

War for Science

Fighting dogmatism and ignorance through science.

Thursday, January 14, 2010

Why I am Not a Buddhist



Sorry, but I've officially left Buddhism.

I left Buddhism not very long ago - it was November 2009 when I started identifying myself as an atheist. Why did I leave, you ask? Isn't Buddhism nothing more than a philosophy of life? Isn't Buddhism atheistic/agnostic? I hoped it was so, but in reality, it isn't. **Buddhism is a religion in Malaysia**, and is full of superstition. To my Buddhists friends and all those who respect this religion, I apologize, but there certainly are reasons why I de-converted.

What Buddhism is in my society.

While Westerners generally think of Buddhism as philosophical and metaphorical, it is viewed as literally in some ways. Quite a number of Malaysia Buddhists (and possibly other Southeast Asian societies), the Buddha is viewed as god-like, hell and heaven are believed to be literally

true, the existences of ghosts are accepted without question and so on. Avoiding association with such beliefs is one of the reasons I left Buddhism. Also note that when I speak of Buddhism, I mean Mahayana Buddhism, which is the one practised the most in Malaysia.

Similarities Between Buddhism and Theistic Religions

The Pure Land of Bliss - Buddhist Version of Heaven

It is taught in Buddhism that life is suffering, and to escape it, one needs to attain nirvana, or enlightenment. I'm perfectly at ease with this view, but there is another Buddhism school that teaches differently - **Pure Land Buddhism**, which is a Mahayana sect. It teaches that Nirvana is increasingly hard to attain, and by chanting the [Amitābha](#) Sutra, and constantly devoting to the Buddha, one can get to the Pure Land of Bliss, which is a stepping stone to attaining Nirvana.

So what is there in this realm? Well firstly, suffering ceases to exist in the Pure Land, and there is only bliss. It is a realm rich and prosperous, comfortable and delightful, fertile and rich, and it is crowded with Bodhisattvas, Devas (deities) and humans. No evil beings like asuras, ghosts, hell-beings, and animals (gasp) exist. Expect crystal clear water, golden sands, overwhelming numbers of lotus flowers, trees of jade, warm lights, cotton-soft terrain, beautiful birds singing melodious notes (Wasn't animals banned? Paradox!), and the chanting of sutras stretching towards all corners of space. Sounds like a great place to go.

Wait a minute, doesn't that sound like praying to Jesus/Allah/Yahweh and getting salvation? And doesn't the Pure Land of Bliss sound eerily like Heaven as depicted in Christianity/Judaism/Islam? Take a look, is it not identical to the Jannah as depicted in Islam?

One day in paradise is considered equal to a thousand days on earth. Palaces are made from bricks of gold, silver, pearls, among other things. Traditions also note the presence of [horses](#) and [camels](#) of "dazzling whiteness", along with other creatures. Large trees are described, mountains made of [musk](#), between which rivers flow in valleys of [pearl](#) and [ruby](#). - Encyclopaedia of Islam

While many may protest that the Pure Land of Bliss is not meant to be a paradise, but rather a stop on the way to enlightenment, the principle is still there. It's exactly the tactic used by almost every religion to create mass appeal, in which great bliss is promised to the one who believes in a particular divine being/religion. In Abrahamic religions, it's the escape from hell to Heaven. For Pure Land Buddhism, it's escape from "suffering" in the real world to a perfect land of bliss. Even Buddhist teachings identify this belief as a faith.



The Pure Land of Bliss: Similar tactics are employed by other religions to gain followers.

Prayer Towards Deities

Go into almost any Buddhist temple here, and you will find altars and offerings to the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and other gods. People here kneel down in prayers to the Kuan Yin bodhisattva, the Laughing Buddha, the Four Guardian Kings, the Jade Emperor, and other supernatural deities, hoping that the deities will give them luck, prosperity, safety, etc. Yes, you hear me right. In Malaysia, Buddhism is predominantly polytheistic.

