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coais: 5. Particularly in early sources, the compound 'Dharma-Vinaya' ('doctrine and discipline') is used to denote the whole body of Buddhist teachings and practice. The ritual, however, is not without its critics. Sometimes animal birth is praised (M.i.341), but most commonly it is denounced as brutal and lowly (M.iii.169). Stem cells, which begin to appear in the embryo at the blastocyst stage, have the ability to divide for indefinite periods in culture and to give rise to other more specialized cells. This episode shows the Buddha directly intervening to prevent monks committing suicide either by their own hand or with the assistance of others, and gives grounds for thinking that this reflects the normative Buddhist position. In the kathina ceremony, which takes place following the annual rains' retreat in countries where Therava' da Buddhism is practised, cotton cloth is supplied to the monks by the laity for the purpose of making robes. However, there seems to have been no bar on the admission of non-practising homosexuals who did nothing to draw attention to their sexual orientation. The purpose of the Ja' taka folktales is to impart moral lessons to human beings in the manner of Aesop's fables, but since animals and the natural world figure prominently in them, these tales are often quoted to demonstrate Buddhism's ecological credentials. Heterosexual parents may therefore be thought of as cooperating in the liberation of all beings. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was one of the leading exponents of deontological ethics, an approach that emphasizes notions of duty and obligation and is characterized by looking backwards for justification. The second level was known as the 'Cultivation of Virtue' (kus' ala-dharma-samgra' haka' s' la) and was concerned with the accumulation of the good qualities necessary for the attainment of nirvana. 34-5 R Raelians 116-17 Rahul, W. Frankena, Ethics (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973); D. Clearly, the criterion of size is not meant to be applied in the case of human beings, otherwise it would lead to the ludicrous conclusion that killing large people was worse than killing small people. Ahimsa' is' not simply the absence of something, but is practised on the basis of a deeply positive feeling of respect for living beings, a moral position associated in the West with the terms 'respect for life' or the 'sanctity of life'. This seems unlikely, since, as we saw in Chapter 6, Buddhism has always taught that the material basis of human life is supplied entirely by one's parents through the union of the male and female genetic components which give rise to a new individual. Such deeds were seen by those who approved of them as sacrifices to the Buddha, recalling the master's own cremation, and demonstrating great piety and devotion. Sexual orientation and even gender were seen as somewhat fluid, therefore, and not in themselves morally problematic. The fact that two individuals share the same genetic code, they say, has never threatened the fabric of society. An implication of adopting the criterion of karmic life, however, is that the greater part of the natural world - especially inanimate nature such as mountains, rivers, and lakes - would lack inherent moral value, although retaining instrumental value to the extent that it provides support for karmic life. P. In common with deontology, Buddhism has rules and precepts that approach the status of moral absolutes. This would seem to apply to all forms of euthanasia, and also physician-assisted suicide, in which the physician typically assists the person who wishes to die by prescribing lethal drugs, but crucially not administering them personally. Although they all resembled him, however, only one was the real dictator of Iraq. Official statistics from the 1960s report some five abortions per year, but this massively underestimates the number of abortions performed. In discussions of both suicide and euthanasia, misunderstandings often arise due to a failure to provide definitions and clarify the issues at stake. Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans or nature. Some Western Buddhist groups, like the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, have experimented with new models of community life without marriage, in order to overcome the perceived exclusiveness of the nuclear Western family unit. It may, however, be thought to teach a 'naturalized' theory of karma in which the good consequences of moral action become manifest in the present as opposed to in future lives. Auto-cremation, furthermore, has ancient roots in China in the practice of moxibustion (the igniting of a cauterizing cone of herbs or other substances placed in contact with the body) and in ceremonies designed to produce rain. While violence connotes aggression, force need not, and we must be careful not to prejudice the discussion by conflating the two terms. Below this threshold, as in the case of microscopic forms of life such as viruses and bacteria, the obligations of the first precept would not apply, since these entities do not reincarnate and are simply functioning parts of an integral being rather than autonomous agents. 