

## Study Group – *Aryadeva's 400 Verses*

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While sitting in a relaxed posture, we set a motivation for receiving the teachings such as, 'In order to benefit all sentient beings, I need to achieve enlightenment. So for that purpose I will engage in listening to the teachings and put them into practice as best as I can'.

At the very least developing a contrived bodhicitta motivation with some effort is very beneficial, as it can definitely help one to overcome the self-cherishing mind, and that positive motivation will pervade our practice.

In order to overcome our wrong view of life as being permanent, it is good to meditate on death and impermanence. This will overcome the strong sense of grasping at this lifetime and thus overcome clinging to this life. Meditating on the short-comings of cyclic existence helps one to overcome clinging to cyclic existence in future lifetimes as well as this one, and in particular it helps to overcome clinging to our self-cherishing mind. In summary, these are the main practices that we need to engage in.

These wrong views, which consist of clinging to different circumstances, are the main obstacles to any practice that we engage in. The wrong view of clinging to the permanence of this life generates a strong attachment to this lifetime, and thus prevents our practice from becoming a cause for a good rebirth in our next lifetime. Clinging to this lifetime with strong attachment is the obstacle to creating causes for a good rebirth, while clinging to the pleasures of a future lifetime, such as the pleasures of higher rebirth as human or in the god realms, prevents our practice from becoming a cause to obtain liberation. And the clinging to the self-cherishing mind is an obstacle to our practice of creating a cause to achieve enlightenment. Whatever our practice, if we cling to any one of these three circumstances, it becomes an obstacle for our practice to be an authentic pure practice. Thus it is good for us to try to challenge these wrong views in our mind, and slowly begin to work at overcoming them.

Generating positive attitudes as a means to overcome these wrong views and attitudes leaves a strong positive potential in our mind. When a practice is done with the right attitude and motivation, then it leaves a very strong positive potential or impression on our mind, which then becomes the basis for our further development. Thus when we reflect on their results, we can definitely see the significance of generating these positive motivations in our mind.

It is good to reflect on how our thoughts are mostly influenced by negative attitudes that influence our actions and our mannerism, and that then has a negative affect as our daily life unfolds. It also seems that even with the slightest condition, the negative attitudes in our mind arise very easily and spontaneously without any effort. Whereas, it is still very difficult for the virtuous mind to arise, even when the conditions are present, which are hard to come by. From our own experience we can see that developing a positive attitude does not come about naturally and that we have to make much effort in cultivating it. However once the effort is made, a positive mind can be developed. Thus it is

definitely worthwhile if we put some effort in developing positive attitudes.

The outcome of our practice from the practical point of view is that even though liberation and enlightenment in this lifetime might be far beyond our reach, having the right motivation and attitudes when we engage in a practice can definitely leave a strong imprint or potential in our mind. That then becomes a cause for us to obtain a good rebirth in the next lifetime. If we are born again as a human being, then we will be reborn with that strong potential, or imprint that can serve as a cause to engage further in practice and thus slowly proceed on the path to achieving liberation and enlightenment. That is something which is definitely possible in the future.

### 1.1.1.3.1.5.2. Consequence that fresh restraint from non-virtue and so forth are unnecessary if the future is substantially existent

This fault arises if the future is established as being substantially existent. The main point being raised in this outline is that if the future is substantially existent, then there would be no point in accumulating virtue now.

*If virtue exists though nothing is done, 262  
Resolute restraint is meaningless.  
If even a little is done  
The effect cannot exist.*

As the commentary explains the meaning:

If, because the future is substantially existent, virtue exists without actions such as safeguarding one's ethical conduct once one's faculties have become mature through meeting a spiritual friend and listening to teaching, resolute restraint from unethical conduct and so forth for the sake of future results [such as a high rebirth] is meaningless, for virtue will exist even if that has not been done.

According to the non-Buddhist assertion the future is a substantially existent phenomenon. That of course implies that the future is an inherently existent phenomenon existing from its own side, and not having to depend on anything else. If that were the case, then regardless of what one does now the results of ethics such as obtaining a good rebirth with a good sound body and so forth will definitely be obtained in the future, because that which is to be experienced in the future is substantially existent or inherently existent. What is being implied here is that if that result is going to come about regardless of what one does, then there is no point in engaging in ethical behaviour now.

