#### Study Group - Aryadeva's 400 Verses

### **७७। । पर्से पर्ट्स पण्डा प्रमी तार्थ मं ये पर्ट्स क्रुवा प्रिय प्रमाय प्रम प्रमाय प्रम प्रमाय प्रम**

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga Translated by the Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe

27 May 2008

# 1.1. Extensively establishing dependent arisings which are not inherently produced as existing in the manner of a magician's illusions (cont.)

1.1.3. Refuting that what is in the process of being produced is being produced inherently

#### 1.1.3.2. EXTENSIVE EXPLANATION

### 1.1.3.2.4. REFUTING THE ASSERTION THAT THE UNPRODUCED IS WHAT IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING PRODUCED

This is subdivided into three:

1.1.3.2.4.1. Actual meaning

1.1.3.2.4.2. Refuting the justification

1.1.3.2.4.3. Necessity of accepting that the unproduced is being produced, if that which is in the process of being produced is produced byway of its own entity

#### 1.1.3.2.4.1. Actual meaning

A thing in the process of production is said 371
To be the entirely unproduced arising.
Since there is no difference, why should the pot
Not be considered as non-existent?

As mentioned previously the earlier and following verses are refuting the inherent existence of produced and non-produced phenomena. In relation to products, the conclusion is that conventionally there are phenomena that are in the process of being produced, but they are not in the process of being produced by way of their own entity. Similarly there is cessation of the causes, for example a seed, but the cessation is not by way of its own entity. Likewise there is production but the production is not by way of its own entity.

As I have mentioned earlier during the study of the *Madhyamika*, that text explains very clearly whether cessation occurs at the time of seed. At the time of the seed there is cessation of the seed, but complete cessation of the seed has not yet occurred. If the complete cessation of the seed occurs at the time of the seed, then there would be no seed left. So there can't be complete cessation at the time of the seed. The conclusion indicated in the *Madhyamika* is that there is cessation at the time of the seed, but that complete cessation of the seed has not yet taken place.

Likewise at the time of the seed, there is production of the sprout but not the complete production of the sprout. If there were to be complete production of the sprout at the time of the seed then there couldn't be a seed either, because complete production of the sprout only occurs when the seed has completely ceased to exist. That is how we should understand that there is production, but not complete production.

One must understand that the following assertions are made by those who assert that products, and so forth,

exist by way of their own entity. They assert inherent existence or true existence and so are opponents of our own system. The assertion in relation to the verse is,

Assertion: A thing that is presently being produced is said to be produced, for although unproduced, it is approaching production.

Again this relates to the earlier refutations. The assertion here is that a thing that is presently being produced (i.e. in the process of being produced), is a produced effect.

With respect to the refutation in the verse the commentary further explains:

If a thing that is in the process of being produced is said to be produced because, even though it is entirely unproduced, it is approaching production...

This is rephrasing the assertion: you say that a thing that is in the process of being produced is actually produced, 'because even though it is entirely unproduced it is approaching production'. Then the refutation is made in the following explanation from the commentary:

[If you assert that is the case then] why should a pot while performing its function not be considered a non-functional thing? It follows that this is a reasonable assertion, since there is no difference between the produced and the unproduced.

Here a counter argument is being used to point out the absurdity. What our system is saying in refutation is that if you can assert that something that is not-produced is being produced then that would be an absurdity. It would be similar to saying that at the same time as a pot is performing its function it is also a non-functional thing. That same logical reasoning also holds for this case as well. So the absurdity is pointed out with the counterargument, 'it follows that this is a reasonable assertion, since there is no difference between the produced and the unproduced.

'Since you do not make any distinction between what is produced and what is not produced then the same logical reasoning would also make no distinction between a functional thing and a non-functional thing, such as a pot. Now a pot, of course is a functional thing. For as long as it is a pot it is functional in relation to its definition, which is that which holds water, that which is bulbous and has a spout. So a pot is a functional thing but according to your absurd assertions, the pot could also be a non-functional thing.'

The refutation is made with this counter argument: if you assert something that is not produced as being produced, then that would be the same as asserting a functional thing to be a non-functional thing.

#### 1.1.3.2.4.2. Refuting the justification

Assertion: There is a difference between that which is in the process of being produced and the unproduced. That which is in the process of production is said to be associated with the activity of production, whereas the unproduced is not necessarily associated with the activity of production.

This is pointing out the difference between that which is in the process of being produced and that which is notproduced. Answer:

That which is presently being produced, Though incomplete, is other than unproduced. Yet also since other than produced, The unproduced is being produced.

372

The answer in relation to this verse is, as the commentary explains:

Since a thing in the process of being produced is associated with the activity of production, you assert that even though it has not completed that activity, it is other than unproduced and future.

The meaning of the verse, as the commentary explains, is that 'you assert that even though it has not completed the activity, it is other than unproduced and future'. This means that at the time of the seed the sprout is actually considered a future sprout because it is not yet produced, i.e. at the time of the seed, which is a cause, the effect, which is a sprout, has not yet been produced. So because it is not produced it is the future of the seed, and not the present. Having the not-produced or the future actually existing in the present would be an absurdity. That is one of the main things being pointed out here: at the time of the seed that which is not-produced and in the future cannot be asserted as being part of the present.

