

*The*

Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

# NEWSLETTER

Number 58

Price 70p



## MEDITATION

In this issue we take a look at the direct method of working on the mind.



# About the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

None of us is complete; more or less by chance, we are tossed up by, our conditioning — biological, psychological, social, and cultural — as partial beings. Our future lies in each one of us making something of him or herself: making of that miscellaneous bundle of conditionings a happy, free, clear-minded, and emotionally radiant individual.

The conscious growth of a truly human being is the ultimate heroic act left to us. If we so choose, we can develop within ourselves a vivid awareness of existence, a powerful positivity towards all that lives, and an inexhaustible dynamism. Ultimately, we can become 'Buddhas', enlightened or fully awakened individuals who have totally liberated themselves from the bondage of subjective conditioning and who have a direct and intuitive understanding of reality.

One who commits himself or herself to this ideal of individual growth is a Buddhist. So the Western Buddhist Order is a fellowship of men and women who have explicitly committed themselves, in a simple ceremony, to furthering their own and others' development.

The Order forms the nucleus of a new society or culture in which the values of human growth are para-

mount. As a result of Order members taking responsibility each for their own lives and attempting to communicate honestly and openly with others, that new society is becoming a living reality. In those areas where Order members have gathered together there are found three things: Communities, Co-operatives, and Centres.

In communities, Order members and Mitras (literally 'Friends': people who, after some initial contact with Order members, have decided they wish to deepen their communication) live together in numbers varying between four and thirty. In these, a new and radical way of life is being forged, which encourages and inspires community members to grow. They are usually either for men or for women so as to break down the habitual psychological and social patterns usually found in our relationships with members of the opposite sex which so much inhibit growth. Often, community members will pool all their earnings in a 'common purse' from which all expenses, communal and individual, will be met. The flavour of the communities is as varied as the people within them.

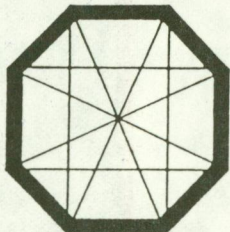
In the Co-operatives, groups of Order members, Mitras, and Friends (those who are in contact with the Movement and participate in any of its activities) work

together in businesses which financially support the workers and which fund the further expansion of this New Society. Present businesses either running or being set up in the Movement include a printing press, wholefood shops, a silkscreen press, a hardware store, cafes, a second-hand shop, bookshop, editorial service, metal-work forge, and graphic-design, photographic and film studio. Members of the Co-operatives are hammering out a way of working which is 'Right Livelihood': team-based so that each person has the opportunity to take responsibility for the work, and ethically sound: exploiting neither other people nor the earth's resources. Work is done not for remuneration, but for its value as a means of development (in what other situation might your workmates suggest that you go for a walk or do some meditation when you seem run down?) and from a spirit of generosity. Each worker either works voluntarily or is given what he or she needs to live.

The most direct and effective means to the evolution of consciousness is the practice of meditation. At the Centres, members of the Order teach meditation and conduct courses, study groups, talks, and discussions on the principles and practice of Buddhism. There are

also ceremonies, festivals, and arts activities. Yoga, massage, and other practices are taught as valuable, though less central, methods of development. Centres are places where you can make contact with Order members and others already in touch with this burgeoning New Society. Above all, through the Centres, a bridge is formed over which those who wish may cross to a new and total way of life based upon the growth and development of individuals.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order ('the Friends') is, then, a movement, always deepening and expanding, of people who wish to be authentic, integrated and dynamic. It was initiated in 1967 by the Ven. Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita, who spent 20 years in India as a Buddhist monk. He there studied, practised, and had contact with all the main traditional schools of Buddhism and returned to the West with a clear awareness that, though its essence remains the same, Buddhism always expresses itself anew in each new age and climate. The 'Friends' is the response of the Buddhist tradition of insight and experience to the circumstances of the modern West. It is an increasingly widespread movement with some twenty Centres and Branches throughout the world.



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The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order  
**NEWSLETTER**

## Summer 1983

**Editor**  
Nagabodhi

**Published Quarterly by the**  
Friends of the  
Western Buddhist Order  
119 Roman Road, London  
E2 0QN. Tel: 01 980 2507

**President**  
The Ven. Maha Sthavira  
Sangharakshita

**Layout & Design**  
Nagabodhi,

**Editorial Assistance**  
Jonathan Brazier, Alan Vero

**Typesetting**  
Windhorse Photosetters  
247 Globe Road, London,  
E2 0HU. Tel: 01 981 1407

**Printers**  
Aldgate Press  
84b Whitechapel High St.  
London E.1. 01-247 3015

\* Windhorse Publications  
1983

**Subscription**  
£3.25 pa (Surface mail to  
all parts of the world)  
Please make cheques and  
P.O.s payable to:  
Windhorse Publications

**Cover Design**  
Nagabodhi

Painting of Amitabha  
by Devaraja

## Editorial

The last issue of the *Newsletter* was devoted to the theme of 'context'. We tried to demonstrate that factors like the work we do, the morality we practise, our cultural environment and our friendships all have a powerful effect on consciousness. Specific activities such as Dharma study, Hatha Yoga, and speculative thought can have an even more precise effect. Taking this principle into account we should be able to devise a life-style that provides an ideal context for the practice of meditation, a context into which meditation can be introduced more or less as a finishing touch.

In this issue we come onto meditation practice itself — or at least some aspects of it. The Venerable Sangharakshita has described meditation as the 'direct method' of working on consciousness, since in meditation practice we aim to transform our consciousness, not by working through our body or our senses, but by working with the mind itself. A meditation practice is a technique that allows and helps us to do this.

In the FWBO we have always given a lot of attention to the matter of context. Our communities and co-operatives, as well as such centre activities as T'ai Chi, Yoga, drama workshops etc., bear ample testimony to this. But, right from the beginning, meditation has always occupied a supreme position at the centre of all that we do. There can be very few people at all actively involved with the FWBO who do not meditate at least once a day, and it would be impossible to calculate how many tens — or hundreds — of thousands of people have learned meditation at the introductory meditation classes which are for most people their first contact with the FWBO.

It is no accident that the 'Buddha image', the central symbol of Buddhism, is the familiar image of a man peacefully seated in meditation posture: poised, balanced and content, yet alive with energy, warmth and clarity. Meditation is the very heart of Buddhism. It is meditation that gives us the key to the radical transformation that constitutes spiritual development.

Far from triggering off a dreamy and possibly dangerous descent from consciousness into unconsciousness, Buddhist meditation is the tool that draws the forces and vision from our unconscious depths and heights into consciousness, thus enlivening, enriching and transforming every aspect and moment of our lives.

Far from providing us with an easy escape from reality, meditation honestly practised leads us into a pure and inescapable confrontation with all that is real in ourselves and in the universe.

Through meditation we can discover that those ideas and ideals of which we read and hear, like 'true individuality', 'the creative mind', 'spiritual friendship', 'self-transcendence', 'Enlightenment' itself, are nothing less than real and tangible treasures, waiting within us to be brought out into the light of day and shared with all beings throughout infinite space.

Nagabodhi

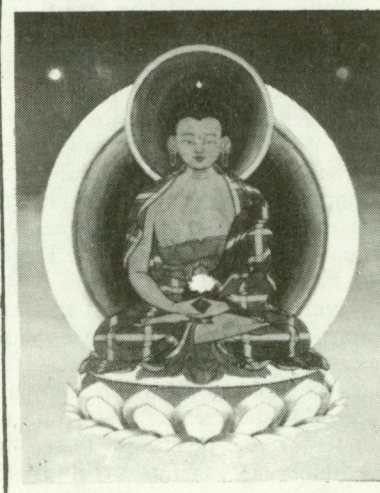
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**M**editation is a word which, although possibly more widely known now than it was ten or fifteen years ago, still conjures up for many people visions of self-induced hypnosis, blank minds, brain-washing, or a life-denying and selfish attitude towards life. It is a word which is often used to cover a wide variety of mental practices and techniques usually derived from a broad range of often unconnected background philosophies and traditions and is therefore open to numerous interpretations.

For example, some time ago a Church of England vicar's wife told me that she meditated by making her mind "into a ball and throwing it into the air for ten minutes or so". While this may have been relaxing, neither this nor the states mentioned above bear any relation to the meaning and purpose of meditation within its specifically Buddhist context.

Within the Buddhist tradition, the word meditation is usually a translation of the Pali word *bhavana*, which simply means 'development'. This immediately gives us some clue that meditation can have quite a specific purpose and in fact involves a certain amount of effort, energy and motivation. The teachings of Buddhism, put very simply, say that human beings are capable of growth, change and development; that consciousness can be transformed; that we can become increasingly more aware of our mental states and develop more expansive, life-affirming and creative states of mind. The direct working on the mind and emotions through various formal meditation techniques has always been, therefore, a central method within Buddhism of effecting a transformation in our awareness, and the tradition has evolved through its long history literally hundreds of methods which suit people with different temperaments, or which deal with specific states of mind. It is important to remember, however, that the word 'meditation' has two aspects; firstly the numerous specific techniques and methods, and secondly the creative states of mind that the practice of these techniques gives us access to. In

its broadest sense, meditation is a flow of positive mental states: that is states of mind rooted in loving kindness, clarity and contentment, regardless of whether one is actually formally meditating or not.

It does seem, however, that most of us do need recourse to a particular method of increasing our awareness. We do need specific practices and time set aside without distraction even to become really aware of the present contents of our minds before we can set about transforming them. Although Buddhism presents us with such a vast range of practices it is not essential that we should know about all of them or that we should attempt to practise all of them. Our first need is to select one or two methods and practise them systematically and regularly over a period of time in order to benefit fully from them.

There are practices which are of benefit to all meditators and we teach two of these at FWBO Centres. One of the first qualities we need to develop in our meditation practice is the ability to focus and concentrate our minds. We can achieve very little even in an ordinary everyday sense, unless we have some degree of concentration and a subsequent developing unity of purpose and an ability to follow something through. Within the context of meditation itself, unless we have some ability to concentrate, we will be unable to see our own mental and emotional states clearly enough to discriminate between what is worth developing and what it is necessary to discard or transform. More often than not, one of the first things we notice when we take up a meditation practice is how distracted we are: how our minds flit from one topic to another, thinking about yesterday or rehearsing for tomorrow. The techniques which help us to develop concentration provide us with something to focus our minds upon, thus enabling our mental energy to become more and more absorbed into the object of concentration so that it can flow in one unified direction, leading us eventually to an experience of wholeness and completeness, free from distraction and conflict.

# MEDITATION



One of the most well known of such concentration practices is the Mindfulness of Breathing, which takes as the object of concentration, the breath itself. This practice is, in essence, very simple but its effects can be very profound. In this particular practice we become aware of the natural process of the breathing itself. We count the breaths in the earlier stages in order to help our concentration develop. Rather than trying to exclude forcibly from our minds any distracting thoughts, we train the mind gently over the course of the practice to flow more and more into the awareness of the breath. Whenever we realise that our minds have wandered, we return immediately to the awareness of our breathing. We do not allow ourselves the luxury of chastising ourselves for having

wandered, of wondering how we got there, or of following that particular fascinating train of thought. We simply return again and again to our object of concentration. In this way we find that we can, over the course of a comparatively short period of practice, substantially change our awareness and intensify our level of concentration.

**A**lthough effort and a sense of purpose are obviously necessary there is no question of forcing the mind, or of generating mental strain. In D.H. Lawrence's book, *Aaron's Rod*, Aaron, who is a flautist, says that when he plays he wants to pour the whole of himself into his flute, with nothing left over. This experience, which many of us feel on occasions when we are



# ATION

By Dhammadinna



wholeheartedly absorbed in some creative pursuit, be it in terms of artistic expression, active appreciation of the arts, or perhaps when engaged in physical discipline, is similar to, though perhaps less subtle than, the experience of being totally absorbed in our breathing. The meditation state is not one into which we can just passively fall. Meditation practice requires of us the development of total attention and concentration, effort, energy, and confidence in our ability to meditate. The meditation state itself is characterised by an absence of conflict, distracting thoughts and negative emotions and is, more positively, a state of mind which is alive, alert, clear, poised, balanced and positive.