The refutation is that if the future body as well as its resources, wealth and so forth, were to be substantially existent in the future, then it would not have to depend on anything else for its existence. This implies that it would not have to depend on the virtue and morals that one accumulates now through observing moral ethics.

As the commentary further reads:

*If even the slightest thing is done to enhance one's capability, future effects cannot be substantially existent. It is impossible!*

What is being established here is that future effects cannot be substantially existent. because of the absurdity that was mentioned earlier.

### 1.1.1.3.1.5.3. If impermanent it is contradictory for something to exist prior to its production

In accordance with the assertion that all composite things are impermanent, all functional things are impermanent.

*If they are impermanent  
How can it be said effects exist?  
That which has a beginning and end  
Is called impermanent in the world.*

263

As the commentary reads:

How can it be said then that an effect exists prior to its production? It is unreasonable since impermanence and existence prior to production are contradictory. Anything which has a beginning, in that it is newly produced, and an end, in that it does not last for a second moment after the time of its formation, is called impermanent in the world.

This refers to the way that impermanence is established: from the moment that it is produced it does not last for a second moment after it is formed. That it does not last for a second moment implies that it is impermanent. The two attributes of impermanence are that it is newly produced and that it doesn't last for a second moment. The implication of being 'newly produced' is that it did not exist in the previous moment, and the implication of 'it doesn't last for a second moment' is that it begins to disintegrate from the second moment of its production, i.e. it changes.

A further analogy of impermanence is the person who walks into the gumpa through the door. The moment that they step into the gumpa they have changed in relation to the person who was about to walk into the gumpa. As they take that one step they have gone through a change, and the moment they step into the gumpa it is as if they are a new person.

Another analogy is time itself. What we call a second remains for only a short moment. Whenever the time comes to a particular point it is a new point at that moment, but in the next moment it has changed, and gone to the next moment. If we relate it to, for example, a particular hour, when the time reaches one o'clock it is one o'clock for just a brief moment. The moment after the dial reaches one o'clock it is past one o'clock. Prior to reaching one o'clock it was part of the hour of twelve o'clock, but at one o'clock it is no longer part of the hour of twelve o'clock, which is different from one o'clock. However the moment after it reaches one o'clock, it passes on to being past one o'clock. When we relate this to instances in life or other objects, then we can begin to understand the subtleties of impermanence that occur at every instance of all functional phenomena.

All products have that nature of changing from one moment to the next. We must look into the subtleties of change to understand their subtle impermanence. When we refer to objects such as the person, we see the person of yesterday and the person of today as being the same person. That is because of our habit of perceiving it as the same person, which comes from our own wrong conception of seeing things as being permanent. However, the reality is that all products change from moment. For those who want to meditate on impermanence, it is actually very helpful for their understanding of impermanence if they watch their clock. When you hear the clock ticking and see the dial changing second by second, you can also reflect on how everything around you is changing from moment to moment as well.

#### **1.1.1.3.2. REFUTING THE ASSERTIONS OF SAURANTIKAS AND SO FORTH**

*Liberation will occur without exertion  
For the liberated there is no future,  
Or otherwise, if this were so,  
Desire would arise without attachment.*

264

The Saurantikas assert that of the three times, the past and

the future are permanent while the present is impermanent. Thus when they establish a vase, they establish that the past and future of the vase are permanent, while the present vase is impermanent. That is because they are not able to establish an existent vase of the past or the future, and thus they feel that they cannot assert an existence of a past or future vase now. So for them that implies that the past and the future are permanent. That is what is being refuted.

According to Saurantikas and so forth who assert that future functional things do not have the slightest existence, liberation will occur without any exertion to generate the paths of the Exalted in order to prevent future disturbing emotions and suffering' because future things do not exist.

This would be like liberated Foe Destroyers for whom there are no future disturbing emotions and so forth and who thus do not need to exert themselves because of them.