As the commentary further explains:

Yet in that case, since a thing in the process of being produced is other than something produced, you are saying that the unproduced is being produced.

The absurdity that is being pointed out is that the opponents are asserting that the activity of production is what is produced, and that anything associated with that activity can be asserted as being produced. The refutation to that assertion is pointing out the absurdity of asserting that something is produced because it is associated with the activity of production, when in fact it cannot be produced because it is the future. 'If it is produced then how can something that is yet to be produced, already exist at the time of the cause? How can the sprout exist at the time of the seed if it is the future of the seed? However what you are in fact implying is that the not-produced is being produced, and that is an absurdity.'

## 1.1.3.2.4.3. Necessity of accepting that the unproduced is being produced, if that which is in the process of being produced is produced byway of its own entity

That which is presently being produced, 373
Though not yet existent, is later said to exist.
The unproduced is thus being produced –
But the non-existent does not arise.

In explaining the meaning of the verse the commentary reads:

Since that which is presently being produced is other than something produced, you must accept that it is unproduced. You might claim that anything in the process of being produced exists as a thing, because, even though it did not exist previously, it has afterwards become associated with the activity of production. If on this account you say that an entirely unproduced thing associated with the activity of production is being produced, that too is incorrect. An unproduced thing, referred to as non-extent, as

not attained its entity. It does not undergo production, because it is not engaged in that activity.

As the commentary explains, 'you might claim that anything in the process of being produced exists as a thing', however that implies 'that an entirely unproduced thing associated with the activity of production is being produced'. That is incorrect as something that is unproduced or not produced is non-existent, so it cannot have an entity; a sprout that has not been produced cannot have the entity of being a sprout because it has not been produced yet. Thus that which is in the process of being produced cannot function as a produced thing. The assertion is indicated in the outline itself - the necessity of accepting that the not-produced is being produced. So, what is being refuted is something that is not produced as being produced. The absurdity that is being pointed out is if that which is in the process of being produced is produced by way of its own entity, then the notproduced is being produced. That is the main point made

The reason why the not-produced cannot be asserted as being produced is because of the fact that what is to be produced depends on causes and conditions; it has to depend on something for it to be produced. So if the cause itself, or if the process of being produced exists by way of its own entity, then that implies that it exists without depending on causes and conditions. If that which is being produced doesn't depend on causes and conditions for its existence, then the produced could already exist at the time when it is in the process of being produced, and that is a falsity.

#### 1.1.3.3. SUMMARIZED MEANING

The completed is called existent. 374
The uncompleted is called non-existent.
When there is nothing in the process of production
What is being referred to as such?

As the commentary explains:

That which has completed the activity of production is said to exist as a thing, and that which has not performed the activity of production is said not to exist as a thing. If neither that which has nor that which has not completed the activity of production is in the process of being produced, what is being referred to as presently being produced? Anything in the process of being produced does not have the least existence by way of its own entity.

This explanation of the verse is quite clear: 'Anything that is in the process of being produced does not have the least existence by way of its own entity'. The refutation is made in relation to how they assert the production of something. Earlier the opponent asserted that that which is considered as being produced is something that is half produced and half not-produced. However those assertions have been refuted by pointing out that the part that is already produced would have to be considered as something that is already produced, and so it is redundant to be produce it again, and the part that has not been produced does not yet exist. So that which is half produced (completed) and half not-produced (uncompleted) can in no way be asserted as existing by way of its own entity.

## 1.2. Concluding summary of the refutations of inherent existence

375

Since without a cause There is no effect, Both starting and stopping Are not feasible.

As the commentary explains the meaning of the verse:

Investigation by reasoning shows that there is no effect without a cause. Since cause and effect, then, do not truly exist and since the bases therefore do not truly exist, the sprout's starting to be produced and the seed's stopping to exist are not feasible by way of their own entity.

In summary, through investigation of the reasoning that was established in earlier verses it is clear that there cannot be an effect without a cause. As cause and effect do not truly exist and as the bases do not truly exist, there cannot be an effect without a cause. Likewise through investigation one finds that there cannot be an effect from a truly existent cause. Here bases refer to that which is the reliant and that which it relies upon, which is cause and effect. The reliant is the effect and that which it relies upon is the cause. A basis that is truly existent does not exist, so there cannot be a truly existent relationship between cause and the effect.

The text refers to 'the sprout's starting to be produced and the seed's stopping to exist are not feasible by way of their own entity'. A sprout starts to be produced and a seed ceases to exist, but even though they exist conventionally they cannot exist by way of their own entity. To support this the commentary refers to a sutra, which reads as follows:

Sentient beings, humans, those born from power whoever they may be,

None that were born and died here were born [inherently].

The nature of all things is empty like magicians illusions,

But the Forders are unable to recognize it.

