From Hinduism to Buddhism

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## Background to Buddhism

### Timeline

<https://www.preceden.com/timelines/274460-buddhism---hinduism>

### Confucianism

* a worldview, a pattern of acting in the world, a philosophy – not so much a "religion"
* 3 values are notable: **Filial piety**, **humaneness**, and **ritual**
* influence in China 2,500 up to the present

see documents

[Confucianism](https://cesa.rc.iseg.ulisboa.pt/Three%20Confucian%20Values.pdf)

[Encyc Britt](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Confucianism) Confucianism, a Western term that has no counterpart in Chinese, is a worldview, a social ethic, a political ideology, a scholarly tradition, and a way of life. Sometimes viewed as a philosophy and sometimes as a religion, Confucianism may be understood as an all-encompassing way of thinking and living that entails ancestor reverence and a profound human-centred religiousness. East Asians may profess themselves to be Shintōists, Daoists, Buddhists, Muslims, or Christians, but, by announcing their religious affiliations, seldom do they cease to be Confucians.

Confucian ethical values have for well over 2,000 years served as the source of inspiration as well as the court of appeal for human interaction between individuals, communities, and nations in the Sinitic world.

3 legged stool:

* Respect for one's parents, filial piety, is considered the most fundamental of the Confucian values, the root of all others.
* Another key value in Confucian thinking–the second leg of the tripod–is humaneness, the care and concern for other human beings.
* The last of the three central Confucian values is respect for ritual–the proper way of doing things in the deepest sense

and also see \*Reading from Confucius\*Reading from Confucius

### Taoism

* philosophy? or religion? a way of life?
* founder Lao-tzu "the wise old man"
* the **Tao**, "the Way", is the origin and law of all things.
* **yin / yang**

The core of the basic belief and doctrine of Taoism is that "Tao" is the origin and law of all things in the universe. Taoists believes that people can become deities or live forever through practicing certain rituals and austerities

Read from text

## Introduction to Hinduism

### Common cliche

### Overlay of Foreign concepts

* The concepts of **Hindu** and **Hinduism** are problematic for several reasons.
* **Hindu** and **Hinduism** are words of Persian origin from the 12th century C.E.; thus, they are not native to India.
* Those who have conceptualized **Hinduism** have been western European

### Hinduism Is / Is not

* Hinduism is not **just** a part or aspect of Indian life or culture; it is far more encompassing than that.
* It structures and influences every aspect of Hindu life, including
  + arts,
  + music,
  + medicine,
  + etc.

Note: and the like, which may explain the lack of a specific self-referential term.

### Veda, classic Scripture

* most authoritative text for Hinduism
* composed between 2300 and 1200 B.C.E.
* oldest named **Rig** contains thousands of songs of praise
* many different gods sung to
* e.g. The oldest and most important of these collections contains more than a thousand songs to various gods and goddesses and is aptly named the Rig, meaning praise. Scholars believe it was composed between 2300 and 1200 B.C.E.

<http://factsanddetails.com/india/History/sub7_1a/entry-4102.html>

The earliest layers of Hinduism are thought to have originated with a people known as **Aryans**. The English language as well as the ancient Aryan Indian language of Sanskrit are both a part of the same language family: "The Indo-European" languages.

The earliest sacred texts in Hinduism – the Vedas – are from this early period in the development of Hinduism.

### Humans

* The Veda regarded humans as being individual souls
* and members of a stratified society.
* For the Aryans, the essence of human life is the soul, which they associated with the **breath**, designated by the word **atman**.
* The Aryans' strong emphasis on **ritual** over **doctrine and belief** - was the basis of the Vedic tradition.

Note: From the Veda and the Aryans we have inherited some familiar religious concepts and beliefs: belief in an individual soul, the breath or spirit as the source of what is essential about the soul, an emphasis on ritual and right belief.

The Veda regarded humans as being individual souls and members of a stratified society. For the Aryans, the essence of human life is the soul, which they associated with the breath, designated by the word tman. The Sanskrit atman has cognates in the English word atmosphere and the German word atmen, which means to breathe.

### Classical Hinduism

* during Axial Age Vedic thought and ritual were re-evaluated
* beginning of belief in **afterlife**
* from **cosmic maintenance** to **personal enlightenment**
* established the central problem of human existence for Hindus, viz. **samsara**
* **Karma** and **Moksha**
* **Upanishads** (800-400 B.C.E.)
* Transformations of thought in the Axial Age (c. 800–200 B.C.E.) led to the re-evaluation of Vedic ritual and new ideas about the nature of human existence.
* Deeper spiritual questions led to the examination of human nature and the possibility of an **afterlife**.
* (*This evolution in Indian religion was roughly contemporaneous with similar developments in other civilizations, including ancient Greece, China, Mesopotamia, and Israel.*)
* The function of religion changed from that of **cosmic maintenance** to one of **personal enlightenment** and transformation.
* Classical Hinduism established the central problem of human existence for Hindus – **samsara**, the cycle of continual **transmigrations of the soul**.
* **Karma**, even good **karma**, keeps a person bound to the cycle of transmigration. One path the Hindu tradition offers for the attainment of **moksha**, or ultimate release, is the path of wisdom.
* The path of wisdom found in the Axial Age, when the most important Hindu responses to the anxieties about death and rebirth were recorded in a collection of texts called the **Upanishads**. The oldest of the **Upanishads** was probably composed between 800–400 B.C.E., but actually written down much later.
* Modern Hinduism has had to face challenges brought by the advent of Islam and Western culture.