If the future were to be non-existent, then the future disturbing emotions and so forth would also be non-existent. Taking the particular instance of a foe destroyer, if the disturbing emotions and so forth were non-existent in the future for someone who is to become a foe destroyer, then there would be no need for them to exert themselves in overcoming the delusions, because delusions would be naturally non-existent in the future.

The line of reasoning in refuting the Saurantika assertion should be understood that if the future is permanent, as they assert, then that implies that all incidences in the future will be permanent. That would then imply that the future delusions, afflictions and so forth will be permanent. If they are permanent, then that means then that they will not generate because they are causeless. If they cannot be generated, then the absurdity is that if delusions were permanent then there would be no such thing as an arising or forming of delusions, because they are permanent.

If delusions are permanent they do not arise, so there would be no point in trying to overcome delusions. However arhats are striving to become a foe destroyer in order to overcome the delusions. Engaging in the practices of overcoming delusions is done in order to overcome them in the future. If delusions were permanent then there would be no purpose in doing that.

What is being implied here is that because we do exert ourselves to overcome the delusions in the future, they are impermanent and so they arise, and are functioning. Thus we exert ourselves to overcome them.

As the commentary further explains the verse:

If the future were non-existent and desire were to arise without there being a person, consciousness and so forth or predispositions for attachment as a basis, it follows that desire would arise in a Foe Destroyer too.

If the future were non-existent then that implies that desire would 'arise without there being a person, consciousness and so forth or predispositions for attachment as a basis'. 'It follows that desire would arise in a Foe Destroyer too', which implies that there would be the absurdity of desire arising in foe destroyers. It is an absurdity because desire cannot arise in foe destroyers.

Referring back to the verse, the commentary mentions that:

The words "or otherwise" imply "or otherwise the future is not non-existent."

### 1.1.2. Refutation by examining whether the effect exists or not

*For those who assert effects exist, 265  
And for those who assert they do not exist,  
Adornments like pillars and so forth  
For a home are purposeless.*

As the commentary explains:

Samkhyas say that since what is non-existent cannot be produced, and since the effect is present in the cause in a potential form, the fallacy that anything arises from anything does not occur.

The Samkhyas assert that the fallacy that anything arises from anything means that it does not depend on particular causes, which does not occur for the Samkhyas, because they assert that prior to the effect, there is a potential in the cause. Furthermore: Some Vaibhasikas assert that the three times are substantially existent and that effects exist prior to their production.

[The] Sautrāntikas and so forth assert that although things are truly existent, future effects are non-existent.

The refutation to these assertions is:

It follows that for all of these, adornments such as pillars for a resultant home are purposeless, since according to some it exists from the outset [referring to the Samkhyas assertion], while according to others the future home is non-existent [some of the Vaibhasikas assertions], like a barren woman's child.

According to this assertion, adornments like pillars and so forth for a future home are meaningless. This absurdity is posited to counter the assertions of the Samkhyas and the Vaibhasikas and so forth.

The Samkhyas say that the effect or result already exists in the cause, e.g. the curd, which is an effect of milk, exists as a potential within milk. They assert that the effect already exists as a potential within the cause. The absurdity which is presented here is that if the effect already exists in the cause, then there would be no purpose in erecting pillars and so forth for a future house, because the house already exists.

The Vaibhasika school asserts that all three times are substantially existent. The absurdity is that if they are substantially existent, then they exist from their own side and there would be no purpose in establishing something for the future as the future would already be substantially existent. The Vaibhasika school also asserts that although the three times do not occur simultaneously in general, there are certain causes and effects which do occur simultaneously. The example that they give is mind and mental factors, which are said to be cause and effect, but which also occur simultaneously. They give this example to show how causes and effects do occur simultaneously, even though the three times do not necessarily occur simultaneously. We translate *sem jung* as mental factor, but the literal meaning of the Tibetan has a connotation that it arises or comes from mind. Thus the very connotation of mental factors asserts that it is something that comes from mind, but the Vaibhasikas also assert that it occurs simultaneously with the mind. The schools above the Vaibhasika, however, do not assert mind and mental factors to be a cause and effect sequence.