Of course, a lot of you may say: “No! Buddhism is atheistic, as it doesn’t accept the view of a god”. Yes, Buddhists don’t believe in a Creator-God. But Malaysian Buddhists believe the existence of the Buddha/Bodhisattvas/Devas as divine beings, and that they can interfere in our daily lives by blessing us luck. They are more like Hindu deities in this sense, and Buddhism can still be classified as polytheistic.

Viewing of Sexual Acts as Dirty

The Abrahamic religions are frequently criticised as being critical towards sex, but guess what - the Buddhist teachings in Malaysia does this as well. It is said that women are “dirty”, masturbation causes diseases and disorders, and homosexuals are considered as abnormal and in one book - viewed as the cause of AIDs. I realise that this isn’t true Buddhism, but here in Malaysia, it is preached as such.

Reincarnation - Where's the scientific evidence?

Buddhism teaches that all beings have an eternal soul, as opposed to a finite body. When we die, we are reincarnated into another body. The exact realms in which we will be born into is

determined by our karma. Despite the wishful belief of reincarnation, there is little (if any) scientific evidence for it, and I choose not to uphold this belief. I will explain the problems of the soul in my following posts in detail, but for now, let's just say that the brain is the core of consciousness, not the soul, and that we cannot survive materialistic death.

Karma - It's simply superstition.

Karma, or known as “报应 (bao ying)” in Chinese, is core to Buddhism. Karma, in its most basic form is simply cause-and-effect, in which no one can deny its existence. But for Malaysian Buddhists, it goes one step further.

Here, karma takes a supernatural meaning. It is all too familiar to hear: “You’re going to hell for lying”, “Curse people and you will be reborn with a crooked mouth”, “Look down upon people and you shall be reborn as a ghost”, “If you do bad deeds, accidents will fall upon you” etc. Karma in this context moves way beyond casual determinism. It's like an omniscient, omnipotent force, constantly monitoring what you do, and blessing you with prosperity or cursing you with accidents and deformations if you do “bad” things. I know that's not the best analogy, but the word “karma” is quite different from the deterministic cause-and-effect model.

Evolution - Not Compatible with the Six Realms of Existence

The Six Realms of Existence is one of the core beliefs of Buddhism. There are the realm of the Devas, which are blissful; Asuras, which are more blessed than humans but full of rage, anger, and jealousy towards the Devas; the realm of *Homo sapiens sapiens*; the realm of the Animalia kingdom; the realm of Hungry Ghosts, where they are always hungry and suffering, with a fire-like sensation burning in their throats; and Hell, where “bad souls” get punished for what seems like an eternity through fire, metal birds pecking, dismembering, metal snakes going through one eye and coming out of another, and in the case of the Uninterrupted Hell, it lasts for $3.39738624 \times 10^{18}$ years long. Alright, I'm getting off-topic.

A main problem I have is the distinction between humans and animals. Yes, we have evolved advanced thinking abilities in contrast to other members, so we are different from most animals in that way. But from when, I ask, are we to be considered human? *Homo sapiens*? *Homo habilis*? *Australopithecus*? *Ardipithecus*? What about Neanderthals, who co-evolved with *Cro-magnon*? The fact that *Homo sapiens* have only existed in the last few ten thousand years when life existed for billions of years makes the sudden distinction between the 2 realms even more illogical. And I'm not going into why bacteria, plants, and other living organisms were left out.

Conclusion

In this post, I summarized the main reasons why I left Buddhism. Well I agree with a lot of Buddhist teachings, these problems were too large for me to ignore, and I decided that being non-religious was the way to go. This list isn't exhaustive, and will be subject to update. If I had any misconceptions on Buddhism, please correct me. Thanks.

41 comments:

Anonymous January 15, 2010 at 7:40 AM

"Christianity ... has always been a religion seeking a metaphysic, in contrast to Buddhism which is a metaphysic generating a religion."

