

# Friends of the Western Buddhist Order Newsletter 28

FWBO (STUDY CENTRE)









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ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER  
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The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order was formed in 1967 by the Venerable Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita. It is a charitable organisation whose aims are threefold:

1. To foster interest in, and understanding of, the teaching of the Buddha, and to propagate that teaching in a form and manner appropriate to the conditions of present day life in the West.
2. To provide facilities for the dissemination of that teaching, and for those wishing to practise it. To this end the FWBO holds retreats and seminars, public meditation classes and lectures, publishes literature on Buddhism, and undertakes other projects as considered necessary for the furtherance of these ends.
3. To act as the supporting organ and matrix of the Western Buddhist Order, and to help individuals in this Order in the furtherance of their work in any way considered necessary.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order is governed by a Council which holds regular meetings to determine policies and organise events.

The Western Buddhist Order was founded by Venerable Sangharakshita in April 1968. It is a community of men and women who have, by taking the Upasaka Ordination, made a personal commitment to practising the teaching of the Buddha in their own lives. The Order now numbers over sixty members, most of whom work in or near London, yet it also has an increasing number of members living in the country and abroad, notably in Finland and New Zealand.

Venerable Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita is English by birth and was born in Stockwell, London, in 1925. At the age of sixteen he went to India, where he made contact with the living traditions of Buddhism, studying its philosophy, scriptures, and languages, practising meditation, and meeting many great teachers from India, Burma, China, Ceylon and Tibet. He has been initiated into the three major traditions of Buddhism, and his teachers include several eminent masters of meditation and doctrine.

In 1950 Venerable Sangharakshita settled in Kalimpong where he remained for fourteen years, studying, writing and practising meditation. In 1957 he founded there The Monastery of the Three Ways, and in the same year published A Survey of Buddhism, which has now become a standard and widely acclaimed textbook on Buddhism. In 1966 he returned to England and settled once more in London, where he founded the FWBO in the spring of the following year. His other published writings include Buddhism and Art (1956), The Three Jewels (1967), and Crossing the Stream (1972). He has also given over a hundred tape-recorded public lectures on Buddhism, and written numerous poems and essays.

Sangharakshita now lives in Norfolk, where he is continuing his writing and teaching activities.



## Editorial

Everyone seems to be talking about 'roots'. In general conversation, in letters, and in the reports sent in for the Newsletter from centres and branches, I am continually struck by the regularity with which the word pops up. Wherever you look, it seems, roots are being dug in, established, and pushing deeper. In desperation I felt I had to hack one or two out of the Newsletter, fearing that it was about to resemble a horticultural magazine. The fact remains however that something is happening in the FWBO that people feel to be analagous to the process of a tree putting down roots.

When people use this analogy, I don't they are refering merely to the acquisition, or hoped for acquisition, of property or funds. I think they are trying to communicate something of what it actually feels like, to them, to be involved in the establishment or consolidation of a centre. No matter where the centre is, no matter what kind of centre it is going to be, the first people to be involved with it are working with a vision - a vision, perhaps, of the Windhorse, riding its blazing rainbow trail through the firmament with the Three Jewels on its back, bringing them to humanity. This vision may initially be translated into the hire of a room one night a week for a meditation class, but as more and more people become interested in what is happening, and as the number of people attending the class begins to swell, the need arises for some kind of permanent centre, a shrine room, a place where people can get together more often for more classes and activities. At this point, property has to be sought, money has to be raised, officers have to be elected.

To some people, no doubt, this is where the fun comes to an end. Up to this point, the 'FWBO' was a benevolent order member or two, who were teaching meditation, playing tapes, suggesting good books, and generally opening up a rich new world of ideas and images. Now they are also talking about money, involvement, and responsibility. It may all seem rather 'unspiritual'. Should anyone at this point feel that is where he or she wants to get off, then they will miss out on an extraordinary opportunity. If the spiritual life is about the transformation of our whole being, then it follows that it is not enough for us to be 'Buddhists' with our peaceful passive sides only. We have to learn to incorporate all our energies and all our drives into the process. Meditation, pujas, and communication exercises no doubt contribute to all round development, changing quite radically our ideas of ourselves and of the world. But the time must come when we have to act in accordance with our new view of things. This may mean acting in a way that is quite new to us, in a way that goes against the current of all our conditioning. When asked to give, our first impulse may be to say "No", but with practice we might come to learn how easy it is to say "Yes". If, in a situation where volunteers are being sought for a certain job, our tendency is to hide or look distractedly away, we might come to learn that the simplest and most enjoyable course of action may be to step forward - if we are given the opportunity. This way the vision of the Windhorse will be realised, and through working with that vision, the individuals concerned find



that they are developing. Organising jumble sales, knocking down walls, rattling a money tin on the street, may put some people in contact with feelings and energies that they would not regard as spiritual, but through doing these things in the context of a vision, through pressing those feeling and energies into the service of the Dharma, they generally find their whole spiritual life to be taking on new depth and vigour.

The roots, then, are the opportunities. To say that a centre is putting down roots can only mean that it is providing more and more opportunities for people to deepen their commitment, more channels through which the life energy of individuals can be helped to flow, from the depth of their being, into their highest vision.

Nagabodhi





## The Importance of the Five Spiritual Faculties in the Evolution of the Individual

Readers of Buddhist scriptures and expositions of the scriptures soon become aware that the formulations of the Teaching teem with lists, lists such as the Four Noble Truths, the Five Hindrances, the Twelve Nidanas, the Three Characteristics, and so on. For those who take to studying like a duck to water, the approach to this kind of classification presents no problem, but others, possibly hampered from the start by unpleasant memories of homework and having to learn list after list by heart, may find this aspect of the traditional presentation of the Teaching a little off-putting. It may however prove fruitful to crash through this particular conditioning barrier from time to time and have a closer look at the more important classifications so that the formulations can be seen not merely as lists to memorise (though learning by heart can be helpful as a basis for deeper understanding), but sure guides to the forming of precepts, invaluable aids to spiritual progress. One of the well-known lists in question is that of the Five Spiritual Faculties.

Among the groups of faculties listed in the texts of the Pali Canon are the six faculties of sense, that is, sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking, and the Five Spiritual Faculties, namely Faith, Energy (or Vigour), Mindfulness, Meditation, and Wisdom. Through the aeons of development that we now refer to as the Lower Evolution of Man, the evolution of the biological species, the five sense faculties (leaving aside, for the moment, thinking) have reached a stage of development such that each individual, after the first few years of physical growth, can use them effortlessly, at will, given that there is no physical handicap to inhibit them. A man does not have to learn, through years and years of practice, how to see and hear, or how to smell, taste and touch. These faculties come to him without conscious effort on his part. In other words, they come easily. The word faculty derives, in fact, from the Latin word facilis, which means easy. The five spiritual faculties, on the other hand, belong to that process of individual development known as the Higher Evolution; they do not come easily, at least not in the early stages of spiritual growth. The individual has to perfect them over many years, even over many lives. Eventually, at a certain point in the Higher Evolution, as a result of the work put into their development, the faculties will operate spontaneously, and the highly evolved individual will not have to make any willed effort to balance them one with the other; any tendency towards imbalance will be immediately redressed by an awareness that is now constant, unfaltering, itself spontaneous. Placed as we are, however, rather lower than this point on the hypotenuse of the triangle of Evolution, we are faced with the immediate task of gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of each faculty, so that we can relate it more meaningfully to our own spiritual endeavour.

With regard to Faith, the first of the list, there is the constant need to guard against misinterpretation of the word in the context of Christ-



ianity. Since it is associated, almost exclusively in the Western mind with belief, especially with belief in God or the dogmas of a church, it has to be pointed out that faith in the Buddhist sense bears no relation to that. The word belief has a strong connotation of accepting as true something that is totally beyond experience, almost indeed beyond conception, whereas Faith in the Buddhist sense has a marked emotional connotation. Like all genuine emotion, Faith is very definitely a movement of our being. On the basis of an understanding of the Teaching, strengthened by glimpses of insight into Its true import, some experience of higher than normal states of consciousness in the course of meditation practice and more positive communication with others, the whole of our being is eventually moved by a feeling of repulsion away from the conditioned and of attraction towards the Unconditioned. This urge to be free of our conditioning is fed by Faith until it becomes a positive drive. As the formulation of the Twelve Positive Nidanas (Links) has it:-

In dependence on Suffering arises Faith;

In dependence on Faith arises Delight.

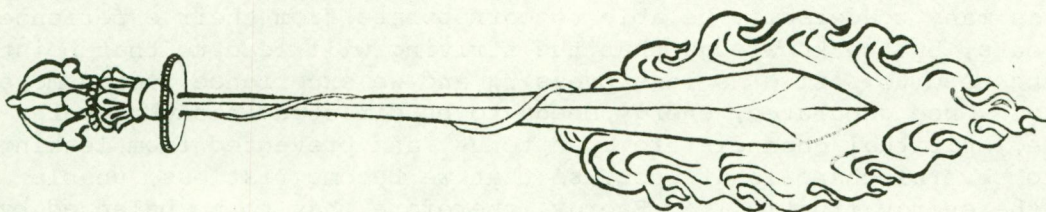
Faith, then, is the link between suffering and joy, not to be thought of as an inert bridge between the two, but more as a living force, the expression of our unqualified emotional assent to the Truth. And if we are to put a brake on the wheel of becoming at the point of feeling ("In dependence on contact arises feeling"), our positive feeling of faith must have sufficient thrust to launch us into the light and airy freedom of the spiral; not a tepid, fainthearted faith, but one that is powerful, glowing. Faith is possible because each individual has the seeds of Enlightenment within. The qualities that constitute Enlightenment, that is, Pure Awareness, Boundless Love and Compassion, Inexhaustible Vigour\* are all present in every one of us in rudimentary form. If this were not so, we would be permanently blind to the possibility of our further development, and the chord struck by the Word of the Enlightened One could have no resonance in the depths of our being. Faith is our emotional response to the Three Jewels; the measure of our response is the measure of our faith. Before we can evolve further, therefore, we must have faith in our own potential; without this we cannot grow spiritually. For instance, one of the five Hindrances to progress in meditation is doubt. If we sit doubting our own ability to reach a higher state of consciousness or allow ourselves to question whether in fact such states are possible, progress will be blocked from the outset. There exists, unfortunately, a specifically Western tendency, grown stubborn through development of the intellect at all costs. This is the tendency to stagnate at the stage of merely playing with the idea of the spiritual life, because realisation of the indispensability of faith in the sense indicated above, has never truly dawned.