As well as realising through increased awareness how scatter-

ed our mental energy can be, we may also begin to see how much of our emotional life is caught up with other people. Unfortunately, this is often of either merely a neutral or negative nature or based on need and attachment rather than being straightforwardly clear and positive. Another method of meditation which is beneficial to almost everyone, therefore, is a practice called the *Metta Bhavana*, or the 'development of universal loving kindness'. In this practice we systematically develop a feeling of *metta*, of warmth, friendliness, and desire for the well being of: ourself, a friend, a neutral person, an enemy, and eventually all life. This feeling of *metta*, in its fullness, is both unconditional in the sense that it is not dependent on whether others like us or not, and universal in that it can potentially extend to include all.

The systematic cultivation of *metta* can and does have a radically transforming effect on our whole emotional life and our interactions with others. We become at the same time more genuinely independent and positively self-sufficient, not dependent on others for love, approval or praise, while at the same time becoming more deeply capable of real emotional response and care towards others. Perhaps we can now begin to see that the combination of these two practices regularly undertaken could begin to change us into what perhaps we have always wanted to be: clear, concentrated, integrated, motivated, with a strong sense of purpose, as well as kind, compassionate, friendly and loving, without prejudice and restraint.

Perhaps, however, it is all beginning to sound too easy. To move with the aid of either of these practices into a state of clarity and free-flowing positive emotion requires a lot of effort and persistence, and on the way there are certain obstacles which we will confront and have to overcome. Although every meditator, on some occasions, passes easily into a state of absorption, most of us also spend periods of meditation practice battling with what are traditionally known as the 'Five Hindrances'. If any of these hindrances are present then our full absorption in the practice becomes impossible. If, for example, our minds are particularly clouded by any kind of hatred, resentment or grievance towards others, we will be pulled away from the practice. If, on the other hand, we are constantly distracted by strong desire for sensuous experiences then again our energy is pulled away from the practice. Or if our minds are dull and sleepy, or so active that we roam restlessly over a million different topics, again we shall be unable to concentrate. Finally, if we doubt our ability to meditate or concentrate, we create a conflict which will actually prevent us from concentrating. Our first task, therefore, is to learn to recognise these states, become aware that they are inimical to a state of absorption and deal with them as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We may often discover, over a period of time, that perhaps one particular hindrance has become more prevalent than the others. We may then have to take serious steps not only to deal with this temporarily, within the meditation practice itself, but also to look at the conditions in which we live and the things which we do in our life. It is also important at the outset of any formal meditation practice to resolve not to allow ourselves to be distracted. We need to make a sort of promise to ourselves that we will put all our energy into the practice for that period of time. If we do this, even though we may be meditating initially for relatively short periods of time, we will notice that the hindrances have less of a hold upon us.

If, during the course of our practice, we have become more concentrated, dealt with the hindrances and are becoming fully absorbed in the practice itself, then we have come a long way indeed. We have achieved what Sangharakshita in his lecture 'What Meditation Really Is' has called horizontal integration. We have managed to pull our attention away from all the many diverse interests over which it normally roams, dealt with our negative states, and perhaps within that process begun to resolve deeper psychological conflicts and problems. We can now enter upon the meditation state proper and can move beyond our more normal state of distraction and confusion with its mixture of positive and negative states, into something much more clear, unified and integrated. We can now begin the process of what we call 'vertical integration', as we intensify our concentration and achieve deeper and deeper states of absorption. Traditionally, within Buddhism, such positive meditative states are called *jhanas* which comprise a continuous ascending scale of intensification of positivity and concentration.

Although the first goal of meditation is to be able to dwell in such states, this is by no means the end point of Buddhist practice. Such states, which are described more fully in a later article, are accessible, to some



degree, comparatively easily by the regular meditator, and are not states confined only to those practising within a Buddhist context. They are higher human states accessible to all. To dwell in such states does not however guarantee a total transformation of our consciousness on all levels; it merely provides us with the base for the next step. Buddhism abounds with stories of sages who have spent many years meditating alone in solitary caves only to fall in love with the first maiden they meet once they have left their cave! Another story tells of a sage who sent his companion in search of radishes to eat. The companion returns only to find the sage deeply absorbed in a meditation which continues for twelve years. When the sage emerges he asks his companion for the radishes, and the companion, who seems rather more enlightened than the sage, replies that the sage cannot really have progressed very far if after twelve years he has not transcended his desire for radishes, in fact has not transcended concepts at all. The sage agrees and develops Insight. Within Buddhism, therefore, two kinds of meditation are described. The first which includes the two meditations previously described, are termed *Samatha* practices, or practices leading to calm, positivity, integration and clarity. The second kind of practices are called *Vipassana* practices, and these lead to Insight, to seeing things as they really are, to wisdom, and ultimately, therefore, to freedom.

The question the Buddha asked himself in his own quest for truth was, 'Why is there suffering?' The answer that he eventually discovered was that we become immersed in our desire for things, for pleasures, for states of mind and being, in the vain hope that once obtained we can hold onto them permanently. The Buddha's own vision revealed to him that all things are impermanent. Nothing stays the same, everything changes, so any attempt to fix things, to hold onto anything is deluded and leads ultimately to unhappiness. Most of us spend our lives trying to change the world in accordance with our desires, rather than try-

ing to transform our desires in accordance with the true nature of things. Although the *samatha* state is very clear, calm and harmonious we can easily lose it outside of the meditation practice, when confronted by the distractions of daily life. What we really want to achieve within our practice is the ability to create as harmonious a mental state as possible on the basis of which we can really see, not just partially, or on some occasions, but clearly and penetratingly, and under all circumstances, that everything is impermanent. Once we have really seen this, not just intellectually but with our whole being, then we can never again make the mistake of thinking something will last when in fact it won't. The criterion of an enlightened perception is that it is never contradicted by subsequent experience. We might say, 'Oh, it's a lovely day, it's going to last for ever, when of course we find later, to our disappointment, that it does not. The Enlightened person says, 'Oh, this is a lovely day', but has no expectations of permanence. This does not mean that we no longer enjoy things; in fact we enjoy things much more fully because we do not try to own or pin down experiences or people or things. It is this sort of state which is expressed so beautifully in Blake's poem:-

"He who binds to himself a joy  
does the winged life destroy  
He who kisses the joy as it flies  
lives in eternity's sunrise"

We can perhaps now see that the taking up of a meditation practice has very wide and deep implications for us. We begin perhaps by wanting just a little more calm and clarity and happiness in our lives. We begin by struggling to count beyond three in the early stages of the Mindfulness of Breathing, battling with the hindrances, trying to rout craving and hatred and confusion, trying to stay awake and work with our doubts. But even within this quite simple work lies the seed of something far greater, within those early struggles lies the potential for us to be completely free human beings walking the earth unconfused, undeluded, self-sufficient, vibrantly alive and open to others and to life.

# CONQUERING THE FIVE HINDRANCES

By Kamalasila

**How did primitive man make fire? By twirling a fire-stick. A fire-stick is a pointed stick of hard wood which bores into a dry board of softer wood. By revolving it between the palms of one's hands, for a long time, the point will get hot. Tiny pieces of dry kindling are added to the bore-hole, and as one keeps twirling the stick, eventually they get hot too. With a careful breath, they start to glow. The glow, with patience, is coaxed, with more of the precious dry matter, until at last — a small red tongue of fire crackles out into the dry leaves. The main point that any master fire maker would make to a novice in the art is this:- You really have to mean business! You really have to start the way you mean to go on. What is more, you have to have everything ready — dry kindling, twigs, wood — and you must be prepared to really work. It might take quite a long time to get even a little glow; and throughout that whole time, there is no possibility of slackening off — you have to keep going!**

If he had heard of the Dharma, he might have said, — it's just like meditation. The art of making fire and the art of meditation require the same approach. It was this very example of fire-

making that occurred to Chi I, the great meditation teacher of sixth century China, when he was trying to find words to express what meditation is really like. To meditate, we first need to know what we want. Then, we need to start, and keep going without stopping until we have what we want! Chi I says, '(This)... is characterised by an earnest and zestful spirit; It means to keep the precepts with a persevering eagerness of spirit; it means to give up the five hindrances, and to persevere with our practice with wholehearted zeal both in the evening and in the early morning. If you were trying to get fire from a twirling stick you would not expect to be successful if you did it intermittently; you must practise with increasing effort until the fire comes. So you must seek Enlightenment with the same earnest zeal.'\*

So this is the way we could be doing our practice. Meditation requires a lot of energy, a lot of application, a lot of persistence and stamina. Looking at it in another way, it is a bit like a battle: to win a battle, we need a high resolve, and we need to know our objectives. Our objectives in this case are higher, happier states of consciousness, the jhanas. Between us and the jhanas are a few enemies to be



conquered: the five gross hindrances (*nivarana*).

We will deal with each of these in turn. First of all, let's remind ourselves of what the five hindrances are. The first is 'Desire for Sense Experience'. In meditation the senses are not in operation. But we can't let them go: we still hanker after sense experience. Therefore we don't get away from them, and we don't get into a state of concentration. What we do is fantasise, using our imagination to play with images and memories of sense-impressions that are already in our minds. We have sex fantasies, food fantasies, fantasies about people and places — anything that feeds our desire for sense experience; anything that keeps us on a relatively superficial level of experience, and prevents us from meditating. Basically, emotionally, we don't want to meditate. How can we rid ourselves of this hindrance? First and foremost, by recognising that it is a hindrance. Otherwise we will not appreciate that anything is wrong. But there is something wrong — we could be meditating! And real meditation is much more enjoyable than fantasy.

The second hindrance, Hatred, is basically the same thing. The mind is hooked on to an object that it is unwilling to let go: but this time, the object is one that causes us pain. Strange creatures aren't we? We don't want to meditate because that would mean letting go the painful fantasy we are attached to. So here again, our mental activity is mainly fantasy — this time about what we'd like to do, what we'd like to say to the person concerned; and we also reflect on their mountainous faults that apparently only we can see.

We may find it hard to admit, but this kind of fantasy is very painful, very self-destructive, and it gets us nowhere. To get beyond this hindrance, we have to recognise it as a hindrance first of all. Then, and only then, will we be in a position to use some means, such as the *metta bhavana* practice, to dissolve it.

These first two hindrances make up a pair, being both concerned with craving. The next two make up another pair which

is concerned with different modes of energy.

Restlessness and anxiety, the third hindrance, has two components. Restlessness, the first, is the inability to settle down. The mind is rushing fitfully hither and thither. We have no particular track, no purpose: there is just energy more or less out of control. Anxiety, the second component, is irrational anxiety: it isn't as though there were anything concrete to worry about — but we feel anxious, tense, worried, on edge, so this too prevents us from finding, or even from looking for, the peace and calm of meditation. We are far too much on the surface of things, in a scatty, speedy, uptight and anxious state of mind.

Again the antidote, the way out of this hindrance, is first to recognise that it is a hindrance; and then, in whatever way we can, to try and become calmer and more concentrated.

that we have to do something about it, and sloth-and-torpor will resist this. What happens with all the hindrances is that we tend to identify ourselves with that state of mind — so we have always to remind ourselves that there are higher states just beyond our sight.

Doubt and Indecision, the fifth hindrance, stands on its own. Perhaps it underlies all the others, since it is basically through lack of confidence in our meditation — and in ourselves — that the other hindrances arise. We are only little, limited, humans, after all, we think. We doubt that Enlightenment is an actual possibility for us. Having only got so far with our meditation, we doubt whether there really is any more. And of course, as soon as we limit our expectations in this way, further progress is made impossible.