<http://seanrobbsville.blogspot.com/2009/11/buddhism-and-process-philosophy.html>

[Reply](#)



Darren Wong January 15, 2010 at 3:18 PM

If you were talking about evolution, I do know that Buddhism accepts evolution. I just had problems with separation of Humans and other living things into different realms, when the line is blur.

Also, do note that I'm referring to Buddhism in Malaysia, which is very superstitious and religious compared to Western or Zen Buddhism.

PS: Please don't comment anonymously

[Reply](#)



Leah Elliott Hauge January 16, 2010 at 8:04 AM

Great post, Darren. I like your conclusion, which is similar to my conclusion about the religions I'm familiar with: Keep the good teachings, but don't base your life on the superstitious parts.

[Reply](#)



Darren Wong January 16, 2010 at 9:15 AM

Yes, Leah. Were Buddhism purely a philosophy instead of a religion, I'll have no problem upholding it at all.

[Reply](#)



Jacqueline February 9, 2010 at 10:02 PM

It's a little unfair to characterise all Buddhism as being of the Malaysian, Mahayana and 'superstitious' sort. Afterall, Pure Land Buddhism and praying to bodhisattvas are later historical developments, not present in the Buddhism taught by Buddha Shakyamuni, and do not represent the teachings of Siddhartha Gotama.

You shouldn't get discouraged by the way you see some Malaysians practising 'Buddhism'. Instead, you should look to what Buddha actually taught, the 'real' Buddhism. Buddha **explicitly** taught us not to pray to deities, but to look within ourselves for our own liberation. The goal of Buddha's Buddhism was not rebirth in a Pure Land, but *dukkha nirodha*, the cessation of suffering. He also taught us to question everything, and not just believe in heaven, hell and reincarnation because he said so! In this way, it could be said that early Buddhism as was more psychological and philosophical than religious.

If you read the Kalamma Sutta, you will realise that Buddhism really does encourage a strictly empirical approach to discerning the truth, similar to modern scientific method, and discourages blind faith and dogma.

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/soma/wheel008.html>
(The text of the Kalama Sutta)

At any rate, one does not need to believe in reincarnation or karma to gain benefit from living a virtuous life. If one keeps the Buddhist precepts, lives morally and is full of love for others, that person's heart will naturally become light and free from worries, regardless of whether one believes in such things as the existence of a soul. (=

The invitation of Buddha is always 'ehipassiko'. In Pali, 'ehipassiko' means 'come and see for yourself'. That's what Buddhism's about: seeing for yourself! Try to discipline your heart and see if you suffer less.

If you meditate well, and you see with your own eyes the realms of ghosts and of hell, then you will have no reason to doubt. If you haven't seen those things, doubt is normal and prudent!

Hmm...on another note...I don't think there's any conflict between evolution and the Mahayana Six Realms at all, though. I always just thought the divisions between the realms were arbitrary and for convenience, not anything of any great cosmic significance, like one may label colours 'red', 'green' 'blue' etc, even though there is not real division. It's more of a continuum than a discrete set of realms, the monks tell me. Like everything in this world, the realms too, are subject to change...and wouldn't have always included humans.

Plants and bacteria excluded because they are non-sentient, they do not have consciousness.

Perhaps you find Theravada Buddhism more palatable than Mahayana Buddhism, as it is closer to early Buddhism...

Anyway, I wholeheartedly commend your willingness to engage in intellectual inquiry!

with metta,
Jacqueline

[Reply](#)



Darren Wong  February 10, 2010 at 6:19 PM

Jacqueline, I'm not not stereotyping Buddhism as "Malaysian Buddhism", which I view as corrupted from its original teachings. However, Buddhism here carries too much superstitious baggage, and thus I choose to not identify myself as one.

However, I accept Buddhism as a philosophy, as its teachings are well thought out, and simply great as a guideline to live life. I was stating I'm not a Buddhist in the religious way.

