



Name:
Date:
Grade:

Sacred Classics Translator Program - Winter Term, 2005

Answer Key, Homework, Class 2

1) What are the five vowels of the Tibetan alphabet? What are their symbols?

The four *written* vowels of the Tibetan alphabet (shown here with the consonant ལྷ།) are:

ལྷི།

ལྷུ།

ལྷེ།

ལྷོ།

giku

shabkyu

drengbu

naro

i

u

e

o

"ee" sound

"oo" sound

"eh" sound

"o" sound

All the consonants of the Tibetan alphabet, unless modified, carry an 'inherent' "a" sound which is not written. For example, ལྷ། without any written vowel or other modification is pronounced 'ah'.

2) Kedrup Tenpa Dargye presents a rare review of the different interpretations that the classical Indian masters took of the teachings of Arya Nagarjuna and Master Aryadeva. Briefly describe how Masters Buddhapalita and Bhavaviveka interpreted the true intent of the realized Father and Son, and in so doing the two schools of thought that they established.

Master Buddhapalita interpreted the true intent of Arya Nagarjuna and Master Aryadeva as that of the Consequence School (*Prasangika*). Master Bhavaviveka refuted Master Buddhapalita's position and interpreted the realized Father and Son's true meaning as that of the Independent School (*Svatantrika*). In so doing, these two Indian Masters respectively established the Middle Way Consequence and the Middle Way Independent Schools.

Master Bhavaviveka's position was subsequently adopted by masters Jnyanagarbha, Shantarakshita, Vimuktisena and Haribhadra.

3) What is the name of the text mentioned by Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye by Master Aryadeva on the position of his Teacher, Arya Nagarjuna? What school of thought does it belong to?

Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye refers to Master Aryadeva's *The Four Hundred Verses on the Yogi's Way*. A number of Tibetan works, including a commentary by Je Tsongkapa on the secret practice of Lo Diamond (*Hevajra*), clarify that *Yogi's Way* in the title is not a reference to the Mind-Only School (also known as the Yogachara) but to the path of the bodhisattva practitioner in general. And so, Master Aryadeva's philosophical position is still undifferentiated Middle Way.

4) How do the two groups of the Middle Way School differ in their understanding of the status of words of logical argument?

The lower Middle Way school, the Independent Group (*Madhyamika-Svatantrika*), holds that words of logical argument have some power of their own to establish meaning and communicate to the listener. The upper Middle Way school, the Consequence Group (*Madhyamika-Prasangika*) holds that words themselves also lack any nature of their own. Accordingly, if a sarcastic rejoinder in debate serves to trigger some new understanding in the listener then it is only because of the ripening of virtuous karma in the mindstream of the listener. In this way, words of argument are empty of any inherent meaning or logic, and therefore can function perfectly to communicate meaning and logic - due to the principle of dependent origination.