4 2 2012

Religion, Buddhism

4/2/2012 1 Early Buddhist Thought Phil 215 Tom Kasulis April 2, 2012 Thought Experiment #2: Who/What am I? " To find oneself. " What does that mean? Imagine a friend, Mary, says that she had a rough time this year in college and has decided to take off next year travelling across country so she can " find herself. " What is she looking for? How do you find yourself? What is the " self" you find and who finds it? How do you know when you've found it? If you believe you have eventually found yourself, how do you know you are right in that belief? What does it mean to " have" a self? Is it the same " self" as in the following common expressions? In choosing a career, you have to beginning by knowing yourself. " To thine own self be true. " " Self-defense" is both an instinct and a legal right. 2 3 Indian social climate 5th c. B. C. E. ï�® Brahmins serve as top of caste system ï�®Perform rituals for sake of upholding cosmic dharma ï�®Brahmins become to of fixed caste system ï�®Status was birthright, not achieved ï�® Response ï�®Groups of ascetics leave householder lifestyle ï�®Become " forest dwellers" engaged in spiritual disciplines aiming for liberation (moksha) 4 moksha Literally, " liberation" A general term in Indian philosophy signifying the ultimate goal of release from the cycle of birth-death-rebirth. In Buddhism, often used as an equivalent for " nirvÄ�na. " 5 Indian intellectual context 5th c. B. C. E. ï�® Praxis involving turning inward, reaching state of sensory quiet or even cessation ï�® Intellectual arguments about ground of experience–true self (Ä�tman) ï�® Rise of idea that world known through senses is only illusory appearance (mÄ�yÄ�) 6 mÄ�yÄ� Literally " illusion" The name for way reality appears as contrasted with the way it really is. In Upanishads contrasted with brahman (Not very commonly used

by early Buddhist texts.) 7 Indian intellectual context 5th c. B. C. E. ï�® Praxis involving turning inward, reaching state of sensory quiet or even cessation ï�® Intellectual arguments about ground of experience–true self (Ä�tman) 1 6 mÄ�yÄ� Literally " illusion" The name for way reality appears as contrasted with the way it really is. In Upanishads contrasted with brahman (Not very commonly used by early Buddhist texts.) 4/2/2012 7 Indian intellectual context 5th c. B. C. E. ï�® Praxis involving turning inward, reaching state of sensory quiet or even cessation ï�® Intellectual arguments about ground of experience–true self (Ä�tman) ï�® Rise of idea that world known through senses is only illusory appearance (mÄ�yÄ�) ï�® True reality is oneness of Brahman ï�®Brahman = Ä€tman The Buddha Siddhartha Gautama (5th c. BCE) Born in northeast India (in today's Nepal) Metapractical goal: to find a " middle way" Theory: Neither materialism nor idealism No need for metaphysical theorizing 8 9 Materialism - Theory that reality is nothing other than matter. Everything that seems to be immaterial (such as ideas) are really, upon analysis, shown to be material. Idealism - Theory that reality is nothing more than experience. " Things" are, upon analysis, shown to be really our " ideas" of things. - - Here " idealism" means idea+ism, not the moral theory of ideals +ism, also called " idealism" The Buddha Siddhartha Gautama (5th c. BCE) Born in northeast India (in today's Nepal) Became an ascetic, a forest dweller Metapractical goal: to find a " middle way" Theory: Neither materialism nor idealism No need for metaphysical theorizing Praxis: Neither hedonism nor severe austerities Control emotions: ignorance, hatred, lust Don't color engagement w/ reality as it is 10 11 12 The Buddha (cont.) Problem = being