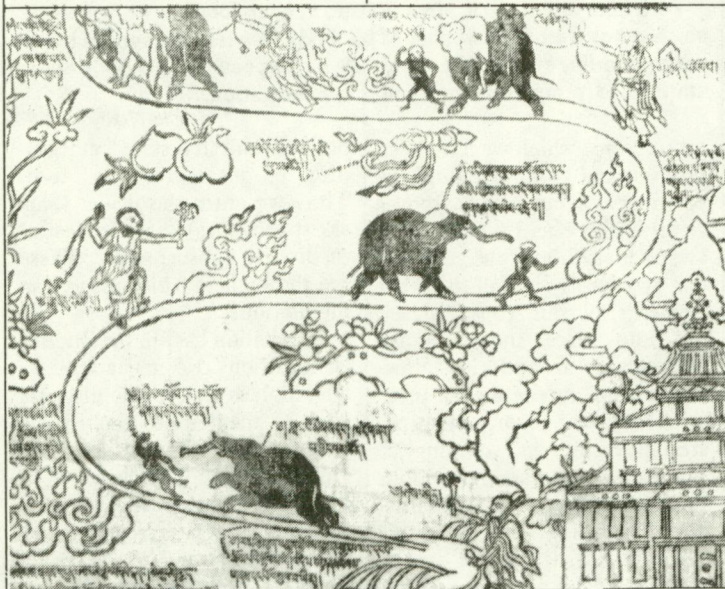
Indecision is the other component of this basic hindrance —

develop. Yes, it is possible for me to develop!' In this way, we'll become more confident; and on that basis, we'll decide to get on with it; and we will have got beyond the hindrance of doubt.

Now we have been through all five we will have seen that the most effective means of conquering the hindrances is *recognition*: seeing that the hindrance is a hindrance, and deciding to move out of it. What happens is that we tend to identify ourselves with the mental states we happen to be in at a particular time, so this requires some imagination and some confidence.

To move out of the hindrances requires us to find a method which works in our case. Each person's mind is unique and only very general guidelines can be given for finding a method. The following sequence of four traditional antidotes might give us some ideas. Firstly, cultivating the opposite tendency — e.g., *metta* (loving kindness) to counter hatred; secondly, considering the consequences of allowing the hindrance to take us over completely (which might put us off somewhat); thirdly, 'passive resistance' — allowing the hindrance to come and go as it will, but giving it no particular attention (which would keep it going); fourthly, the last resort is suppression, forcing it out of the mind. So, first we recognise the hindrance as such, then we use our imagination to go beyond it.

In meditation we should be looking all the time to see whether we are really meditating or not. There must be an element of purposiveness, of knowing why we are doing what we are doing, what we want and whether we are achieving it: we must check up on ourselves continually. This should be our strategy. Without some form of strategy, we will never be able to conquer the hindrances. Whether it is the *metta bhavana*, visualisation, or whatever practice we are doing, this approach is necessary. It is just like the art of making fire — you can't afford to take your attention away for a moment, or everything is lost and you have to start again. You can only stop for a little while when there's a great blaze going.



Chasing the elephant of the mind

The opposite mode of energy is the hindrance of Sloth and Torpor: dullness, heaviness, stagnation, blockage of both bodily and mental energy. Sloth is mental dullness; torpor is physical heaviness: the sort of feeling we get after a very substantial meal. Naturally, this gives us a rather unpromising start for any sort of meditation. To get rid of it, we first have to recognise it as a hindrance, which will not be easy. Recognising it as a hindrance has implications! It implies

we don't make the decision to get on with the meditation because any decision, once made, requires acting upon. We shrink from action because we have no confidence in ourselves; we remain stuck fast in indecision. So we really must do something about doubt and indecision. First — recognise it for what it is: a hindrance. Then we ask ourselves, 'Do I want to develop or not? Is it possible for me to develop or not?' We then answer ourselves, 'Yes — I do want to



Sore knees, a stiff neck, long periods filled with day-dreams; thoughts, memories, and anxious mental wanderings: such is the stuff that meditations are sometimes made on. At the beginning at least. Meditation is not easy. It requires energy, effort, and determination. Anyone who has taken up the practice will be familiar with those sessions when one struggles almost fruitlessly just to stay awake, just to keep with the technique for a few moments, or for a few minutes on end!

Of course, even when our meditation practice seems to be going badly it has some value. It is at least a break from the usual hurly-burly — a change that can be as good as a rest. All those wanderings and fantasies can have some therapeutic effect; allowing our minds to go 'off-line' and unravel a bit. And the humiliation of having to admit to ourselves that our minds are almost out of control can have a positive, chastening effect. In the face of repeated failure we come to realise that we must take ourselves in hand, that we are not as clear and sorted out as we like to think. Thus our meditation practice becomes a useful guide as we try to establish a more ethical basis to our lives.

But meditation practice is not always like that. It certainly doesn't have to be. If we keep our determination strong, and bring forth the necessary effort we will find ourselves having some very different experiences indeed. At times we will feel physical tensions magically dropping away, leaving us with an all-pervading sense of relaxation and peace. An anxious whining in our minds subsides and ceases; suddenly we find ourselves quiet, as if an actual noise of which we were previously unaware has just stopped. We are left calmly sitting there, fully awake, fully alert, fully in tune with our practice. Sometimes a heated flow of angry or resentful memories is transmuted into a radiant force of pure energy; we feel filled with new strength, vigour and brightness.

As we conquer the hindrances, the object of our practice, be it our breathing, a feeling of loving kindness, or a visualised *bodhi*-

## THE JHANAS

By Nagabodhi

As an expert bath attendant, or bath attendant's apprentice, puts soap powder into a dish, soaks it with water, mixes and dissolves it in such a manner that its foam is completely permeated, saturated within and without with moisture, leaving none over, even so the monk suffuses, pervades, fills and permeates his body with the pleasure and joy arising from seclusion, and there is nothing in all his body untouched by the pleasure and joy arising from seclusion.... As a lake with a subterranean spring, into which there flows no rivulet from East or from West, from North or from South, nor do the clouds pour their rain into it, but only the fresh spring at the bottom wells up and completely suffuses, pervades, fills and permeates it, so that not the smallest part of the lake is left unsaturated with fresh water, even so the monk....permeates his body with pleasure and joy arising from concentration....

As in a lake with lotus plants some lotus flowers are born in the water, develop in the water, remain below the surface of the water, and draw their nourishment from the depths of the water, and their blooms and roots are suffused, pervaded, filled and permeated with fresh water, so that not the smallest part of any lotus flower is left unpermeated with fresh water, even so the monk....permeates his body with pleasure without joy....

As a man might cloak himself from head to foot in a white mantle, so that not the smallest part of his body was left uncovered by the white mantle, even so the monk sits having covered his body with a state of extreme equanimity and concentration....

*Digha Nikaya, 11.82.*

*sattva* form, which we have been hunting and chasing around the periphery of our minds, moves clearly into the centre of our awareness, *becomes* the centre of our awareness, and all the other elements of our consciousness fall into place and rearrange themselves around it. Now, rather than obstructing our practice, they are complementing, strengthening, and refining it. We experience the tremendous thrill of freedom from conflict and distraction, and a simple sense of sufficiency and dignity arises.

This kind of experience may last for minutes on end, or for just a few moments. It might be quite subtle, like a new flavouring to the practice, or it may be so powerful, so exhilarating and blissful that the hairs of our head literally stand on end.

Our meditation practice has allowed us, first of all, to bring all the elements of our ordinary everyday consciousness into harmony. Now it is taking us further. The factors and forces of our unconscious heights and depths, attracted by the power of

our concentrated state are beginning to get involved as well. Thus we enter the *jhanas* (Sanskrit: *dhyanas*), the 'states of meditative absorption'. These are the highest fruits of *samatha* meditation.

Meditation has, in the Buddhist tradition, two major aspects. The highest aspect, the ultimate goal of meditation practice, is *vipassana*, or Insight into the Unconditioned. Such Insight may arise spontaneously, as a reflex of the interplay between our meditation and our every-day life, or it might 'arise' — Insight into the Transcendental cannot be forced or 'made to happen' — in the context of a specific Insight meditation technique, such as the Contemplation of the Six Elements, or the Contemplation of Impermanence.

In its *samatha* aspect meditation has the aim of stopping and calming the habitual, reactive processes of the lower consciousness, as well as of invigorating and enriching it. The *jhana* states are therefore our goal when we embark upon the practice of techniques like the Mindfulness

of Breathing and the *Metta Bhavana*.

According to Buddhist teaching, eight *jhanas*, or categories of meditative absorption can be identified along what is, in fact, a scale of uninterrupted increase in concentration and mental refinement. The Buddha not only defined the psychological constituents of each stage but, perhaps to make the teaching even more accessible, also gave a set of images that evoke the qualities of the first four. The second set of four, known as the *arupa jhanas*, the 'formless *jhanas*', with names like 'the sphere of no-thingness', and 'the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception', cannot, perhaps, even be evoked in images.

It is worth briefly considering each of the Buddha's similes. Just as it is valuable to be able to identify each of the hindrances that we encounter, so too is it worthwhile to have a feeling at least for the manifestations of success that our efforts will bring forth.

As a simile for the first *jhana*, the Buddha gave the image of a perfect mixture of soap powder and water (soap powder has been made in India for thousands of years from the grated fruit of a certain tree.) The soap and water are so mixed that not a grain of powder is left unsaturated, while not a droplet of water is left over.

Just a little reflection will suggest that this is an image which evokes the resolution of opposites. The powder is dry; the water is wet. The two elements have been brought into perfect union, providing us with an image of unification, integration and balance. Such is the first *jhana*: a state in which we feel no conflict, no resistance, no contrary pulls, and experience no irrelevant mental activity: a state of peaceful, radiant calm and poise.

This state of mind, however, is not to be regarded as something far-off or ethereally remote. It is quite easily within reach of anyone who meditates regularly and sincerely. According to the Ven. Sangharakshita it is, in fact, the state in which we should aim to live all of the time: a happy, healthy, human state of mind.

For the second *jhana*, the



Buddha gave the simile of a subterranean spring bubbling up into a deep, cool pond. The suggestion here is that the concentrated, unified consciousness of the first jhana is being fed by something from an even higher — or deeper — level of consciousness. This stage has been called the stage of 'inspiration' since it is analogous to the state talked of by creative artists. New richness, new potency, new life erupts, or flows in to the mind, as if from outside of ourselves. The forces that are flowing in are in fact aspects of our own unconscious heights and depths, but because they are beyond our normal experience, coming from outside our conscious personality, we may even have the impression that they are coming *literally* from outside. Perhaps because this sense of inspiration can actually manifest in visionary or even verbal 'prophetic' terms, it is possible to believe that we are receiving messages from a muse, or a god, or from the angels. The truth is that we are being enriched by our own deeper and finer aspects.

A lotus flower, floating just on the surface of a lake, is the simile for the third jhana, which Sangharakshita has called the stage of

'permeation'. Whereas in the second jhana the higher consciousness seemed to be flowing into *us*, now, in the third jhana, we are in *it*. We are suffused with it, saturated by it, having our whole being in it. There is no longer any feeling of separation between us and the state of bright, illumined consciousness. In feeling, in terms of immediate experience at least, as distinct from the terms of Insight and permanent transformation, we are experiencing an attenuation of the subject/object dichotomy, or a dissolution of it. For this reason the third jhana could be called the 'mystical' stage.

Finally, for the fourth jhana, we have the image of a man who has taken a cool bath on a hot day, and now sits completely enfolded in a pure white robe. Here the water symbolism has been left behind; it has been transcended. The higher state of consciousness has become so strong, so powerful, that it becomes almost tangible. Not only does it protect us from all negative influences, but it can actually take a kind of offensive against them. In the fourth jhana various supernormal powers, such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, and healing become possible.



Aloka

Perhaps it is not easy to grasp at these states of mind with our imagination. The images can only serve to evoke some feeling for them. After all, once the first jhana has been left behind, and as we progress through the jhanas, thought too is left behind, and our experience has less and less to do with the sensuous plane of experience — and therefore with words and even images. But it should at least be clear by now that meditation can lead us into some very powerful and creative mental states. There is nothing passive or soporific about it whatsoever.

Of course these states can only be temporary, briefly sustained by our efforts in meditation. They guarantee no permanent transformation or contact with the Transcendental. Only Insight will do that. But regular experience of jhana states is extraordinarily refreshing and energising. It connects us with the sources of vitality and creativity. Further, it serves to weaken the hold that our negative, self-centred attitudes and habitual reactions have on us. Thus we create the basis for Insight to arise, and a basis for our receptivity to it.

But there is another vital aspect to jhana experience. The Ven. Sangharakshita has said, 'A dhyana is not a 'state' in which 'we' are, but a way in which we reorganise our being.' (*Peace is a Fire*, Windhorse Publications). The jhana state is not something which gets added on to our ordinary, unchanged selves. Rather, the jhana state is our experience of ourselves as we reorganise,

and refine the various factors of our mundane (as opposed to Transcendental) consciousness. The jhana states are our experience of ourselves as we potentially exist, on higher and higher planes of being.

