The Four Main Buddhist Philosophical Schools

Vaibhashika

Great Exposition School

18 sub-schools

Proponents:
- Vasumitra
- Dharmapala
- Buddhadeva
- Sambhabhadra

Sautrantika

Sutra School

Followers of Scripture

Proponents:
- Vasubandhu (4th century)

Followers of Reasoning

Proponents:
Hinayana followers of
- Dharmakirti (7th century)
- Dignaga (480-540)

Chittamatra

Mind-Only School

Followers of Scripture

Proponents:
- **ASANGA** (4th Century)
- Vasubandhu (toward the end of his life)

Followers of Reasoning

Proponents:
Mahayana followers of
- Dharmakirti
- Dignaga

Madhyamaka

Middle Way School

Svatantrika-Madhyamaka

Middle Way Autonomist School

Yogacharya Svatantrika

Proponents:
- **SHANTARAKSHITA** (154 B.C.–845 A.D.)
- Arya Vimuktisena
- Kamalashila (740-795)
- Haribhadra (toward the end of the 8th century)

Sautrantika Svatantrika

Proponents:
- **BHAVAVIVEKA** (500 – 570)

Prasangika-Madhyamaka

Middle Way Consequentialist School

Proponents:
- Nagarjuna (80 B.C.E. – 520 A.D.)
- Aryadeva (contemporary of Nagarjuna)
- **BUDDHAPALITA** (470-540)
- Chandrakirti (600-650)
- Shantideva (8th century)
- Atisha (982-1054)
- Lama Tzong Khapa (1357-1432)
- Gyeltsab Je (1364-1432)
- Jamyang Shepa (648-1721)

Note: The names of the founders of the various philosophical schools are written in CAPITAL letters and bold.

Primary Sources: *Meditation on Emptiness* by J. Hopkins
Dependent Arising & Emptiness by E. Napper

Chart created during the Masters Program 1998-2004

HINAYANA ← → **MAHAYANA**