

TBLC Sunday Class  
August

**Geshe Yeshe Thabke**

Text: Ruth Sonam, trans. and ed., Aryadeva's Four Hundred Stanzas on the Middle Way with Commentary by Gyel-tsap. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2008. Chapter XI Refuting Truly Existent Time.

[missed large portion at beginning]

Our way of thinking is never along those lines. We always think there is something right there that seems to exist in its own right, separate from imputing it there. so then, this is the way we think about everything, whether it be cyclic existence, nirvana....Anything we bring to mind, we think about it in this way. Another way we say it is, "exists intrinsically."

In the previous chapter (10), Aryadeva refuted the idea that the permanent self is a functional thing. Now we are on the topic of time. The Vaidantikas are a certain philosophical view, held in India. The Vs say there isn't this kind of permanent, functional thing called the "self," that's fine...but there are some things that are permanent, yet functional. [such as Time]

It's obvious they need a certain time. So, time acts as a .....

[Time is] a permanent thing and doesn't undergo change. It acts as a permanent cause of everything.

So time doesn't need to depend upon objects of the past, present, or future. It exists on its own. It has some intrinsic existence. If you need to go to sleep, time to ....these are all created by this independent enemy called "time" so Time is really the creator.

The Buddhist position is opposed to what they say. The Bs say there is no such thing as time—permanent, unchanging, time. It also could not exist on its own, without any objects of past, present or future. Time is something we impute to the change in objects. When the sun is bright and sunny, we say it's the day and when the sun has gone down and its dark, we say it's the day. When people are disagreeing and fighting and there are wars...we say these are bad times. These are based on us imputing onto those objects.

In general, there are two main categories for imp. phenomena: physical things (we call them forms really, but you can think of it as things made up of atoms or particles) and another category is things not made up of particles—mind. Then there's a category of things imputed on the other two—called "non-associated compositional factors"—meaning it's not mind, it's not some physical thing. It's not immaterial. It's something based on the other two.

Compositional means it is impermanent.

So anyway, move on.

But anyway...Geshe-la is saying that we say our life force, our vitality, is neither really mind or body, it's something we attribute or impute to the mind and body. Time is like that—it's a non-associated attributed thing. We impute it to impermanent things, like the body and mind or it can be other impermanent things around us. It's just something imputedly existent.

Time is something that we then impute based upon some impermanent object. Like when people are doing something really terrible and we say, "this is a bad time." Or when we all get together to study we say it's "class time."

We impute it based upon the actions of human beings or objects and their transformational change. [missed a section here]

Now let's open up the book.

So then, usually it's explained as refuting and then meditating on the lack...that there is no truly existent time.

If you then take a look at p. 322 you'll notice an outline there. The commentator on these verses here is indicating that time is substantially est. by nature. That is the same as saying that it exists intrinsically, on its own. substantially est. past or future.

Refuting a sust. est. future—there is no such thing as a future that is something that exists on its own, independent of everything. So that is where we have arrived here.

Refuting means that there is a non-B position that we are negating. We are negating the fallacy

So, the V say as follows, "Though it is correct to say that a permanent self does not exist since it is not established by either direct or inferential cognition, permanent functional things are not non-existent since there is permanent time." (p. 227)

[Missed the explanation of the vocab./ commentary to this quote from the text]

In their system, they assert something called a permanent, functional thing. So they are saying that permanent, functional things do exist, and there is one called Time—permanent time.

Reading on: "Though water, manure, seeds and so forth are present, one observes that sprouts, flowers and the like are not produced at certain times but are produced at others. From this one can infer the presence of another cause which is time." So, they're saying that even you have all these causes together and sometimes you give rise to a sprout and sometimes you don't, you need something else, and that's this thing called time. "Though it is a permanent entity different from the functional things which exist in the three times, it is revealed in terms of instants, moments, brief spans, and so forth." So it's

something that exists separate from other, functional things and it's only revealed...when the time for things to occur arises, time is there to make them happen.

The Bst position is stated in the answer. "This is unacceptable, for if time were an entity different from functional things it should be perceived but it is not perceived. That has already been refuted." We are saying this is class time bec. we are all here to listen and there is someone here to explain. If there weren't anybody here to listen or anybody to explain, we wouldn't be able to call it "class time." It [the V's position] has already been refuted [earlier]. If you look at bottom of 206, the assertion of the Vaidantikas and others...[p. 206 too quick]

You can't have permanent time that is separate from everything and is creating things. So that is the refutation he is referring to and it has already been refuted.

[We go to page 207 and look at vs. 209.] This is a refutation of things being permanent, meaning not undergoing any change. ....process of transformation.....so the process of cause and effect ...Anything that undergoes change should not be called permanent.

the cause has to undergo a process of transformation and then the effect arises.