As human beings we have the possibility of living at different levels. We may be well familiar with those times when we live at a less than human level: when we are in the grip of craving or hatred, when we sink into an animal torpor, or when we wander aimlessly about, living on only the most superficial level. We can also think of those times when we are more completely and truly human, when we are self-aware, acting responsibly, non-neurotic, and directed.

Through meditation practice we get the opportunity to live on higher levels still. As we experience the jhana states we actually live out some of these higher possibilities: we *become* gods — *devas* — radiant beings feeding on joy.

As we become more familiar with these states we will become more confidently aware of our multi-dimensionality. We come to realise that we have some measure of choice as to the level of being at which we live. At the end of the Path, beyond those flashes of Insight, awaits the Transcendental: Buddhahood. But long before then, right now, today, as we take our seats for a period of meditation, we can enrich and glorify our lives by existing, if only for a moment or two, or for a few minutes, as beings of light.



Aloka



# MEDITATION AND ACTION

By Subhuti

Life sometimes seems to consist of nothing but irreconcilable opposites. Again and again we are faced with the impossibility of uniting in a single moment all the contradictory forces of our nature. Masculine and feminine, head and heart, introversion and extraversion: each psychic pole is seemingly exclusive of the other and, often, we are caught by the demands of our circumstances in the wrong polarity at the wrong time.

One of the hardest of these oppositions to bring into harmony is that between the demands and attractions of the inner and the outer worlds. Each is, in its own way, rich and enticing, offering its own fascinations and allurements. The world around is so complex and multiform, defying generalisation in its dizzying array. The world within promises new vistas of freedom, fresh springs of vitality, dazzling insights and pure feeling. So often we find it hard to balance these two so that we are able to gain the fulfilment and self-knowledge which action brings, together with the clarity and wholeness which comes from meditation. Frequently, we spend our time reacting between a frenzied and somewhat superficial activity and a defensive, rather precious isolation. This constant oscillation between the extraverted and the introverted poles is another symptom of our lack of integration and individuality. We have not grasped our lives and made of the different forces seething within our breasts a satisfying unity, like the different notes in a musical scale threaded together by a single melody. Jangling discordantly, we stagger from activity to meditation and back without

much conscious control.

In the teaching of the Five Spiritual Faculties we are shown that the harmonising of these various polarities — Meditation and Vigour (or introversion and extraversion), Faith and Wisdom (or emotion and reason) — is the task of Mindfulness. What this means is, in the first place, that we must take responsibility for our lives. This has been spoken of as 'keeping the initiative with our lives', making sure that we do not become the passive victims of our lives and that we do not respond like mere puppets to the pushes and pulls of the daily round. We must seize the reins, take the driver's seat, and live our lives for ourselves.

The Pali word *Sati* which is usually translated as 'Mindfulness' includes in its meaning both memory and forethought. To be mindful means to remember in the sense of learning from our past experience. Forethought involves seeing the implications of our actions, seeing as far as we can what we are letting ourselves in for when we commence any act. In this case, it involves being aware of the need to keep meditation and action in balance by seeing what is happening in the present, what has gone wrong in the past, and where our future actions are leading us.

If we apply mindfulness in this way we will be better able to bring meditation and action into dialectical harmony. Probably, for most people, this will involve periods of intensive activity followed by periods of intensive meditation. The interval between each phase and the distance between the extremes will vary from person to person. Some prefer to work very hard for periods of time — six months, a year, even longer — keeping up

only a basic daily practice of meditation the while. Then they will spend a month or more in solitary retreat or at a meditation centre like Vajraloka. Others like to keep more of an equilibrium within each day. Others again choose to do long periods of constant meditation with occasional forays into the world of action.

The variation is determined by temperament, circumstance, and spiritual maturity. It is a matter of honesty and mindfulness to determine which pattern suits one best and helps one to integrate and harmonise the full range of one's potentiality. Within the context of one's overall commitment and particular responsibilities and of one's fellowship with others in the spiritual community, one should be aware of this steady pendulum swing from pole to pole. The swing should be taken into account when one takes up one's duties.

If the individual achieves in his own life a unique and natural blending of meditation and action they will become for him the means of steady progress relatively free from inner conflict. He will know both the joy of action and the delight of meditation.

Action well-done brings its own special joys. There is the satisfaction of achieving what we set out to do, of using and testing muscle and brain, heart and hand. In acting we bring forward powers we never knew we had; we are asked for determination, courage, and cunning hitherto dormant within us. Action stretches and extends us, shows up our weaknesses and strengths. Action, properly directed, demands that we go beyond ourselves and that we reach new

levels of energy and integration. Above all, action is objective. It puts us into the arena of the world which reveals us because it resists us. In every thought, word and deed we make ourselves known to ourselves as we imprint ourselves upon the opaque surface of the external world.

The feature of the world which most eludes our control is other people. However much we want them to, they will not easily dance to our tune. Matter we can force to our shaping — we can mould clay, bend metal — but we cannot easily shape other people to our will. In acting *with* and *for* others we are brought most squarely up against ourselves. How much do we really care about them? To what extent are we willing to consider their needs before our own? Our inspiration and our metta receive their greatest testing in our work with others. We should not overstress the benefits of action to the agent. Surely, the crucial point about action is that it contributes to the welfare of the world. The world so badly needs the efforts of those with skilful motivation and it so badly needs the Dharma. Skilful action is needed.

Meditation on the other hand brings us into contact with ourselves on new heights. When we break through into real meditation we experience ourselves as more than mortal clay. We find that we are, as it were, spiritual beings existing in a dimension of hitherto unimagined clarity and brilliance. We discover that we have a destiny which far transcends our earthly career. We have access to inspiration and delight which spring up endlessly within us. No longer are we the victims of conflict and contra-



diction but we feel unified and purposeful, in touch with our own significance and meaning. We feel fulfilled and contained, contented and unsullied. Of course, the ultimate benefit of meditation is that it provides the basis for Insight. Through our practice of meditation we can systematically direct ourselves to seeing things as they really are.

Each of these, action and meditation, has its own attractions and benefits. Why then do we oscillate between the two? The point is that we cannot sustain ourselves satisfactorily in either mode without some experience of the other. Action without meditation leads to us becoming lost in mere activity. We lose all perspective and, however noble our original purpose, find ourselves working for baser and baser motives with less and less of vision and inspiration. We forget who we are, and more and more identify ourselves with the details of our activity and less and less with its overall purpose and meaning. The light goes out of our eyes and we become either dull and listless or else hard and unpleasantly aggressive. All our noble ideals are lost and we do not benefit others.

Meditation without action eventually leads to loss of energy. Many people know themselves so little that without doing something concrete they cannot properly experience themselves. Meditation is too refined, too immaterial to be sustained for long unless one has already to some degree unified and purified one's energies. Restlessness and boredom set in and day-dreams and fantasies possess one's mind.

And so we swing between action and meditation: acting until we begin to lose contact with our inspiration and purpose, meditating until we cannot sustain the pure flow of meditative states and find that we must engage ourselves in action once more.

So far I have talked of meditation and action as if they were two mutually exclusive conditions. Clearly, they need not be and should not be. It is possible to act from a state of concentration and clarity. It is possible to retain at all times a sense of higher purpose and meaning, to



feel fully engaged and yet constantly refreshed and invigorated. In other words, our action can be the expression of a higher state of consciousness.

On the other hand, meditation is itself a form of action. When we are meditating, we are making an effort and we are moving forward to ever higher levels of consciousness. Not only that, but in the higher reaches of meditation our own very positive state begins to radiate from us and to have an experienceable effect on those around us. When we look closely, the line between meditation and action wears a little thin. Indeed, it is only a reflection of our relative spiritual

immaturity that we experience a tension between the two at all. We do not have sufficient vision to act consistently from inspiration and we do not have sufficient purity of energy to be able to be consistently effective in meditation. So, whilst we must try to unify the two at all times, we must constantly redress imbalance as it develops by giving special attention to one or other as the need arises. While we are acting, we must try to remain in as positive a mental state as we can and when we are meditating we must try to remain as energetic and alive as we can. When our actions become more and more superficial in motivation

then we must strengthen our contact with the depths of meditation. When meditation becomes hard to sustain for lack of vitality then we need the invigoration of action. Constant mindfulness will teach us how to blend the two in our lives so that we are in as positive and effective a condition as possible at all times.

But in the end we must break through that distinction altogether. Our action must become so complete that it is the perfect expression of the highest mental clarity. Our meditation must be so powerful that it lifts all who are open to it beyond themselves. Action and meditation, meditation and action are unified here in the life of the Bodhisattva. At rest he is meditating: his meditation is the radiation of compassion to all that lives. At play he is engaged in compassionate activity which is never separated from the bliss and wisdom of meditation. In him, all contradictions are resolved and transcended and he is become a flood of pure feeling for living beings, acting tirelessly for their welfare.

This unification of action and meditation is expressed iconographically in the figures of many Bodhisattvas who sit with the left leg drawn up in meditation and the right stepping down compassionately into the world of suffering. Yet though they step down they never leave their transcendental seat. They see the world with all its frustrations, imperfections, and sufferings — yet they know that it is not really so. Though they enter joyfully into action in the world they remain in the core of their being untouched by it.

So meditation and action are, at the outset, but the jarring contradictory demands of the inner and outer worlds. With mindfulness, we weave them into our lives so that they work with and for each other. Deeper still, the tension lessens and we experience more and more of one within the other. Ultimately, with Transcendental Insight, we break the boundaries altogether and meditation becomes action, action becomes meditation, inner and outer worlds merge into a single whole.



The name of Tsang Nyön Heruka (the Mad Yogin of Tsang) is not well known in the FWBO. Yet it is largely through him that another name has become very familiar to us, that of Milarepa. Tsang Nyön lived in Tibet in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. He entered a Buddhist monastery as a young man, but after being there for a few years he was expelled for 'wild and insulting behaviour' in front of the patron prince and his entourage who were visiting the monastery. He then spent his time wandering in Tibet and Nepal, meditating in caves. He was clearly greatly inspired by Milarepa, and in 1488 he completed both his biography and the collection of stories and incidents known as *The Hundred Thousand Songs*. By giving us such detailed accounts of the struggles and triumphs of one of the greatest spiritual figures of Tibet — or any other country — Tsang Nyön has left us very much in his debt.

However, Milarepa's was not the only biography which this 'mad yogin' produced. Towards the end of his life, in 1505, whilst staying in one of the caves in which Milarepa had meditated, he dictated the life and songs of Marpa, Milarepa's guru. It is this biography which has now been translated into English by the Nalanda Translation Committee, directed by Chogyam Trungpa, as the first of a series of biographies of Tibetan masters to be published by the Prajna Press.

The original title of this work was 'Seeing Accomplishes All'. This suggests that reading this life of Marpa can accomplish the aim of the spiritual life, that it can catalyze the awakening of Insight into Reality. With this as its goal, the book does not particularly concern itself with the historical facts of Marpa's life; rather it takes us inside Marpa's spiritual world and tells us of his meetings with his gurus, the initiations he received, the meditations he practised, and of the dreams, visions and miraculous happenings which befell him on his quest for Enlightenment.

The book will point readers in the direction of Insight in two main ways: firstly through its presentation of Marpa himself,

and secondly through its description of the paradoxical world in which he lives.

Marpa is a very impressive man. His absolute conviction of the truth of the Dharma means that he is prepared to risk life and limb repeatedly, and to give away a fortune, in order to receive the Tantric teachings. For Tibetans, locked beyond the cold mountain fastnesses of the Himalayas, India was a world away. To get there involved months of travel across lonely plains and steep mountain passes. On the way there were bandits and rapacious customs officers to be circumvented. And then, on the plains of India, there were the scarcely tolerable heat and a whole range of diseases unknown in Tibet. Even in recent times many Tibetan refugees fled from the encroaching Chinese only to find death awaiting them in India. Marpa makes this hellish journey 3 times, staying away for a total of 16 years. Each time, he takes with him a large amount of gold dust which he offers to Naropa and his other teachers. For a solitary foreigner with a fortune in gold in his bag every day brings new dangers. Even when, on his first journey, Marpa meets a fellow Tibetan and they agree to travel together, the outcome is disastrous. The Tibetan he meets is called Nyö, and he is a prototype of the many spiritual trophy-hunters who wander dissatisfied from teacher to teacher today. Nyö is always looking for better and more powerful teachings. After they have both received the Tantric teaching of *Hevajra*, Nyö says:

'Hevajra is already well-known in Tibet. There is a father tantra

better than this, called the *Guhyasamaja*. It enables the *prana* to flow through your fingertips and enables you to hold buddha in the palm of your hand. This is what we need.'

