A Comparative Study of the Teachings of Panca Sradha in Hinduism and the Concept of Faith in Islam

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Abstract: This study aims to provide a comparative analysis of the belief system of Panca Śraddhā in Hinduism and the pillars of faith (rukn al-īmān) in Islam through a text-based comparative theological approach. The research is motivated by the growing need to understand the theological foundations of two major religions that are often simplistically juxtaposed in interfaith discourse. Employing library research as its method, this study applies philosophical hermeneutics and reflective engagement with sacred texts, including the Bhagavad Gītā, Upanishads, Vedas, and the Qur'an. The findings reveal that while Panca Śraddhā and the Islamic pillars of faith serve similar normative functions as the foundations of belief, they differ significantly in terms of epistemological, ontological, and soteriological structures. These differences are particularly evident in concepts such as Brahman–Allah, ātman–rūḥ, karma–deeds, punarbhava–punarbhava-the Day of Judgment, and mokṣa–heaven. The study contributes to the development of interreligious discourse in Indonesia by offering a theologically grounded and context-sensitive analytical framework. Nonetheless, the research has limitations, including restricted access to traditional Hindu commentaries and limited direct engagement with religious authorities from both traditions. These challenges underscore the need for further studies employing interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to deepen interreligious understanding.

Keyword: comparative theology; Hinduism; interfaith dialogue; Islam; Panca Śraddhā

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara komparatif sistem keyakinan Panca Śraddhā dalam agama Hindu dan rukun iman dalam Islam melalui pendekatan teologi komparatif berbasis teks. Kajian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kebutuhan untuk memahami struktur teologis dua agama besar yang sering kali disandingkan secara simplistik dalam wacana dialog lintas iman. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan hermeneutik filosofis dan keterlibatan reflektif terhadap teks-teks suci, seperti Bhagavad Gītā, Upanishad, Weda, dan al-Qur'an. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat persamaan fungsi normatif antara Panca Śraddhā dan rukun iman sebagai fondasi keimanan, terdapat perbedaan mendasar dalam kerangka epistemologis, ontologis, dan soteriologis dari masing-masing konsep, seperti Brahman–Allah, ātman–rūḥ, karma–amal, punarbhava–hari kiamat, dan mokṣa–surga. Perbedaan ini penting untuk dipahami agar tidak terjadi penyederhanaan yang dapat menyesatkan dalam kajian perbandingan agama. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian lintas agama di Indonesia dengan

menawarkan pendekatan analisis teologis yang mendalam, kontekstual, dan kritis. Namun, keterbatasan dalam akses terhadap sumber otoritatif Hindu dan keterlibatan langsung dengan pemuka agama menjadi tantangan yang perlu dijawab melalui riset lanjutan yang lebih kolaboratif dan multidisipliner.

Kata kunci: Agama Hindu; dialog lintas iman; Islam; Panca Śraddhā; teologi komparatif

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Introduction

Religion, in all its expressions, constitutes a complex and comprehensive system of meaning. It not only governs the relationship between humans and God but also shapes the ethical framework, cosmology, and social order of its adherents (Bahaf, 2015). In this context, the belief system serves as a foundational element that determines how followers perceive reality, life, and the purpose of existence (Rohman et al., 2021). Hinduism and Islam, as two major religious traditions with distinct historical roots and doctrinal foundations, offer unique structures of faith that are both rich and worthy of comparative study, particularly in exploring the spiritual and ethical common ground that exists amid dogmatic diversity.

In Hindu Dharma, the belief system is formulated through the teachings of Panca Sradha, which encompass belief in Sang Hyang Widhi (the Supreme God), Atman (the soul), Karma Phala (the law of cause and effect), Punarbhawa (reincarnation), and Moksha (spiritual liberation)(Widana, 2021). These teachings serve not only as a metaphysical foundation within the Hindu tradition but also function as a moral framework and spiritual orientation that guides the daily lives of Hindu adherents. Conversely, Islam establishes its foundation of faith through the Six Pillars of Iman, which include belief in Allah, angels, holy books, prophets, the Day of Judgment, and divine decree (qadar)(Rakhmat, 2021). These six elements constitute not only the doctrinal structure of Islam but also deeply influence how Muslims live out their moral and social lives.

