

Approaching the Buddhist Path 2023 Class 1

4-week course with registered FPMT teacher, Eddie Peet

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Refuge & Bodhichitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened

To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly

By the merits I create through listening to the Dharma,

May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings.



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Four Boundless Thoughts

May all sentient beings have happiness and its causes.

May all sentient beings be free from suffering and its causes.

May all sentient beings never be separated from the happiness that is without suffering.

May all sentient beings abide in equanimity, free from the bias of attachment for friends and hatred for enemies.



3

Seven Limb Prayer


Reverently I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind;

I present clouds of every type of offering, actual and imagined;

I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time and rejoice in the merit of all holy and ordinary beings.

Please, remain until the end of cyclic existence, and turn the wheel of Dharma for living beings.

I dedicate my own and other's merits to the great enlightenment.



4

Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers, Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon: I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.

May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALA
KAM NIRYATA YAMI



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The Course Outline

4 weeks in total

- 4 teachings
- Extra evening class as a summary

Topics include

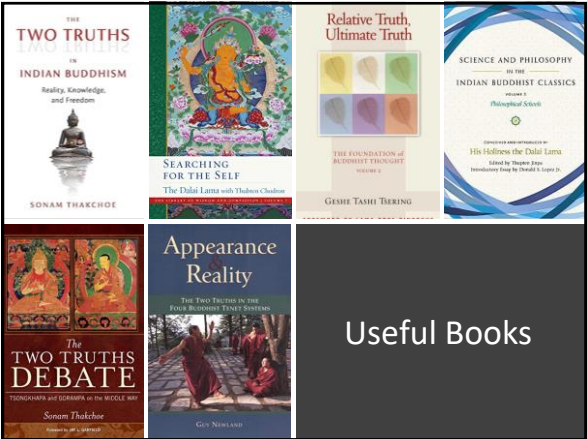
- Two Truths
- Consciousness
- Approaches



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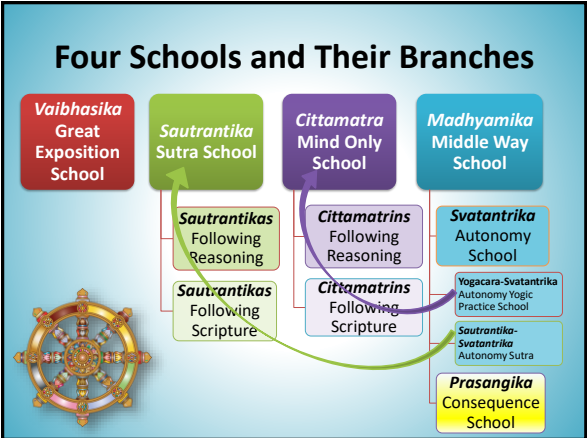
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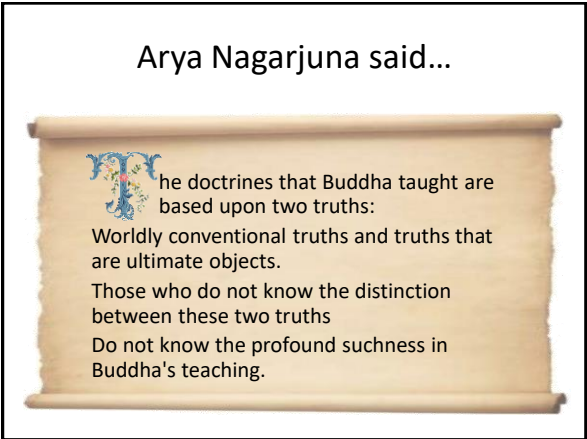
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Bases of the Two Truths




Gelug

- Objects of knowledge



Non-Gelug

- Mere mind
- Mere interdependence
- Mere objects of knowledge
- Mere subjects of the Buddha's discourses




Ordinary people

- Ideals
- Facts
- Beliefs


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Ontology



Definition

- The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of existence and reality.




Divisions

- Materialism
- Idealism
- Dualism
- Monism
- Platonism
- Intrinsicity
- Shunyata
- Pratityasamutpada

Purpose

- What does exist?
- Their properties?
- Relationships
- Categories
- Principles



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What Exists?

Selfless

Exists

Permanent

Form

Consciousness


Abstract

Thing

Non-exists


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Epistemology



Definition

- A branch of philosophy that examines the nature of knowledge, belief, and justification.




Divisions

- Empiricism
- Rationalism
- Constructivism
- Pragmatism
- Yogacara
- Pramana


Purpose

- How is knowledge acquired?
- What constitutes evidence?
- How is certainty achieved?




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Individual Vehicle Ultimate Truth




Great Exposition
Vaibhashika




1. The aggregates
2. Uncompounded phenomena
3. Substantial particles of matter or mind

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Individual Vehicle Ultimate Truth




Sutra
Sautrantika



A phenomenon that exists from its own side, without being imputed by a conceptual consciousness e.g. things

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A Universal Vehicle Ultimate Truth



Mind Only
Chittamatra


The nondual consciousness that has passed beyond apprehended and apprehender being different substantial entities

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Summarising the Two Truths

SCHOOL	CONVENTIONAL TRUTH	ULTIMATE TRUTH	ASSERTION OF POT
MIND ONLY	That which is realized by a valid perception directly realizing it by way of being together with dualistic appearance. E.g., a pot	That which is realized by a valid perception directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance. E.g., Emptiness that is a pot and the valid cognition apprehending that pot is empty of being a different substance	A pot is the factor of appearance that is an appearance as a pot due to the force of activation of a predisposition. (A pot is not the collection of the parts of a pot)
SUTRA – Followers of Reasoning	A phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is canceled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its parts. E.g., uncompound space	A phenomenon that can perform a function ultimately. E.g., a pot	A pot is the mere collection of the many particles that are the parts of the pot.
SUTRA – Followers of Scripture and the GREAT EXPOSITION	A phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is canceled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its parts. E.g., a pot	A phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is not canceled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its parts. E.g., partless particles	


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What's My Take-Away?

Regarding the systems of tenets, you have a beginner's understanding of the two truths. On the one hand, the world is real. On the other, it's consciousness that is real.

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Coming up

- The two truths and the middle-way tenet systems
- The refutations of the lower systems
- Tsong Khapa and the deepest truth

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Dedication

Due to the merits of these virtuous actions
May I quickly attain the state of a Guru-Buddha
And lead all living beings, without exception,
Into that enlightened state



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Bodhicitta Verses

May the supreme jewel bodhicitta
Not yet born, arise and grow
May that born have no decline
But increase forever more

And as long as space endures,
As long as sentient beings abide,
May I too remain
To dispel the sorrows of the world



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Rinpoche’s Swift Return

In holding and spreading the Muni’s
precious and complete teachings
Through explanation and practice,
You wore the armour of patience
that is never discouraged,
Incomparable Venerable guru,
to you I make this request.