Of course, when he has received the *Guhyasamaja*, Nyö promptly begins talking about an even *better* Tantra called the *Mahamaya*.... One reads this with an odd sense of déjà vu. We have Nyös passing through our Centres, in frantic search for the final 'far-out' teaching which will enable them to hold buddha in the palm of their hand without changing themselves. ('I've done the *metta bhavana*; what I really need is a visualisation practice, rebirthing, Zen, etc.'). Nyö ends up becoming so jealous of Marpa, who faithfully practises the teachings he is given, that on their return journey to Tibet he arranges for all Marpa's books, detailing the teachings he has received, to 'accidentally' fall into the Ganges. If the situation had been reversed Nyö, shorn of his spiritual trophies, would be left with nothing. But Marpa, watching his books sinking into the river, is only momentarily upset. At that moment he realizes that through hard practice he has *become* the teachings, and no-one can take them away from him.

Marpa's time with his gurus also has its difficulties. They are, in the main, wild, unpredictable people, who will stop at nothing to confront him with Reality. In order to receive the Tantra of *Mahamaya* Marpa has to go to see Kukkuripa, a teacher who lives alone surrounded by dogs on a remote island in the middle of a poison lake. But Marpa, who as a child was sent off by his parents

to practise the Dharma in order to harness his stubborn, wilful and aggressive personality, is not someone to be put off, or to give up. He survives, he endures.

One is left with a picture of a tall, strongly-built man toiling through the jungle of an alien land, sweating under an unaccustomed sun, weighed down by a heavy bag of gold dust — the solidified sweat and labour of years of his life — lumbering on



# EVERYDAY

## The Life of Marpa the Translator

Nalanda Translation Committee Published by Prajna Press, Boulder

Pp.267+1. Price £7.95



# MARVELS

By Vessantara

endlessly in search of a guru, a man with truth in his eyes, to whom he can offer not only gold dust but his very self: body, speech and mind. Marpa endures, sustained by the patient faith that the Dharma teachings which he hopes to receive are more valuable than gold dust, they are the 'jewels of the mind'.

The second justification for the title 'Seeing Accomplishes All' lies in the extraordinary

interweaving in the story of the down-to-earth and the magical. Marpa and his close disciples appear both as very ordinary people and living embodiments of the spiritual.

Marpa's wife, Dagmema, is a case in point. She appears as a kindly and sympathetic woman, the wife of a difficult, often irascible man, who is nonetheless prepared to disagree with him or even to make rather unsuccessful efforts to scold him. But *dagmema* is the Tibetan equivalent for the Sanskrit word 'nairatyma' which means 'emptiness', and is the name of the female consort of the meditational deity Hevajra. So this strange being is at one and the same time a farmer's wife with feelings we can all relate to, and a goddess born of the Voidness, who never dies. At a certain point in the story the text just says: 'After he had displayed signs and miracles beyond measure, his wife Dagmema melted into light and dissolved into Lord Marpa's heart.'

This incongruity of Marpa's world — which sometimes seems so ordinary that one doubts whether the people involved have any spiritual attainment, and is sometimes so extraordinary that one finds it hard to believe that the experiences described could happen to a human being — presents a very serious challenge to the reader. It is clearly brought out in the most moving section of the book, the account of the 'death' of Marpa's son Tarma Dode.

He is regarded as almost on a par spiritually with his father. Yet he brings disaster on himself by breaking a 3-year retreat in order to go to a fair. Before going

he makes 7 promises to Dagmema, all of which he breaks, not out of rebelliousness but out of a desire not to offend people at the fair. During his return journey his horse is startled by a mother partridge with six chicks suddenly taking off nearby. These partridges rising into the air are clearly his 7 broken vows 'coming home to roost'. His horse bolts, and he is thrown and critically injured.

When he has been carried back to Marpa's house we see a typical example of the juxtaposition of the mundane and the spiritual which characterizes the book. Marpa blames his wife unjustly for the accident and then withdraws into a sulk. His wife refuses to argue as she is totally concerned with her dying son. At the same time as this domestic quarrel is going on, both husband and wife are urging their comatose son to remember an extraordinary teaching — how to transfer his consciousness from his maimed body into another body and thus escape death.

The paradoxes continue. Tarma Dode regains consciousness and sings a moving song apologising to his parents for being unable to repay all their kindness to him, but assuring them he has completely mastered the teachings, and they need have no fear for him. From this sublime song we move to black comedy. Tarma Dode prepares to transfer his consciousness into another body and thereby avoid death, whilst Marpa's disciples are busy scouring the countryside for a suitable corpse — preferably the unwounded cadaver of a young man. How-

ever, none are to be had. The only fruits of the search are the corpse of a very old woman who died of a goiter, and one dead pigeon. Tarma Dode is unwilling to transfer his consciousness into either of these unpromising vehicles.

The disciples appeal to him not to die without transferring his consciousness, as then the many teachings he has received will be lost. The reader will find this deeply moving, if he can keep a straight face at the bizarre spectacle of a dying young man being implored to become a pigeon for the sake of all sentient beings.

I shall not reveal the outcome of the story. What is important is that the reader is challenged at every turn by seeming paradox. Can a sunburnt Tibetan farmer really have mastered the secrets of existence by imagining himself as a sixteen-armed deity, every hand clutching a skull-cup filled with blood? Can this short-tempered man who scolds his wife and disciples be at the same time a spiritual master with power to impose his spiritual vision on everyday public reality? It will be tempting for the reader to suppress the conflict by denying either Marpa's humanity or his spiritual achievements. But then seeing will accomplish nothing.

Marpa's world is based on his practice of Tantric meditation, in which whole universes are built up through visualisation and then dissolved back into the empty blue sky in the mind of the practitioner. If the reader can hold himself open to all the elements of the story, accepting the paradoxes, he may catch a glimpse of the power of such meditation, a glimpse of a different universe in which 'Mind is king' and the Buddhist maxim that consciousness determines being is demonstrated by the tantric adept displaying effortless control over all phenomenal appearances. He will see a world in which even negative emotions are simply expressions of the pure play of consciousness. He will be led on into a new realm in which the marvellous is an everyday occurrence, and in which the most everyday occurrence is a marvel.





## Britain

### PADMALOKA

The wet Norfolk Spring refreshed more than it depressed: heavy showers, fresh winds, and periods of bright sunshine.

However, all the rain impeded the completion of the building programme. The elaborate drainage system for the new wash-rooms soon overflowed with rainwater, and the newly completed bedrooms are only now losing their damp, musty atmosphere.

Before and after the Spring Events (reported elsewhere), the emphasis for visitors to Padmaloka was on the cultivation of the body, with weeks and weekends devoted to Yoga and massage, Judo, T'ai Chi, and Karate. All of these events emphasised the value of meditation, as well as physical discipline, as do all the retreats at Padmaloka.

Subhuti led a week of study on the *Udana*, an exciting Pali text which gives a vivid impression of the Buddha and the early Sangha, and of the places where they lived and taught. More recently, twenty-five Order members and mitras close to ordination spent a fortnight preparing themselves for the third intensive three month preordination course to be held in Tuscany this Autumn.

In January, Subhuti, Kevala and others started weekly classes in Diss, a town not far from Padmaloka. Already, twenty or more people attend regularly, learning meditation and participating in Dharma courses. Two very successful day retreats have also been held there. The men from Padmaloka are helped in this by Dharmacharini Srimala. The classes in Diss suggest that Order members based in a strong community can quickly start Buddhist activities in their locality, without having to undertake the financial struggle of setting up a new centre from scratch.

As reported in the last Newsletter, the Padmaloka community has attempted to give itself more direction and solidity. As a result, people who are engaged in work not directly related to the Retreat Centre and Order Office have left. It has been very sad to see the departure of those who have made lasting personal and practical contributions to the community, but it has also been good to see the effect being made by some new members, who have already begun to contribute to the running of our activities, and the shared happiness of the community.



About 100 attended the July men's weekend at Padmaloka. These events are held four times a year, and become more popular every time.

### New Zealand Retreat

A weekend retreat was held on Feb 18th-20th at Padmaloka for New Zealand Order members and mitras living in England.

The object of the weekend was to facilitate a deepening sense of friendship and mutual commitment to the Three Jewels amongst those present. To this end the Venerable Sangharakshita led two days of study on the Meghiya section from the *Udana*, and participated in meals and general discussion.

The cold grey Norfolk Winter days provided a stark contrast to the warmth and inspired vision arising from an in-depth study of one of the oldest renditions of Buddhist teaching.

The central theme of discussion clearly illustrated the positive basis of beauty and friendship that FWBO practices provide: an essential basis for the development of higher states of consciousness, and the eventual attainment of Enlightenment. Tapes of the study and other discussion have since been sent on to New Zealand.

We have all agreed to hold further retreats at regular intervals in the future.

Murray Wright

### Men's Event

The Norfolk locals say that it was the wettest Spring they can remember, and Spring met Summer with a splash with two ten-day men's events at Padmaloka. There was meditation, lots of study, talks in the evenings, and some glorious pujas, but still plenty of time to dash out between the fresh showers and enjoy the lush country Spring. A rejuvenating draught, a great success for all who came. For all who came! In one sense the events were a disappointment, since only half the anticipated number of people decided to come. The Retreat Centre at Padmaloka rushed through an expensive building programme in order to accommodate at least fifty on each event. (Ninety attended the 1981 event at Vinehall School.)

As it turned out, barely fifty came on the 1983 events altogether. However, there was a much more intimate and informal atmosphere than would have pervaded a packed Padmaloka, which in part compensated for the financial loss incurred by FWBO Surlingham.

On the first event, Prakasha, Abhaya, and Devamitra led study. They also gave talks, as did Nagabodhi, Subhuti and Vessantara, all echoing the 'Lion's Roar' of the Buddha. Ajita, as leader of the meditations and pujas, gave the whole event a relaxed and

friendly flavour.

Study and talks on the second event visioned the Bodhisattva Ideal. Study group leaders were Dharmananda, Susiddhi, Subhuti and Devaraja with Ratnaguna in concert. Padmaraja, as overall leader, poured a continual libation of inspiration and direction over the whole event, and talks were given by Chintamani, Subhuti, Ratnaprabha, Ratnaguna, Ratnavira, Subhuti and Devaraja.

The next great Men's Spring Event is two years away in what seems to me the unimaginable future of 1985. Until then, Friends throughout Europe will have to be content with brief weekend gatherings, or less universal encounters.

Maybe we should start anticipating 1985 now, so that we don't miss the rare and vital opportunity for all the men in the Movement to get together for a reasonable period and exchange warmth, strength, and ideas.

Ratnaprabha

### Chairmen Come Together

From June 25th to July 8th, fourteen chairmen from different parts of the Movement came together at Padmaloka for a two-week retreat/convention.

As well as the chairmen of our U.K. centres, Lokamitra had come from Poona, Sonā from



Stockholm, and Manjuvajra from Boston.

The main purpose of the meeting was to give the chairmen an opportunity to renew and deepen their friendships, rather than to immerse themselves in the fine details of business.

The FWBO has no central 'headquarters', and there are no legal links between all of our centres. The network of spiritual friendships that run through the Order, and among the chairmen especially, are really the surest guarantee that the Movement coheres, and that each facet of it is a fair reflection of the whole.

In the mornings the chairmen studied *The Diamond Sutra*. This was led by Subhuti, who had studied the text in Tuscany with the Venerable Sangharakshita. The afternoons were left fairly free, while the evenings were given over, each to an individual chairman to use as he wanted. Some reported in on their own personal lives, others reported on developments at their centres, while some recited verse, or initiated discussion on more general themes. The programme was punctuated by periods of meditation.

Some of the people there have now known each other for twelve or thirteen years, while others are relatively new to the 'kula' or brotherhood of chairmen. The surprise heatwave made the long afternoon walks particularly enjoyable, and allowed everyone to spend a good long time in personal communication with everyone else present.