Once the faculty of Faith has been developed beyond the embryonic stage and is operating without hindrance, the danger of allowing it to run to excess has to be accounted for. History and perhaps one's own experience have provided enough examples of such excess in the form of superstition, religious intolerance and fanaticism. Faith, therefore, has to be

\*c.f. Ven. Sangharakshita's lecture 'The Ideal of Human Enlightenment'.



balanced by Wisdom. In the perfected sense, we are told, Wisdom is the faculty of continuous, unsullied Insight into the nature of Reality Itself, the Fruit of that stage of the Path known as Knowledge and Vision of Things as They Really Are. In its less developed state it is more in the nature of a clear intellectual appreciation of the import of the Teaching, sometimes accompanied by spasmodic flashes of Insight of varying depth or penetration. What needs to be stressed here is that Wisdom is innate in all sentient beings, just as the other faculties are, as a Potential to be Actualised and not a sort of super-numerary faculty that we 'get' when we're enlightened. This false view of it leads to the fatal corollary that there's nothing we can do about it till then! There is a flavour of this false view in the lady's words to an Upasaka at the end of his lecture, to the effect: "But you're so young to be talking about Wisdom". As if a certain stage of physical decrepitude were essential! Provided we remain aware and have Faith and put energy into our thinking, there is much to be gained from pursuing the meaning of Wisdom to the very limits of our understanding; for this is one way of transcending those limits. But if Wisdom is not balanced by Faith, if we spend too much time at our books and in our heads and too little at puja and in positive communication with people, our burgeoning Wisdom may wither to a kind of academic dryness which can be very discouraging to others on the Path of the Higher Evolution.



There is a refreshing emphasis within our own spiritual movement on the importance of Energy or Vigour. Though we are reminded that Awareness is the only one of the faculties that we cannot have too much of, because it is only through Awareness that we can notice where imbalance among the various faculties lies, it is also true that without Energy, none of the other faculties can be developed further. Initially we even have to make an effort to be mindful! Lack of Energy can be related, too, to lack of Faith, since a vigorous effort is needed to generate this Faith in the Enlightened One and in our own Enlightenment Potential. Comparing our own inertia with the inexhaustible Creativity of a Buddha, instead of seeing Him as Pure Inspiration, we are inclined to shudder at the awful gap to be closed and flounder back with a sluggish flop into our own stagnation.

In the Buddha's description of the Five Spiritual Faculties in the Samyutta-Nikaya (V.196 Thomas's translation), He says about Energy:

"And what, monks, is the faculty of energy? Herein, monks, a noble disciple dwells exercising energy. With the dispelling of bad thoughts and the gaining of good thoughts he is steadfast, advancing steadily, not throwing off the burden involved in good thoughts. This is called the faculty of energy."



"Burden" suggests effort, for we have to work against the dead weight of our conditioning. Having realised, albeit reluctantly, that we do not have, as yet, immediate access to fountains of creative energy, always on tap, so to speak, we are faced with a certain amount of hard work in the business of dispelling the negative emotions and generating the positive. The above description of Energy calls to mind another memorable formula in the Buddha's exposition of the Eightfold Path, in connection with Right Effort, that is the Four Great Efforts:-

"...the effort to avoid, the effort to overcome, the effort to develop, and the effort to maintain."  
(Anguttara Nikaya IV 13, 14)

These refer, of course, to the effort to avoid and overcome unskilful states of mind, and the effort to develop and maintain skilful states of mind. So, one way of solving the problem of how to overcome inertia would be the practical application of this formula to our state of mind at any given time. As soon as we become aware that our skilful mental state might become unskilful should we decide to act in a certain way, energy has to be generated to resist surrendering to that tendency to act; of course, if we have succumbed, the same boost will no doubt be needed to extricate us from the mess. In either case, there will be the inertia of our conditioned selves to deal with, that dead weight pulling against the striving for positive action. But we can be consoled, as many readers may be able to corroborate from their experience on retreats, by the knowledge that the striving will lead to that point where the need to strive is less pressing and we experience Energy more directly. Once generated, energy needs to be directed into whatever creative, spiritual channels are open to us, and prevented from leaking out into several channels at once, so that we become restless, unable to use the energy fruitfully. Energy, therefore, has to be balanced by Meditation.

The process of meditation begins with the concentration of all our scattered energies into a single channel, so that the many 'selves' formerly in conflict unite; then energy begins to flow one-pointedly and the turbulence of warring selves is transformed into an alert calm. The initial willed re-alignment of forces leads, with perseverance, to a refreshing harmony, to entry into the first Absorption. At this stage, perhaps especially at this stage, Energy has to be ever on guard lest meditation degenerate into mere quiescence, a more refined version of our grosser inertia.

The mutual balancing of each of the pairs in our spiritual practice, of Faith with Wisdom, and Energy with Meditation, is controlled by Mindfulness or Awareness. Awareness is the ruling faculty in the sense that it is by Awareness, as mentioned above, that imbalance between the other faculties can be recognised, and in the sense that it cannot run to excess; we can never be too aware! We cannot know where we stand in relation to the other faculties unless we have a close look at ourselves in action. We may scratch our heads about the meaning of Faith, Wisdom and even Energy, and we may wonder exactly how they are inter-related, but there is no mistaking the meaning of Awareness. There is no need, therefore, to delay putting it into practice on the pretext that we're



not quite sure what it is. The Buddha enunciates the meaning in the Satipatthana Sutta, known as the Foundations of Mindfulness. Should we be in doubt as to the importance of Mindfulness, the Buddha states at the outset:-

"This is the only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbana, namely the Four Foundations of Mindfulness."

(the tenth discourse of Middle Length Sayings, published separately as The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, Wheel Publications, no. 19 ).

Through awareness of our bodily postures and movements, of our feelings and thoughts in all circumstances, we come to know how Faith, Wisdom, Energy, and Meditation are operating and the extent to which they are to be developed and equalised. With respect to Awareness, we have to take great care that it does not become alienated. Mara is always at the ready to cut ourselves off from ourselves! In the course of our development, we may well become aware, perhaps painfully, of a severe imbalance between, say, Wisdom and Faith. It might be a case for some time of working uphill and against the grain of an over-developed thinking faculty, of working in a very practical way, by simply apportioning more time and energy to activities conducive to the development of Faith. As always, it is a matter of perseverance in the right direction. Such perseverance requires forbearance during periods of frustration and the strength to resist getting carried away by success. In time, it should certainly have the effect of lifting the Five Spiritual Faculties from the level of the lifeless lists of a text book to the realm of living precepts, the following of which will lead to true progress along the Path of the Higher Evolution.

Abhaya



# The New London Centre

It is now three months since six of us pulled the corrugated iron off a few windows, cleared enough dust and rubbish to lay down our mattresses and began the work of preparing the old fire station in Bethnal Green for use as our new London Centre. People who saw the building before work began, say on visiting now that it actually looks worse than it did before, and in some respects this is true. Having made ourselves roughly comfortable on the top two floors and having got rid of sixty cubic yards of rubbish accumulated in the five years the building has been derelict, we have been forced to strip out a lot of walls and ceilings, remove some floors and joists, and generally to disturb apparently sound construction. The reason is that we have discovered a wide-spread outbreak of dry rot (a science fiction-like fungus which creeps beneath plasterwork feeding on timber). One corner of the building has been infected from top to bottom, necessitating the removal and replacement of a small flat roof and some fairly delicate work on the footings of the large main roof. All timber infected has to be cut out, and neighbouring timber treated and the walls drilled and sprayed to prevent further outbreaks. It will probably take another month or so to eradicate the dry rot and to make good the damaged structure. However work has already begun on bringing the first floor up to its finished standard. This will eventually be the lower floor of the residential community. Here there will be a large common room and kitchen, guest rooms and a library. In all up to twenty people will live in the building when it is complete.

Once the residential floors are completed, work can begin on the ground floor which will provide two shrine rooms and a number of reception rooms, and the basement in which there will be a design and printing workshop and additional space for arts and crafts. It is hoped that the building will be completed by October 1976, ready for full use and occupation.

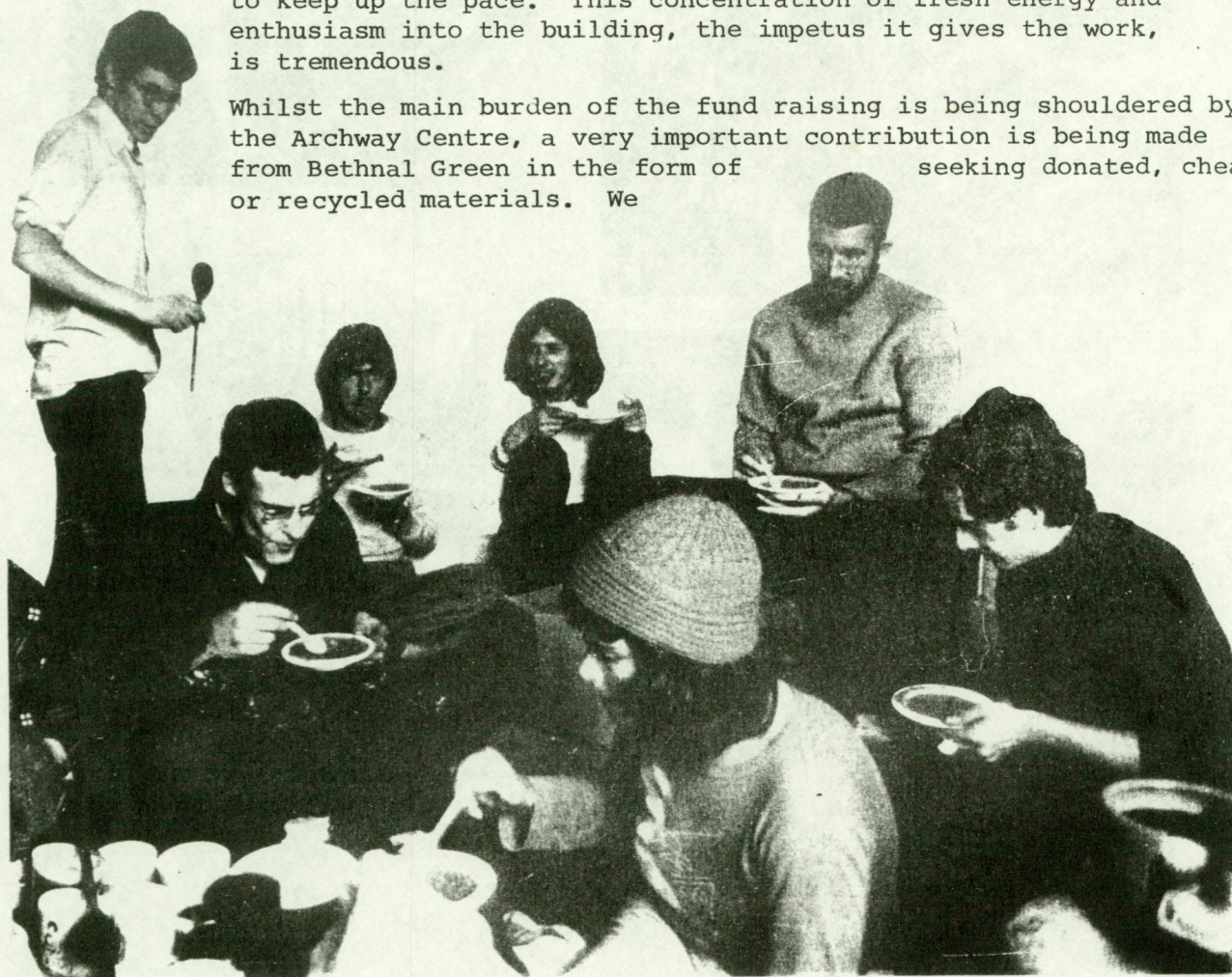




All the work is being done by members and Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. There are now twelve residents who form the main work body, assisted by people staying for short or long periods, just dropping in or attending the working weekends which are held two or three times a month. Among us there is an architect who is responsible for the design, a building engineer, and a skilled carpenter who acts as general foreman. Otherwise skills range from 'handymen' to those of a competent builder.

