

Hinduism and buddhism, and their respective elements

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



Two known eastern religions and philosophies shared the area of India for centuries, which probably lasts up to this date. These two are Buddhism and Hinduism. Since both concept of Buddhism and Hinduism originated from a single source, it would be possible to identify similar concepts between the two, or at least some form of derivative of a concept belonging to one of the two mentioned religions and philosophies. The focus of this paper primarily entails the comparison between the two great religion philosophies of Buddhism and Hinduism. There is bound to be a difference between them, as one of them originated earlier than the other.

One cannot simply judge that the latter one is a mere copy of the one that existed before it. In relation to death and the afterlife, there are two concepts which can be identified in both Buddhism and Hinduism: Reincarnation and Samsara, the Wheel of Life wherein rebirth is usually based. For now, it is best if the both Buddhism and Hinduism be discerned and identified as a separate entity. The Two Eastern Religion Philosophies: Buddhism and Hinduism As mentioned earlier, the two primary religions and philosophies that proliferated in India were Buddhism and Hinduism. Both of which had a significant amount of followers.

Buddhism and Its History. Basically, Buddhism is the basic religion to which its disciples and members follow the scriptures and teachings of Buddha. After Buddha's death, its followers—mostly monks—congregated in order to discuss which scriptures and teachings would fit best to the aims of Buddha and the proliferation of Buddhism around India, and in other parts of the world. Emperor Ashoka converted to Buddhism after witnessing a carnage he

produced. After being converted, he dedicated his life and a whole lot of structures to Buddhism, and to Buddha—his life and death.

He ordered the construction of numerous pillars which contained the scriptures and teachings of Buddha, spreading it through these stone pillars (Boeree 1999). It was Emperor Ashoka who allowed Buddhism to proliferate across India and beyond its borders, sending messengers to promote Buddhism within those areas. Hinduism: a Brief History. It has been mentioned by historians that Hinduism dates back around 5, 000 years ago, proving that it is a much older religion than Buddhism. The word was actually derived from the river “ Indus”, from an area of which it originated (Kolanu 2009).

The daily practices of the area's inhabitants gradually turned into a religion or concept, upon which it revolves around the peoples' religious, philosophical, and cultural practices native to the Indian sub-continent (Kolanu 2009). It has had many names before Hindu. However, many of its followers would prefer to call it as Hindu, after the name—or at least a close version of it—of the place wherein it originated. It would be later known in history as one of the main religions in India, which is still quite true today— Islam is the second main religion during the contemporary period.

The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. The Four Noble Truths is one of the basic doctrines that Buddhist follow. It basically involved the dispossession of material things, which Buddhist do not really need. The First Noble Truth entails the realization that every aspect of existence is unsatisfactory as these are all subjected to birth, decay, disease, and death (Lorentz 2007).

The Second Noble Truth is the cause of dukkha. The Third Noble Truth entails the freedom from dukkha, wherein one is required to remove the craving of the senses.

The Fourth Noble Truth leads to the end of the dukkha by following the Eighthfold path: Perfect understanding, Perfect Thought, Perfect Speech, Perfect Action, Perfect Livelihood, Perfect Effort, Perfect Mindfulness, and Perfect Concentration (Lorentz 2007). India's Caste System. Hinduism entailed a social hierarchy in which identified their society, based on social rankings upon which was born into, or had been reborn into. When the Aryans came to the Dravidian-occupied Indian subcontinent, they implemented a caste system which separated them from the Dravidian.

It composes of four major components wherein the bottom was reserved for the Dravidian people. The topmost was known as the Brahmin class, made up of religious officials. The second was the Kshatriya, which was reserved for warriors and rulers. The third was the Vaishya, which was reserved for artisans and other skilled workers like farmers. The last one was the Shudra, wherein they serve the higher castes (Flesher 1997). Intermarriage was disallowed because they believe that it will reduce their rank. One is also required to perform well, and promote goodness in order to maintain the rank or move upward when they are reincarnated.

The opposite happens to those who promote evil. It has also been mentioned that some Buddhist from other areas practice the same Caste system implemented by the Aryans. However, they implemented new ideas in order to promote equality among the classes, which is a chief principle of Buddhism.

The Life of Buddha: Who was He anyway? Buddha was said to have been born in the body of Siddhartha Gautama, the prince of Kapilavastu which was near the Indian-Nepalese border, during the fifth century B. C. (Delattre 2009).

At around this time period, India had a prolific spiritual heritage, with Hinduism at the forefront. It has been described in spiritual scriptures—probably from Hindu sources—that an ascetic will be born and become the greatest spiritual teacher. This ascetic would also realize the ultimate truth (Lorentz 2007). It has also been mentioned in Hindu scriptures that after the prince was born, seven Brahmin priests observed the baby, concluding that the baby will become a great spiritual leader who will leave his royal status behind him; the basic principle of Buddhism.

However, his father wished for him to become a Great King, giving him the best education which a prince deserved. His curiosity of the world beyond the walls of their palace urged him to sneak out and realize the truth about the world they lived in. After this realization, he vowed to help the people by living life as an ascetic, leaving his royal status behind. While on his spiritual quest, he went under the wings of great teachers, to which he was able to surpass. Realizing that there is still dukkhas to be flushed away, he left his teachers and practiced by himself.

He was able to attain his complete spirituality without the practice of extreme asceticism. For the next four or so decades, he ordained new followers and taught them what he had learned from his spiritual quest (Lorentz 2007); he became Buddha. End of the World at the Presence of

Seven Suns In Buddha's sermon of the Seven suns, he envisioned that Seven suns would appear on the sky and wreak havoc towards the Earth, through a series of cataclysmic events (Jayaram 2007). This will occur after many hundreds and thousands of years in the future; as do all “ end-of-days” prophecies.

In Buddha's version, the presence of the seven suns will cause the following: first sun would cause severe drought; second sun will evaporate streams and ponds; third sun will evaporate great rivers like the Ganges; fourth sun, after a long lapse, would evaporate the great lakes; After another long lapse, a fifth sun will gradually drain oceans; After yet another long lapse, a sixth sun will scorch the earth and cause volcanic eruptions; After another long interval, the seventh sun will turn the earth into a ball of flame and then explode and disappear. A Slight Taste of Death and the Afterlife

Both Hinduism and Buddhism believed in reincarnation, as the caste system which they followed required reincarnation to reward or punish people. However in Buddhism, one must attain Nirvana—enlightenment--in order to escape the endless cycle of reincarnation. If the person failed to do so, he or she will be reborn into one of the following six states of life: Heaven (has 37 different levels), Human life (under the caste system), Asura (Demi-Gods), Hungry ghost (taken literally), Animals (those who have killed animals), and Hell (the lowest level) (Tang, Urbandharma.

org 2002). References Boeree, C. G. (1999). The History of Buddhism. Retrieved May 19, 2009 from Delattre, M. (2000, November 18). The Illustrated Life of the Buddha. Retrieved May 19, 2009 from Flesher, Paul.

(1997, February 8). Social Organization: The Caste System. Retrieved May 19, 2009 from Jayaram, V. (2007). Buddha's Discourse on the End of the World.

Retrieved May 19, 2009 from Kolanu, P. (2009). The History of Hinduism.

Retrieved May 19, 2009 from Lorentz, M. (2007). Buddhism. Retrieved May

19, 2009 from Tang, T. H. (2002, March 22). Buddhist View on Death and

Rebirth. Retrieved May 19, 2009 from