Although the UK chairmen meet for four days every few months, these more international gatherings are much less frequent. Lokamitra feels able to take a break from his responsibilities in India only every other year, and so far Buddhadasa and Dipankara, from Auckland and Sydney, have not been able to make the trip at all.

## T'ai Chi

Since the first T'ai Chi weekend held here at Padmaloka last year, there has been steady support for the ensuing retreats held in January and May this year. These retreats, for five and six days respectively, enabled people to get a real taste of what T'ai Chi is about, just by doing it. A further weekend was also held in April.

Having Mike Chivers along as assistant tutor has proved an invaluable help, meaning that classes of mixed levels can be carried on for longer without preventing everyone from benefiting.

Next year, however, may see the start of a tiered structure to make teaching simpler.

I myself attend classes in Norwich, at a T'ai Chi Centre there, thereby remaining in touch with and developing my own practice.

Sthirananda

## BRIGHTON

In April the Brighton Centre and Sussex University Buddhist Studies Association mounted a series of three talks on Buddhism entitled 'Truth, Beauty and the Imagination', at the University's debating chamber. The first talk was called 'Emptiness', the second 'Form', and the third 'Perfect Wisdom'. In the talks Devaraja spoke on impermanence, on spiritual friendship, and on our highest creative faculty, the Imagination.

In May, the Brighton Centre provided the venue for the first 'regional Order weekend' which was attended by Order members from Brighton, Bristol, West London, and Croydon. On Saturday morning we studied together, and in the evening, in a symposium, we listened to three talks on the theme, 'Reality and Pleasure'.

On Friday 24th June, in the context of a day retreat, we celebrated the anniversary of the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, that is, the occasion on which the Buddha first made known what he had realised to others. In the evening we opened the celebration to the general public, and Surata gave a talk on the significance of the day.

Also in June, the Ven. Sangharakshita visited Brighton for two days. During this time he had talks with several mitras and Friends, and spent

an afternoon walking on the South Downs with a party of Order members.

As our activities and our resident men's community at the Centre expand, we are fast outgrowing our premises, so we are starting to look for a separate community house. If we can relocate the community we will be able to enlarge and improve the facilities at the Centre, and offer an even wider range of activities, including morning meditation sessions for the general public.

## GLASGOW

Since the Glasgow Buddhist Centre opened in January, its council has pursued a policy of starting a new meditation, or meditation and Buddhism, course every three weeks. These courses, usually of six weeks duration, supported by continuation courses and day and weekend retreats, have introduced a large number of people to meditation, to Buddhism, and to the Friends. A need has therefore arisen to provide attractive and relevant classes for those people, as well as for more experienced Friends.

We are now offering a study evening, with a range of study groups, whose members come together before study for meditation, and afterwards to enjoy a concluding puja. Each week there is also a taped lecture class, a practice

class, and a Friends' evening, which begins with meditation and modulates through tea to a talk, slide show, communication exercises, to some surprise activity cooked up by Uttara or Ajita who lead the class.

A feature of FWBO Glasgow over the past year has been the growing number of hard working women connected with the Centre. Their effect shows most markedly on festival days at the Centre, and at 'Ink', our printing business, where finishing work is often taken on by teams of volunteers, under the direction of the full-timers.

## W. LONDON

On Thursday June 9th we celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of the Baker Street Buddhist Centre. Although many of the people involved in the Centre had been living and working together for a long time beforehand, the emergence of the new Centre marked a new phase, in fact a new beginning and a new adventure for all involved.

A lot has happened over this year. There is now a consistently high standard of classes being maintained. Special mention could be made of the beginners' class, which has grown from almost nothing to a large and enthusiastic gathering.

At the same time we are also coming to terms with what running such a centre can entail. The Centre finds itself in financial difficulties at the time of writing. Funds have run out, and we are having to cut down on expenditure.

Our prime response, however, has been to put more energy into the Centre, and during the Autumn we hope to offer a wider range of classes and courses than ever before, aiming particularly at office workers at lunchtimes.

One's experience of the Dharma in a capital city is inescapably bound up with the theme of energy. A big city stimulates energy, and the Dharma there also needs energy if it is to flourish and thrive. Energy, in the forms of enthusiasm and hard work, is the key on the business side of activities, as well as in the Centre itself.

In 'Friends Gardening', spring and early summer are the busiest times of the year, and the team has expanded to six full-time workers, with occasional help from others.

Friends Foods is looking for one or two full-time workers, so if you are a woman interested in joining a dynamic team with other women, give them a call on 01-221 4700.

One final notable example of the application of energy has been Stan Bellingham's efforts to raise money for the barn roof at Vajraloka, which



Sthirananda practises in the Padmaloka garden



is reported elsewhere. Stan is one of the Movement's older mitras, but his efforts can stand as an example to many of us of lesser years.

Daphne Luce

## NORWICH

This last session saw the end of the long established 'double meditation and puja' on Tuesday evenings, and its replacement by a class geared more to the needs of relative beginners and regulars. There is now a talk or tape-extract followed by discussion, a meditation and a puja.

Abhaya recently led a five-week course studying the 'Odes' of Keats, which proved very successful, and it is hoped that there will be a repeat of this, as well as similar courses in future.

Looking back to a little earlier in the year, at the same time as the women's mitra retreat in Norwich, six boys aged 6-10 spent the weekend in Vajrakula. Khemapala awed them with a karate class, Abhaya kept a low profile, and there was much running about in woods and over sand dunes, and kicking of a football.

Our Buddha Day celebrations extended over two days with a meal, talk, and festive puja on the Tuesday evening, and a morning of meditation and readings led by Subhadra on the Wednesday. On the Wednesday afternoon, Order members, mitras, Friends and families gathered again at the Centre for a very colourful offering of the mandala. After the celebration we went to a Friend's garden in the country to watch the offerings being bonfired in the traditional manner, and to enjoy a picnic.

More recently Dharma Day was celebrated with meditations and substantial readings from the *Bodhicaryavatara* by Shantideva in the morning, and in the evening a meal, a talk by Srimala on 'The Simple Life' and a festive puja.

The following day we had an outing to the seaside with 36 adults and children (and one mad, three-legged dog), which was very much enjoyed. One nine year old was overheard saying to his parents, "It's good being Buddhist isn't it?"

## Away with the Kids

At the end of March four women and eight children from Norwich and Croydon spent just under a week at White Row in Sussex. I think we were all pleasantly surprised by how successful it was.

Practical matters seemed to fall together quite harmoniously without the need for work rotas or much planning. The children got on together remarkably well, and on the last day treated us to a puppet



## Queen Mahamaya dreams of the white elephant

show with puppets they had made themselves. We all left feeling more relaxed and invigorated, and having gained a strong sense of friendship.

In Norwich, on the Buddha's Birthday, several women and children got together to perform an impromptu play about the birth of the Buddha.

The children dressed up for it, and Srimala read from the story of the Buddha by Jonathan Landaw. We created a palace, gardens, a white elephant, and all the characters.

Children and parents alike threw themselves in to the performance, and we ended with a birthday tea, complete with ice-cream cake and candles!

## At the Fair

Over the scorching first week in July, several Friends, mitras, and Order members, and the inevitable horde of children, camped out at the 'Peaceful Green Fair' in a park on the outskirts of Norwich. Some Friends from the University of East Anglia had been active in the organisation of this.

We meditated in the mornings in a marquee provided by the organisers for a programme of 'Mind and Body' activities, and performed a puja each evening. During the day we ran a bookstall and chatted to people interested in our activities. Jayananda taught some people the 'mindfulness of breathing', and the 'metta bhavana' meditation practices, and a team of women raised £21 towards the women's Retreat Centre by giving head and shoulder massages. It was an enjoyable, and hopefully fruitful weekend.

Saddhaloka

## CROYDON

Friday evenings have a new look at our restaurant and centre in Croydon. At eight o'clock, perhaps after a meal, many of our customers make their way through a passage on the ground floor to the delightful fifty-seater cinema. Half an hour before, the same space had been used for a beginners' Yoga class, but now, after a lighting transformation, it is ready for the latest filmshow in a season on 'Modern Painting'. Our audiences have seen films on painters as varied as Manet, Magritte, Samuel Palmer, and Seurat.

On other evenings in the week we use the same space for meditation classes and pujas.

So what have films on modern painting got to do with Buddhism?

The filmshows constitute the beginnings of the operation of our new arts centre: 'Education through Art', which we hope will attract a broader and larger cross-section of the Croydon public than would perhaps come to our purely Buddhist activities.

Nevertheless, the inspiration behind all the arts activities is the Dharma itself. Our emphasis throughout is on such themes as awareness and aesthetic appreciation, the creative life, communication, and the role of the imagination. In this way it is a short step to the practice of the spiritual life proper. We hope it is a step that some of our friends will make, even though they are perhaps more interested, initially, in the fine arts than they are in "religion".

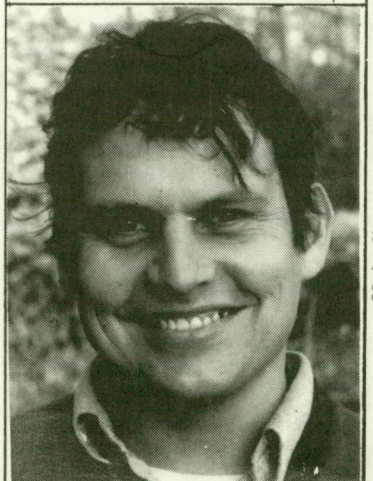
Recently we have gone further, with outside lecturers,

well-known in their fields, giving talks on 'Cubism', and the history of twentieth century painting. An Order member described one of these lectures as 'illustrating the conflict between the Higher and Lower Evolution.' The talk was on 'Cubism versus Naturalism', and the lecturer would certainly not have considered himself to be a Buddhist!

Future plans include plays and poetry, plus music recitals. But these will wait until the next stage of our building work is completed, early in the new year.

## INTO LEEDS

I moved to Leeds in March this year, and began by starting a meditation and Buddhism class at a local private educational centre. I have been helped by a member of the Leeds Buddhist Group, who put me up in his house for a while, and who has supported my classes, and



Aryamitra

Vajradipa



Harri, a mitra from Finland. Harri has now returned to Finland, and I now have a flat of my own.

The classes are going well, and there seems to be good potential for the FWBO in Leeds, since there is nothing else like it. When we have a community of some sort - which is my first priority - it will be the first venture of its sort in West Yorkshire. The beginnings of a co-op have already been formed, with the casting of Buddha rupas.

We have frequent contact with the Manchester FWBO, which is always refreshing and rewarding.

Aryamitra

## LBC

In June, Subhuti led a weekend study on the Satipatthana Sutta, which was very well received by those taking part, and more recently, twenty-eight people attended the weekend event, 'Buddhism and the Artist', for artists in the Movement. This was led by Dhammarati and apparently proved interesting enough to spawn similar events in the future. A report of this event will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

The recently introduced early morning meditation class has a small but loyal core of supporters, while the Wednesday lunchtime introductory class is benefitting from some organisational and promotional investment, and sometimes attracts up to 20 people.

At the time of writing we are benefitting from an extended visit by the Venerable Sangharakshita. He is engaged mainly in literary work: writing, editing and corresponding, but still finds time to see people (over eighty have asked to see him), and to take part in Centre activities. He took part in Dharmachakra Day, which was attended by an estimated 150 people, and also conducted a naming ceremony. Bhante will also be taking part in our celebrations of Padmasambhava Day.

The management committee of the Pure Land Co-op has under-

gone changes, and already it looks as if Right Livelihood around the LBC is being undertaken with renewed enthusiasm.

Down the road, at the premises known as '119', the users have formed themselves into an association known as 'Greenhouse'. This association is managing the premises, and has started on essential building improvements. This development should accelerate the move towards more extended use of the Annexe, as outlined in the last issue of the Newsletter.

On the publicity front, a local radio station has recorded two interviews with us, and one of our businesses, 'Jambala', has been promoting the FWBO at its stall at the Festival of Mind and Body at Olympia.

With the latest Aid for India appeal in full swing, the LBC's Summer retreat bookings building up, and a full programme of events for the Autumn in the offing, life at the LBC seems to be thriving.