137-68. The militant leader Thich Tri Quang declared, 'Burning oneself to death is the noblest form of struggle which symbolizes the spirit of nonviolence of Buddhism.' In the aftermath of this statement, five deaths occurred, at which point Tri Quang called on his followers to desist. One might wonder, for example, whether Buddhism fits the Western category of a 'religion', or how it should be classified. Conclusion 99 Abortion Early scriptural sources oppose abortion, regarding it as a breach of the first precept, a view generally followed in traditional countries despite the evidence that large numbers of 'back-street' abortions are carried out. The fact that the world is seen as inherently flawed and imperfect, and ultimately a disvalue, seems to cast a shadow over the prospects for a Buddhist ecology. The gender of the individual was thought to be determined at this time (although in exceptional cases it could change during life, as we have seen) and from conception onwards the spiritual and material components that constitute the new individual - what Buddhists call na' pa (mind and body) - evolve together and remain 'ma-ru united' like a mixture of milk and water' until they once again separate at death. The idea has been put about, often accompanied by lurid pictures, that an aborted fetus becomes a vengeful spirit that causes problems for the mother unless placated by the ritual. The bodily form at rebirth has changed, but the bodily form of human beings changes constantly, and according to Buddhist teachings we have before us at conception the same individual only now at an immature state of physical development. 14 Among the renouncers, the principle of respect for life was sometimes taken to extremes. In the course of time in Buddhism there appeared a doctrine of salvation by faith according to which the mere invocation of the name of a Buddha was sufficient, given the extent of the Buddha's compassion, to ensure rebirth in a 'Pure Land', or heaven. It can be noted that scholars working in other branches of Buddhist philosophy have not hesitated to draw comparisons between Buddhist and Western thinkers and concepts. For example, a deontologist might suggest that the reason I am morally obliged to give £5 to Tom is because I promised to do so when I borrowed the money from him yesterday. As the encounter between Buddhism and Western values proceeds, discussions over the abortion question are certain to continue, hopefully producing more light and less heat than has been the tendency in the past. theory of karma. Buddhist Ethics more common. The second 120 method is to isolate pluripotent stem cells from fetal tissue obtained from terminated pregnancies, and here we encounter dilemmas familiar from the discussion of abortion in Chapter 6. This makes it difficult to address questions concerning which species should be saved, and the relative value between them. Contrary to popular belief, Buddhism is generally conservative on sexual matters, and traditional Buddhist societies tend to be reserved and even prudish where sex is concerned. However, it evolved at a time when the outcome of a war often depended on a single pitched battle, and applying its provisions to the infinitely more complex situations of modern warfare is not always easy. 11 Buddhist morality categories of offences. Jus in bello 1. While there may be some truth in the view that Buddhism is more benign in its attitude towards nature than Christianity, the idea that Buddhism is deeply in tune with 'green' values and a natural ally of the 'animal rights' and other activist movements requires qualification. Most Buddhist layfolk, and particularly women, would feel embarrassment at discussing such intimate matters with monks, and prefer to discuss the problem with a doctor or other secular professional. Buddhist Ethics own, within which three levels were identified. First, that we must try to understand fully the causes that have led to the present situation. The penalty for the abortionist is even greater: five years or 5,000 baht, or both, and if the woman is injured or killed in the process the penalties are much more severe. Reproductive cloning is also in conflict with the biblical model of sexual generation. Quite the contrary, in fact, for in this case it universalizes the characteristics of greed and flattery as qualities shared by all members of the crow and jackal species. This act involves making two small crown-wise slices across the gut while in a kneeling position, after which an assistant would behold the samurai with a sword (in practice the first step was rarely carried out). Euthanasia The discussion of assisted suicide in the third pa' ra' jka leads naturally to the issue of euthanasia. Married laypeople may adopt the practice of voluntary celibacy for longer or shorter periods. Dharma has many meanings, but the underlying notion is of a universal law which governs both the physical and moral order of the universe. Compassion Compassion (karuna') is a virtue that is of importance in all schools' of Buddhism but it is particularly emphasized by the Maha' ya' na. Monks would come into daily contact with women in the villages as they received food on their alms round, and the Buddha was well aware how easily attraction could arise. The most general moral duties are those found in the Five Precepts, for example the duty to refrain from evil acts such as killing and stealing. Is it deontological or teleological? In this general wave of disapproval, religious opposition was led by the theistic traditions, notably Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Westerners