Another refutation for the idea of a permanent cause is on p. 208, no. 11

Never are the two seen to have congruent...

This means...it also undergoes this constant process of transformation and becomes the cause of something else. So you'll never see incongruent cause and effect, where the cause is permanent (what is meant is static)...so then if the cause is static, then how can the effect possibly be non-static? It cannot. ...

If we go back to page 227, that is already been refuted. Now to continue with this answer to the Vs. "In this context the refutation is made taking a future pot to represent future time. The same should be understood with respect to the other two times." means that

[missed a section....] ....there's a future pot. So then when we talk about future and past time, we'll be talking about pots.

Geshe la is just making sure—our custom is to stop at 2:45 so we can have a discussion. and GYT said, "We don't have to worry about doing it ourselves...TIME will make us do it!"

Refers to outline.... If we think about it—we're talking about a clay pot—so we're dealing with a lump of clay, water...and there's going to be a pot out of that. The future pot, at the time when it's a lump and water and all of those are there,....when they get assembled...After that, when it gets smashed, it's the past pot. If the future pot truly exists, right there and then, ...all three times would exist right there together, but this is not the case. This is a refutation...All three times would have to come together at once.

It works okay if you said the B position that the future pot is merely designated to

but the problem comes when you say that the future pot exists on its own right there—because then the ....[three times?] would exist together right there. It works okay for an imputed pot...A future pot is imputed to the assembly of causes and conditions. But the problem comes when you say that the future pot exists... independently, on its own.

There's a consequence being stated in the commentary here. "It follows that the present pot does not exist in the future pot, nor does the past pot exist at that time, for if they both existed at that time, time would be disrupted, since things which are to occur later would already exist at an earlier time.".....as Geshe-la was saying.....Also, at any one time, another cannot exist.

Kathy: [sorry, missed the first portion until it occurred to me I needed to be typing because it was English!!]

Geshe-la's answer: When we talk about the world creator, usually it is felt that it is an eternal creator that has always been there. The people who proposed this kind of idea feel that if it did have a cause, it would undergo transformation and be very unstable. So they are putting forth a type of creator not subject to transformation itself that can give rise to ....

they don't want to say that it has a cause. stable, eternal.

if it's a permanent cause, it would

Whatever effect it creates, it would be creating more and more and more and more over and over and over again. So then, if you posited an impermanent cause, then this process of constant transformation of cause and effect...you have this endless process of cause and effect. That would be the Bst position.

Karen:

You spoke before about having compassion for s.b.s who are in cycle existence—as buckets in a water wheel. In order to have that kind of compassion, you have to have a sense of samsara and what c.e. is. Now, my understanding—I know it's affliction and karma—but my understanding, and I'd like Geshe-la to correct me—if you have a non-virtuous thought that is therefore the cause of suffering...or if you have a thought that you say something that leads to an argument—that is not necessarily harsh speech, but would be an affliction...so your goal is not to attach to that non-virtuous thought and to recognize the thing that you might say—that would cause an argument, for instance—

Is this a summary of samsara.....

GYT:

.... and you stop to say it because you are thinking "I don't want them to suffer" then you are involved in compassion.

Karen:

GYT:

Yes, this is an affliction.

The one that is mentioned in that particular verse is Compassion just for sentient beings, living beings. So the idea in the verse, that it is expressing both compassion for oneself and for others. For oneself is when you understand how you are caught in this process....and then you think, “mine” “things of mine” and you create attachment to them and hostility toward things that prevent them. And then you get involved in physical and mental actions for their sake. And that’s what it’s talking about here. You’re helplessly caught up in this process—being involved in afflictions and actions or karma. If you then think about others...so you want to get rid of that yourself. If you think, “” it’s called the determination to be free, which is compassion for self.

All beings, like me are thinking, “I” and “mine” and engaging in the afflictions of hostility and attachment for the sake of that and they enter into various actions in order to provide for themselves...They’re caught up in that and wanting to free them....that’s compassion

...for impermanent sentient beings. So then you are compassionate from the viewpoint of viewing things as impermanent....and from the viewpoint of them lacking this kind of intrinsic self.

GYT: you are understanding the suffering of living beings. The other one is you have a sense of momentariness-that things are changing constantly from one moment to the next. So then, the living beings themselves don’t have that understanding. They are caught up in the concept of permanence, staticness....and therefore they are pursuing all sorts of things that are harmful to themselves, under the influence of this conception.....compassion for the impermanent. Compassion for the selfless is that, although you understand that all things lack an intrinsic self, you see that all beings have this misconception....harmful thoughts and actions for the sake of that unchanging and independent self. And so you are having compassion for them out of that. So that’s the third category.