Note: Both incursions into India have left profound and lasting imprints on Hinduism.

### 3 Ways of Hinduism

* Over time there developed 3 paths to **moksha**
  + Way of action
  + Way of wisdom
  + Way of devotion

The ultimate goal of Hinduism is freedom from samsara. Classical Hinduism establish the basic problem of life as escaping the cycle. Moksha. There are three traditional ways to do this in Hinduism.

The first is the way of action. The things that one does in life such as rituals, pilgrimage, are done in order to achieve moksha. There are three goods in life, duty, wealth, pleasure, and Mockshire. The first three must be given up in order to gain the fourth. All of these interact to fulfill one’s karma. Karma has to do with actions and its consequences. It is a principle of justice and it is what binds a soul to samsara.

Second is the way of wisdom. The way of wisdom is reflected in the texts of the Upanishads. This dates from the axial age. The principle of the unity of Brahman and Atman is foundational theory for the path of wisdom. Braman is the power of all powers and is chiefly understood through negative theology, identifying what it is not. Atman came to be the word for soul. It is imperceptible, spiritual, beyond comprehension, immortal.

Third is the way of devotion. Hinduism embraces both polytheism and monotheism. This approach focuses ones love on a personal deity. This allows different people to focus on different gods and us different paths.

Into this developing Hinduism came a reformer by the Gautama.

## Overview of history

<https://youtu.be/n7ndRwqJYDM>

## Buddhism 101

### Introduction to Buddhism

[12 min. video](https://youtu.be/8Nn5uqE3C9w)

### Introduction

* During its 2,500-year history, from the time of the Buddha to the present day, Buddhism has grown from a tiny religious community in northern India into a movement that now spans the globe.
* the tradition begins simply with a **human being – Siddhartha Gautama** who found a solution to the problem of human suffering.
* Buddhists focus on his experience, and they **deny the existence of a single, almighty God.**
* The most basic Buddhist expression of faith is called the triple refuge:
  + I take refuge in the **Buddha**;
  + I take refuge in the **Dharma** [ *the Buddhas teaching* ];
  + I take refuge in the **Samgha** [ *the community of the Buddhas followers* ].

Note: The Buddhist tradition will challenge us to look in new ways at some basic religious questions: What is ultimate reality? How can I know it? And does it love me? Many religious traditions emphasize the importance of an immortal soul. This is not so in Buddhism.

### Buddha

* The doctrine of reincarnation or rebirth is known as **samsara** (literally, *wandering*). Samsara was not considered a pleasant prospect. For many people, it was not an opportunity as much as it was a burden, and they tried to find a way out.
* The release from **samsara** is found in **moksha**
* emancipation, enlightenment, liberation, and release; both a deep wisdom and a goal for life

Inherited from Hinduism are some basic concepts of what life is like. Samsara and moksha are key concepts inherited by Buddhism.

### Four Noble Truths

Four Noble Truths (The Buddha's first teaching) are:

1. the truth of suffering (**Gurkha**): *all is suffering*
2. the truth of the arising of suffering: *it is from desire*
3. the truth of the cessation of suffering (also known as **nirvana** or **nibbana**): *i.e. cease from desire*
4. the truth of the path that leads to the cessation of suffering: *via 8-fold path*

Note: The great contribution made to Hinduism – and ultimately to the rest of the world – is the 4 noble truths. These came to the Buddha by way of enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.

Buddhists have a rich tradition of stories and legends about the Buddha. The stories begin with the Buddhas previous lives. Buddhist tradition arose at a time when the doctrine of reincarnation was a basic assumption in Indian religious life.

### The path to nirvana is divided into eight categories:

* right understanding,
* right thought,
* right speech,
* right action,
* right livelihood,
* right effort,
* right mindfulness,
* right concentration.
* The path, then, to the release of desire and thus suffering, is through the 8-fold path.

### The logic might be expressed in 3 categories:\*

* **sila**, or moral conduct; virtue
* **samadhi**, or mental concentration; meditation
* **pa-a**, or wisdom

Note: These 8 fold path elements can be condensed to 3:

### circa 1st c. CE a reforming and "missionary" impulse

Buddhism was able to associate Taoist concepts and practices with the way of Buddhism

* Mahayana spread to China, Tibet, Japan, Korea, Vietnam
* One of the Mahayana traditions most important innovations is the **bodhisattva** ideal.
* A **bodhisattva** is a Buddha-to-be or future Buddha who does not attempt to go straight to **nirvana** but returns to this world to help others along the path.
* **emptiness**: Hinduism there is an eternal self. Buddhism there is “no-self”
* **non-duality** (physical / spiritual)

The concept of bodhisattva became important in the development of Buddhism. Other important concepts are:

### Chinese adoption of Buddhism blended with an adaptation of Chinese Taoism

* the **Tao** is the "Way" and Buddhism generally rejects theism
* **samsara** can be understood as similar to the evolution and manifestation of the Tao over time
* most Taoists today follow a Buddhist way
* compare "one with the Tao" with the "release found in moksha"
* Note:
* The Tao that can be told of is not the eternal Tao; The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth; The Named is the mother of all things.\\ The Tao is empty like a bowl.\\ It may be used but its capacity is never exhausted.

### Quick overview of Buddha

<https://youtu.be/ZTI3P9zx-oY>

formerly used

<https://youtu.be/YpVlbPeX37A>

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