who turn to Buddhism in the hope of finding the endorsement of a hippy-like attitude to 'free love', however, are likely to be disappointed. In the modern period, Buddhist religious groups have had a close involvement with Japanese nationalism and militarism. Thus, as we saw in Chapter 3, it is worse to kill a large animal, such as an elephant, than a mouse, because it involves a greater degree of effort and determination, and the will to cause harm on the part of the assailant is greater. form of words used acknowledge the free and voluntary nature of the duty assumed. Comparing oneself with others one should neither kill nor cause to kill. It can be seen that three of these (s' la, sama' dhi, and prajña') coincide with the three divisions of the Eightfold Path of early Buddhism, demonstrating both continuity and reconfiguration in the evolving moral tradition. (It will be seen that this fourfold model builds on the threefold classification of Maha' ya' na ethics described in Chapter 1.) With such an expanded concept of morality in mind, a number of engaged Buddhist activists have worked to extend the traditional principles of morality into a carefully developed plan of Buddhist social ethics. Vivisection in recent times has come to symbolize unnecessary cruelty to animals and a disregard for their suffering. Two principal modes of euthanasia are commonly distinguished, namely active and passive. The 'Buddhism' discussed in the present work is not that of any one school, culture, or historical period, and, although my own expertise is in Therava' da Buddhism, my remarks are made with respect to an amorphous fiction which for convenience might be termed 'mainstream Buddhism'. One of the few early texts to explore moral dilemmas is Milinda's Questions, and it is interesting that although the bulk of the work was composed in Sri Lanka, the debate recorded in this text took place in a Greek-influenced part of northwest India between a Buddhist monk (Na' gasena) and a Greek king (Milinda). The purpose of this first chapter is to review these basic moral teachings. 11. The book offers an overview of how Buddhism might respond to the ethical dilemmas confronting the modern world. 23 Ethics East and West Virtue ethics offers something of a middle way between the other two and tends to look both to the past and future for justification. The first is indirectly, by directing the individual being reborn to a particular set of parents with a certain kind of DNA. In terms of the first, the precept on sexual misconduct is relative to time, place, and culture and may be adapted and changed. Some commentators see this distinction as morally significant, whereas others do not. There is already a serious shortage of eggs for IVF programmes, and in the context of resource allocation ethics committees may feel that the treatment of existing cases of infertility takes priority over unproven and possibly wasteful cloning experiments. Can there be a 'just war' according to Buddhism, and what is the appropriate response for Buddhists in the face of outrages such as 9/11? Pa' ra' jka dharmas: offences requiring expulsion from the sangha. The transitive effect is seen in the direct impact moral actions have on others; for example, when we kill or steal, someone is deprived of his life or property. - Practise mindfulness, A (D.ii.141) 55 Sexuality As the Buddha's words in the text box below reveal, Buddhism in general adopts a wary attitude towards the opposite sex. An alternative view, also worthy of serious consideration, is that Buddhist ethics cannot be accommodated entirely within any of the available Western 25 Ethics East and West With the above caveats enumerated, I think it fair to say that the growing consensus among scholars is that Buddhist ethics bears a greater resemblance to virtue ethics than any other Western theory. The text goes on to describe the course of development within the next 28 days. When the oval-shaped foetus has passed seven days. If we take as our definition of suicide something like 'cases where a person knowingly embarks on a course of action that will lead to his death', we may find that the category is too broad. Buddhist Ethics Chapter 8 M. Apart from the political statement it made, this dramatic image brought Buddhism to the attention of many in the West, and awakened curiosity about a religion whose followers were capable of acting with such conviction while manifesting a deep sense of inner peace and serenity and possessing apparently superhuman self-control. The commentator Buddhaghosa suggests at one point that the larger the animal, the greater the 'demerit' in killing it (M.A.i.189). I do not have the authority to redefine these precepts since no one can make a unilateral decision or issue a decree.' He concluded, 'Such a redefinition can only come out of sangha discussions within the various Buddhist traditions. While pacifism may be a viable option for those who have renounced the world, it is not clear that it can provide a workable basis for a society. East Asia has also seen the involvement of monks in insurrections and military campaigns. What was the significance of this act, and how should it be assessed from an ethical perspective? These religions teach that life is a gift from God, and for them the creation of life in the laboratory seems to usurp the divine authority of the creator. Finally, I would like to thank George