Although these two belief systems are rooted in distinct historical backgrounds and cosmological understandings, they essentially function as spiritual compasses, guiding their followers through the journey of life. However, studies that hastily conclude the existence of "shared values" without thorough theoretical grounding often fall into oversimplification(Mulder, 2001). In serious comparative religion studies, such an approach is criticized as a weak generalization that risks obscuring the depth and uniqueness of each tradition(Schumann, 1999). Therefore, a more reflective, methodological, and primary literature-based approach is required to explore these belief structures authentically and meaningfully.

Comparative theology, as an academic approach, offers a profound analytical framework for understanding religious doctrines across traditions while respecting the integrity of each teaching. Unlike mere descriptive comparative studies, comparative theology—as articulated by scholars such as Francis X. Clooney (2010), James Fredericks (1999), and Keith Ward (2000)—requires direct and serious engagement with authoritative texts, insider interpretations, and a sensitivity to the spiritual and socio-cultural dimensions that shape those teachings. In this context, comparing Panca Sradha and the Islamic Rukun Iman cannot be conducted merely through terminological identification, but must be explored through their theological, ethical, and anthropological dimensions.

Furthermore, amid the growing discourse on pluralism and multiculturalism in modern society, such studies have become increasingly relevant. Interfaith understanding grounded in scholarly analysis and intellectual empathy is essential for fostering spaces of authentic and meaningful dialogue (Junaidi, 2017). In Indonesia—a nation characterized by high religious diversity—comparative studies between these two major belief systems hold significant potential to contribute to the strengthening of social harmony and the transformation of interfaith consciousness (Qomar, 2021).

However, it must be acknowledged that most studies discussing Panca Sradha tend to be internalistic, focusing primarily on intra-religious understandings within Hinduism, and rarely engage in systematic comparisons with theological systems from other religions, particularly Islam. Conversely, Islamic studies that touch upon Hinduism often remain confined to polemical or apologetic dimensions, rather than engaging in philosophical explorations of the Hindu belief system as a theologically equivalent entity. It is precisely this gap that this study seeks to address: to examine the teachings of Panca Sradha as a comprehensive Hindu theological system and critically compare them with the Islamic Rukun Iman, within a text-based comparative theological framework.

This research does not merely aim to identify points of convergence and divergence, but also aspires to answer more fundamental questions: How do these two belief systems explain the nature of divinity, the soul, moral action, and the ultimate purpose of human existence? Through a close examination of primary sacred texts—such as the Yajur Veda, Upanishads, and Bhagavad Gita on the Hindu side, and the Qur'an and Hadith on the Islamic side this study highlights how these teachings are not merely doctrinal assertions, but also shape the ethos, value structures, and spiritual horizons of their adherents..

With such an approach, this research is expected not only to provide a richer and deeper understanding of the two major religious traditions, but also to strengthen the foundation of interfaith dialogue based on scholarship, mutual

respect, and a shared commitment to the pursuit of truth. This is crucial not only within the academic realm but also in shaping a collective societal narrative that is more tolerant, reflective, and inclusive.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative approach using the library research method, focusing on an in-depth analysis of religious texts and theological literature from two major traditions: Hinduism and Islam. This method is chosen due to the conceptual, theological, and philosophical nature of the study, which requires a comprehensive understanding of belief structures, both textually and contextually.

To bridge the paradigmatic differences between religions, this study adopts Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutics, which emphasizes the importance of a fusion of horizons between the interpreter and the text. As Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004) states, "Understanding is not a matter of reconstructing the past, but of a fusion of horizons." In this research, the understanding of the doctrines of Panca Sradha and the six articles of Islamic faith (rukun iman) is not approached as neutral objects, but rather as a dialogical engagement between living faith traditions and an interpreter with a particular horizon of understanding.

To address the risks of reductionism and interpretative bias, which are particularly sensitive in interreligious studies, this approach is reinforced by text-based comparative theology methodology, as developed by Francis X. Clooney. According to Clooney (2010:9), "Comparative theology begins with a commitment to one's tradition, but ventures into learning from the depth and sacred texts of another." Therefore, the readings of texts such as the Yajur Veda, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, and the Qur'an are carried out in a deep, dialogical, and reflective manner, without judgment or the erasure of theological boundaries. The researcher acknowledges the limitations of being an outsider to the Hindu tradition and seeks engagement with authoritative sources and interpretations from Hindu scholars and religious figures to minimize the risk of misrepresentation.

The validity of data in this study is maintained not only through triangulation of primary and secondary sources but also strengthened by expert validation and interfaith consultation. The interpretation of findings was discussed in academic forums with supervising lecturers and experts in both Hindu and Islamic theology to obtain critical feedback on the emerging meanings. A reflexive interpretation approach was also applied to help the researcher remain aware of their epistemological position and to minimize internal bias.

