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The 'Epiontic' Dependently Originating Process of Cyclic Existence According to Early Buddhist Metaphysics

Graham P. Smetham

Abstract

Some modern Western interpreters of Buddhist teachings and philosophy claim that the original teachings of the Pali Canon were staunchly anti-metaphysical. In this article I examine the early Buddhist worldview and demonstrate that this assertion is deeply mistaken. Whilst the early teachings of the Buddha clearly rejected dogmatic metaphysical positions which the Buddha characterised as being 'extreme', he also implicitly, yet clearly, taught a subtle metaphysical view of the process of reality which is consistent with the modern quantum 'epiontic' (epistemological perception creates ontology) perspective of 'quantum Darwinism.' Central to this viewpoint is 1) a non-materialism which indicates that the ultimate process of reality is of the nature of mind; 2) the assertion that the ultimate nature of reality lies between the extremes of 'existence' and 'non-existence', 'eternalism' and 'nihilism'; 3) the assertion that the epiontic mechanism operates as 'kamma', or 'karma', a central mechanism for the functioning of conditioned samsaric (cycle of dissatisfactory lives) reality. On the basis of these fundamental insights the doctrines of 'rebirth' and 'dependent origination' are shown to be crucial metaphysical components of the overall early Buddhist worldview as taught by the Buddha. These doctrines are also shown to be consistent with modern quantum theory. On the basis of this investigation recent claims that the 3-lifetimes model of dependent origination is mistaken are shown to be desperately misleading.

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The article 'The 'Epiontic'. Dependently Originating Process of Cyclic Existence According to Early Buddhist. Metaphysics' in particular contains insights concerning aspects of the early Buddhist. worldview of the Pali Canon in relation to the modern quantum 'epiontic' paradigm (the. insight that 'epistemological' acts of perception, operating through the quantum level, 'creates' ontology) which have not been drawn previously. In this article I demonstrate, for. example, that the sophisticated Buddhist notions of 'karma' (Pali: kamma) and 'rebirth' are. the process of reality, 'karma' and 'rebirth' being central in this respect. As the Buddhist. practitioner and writer B. Alan Wallace points out in his article Distorted Visions of. early nineteenth century. With Shaykh Ah mad ended the cycle of the great. . . . and original philosophers of traditional Muslim civilization, a cycle that be-. gan with al-Kindi (d. 870). Although the philosophical tradition remains. alive in the lands of Eastern Islam, and continues to produce outstanding. process philosophies and process metaphysics. A philosophy or metaphysics. of process may use the concept of process without being committed to the. fundamental reality of process. A process philosophy or metaphysics asserts. him to a belief in the fundamental reality of process. Although he was by no means a Peripatetic, Shaykh Ah mad makes much. . use of Muslim scholastic terminology, which was in large part derived from. The 'Epiontic' Dependently Originating Process of Cyclic Existence According to Early Buddhist Metaphysics. Save to Library. Download. by Graham Smetham. • Scientific Proof of God. The Quantum Truth of the Buddhist Metaphysics of the 'Two Truths' or 'Two Realities'. Save to Library. Download. A. The Idea is the fundamental reality of the World, whose existence was clearly intuited (as "hypodoché") by Plato, operationally defined by Boehme (first as "das Rad Gottes" and subsequently as "Eternal Nature"), organically articulated by Hegel (as "the Idea"), and finally discovered to be the locus of proto-being and foundation of living motion by means of.