## Buying the LBC

Since 1979, a succession of treasurers and chairmen at the London Buddhist Centre have been negotiating with the Greater London Council (GLC) over the price for the freehold on the FWBO's largest combined public centre and residential community.

At last a figure is being seriously considered by both parties. We have a tentative agreement on £77,000: not a bad price for a building the size of eight four bedroomed houses put together.

In practical terms, the main advantages are as follows:

1. We avoid wasting our money. Instead of the major part of our resources going in rent, and our having nothing to show for it at the end of the term of our lease, we will have secured a major asset.
2. We avoid three major rent increases over the next fifteen years. In all likelihood this will mean saving a substantial amount of money.
3. We would secure a great asset for the Movement. On the strength of this asset further money could be raised to invest in other ways, to help the Centre spread the Dharma in London.
4. We would be independent from involvement with a landlord.
5. We would have security of tenure. Once the building belongs to us we will be free from any danger of eviction.

What all this means is that if we purchase the LBC we will own our own permanent centre in one of the world's largest capitals, to use as a base for contacting the people of London.

If you would like to contribute towards the acquisition of the Centre, then please make your cheque/postal order payable to London Buddhist Centre, and mark clearly,



Hot weather brings Cherry Orchard customers out into the garden

'Centre Purchase Fund'.

Further information can be obtained from Kulamitra, Khemavira, or myself, at the LBC, on 01-981 1225.

Tejamati

## VAJRALOKA

At the time of writing it seems that we shall soon have enough money to put a new roof on our largest barn. This is almost entirely due to the effort of Stan Bellingham from the Baker Street Centre. Not only did Stan build a model of the barn and take it round the centres, selling tiles at £1.00 a piece, but he also found people to sponsor him for a solo bicycle ride from London to Brighton. We are very grateful for the work he has done.

Work on the Retreat Centre has continued. We are now re-decorating both inside and out. We have also begun the task of constructing two new guest rooms - a job that will probably last until the end of the

year, since all work done here has to fit in with the on-going retreat programme.

The size of the resident community seems set to increase, since we have recently decided on a new policy, which should allow Vajraloka to play the part that it most surely can play in raising the inspirational level of the whole Movement. We have devised a scheme which will allow Order members (many of whom have very little money) to come for a period of three months or more, at a rate that they can afford. This will benefit not only the Order members themselves, but also the FWBO and the Order itself, as well as the particular centre that the Order member comes from - and returns to.

At the time of writing, the womens' June retreat has just ended. This retreat lasted for a month, and was fully booked some time before it began.

We are about to embark on three months of uninterrupted retreat, and we are looking forward to seeing some of you here - very much.

Kamalasila.

## HELP THE WOMEN'S RETREAT CENTRE

- Did you know that by giving a donation to the Women's Retreat Centre Fund in the form of a covenant, all the tax deducted on that sum can be claimed by us as well?

A small donation from you can mean a lot to us.

If we can find 70 people who are able to give as little as £1.27 per week to the fund for four years, we could take on a mortgage of £12,500. With 140 people we could take on a mortgage of £25,000. With 280 people we could take on a mortgage of £50,000.

Why don't you consider making a covenant to the project? Some people have started already.

Please don't hesitate to contact me on 01-980 4151 if you are interested, or know a friend who would be.

Sanghadevi





## BOSTON USA

## AUCKLAND

18

Manjuvajra



Opening night at the new Centre

On May 1st, between thirty and forty Friends attended the opening of the new Boston Buddhist Centre, and joined in a celebration of the Buddha's Enlightenment.

This new Centre has a much larger floor space than the old one; it is brighter, more attractive, and enables us to have a separate shrine room, study room and reception room. Also, being in the same building as our community, it is possible to have one of our community members 'at home' most of the time.

This spring we held a successful study course, and we have continued our usual programme of meditation classes. A course of four one-day workshops on meditation, organised by the Arts Centre at Groton, a town some thirty miles from Boston, also went well, and a follow-up series of evening classes has been arranged for the Fall.

In Cleveland Ohio, some 600 miles west of Boston, Pavel Hrma, a mitra originally from Czechoslovakia, via the Manchester Buddhist Centre, has organised a meditation circle and a weekly meeting to listen to tapes of Bhante's

lectures. He has contacted a number of people interested in Buddhism, and Manjuvajra will be visiting in August to give a talk and lead a day-retreat.

Back in Boston, Vajradaka has been teaching massage as well as giving talks and teaching meditation at the Centre. Punya is preparing for his journey to Italy and three months retreat in Tuscany. Manjuvajra has spent two months in England, visiting Centres and attending various events at Padmaloka.



The reception room

The Easter and June break retreats were held at a local 'outward-bound' school. The place was light, airy, comfortable, with native bush and bird-life all around, and it overlooked the broad reaches of Manakau Harbour.

Back in Auckland, classes are held on the second floor of a city building owned by New Zealand/Yugoslav winegrowers. The Centre has two shrine-rooms, one of which is very large, two offices, one study room, a library, and a big reception room/kitchen. There are three weekly classes held there at the moment, and regular weekend arts events and retreats.

The last few months have been a transition period for the Auckland scene. Some of those Order members and mitras who were doing the bulk of the work at the Centre last year are now taking more of a back seat, or going on solitary retreats, while new arrivals have been settling in. Priyananda is back from Malaysia and the UK, Ratnaketu has returned from the UK, I am here for a few months, and Jayashri is back from England, ordained.

Dharmadhara leaves for India, to join the medical team there in a couple of weeks. After

then, the situation here should consolidate and continue to expand.

As with most centres, Auckland relies for its income partly on fundraising events. 'Progressive dinners' are a regular feature. These are held in several different Friends' houses, and the (paying) guests travel on from house to house in pursuit of the next course. A recent such dinner included one course that was eaten on the handstand of a city park, to which the 'guests' were led as part of a 'mystery tour'.

Recently 35 people attended a film evening, and soon an arts evening will include an ikebana demonstration and a professional cello recital, following a 'bring a plate' shared meal (an ancient New Zealand custom).

Outside the Centre, Order members are speaking frequently at schools, in prisons, and to other groups. Priyananda and Jayashri are giving a series of ten evening lectures at the Continuing Education Dept. of Auckland University, during the Spring term (September - November). This is an exciting prospect for the FWBO, and follows on from a successful seminar held there last year.

## HELSINKI

Some major changes have taken place in Helsinki. After five years in Albertinkatu, the Centre has had to move on. But the move has had its advantages since the new siting is even better situated than the old one.

However, leaving the old premises has meant that the residential men's community has had to split up after functioning for a year and a half. Some of the former residents found their way to centres and communities in the UK, while others have returned to their families, or taken to living alone.

Although it had never been an ideal community, it had been a breakthrough for the FWBO in Finland, allowing eight men to live together. Now the lack of such a community is keenly felt, so it will not be long before a new one is sought.

The Centre was tightly packed on Buddha day, the attendance boosted by the arrival of a dozen Vietnamese refugees with their wives and children. Their sincere devotion and joy at meeting other Buddhists in a strange country where they had

been told that there were no other Buddhists added much to the atmosphere of the day. Shantiraja hopes that it will be possible one day to do more for these 'boat people', especially if a good interpreter can be found.

A new business has been formed and seems to be off to a good business: sprouting. Alfalfa sprouts were originally grown as a small sideline to the 'Karuna' wholefood shop. But now the alfalfa sprouts are a growing concern in their own right, with a basement stacked with five layers of sprouting shelves. Management of the business is being rotated, partly to share the responsibility, and partly to ensure that the business will not suffer if a 'lone' manager has to leave.

A men's study group meets regularly in Ratnapriya's home. They are studying the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and discussing ideas related to the transcript of the seminar given on this text by the Venerable Sangharakshita a few years ago.

Manjuvajra



# Activities in Germany

In April this year, three Order members and a Friend from Hamburg moved into a house over a busy shopping street in Essen. This move represented the first step in establishing the FWBO in West Germany. Essen is a town in the centre of the industrial area of Germany, but is itself an administrative city. It is also part of a conurbation in the most heavily populated part of the country. Also, the situation of Essen allows easy access to most parts of Germany, by way of the comprehensive motorway system.

This last point is particularly significant since the team will be travelling around a lot, working in different places. Initially it was decided to hold retreats and courses in a number of towns, in order to establish a network of contacts. Once this has been done the next step will be devised, taking into account the kinds of people who have become involved.

Since April there have been two very successful retreats, one in the hills near Essen, and in the Odenwald, which is near Karlsruhe in Southern

Germany. The first retreat was for just a weekend, but the second lasted four days, which proved to be much the better arrangement. In the future we intend to hold weekend retreats that coincide with public holidays, so that they can go on a bit longer.

Dhammaloka supported a retreat in Holland, to which some German Friends went. Dharmapriya has been busy organising and leading Yoga weekends in different cities, and has held a meditation and Yoga course in Ravensburg down south.

In Karlsruhe there is one Friend who has organised a small meditation group which meets once a week. Already some of the people involved in this group have shown keen interest in establishing more contact with the FWBO.

During the Summer, the whole team will be on the Stenfors Retreat in Sweden, along with a number of German Friends. Later, in the Autumn, more retreats will be held throughout Germany, with a two week retreat at the end of the year in the Eiffel Hills, south of Cologne.

## STOCKHOLM

The most significant development that has taken place here is the ordination of Kenneth Nolkranz, who is now known as Dharmachari Dhirananda.

Dhirananda first made contact with the FWBO late in 1980, at a public talk that I gave. Soon after that he moved into our small community, with another Swede, a mitra from Finland, and myself. Last year he spent some time in England before going to the course in Tuscany where he was ordained.

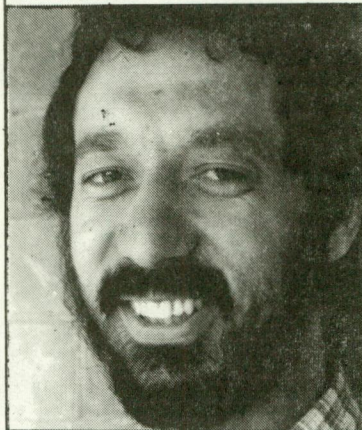
During the past year I have been building up contacts and mainly working with the more regular Friends. But there have also been some meditation courses and Yoga courses for beginners.

At present we do not have a community in Stockholm. Two members of the old community are now in England, living at Aryatara, where they can appreciate more deeply the various aspects of the FWBO. Dhirananda is presently finishing his medical studies, after which he will spend some time at Padmaloka, to deepen his experience as an Order member.

I am presently working in

Germany with Dhammaloka and Dharmapriya, but I will be returning to Stockholm in November to continue my work there.

Each year we have held a Summer retreat at 'Stenfors'. Last year's retreat was particularly successful, but this year's may be the best attended since the first one, back in 1977.



Sonja

Aryavamsa, who owns Stenfors, has been busy with meditation classes and retreats at 'Stenfors'. Last May he led a weekend retreat for over thirty people.

So we continue to build up more contacts, work intensively with regular Friends, until the time comes when there will be a team of Swedish Order members able to run and support a permanent centre.

Sonja

# India

On April 27th, while the FWBO in the UK was celebrating Buddha Day, we signed the sale deed for two and three-quarter acres of land in Dapodi, a district of Poona. It was a great relief for us in TBMSG as well as for the large Barathe family who have sold us the land at a price well below the market rate.

Because of complications with various government offices, it has taken two and a half years to sort this deal out. Although this seemed like a very long time, both to us in the 'field', as well as to our fund-raisers in the UK, things went comparatively quickly by the standards usually set by such transactions.

Eleven days later, we held our foundation stone laying ceremony on the land. Protected from the midday heat by a brightly coloured pandal, about 1,500 people (this is my estimate; others say there were as many as 15,000) assembled to watch the Housing Minister for Maharashtra, Professor N.M.Kamble, lay the first trowel of cement. Professor Kamble, an associate of

Dr B.R.Ambedkar, was very pleased to be associated with our work, since he has a great deal of respect for the Venerable Sangharakshita.

On such occasions a programme is not considered complete unless a number of prominent people speak. We managed to keep that number down to nine. These included Bodhidharma, Vimalakirti and myself, as well as several Buddhists with high positions in government administration, and two members of the large Barathe family. Perhaps it was the talks given by the Barathes which were most moving.