The analysis process was carried out in two stages. The first stage involved content analysis of the conceptual structures found in the doctrines of Panca Sradha and the six articles of Islamic faith (rukun iman). The second stage involved comparative analysis to examine both the correspondences and divergences between the two traditions in terms of metaphysics, ethics, and eschatology. In this way, the study does not merely aim to describe, but rather to build a bridge of understanding between religions through critical analysis that remains respectful of theological differences.

Results And Discussions
Results
Belief in God: Sang Hyang Widhi and Tawḥīd

In Hindu teachings, belief in God is manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, who is both transcendent and immanent(Januariawan, 2019). The Rig Veda I.164.46 states, "Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti", meaning "Truth is one, but the wise call it by many names." This concept indicates that although God is personified in various forms, such as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, in essence, there is only one Supreme God. This monotheistic foundation is further affirmed in the Bhagavad Gita 10:8, which declares, "I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me."

In the Islamic tradition, the concept of divinity is firmly monotheistic, grounded in the doctrine of tawhid(Quddus, 2012), as emphasized in Surah Al-Ikhlas (112:1): "Say: He is Allah, the One and Only." This teaching asserts that Allah is the sole God—He neither begets nor is begotten, and there is nothing comparable to Him. Tawhid in Islam also underscores the unity of Allah's essence, attributes, and actions, affirming His role as the Creator, Sustainer, and Regulator of the entire universe (Surah Al-Hadid, 57:4).

The comparative findings indicate that both religions emphasize the oneness of God, although this is expressed in different ways(Hasyim, 2018). In Hinduism, God may be manifested in multiple forms (saguna) or understood as an absolute principle (nirguna), while in Islam, the expression of God cannot be represented in any form (Surpi, 2023). The similarity lies in the principle of divine unity and the belief in God as the source of all existence; the difference lies in the symbolic interpretation and representation of the divine.

Existence of the Soul: Ātman and the Concept of Rūḥ

Hindu teachings hold that within every living being exists the Atman, a divine spark from Brahman, eternal and indestructible. The Bhagavad Gita 2:20 states: "The Atman is never born, nor does it ever die. It is not created, and it is never destroyed." The Atman is considered the essence of a living being's

existence, which undergoes cycles of rebirth (punarbhava) until it attains the highest level of consciousness, known as moksha.

In Islam, the ruh (soul/spirit) is believed to be an immaterial element granted by Allah to every human being. Surah Al-Isra (17:85) affirms: "They ask you concerning the soul. Say: The soul is of the affair of my Lord." According to Sukardi, Islam does not provide a detailed metaphysical explanation of the ruh, but acknowledges its existence as the foundation of human life and the entity that will be held accountable for deeds in the hereafter(Sukardi, 2003).

The comparison between the concepts of Atman and ruh reveals that both are understood as non-material essences of life that originate from the Divine(Ni Kadek Surpi, 2023a). Hinduism emphasizes that Atman is a fragment of Brahman undertaking a journey of reincarnation, while Islam regards the ruh as an individual entity accountable in the afterlife. Although the terminology and cosmological frameworks differ, both concepts imply the presence of a divine and eternal aspect within human beings.

Law of Cause and Effect: Karma Phala and Deeds–Destiny

According to Sukardi, in Hindu tradition, the doctrine of Karma Phala asserts that every individual action, whether good or bad, will inevitably bring consequences. Karma is understood as a cosmic moral law that affirms that one's present life is shaped by actions performed in previous lives(Sukardi, 2003). Bhagavad Gita 3:30 states, "Those who do good will receive good results, while those who do evil will receive evil results." This concept is categorized into three forms: Sanchita karma (the accumulated karma from past lives), Prarabda karma (the portion of past karma that is currently bearing fruit), and Kriyamana karma (karma being created in the present, which will influence the future). The Rg Veda X.1.5 also affirms this moral principle: "Those who sin suffer from their own sins."

In Islam, the principle of reward and punishment for deeds is emphasized in numerous verses. Surah Al-Zalzalah (99:7–8) states: "So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." The concept of actions (amal) in Islam is closely tied to belief in divine decree (qadar), where everything occurs by Allah's will, yet human beings remain accountable for their actions (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:286).

An analysis reveals that, although Hinduism and Islam differ in their metaphysical doctrines, both affirm the intrinsic connection between human actions and their consequences. Hinduism understands this through the moral mechanism of karma, operating across cycles of rebirth, while Islam frames human deeds within the context of the afterlife and divine justice. Both traditions emphasize the importance of moral responsibility and spiritual integrity.