As the commentary further reads:

For proponents of dependent arising free from inherent existence, [referring to the Prasangika Buddhist school] there is no possibility of error and thus everything is properly established.

So there is no possibility that the absurdity that was

presented earlier will occur to the proponents of the Prasangika school.

As the commentary further reads:

In meditative equipoise the Exalted who are still learning do not Perceive dependently arising phenomena as existent. Failure to distinguish between this non-perception and the perception of phenomena as non-existent, as well as inability to posit conventional valid cognition in one's own system, seems to give rise to numerous errors.

What is being explained here is that in meditative equipoise, as mentioned here and as explained in other texts, *arya* beings do not perceive conventional phenomena. Thus, for the *arya* being who is in meditative equipoise on emptiness, it is said that the conventional phenomena do not exist, and not perceiving the conventional phenomena itself is seeing ultimate phenomena or ultimate reality, which is emptiness. There are those who are not able to differentiate between conventional and ultimate reality which leads to many errors or misunderstandings.

[Since this can give rise to numerous errors one] must therefore master the meaning of the establishment of the two truths by valid cognition in our own system.

The definitions of the two truths were presented earlier, so you can refer to the definition of the two truths there.<sup>1</sup> Again it is good to point out the relevance of having studied the *Madhyamaka*, which is related to many other topics as well as the two truths. That's why I remind you to refer back to those teachings, as they are very relevant. We also covered the distinction between the three times in the *Madhyamaka* as well.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.1.3. Refuting a truly existent present

*Assertion:* Although existence of the past and future are being refuted, the present exists. Since it does, the future exists too, for the principal, giving up its state of futurity, assumes the state of present curd. Thus the present exists.

*Answer:*

*The transformation of things also 266  
Is not perceived even by the mind.  
Those who lack wisdom nevertheless  
Think that the present exists.*

The verse serves as a refutation for the Samkhya assertions in particular.

It is not feasible for the principal, which is matter and permanent by nature, also to undergo temporary changes into things like milk and curd.

The Samkhya assert that the principal is matter and is permanent by nature, but that it undergoes the temporary changes of impermanence. The absurdity of that assertion is that:

Such transformations are not perceived even by mental consciousness that engages with extremely subtle objects, let alone observed by the five kinds of sense consciousness.

If it were the case that the principal is permanent by nature, but that it undergoes change then it would have to be perceived, either by the five sense consciousnesses or by the subtle mental consciousness. But if it is not perceived even by the subtle mental consciousness let alone by the five sense

<sup>1</sup> See transcript for 10 July 2007.

<sup>2</sup> See transcripts of 2 September 2003, 21 October 2003, and 11 November 2003.

consciousnesses, then how else can you prove that the assertion holds? Who else can perceive that?

Although transformation with respect to the present and its causes is not observed, those who lack wisdom and are ignorant about the meaning of suchness consider the present truly existent.

What is being established here is that the transformation from permanent into impermanent phenomena such as milk and curd is not observed.

'...with respect to the present and its causes is not observed, those who lack wisdom and are ignorant about the meaning of suchness consider the present truly existent.'

So only those who lack wisdom, and who do not have the wisdom to perceive that the transformation from permanent to impermanent does not occur assume that it does, and consider the present as being truly existent. But in reality, that is not the case.

## 1.2. Refuting the proof [of substantially established time]

There are two sub-divisions:

1.2.1. Refuting existence of substantially established functional things as a basis for time

1.2.2. Refuting proof based on memory of the past

### 1.2.1. Refuting existence of substantially established functional things as a basis for time

The five sub-divisions of this category are:

1.2.1.1. Refutation by examining whether or not things have duration

1.2.1.2. Refutation by examining whether or not time has duration

1.2.1.3. Refutation by examining whether things and impermanence are one or different

1.2.1.4. Refutation by examining which is stronger, duration or impermanence

1.2.1.5. Refuting that both exist together

#### 1.2.1.1. Refutation by examining whether or not things have duration

This is divided into two:

1.2.1.1.1. Actual meaning

1.2.1.1.2. Proving that duration is not inherently existent

##### 1.2.1.1.1. ACTUAL MEANING

*Assertion:* Time exists because functional things which act as the basis for imputing time exist. Since time may be investigated by considering functional things but not on its own, time is truly existent.

