

## 11. 6. 2012 DBC Tenets/Drupta Geshe Jampa Tenzin

### Mind Only Review

#### **Definition of Foundation Consciousness:**

It is a primary mind which is stable and is the basis of depositing predispositions.

‘The base upon which predispositions are laid’ is the key term.

There are three assertions with regard to this according to the four schools.

For Prasangika the mere ‘I’ is the base on which predispositions are laid.

All schools below that except Mind only who believe in a Foundation Consciousness, the base on which predispositions are laid is the mental consciousness.

For Mind Only the base on which predispositions are laid is the foundation consciousness.

#### **The process of depositing predispositions is in four ways according to Mind Only:**

1. base itself
2. depositor
3. how predispositions are laid down
4. discussion about what is a predisposition (nature/definition)

#### **Base**

It has five attributes:

1. Steady, stable

It must be stable. The sense consciousnesses for instance are not stable and are not present in the formless realm and so not suitable. Form is not a good base because in the formless realm there is no form. Mental consciousness is not suitable because it ceases briefly during fainting and coma and at death ceases altogether according to Mind Only. Deluded consciousness is not suitable because it ceases at the development of the uncontaminated path (when emptiness is seen directly).

Whatever is the base/recipient of predispositions must be stable and steady at all times regardless of any situation the person faces. All schools believe that the recipient base must be steady and stable regardless of what it is.

2. Neutral-neither virtuous nor non-virtuous

If the base were virtuous then at the time of non-virtue it could not be existent. A neutral base and non-virtue can manifest in tandem whereas a neutral base and virtue cannot.

Another reason the base should not be non-virtue is that in the form and formless realms non-virtue is absent but people do exist there so they must have a base.

3. Appropriateness/suitability

The base must be receptive to be suitable, therefore the elements, water for example, cannot be a base for depositing predispositions which are a mental faculty.

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4. Related with action of receiving/depositing

If this wasn't an attribute an absurdity would follow; person A would perform an action and person B would receive the predisposition.

5. Self-sufficient

The base can stand alone. It has a degree of independence, unlike, or example, the five omnipresent mental factors which are always present around a primary consciousness. They cannot stand alone. They only follow a primary mind.

Anything meeting these five conditions could constitute a recipient base for predispositions.

### **Depositor**

For Mind Only of their eight consciousnesses the first seven are those which deposit predispositions on the eighth, the foundation consciousness. They don't believe the foundation consciousness can lay predispositions on itself.

### **How predispositions are deposited**

An analogy of the way the seventh consciousness deposits onto the eighth is; like garlic is rubbed onto other food the unique smell is transferred. For example; when the secondary mental factor of faith/reverence in the qualities of the Buddha contacts foundation consciousness the point when the first moment of faith has ceased, and the second moment of contact has arisen, that is when the deposition is laid.

### **Nature/divisions of predispositions**

#### *Three types:*

predispositions of clear expression

predispositions of view of self

predispositions of existence/samsara

Wherever we go we take them.

Mind Only insists on foundation consciousness because of the difficulty they faced when dealing with predispositions. They uniquely assert the foundation consciousness as a base for predispositions but this comes under a barrage of attack by all quarters of the four other schools.

Prasangika attack on the grounds of the Buddha's scriptures, which say, "All sentient beings have a singular continuum of consciousness". Prasangika say to Mind Only, "You have eight which flies in the face of that statement".

Prasangika also negates foundation consciousness as a base on the grounds of the idea of non-inherent existence. For this understanding we need to grasp the idea of disintegratedness/destructuredness as a functioning reality.

Prasangika has three distinguishing hallmarks of its tenet. One of them is this idea of destructedness as a functional reality.

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### **Mind Only continued:**

### **Foundation consciousness continued:**

#### ***The three types of predispositions:***

*-of clear expression*

eg; when you see a form you think, 'this is form/vase', for example. The linguistic expression following perception arose from a predisposition of that expression.

*-of view of self*

eg; viewing oneself as having true existence comes from the predisposition which leads one to have a notion of self, whether correct or not.

*-of existence*

This is the karmic predisposition which makes us take rebirth in samsara.

### **Accompanying retinues:**

According to Mind Only the foundation consciousness has a relationship with the five omnipresent mental factors. When it is focused on an object different registrations of the object take place via the five. The five are related to the function they have. There are two views about this relationship. One is that the five are of one entity with the primary consciousness, that is, they are here with the foundation consciousness. The other view is that they are different entities.

Different schools have differing explanations about primary mind and mental factors.

