

Sophita Sumsang 2014: A Comparative Study of Avatār in Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Master of Arts (Philosophy and Religion), Major Field: Philosophy and Religion, Department of Philosophy and Religion. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Theerat Saengkaew, Ph.D. 359 pages.

The purpose of this study is to follow the detail of Avatār in Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Especially this belief concerned with Nārāyana and Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva happened in both of religions. This research is to compare in a meaningful manner, history, characteristics, types, aims and methods of Avatār.

The results of this research were found that: Avatār concept are divided into two parts: The first part was described in a meaningful way, which explains the origin of the gods down to earth. There are many forms of Avatār, they depended on each religion. Nature and type of Avatār have many characteristics in forms of animal, human and half animal, half human. The aim of Avatār to bring human beings out of suffering. The methods of Avatār did not appear in details, they were applied in each religions rites. Second, it will be focused on the gods, Nārāyana, who will come down to help mankind, when the chaos age occur, but Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva assist human beings all times as long as human beings remain in distress. The purpose of the State of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva is to a Buddha in the future.

The idea of Avatār of two religions is to need to build credibility and trust with their religion. Simultaneously, human being want the anchor of mine in the form of personal God, the concept of Avatār fulfilled human need.

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Thesis Advisor's signature