Miller for inaugurating this project during his time with the Press, and Emma Simmons and Marsha Filion for seeing the volume through to publication. Second, that we must respond to aggression with compassion as opposed to hatred; and third, that violence will only lead to a cycle of retaliation and make the chances of peace even more remote. At the same time, one has to be aware that Buddhist literature also contains contrasting descriptions of opulent surroundings in which trees and ponds made of gold and other precious material are glorified (D.iii.182). A cloned child, however, inherits all 46 of his chromosomes from a single DNA source. These duties are thought of as implicit requirements of Dharma, consciousness (vijña' na) If it could be shown, for instance, that these five endowments were acquired gradually rather than all at once, it may be possible to argue that the life of an early fetus which possessed fewer of the five was ess valuable than that of a more mature one, which possessed them all. Premasi', 'Moral Evaluation in Early Buddhism', Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities, 1 (1975): 63-74; Christopher Queen, Engaged Buddhism in the West (Boston: Wisdom, 2000); T. Instead, their aim is to focus on the point where these subjects intersect to form a new field of enquiry, one that has so far received very little attention from experts in either of its component disciplines. Buddhist Ethics universal seed of Buddhahood is present in all living beings, including animals, further strengthen the ethical identification between self and others which is vital to ecological concern. Not all scholars would agree with the identification just made between Buddhism and virtue ethics. While some practitioners understood such teachings and practices literally, however, others saw them as merely symbolic and simply useful subjects for meditation. War on a scale never before seen caused untold destruction and loss of life. My reading of the sources is that although the Buddha appears to have felt great sympathy for those involved, there is little evidence that he ever condoned suicide. If complete pacifism is required by Buddhism, it seems hard to imagine how a criminal justice system can function. When another seven days pass . There was no scholarly journal devoted to Buddhist ethics until the present author and Charles S. There seem to be only two ways karma can influence DNA. Karma does not determine precisely what will happen or how anyone will react to what happens, and individuals are always free to resist previous conditioning and establish new patterns of behaviour. The moral distinction is that the first patient seeks death or 'makes death his aim', to use Buddhaghosa's phrase, while the second simply accepts the proximity and inevitability of death and rejects further treatment or nourishment as pointless. It relates how following intercourse the 'drops of semen and blood' Buddhism at war 'Turning from theory to practice, the pacifist ideal of the classical south has not prevented Buddhists from fighting battles and conducting military campaigns from a mixture of political and religious motives, both its main senses, namely as the principle of order and regularity seen in the behaviour of natural phenomena, and also the idea of a universal moral law whose requirements have been revealed by enlightened beings such as the Buddha (note that Buddha claimed only to have discovered Dharma, not to have invented it). The Buddha left a palace to live in the forest, and if there were no wilderness the religious seeker would be unable to seek refuge from active life. Very Short Introductions available now: ANARCHISM Colin Ward ANCIENT EGYPT Ian Shaw ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY Julia Annas ANCIENT WARFARE Harry Sidebottom THE ANGLO-SAXON AGE John Blair ANIMAL RIGHTS David DeGrazia ARCHAEOLOGY Paul Bahn ARCHITECTURE Andrew Ballantyne ARISTOTLE Jonathan Barnes ART HISTORY Dana Arnold ART THEORY Cynthia Freeland THE HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY Michael Hoskin Atheism Julian Baggini Augustine Henry Chadwick BARTHES Jonathan Culler THE BIBLE John Riches BRITISH POLITICS Anthony Wright Buddha Michael Carrithers BUDDHISM Damien Keown BUDDHIST ETHICS James Fulcher THE CELTS Barry Cunliffe CHOICE THEORY Michael Allingham CHRISTIAN ART Beth Williamson CHRISTIANITY Linda Woodhead CLASSICS Mary Beard and John Henderson CLAUSEWITZ Michael Howard THE COLD WAR Robert McMahon CONSCIOUSNESS Susan Blackmore Continental Philosophy Simon Critchley COSMOLOGY Peter Coles CRYPTOGRAPHY Fred Piper and Sean Murphy DADA AND SURREALISM David Hopkins Darwin Jonathan Howard Democracy Bernard Crick DESCARTES Tom Sorell DESIGN John Heskest DINOSAURS David Norman DREAMING J. While lay Buddhists are free to marry and have families, there is a clear sense in Buddhism that the lay estate is inferior to the monastic one, and is appropriate only for those who are not yet able to sever the ties that bind them to the mundane world. Few, if any, Buddhist groups have campaigned for it, and euthanasia has not been made legal in any Buddhist country. My promise in the past, thus gave rise to a moral obligation which I now have a duty to discharge. Further, a just war can only be fought with 'right' intentions: the only permissible objective of a just war is to redress Buddhist Ethics the injury. Buddhist Ethics Suicide in Indian Buddhism The