

[The following selection introduces, briefly, the concept of the three levels of deep practice that correlate to the three degrees of selflessness. It is taken from The "Cloud of Offerings, which Pleases the Wise, and Illuminates the True Thought of the Treatise known as the 'Ornament of Realizations,'" being a Combined Word Commentary and Dialectical Analysis of the Fifth Chapter of the Treatise, by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748), also an illustrious author of textbooks for Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery (ACIP electronic text S0195, Part Five, ff. 11b-12a).]

,GNYSIS PA RANG GI LUGS LA, ZHI LHAG ZUNG 'BREL GYI RTEN BYED
PA'I RIGS SU GNAS PA'I LTA SPYOD GNYIS SU PHYE BA'I LTA BA'I CHAR
GTOGS PA'I MKHYEN PA, RNAL 'BYOR GYIS SA'I NGO BO DANG ,

Here secondly is the position of our own school. The essential nature of a level of deep practice can be defined as follows:

It is that state of knowledge which is of the type that provides a foundation for the combination of quietude and vision, and which can be classified as a viewpoint in the dichotomy between actions and viewpoints.

DE LA GSUM DU DBYER YOD DE, GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED RTOGS PA'I
RNAL 'BYOR GYI SA, CHOS KYI BDAG MED RAGS PA RTOGS PA'I RNAL
'BYOR GYI SA, STONG NYID RTOGS PA'I RNAL 'BYOR GYI SA DANG GSUM
YOD PA'I PHYIR,

Levels of this kind can be divided into three: the level of deep practice wherein you realize the selflessness of the person; the level of deep practice wherein you realize the gross selflessness of objects; and the level of deep practice wherein you realize emptiness itself.

[The following selection comments on whether the lower degrees of selflessness are true emptiness.]

,KHA CIG, RGYUN MTHA'I BAR CHAD MED LAM GYIS GZUGS DANG
GZUGS 'DZIN PA'I TSAD MA RDZAS GZHAN GYIS STONG PA'I STONG
NYID MNGON SUM DU RTOGS PAR THAL, DES DE BYA RDZOGS KYI
SKAD CIG MA GCIG LA MNGON SUM DU RTOGS PA'I PHYIR,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

It must too be the case that the uninterrupted path in the mind of a person at the end of the process realizes, directly, the form of emptiness which is the absence of a separate substance to physical matter and the valid perception which perceives this physical matter,

Because it perceives this fact directly in a single briefest instant of action.

DER THAL, DES DE DE LTAR RTOGS NUS PA'I PHYIR, ZER NA, MA KHYAB,

[We disagree with your reason.]

But you can't, because it does have the capacity to do so.

Our answer would be that it doesn't necessarily follow.

'DOD MI NUS TE, THEG CHEN GYI BAR CHAD MED LAM YIN PA'I PHYIR,

And one could never agree with your position, because we are talking about the uninterrupted path in the higher way.

KHYAB STE, GZUGS DANG GZUGS 'DZIN PA'I TSAD MA RDZAS GZHAN GYIS STONG PA'I STONG NYID DE KUN RDZOB BDEN PA YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It doesn't necessarily follow.]

But it does necessarily follow, because that emptiness represented by the absence of a separate substance to physical matter and the valid perception which perceives this physical matter is deceptive reality.