Central Hindu Beliefs

Question ❓

Does Hinduism have paradoxical traits?

Evidence 📖

- People who follow Hinduism have a paradoxical purpose:
  - Serve human society (dharma)
  - Find ultimate release from the world, **usually by withdrawing from society** (moksha)
- Over time, Hinduism has tried to affirm that both purposes can be accomplished; humans are social animals but also desire to "transcend" physical/social limitations
- This problem is also reflected in the conflict between **karma** and **samsara**; karma is defined as "works" and samsara is defined as the idea of endless rebirth.
  - One's next rebirth is based on the karma accumulated
- From the perspective of **dharma**, karma and samsara are important; **moksha** is the release ore renunciation of karma and moksha.

- Rituals were also very important in Vedic society
  - For example, there were specific rituals for health, wealth, children (sons) and long life
- The reasons castes existed was because every person had to do a specific duty to uphold *dharma*
  - Disorder is a threat to humanity
- The reasons that the Vedas give for the caste system is that people who do good in this life have fun in the next rebirth i.e. people who fulfill their duties as a lower caste are reborn in an upper caste

Conclusion 🕵️

Hinduism has two main concepts, **dharma** and **moksha**; **dharma** defines the ideal society as a whole, while **moksha** defines the ideal individual.