

Course Examination: Mahayana View 2

Two options are available for this exam:

Answer two questions in essay form from list number one.

OR

Answer one more detailed question from list number two.

Option One (Please answer two questions):

1. Taking the object “self”, describe the Svatantrika reasoning “Free of Singularity or Multiplicity” to prove that it is empty of true existence, using first the name [i.e. your name], and then using the actual basis for imputation.
2. Referring to Prasangika Madhyamaka, Sakya Pandita said “If there were a view superior to the view which is free of all elaborations, that view would necessarily constitute a further elaboration.” Discuss.
3. Discuss the Two Truths from the Madhyamaka perspective. How does the view of the Two Truths differ from the Chittamatrin view of the Three Natures?
4. What does “Empty of Self” and “Empty of Other” mean in terms of the Rangtong Madhyamaka and Shentong Madhyamaka views?
5. The text which expounds the Buddha nature teachings is Gyud Lama, or “The Changeless Nature.” How is it that the notion of “changeless nature” does not violate the truth of impermanence?
6. Explain the following in the context of the shentong and rangtong debate:
“Saying the object of negation is the imputed and dependent natures is like saying ‘there is no elephant in the room’ to a person scared of a snake. It doesn't relieve the person's fear.”

Option Two (Please answer one question):

1. From the following three points of view:

- i) the Sautrantika-Svatantrika viewpoint
- ii) the Yogachara-Svatantrika viewpoint
- iii) the Prasangika viewpoint

briefly support or critique the following three statements:

- A: Though the relative thermos exists as a mere mind-dependent object, ultimately there is no thermos
- B: Ultimately, there is no thermos.
- C: There is no thermos.

2. What aspects of the explanation of “emptiness” does the following assertion fail to capture: “The word ‘thermos’ is a label that has no real connection to the actual “thermos.” This is the entire meaning of “empty” as in: ‘the thermos is empty.’”

Discuss the above from two viewpoints:

- i) Rangtong Madhyamaka
- ii) Shentong Madhyamaka