*Answer:*

*How can there be things with no duration? 267*  
*Being impermanent, how can they endure?*  
*If they had duration first,*  
*They would not grow old in the end.*

As a refutation to that the assertion the verse asks:

How can functional things, the basis for time, be truly existent? It follows that they are not because of not having inherent duration.

How could they have inherent duration, since they are continually consumed by impermanence?

Moreover, if they had inherent duration at the start, they would not grow old in the end, because that which is inherently existent cannot cease.

What is being established is that if it is said that duration started off as being inherently existent, but then later it

changed and ceased to be inherently existent, then that is absurd. If something is inherently existent then by default, it would have to maintain the characteristics of being inherently existent and thus can neither change, nor cease. You are asserting that it was first inherently existent and then it later changes, which is absurd.

### 1.2.1.1.2. PROVING THAT DURATION IS NOT INHERENTLY EXISTENT

*Just as a single consciousness 268*  
*Cannot apprehend two objects,*  
*Similarly two consciousnesses*  
*Cannot apprehend one object.*

As the commentary explains the meaning of the verse:

Furthermore there is no inherent duration, for just as a single moment of consciousness does not apprehend two consecutive objects actually presenting their own likenesses, two consecutive moments of consciousness do not apprehend a single object simultaneously, for they undergo momentary production and disintegration.

The main point here is that if duration itself was inherently existent, then it could not change into the second moment. It could not undergo any change because it is inherently existent. Again by default, that would then imply that it cannot undergo any change at all, because of being inherently existent. If duration itself was inherently existent then there would be no such thing as the second moment that comes after the first.

According to the commentary, if duration itself was to be inherently existent, then that would also imply that the first moment of consciousness and the second moment of consciousness perceiving the same object would be the same. However that could not be the case: when a consciousness perceives something, at the second moment of perception of the object the first moment of consciousness has already disintegrated. Thus when the consciousness perceives an object in the second moment, there cannot also be the first moment of consciousness, because it has undergone change.

The fact that it has changed and ceased is because the first moment of consciousness cannot perceive an object simultaneously with the second moment of consciousness perceiving an object. However if duration were to be inherently existent, then that would imply that the first moment exists at the same time as the second moment of consciousness; the first moment of consciousness would not have ceased, because having an inherently existent duration implies that it does not cease. Thus, by default, the first moment of consciousness would then perceive an object in the second moment of consciousness, and thus the two consciousnesses would perceive an object simultaneously. But that is absurd, because there is cessation and production from moment to moment.

Then there is this objection:

Well, that contradicts the assertion in the sūtras of knowledge that the five objects such as visual form are each apprehended by two kinds of consciousness.

As an answer to that the commentary reads:

If one does not accept momentary disintegration, one is not a Buddhist. [However] if one does, the object of observation of a visual consciousness cannot act as object of observation for a subsequently arising consciousness. The sūtra passage means that the visual consciousness cognizes the form clearly and the mental consciousness which is produced subsequently cognizes it in an unclear way.

As the commentary explains, the objection goes against the explanation in the sutras. The interpretation of what the sutra means is:

The sūtra passage means that the visual consciousness cognizes the form clearly and the mental consciousness which is produced subsequently cognizes it in an unclear way.

When an object is perceived, the eye consciousness sees the object directly and thus clearly. After perceiving it directly with the eye consciousness there is a subsequent mental consciousness that perceives the image of that object, which is what we call a conceptual perception. So the conceptual perception is a subsequent perception by the mental consciousness, which sees the object in an unclear or indirect way. The term 'unclear way' means that it is not perceived directly but through the generic image that arises in the mind. We can relate this to our own experience. When we see any kind of form or object, we first see it directly with our eye consciousness, and then if we close our eyes and recall the object that we have seen, we have a mental image in our mind which is called the generic image, but that mental image is not as clear as seeing the object directly with our eye consciousness. Thus we perceive the image of that object with our mental consciousness, but not clearly.