The work takes place against a background of regular meditation and puja. Each morning there are two hours of meditation and walking and chanting, and every evening a short meditation and puja. One day a week there is a retreat - more meditation, yoga class, and a study group. A small yoga class has been started for people in the area and it is hoped that before long there will be a meditation class. This programme is the only still point in the otherwise everchanging conditions of a residential building site. Rooms change round, lavatories and wiring are uncertain, and the aspect of the building is constantly altering. Above all there are constantly fluctuating quantities of people flooding through. Those who come over for working weekends are so enthusiastic about the building and its potential, and so eager to do their share of knocking, scraping, sawing, sweeping, painting etc, that the residents find themselves lying back on a Sunday night exhaustedly contemplating a fresh bout of creative destruction, and wondering whether they will be able to keep up the pace. This concentration of fresh energy and enthusiasm into the building, the impetus it gives the work, is tremendous.

Whilst the main burden of the fund raising is being shouldered by the Archway Centre, a very important contribution is being made from Bethnal Green in the form of seeking donated, cheap or recycled materials. We









are already well known all over Bethnal Green as a possible purchaser of anything in the building trade.

As the building work progresses and as the atmosphere in the community develops, the new Centre's potential begins to be revealed. There is a lot of hard work to be done yet, but the work is positive and creative. We still need a lot of money, a lot of materials (building equipment, furniture, paint, wood, etc.) and a lot of help. If you would like to help, have contacts etc, or would just like to visit, write, phone, or simply call at the building and see for yourself what is being brought into being. F.W.B.O. 51 Roman Road, London E2. tel: 01-981 1933.

Subhuti

## The Order Convention

For eight days in August, the village hall in Tittleshall, Norfolk, provided the setting for the second Convention of the Western Buddhist Order. With the exception of Bodhishri who came over from Finland, the forty or so members of the Order who attended, were from the United Kingdom. The Convention is the largest annual gathering of Upasakas and Upasikas of the WBO, and provides an opportunity for contact and communication between those who may not have seen each other since the previous year. The focus for this communication was the programme of eleven plenary sessions which were chaired by the Ven. Sangharakshita.

The topics presented for discussion each day varied widely. In one session we talked over the technical and procedural details involved in the leading of classes, and in another allowed our imaginations to take flight as we considered the infinite possibilities that lie ahead in the future. Other themes considered were the teaching of the Dharma, the different types of FWBO centres, devotional, and artistic activities, and social and political involvement.

Perhaps the most exciting prospect to emerge from the various sessions was the vision of the many different ways in which members of the Order will operate in the future as the movement grows and expands. Some may wander worldwide from centre to centre, spending a few months here, a few months there, never becoming associated with any one particular centre, while others may come together to form a community devoted to a specific project such as publishing. Others may establish and run a buddhist school, and so on. There is no 'fixed' way in which an individual might contribute.

Outside the plenary sessions, periods were set aside for meditation, puja, yoga, physical work, and even a football match (London-9, The Rest-7). Abhirati, the home of Norfolk representative Upasika Sulocana provided accommodation for most of those attending, while other communities in the area helped to share the load.

After a long hot summer, the first scent of autumn was in the air as the proceedings drew to their conclusion on the day before Bhante's birthday. After the last plenary session, Bhante was presented with a new typewriter, and an enormous stupa cake with a single candle, in celebration of his 50 years, and in deep appreciation for all that he has given us.



## The Buddhist Society Summer School

The annual Buddhist Society Summer School is such a popular event, that unless you send off your application form within days, if not hours of receiving it, you will be unlikely to get a place. Since many of the people who go live too far from other like-minded people to be able to meet on any other occasion, the organisers of the Summer School have the responsibility of providing a situation which will please, stimulate and recharge most of the people, most of the time. The policy normally followed therefore leads to the creation of a vivid mosaic of attractions which includes lectures, film, discussion and study meetings, classes in Japanese flower arrangement, various kinds of meditation practices, invited teachers and dignitaries, and so on, all with the aim of either improving, bewildering or negating the mind, depending on your temperament, stamina or approach to the Dharma. In his article on last year's Summer School, Devamitra examined the potential latent in such a situation for intellectual and spiritual confusion. I can only reaffirm his observations in this respect, and redirect the interested reader's attention to the article in Issue 24. This year Subhuti was invited to give an evening lecture, lead the evening meditation and puja, and with my assistance, chair a study group.

Subhuti introduced his lecture, entitled 'Vision and Transformation', with a consideration of the theme of 'higher evolution'. After demonstrating the increasing universality of the evolutionary model of development, he went on to maintain that the spiritual life, this higher evolution, consists in the full realisation and development of those visions and insights which so many, if not all of us, have at some stage of our lives, in all kinds of circumstances. He stressed the fundamental importance of going for refuge, commitment to the goal, of creating and maintaining contact with a spiritual community, and of cultivating positive emotional states, as conditions upon which further development relies. His lecture, and in particular his comments on the topic of positivity seemed to encourage a varied response. Among people to whom the aryan truth of dukkha is often interpreted to mean that we should always be aware of suffering as an empirical fact of life, rather than as a transcendental insight into the nature of conditioned existence, his remarks on the desirability of being happy were felt by some to be mildly heretical. Some others, however, spoke of feeling as though a burden had been lifted from them.

Study groups at the Summer School tend to be situations in which an expert offers unilaterally, his comments upon a text, or portion of a text. These observations are generally followed by a period of general discussion. The size of the groups normally prevents the leader from asserting much control over the proceedings, once this stage is under way. It is not unusual for the communication to become quite heated, especially when it concerns points of difference between the followers of the Theravada, and those of the Mahayana. We were fortunate then that our study group on the Udana attracted a relatively small attendance. We conducted the group in much the same way as groups are conducted at FWBO centres, giving people the opportunity to offer their own insights,

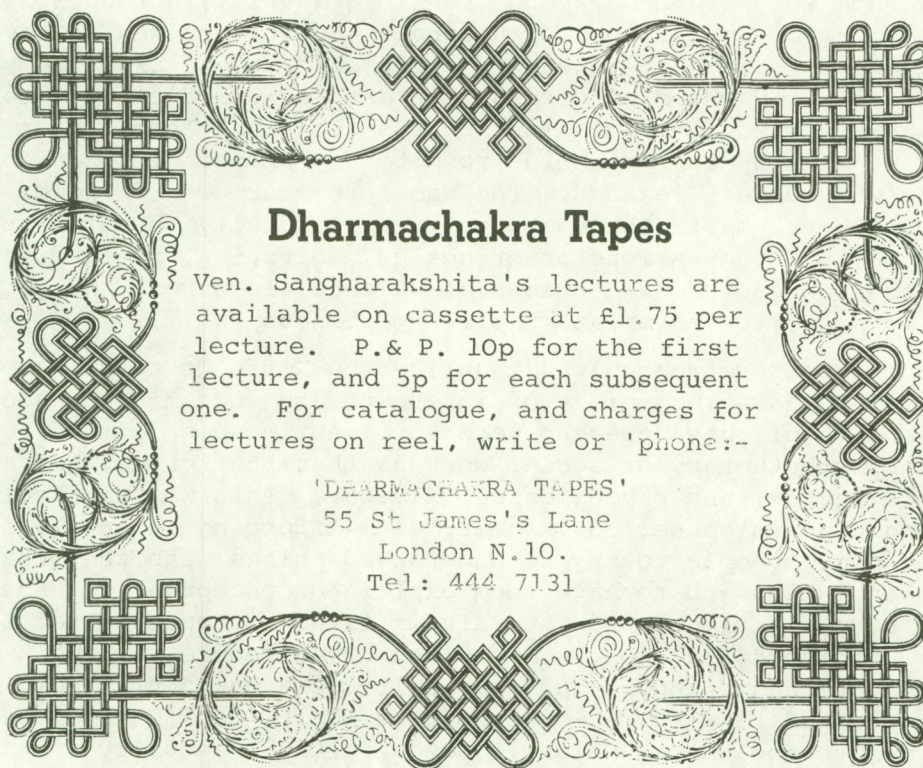


talk about their experience, discuss difficulties, in a very down to earth way. I hope we managed in this way to demonstrate how the reading of the scriptures can be integrated into everyday experience. Certainly the intimacy of the situation seemed to be greatly appreciated by the twenty or so who participated.

I was always a little surprised to see so few people attending the puja. For me and for the very few who did come, the simple, non-conceptual contemplation of Buddha, every evening, provided us with a very welcome and moving counterbalance to the predominantly mental exertions of the day. I feel that had the Summer School continued for a little longer, the warmth and happiness of the ceremony would certainly have begun to exert its attraction over many more people.

Whether at the meal table, or outside under the blazing sun, Subhuti and I spent much of our time in conversation with people, making friends, discussing Buddhism, and answering questions about the FWBO. For many no doubt, we were yet another confusing element in the general babel of views and opinions, but for some, I believe, our contribution, if a little outside the norm, was a source of stimulation and interest.

Nagabodhi



### **Dharmachakra Tapes**

Ven. Sangharakshita's lectures are available on cassette at £1.75 per lecture. P.& P. 10p for the first lecture, and 5p for each subsequent one. For catalogue, and charges for lectures on reel, write or 'phone:-

'DHARMACHAKRA TAPES'  
55 St James's Lane  
London N.10.  
Tel: 444 7131



## The European Retreat

Die Hooghe Hoenderbergh, a large hotel-like building somewhere between a German hunting lodge and a Spanish hacienda, is set in magnificent woodlands near Grosbeek, Holland, close to the frontier with Germany. It was here for ten days that some thirty people of seven different nationalities got together for the first European retreat to be organised by the FWBO.

One might wonder how it were possible to conduct a retreat consisting of 19 Dutchmen, 5 Englishmen, 3 Swedes, 2 Frenchmen, 2 Scots, one Irishman and a Belgian, (not to mention the further complications of Pali and Sanscrit) but with everyone speaking good, and in some cases, excellent English, a high level of communication was established.

In all retreats the first thing to be done is to establish a centre, one's focal point, the central pivot around which the proceedings will revolve, in other words the setting up of a shrine. For this we were very fortunate in having a large A-roofed pinewood attic which was just the right size for our needs. Under Bhante's direction, a very imposing though simple shrine was erected, and a large Shakyamuni image - a gift to the FWBO in Holland - placed in position. This having been done and the dedication ceremony performed, the stage was now set, so to speak, for proceedings to begin.

