

Religious similarities and dissimilarities essay example

[Religion](#), [Buddhism](#)



One of the major issues for both Buddhism and Hinduism relates to the geographic origin of the two religions and its developments after the founding of the two religions. In the first instance, the two share a common geographic origin with North Eastern India being the place of origin. However, while the two religions may have originated in the same area, Buddhism suffered from a decline in interest in the Indian sub-continent while Hinduism along with Islam came to dominate.

Closely linked to the concept of Karma and present in both Buddhism and Hinduism is the concept of reincarnation which both religions accept in one form or another. For the Hindu, there is a consideration that the “soul” or Atman is essentially eternal and that while the physical body is born and dies, the soul continuously follows a path of reincarnation governed by the laws of Karma. While Buddhism accepts the concept of reincarnation, there is however a key difference with the Shakyamuni Buddha rejecting the notion of an eternal self within the body broadly describing the Hindu concept of the Atman soul.

While there are many similarities between the two religions, there are also some key differences. One such difference relates to the concept and acceptance of the existence of a God. In Hinduism, the concept of God in the form of Brahman may be seen as central to the religion. As such, the objective Hindus is to achieve a state of perfection in soul which will allow the cycle of life and death to stop as the perfected soul is then allowed to join the Brahman. This is quite different to the Buddhist view point on God in which the religion does deny the existence of a God or forbid worship

however, Gods in the Buddhist religion as seen only as potential guides to enlightenment. As such this also presents another key difference between the two religions. While in the Hindu tradition one may see that the point of a holy life is a reward in the next life, to join the Brahman, this is quite different to the teachings of Buddhism which emphasises that the point of a holy life is to achieve a state of enlightenment within the current incarnation.

Another key difference between the two religions relates to the acceptance of the caste system. While in Hinduism, the caste system is widely accepted although not central to the belief system, Buddhism actively rejects the system seeing it as a form of corruption. As such, the teachings of Buddhism emphasis that there is no link between the concepts of caste and Karma, in other words one's social rank according to the caste system is not determined by the actions of a previous life.

References

Wikipedia. (2012). Buddhism and Hinduism. Available online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_and_Hinduism [Accessed on 23/09/12].