The commentary explains this quote from the sutra in the following way:

For instance, the men and women conjured by an illusionist cause the spectators of the magic, who think of them as men and women, to feel attraction and aversion. [With that analogy of illusory men and women the commentary continues] Though they also appear to the magician, he does not think of them in this way. They do not even appear to those who are unaffected by the spell.

The analogy is of the different circumstances in which a magician conjures men and women; to some the illusion actually appears as real men and woman, and they feel attraction or aversion towards them. The illusion also appears to the magician himself but he does not see them as being real, while nothing appears to those who are not subjected to the spell. In relation to this example, the three different types of persons are:

1. Those on whom the magician has cast a spell who see the illusions and believe in them; they see the men and women.

- 2. The magician whose spell affects his own eyes; he see the conjured men and women but does not believe that they exist.
- 3. Those who do not have the spell cast over their eyes; they do not see the illusion so even the appearance of men and women is not there.

In explaining these examples the commentary further reads:

You must understand that these analogies apply respectively to the perception of common beings who have not understood dependent arising's emptiness of inherent existence, to the wisdom of subsequent attainment of the Exalted, and to the meditative equipoise of the Exalted.

The three types of persons mentioned earlier in the analogy correspond to these three types of people.

- 1. The first type of person is the spectator who experiences the magic spell, and who see the illusory men and women and believes in them. This corresponds to an ordinary being who has not understood dependent arising or the emptiness of inherent existence. Without the realisation of emptiness, and due to the strong imprint of grasping at the self, all phenomena appear as inherently existent. Not only do phenomena appear as being inherently existent, but ordinary beings also believe that they exist in the way that they appear.
- 2. The magician sees the conjured men and women, but does not believe that they exist in that way. This corresponds to 'the wisdom of subsequent attainment of the Exalted'. 'Subsequent attainment' refers the post-meditative state after meditative equipoise. When you come to the post-meditative state then the appearance of inherent existence will still be there, but due to the realisation of emptiness there is no belief in the appearance.
- 3. For the Exalted, meaning an Arya, who is in meditative equipoise there is neither the appearance nor the belief.

Though this has been explained several times before, I will repeat the essence again: An Arya being who is in meditative equipoise does not have any dualistic appearances, which means that they don't have any of the three dualistic appearances; the appearance of any conventional phenomena, the appearance of inherent existence, and the duality of subject and object appearing as being separate. For an Arya who is in meditative equipoise these three appearances are completely cut off. The only appearance to the meditative equipoise of the Exalted is the appearance of emptiness, so there is no appearance of any discrepancy between subject and object, no appearance of conventional phenomena and no appearance of inherent existence.

For the Exalted who is the post-meditative state, the opposite is true. There is the appearance of conventional phenomena and inherent existence as well as the appearance of subject and object as being separate. Of course the exception is for an enlightened being, so a buddha would not have these appearances at any time.

The commentary explains:

You should learn how Conventional phenomena are established by Conventional valid cognition and

Ultimate Truth by conceptual and non-conceptual reasoning consciousness from the presentation in [Gateway for Conqueror Children], Explanation of [Santideva's] "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds" and so forth.

This refers to the definition of conventional phenomena and ultimate phenomena. Conventional truth and ultimate truth were explained earlier when the ninth chapter of Shantideva's text was taught. What is to be noted is that the definition of conventional and ultimate truth given in the Madhyamika text and the definition given in The Bodhisattva's Way of Life, are presented in different ways. In relation to the Madhyamika text, as it mentions here, 'you should learn how Conventional phenomena established by Conventional valid cognition and Ultimate Truth by conceptional and non-conceptual reasoning consciousness'. Whereas in Shantideva's text the explanation is different: that which sees the object with duality is conventional truth, and the consciousness or perception that sees things without duality is ultimate truth. The two definitions come to the same thing but the way each is presented is different.

The summarising stanza by Gyaltsab Rinpoche is:

Production and disintegration of composite things Are like dreams and like illusion.

When they are mere terms and mere imputation, How could non-products be truly existent?

The meaning of the first two lines was explained earlier. When the stanza says that all appearing phenomena 'are like dreams and illusions, when they are mere terms and mere imputation', this relates to the earlier explanation about how phenomena lack any inherent or true existence and are just mere terms or imputations. Here 'terms' means being merely labelled conceptually and verbally. Finally, 'how could non-products be truly existent?' is a rhetorical question, implying that products could not possibly be truly existent in any way.

#### 2. Presenting the name of the chapter

This is the fifteenth chapter from the Four Hundred on the Yogic Deeds, showing how to meditate on the refutation of that which constitutes products.

This concludes the commentary on the fifteenth chapter, showing how to meditate on refuting [the inherent existence of that which constitutes products, from *Essence of Good Explanations, Explanation of the "Four Hundred on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas"*.

Transcribed from tape by Judy Mayne Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett Edit 2 by Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe Edited Version

© Tara Institute

Verses from *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas* used with permission of Snow Lion Publications.

Chapter 15 4 27 May 2008