out of touch with reality Emphasis on problem as delusion instead of illusion Reality does not hide or disguise itself in illusions (in maya) But we project onto reality what is not there 2 12 The Buddha (cont.) Problem = being out of touch with reality 4/2/2012 Emphasis on problem as delusion instead of illusion Reality does not hide or disguise itself in illusions (in maya) But we project onto reality what is not there 13 The Buddha (cont.) Problem = being out of touch with reality Emphasis on problem as delusion instead of illusion Reality does not hide or disguise itself in illusions (mÄ�yÄ�) But we project onto reality what is not there Delusion is cause of ignorance, preventing liberation Emphasized seeing reality as it is (tathatÄ�) No need to transcend the way the world shows itself 14 tathatÄ� - Literally " suchness" or " thusness" or " asness" - (Buddhist term) The name for the reality of things as they are w/o our projecting false ideas (delusions) on them OR Reality of things as they are w/o any conceptualization at all placed on them. 15 Myth of the Buddha's Life SiddhÄ�rtha Gautama (ÅšÄ�kyamuni) Birth -- prophesy of being great leader spiritual or political Adolescence — protected from outside world 4 sightings: aging, disease, death, and meditative tranquility Period of asceticism Middle way between asceticism and hedonism NirvÄ�á¹‡a " extinction" of anguish End of cycle of being born, dying, being reborn 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 NirvÄ�á¹‡a Literally " extinction. " The ultimate goal of Buddhism: the extinction of anguish and unsatisfactoriness (duá¸¥kha) bringing about release from the cycle of birth-death-birth. 23 Dukkha (Skrt: Duá¸¥kha) 3 " extinction" of anguish End of cycle of being born, dying, being reborn 22 4/2/2012 NirvÄ�á¹‡a Literally " extinction. " The ultimate goal of Buddhism: the extinction of anguish and

unsatisfactoriness (duá¸¥kha) bringing about release from the cycle of birth-death-birth. 23 Dukkha (Skrt: Duá¸¥kha) Literally, " unsatisfactoriness" (from a word meaning " doesn't fit"). The anguish of ordinary life created by our desire for things to be what they are not, specifically, our desire for permanence in a world of change. 24 After enlightenment ï�® Buddha begins to teach others the dharma ï�® 25 Dharma (Pali: dhamma) in Buddhism - General meaning in Indian philosophy - Doing things correctly (rituals, morals) in relation to cosmic order - Came to have 4 interrelated meanings 1. Duty 2. True teachings 3. Phenomena (things-as-experienced) 4. Cosmic order - For Buddhism 1-3 stressed - 1. Acting as a person truly should - 2. True teachings of the Buddha - 3. Things appearing as they truly are w/o illusion (tathatÄ�) - 26 Teachings: Four Noble Truths ï�® 1. Symptom: Duhkha (>" doesn't fit") ï�® 2. Etiology: Cause of duá¸¥kha= trishna (" thirst") ï�®we desire things to be other than how they must be and how we know them to be 27 " Thirst" (trishna) in Buddhism The desire for permanence; the attachment to things we like (wishing them to remain forever) and the aversion from things we dislike (wishing they would never arise) 28 Four Noble Truths ï�® 1. Symptom: Duhkha (>" doesn't fit") ï�® 2. Etiology: Cause of duhkha= trishna (" thirst") ï�®we desire things to be other than how they must be and how we know them to be ï�® 3. Prognosis: eliminate causeÃ eliminate symptom ï�® 4. Therapy: Noble Eightfold Path ï�®Correct (a) knowledge; (b) aspiration; (c) speech (d) behavior (e) livelihood (f) 4 28 Four Noble Truths ï�® 1. Symptom: Duhkha (>" doesn't fit") ï�® 2. Etiology: Cause of duhkha= trishna (" thirst") ï�®we desire things to be other than how they must be and how we know

