



Diamond Mountain University

Sacred Classics Translator Program, Winter Term 2006

Answer Key, Homework, Class 5

1) Is it the case that a compassion that is focused upon a living being as its object of focus and which is characterized by lacking any nature of its own is necessarily the compassion that has no focus? Is it the case that a compassion that is focused upon a living being as its object of focus and which is characterized by being changing etc is necessarily the compassion that focuses on things? If not, why not?

It is not necessarily so in either case because any form of compassion is directed towards living beings and living beings, in our system, must be changing things and empty of a self-nature. That is, the object of focus of a compassionate state of mind (a living being) is changing, empty and so on, but it does not necessarily follow that a person with a compassionate state of mind is actively holding the living being which is the object of their state of compassion as being changing and lacking a self-nature.

2) Are the three forms of great compassion distinguished from each other by the object of their focus? Or how they feel about them? If not, why not, and what is the distinguishing factor?

No. All three forms of great compassion are focused on the same object of focus – living beings; and all have the wish that living beings be freed from their pain. They are distinguished, however, by the way in which their focus is established. That is, they are distinguished by way of different senses of the nature of the object of focus (the nature of living beings) - as being changing or whatever – which accompany the wish that living beings be freed from their pain.

3) Following which classical author, Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye uses what example of how both DMIGS MED KYI SNYING RJE and CHOS LA DMIGS PA'I SNYING RJE

characterize the object of their focus as lacking any nature of their own, of being changing and so on.

Also give the Tibetan words for a support or foundation (that which supports something else) and for the thing that is supported. Which is which in this example?

Following the famous metaphor in the opening lines of Master Chandrakirti's *Entering the Middle Way*, Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye uses the example of the reflection of the moon in a pool of water which is stirred by the wind causing ripples to run across the surface of the water.

RTEN: The support or foundation. In this example it is the water.

BRTEN PA: The thing that is supported. Here it is the reflection of the moon.

One observes that both the pool of water and the reflection of the moon are changing, being destroyed moment by moment. These two types of compassion then hold, respectively, “May this *changing* living being be freed from all pain,” or “May this living being who *appears* to have some nature of their own, but who in reality has no such nature, be freed from all pain.”

4) Is there a difference in the meaning when pronouncing DMIGS PA with a mid tone and pronouncing it with a higher tone? As translators we don't have the benefit of hearing how the word is pronounced, so how can we ascertain the correct way to translate the word? Can you find an example from the section of the text we read during this class?

The word pronounced with a mid tone is the noun: ‘object of focus’, or ‘object of observation’ – the object that is observed by the act of focusing.

The word spelt the same way but pronounced with a higher tone means the verb ‘to focus’, ‘focusing’.

In this class we met with the line:

SNYING RJE GSUM PO DE DMIGS PA'I SGO NAS 'JOG PA'I DON YANG YOD DE.

That is, there is a certain meaning when we say that the three types of compassion are established through their DMIGS PA.

As translators of this text we obviously don't have the benefit of hearing the author pronounce the word for us, and so we need to ascertain the correct translation by reference to the context.

In this case, we know from what has preceded that the author could not be saying that the three types of compassion are distinguished by way of the object of their focus – because each compassion shares living beings as their object of compassion.

So the difference between them must be in the act of focusing itself. That is, whether the act of focusing is accompanied by any sense that the living beings who are the object of focus are empty of any self-nature; or have subtle impermanence; or whether there is no accompanying sense of any such characteristics.

Accordingly, we translated the above line as “Now it has a certain meaning when we say that the three types of compassion are established through their focus.”

And we translated the line that immediately followed it - DMIGS PAR ‘JOG TSUL GYI SGO NAS ‘JOG PA’I PHYIR - as “The point is that they are established in the way in which their focus is established.”