[Reply](#)



Robyn March 1, 2010 at 11:43 PM

I think you have said a lot of insightful things. I can't agree more about the superstitious elements of some religious lifestyles. However I would be careful when trying to make sense of "realms" by

thinking in a linear (chronological) way.. I understood the realms to be beyond space and time- considering that, I wouldn't just debunk/throw out teachings that mention "realms" of any sort due to evolution. Also, while we have come a long way in an evolutionary sense, we still must admit we cannot perceive or understand ALL that exists and we may still have a far way to go down the evolutionary line- that being said, who's to ever say something cannot be? I simply think man does not yet know enough to ever be able to rightfully say that they are 100% certain that there is not sort of experience after death. Let's swallow our prides for a second and admit that we are still debating the mind brain problem.. i subscribe to no single faith but i respect them all as well for the truths they have buried within.

[Reply](#)



Bhagya March 15, 2010 at 4:03 PM

Firstly I want you to know, that I was born into Theravada Buddhism, and I am still learning about it.

Many of the things I wanted to say were said by Jacqueline and her post contained more knowledge of Buddhism that I even know about.

You constantly write that you are referring to the Mahayana Buddhism, but so many of your examples has truly nothing to do with Buddhism.

One example is 'Viewing Sexual Acts as Dirty'. What I have been taught is that it is an animal instinct that is necessary because it ensures our species does not die out.

Lord Buddha has taught us to reduce our desires as much as possible. Whether it is eating your favorite food, listening to your favorite music. The less attachments, the more towards the goal of being enlightened. He has also preached specifically to the lay man to lead a virtuous Buddhist, the five precepts is one example that is aimed at us.

Religion or Philosophy, whatever it is. Buddhism is what Lord Buddha preached. So in one sense I think you are more Buddhist than those people who believe false superstitious stories.

Wondering whether you have looked into Theravada Buddhism.

I do not mind what religion a person is. Be it an Atheist, Muslim or Wiccan... But I do not agree with false stories and cultural superstitions as being passed as Buddhism.

Thanks for reading

[Reply](#)



Darren Wong  March 18, 2010 at 11:26 PM

Robyn: I was only referring to the animal & human realms. I think the line is quite blur, since we are all too closely related too animals (genetically, evolutionarily, and behaviorally). As for the mind-brain problem, you may want to take a look at my posts on the problems of the soul - [Arguments from Neuroscience](#) & [Arguments from Physics](#)

Bhagya: Yes, I agree that a lot of my points weren't related to Buddhism at all. Yet, most Buddhists in Malaysia view Buddhism wrongly to the point of being corrupted and superstitious, and I was referring to the majority view in Malaysia.

[Reply](#)



Henrique March 30, 2010 at 5:58 AM

I learned lot of things with Buddhism, but I left it too, because for me, the way Buddha had chosen is not the way we have to follow. It worked for him.

But, you believe in what you want to, you don't need to change your view only because some people see it in a different way, just think what you want of it and be happy.

Buddhism is not only Malaysian and you can't do an affirmation saying that all Malaysians Buddhist have this vision, because I think they don't. We all have different visions, different interpretations, and you can still follow the principles you've learned, in your way.

Sorry if a committed some mistakes writing, I'm from Brazil, and here, in a different culture, we have different visions too. Buddhism is very flexible.

But, continuing: Here, in Brazil, in Curitiba, the city I live, there are two Buddhist temples with different schools, so, two different visions. You don't need to go too far to experience different opinions in a same Religion or Philosophy (if you prefer to use this term for Buddhism).

How many Christian churches can you number? Nobody will ever know all of them.

[Reply](#)



fedewein July 19, 2010 at 9:54 PM

I'm sorry that u didn't get the idea...
You become buddhist when u understand there is no Buddhism.
Maybe in another life... maybe not...

[Reply](#)



zendirtzendust.com November 9, 2010 at 9:34 AM

Wonderful post. It seems that while I agree with much of what you state, I am comfortable with labeling myself sa a Buddhist since there is very little cultural baggage with the practice in the States (many dharma or zen centers tend to be more skeptically minded).

