



MEDITATIONS ON EMPTINESS

CLASS SEVEN: THE EMPTINESS OF THINGS

From the Ninth Chapter of Master Shantideva's GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE:

कायो न पादौ न जङ्घा नोरू कायः कटिर्न च।

नोदरं नाप्ययं पृष्ठं नोरो बाहू न चापि सः ॥ ७९ ॥

kāyo na pādau na jaṅghā norū kāyaḥ kaṭirna ca  
nodaraṁ nāpyayaṁ pṛṣṭha noro bahū na cāpi saḥ||

The body is not the feet, the calves, the thighs, or the hips. It is also not the belly, back, chest, or arms. (79)

न हस्तौ नाप्ययं पार्श्वौ न कक्षौ नांसलक्षणः।

न ग्रीवा न शिरः कायः कायोऽत्र कतरः पुनः ॥ ८० ॥

na hastau nāpyayaṁ pārśvā na nakṣau nāṁsalakṣaṇaḥ|  
na grīvā na śiraḥ kāyaḥ kāyo'tra katarah punaḥ||

It is not the hands, the ribs, or the arm pits, and it is not characterized by the shoulders. The body is not the neck nor the head. So where is the body? (80)

यदि सर्वेषु कायोऽयमेकदेशेन वर्तते।

अंशा अंशेषु वर्तन्ते स च कुत्र स्वयं स्थितः ॥ ८१ ॥

yadi sarveṣu kāyo'yamekadeśena vartate|  
aṁśā aṁśeṣu vartante sa ca kutra svayaṁ sthitaḥ||

If this body exists partially in all the parts, and the parts exist in their parts, where is that which stands by itself? (81)



सर्वात्मना चेत्सर्वत्र स्थितः कायः करादिषु।

कायास्तावन्त एव स्युर्यावन्तस्ते करादयः ॥ ८२ ॥

sarvātmanā cetsarvatra sthitaḥ kāyaḥ karādiṣu |  
kāyāstāvanta eva syuryāvantaste karādayaḥ ||

If the body was fully present in its entirety in the hands and so on, then there would be as many bodies as there are hands and the rest. (82)

नैवान्तर्न बहिः कायः कथं कायः करादिषु।

करादिभ्यः पृथङ् नास्ति कथं नु खलु विद्यते ॥ ८३ ॥

naivāntarāna bahiḥ kāyaḥ katham kāyah karādiṣu |  
karādibhyaḥ pṛthaṅ nāsti katham nu khalu vidyate ||

The body is not inside nor is it outside. How could the body be in the hands and the rest? But it is also not separate from the hands and the rest. How can it be at all? (83)

तन्नास्ति कायो मोहात्तु कायबुद्धिः करादिषु।

संनिवेशविशेषेण स्थाणौ पुरुषबुद्धिवत् ॥ ८४ ॥

tannāsti kāyo nohāttau kāyabuddhiḥ karādiṣu |  
sanniveśaviśeṣeṇa sthāṇau puruṣabuddhivat ||

There is no body. But because of delusion, there is the idea of a body when it comes to the hands and the rest. It's like mistaking a pillar for a person due to the particular arrangement of the parts. (84)

यावत्प्रत्ययसामग्री तावत्कायः पुमानिव।

एवं करादौ सा यावत्तावत्कायोऽत्र दृश्यते ॥ ८५ ॥

yāvatpratyayasāmagrī tāvatkāyaḥ pumāniva |  
evaṁ karādaū sā yāvattāvatkāyo'tra dṛśyate ||

As long as the assembly of conditions last, the body appears as a person. Similarly, as long as that assembly of hands and the rest last, the body can be perceived. (85)



एवमङ्गुलिपुञ्जत्वात्पादोऽपि कतरो भवेत्।

सोऽपि पर्वसमूहत्वात् पर्वापि स्वांशभेदतः ॥ ८६ ॥

evamaṅgulipuñjatvātpādo'pi kataro bhavet।  
sopi parvasamūhatvāt parvāpi svāṁśabhedataḥ॥

So too there is a foot due to the multiplicity of toes, but which of them is the foot? And “toe” is also made possible due to the collection of the joints of the toe, and “joint” due to the division into its own parts.

एवं स्वप्नोपमे रूपे को रज्येत विचारकः।

कायश्चैवं यदा नास्ति तदा का स्त्री पुमांश्च कः ॥ ८८ ॥

evam svapnopame rūpe ko rajyeta vicāraḥ।  
kāyaścaivam yadā nāsti tadā kā strī pumāṁśca kaḥ॥

What discerning person would be attracted by form, which is just like a dream? When there is no body at all, who is woman and who a man? (88)



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