Being a beginners' retreat where most of the people had had little or no previous experience of meditation or Buddhism, it was decided to start things in a very light way, and then to gradually introduce longer periods of meditation and periods of silence. So, before we did any guided meditation, we all sat together in the shade of a large tree while Bhante explained the Mindfulness of Breathing practice in some detail and answered people's questions on the subject. Then, after some coffee, we went up to the shrine room to try and put into practice the technique we had just learned. The same procedure was followed on the next day with the Metta Bhavana practice. Gradually therefore people were introduced into the various practices of meditation, puja, discussion, communication exercises, periods of silence, lectures, and yoga, with plenty of space to assimilate their experiences.

In many respects this retreat was not unlike the Keffolds retreats of a few years ago, consisting mainly of interested by uncommitted people. A large percentage of those present were involved in some form of 'alternative' psychotherapy or social work so that the retreat had a decidedly intellectual and psychological flavour. This was particularly evident during discussion periods, sometimes manifesting in an almost neurotic need among people to try to understand things with the intellectual, rational mind and to have them explained conceptually, thus highlighting very clearly one of the main difficulties encountered in introducing Buddhism to the West. It is as though people fear what they cannot explain or cannot understand rationally: the unknown. They therefore try desperately to know it, understand it, explain it (away) and thereby remove the threat which it poses to their 'security' (insecurity). But some things just cannot be explained, grasped in this way and have to be experienced directly, rather than through the



medium of words, thoughts, or ideas - something which I think most people began to appreciate as the retreat progressed, as the meditations deepened and they began to approach that area where no questions exist and nothing needs to be explained. This was nowhere better seen than in the special puja held to celebrate Padmasambhava Day, where everyone, circumambulating the shrine room and chanting the Padmasambhava mantra, went forward individually to make offerings to the shrine. Here people were able to give up, at least for a period, that sceptical, questioning disposition so characteristic of the Western mind, and just allow themselves to enter the flow. In doing this, in putting people in touch, if only for a day or so, with that more devotional, more relaxed, more spiritual attitude, in showing them at least the possibility of something beyond the everyday rational mind, lay the great success of the retreat, and also gave some idea of the tremendous contribution Buddhism has to offer to the West.

As yet there is no FWBO centre in the Netherlands, but judging by the enthusiastic response to Vajrayogini's proposals on the matter, it is clearly only a question of time. In the meantime it is intended that FWBO activities will be held regularly at one or other of the many flats and houses offered for that purpose, and Upasika Vajrayogini, as the FWBO representative, will be able to keep those interested informed of all such activities, both in the Netherlands, and elsewhere.

Mangala

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## CENTRES and BRANCHES

### FINLAND

Although there is a growing interest in some forms of Oriental philosophy, even the word Buddhism is rarely heard or understood in Finland. Few books on the subject are available, and of those that have appeared over the years, many are now out of print. This is well illustrated by a little story. We recently hired some tents for a retreat, and on returning them a man from the firm said, "Ah, so you are from the nudists with the tents". He had misheard that we were the Friends of the Western Nudist Order, since in Finnish the words 'buddhist' and 'nudist' are pronounced similarly, and because nudism is far more common.

The Friends in Helsinki come quite evenly from all age groups, and many of them seem to have some previous connections with one or more of the groups in town involved with Eastern teachings. A guide to the size of the FWBO in Helsinki can be gained from the circulation of our Finnish Newsletter. Until Spring this year we were distributing just over a hundred copies. In May we sent out over 250. This growth of interest was largely a result of Ven. Sangharakshita's visit to Helsinki.

On what seemed to be the first warm day of the year, Ven. Sangharakshita arrived at Helsinki airport for a visit which was to last almost four weeks. After two fairly quiet days, he became involved in a vigorous programme of activities. The three weekly classes we had been running throughout the winter months continued, only they were now led by Ven. Sangharakshita and up to fifty people attended them. We held two weekend retreats, one for the advanced class, and another open to all-comers to which twenty people came.

Bhante delivered a public lecture on awareness to about a hundred people, chaired a question and answer meeting in a local vegetarian restaurant, and held a discussion evening for the students of comparative religion at Helsinki University. He also made himself for a great number of private interviews, one of which resulted in a fairly substantial and sympathetic article on Buddhism in one of Helsinki's main newspapers.

While Ven. Sangharakshita's visit did much to encourage a general interest in Buddhism and the work of the FWBO, perhaps the most important aspect of his visit was the communication he was able to have with those few people in whom a sincere commitment to the dharma is beginning to dawn.

Not very long after his return to Finland, Ven. Sangharakshita conferred upasaka ordination on Pekka Airaksinen, who is a musician living in Helsinki. Pekka received his ordination while attending the two week long men's retreat, held in Kent in July. Pekka was given the name of Maitreya, which means the friendly one, one displaying maitri or loving kindness. The name is associated with the Chinese Laughing Buddha, and also with the inspirer of Asanga, the originator of the Yogachara school. Some say that this Maitreya was the Bodhisattva who instructed Asanga telepathically when he arose, as it were, in meditation, to the



Tusita heaven. Others say that Asanga's inspiration came from Maitreyanatha, his guru who bore the title of bodhisattva. However this may be, the name is appropriate to one having a special interest in meditative states of consciousness.



Since the beginning of September there has been a further increase in the centre's activities. Upasaka Vajradaka is now here on an extended visit, and helping to run our six weekly classes- three of which are for beginners to meditation. Vajradaka has given a lecture on the theme of individuality and altruism in the spiritual life. Ashvajit also has plans to visit Helsinki this Winter, while Vajra-bodhi spends a few months working in London. Some Friends have also visited London, and others are hoping to soon. In this way, we hope to increase the links between us.

We have held, recently, a weekend retreat and an open-day, and have plans for more public lectures. Without doubt, the FWBO is becoming firmly established in Helsinki, and as the Winter begins to set in, we are looking forward to a very active future.

#### ARCHWAY CENTRE

Having at last found a New Centre in London, we have probably a year's work to do in making the Old Fire Station in Bethnal Green fit to house a Meditation Centre and a large Buddhist community, and also a great deal of money to raise to enable us to complete the conversion satisfactorily. So for the next year this will be the main focus of our energies in London. At present there are twelve people living at the fire station, including five members of the Order, and these have come largely from Archway, resulting in a lot of changes here. Those who have gone to live and work at the fire station are among our most dedicated and energetic Friends, though the gaps left by them have been quickly filled by other Friends only too eager to do what they can. It is a joy to work in such an atmosphere. Although we now have the fire station, there is a need for a Centre in North London, when the



Archway Centre is finally demolished , to cater for all those Friends who live in this area. This obviously will not need to be as large as the main London Centre. The sort of premises we are thinking in terms of at present are short term properties: small schools (there seem to be quite a few on the market) and very large flats which would be able to house a community of at least three as well as a large shrine room. Despite all these activities and changes, the Archway Centre has been brighter and more welcoming than ever. A Yoga Course has been the only innovation this year. Being a course, it has had two advantages over the open class held on Wednesdays. People are encouraged to attend consistently so there is a continuity to what they are learning, and since there aren't new people starting every week, everyone can progress faster. We shall be starting again in January, so if you are interested you should book soon.

#### ORDINATIONS

On a weekend retreat at Brandon in Suffolk on 27 July, three Friends of long association with the Archway Centre received the Upasaka/Upasika Ordination from the Ven. Sangharakshita.

David Brian Featherby of Archway, London, was given the name 'Padmapani', which means 'Lotus-in-hand'. Padmapani is one of the most prominent aspects of Avalokiteshvara. Padmasambhava has been a strong influence on Upasaka Padmapani's development and is a member of the same Buddha family .

Grahan James Sowter, also of Archway, was given the name 'Siddhiratna' which means 'wish-fulfilling gem' and 'jewel of success'. The success is not only at the mundane level, but also in the use of mystical powers (siddhi) and, ultimately, success in gaining that most precious jewel, Enlightenment itself.

Elizabeth Jane Fricker of Great Ryburgh, near Fakenham in Norfolk, received the name 'Shrimala' which means 'auspicious' or 'noble garland of flowers'. Shrimala is the name of a princess of the time of the Buddha, encouraged to practise the Dharma by her parents. (In this case, Bhante said, it was not her parents, but her brother and husband, Sona and Lokamitra). Despite being married and keeping a home, she determined to become enlightened, and there is a Mahayana Sutra named after her: The Shrimala Devi Sinhada Sutra or the "Lion's Roar Discourse of Princess Shrimala".

#### FUND RAISING

Many many thanks to those of you who have contributed so far to our New Centre Appeal Fund. As you will probably realise, we do not have the general appeal that Oxfam, Save the Children, Help the Aged, and other similar charities have. Most of our funds have to come from those who are involved in, or associated with, the movement in some way. Considering this, the response so far has been very encouraging indeed. We have £30,000 to raise and so far we have raised £16,000. We have £2,000 committed to us over the next year in the form of regular weekly payments, standing orders, etc, and some of these have been covenanted for seven years. This regular payment, or tithe, has been used for some time in Glasgow and New Zealand, but up till now very few people have made such regular commitments in London. It is



especially useful to us because it gives us a good idea of what income we can rely upon over a certain period.

By the time most of you receive the Newsletter it will probably be well into November and it will be too late for you to take part in W.A.M. However, we are holding another W.A.M. in March next year, or you can take any month you like. Perhaps I'd better explain what W.A.M. is: the initials stand for 'Work-a-Month'. We are encouraging all those in any way associated with us to donate all their earnings for November apart from their basic expenses such as rent, food, etc. As you will see elsewhere in the Newsletter, we have a number of fundraising activities taking place before Christmas. If you can help, or continue to help, in any way, you can be sure it will be very much appreciated and used in the best possible way.

Lokamitra

#### GLASGOW

"...not that retreats are ordinary, but this is an extraspecial retreat..."

On October 9, Bhante arrived in Glasgow to give the first ever Upasaka Ordination on Scottish soil. History!

As always during Bhante's all too rare visits the Centre hummed with activity and, as preparations for the ordination retreat were made, people seemed to glow with awareness of the significance of the occasion.

The retreat was led by Bhante and we were happy to be joined by Padmaraja after a two year absence, Mangala extending his Glasgow visit, Uttara from Aryatara, Ratnakuta from Otterferry, as well as the Glasgow Order. It attracted many Friends of long-standing, some newcomers, and also some people from as far afield as Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

The retreat developed. On Saturday night while the rest of us meditated, participating in mind at least, the private ordination took place in Bhante's room. On Sunday morning the retreat reached its climax when, after Metta Bhavana and the Sevenfold Puja, we watched the public ordination, and before our very eyes John Kerr was reborn Ajita, the unconquered.

