



**Defining and Understanding Hermeneutics in
the Yogācāra Text dbus dang mtha' rnam par
'byed pa kyi 'grel ba (The Commentary on
Differentiating the Middle from the Extremes)**

Defining and Understanding Hermeneutics in the Yogācāra Text dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa kyi 'grel ba (The Commentary on Differentiating the Middle from the Extremes)

Paul Brownell - ANU

This paper will discuss the hermeneutics outlined in this seminal Yogācāra text, root verses by Maitreya and commentary by Vasubandhu. In particular, it will address the concept of a soteriological hermeneutic. For a vast number of reasons, Buddhist scholarship in its endeavour to gain legitimacy in the eyes of Western philosophers, has tended to marginalise the soteriological aspects of Buddhism, especially in Yogācāra Buddhism. Through an analysis of this important work, this paper will illustrate the significance of the role played by soteriology in Buddhist intellectual thought, and analyse the reasons why this concept is not included in most discourses on Buddhist philosophy.