

Thesis Title	A Comparative Study of the Concept of Brahma in the Upaniṣad and the Suttantapiṭaka
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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was to make a comparative study of the Concept of Brahma in the Upaniṣad and the Suttantapiṭaka. The Upaniṣads are the scripture dealing with philosophy in the Vedic period of India whereas the Suttantapiṭaka is a part of the Pali Canon dealing with teaching of the Buddha. The latter is later than the former. The thesis is divided into five chapters as follows :

1. Chapter one is the introduction.
2. Chapter two deals with the concept Brahma as described in the Upaniṣads.
3. Chapter three deals with the concept of Brahma gathered from the Suttantapiṭaka and its commentaries.
4. Chapter four deals with the comparison both concepts mentioned in chapters two and three.
5. Chapter five is the conclusion and suggestion.

After the study it is found that there are certain similarities and differences between the two textual sources which can be concluded as follows :

1. there are two kinds of Brahma in the Upaniṣads, i.e., Brahma which is neuter and Brahma which is masculine. The former represents the supreme reality, the absolute, indescribable by words. It is one without a second. It can be described only by using negation like "not this; not this". The latter represents the Supreme God, who creates, sustains and destroys the world. He is known as Saguṇa Brahma, who is endowed with all excellent qualities, such as, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience etc.

2. The Brahma in the Suttantapiṭaka are celestial beings residing in the celestial planes. They are radiant, long-lived, endowed with beautiful appearances and strength. To become a Brahma one must achieve certain stages of Buddhist meditation.

3. Atman which is also Brahma of the Upaniṣads is different from Attā of the Suttantapiṭaka which equivalent to Ātman. Ātman is eternal, changeless, sorrowless etc. But there is no such thing as Ātman or Attā in the Suttantapiṭaka which teaches that everything is subject to change and decay, non-eternal etc.

4. The similarity between the two concepts is also located. It lies in the fact that both concepts categorize Brahma into personal aspect and impersonal aspect. The absolute aspect of Brahma of the Upaniṣads is similar to the aspect of Nibbana of the Suttantapiṭaka and like the concept of Dharma, which is the eternal.