#### FWBO BRIGHTON

The last few months have seen considerable expansion in FWBO Brighton. We have had an upsurge in attendance, with sometimes as many as thirty people attending the beginners' meditation class. Perhaps more even more marked than the increasing quantity of people is the change in the quality of feeling that is being brought to the Centre. From being a place where they came to learn meditation techniques and listen to Bhante's lectures, the Centre is rapidly becoming the focal point for a number of people who are increasingly identifying with it. It is becoming their Centre. Instrumental in the development of this feeling have been a number of events both formal and informal, including a weekend retreat at Aryatara, a picnic on the Downs, a poetry reading, as well as trips to London on various pretexts. In a few weeks the seal is to be set on this whole movement towards friendship and Friendship, when the Mitra system will be instituted here. So in the rich soil of friendship the seeds of nascent spiritual community are being sown.



## FWBO SURREY

Purley is a comfortably-off town on the very outside fringe of Greater London, in what is often described as the stockbroker belt. The main link between the residents of Aryatara Community and the local residents has been based largely on our yoga classes which have had a more obvious appeal than meditation. We now hold three yoga classes a week, one of which is a twelve week course, and all three are always well-filled. We have recently felt the wish to place a stronger emphasis on our meditation classes and to this end have embarked upon a modest advertising campaign. We are now welcoming several more new people each week.

For those who have been attending meditation classes for some time, the weekly study group continues to provide the opportunity for deepening understanding and commitment. We also plan to hold more retreats for this purpose.

In this connection, it is most desirable to provide more opportunities for Friends to extend their active involvement with the Centre. The jumble sale we are about to hold is not only a fund raising venture, but more importantly, is giving many Friends the chance to get to know one another better through working together. Similarly, we shall shortly initiate a whole-food cooperative based at Aryatara. As well as supplying good, cheap food to people in the area, and making some money for the Centre, we hope that this project will in time provide a means of right livelihood for some of our Friends.

## TRURO

Within a month of its official formation the Cornwall Branch has dug into the ground and its firm roots support the waving branches of this little tree.

First the roots: we now have an established country centre. In a small cottage near Redruth one room has been converted into a shrine that has aroused the interest of more than one local farmer. The kitchen will be completed next, followed closely by a library-cum-study, and then a room for living accommodation. A nearby caravan of palatial dimensions already provides additional comfortable accommodation.

Once a week on Mondays we hold our regular class here. We are in the process of consuming, with delight and mindfulness, the lecture series 'Aspects of the Bodhisattva Ideal'. Another root concerns our organisation - we now have a chairman, secretary, and treasurer.

Now for the branches: we have recently acquired a room of our own in Truro. It is part of the Earth centre, a building occupied by a couple of 'alternative' agrarian groups. We have a room for meditation, and shared use of a small shop and lounge. We are holding an introductory mediation class with short talks here every Wednesday. The contacts made through the Centre promise to make the Dharma available to a new section of the Cornish community. Wednesday meetings are held at 7.0 pm at the Earth Centre, 8 Tabernacle Street, Truro. Please send any correspondence to Ms J. Martin, Secretary, North Calvadnack, Polgear, Carnmenellis, Redruth.



Several weeks ago Maha Upasaka Akshobhya boarded a ship bound for England, and by the time of going to press should have arrived for a short visit. We plan to include in the next issue some of his reflections on Buddhism in New Zealand.

FROM THE EASTERN QUARTER NORFOLK

The brassy brilliance of the sun has turned  
The hedgerows now dripping autumn  
To scarlet gold and purple showers of richness  
Prickly green urchins scattering chestnuts  
On the road to Castle Acre  
What can I bring from Abhirati?  
What flowering of thought, word, or deed?  
What news equal to that last hidden honeysuckle  
Flowering in the hedge, the light of rosehip glowing  
What incense equal to the woodsmoke in the breeze?  
There has been planting of willow wands along the  
boundary  
Well watered with tears or rain to weave a fence  
to our retreat  
(The herb to allay the fires of passion I am told)  
It grows best when well trimmed to sensitive green-  
gold bark  
That strikes a root in good earth dark and still  
Blue as above, so blue field spread lion throned Buddha  
He sits serene  
radiant with diamond light.

Sulocana



## Book Review

### BUDDHISM IN CEYLON; The Heritage of the Political Bhikkhu

THE HERITAGE OF THE BHIKKHU. By Walpola Rahula. Grove Press, Inc. New York, 1974. Pp.176. Price \$3.95.

When I met Walpola Rahula in 1945, in Ceylon, he was probably the best known - certainly the most notorious - monk in the whole island. His thesis that the Buddhist monk had the right to take an active part in politics had split the entire Sangha into two factions, one enthusiastically supporting, the other violently condemning, the stand he had taken. It was not until some years later, however, when I was myself a monk, that I really came to know anything about him. Sinhalese bhikkhus whom I met in Calcutta in the 'fifties, on my periodic visits to Maha Bodhi Society's headquarters, gave me a vivid account of the disturbing effect he had had on the socio-religious life of Buddhist Ceylon. (By that time he was living in virtual exile in Paris.) One of them, with whom I was on particularly friendly terms, took the trouble of giving me a general idea of the contents of his famous book Bhikṣuvagē Urumaya or 'The Heritage of the Bhikkhu', published in 1946. There matters rested for a number of years. I met Walpola Rahula for the second time in 1965 or '66, when he was on a visit to London, and in the course of a conversation we had at the Ceylon Vihara it became evident that despite a scholarly preoccupation with Mahayana thought his ideas were as 'radical' as ever. Now, twenty-nine years after the publication of the original Sinhalese edition, comes an English translation of Bhikṣuvagē Urumaya, so that we are at last able to see for ourselves what the fuss was all about. To Western Buddhists the whole subject is, indeed, of special interest, inasmuch as the author has recently aired his views on 'The Future of the Sangha in the West' in two articles in The Middle Way (June, and August 1974). I shall therefore go through the whole book chapter by chapter, commenting on anything that seems deserving of special notice. In this way we shall be able to see what sort of heritage we in the West may expect to take over from the Sangha in the East - or at least from a section of the Sangha in Ceylon.

#### 1. BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

This chapter emphasises an aspect of Buddhism which is often overlooked, i.e. its concern for the material as well as for the spiritual well-being of man, and the author rightly draws attention to passages in the Pali canonical texts which represent the Buddha as advising people on their economic, social and political affairs. Unfortunately, the chapter opens with the sentence "Buddhism is based on service to others". Such ambiguity as this can spring only from extreme confusion of thought, and we are therefore not surprised when, after referring to the Buddha's renunciation of Nirvana in his previous life as Sumedha the hermit, the author goes on to conclude the first paragraph of this chapter with the statement "A true Buddhist should have the strength to sacrifice his own nirvana for the sake of others" - it being assumed, apparently, that to such a true Buddhist Nirvana is as "assessible" as it was to Sumedha. With the help of a truncated reference to the Buddha's well-known exhortation to His first sixty enlightened disciples to wander from village to village preaching to people for their good and well-being



(nothing is said about Him exhorting them to proclaim the Dharma, and to make clear the perfectly pure brahmacarya or holy life), as well as by means of the plethora of references to the Buddha's advice on purely secular subjects already referred to, the impression is created that "a true Buddhist" is concerned with the promotion exclusively of the material well-being of humanity. In other words, Nirvana having been in effect dismissed as a sort of anti-social selfishness, the Bodhisattva ideal is equated with the secular concept of social service. Could the degradation of a sublime spiritual ideal be carried further than this? Despite his extensive scholarship, the author seems totally unaware of the true significance of the transcendental 'state' of Nirvana, the goal of the Theravada, or of the transcendental 'career' of the Bodhisattva, the ideal of the Mahayana schools.

Besides degrading the Dharma, Walpola Rahula denigrates the people to whom it was preached by the Buddha and His disciples as they travelled from place to place. "Generally" he says, "the villagers were poor, illiterate, not very clean, and not healthy" (p.3). What evidence there is for the greater part of the population of Northern India being poor (by what standard?), dirty and unhealthy in the Buddha's time we are not told. Even quite a cursory reading of the Sutta and Vinaya Pitakas conveys quite a contrary impression. Indeed, if the villagers had not been prosperous, in the sense of having sufficient food, clothing and shelter, how would they have been able to support so large a number of monks, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist? As for their being illiterate, of course they were. With the possible exception of a few traders, who may have used writing for purposes of business correspondence, everybody in that society was illiterate - including the Buddha and His disciples. Religion and culture were transmitted exclusively by oral means. To be "illiterate" did not imply any lack of education or culture - or even of Enlightenment. One cannot help thinking that Walpola Rahula has fallen victim to what a distinguished fellow-countryman of his has called "the bugbear of literacy".

## 2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE LIFE OF THE BHIKKHU

Quite a few Buddhists, even in the West, seem to be under the impression that the Buddha drew up, once and for all, a code of discipline for His monks to which the 'orthodox' among them have adhered ever since. The author shows that this was not so, and that even during the lifetime of the Buddha "the Rules of Discipline were introduced and changed and modified in accordance with changing economic and social conditions to suit times and places" (p.11). He therefore rightly concludes that "The Vinaya (the Code of Disciplinary Rules for the Sangha) is not an absolute truth; it is only a convention agreed upon for the orderly and smooth life of a social organisation. As it should be conducted according to the social and economic changes to suit the place and the time, the Buddha laid down appropriate rules and also changed and modified them" (pp.11-12). One would have thought, however, that if the Vinaya could be modified according to changed social and economic conditions, it could with even greater reason be modified in accordance with changed psychological and spiritual needs, but on this aspect of the subject the author has - perhaps characteristically - nothing whatever to say. His concern seems to be exclusively with the social and the economic. There is also a certain amount of semantic confusion in connection with the word 'democracy'. Democracy means a form of



government in which the 'governed' govern themselves, whether directly or through their elected representatives. It is therefore absurd to say that "the Buddha's system of controlling bhikkhus was purely democratic" (p.11). If He really "controlled" them surely the system was not democratic, and if it had really been democratic, the bhikkhus would have elected Him as their "undisputed master" - which is surely unthinkable. The dilemma illustrates the confusion which is created when popular concepts are used without proper awareness of their meaning.

### 3. THE COUNCILS

These are the Council of Rajagaha, Vaisali, and Pataliputra, and the author's very brief summary follows the traditional Theravadin accounts. He brings them in, apparently, simply in order to make the point that the differences of opinion about the Rules of Discipline which had sprung up among the bhikkhus by the time of the second council were all due to the fact that "A hundred years after the death of the Buddha the economic and social structure as well as the outlook of the people must have undergone changes" (p.13). Once again we hear nothing of any spiritual changes. However, the author agrees with Dr. B.M.Barua, who in turn agrees with Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, that the rise of schools and sects within the Sangha during this period was a sign of health rather than decay.