But were I in your shoes, I would sure think twice before calling myself a Buddhist after seeing such a discrepancy between what I believed and what the majority of Buddhists there believed.

I think if you internalized the core teachings and are comfortable with that while displaying some amount of compassion tempered with wisdom then you are on the right path...

Whatever you wish to call that path is entirely up to you.

Cheers,

John

[Reply](#)

Duff November 9, 2010 at 9:37 AM



Excellent post, Darren. I've found that even in Western Buddhism, which tends to have much more agnostic/atheistic bent, there are many who haven't adequately thought about the things you rightly criticize here. In addition, Western Buddhists tend to fetishize Eastern Buddhism as pure and holy and beyond reproach.

In fact, many "recovering Christians" turn to Eastern religions like Buddhism here in the West as an attempt to find a religious tradition free from dogma or corruption.

The truth is that all religions as well as all anti-religious groups are made up of humans, and thus subject to predictable dogmas and corruptions.

[Reply](#)



apel November 9, 2010 at 10:18 AM

Totally understand where you're coming from. I also enjoyed reading ZenDirtZenDust's and Duff's comments.

Religion doesn't exist in a vacuum. There is a social, cultural, political and intellectual context.

In many countries the dominating religion has been used (and abused) for political ends, eg to deny women a voice in government. It is not surprising that Buddhism has been used like that in some Asian countries, just as the various flavors of Christianity were used for political ends in Europe.

Remaining in denial about the connotations of identifying as a believer of a specific religion is not skillful, in my opinion. It seems more honest to openly jettison the baggage and keep only the practices that make sense without it. I admire your integrity.

[Reply](#)



c4 November 9, 2010 at 3:41 PM

Darren,

the Buddhism you described is a mythic form of religion. i agree with you. it's not that kind of Buddhism which attracted me to Buddhism. but i hope you don't throw the baby with the bathwater. afterall, you don't have to follow Buddhism to be a true Buddhist. check out this article on "What Makes You a Buddhist" ~ <http://www.khyentsefoundation.org/pdf/WMYNAB-shambhala.pdf>

also, i would caution you in taking the materialist view hook-line-and-sinker when it comes to consciousness. checkout this interview with Pim Van Lommel, author of the book "Consciousness Beyond Life - The Science of the Near Death Experience" <http://j.mp/cW4uQR>

take care and be well,
~C

[Reply](#)



Sam January 10, 2011 at 3:22 PM

I agree with Darren on some points while there are some for which I think the jury is still out,

example reincarnation - this is very debatable and very much depends on point of view.

However, unlike Darren, I have not disavowed my beliefs in the teachings, but I have consciously left the mainstream Buddhism - i.e. attending temple ceremonies, listening to some BIG time hyped up monk talk about the dharma. I try to apply the teachings in my daily life as thats what Buddhism is about - practice - and not merely about chanting, prayers and meditation.

Then why did I leave the mainstream? Because it pissed me off big time! I can't understand why the monks these days live in such luxury and the temples are always seeking funds for this and that? But where is the service? Why make it so difficult for the common folks to meet with the monks, especially the "senior" monk? These people have brought shame to their teacher, Buddha. Even the Buddha bowed and said thank you to the villager who gave him food.

Then again these phenomenon of money, money and more money is not restricted to Buddhists, it is happening BIG time in Christianity as well! But thats another story, suffice to say that the pastor in your church could probably be sending his kids to a private school while your kids are struggling in a government school.

[Reply](#)



Anonymous January 24, 2011 at 8:25 AM

Well-written post, Darren.

Your skepticism is commendable. Supposedly even the Buddha said, "Believe nothing, no matter where you read it or who has said it, not even if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense." or something along those lines, considering the translation, etc.

I have a fondness for Buddhist philosophy, and whenever I come across an idea or practice in Buddhism of which I am uncertain, or which seems too theistic to me, I remind myself of this saying.