them to be ï�® 3. Prognosis: eliminate causeÃ eliminate symptom ï�® 4. Therapy: Noble Eightfold Path ï�®Correct (a) knowledge; (b) aspiration; (c) speech (d) behavior (e) livelihood (f) effort (g) mindfulness (h) meditation 4/2/2012 29 Three Marks of Buddhism Buddha's " Three Insights" ï�® 1. Impermanence ï�® Reality as processes, not things ï�® 2. Duhkha ï�® 3. AnÄ�tman (anÄ�tta) = " no" + " atman" no eternal, unchanging soul contrast with Hinduism's atman ï�® Three Marks of Buddhism Buddha's " Three Insights" ï�® 1. Impermanence ï�® Reality as processes, not things ï�® Idea of conditioned co-production (dependent origination ï�® 2. Duhkha ï�® 3. AnÄ�tman (anÄ�tta) = " no" + " atman" no eternal, unchanging soul contrast with Hinduism's atman ï�® 30 31 AnÄ�tman Literally, " no Ä�tman" or " no I. " The Buddhist teaching that we (like all other things) are interdependent processes and there is no permanent thing behind those processes. There is no independent, substantial I, unchanging ego, or soul. More generally, all phenomena are w/o substantiality because all is impermanent and in flux w/ no unchanging " thing" behind the change 32 Reality as processes, not substances ï�® Core teaching ï�®" dependent origination" or " conditioned co-production" Dependent Origination or Conditioned Co-production - Blend of ideas of impermanence and nonsubstantiality (anÄ�tman) - No thing exists w/o dependence on something else - No thing ceases to exist w/o dependence on something else - Reality is interlinked set of interdependent processes - - [Sanksrit: pratÄ« tya samutpada " conditioned coproduction"] Buddhist understanding of self ï�® If there is no soul or Ä�tman and only processes, what processes constitute the " self" as it really is? ï�® The issue is not what I am, but

rather, how I am; if I am my experiences, what 33 34 5 - - - - - 34 No thing exists w/o dependence on something else No thing ceases to exist w/o dependence on something else Reality is interlinked set of interdependent processes [Sanksrit: pratÄ« tya samutpada " conditioned coproduction"] 4/2/2012 Buddhist understanding of self ï�® If there is no soul or Ä�tman and only processes, what processes constitute the " self" as it really is? ï�® The issue is not what I am, but rather, how I am; if I am my experiences, what constitutes experience? ï�® Five skandhas (" heaps", i. e. constituents) ï�® ï�® 35 Khandhas (S: Skandhas) Literally, " heaps" or " aggregates" The set of five interdependent processes that constitute the self (with nothing else behind these processes). 36 Buddhist understanding of self ï�® If there is no soul or Ä�tman and only processes, what processes constitute the " self" as it really is ï�® Five skandhas (" heaps", i. e. constituents) ï�®Matter/form, body ï�®sensation, ï�®perception, ï�®saá¹fskÄ�ra, ï�®consciousness ï�® 37 Saá¹fskÄ�ra The habitual mental formations through which we filter raw data into meaningful units. 38 Buddhist understanding of self ï�® If there is no soul or Ä�tman and only processes, what processes constitute the " self" as it really is ï�® Five skandhas (" heaps", i. e. constituents) ï�®Matter/form (the body) ï�®Sensation (raw sensory data) ï�®Perception (Data as meaningful units) ï�®saá¹fskÄ�ra, ï�®consciousness ï�® Buddhist understanding of self ï�® Five skandhas (" heaps") ï�®Matter/form, sensation, perception, saá¹fskÄ�ra, consciousness ï�® ï�® Nothing behind skandhas; nothing permanent ï�®Example of chariot ï�® 39 6 4/2/2012 39 Buddhist understanding of self ï�® Five skandhas (" heaps") ï�®Matter/form,

sensation, perception, saá¹fskÄ�ra, consciousness ï�® ï�® Nothing behind skandhas; nothing permanent ï�®Example of chariot ï�® ï�® " Self" is a name for the confluence of processes ï�®Example of river ï�® ï�® 40 Ä€tman & AnÄ�tman: Comparative views of self 41 Critiques of Upanishads Ä�tman theory ï�® Argument against claim that logic requires an experiencer who is not experienced ï�® Argument against metapractical claim that deep trance with cessation of all sensory input (or dreamless sleep analogy) proves oneness of Brahman (Ä€tman) ï�® Summation Buddha rejected Upanishadic ideas of: mÄ�yÄ�, Ä€tman, Brahman â–¼ â–¼ â–¼ tathatÄ� â–¼ â–¼ anÄ�tman â–¼ dependent origination 42 7