### 4. INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM TO CEYLON: THE NATIONAL RELIGION OF THE SINHALA PEOPLE

According to Sinhalese tradition, Buddhism was introduced into Ceylon in the 3rd century B.C. by the Arahant Mahinda, son of the Emperor Asoka. In reply to a query by the king of Ceylon, Mahinda is said to have declared that Buddhism could not be considered to have firm root in Ceylon unless and until a Ceylonese, born in Ceylon of Ceylonese parents, ordained in Ceylon, learned and recited the Vinaya in Ceylon. In other words, Buddhism would not be established in Ceylon unless the Sangha there was completely autonomous, i.e. not dependent on the parent body in India - an attitude fully in accordance with the spirit of Buddhism. However, Walpola Rahula takes Mahinda's statement to mean much more than that. "Mahinda's desire," he says, "was to make Buddhism the national religion of the Sinhalese people. And so it happened ...Buddhism became the state religion". (p.17). For 2,200 years legal possession of the throne was the right only of Buddhists. In the tenth century a king declared that only Bodhisattvas should become kings of Ceylon! (Presumably those who became kings were Bodhisattvas). In the 13th century the Pujavaliya declares that the Island of Lanka (Ceylon) belongs to the Buddha Himself. Religio-nationalism seems to have run wild. As if that were not bad enough, however, we are told that "Historical evidence clearly shows that Buddhism existed as an institution of the Sinhalese monarchy" (p.18). In other words, Buddhism has been subordinated to the state. By the time we come to the end of the chapter, therefore, we are not surprised to find the author concluding "Thus, because of the unity of the religion, nation, and state, bhikkhus began to participate in many ways in public affairs and in the freedom and protection of the nation" (p.19). What this "participation" involved we shall see in the next chapter.



## 5. RELIGIO-NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL CULTURE

"From the time of King Dutugamunu...religious and national fervour of both the laity and the Sangha began to grow intensely" (p.20). The Sinhalese from the south, we are told, mounted a "crusade" to liberate the nation and the religion from the foreign yoke (the capital had been occupied by a South Indian king), and Dutugamunu, "the greatest of national heroes", after proclaiming that he was not warring for the pleasures of kingship but for the reestablishment of Buddhism, marched at the head of his advancing army carrying a spear with a sacred relic of the Buddha enshrined in it. Western Buddhists will no doubt wonder where they heard all this before. But the story is not yet finished. "In this decisive battle for the liberation of Buddhism and the Sinhalese," Walpola Rahula relates, the bhikkhus, headed by their great Elders, did not remain in their cells" (p.20). One bhikkhu, "who was about to become an arahant," disrobed and joined the army, a large number of others accompanied the army into battle, and "blessed and inspired by the presence of bhikkhus, the warriors fought with great courage and determination" (p.21). In these circumstances we are not surprised that "From this time the patriotism and the religion of the Sinhalese became inseparably linked. The religio-patriotism at that time assumed such overpowering proportions that both bhikkhus and laymen considered that even killing people in order to liberate the religion and the country was not a heinous crime" (p.21). Indeed when the victorious king one day became remorseful when he thought of the destruction of thousands of beings in battle, eight arahant bhikkhus, i.e. monks who had attained Nirvana, came to the king and assured him that he had committed no sin. Non-Buddhists, they declared, were no better than beasts! Once again, we cannot help wondering where we have all this before.

At this point, feeling perhaps that he has been rather carried away by his enthusiasm for religio-nationalism, Walpola Rahula seems to check himself. He has the grace to admit that the statement of the eight arahants, as recorded by the Mahavamsa or Great Chronicle of Ceylon, is diametrically opposed to the teaching of the Buddha. Yet he is clearly unwilling to condemn it outright. "It is difficult for us today either to affirm or to deny whether the arahants who lived in the 2nd century B.C. did ever make such a statement" (p.22). (Apparently they could have made it, then.) However, being concerned with precedents rather than with principles, he does not allow the problem to bother him for very long. By the 5th century A.C., when the Mahavamsa was written, monks and laity alike had clearly recognised that working for the freedom and uplift of the religion and country was so important and noble that arahants themselves, they believed, had accepted the idea that the destruction of human beings for this purpose was not a very grave crime - and this is all the author really wants to know. "It is evident," he says, "that the bhikkhus of that time considered it their sacred duty to engage themselves in the service of their country as much as in the service of their religion" (p.22). He then gives examples illustrating the national and cultural activities in which the bhikkhus engaged. Some of the activities are innocent enough. In the reign of King Dutugamunu we find arahants functioning as architects and bhikkhus rendering manual labour by supplying the masons with bricks and mortar. Later on, however the



monks play a leading part in politics and even decide who should occupy the throne. Walpola Rahula is therefore able to conclude, very much to his own satisfaction, that "from the earliest period of Ceylon history to the recent past, it is abundantly clear that in addition to participating in numerous other responsibilities, the bhikkhus played a leading role even in the highly responsible political function of selecting a suitable king to rule the country" (p.23).

#### 6. FUNDAMENTAL INNOVATIONS

The most important of these innovations was the writing down of the Tipitaka. Hitherto, of course, it had been preserved exclusively by oral means, but in the last century B.C., in the reign of King Valagamba (Vattagamani-Abhaya), an invasion from South India, internal dissensions and, above all, the most disastrous famine in Ceylon history, between them brought about such unsettled conditions in the country that the elder monks, fearful for the future of the religion, decided to commit the Buddha's Teaching to writing. This was a courageous and far-sighted decision, and we cannot be sufficiently grateful to the ancient worthies who, at such a time, preserved the 'Pali' rescension of the sacred tradition not only for the Buddhists of Ceylon but for the world. Unfortunately, however, besides committing the Tipitaka to writing they resolved that doctrinal study was more important than the practice of ethics and meditation. As Walpola Rahula points out, this was directly contrary to the original teaching of the Buddha, according to which the practice of virtues and the realisation of Nirvana were more important than the mere study of the Dharma. Not that this was not realised at the time. There was a lengthy debate between the pamsululika or ascetic 'rag-robed' bhikkhus and the dhammakathika or 'Dharma-expounding' bhikkhus, but in the end the latter, who seem to have been in the majority, carried the day. As a result, a fundamental change took place in the character of Buddhism and the way of life of the monks. Scholarship came to be considered more important than spiritual practice. Monks who were good scholars came to be more highly esteemed than those who devoted themselves to meditation. As Rahula puts it, "The solitude-loving meditator lives in seclusion away from society, doing no service to society. The scholar is engaged in service which is necessary for society, and valued by it" (p.27). From the first century B.C., therefore, it is the scholar monk who dominates the scene in Ceylon. The 'rag-robed' monk disappears into the forest, where he exercises less and less influence, and at times even partially adapts himself to the new trends. Eventually, though this the author does not tell us, - perhaps because he does not consider the matter important enough, - the practical knowledge of meditation virtually died out in Ceylon.

#### 7. STUDY AND MEDITATION: ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Scholarship having come to be considered more important than spiritual practice, it was only natural that two separate and mutually exclusive monastic vocations should come into existence. A monk could be either a scholar or a meditator, but he could not be both. More extraordinary still, meditation was considered suited to the weak and incapable. "Able and intelligent bhikkhus who were strong in body and mind followed the vocation of scholarship, while bhikkhus of weaker intelligence, feeble in body and mind - particularly those who had entered the order in their old age - followed the vocation of meditation (vipassana-dhura)"



(p.30). By the time of King Mahinda IV. in the 10th century A.C., the salary paid to the teacher of the Abhidhamma Pitaka, which was "conducive to the advancement of knowledge", was equal to the combined salaries of the two teachers of the Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas, which were traditionally held to deal with monastic discipline and meditation respectively. With incentives of this sort being offered them, it is not astonishing that monks who took up the vocation of scholarship should have widened their scope to include the various branches of secular knowledge. In this way the whole field of secular education came into the hands of these monks, who enjoyed a comfortable and lucrative existence. They even took up medicine and law. At the end of the chapter Rahula is able to record with satisfaction that as early as the 1st century A.C. an elder monk held a post equal to that of Chief Justice of Ceylon. The scholarly monks had clearly become what Coleridge called a clerisy, and a Buddhist clerisy is no more the Sangha than a Christian clerisy is the Church.

#### 8. MONASTERIES: THEIR ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE

As a result of the educational and other services rendered by the monks to the nation, the monasteries became extremely wealthy. So much so, indeed, that special departments of state had to be created to administer the monasteries and their landed estates, which often included whole villages. The possession of so much wealth was not without its disadvantages. Whenever law and order broke down the monasteries had to pay to robbers and bandits chiefs what can only be described as protection money, a practice that eventually came to be regarded with approval. The monasteries also owned large numbers of slaves, both male and female. As Walpola Rahula frankly admits, all this constituted a radical departure from the way of life prescribed for the monks by the Buddha, so much so, indeed, that what he disingenuously calls "a new monastic way of life" (p.39) developed in Ceylon. Not that the change seems to bother him particularly. As he says, "It was the natural result of the inevitable changing political, economic, and social conditions of the country from time to time" (p.39). The chapter concludes on a curious note. The author finds it difficult to believe that the monks were given so large a portion of the national wealth solely for religious reasons. They were treated so generously, he believes, because they "worked for the common welfare of the people and the cultural advancement of their country." (p.39).

#### 9. ARTS, CRAFTS AND LITERATURE

This chapter strikes a happier note. From the 4th century A.C. onwards the monks of Ceylon not only greatly encouraged the visual arts but themselves sometimes practised them, particularly painting and sculpture. Monks also played an important part in the development of secular literature. Mahanama, in the 5th century A.C., composed the Mahavamsa or 'Great Chronicle', our principal source for the early history of the Island. This work consists mainly of stories about kings, ministers, bandits, wars and rebellions, towns, cities and countries, all of which are subjects that the Buddha had said it was improper for monks to discuss. Mahanama gets round the difficulty in a highly ingenious manner. By concluding with a reference to death and impermanence, to which even kings are subject, he could claim that each chapter had been converted from a description of worldly affairs



into a meditation on the sublime truths of the Dharma. The use of such a device, though innocent in itself, well illustrates the ingenuity with which the Ceylon monk often sought to combine extreme unfaithfulness to the spirit of the Buddha's teaching with scrupulous regard for its letter.

#### 10. NATIONAL FREEDOM AND THE PROTECTION OF PEACE

Here we see the monks of Ceylon busy with all kinds of political activities. From the 5th to the 18th century they depose and enthrone kings, approve declarations of war, settle feuds, answer questions on the constitution, and negotiate trade pacts. Apart from allowing King Parakrama Bahu the Great to send an army to India to spread "the Right Faith", they used their vast influence in a humane and moderate manner, and seem to have well deserved the tribute which Rahula pays them for their zeal and prudence.

#### 11. THE PORTUGUESE PERIOD

The Portuguese arrived in Ceylon in 1505, at a time of political disintegration, and ruled the maritime provinces from then until 1658. Throughout the territories under their control Roman Catholicism was propagated with fire and sword, and many people embraced the new faith. In the kingdom of Kandy, still ruled by a Sinhalese monarch, the situation was if anything even worse. King Rajasimha I not only gave up Buddhism for Hinduism but behaved with great brutality, killing many bhikkhus and burning a large number of religious books. So great was the havoc, that the monastic order ceased to exist, and had to be re-introduced from Arakan at the beginning of the following century. Despite the uninterrupted patronage it had received for centuries, it seems to have collapsed with remarkable ease.