While Theravada Buddhism may not be perfect either, I prefer their emphasis on meditation over prayer to various buddhas and bodhisattvas, as in Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism. The Buddha taught self-reliance in spiritual matters; no other body can help you.

Also, I have been meaning to read a book entitled "Confessions of a Buddhist Atheist." It seems to discuss much of what you wrote here. I wonder if you have heard of it.

[Reply](#)



toan February 9, 2011 at 2:59 AM

To all the people may concern about this matter: I just have one thing to say and it is a really an advise from my bottom heart: Don't jump into conclusion before you see the whole picture. Any Buddha appear in this life is to teach you the way you could ease your soul and not take wrong way in this instability life. To Darren Wong: You can not be a buddist but you can always use Buddha teachings like a guide in your life. Don't consider him like a god-like but a teacher, a father of you. Hope you will have a beautiful life.

P/S: My english is not very well, so excuse me if i had made some mistake in this writing.

[Reply](#)



toan February 9, 2011 at 3:00 AM

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P/S: My english is not very well, so excuse me if i had made some mistake in this writing.

[Reply](#)



toan February 9, 2011 at 3:00 AM

This comment has been removed by the author.

[Reply](#)



KO & ChitLay March 13, 2011 at 10:28 PM

Hi Darren,

I suggest you should study Buddhism to the main-core. I agree with you some Buddhist follower are superstition. It is very on what is the cultural background (Chinese, Thai, Burmese, European ..)Chinese root are more superstition because we pay respect to our ancestors.

I am Chinese, Born in Roman Catholic family, because My grand parents are Catholic. When they come from China they met some Catholic missionary. I am Catholic till age of 15. I study Bibles and Koran. Because I am interested in religions views.

I can't accept Creator or GOD. Some of my relatives are still Catholic. My younger aunt is a Catholic nun. Our family no problem with different religion and we are OK with each other.

In fact Buddhism is universal. We do not have religion label and we never go against who never believe in Buddhism. Everyone can go to haven .. Just be good.

Regardless of your religion you can be a good person. All Buddhist will not go to haven even-though they are Buddhist. Unlike other religions someone can go to haven if she/he believe in this religion.

I suggest you should study Theravada Buddhism and also practice/study Vipassana Meditation if you can manage some of your time. <http://www.dhamma.org/>

If you can manage more of your time, you could study "Abhidhamma". In Buddha Abhidhamma you can find out what Buddha though about since >2500 years ago.

Below is my favorite quote ..

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

~~ Buddha ~~

I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own -- a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. Neither can I believe that the individual sur..vives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear or ridiculous egotisms.

-- Albert Einstein, obituary in New York Times, 19 April 1955

[Reply](#)



Adam March 26, 2011 at 1:25 PM

I am intrigued with your post i hope that you don't mind if I add my thoughts regarding why I believe in reincarnation.

Although not studied in a lab setting, there is much evidence of reincarnation where many people have remembered and correctly identified facts from what they claimed to be their past lives, look on youtube, there is a great dateline story about a boy who remembered a past life, and many others from legitimate sources (i don't claim these are proof, but for me they are some evidence). Also there is no scientific evidence that there is no future life, also there is no scientific evidence that memories are stored anywhere in our bodies or brains, the physical mater appears yet is empty of true existence. Our memory is our thinking, and every moment our thinking reincarnates, the previous moment is the cause for this moment, the current moment is the cause for the next moment, this moment to moment reincarnation doesn't stop when the connection between and our thinking and body is over.

[Reply](#)



Adam March 26, 2011 at 1:49 PM

Also Malaysia is mostly Theravada, a school of Sravakayana Buddhism, it is not Mahayana. Mahayana is a different school of teaching, very different systems.

Sravakayana (or known as Hynayana to Mahayana Buddhists) has the goal of individual liberation, not attaining a heaven that is public but reaching a peace of mind that is entirely based on ones own perception.

