



Diamond Mountain University

Sacred Classics Translator Program, Spring Term 2006

Answer Key, Homework, Class 3

Name:
Date:
Grade:

1) What extreme views does Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye now identify in concluding his presentation on how one practices the levels of an ordinary person?

Write the Tibetan phrase that we translated as ‘to deny everything that exists’.

The extreme of nihilism – thinking that suchness (or emptiness) means that nothing exists. This view mistakenly negates the existence of things that does exist.

From this mistaken view Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye identifies a chain: believing that all conceptual thought requires holding to things as existing in truth, and that all deceptively existing things exist only in the mind (as mere appearances); and that in a Buddha Paradise there is only suchness and there cannot be any wisdom or the two physical bodies of an enlightened being.

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yu-pa tam-che kak-pa

(transliteration: YOD PA THAMS CAD BKAG PA)

‘to deny every existing thing/ everything that exists’

2) Comment briefly on the syntax and grammar in the lines:

NYAN RANG THUB DBANG, THUB DBANG BYANG SEMS, BYANG SEMS
CHOS GSUM LAS 'KHRUNGS PA DE,

In Tibetan syntax the verb ('KHRUNGS PA – “to be born”) and the preposition (LAS – “from”) come at the end of the series of clauses.

Literally, the lines read, “listeners, self-made Buddhas, Lord of the Able; Lords of the Able, bodhisattvas; bodhisattvas are born from the three qualities”.

We would reverse the syntax in our English translation and repeat the preposition:

“Listeners and self-made Buddhas are born from the Lords of the Able; Lords of the Able from bodhisattvas; and bodhisattvas from the three qualities.”

3) What is the third division of the explanation of the causal levels? Upon which sutra and classical commentary will we rely for this presentation?

The third division of the explanation of the causal levels is how one practices the (ten) levels of a realized bodhisattva.

The presentation here follows Arya Nagarjuna’s explanation in his ‘String of Jewels for the Middle Way’ which in turn follows the ‘Sutra on the Ten Levels’. Therefore, both scriptures will be referred to in this presentation.