#### 1.2.1.2. REFUTATION BY EXAMINING WHETHER OR NOT TIME HAS DURATION

*Assertion:* Duration has inherent existence because of being the characteristic of present time.

The answer to that is:

If time and duration are different and have an inherently established relationship, they must act as basis and that which is based upon it.

And furthermore:

If duration relies on time as something separate, duration is not time because they are mutually exclusive.

*If time has duration* 269  
*Duration is not time.*  
*If it has not, without duration*  
*There will also be no end.*

What is being refuted here is an inherently established relationship between time and duration. If their relationship was inherently established, then they would have to be both a basis and that which is based upon. However time is established as a basis, and duration is that which is based upon it.

Furthermore:

If time does not have duration, then without duration there cannot finally be disintegration. Therefore since time does not have inherent duration, the latter is unsuitable as the present's characteristic.

It is actually quite clearly established here. The main thing which is being refuted is an inherently existent relationship between time and duration.

The remainder of the chapter is quite easily understood as it is not very subtle, so we will just go through the text quickly without much further explanation.

#### 1.2.1.3. REFUTATION BY EXAMINING WHETHER THINGS AND IMPERMANENCE ARE ONE OR DIFFERENT

*Assertion:* Duration exists because there are impermanent things that have duration.

*Answer:*

*If impermanence and things are separate* 270  
*Things are not impermanent.*

*If they are one, since things are precisely that which is Impermanent, how can they have duration?*

As the commentary explains the meaning of the verse:

If impermanence and functional things are separate in nature, it follows that things are not impermanent. If this is accepted, they must be permanent.

Then furthermore:

If things and impermanence are one, since precisely that which is impermanent is a functional thing, how can they have inherent duration? Duration is impossible.

If things and impermanence are one, then they cannot have inherent duration, thus duration itself would be impossible.

#### 1.2.1.4. REFUTATION BY EXAMINING WHICH IS STRONGER, DURATION OR IMPERMANENCE

This section is sub-divided into three:

1.2.1.4.1. Consequence that subsequent reversal is unfeasible if impermanence is weaker

1.2.1.4.2. Consequence that nothing will have duration if impermanence is stronger

1.2.1.4.3. Consequence that what was permanent will later be impermanent if duration is stronger

##### 1.2.1.4.1. CONSEQUENCE THAT SUBSEQUENT REVERSAL IS UNFEASIBLE IF IMPERMANENCE IS WEAKER

*Assertion:* While things continue to exist, duration is stronger and impermanence weaker, but it is not impossible for the weak to overcome the strong.

*Answer:*

*If duration is not weak* 271  
*Because impermanence is weak,*  
*Why should a reversal*  
*Afterwards be seen?*

The explanation of the verse is presented thus:

How can such a reversal be seen when things later finally become impermanent? It follows that it is unfeasible. If duration is not weaker because impermanence is weaker while things continue to exist, nothing can harm what has inherent strength.

The main refutation here is based on the assertion that duration is stronger and permanence is weaker, because duration at that time is predominant while impermanence takes place only as an eventual change. The main refutation here is that if you establish duration as being stronger and impermanence as weaker, and if that is inherently established, then nothing which is inherently established or inherently existent can have any effect in relation to any other object. So it is irrelevant to say that the duration is stronger and impermanence is weaker, as that would be an absurdity if they were to be inherently established.

##### 1.2.1.4.2. CONSEQUENCE THAT NOTHING WILL HAVE DURATION IF IMPERMANENCE IS STRONGER

*If impermanence is not weaker* 272  
*And is present in all things,*  
*None of them will have duration*  
*Or not all are impermanent.*

If impermanence is not weaker and is present in functional things at all times, it follows that all functional things do not have inherent duration, for impermanence, which overrides it, is always present.

Alternatively, if not all things are impermanent, it follows that those which are not are permanent, because impermanence is weaker and duration has inherent strength.

Basically what is being established here is that if things were to be inherently existent and permanent, then the fault presented here follows.

**1.2.1.4.3. CONSEQUENCE THAT WHAT WAS PERMANENT WILL LATER BE IMPERMANENT IF DURATION IS STRONGER**

Furthermore, does impermanence arise together with the products it characterizes or does it arise later?