Mahayana differs in that the intention is to help all beings attain a liberation though realization and reaching the same peace of mind but concentrating on all beings other than oneself. It is characterized by great compassion wanting all beings to be free from suffering, there is not a single being that is excluded from this compassion.

I think you might view Sravakayana as superstitious because in that tradition you are usually taught conduct first with very little view (not the whole reason, but a tinny part of it).

I respect your view that Buddhism is not right for you. As a Buddhist practitioner I wholly believe that being a loving and compassionate person is immeasurably more important than praying to a statue or tanka, the objects are symbols that are intended to be indicative of increasing someones love and compassion to all beings by means of symbols and metaphors that act as handles for remembering reasons.

If someone prays to a statue or a different emanation of Buddha every day but is not increasing there love and decreasing anger then they are wasting there time. It doesn't matter what way you walk up the mountain, as long as you are going up, Buddhism is right for some people, but there are countless ways that are at least as successful as Mahayana or Shrivakayana for being happy and helping others be happy.

[Reply](#)



rhdartayet August 6, 2011 at 1:33 AM

jeje buddhism is great dude

[Reply](#)



ColomboCub October 3, 2011 at 7:03 AM

Perhaps you need to learn the purest form of Buddhism ("Teravada") which is taught in Sri Lanka. One of the greatest teaching of Buddha is 'you are your own savior'. It gives us so much courage and self esteem to stand up for ourselves.

[Reply](#)



Soul Seeker October 20, 2011 at 4:16 AM

What's the point of living in a world where all that you experience is what can be measured is this life? there is more to life that yes science has explanations for many things but that witch manifests in the heart, mind, and soul is more real than any science
karma is real it is an unseen justice same as the the laws of physics it is not seen yet it is there
be informed not all forms of Buddhism are like the one you have described example Theravada Buddhism differs quite a lot from Malaysia's Buddhism
all science and religion came from the same roots taken back thousands of years all science was but a philosophy witch has split the measurable (science) from the heart measurable yet not measurable,true and infinite
Please reconsider Buddhism
yours truly
Anonymous Buddhist

[Reply](#)



ling lavie December 5, 2011 at 12:08 PM

Darren Wong has burnt tofu for breakfast, lunch and dinner and he thinks tofu is very bad-tasted. And now, he official leaves tofu.

Keep going, try to have so Johnny Walker with it?

Cheers,

Cuong

[Reply](#)



蓮華 December 25, 2011 at 11:08 AM

This comment has been removed by the author.

[Reply](#)



蓮華 December 25, 2011 at 11:11 AM

That's a good step. But that's not Buddhism. Buddha was just a human, like everyone else. I just encourage you to seek for the Lotus Sutra teachings. True Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin.

[Reply](#)



Oskar January 12, 2012 at 6:38 PM

Well that's a shocker, buddhism a religion? :O I did not know that... How could you think it's "only" a philosophy? It's pretty obvious that buddhism is a religion... but good for you that you have chose a path you find suitable :)

[Reply](#)



Preston January 17, 2012 at 8:21 AM

I'm afraid, as a Buddhist, I do not agree with you on the idea that Buddhism is mere 'superstition'. If you took your time on studying your ex-religion a little more, you'd realize that reincarnation is far more proven then universalism or whatever, and that Siddhartha Gautama said he visualized things that weren't found by science until the 20th century. If Buddhism is not your cup of tea, then I do suggest that you study other religions before you just turn to atheism(a complete and utter disbelief in spirituality). Relative religions to Buddhism include Daoism, Hinduism, Shintoism, and Sikkhism.

[Reply](#)



Preston January 17, 2012 at 8:21 AM

This comment has been removed by the author.

[Reply](#)



YogiWade January 20, 2012 at 7:31 AM

If you really understood Buddhism, you would never abandon it. I'm sorry that you were raised in a society where the dharma is not practiced purely. You shouldn't let that influence you.

[Reply](#)



Thida January 28, 2012 at 2:36 PM

@YogiWade: The Dharma has never been practiced purely ever since the Buddha passed away, schisms occurred and the modern era began. I don't believe any person living today can claim that they practice the "true" dharma.