Cycle of Birth and Afterlife: Punarbhava and the Day of Judgment

Punarbhava in Hinduism refers to the concept of reincarnation, the rebirth of the soul (Atman) into a new bodily form based on the karma accumulated in previous lives. This doctrine asserts that the soul will continue to reincarnate until it attains purity and ultimately reunites with Brahman. The Chandogya Upanishad 5.10.7 states, "It is karma that determines whether one is reborn as a human or as an animal." Likewise, Manu Smriti 12.40 affirms that rebirth depends on the moral quality of one's previous life.

In contrast, Islam rejects the concept of reincarnation and affirms the belief in resurrection and the final judgment (Yaum al-Qiyamah). Surah Al-Baqarah [2:281] states, "And fear the Day when you will be returned to Allah." In Islamic belief, after death, the soul enters the realm of Barzakh to await resurrection, after which it will be judged and sent either to Paradise or Hell based on its deeds (Surah Al-Mu'minun [23:102–104]).

The fundamental difference between these two traditions lies in their understanding of spiritual time. Hinduism views life as an endless cycle of reincarnation, while Islam sees earthly life as a single, linear test. Nonetheless, both religions share a common emphasis on moral accountability and the existence of an afterlife as a means of soul purification.

Spiritual Ultimate Goal: Mokṣa and Heaven

In Hinduism, the ultimate spiritual goal is to attain Moksha—absolute liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara) and the union of the Atman (individual soul) with Brahman (the Supreme Reality). Bhagavad Gita 2:72 states, "He who attains Moksha is freed from the cycle of birth and death." Moksha is not merely liberation from the material world but also represents the highest state of spiritual consciousness. The Chandogya Upanishad 6.14.2 describes Moksha as the state in which the soul has detached itself from ego and material bonds.

In Islam, the highest spiritual goal is to enter Paradise (Jannah)—a place of eternal happiness for those who believe and perform righteous deeds. The Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah (2:25), states: "And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds, that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow." In Islam, Paradise is a divine reward from Allah for unwavering faith and consistent righteous actions.

This comparison illustrates that, despite their differing forms, both Moksha in Hinduism and Paradise in Islam symbolize the ultimate spiritual goal—freedom from suffering and union with the Divine. Hinduism seeks this through liberation from samsara and the attainment of spiritual knowledge, while Islam reaches it through faith, righteous deeds, and the mercy of God. Both traditions emphasize

the significance of transcendence and the afterlife as central orientations of religious life.

Table 1. A Comparative Overview of the Panca Sradha Teachings in Hinduism and Their Equivalents in Islam

No.	Panca Sradha (Hinduism)	Theological Essence	Parallel in Islam	Theological Essence	Primary Sources
1	**Sang Hyang Widhi (Brahman)**	Belief in the One Supreme God manifested in various forms (Saguna and Nirguna)	**Faith in Allah**	Tawhid: belief in the One and Only God, who is transcendent, does not beget nor is begotten	Ṛg Veda I.164.46; Bhagavad Gītā 10:8; Qur'an Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ:1; Al-Ḥadīd:4
2	**Ātman**	The eternal soul, a divine spark from Brahman, and the source of consciousness in living beings	**The Soul (Rūḥ) and the Hereafter**	The soul is created by Allah and will be judged after death	Bhagavad Gītā 2:20; Upanishads; Qur'an Surah Al-Isrā':85; Az-Zumar:42
3	**Karma Phala**	The law of cause and effect: every action results in moral consequences	**Deeds (Amal) and Divine Decree (Qadar)**	Good and bad deeds determine one's final destiny, subject to the will of Allah	Bhagavad Gītā 3:30; Ṛg Veda X.1.5; Qur'an Surah Az-Zalzalah:7–8; Al-Baqarah:286
4	**Punarbhava (Reincarnation)**	The cycle of rebirth continues until the soul is purified and liberated	**Day of Judgment and the Afterlife**	Life occurs only once; souls will be resurrected and judged in the Hereafter	Chāndogya Upanishad 5.10.7; Manu Smṛti 12.40; Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah:281; Al-Mu'minūn:102–104
5	**Moksha**	Spiritual liberation: the union of Ātman with Brahman, ending the cycle of rebirth	**Heaven (Jannah)**	Eternal life in peace and bliss for the faithful and righteous	Bhagavad Gītā 2:72; Upanishads 6.14.2; Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah:25; An-Nisā':57

Discussions

In comparative religion studies, sensitivity to the epistemological differences and meaning structures of each tradition is crucial. The attempt to compare the teachings of Panca Śraddhā in Hinduism with the Rukun Iman in Islam cannot be carried out merely by aligning terminology; rather, it requires deep engagement with both texts and contexts. The approach employed in this study refers to the text-based comparative theology model formulated by Francis X. Clooney (2010).