notion that suicide is permitted in Buddhism has gained currency largely because of a small number of well-known cases in the Pa' li canon when monks who were sick and in pain took their own lives and apparently received a posthumous endorsement from the Buddha. Examples of such activities include drinking alcohol and sexual intercourse, both serious breaches of the monastic rules. In a very real sense, individuals create themselves through their moral choices. I Do not get your mind stopped with the sword you raise, forget about what you are doing, and strike the enemy. Dolly the sheep had to be put down in February 2002 after developing arthritis and suffering from progressive lung disease, and many cloned fetuses exhibit 'giantism', a condition in which they grow so large that the womb cannot contain them. On becoming a Buddhist, one formally 'takes' (or accepts) the precepts in a ritual context known as 'going for refuge', and the 8 The Five Precepts (pañcas' la) 1 This is the most widely known list of precepts in Buddhism, comparable in influence to the Ten Commandments of Christianity. Monks who were involved in performing or procuring abortions were expelled from the sangha for life, the severest sanction available. It has pointed out the apparent absence of a branch of learning concerned with ethics in the philosophical canon of Buddhism, and attributed this to disparities in the cultural history 37 Ethics East and West 1. As a moral fable, the tale is quite acceptable, but the fact that animals are the main protagonists should not by itself be taken as evidence of Buddhist concern for animals. Furthermore, while many Buddhists would identify themselves as pacifists, this moral stance embraces a range of possible positions. This is one horn of the dilemma. In its final form the text is divided into three sections, the first of which contains the set of rules for monks and nuns known as the Pra' timoksa (Pa' ti, Pa' timokkha). In medical contexts pa' na is one of the bodily humours, understood as the force' underlying biological growth, perhaps equivalent to the 86 contemporary notion of metabolism. Pence was one of the first books to make a positive case for human cloning. He stated, 'It is intention (cetana'). O monks, that I call karma: having willed one acts through body, speech, or mind' (A.ii.415), feelings and sensations (vedana') Buddhist Ethics 3. The transformation of the 'man in the street' into a Buddha comes about through the cultivation of particular virtues (paradigmatically wisdom and compassion) leading step by step to the goal of complete self-realization known as nirvana. Segal NIETZSCHE Michael Tanner NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN Christopher Harvie and H. Prattides' an' ya dharmas: offences that should be confessed. 79 War and terrorism In the West, such a set of principles is found in a body of theory concerned with the notion of the 'just war'. By considering how Buddhist thought has developed over the centuries, this VSI considers how contemporary dilemmas can be faced from a Buddhist perspective. Actions motivated by greed (ra' ga), hatred (dvesa), and delusion (moha) are bad (akus' ala), while actions' motivated by their opposites - non-attachment, benevolence, and understanding - are good (kus' ala) . 72 Buddhists were inevitably caught up in the turbulent history of South East Asia in the 20th century as Communist and Maoist movements fought for political power in Vietnam and Cambodia, to die because they had made the judgement that their lives were not worth living and that they would be better off dead. Right Action 5. After the fashion of utilitarianism, many scriptural sources advise Buddhists to reflect deeply on the consequences of their moral choices. We need to examine these claims and consider to what extent the East Asian practices described so far have a foundation in the early teachings. What might be the characteristic of homosexual acts that led the Dalai Lama and other authorities to regard them as prohibited by the third precept? Holt, Discipline, the Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapitaka (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981); P. The objectives of SGI include the aim of 'Working for peace by opposing all forms of violence and contributing to the welfare of humankind by pursuing humanitarian culture and education.' Another group active on this front is the Rishso Kosei-kai, which in 1978 established the Niwano Peace Foundation 'to contribute to the realization of world peace'. 76 In the aftermath of the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959, it is estimated that 6 million Tibetans died and a further million fled the country as refugees. On very few occasions, for instance, do we see the Buddha moving to a discussion of theoretical questions about ethics, or responding to ethical and political conundrums of the kind put to Jesus by the Pharisees, such as whether it was right to pay taxes to the Romans (Matt 22:17). Bernard 45 9 Suicide of Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc in Saigon, 1963 101 © 2005 TopFoto.co.uk 5 The fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet 63 © Martin Louis 6 Ven. A basic knowledge of Buddhism is assumed in the pages that follow, and readers who lack this are advised to consult first my companion volume in the series Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction. As I secretly