[Reply](#)



Coyote September 14, 2012 at 3:34 PM

Actually, Buddhism doesn't teach the existence of an eternal soul.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatta>
Check it out.

I recommend you check this out: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1AHI-XrJ9Y>

[Reply](#)



Unknown October 14, 2012 at 2:58 AM

With all due respect, it seems as though you have a problem with Malaysia, and the Malaysian

cultural aspects that influence Buddhism there. Many of your complaints don't regard anything "Buddhist", or anything the Buddha ever said or did.

[Reply](#)



Fireman January 16, 2013 at 1:09 PM

So what's your view on Theravada Buddhism? It's much less religion like as I'm sure you know, focusing more inward for peace then outward, the way Buddha intended.

[Reply](#)



richard kaza May 20, 2015 at 12:59 PM

my suggestion
more meditation
less thinking and talking

[Reply](#)



Wryly May 21, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Same in Thailand, Buddhism is more like orthodox Catholicism or Muslim fanaticism than a philosophy of life.

Better to learn from the original words of the enlightened ones than the twisted 'religions' which have evolved therefrom.

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Max Lim July 19, 2015 at 7:52 PM

I agreed some points with you, brother Darren. I was in your Buddhism before, many superstitious elements in so call 'Malaysian Buddhism'. I don't like superstitious, doctrinairism and dogmatism in my life. But one attitude that I different from you is I will keep research and study more from multi-aspect, many sided about Buddhism and other religions, and you know what, yes, same like you, finally i left 'Mahayana Buddhism', but i return to the original Buddhism, the Theravadā Buddhism. I found that Theravadā Buddhism is beyond Scientism and philosophy, is more than realism.

I saw some Sanskrit words like nirvana, karma, sutra, Bodhisattva in your blog. Sorry to tell you that the you knowledge about the Buddhism still remain in the later period of Buddhism that might deviate a lot from the early (original) Buddhism. You can see the vestige of Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, yogism, folk religion etc are mixed into the later Buddhism that recorded in Sankrit Tipitaka. What you know about Buddhism is not the core of the original teaching by the Buddha.

By the way, we don't need to be a Buddhist to realize the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. What ever you labeled yourself as atheist, philosopher, polytheist, Christian, what so ever, anyone can experience the Dhamma by his or her own direct knowledge. What is the Dhamma? The law of universel, like Kamma, rebirth, cause-and-effect etc, just like everyone on earth can't escape from the Newtons law and the force of gravity. No body on Earth can escape from the law of Kamma, rebirth, cause and effect, no matter he or she belief or not. And the Dhamma can be experiences in this very life and in this present moment, we don't need to wait until we die.

The real Buddhism is not only belief, is beyond belief, just like we never need to believe that the Sun and moon are above the sky, because we can see by our own eyes. Buddha teaches us the method through meditation to realize what he taught, not by belief only.

The person who sees the Dhamma, see me, the Buddha said. I sincerely invite you, brother Darren, come and see the Dhamma, by research and feel the difference of Theravādā Buddhism. For your own welfare and benefit, it is always good and fair enough to make the comparison and study first before you jump into the final conclusion and decision. Just like how you apply your attitude in choosing your university, college, job, company, wife etc, why not apply the same way in the search in your inner Truth and the search for the answer of 'What is the Ultimate Goal of our Life'?

Whatever the decision you make for your life, I always wish you Good luck, Brother Darren.

[Reply](#)



tushar rangari November 5, 2015 at 9:29 PM

I recommend you to read "Buddha And His Dhamma"- By Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. If you wish, I can give you pdf version of that book. There you will find the real, pure teaching of Buddha.

Tushar Rangari (From India)

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About Me



 **Darren Wong**

Penang, Malaysia

I'm an atheist and a skeptic. I'm being very alarmed by the rise of superstition, pseudoscience, and religious fundamentalism, for only science and reason can lead to a better world.

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