#### 12. THE DUTCH PERIOD

The Dutch ruled the maritime provinces from 1658 to 1796. Though there was sixty years of peace at the beginning of this period, on the whole the presence of the Dutch was as disastrous to the political, economic and cultural life of the country as that of the Portuguese had been. So far as the unfortunate inhabitants of the occupied territories were concerned, the only difference was that instead of being forcibly converted to Roman Catholicism they were now forcibly converted to Protestantism. Twice the monastic order died out and twice it had to be re-introduced, once - for the second time - from Arakan and once from Siam (Thailand). On each occasion the reintroduction seems to have consisted in little more than the restoration of the technically correct tradition of bhikkhu ordination. Despite the noble personality of Saranamkara, who eventually became head of the revived Sangha, there was no question of spiritual renewal. The clerisy re-formed its scattered ranks, and clung on to whatever patronage was still available.

#### 13. BRITISH RULE

In 1796 the British conquered the maritime provinces from the Dutch, and in 1815 they gained control of the kingdom of Kandy, thus becoming "the first and the only foreign power in history to occupy the whole of Ceylon" (p.64). The author relates a story to show how, on the sad day when the Kandyan Convention was signed, "the honour and prestige of the Sinhalese and their religion was saved and protected by a bhikkhu"



(p.64). This enables him to conclude that "On every occasion when both the nation and the religion were in danger, Buddhist monks came forward to protect them" (p.65). However, though otherwise meticulous in citing sources, he gives no authority for his story.

#### 14. STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM: REBELLION

In this chapter we find Buddhist monks assisting, and even leading armed rebellions against British rule. One elder monk was, indeed, shot on suspicion of complicity in one of these rebellions. "In the 19th century, as in the past, patriotic Sinhalese laymen and the clergy fought together, sacrificing their lives in the cause of freedom and religion" (p.67).

#### 15. THE STRENGTH OF THE BHIKKHUS: LAY-CLERGY UNITY

#### 16. BRITISH TACTICS: DISRUPTION OF LAY-CLERGY UNITY

#### 17. BRITISH TACTICS: CONFUSION OF MONASTIC ADMINISTRATION

#### 18. BRITISH TACTICS: INTRIGUES TO DESTROY BUDDHISM (CHRISTIAN EDUCATION)

In this group of chapters the author describes the way in which the British disrupted the unity and solidarity of the bhikkhus and the laity, won over some of the most prominent elder monks, severed the Government's connection with the administration of Buddhist temporalities, and spread Christianity and Christian culture throughout the country. Article 5 of the Kandyan Convention had declared that "The Religion of Boodhoo....is declared inviolable, and its Rites, Ministers, and Places of worship are to be maintained and protected", but this was not observed in the spirit, and hardly in the letter. Indeed, in 1816, the year after the signing of the Convention, we find Governor Sir Robert Brownrigg, in a letter to William Wilberforce, protesting against the suspicion that the word "inviolable" was being understood in an "anti-Christian" sense in Ceylon, and assuring his correspondent that the chief object of his Government had been the religious and moral improvement of people, and the propagation of the Gospel (p.87). For some years the salaries of all Christian missionaries were paid out of the civil list, which meant Sinhalese Buddhists were having to finance the cost of their own conversion to Christianity! Measures of this sort, which were aimed at the destruction of Buddhism and the enfeeblement of the Sinhalese nation, understandably arouse Walpola Rahula's indignation - an honest indignation that will be shared by all who cherish the ideals of national self-determination and religious tolerance. His harshest strictures, however, are reserved for the chief high priests of the Malvata and Asgiriya Chapters, who on appointment to office undertook to be "loyal and faithful" to the Government, as well as to report any subversive activities that came to their notice. Such conduct might not have been very heroic, but the author adduces no evidence to show that the high priests necessarily acted from unworthy motives. Perhaps he does not consider it necessary to do so, religious-national patriotism being for him obviously the highest of all virtues.

#### 19. NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS DEGENERATION

With the spread of Christianity and Western education Sinhalese Buddhist culture came to be neglected and despised, even by the Sinhalese



Buddhists themselves. The position of the bhikkus deteriorated. As they "could not adapt themselves to suit the changed political, economic and social situation, they were rendered useless to society" and "laymen had nothing to learn from them" (p.91). Worse still, the Buddhist monk was "driven to limit his activities to the recitation of the Suttas (Pirit chanting), preaching a sermon, attendance at funeral rites and almsgiving in memory of the departed, and to an idle cloistered life in the temple" (p.91). Some Buddhists would probably feel that such activities as chanting and preaching were not altogether unworthy of a Buddhist monk, but Ven. Rahula seems to think that for someone who had been used to enthroning and deposing kings they represent a great come down in the world, and he speaks bitterly of the "melancholy and abject situation" of such a monk. More extraordinary still, he refers with approval to the ancient Sinhalese idea that a Sinhalese had to be a Buddhist! This is surely a complete denial of the individual's freedom to follow the religion of his own choice, and as such a complete negation of both the spirit and the letter of the Buddha's teaching. One cannot be a Buddhist unless one is free not to be a Buddhist - unless one is free to be a Christian, or a Muslim, or a tree-worshipper, or anything else one wants to be. What Walpola Rahula in effect does is to turn Buddhism from a universal religion into an ethnic religion, surely the worst of all betrayals, the worst of all perversions, of a teaching that stressed above all others the responsibility of the individual for his own development. Indeed, had Walpola Rahula been around at the time of Mahinda's arrival in Ceylon, he probably would have objected to the introduction of the new faith, on the grounds that it was of Indian origin, and would have exhorted the Sinhalese people to remain true to their own traditions. At the end of the chapter he says that "what the Sinhalese Buddhists opposed was not the religious teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, but a religion together with an alien civilisation propagated by the imperialists as a mode of destroying patriotism and national culture, and reestablishing foreign rule in Ceylon" (p.92). But this does not really help him very much. It was undoubtedly right for the Ceylon Buddhists to resist the forces of Christian religio-imperialism, but what if a Sinhalese wanted to adopt, of his own free will, "the religious teaching of Jesus of Nazareth"? According to Ven. Rahula, he is not free to do so. He is a Sinhalese and he must be a Buddhist. Moreover, if the Christian missionaries did not represent "the religious teaching of Jesus of Nazareth" neither did the bhikkhus of Ceylon - at least those with whom Rahula is concerned - represent the religious teaching of Gautama of Kapilavastu. Rahula does not understand this. He does not understand that what really happened during the period of British rule, if it had not happened even earlier, was that the Christian clerisy, as represented by the missionaries, to a large extent superseded the Buddhist clerisy as represented by the monks. The more powerful 'medicine' of the West virtually ousted the weaker 'medicine' of the East. Quoting Rahula's own words in an earlier chapter one might say that this was an example, on an even wider and historically important scale, of "the inevitable changing political, economic and social conditions" in the world. In fact, what took place was not so much a clash between Buddhism and Christianity, or even a clash between Buddhism and the forces of



Christian religio-imperialism, but a clash between two rival clerisies. Buddhism as a living spiritual tradition had disappeared from Ceylon long before the British came. What collapsed under the combined impact of Christianity and Western education was the clerisy, and it is degeneration in this sense that Rahula is really lamenting in this chapter.

## 20. THE REVIVAL

Just as degeneration was the degeneration of the clerisy, so revival was the revival of the clerisy. From 1841 onwards pirivenas or Buddhist monastic institutes for the study of the traditional learning and culture were established, Buddhist schools were opened, and Buddhist societies founded. However, reading between the lines of Rahula's account, it is clear that 'revival' tended to mean two quite different things. In the first place, it meant the revival of the traditional learning and culture. In the second, it meant the teaching of Western arts and sciences under 'Buddhist' auspices. Thus there were, in fact, two clerisies. one consisting of those Buddhist monks who had been educated at the pirivenas, and one consisting of those laymen - and monks too, eventually - who had received a Western education. As a result of this, the conflict between the 'Christian' clerisy and the 'Buddhist' clerisy was reproduced within the Sinhalese Buddhist community itself. One interesting development of this conflict was that many of the wealthy, Western-educated Sinhalese Buddhists not only sent their children to Christian missionary schools (presumably because they believed Western 'medicine' to be superior to Eastern 'medicine') but believed that bhikkhus "ought to confine themselves to purely religious activities" and, in Rahula's own words, "live a life limited to the four walls of their temples" (p.95). Rahula believes that such wealthy laymen wanted to keep the bhikkhus out of politics for purely selfish reasons, and with regard to some of them he is undoubtedly right. At the same time it ought to be considered that some laymen of this class, being themselves members of the dominant clerisy, looked to the members of the monastic order for something more than just learning and culture - for a higher, 'spiritual' something that neither the Christian missionaries nor the 'political' bhikkhus possessed. Where a need of this sort is concerned, however, Rahula seems quite unsympathetic, even uncomprehending. Bhikkhus ignorant of the modern world and its problems he dismisses as "a set of meaningless ancients" (p.96). His ideal is represented by the knowledgeable and energetic bhikkhus of the present generation who, he declares, have no wish to chant pirit, perform funeral rites, or deliver "the usual sermons". Such bhikkhus have "considered it their duty and heritage once again to liberate their country, nation and religion" and this, according to him, is "the inevitable course of history which cannot be stopped" (p.97).

On this stirring note The Heritage of the Bhikkhus ends. Since its original appearance in Sinhalese in 1946, however, a great deal has happened in Ceylon, and Walpola Rahula has therefore added to this English edition of his famous book a Postscript which brings the story down to 1971, the year of the great insurgency. In 1948 Ceylon became



independent. Those who had assumed that the end of foreign rule would mean automatic reversion to full-fledged religio-nationalism were however soon disappointed. Whether or not the process of history cannot be stopped, Rahula and his friends had certainly miscalculated its direction. Nevertheless, such was the enthusiasm for national, cultural and religious revival that, in the first decade after independence, it seemed as though a veritable renaissance was taking place. A World Fellowship of Buddhists was inaugurated, a Buddhist council held, a Buddhist Committee of Inquiry appointed, and the 2500th Buddha Jayanti celebrated on a grand scale throughout the country. At the same time, the bhikkhus became more deeply involved in social reform and welfare activities of various kinds, while among both monks and laymen there was a growing demand for the implementation of the recommendations of the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry, which had proposed widespread changes, and the declaration of Sinhalese as the national language. This demand was spearheaded by the 'political' bhikkhus, and with their support the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, which had promised to implement the Committee's proposals, won the General Election of 1956. For a while it seemed as though the wildest dreams of religio-nationalism were about to become a reality. Then in 1958 the Prime Minister, Mr S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, was assassinated by a Buddhist monk. I was in India at the time and well remember the sensation the news created. "Generally speaking," Rahula tells us, "the bhikkhus could not face the public for several years" (p.109). In the light of what Rahula has told us about the bhikkhu "in educational, cultural, social and political life" throughout the centuries it now seems, in retrospect, that sooner or later a tragedy of this sort was bound to take place. Indeed assassination, or attempted assassination was part of the heritage of the bhikkhu in Ceylon. In a curious footnote Rahula tells us that in the 1st century A.C. about 60 bhikkhus who had attempted to assassinate the king were executed by being thrown over a high rock (p.161). When the bhikkhus again "faced the public" and appeared on the political scene, at the time of the 1965 General Election, their forces were divided. Some supported the United National Party, which carried the day, and some the S.L.F.P., which went back into opposition. "Thus," Rahula concludes with satisfaction, "bhikkhus on both sides were again in the forefront" (p.109).