### **Not beginningless?**

Other consciousnesses are erratic, not seamless. Mind Only believe foundation consciousness is seamless up until Buddhahood and even then a transformed deluded consciousness becomes one of the five wisdoms.

For Mind Only the clear light mind is foundation consciousness.

### **Does foundation consciousness end at the eighth bodhisattva bhumi?**

The eighth bodhisattva bhumi and the path of seeing are different. The path of seeing is the on the first bodhisattva ground. The second to the tenth ground is covered by the path of meditation.

### **Two main reasons for asserting foundation consciousness**

1. need to have a recipient for predispositions
2. need for sense of 'I'.

Foundation consciousness comes to an end at nirvana because deluded consciousness is that sense of 'I' (self-sufficient substantially existent 'I'). What is that 'I'? Foundation consciousness according to deluded consciousness. Deluded consciousness is the root of samsara. At nirvana all delusions are overcome, therefore there is no 'I'. For Mind Only deluded consciousness equals grasping at self. That is eradicated on attaining arahatship. An arahat has no deluded consciousness and therefore the sense of 'I' which developed prior is gone. In its place a new name is given. For Mind Only grasping at self is not eradicated by the Mahayanist until they achieve the 8<sup>th</sup> bodhisattva ground.

*(ED: This doesn't make sense and will need to be clarified)*

### **Synonyms**

Why have more than one word for foundation consciousness?

-appropriating consciousness because it appropriates rebirth

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### Foundation consciousness continued:

- source of all knowledge because all outer and inner phenomena arise from predispositions laid on it, it is the source from which all knowledge is achieved
- the foundation of all because all pleasant and unpleasant sensations arise from it
- the root because it is the main root of all the other consciousnesses

### Aptitude/potential of two kinds

- innate/naturally abiding/predisposition
- developing/expanding potential/spiritual growth through the paths and stages

Asanga founded Mind Only but practiced Mahayana. Why? Because he knew Mind Only position that things exist truly/inherently, was not tenable and that it didn't stand up to logical scrutiny.

### Stable base for predispositions

Stability is paramount to the concept of predispositions. An action whose predisposition will help someone take rebirth as a human may be performed and a moment later the predispositions are laid down but the ripening of those predispositions may not take place for a billion years. Because they may take so long to come to fruition there must be a stable immutable base on which karmic predispositions can be stored and then ripen.

### Significance of the five Buddha families

These five are the enlightened expression in physical form of our own aggregates which at the moment are afflicted and suffering. As one progresses the aggregates become purer and purer then manifest as the five Buddhas.

### Geshela asks questions

For MO is FC person? Yes.

Is a hell beings FC a hell being? Yes.

Is FC of a hell being a sentient being? Yes.

For Mind Only the foundation consciousness in the mind of the hell being is a hell being. A misgiving arises re suffering. . . . . If it is suffering then FC must have the omnipresent mental factor of sensation/feeling. Is painful sensation present with FC?

MO believes that although there are pleasant, unpleasant and neutral mental factors of sensation the sensation of FC is necessarily neutral.

### Unresolved questions

*Re nature of FC-* it is neutral. When an arya being enters the absorption of cessation and all mental activities stop does that arya have the true path? Cessation here means there is no active pleasant or unpleasant sensation at all. Why does this unresolved issue arise?

A given is that unless he or she were to have true path he or she would not be an arya being. MO says the only consciousness left would be FC. Yet if an arya has true path he or she has a virtuous consciousness and MO say that FC has to be neutral.

*Re definition-*for FC there are two parts, base and predispositions. FC is the recipient base and not the depositing factor. That is the parameter. The doubt arises; is FC in the continuum of a human being or not, because humans collect karma. Does the FC in a human create karma or not? Does FC have mental factors around it? Yes.

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### Unresolved questions re foundation consciousness continued:

If a person dies its possible for him to fall into the lower realms. If he falls down he does so due to collecting negative karma. How can FC be giver and receiver of karma? This is the doubt that arises. FC is always excluded from being a depositor.

*Re divisions, base and predispositions*-the base is that which is relied upon and predispositions are that which relies on it. Are they one substance? If you say they are the same, in that case, virtuous and non-virtuous predispositions would blend and merge. If you say they are different it goes against the basic premise that one individual person can't have two distinct foundation consciousnesses.

*Re observed object-does one person's FC observe another person's aggregates?* If you say no it goes against the stated observed objects. MO say all phenomena are in the nature of mind. If the position is held whereby when person 1 observes object B person 1 and object B become of the same nature then the projecting karma of person 1 and projecting karma of person 2 observing object B would collapse into one.