In this approach, a researcher remains grounded in their faith while seriously and deeply reading and interpreting the texts of another tradition with an open, reflective attitude and without reductionist intent. As Clooney states, "Comparative theology is faith seeking understanding across traditions, using deep reading and serious learning from the other."

This approach is reinforced by Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics framework (2004), as referenced in Harjon's research, which emphasizes that true understanding occurs through a dialogue between the horizons of meaning of the reader and the text (Harjon, 2023). This enables an encounter across traditions that does not rest on relativism, but rather on the effort to reach shared depth of meaning through open dialogue(Harjon, 2023). This enables an encounter across traditions that does not rest on relativism, but rather on the effort to reach shared depth of meaning through open dialogue(Hasiholan & Stevenson, 2023). In addition, this study adopts the framework of Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1981), who critiques the model of "religion as a closed system" and proposes that religion should be understood as a living and evolving system shaped by the experiences of its adherents.

Concept of Divinity: Brahman and Allah

The concept of God in Hinduism is expressed through the term Brahman, regarded as the highest metaphysical principle that is both transcendent and immanent. Brahman is described as nirguṇa (without attributes), yet can also be manifested as saguṇa (with attributes), such as in the deities of the Trimūrti (Ni Kadek Surpi, 2023b). This concept is rooted in sacred texts like the Ṛgveda I.164.46: "Ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti" ("The One is called by many names by the sages"). Brahman is not personified in any specific form but serves as the foundational principle of reality for the entire universe (Warta, 2024).

Conversely, in Islam, the concept of Allah refers to the One and Only, incomparable, and indivisible Being. Tawḥīd, as the foundation of Islamic creed, emphasizes the oneness of Allah in His essence (dhāt), attributes (ṣifāt), and actions (afʿāl) (al-Ghazālī, al-Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtiqād) (Casewit, 2020). Surah al-Ikhlāṣ (112:1–4) states: "Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad..." and affirms His incomparability. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2006), this distinction reflects the vertical nature of Islam, based on direct revelation from God (Faruque, 2023), Hinduism tends toward a horizontal-mystical approach in its understanding of the divine.

This contrast also highlights two distinct epistemologies: revelation (Islam) versus metaphysical intuition (Hinduism). Therefore, equating Brahman with Allah without epistemological clarification constitutes a problematic oversimplification with potentially serious academic consequences.

Soul and Spirit: Ātman vs. Rūḥ

In Hindu teachings, Ātman is the eternal divine spark within each being and is identical with Brahman. It is neither created nor destroyed(Nasr, 2025). As stated in Bhagavad Gītā 2.20: "Ātman is never born and never dies." The ultimate goal of ātman's existence is to realize its unity with Brahman (mokṣa), which is achieved through knowledge (jñāna), meditation (dhyāna), and worldly renunciation (vairāgya) (Dhiman, 2019).

In Islam, rūḥ is a creation of Allah, as mentioned in QS al-Isrāʾ:85: "Say: The rūḥ is of the affair of my Lord." Islam rejects the notion that the rūḥ is a part of God's essence or a manifestation of Him. Ibn Taymiyyah, in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā, firmly states that equating the rūḥ with God constitutes a theological deviation (Krawietz & Tamer, 2013).

Therefore, ātman and rūḥ differ significantly in their ontological status. Ātman is considered a divine reality within the self, while rūḥ is a spiritual creation that will be held accountable and does not unite with God. As such, comparisons between the two can only be made at a symbolic level, not an ontological one.

Moral Law and Causality: Karma vs. Deeds and Destiny

Hinduism teaches the law of karma phala, in which every action inevitably yields specific consequences, either in this life or the next (Yase, 2020). This law operates impersonally and is inherent within the structure of the universe. The Upaniṣads state: "As one acts, so shall one reap the result."

In Islam, human actions are judged by Allah, and their rewards or punishments are determined by His justice and mercy. Surah al-Zalzalah (99):7–8 affirms that every deed, no matter how small, will be recompensed. Al-Shāṭibī, in al-Muwāfaqāt, emphasizes that human deeds are evaluated within the framework of maqāṣid (the objectives of sharia) and maqām (the sincerity of intention), not merely by their outward consequences.