*If there is always impermanence  
There cannot always be duration,  
Or else that which was permanent  
Later becomes impermanent.* 273

As the commentary explains:

If there is always impermanence because that which is characterized and its characteristic are inevitably concomitant, it follows that duration is not inherently existent.

Alternatively, having been permanent, a thing would later become impermanent, and if it remained for a second moment, it would be permanent. Yet one thing cannot be both permanent and impermanent.

That is the absurdity.

**1.2.1.5. REFUTING THAT BOTH EXIST TOGETHER**

*If things have duration  
And impermanence together,  
Either it is wrong that things are impermanent,  
Or duration is a fallacy.* 274

As the commentary explains:

The characteristics of products are concomitant with one another. Thus if one accepts that the duration of a thing's existence and the impermanence of its existence are simultaneously of one nature with a thing, either it is wrong that things are impermanent or else inherent duration is a fallacy.

If 'the characteristics of products are concomitant with one another' then 'the duration of a thing's existence and the impermanence of its existence are simultaneously of one nature with a thing' then, 'it is wrong that things are impermanent' i.e. we cannot say that things are impermanent. Alternatively what you can say is that establishing such an inherent duration would be a fallacy that cannot be established.

As the commentary further reads:

These two can exist together in false products [which do not exist as they appear] but cannot have a common locus in truly existent functional things.

'These two cannot exist together in false products' indicates that having impermanence and duration existing at the same time in the one thing is not possible.

**1.2.2. Refuting proof based on memory of the past**

*Assertion:* Time exists because there is past time depending on past products. If that were not so, it would be impossible to remember past rebirths, thinking that one was this or that in the past.

*Answer:* This proof of time's true existence is also without the slightest substance.

*Things seen do not reappear,  
Nor does awareness arise again.  
Thus memory is in fact deceived  
With regard to a deceptive object.* 275

In addition to the answer above the commentary adds:

Memory focuses on an object which one has experienced.

Though things seen previously do not reappear later and though awareness observing objects belonging to a past rebirth does not occur again, memory arises with a sense of seeing as one sees present objects.

Memory which is in fact mistaken and deceived arises in relation to a so-called remembered object which is false and deceptive like an optical illusion. However, we do not deny that memory focusing on past objects arises dependently. This is certainly accepted in our own system.

Establishing that things exist inherently because there is memory of the past is absurd, because memory itself is a fault.

Memory which is in fact mistaken and deceived arises in relation to a so-called remembered object which is false and deceptive like an optical illusion.

Memory itself as well as the object being remembered are both like an illusion, and thus false. It cannot be established that memory and the object being remembered are inherently or truly existent, because memory and the object being remembered are like an optical illusion in both nature and reality. However our system does not deny memory of past objects, which arises dependently rather than inherently or as truly existent. So memory itself, as well as the objects that are remembered are dependently arisen phenomena. Thus there is memory, but both the memory itself as well as the objects that are being remembered arise dependently, not independently and inherently. That is something which is accepted in our system.

The summarising stanza by Gyel-tsap Rinpoche is:

Not knowing how to posit continuity and transitoriness,  
They say time is permanent and the three times exist  
substantially.  
Having understood that phenomena are like optical  
illusions,  
Learn how the three times are perceived.

**2. Presenting the name of the chapter**

This is the eleventh chapter from the *Four Hundred on the Yogic Deeds*, showing how to meditate on refuting time.

The first verse from Chapter Twelve is a very significant verse that indicates how we listen to the teachings:

*An unprejudiced, intelligent and interested 276  
Listener is called a vessel.  
Neither the teacher's nor the student's  
Good qualities will be taken as faults.*

The explanation of this verse and the other verses in Chapter Twelve will be covered in our future sessions. It is now an appropriate time to have some discussion so next week will be a discussion session, and the following Tuesday will be the exam.

The relevant points in relation to these topics, particularly relating to how the self is asserted, refuting the false self and so forth. can be found in the Madhyamaka text. It is good to relate what we are doing now to the topics in that text.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See the teachings from 11 May 2004 to 24 August 2004.