Again in the forefront! These words contain a clue to much that is muddled in Rahula's thinking, and much, indeed, that is ambiguous in his own position. To him it does not matter, apparently, if bhikkhus campaign for rival political parties - and from what I remember of newspaper reports at the time the campaigning was not conducted in a very gentlemanly fashion. What matters is that they should take a prominent part in whatever happens to be going on. In other words, the bhikkhus - or rather the political bhikkhus - like his 'socially' oriented counterparts in the modern 'Christian' West is in fact looking for a role. Two thousand years ago he lost faith in Buddhism as a path of individual spiritual development and gave up being a monk in the original, more 'spiritual' sense of the term to become a member of the Buddhist clerisy. This gave him both influence and prestige and for some centuries he was satisfied. Now, however, the 'Buddhist' clerisy has been superseded by a secular, modern clerisy to whom he has forfeited much of his former



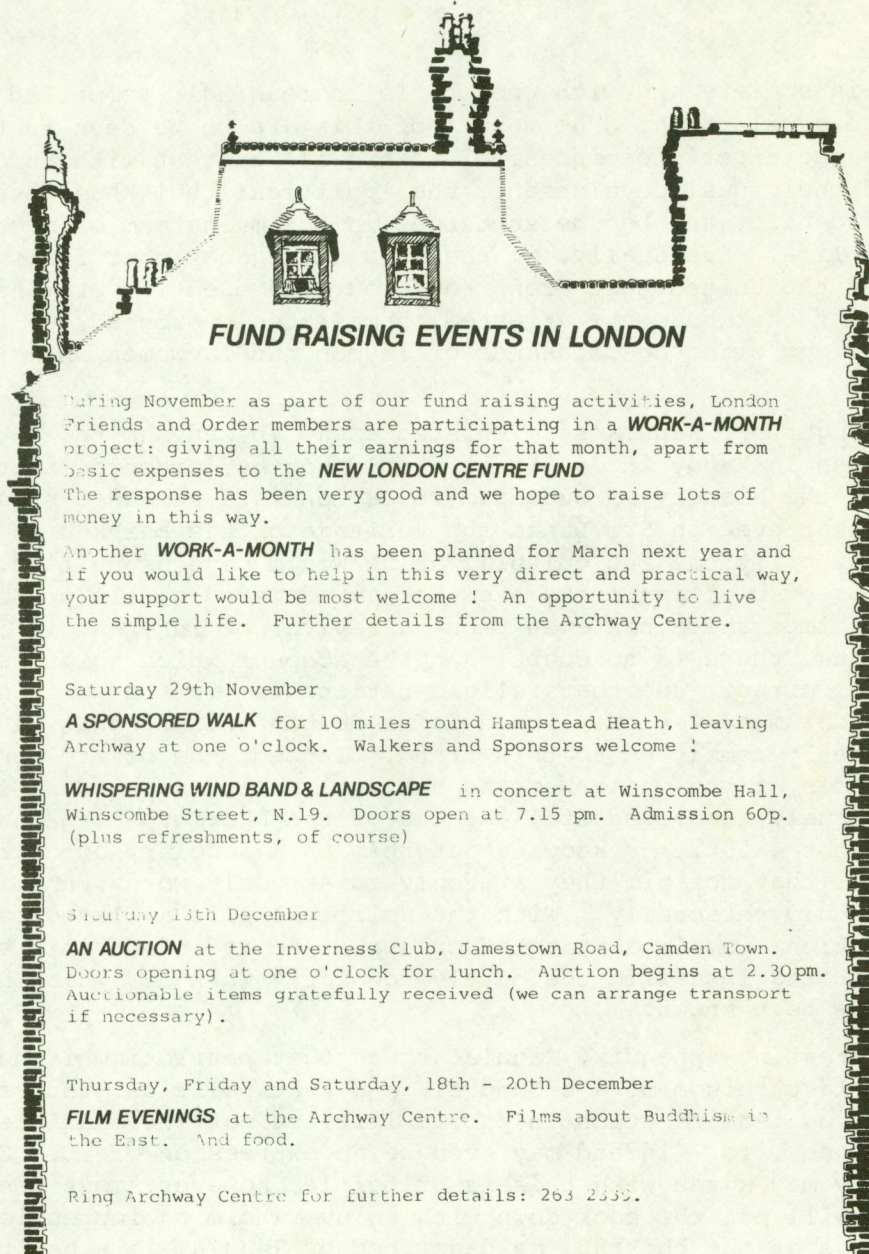
position in society and with whom he is increasingly compelled to compete on equal terms. The results of this are to be seen in the second decade after independence. Losing all contact with Buddhism as a path of individual development, the 'political' bhikkhus lose their separate identity and become submerged in the mainstream of secular political life. Eventually, in the mass insurgency that followed the failure of the United Left Front to honour its election promises, "hundreds of bhikkhus were arrested, humiliated, tortured, or killed" (p.117), along with the thousands of laymen and laywomen who similarly suffered.

Going through Ven. Rahula's celebrated essay (based, he tells us, on a speech given in Kandy in 1946), it should not be forgotten that his reading of the history of Buddhism in Ceylon is a somewhat selective one, and that even in Sri Lanka the heritage of the bhikkhu is not so exclusively political and cultural as he would have us believe. 'Rag-robed', forest-dwelling monks seem to have existed at all periods, and in recent times there has even been a revival of interest in meditation. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the account which he gives is substantially correct, and that religio-nationalism is the dominant feature of the Buddhism of Ceylon. There is no doubt, either, that Rahula himself is deeply committed to this trend. Indeed, one of the most remarkable features of the whole book is his entire unconsciousness of the more spiritual, transcendental aspects of the Dharma. For Rahula these simply do not exist. He knows about them as a scholar, of course, but it is clear that for him they are only ideas, only words, and mean nothing to him personally. With the spiritual life a closed book, and religio-nationalism in a state of collapse, he is indeed in a strange position, being left with the purely scholarly work for which he is, of course, now best known.

In an interesting appendix, Rahula argues that patriotism is not necessarily the last refuge of a scoundrel, and that politics, understood as disinterested participation in public life, is not incompatible with the religious life - indeed may even be an expression of it. Even though they may agree with this in principle, however, most Western Buddhists will put the book down with an overwhelming impression that the heritage of the bhikkhu, as described by Rahula, is a heritage of shame. With its record of almost continuous betrayal of the spirit of the Buddha's teaching it provides us with a saddening and sickening example of what happens when ultimate spiritual objectives are replaced by secondary cultural and political ones - when a universal religion is transmogrified into an ethnic one and the spiritual community becomes a cultural elite. It is therefore a heritage with which I for one want as little as possible to do. What our real heritage is, in both East and West, is for me sufficiently indicated by the Buddha, when He declared, "O monks, ye are mine own true sons, born of my mouth, born of the Dharma. Therefore, O monks, be ye heirs of the Dharma, not heirs of worldly things".

SANGHARAKSHITA





## FUND RAISING EVENTS IN LONDON

During November as part of our fund raising activities, London Friends and Order members are participating in a **WORK-A-MONTH** project: giving all their earnings for that month, apart from basic expenses to the **NEW LONDON CENTRE FUND**

The response has been very good and we hope to raise lots of money in this way.

Another **WORK-A-MONTH** has been planned for March next year and if you would like to help in this very direct and practical way, your support would be most welcome ! An opportunity to live the simple life. Further details from the Archway Centre.

Saturday 29th November

**A SPONSORED WALK** for 10 miles round Hampstead Heath, leaving Archway at one o'clock. Walkers and Sponsors welcome !

**WHISPERING WIND BAND & LANDSCAPE** in concert at Winscombe Hall, Winscombe Street, N.19. Doors open at 7.15 pm. Admission 60p. (plus refreshments, of course)

Sunday 13th December

**AN AUCTION** at the Inverness Club, Jamestown Road, Camden Town. Doors opening at one o'clock for lunch. Auction begins at 2.30pm. Auctionable items gratefully received (we can arrange transport if necessary).

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 18th - 20th December

**FILM EVENINGS** at the Archway Centre. Films about Buddhism in the East. And food.

Ring Archway Centre for further details: 263 2332.

## RETREATS

The following retreats will be taking place within the next few months. Any further information and booking forms can be obtained from the retreat organiser at the Archway centre.

28-30 November	Weekend retreat at Aryatara, Purley.
13 December	Day retreat at Aryatara, Purley.
20 December - 11 January	Three week working retreat at the New London Centre, Bethnal Green. No charge.
20-22 February	Weekend retreat at Court Lodge, Kent.
19-21 March	Weekend retreat for beginners at Court Lodge.



## Weekly Programmes

### ARCHWAY

Monday	6.00 pm	Hatha Yoga courses (by arrangement)
Tuesday	7.00	Double meditation and puja
Wednesday	5.00	Beginners' yoga class (50p)
	7.00	Beginners' meditation class
	8.30	Recorded lecture by Ven. Sangharakshita
Sunday	6.30	Beginners' meditation class
	8.00	Recorded lecture by Ven. Sangharakshita

Meditation every morning 7.30 - 9.00 am.

### ARYATARA

Monday	6.30 pm	Beginners' yoga class (50p)
	8.00	Advanced yoga class (50p)
Tuesday	7.30	Regular meditation class
Wednesday	7.30	Beginners' meditation class
Friday	10.30 am	Hatha Yoga course (by arrangement)

### BRIGHTON

Monday	7.00 pm	Beginners' meditation class, and recorded lecture by Ven. Sangharakshita
Tuesday	7.00	Hatha yoga (50p)
Wednesday	7.00	Regular meditation, recorded lecture, puja
Thursday	7.00	Dharma study (by arrangement)

### GLASGOW

Tuesday	7.00 pm	Meditation. Recorded lecture or discussion. Puja
Wednesday	7.00	Dharma study (by arrangement)
Thursday	7.30	Beginners' meditation class

### EALING

Tuesday	7.30 pm	Beginners' meditation, discussion
Thursday	7.30	Double meditation, puja

### TRURO

Monday	7.00 pm	Dharma study (by arrangement)
Wednesday	7.00	Beginners' meditation, discussion.



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If you would like to contact other Buddhists in your area,  
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We are very glad to give any assistance we can to individuals  
or groups who are trying to practise or study Buddhism.



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