Hindu And Buda Essay, Research Paper

The idea of ?religare? or binding oneself back to one?s religion is key to

many religions. In Christianity, we bind our selves back to the truth unveiled

through scripture, myths, tradition, and the church?s teachings. Hinduism,

however has a much different interpretation of the idea of binding oneself back.

There really is not a whom or what that I can put my finger on. We all came from

one God and we must get back to God. But how can one go about doing that? A

Hindu would say to free ourselves from the desires and illusions present here on

Earth. To free ourselves from the material possessions and pleasures would be to

obtain Moksha. Moksha, for Hindus, would be the point of freedom and the

attachment to Brahman. In a way this is extremely ironic, for in the act of

binding oneself back, a Hindu would obtain liberation. To me, these terms seem

directly contradictory, however, this is proof to the fact that our minds cannot

understand certain aspects of religion, and that we are limited. The goal of a

Hindu is to release themselves, but also to gain a complete understanding of

life. By doing this, they are freed from the continuous cycle of reincarnation.

There are, as Huston Smith tells us, four paths to the goal. The yogas are the

specific direction taken to unleash the human potential of Moksha. The goal of

the yogas is to come in to and remain in touch with Brahman. The first way to

God is through knowledge. The three steps taken on this path is learning,

thinking, and the third, a little more complex, consists of separating one?s

material ego form one?s Atman. The second way to God is through love. The love

we show to others can be translated into a love for God. The third path to God

is though work. Through a devotion to one?s work, God can be seen through the

highest rewards if done so wisely. The final Hindu path to God is through

Psychophysical Exercises. In this way, a Hindu experiments with mental exercises

and observing their effects. Not all Hindus take the same path to God, but the

goal is identical. The Buddha made much reform to the path to God. Well, not so

much a reform as perhaps an alternate route. He called this the Middle Path. A

way between sensuality and asceticism, the Middle Path lay through intelligence.

The main revolutionary idea behind the Buddha?s teachings was that he rejected

asceticism, which at that time had been a popular belief and a socially approved

route to salvation. Not only did he reject self-denial, but the worship of gods.

In his renowned Eightfold Path, there is never any mention of worship. Also, he

refuted the idea that one had to pass through countless rebirths to reach the

Brahmin caste before being able to obtain salvation. For this very reason,

Buddhism ultimately failed in India, because of the widespread control by the

Brahmins. The most challenging concept for the Hindus to except was that the

Buddha taught that the soul did not exist. Hindus thought that the Atman, or

soul, was actually God. The Buddha reasoned that if the soul is purely God, the

it is not individual and therefore is an An-Atman, or no soul. The achievement

of liberation then for Buddhist takes form in Nirvana. Nirvana occurs when

people release their yearning for a false selfhood, which is similar to

Hinduism. Paradoxically, as with Hinduism, the act of extinguishing this

yearning occurs simultaneously with an enlightenment. Studying Hinduism and

Buddhism has been surely an enlightenment for me. To my amazement, Hinduism

actually addresses a few questions I have had before. I?ve wondered about the

way life is connected and how life is a flowing circle of life and death.

Hinduism is based primarily on the idea of Brahman and that everything is one.

The idea that material positions are basically meaningless is something that I

dread to think about, because I am most certaintly a victim of todays society

based on wealth and power. It infuriates me to think that my possessions are

meaningless, but for some reason I am drawn to these teachings of Hinduism. The

majority of teachings of all the religions we have studied so far has made sense

to me, and this is the most puzzling conclusion I am faced with. What does this

mean? I have found something here and I am utterly confused. How the heck can

more than one religion make sense to me? It is almost as though I could draw

parts form different religions and form something new and rounded. This of

course is a ludicrous idea, for thousands of years of traditions stand in my

way. I just wish there would be some way to wipe the slate clean and rework the

idea of God in a complete universal sense. I sometimes have the tendency to view

our ancestors and traditions to be inhibiting us from reaching some far off

realization that no Buddha or Brahmin or anyone has ever obtained. In

Conclusion, I do wish to continue studying religions beyond high school maybe it

will lead me to some discovery.