While karma operates deterministically and without the involvement of a personal divine will, Islam highlights a balance between human effort (kasb) and divine will (qadar) (Keskin & Azhar, 2024). Therefore, although the two systems serve similar functional roles, they are based on different axiological structures.

Afterlife: Punarbhava vs. Day of Judgment

In Hinduism, Punarbhava refers to the cycle of reincarnation, which is determined by karma (Alfian & Hambali, 2023). A soul that has not attained mokṣa will continue to be reborn until all karmic debts are resolved. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.7 explains that one's next birth depends on actions performed in previous lives (Seriadi & Dewi, 2023).

Islam, on the other hand, rejects the concept of reincarnation and believes in life after death as a singular phase leading to the Day of Resurrection (Yaum al-qiyāmah) (Adeoye, 2024). Surah al-Baqarah [2:281] states: "And fear the Day when you will be returned to Allah." Sayyid Quṭb, in Fī Ẓilāl al-Qurʾān, explains that life in this world occurs only once, and the hisab (divine reckoning) represents the final moral judgment.

Therefore, the concept of spiritual time in Hinduism is cyclical, while in Islam it is linear and teleological. These are two distinct worldviews that cannot be reduced to a single meaning without compromising their fundamental principles.

Ultimate Goal: Mokṣa vs. Heaven

Mokṣa in Hinduism is the state of liberation from the cycle of rebirth and the union of the ātman (individual soul) with Brahman (the ultimate reality) (Titib, 2024). It is a non-dualistic experience where the individual identity dissolves. In the Bhagavad Gītā 2.72, mokṣa is described as a state of supreme consciousness that transcends both sorrow and pleasure (Ashton, 2013).

In Islam, Paradise (Jannah) is a place of both spiritual and physical delight, attained through faith and righteous deeds(Afifah, 2022). The Qur'an in Surah al-Baqarah (2:25) states: "Gardens beneath which rivers flow are prepared for them..." Paradise in Islam preserves human personal identity and does not dissolve it into divine reality (Tamam, 2017).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2003) explains that the highest spiritual experience in Islam is not union or dissolution, but visio Dei—the vision of God in His glory, without becoming Him (Sayem, 2020). Therefore, equating mokṣa with paradise is a soteriological error, as they reflect fundamentally different theological and metaphysical understandings of the ultimate goal of human existence.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the belief systems of Panca Śraddhā in Hinduism and the articles of faith (rukun iman) in Islam, while both serving as theological foundations for their respective adherents, are built upon profoundly different epistemological and ontological frameworks. The concept of Brahman in Hinduism—as an absolute, formless reality manifested in diverse forms—fundamentally differs from the Islamic concept of tawḥīd, which affirms the oneness of Allah as a transcendent, indivisible being who neither begets nor is begotten. Similarly, comparisons between ātman and rūḥ, karma and amal, punarbhava (rebirth) and the Day of Judgment, as well as mokṣa and paradise, reveal that while the terms may appear functionally parallel, they do not share equivalent substantive meanings. This study underscores that interfaith comparative approaches must be undertaken with a deep awareness of the

cosmological, soteriological, and hermeneutical contexts inherent in each tradition. Such awareness is essential to avoid theological simplifications that may lead to misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

The main contribution of this study lies in its application of a text-based comparative theological approach, which remains relatively rare in religious studies in Indonesia, particularly in the side-by-side examination of Hindu and Islamic teachings. By positioning both traditions on equal footing within an analytical framework and engaging with their sacred texts through a hermeneutic lens, this research offers a significant contribution to the development of a more academic, critical, and inclusive form of interfaith understanding. Furthermore, this study enriches the discourse of interreligious dialogue by highlighting the importance of deep engagement with doctrine, rather than relying solely on symbolic tolerance.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the researcher's engagement with primary Hindu texts is from an outsider's perspective. Although experts have validated the interpretations, they may not fully capture the internal nuances and interpretive depth of the Hindu community itself. Second, limited access to traditional commentarial sources (śāstra) in the original Sanskrit constrains the depth of analysis in certain sections. Third, the comparison was conducted within a normative theological framework, and thus did not address the sociological dimensions or religious practices of adherents in lived contexts. Therefore, further research is recommended to incorporate multidisciplinary approaches and promote collaborative efforts among religious leaders, thereby enriching interfaith dialogue and fostering a more comprehensive understanding across traditions.

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