wish the mizuko resting place I offer this lotus flower from the last kuyo' . May it be a penitential proof of my love. Other scenarios in which cloning may play a part include providing children for lesbian couples (one partner donates the ovum and the other the DNA), or in cases when a woman wishes to conceive a child after the death of her partner using his genetic material. This view is based on a remark of Buddhaghosa in his commentary on the Vinaya (M.A.i.198) to the effect that the size of the victim is one of two important criteria (the other being sanctity) in assessing the gravity of breaches of the first precept. The ultimate goal of a just war is to re-establish peace. There is here a similarity with utilitarianism, which sees the moral life as geared to the production of happiness. There are, however, numerous references to homosexual practices in the context of monastic law. ' For example, would Buddhism approve of a conservation measure that required the culling of some animals, even if such killing were ultimately to preserve the balance of the natural world? 64 However, there are problems with this strategy. Considerable suffering results in the process of domesticating elephants, yet Buddhist texts turn a blind eye to such practices, except for certain rare examples such as the Dubbalakathā Ja' taka (J.i.414-416) in which, though the pain is' acknowledged, no directive to stop it is issued. Since Buddhism does not believe in a supreme being, there is no divine creator who might be offended by human attempts to duplicate his work. Thus, although karma and DNA may produce similar results, they are separate mechanisms and there is no causal link between them. Human beings and persons Much of the philosophical discussion of abortion in the West has focused on the criteria of moral personhood and the point at which a fetus acquires the capacities that entitle it to moral respect. It is not entirely' clear who or what these were, but Peter Harvey concludes that the term denotes a type of 'sexually dysfunctional passive homosexual' male. At stake were both the reputation of monks and nuns with the public and the risk of disruption within the monastery which might hinder 61 Sexuality The Buddha himself never passes judgement on the moral status of homosexual acts, and in early sources homosexuality is not discussed as a moral issue. Burning of the body in a token way has formed part of the monastic ordination ritual in China and Korea down to modern times. Making progress to enlightenment, however, is not simply a matter of having good intentions, and evil is sometimes done by people who act from the highest motives. His special form of self-immolation has since been copied worldwide. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data Data available Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data Data available ISBN 0-19-280457-X 1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2 Typeset by RefineCatch Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk Printed in Great Britain by TJ International Ltd., Padstow, Cornwall Contents Preface ix Acknowledgements xiii Note on citations and pronunciation xv List of illustrations 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 xvii Buddhist morality 3 Ethics East and West 21 Animals and the environment 39 Sexuality 53 War and terrorism 69 Abortion 84 Suicide and euthanasia Cloning 116 References 133 Further reading 136 Glossary Index 141 143 100 This page intentionally left blank Preface This book is written for a broad general readership. It is worth noting, however, that a 'precious human rebirth' is given particular prestige, even greater than that of rebirth among the gods, for this is the most auspicious form of rebirth from which to attain liberation due to its special mix of happiness and suffering. They seemed to 102 some to involve both violence and the squandering of a 'precious human rebirth'. This page intentionally left blank Note on citations and pronunciation From time to time, the reader will encounter references in the form D.ii.95. The Path has three divisions - Morality (s' la), Meditation (sama' dhi), and Insight (prajña') - from which it can be seen that morality is an integral component of the path to nirvana. Among heterosexual couples, then, even when contraception is used, the precreative dimension of their sexual relationship may not be absent in the same way it is for homosexuals. Passive euthanasia is the intentional causing of death by omission, for example by failing to provide food, medicine, or some other requisite for life. Many monks, too, feel that these questions are not proper for one who has renounced the world and is pursuing the spiritual life. The initial letter refers to one of the five divisions (nika' yas) into which the Buddha's discourses (suttas) are collated. Buddhist Ethics It is clearly important to explore the basis of Buddhist pacifism and discover what precisely is being opposed. The third precept Various precepts were laid down to regulate sexual behaviour, particularly for monks and nuns, as we will see below, while the sexual morality of the laity is governed primarily by the third 58 precept. Three cases are particularly important, those of the monks Channa, Vakkali, and Godhika. In early Buddhism, karuna' n figures as the second of the four' Brahma-viha' ras, or 'Divine Abidings'.

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