Many Untouchables in India had been allotted land by the government as a reward for their services as village servants. This had meant doing the most menial of tasks. But being Untouchables they were usually backward and ignorant, and hence, all over India, these people were exploited. Many lost their land with little or no remuneration. This had happened with the Barathes. Even the government had taken away a considerable amount of their land without paying them.



Laying the foundation stone at Dapodi

The two Barathes told this story, but at the same time made it clear that they were very happy to let us have what was effectively the last of their land because they wanted to do something of Dhammic and social benefit with it. We are going to help them try to

reclaim some of their lost land from the government. We will be paying their expenses for an appeal, which will be no easy process.

The land that we now have is not quite the same as that which we originally expected, and so we have to get new plans



drawn up. Besides a shrineroom and Centre in the traditional FWBO sense, we will be having a large medical centre, and many other social activities catering for the needs of the local community. We plan to have a printing press not only because we now do so much publishing work, but also to give job training to boys from the Buddhist and Scheduled Caste communities.

We want to have a library for school children to study in since so many of them have to use street lamps, where they exist, at night, since housing conditions are so poor. We want a physical exercise centre, since such facilities are non-existent in Dapodi. We plan to have co-operative stores for basic materials such as kerosine, grain and cloth. We want to build a social activities centre which will include income generating schemes, especially for women, adult education, employment advice, etc.

Eventually we would like to have a school there, but these plans are not yet clear.

We will begin by concentrating on building the medical and Dhamma centres, since these are really the central aspects of our work. There are still a number of hurdles, particularly connected with town planning (there is a plan for a fire station to be built on some of our land) which will hold things back for a bit longer. So with new plans to be drawn up, tenders to be asked for and accepted, and detailed planning permission to be sought, it could well be a year before we are able to start building. However, we can erect a temporary building, and that is something we will do for the medical work. This will also be used as a meeting place and site office.

In the meantime our medical work is continuing to grow. We held a one-day inoculation

camp in May, at which we managed to inoculate 150 children. We have also erected a medium-sized temporary building in one of the localities. This is primarily being used as a 'balwadi', or kindergarten. The locality where it is sited is one of the poorest in the Dapodi area, and education, the surest way of getting out of the mud at the bottom

Immediately after the foundation stone ceremony, 16 mitras and seven Dhammacharis set off for Kondhanpur, an hour by bus from Poona, for a one month retreat. It is not easy for people to get away like this in India. Most of them have families and jobs that allow very little paid leave, and pay very little money. May is also an especially hard time since it is the height of the marriage season, so very few people have no relatives or friends whose marriages they need to attend.

But despite all these difficulties we all managed to get away, and had the most positive retreat experience we have had in all our five years experience in India.

After a couple of days spent settling in, we turned our minds to Dhamma study. We studied Bhante's *What Meditation Really Is*, which has been translated into Marathi. This helped people to become clearer in their personal practice, as well as making sure that they understood the theory, as a preparation for the time when they will be teaching.

The next eight days were taken up with a lot of meditation, and during this time we introduced the Seven-fold Puja in Hindi. We spent the last week studying *Going for Refuge*, a talk which the Venerable Sangharakshita had given in Bombay the year before, which is now available as a Dhamma-megha publication. This is one of the best existing exposit-



Nagabodhi

### Lokamitra reports in at the Chairmen's Event

ions of the FWBO's work and approach to the Dhamma, and proved to be excellent study material, especially coming at the end of an intensive study retreat when we were all thinking of going back to the world.

We were staying in a delightful mango grove in an equally delightful valley in the mountains behind Poona. We had three very small buildings but most people preferred to sleep outside. Our shrine too had to be outside under a tarpaulin. Unfortunately the rains came unexpectedly early and, as there were so many leaks in the building, we had no choice but to end the retreat a couple of days early.

This was followed by our annual Order retreat-cum-convention. This was led by Chandrabodhi, and was attended by most of the Order members from Poona and Ahmedabad (apart from two Dhammacharis who had to stay in Ahmedabad following up the destruction of a Buddha image that they had erected by members of another community).

We had hoped to hold these retreats at our Bhaja retreat centre, but we were unable to get the building up in time. The delay was caused by some problems encountered drilling for water. Without water no building work can start, and since there has been a drought in Maharashtra, all the available drilling rigs were in great demand.

However, the well was drilled in April, so work began, and the Centre should be ready for use in September. The fact that we have not had our own retreat centre in the past has held things back considerably. Although we have been able to use premises in Bombay and Aurangabad, it has not been possible for some of our very poor Friends from Poona to afford the fares to such places. Already their retreat costs have to be subsidised. But with our own retreat centre, so well placed for Poona and Bombay, we will now be able to run a full programme of well-attended retreat activities.

Although we were not able to use the centre for our retreats, the well, once dug, proved very useful to people from the local village. Every morning, 100-150 ladies from the village would walk the mile and a half to our well to fill their pots during the drought. They would do the same in the evening too. We were happy that, even though we were not able to make use of our well this season, others could.

The present retreat centre, which is now almost completed, will house about 35, but it could take more if we have an outside shrine. Eventually we want to be able to accommodate about 200 on our retreats. Already, in Bombay and Aurangabad we get 100 people on some of them.

There are so many Buddhists in Maharashtra, and we can only contact a small proportion of them through our regular work. But someone who comes on one of our retreats will usually go back to his village so inspired that he will pass on something of what he has learned to many of the other Buddhists in the village.

What people seem to get above all from our retreats is the confidence that the Dhamma does work; it does bring about change. On returning to their villages they will encourage their friends to give up old unhelpful practices like animal sacrifice, dowry weddings, alcoholism, blind faith, and other things that hold them back as human beings, let alone as Buddhists.

To develop the retreat centre in the way we want will cost in the region of £60,000, and at present we have no idea where it will come from. Although Aid for India has concentrated on social work projects up to now, it is soon to start exploring ways of raising money for the Dhamma side of our work. There is so much to be done in this area. Without the right basis for our social projects, the social work that we are doing will lose its positive flavour.

Lokamitra



The setting for the Mitra Retreat



## Aid for India

Following on from the success of the first two and a half years of activities, raising funds in the UK to support development projects amongst the ex-untouchable Buddhists of Western India, the first half of 1983 has made it clear that the charity's growth will be continuing at an exciting and impressive pace for some time to come.

You may remember that at the end of 1982 we reported that we can expect an income of nearly £1,200,000 for the Poona Project. This will enable medical, educational and social work to be carried out in the Dapodi slums. Eventually this could bring about permanent improvements in the quality of life for the whole community. The funds will come in over the next seven years, through the regular donations of about 2,900 supporters.

In June and July of this year, ten volunteers - who have come from FWBO centres throughout Britain for a nine week stretch of fund-raising work - have approached the people of London with a new appeal: 'Action in Education'. Planned as a series of projects under the direction of TBMSG (the equivalent of the FWBO in India), Action in Education will first of all provide funds for the setting up of a series of Educational Resource Centres.

As ex-untouchables, the Buddhists have had minimal access to educational opportunities, and although places at schools and colleges are now available where, due to caste attitudes, they would not have been in the past, in very many cases the children are unable to take up these opportunities. At present their parents cannot afford to send them to school, or even where they just about can manage, the conditions at home make study more or less impossible.

The Centres will be a practical and effective way of putting this right for some of the children. Children from the slums and villages will live together in the Centres, attending the government schools and colleges nearby. Outside school hours they will benefit from an environment where further study, other educational activities, and a healthy community spirit will naturally take place.

The people of London have responded with tremendous enthusiasm and generosity to the new appeal, and at the time of writing, with four weeks still to go, we look set to break all previous records in terms of amounts raised per fundraiser. Full figures will be given in the next Newsletter. Although many houses are now being approached for the third time, there is no sign that support for the work we are

undertaking is drying up.

We now have so many supporters (something now approaching 3,500) that there are one or two AFI supporters in many of London's streets. One of the joys of this last appeal has been to come across 'Friends of the Poona Project', and to spend a few minutes exchanging words on the progress of the work in India, before passing on to the next house.

In the new year we are looking forward to exchanging more than just a passing word with our Friends when we will be organising slide shows of the work in India, and we will be answering questions at regional meetings throughout London.

We have quite a lot to report from Poona. Already, during this year, activities in Dapodi have been greatly extended. We have been hoping for some time that a medical centre and other community buildings would soon be evident. However, bureaucratic

easier. The hut is also used as a kindergarten and job-training centre, so it is well used! Later on this year, with many of the difficulties over our main building site behind us, some temporary buildings will go up for immediate use, while planning permission for the permanent buildings is still being sought.

Lokamitra has been over from Poona during June and July. His visit has facilitated discussions on various practical aspects of the liaison that takes place between AFI and TBMSG, and has also provided an excellent opportunity for Lokamitra to renew friendships with the AFI trustees and full-time workers. On July 11th a very successful event was held, to which many of those both presently and previously involved with AFI met to enjoy a meal together and hear Lokamitra give a slide-show and talk on our work in India.

At the end of 1982, Tim Lilley completed the task that he had originally undertaken: to raise funds for the Poona Project. He has moved on to something else now. The success of AFI, starting out in 1980 as a new and unheard

taken by John Bloss, who has been developing this unusual and highly skilled art for most of the last two years. John is part of a team of eight, which also includes Pete Nicholson, a systems analyst, who is working on the development of computerisation for much of our office work. Malika, an Order member who was, until quite recently, the Director of the Glasgow Arts Centre, is also working with us, researching new methods of fundraising.

The affairs of the Charity now demand considerable co-ordination and planning. This is undertaken by Mahamati, who is full-time Director, and the Trustees who meet every month under the chairmanship of Vessantara.

An important project that will be being launched in the Autumn is fund-raising for the Dharma work in India. Up to now, funds for this aspect of our involvement with Indian Buddhists have come mainly from FWBO centres, while funds for the social and medical aspects of AFI's work have come from the public.

These twin aspects of our work can, and doubtless will, provide the basis for a radical social uplift for the ex-untouchable Buddhists in India. The size of the Buddhist movement in Western India greatly exceeds the numbers involved elsewhere in the FWBO, yet the financial resources to back this up are very slight.

Urgently needed are a Centre in Bombay, a much larger retreat centre at Bhaja to add to the relatively limited resources already built there this year, and a Centre in Poona.

Also needed are a couple of vans for frequent tours of the village areas, and a public address system for the outdoor talks.

We hope to approach all Buddhists, and those who have a special sympathy for Buddhism and the plight of the ex-untouchables. So if you are approached, either directly or by letter, we hope that you will respond favourably if you possibly can. There would be nothing more pleasing than to be able to report a growing volume of regular support for Dharma work in India, in future issues of the Newsletter.

Mahamati



### Medical work in Dapodi

obstructions have made things very difficult. Yet these last two years have in no way been wasted. Research into the medical, educational, and job-training needs of the area has been undertaken by experts in each field. Considerable medical work - especially in the field of health education - has been carried out by our doctor, Virabhadra, and our midwife and nurse, Padmasuri. They have been working in association with committees of ladies from within the local community. Educational and social work is underway. We have opened our first 'balwadi', or kindergarten, and initiated some small-scale industry, greatly aided by the involvement of two Indian social workers.

Above all, perhaps, links with the local people have been developed and strengthened. All this has been possible without any buildings of our own, taking place outdoors, and through facilities made available in someone's hut.

However, earlier this year, Virabhadra had a small hut of our own built to make his work

of charity, is due primarily to Tim's inventiveness and extremely hard work. We are very grateful to him indeed, and we rejoice in his merits.

Over the last two years, the team of people running AFI has naturally had to grow steadily to meet the needs of the expansion of our fund raising activities in this country, and of the development work in India. The running of door-knocking appeals is now under-

## Publications

Triratna Grantha Mala, the publishing wing of TBMSG) have recently published a booklet entitled *Gandhi and Ambedkar - a Study in Leadership*. Written by Eleanor Zelliot, an anthropologist who has written a great deal about Dr Ambedkar and the conversion movement, it is a very balanced account of the way in which these two men approached untouchability. Well worth reading it provides excellent background material to the work that we are doing in India.

Back issues of DHAMMAMEGHA are available. These include:

9. *Buddhism as Philosophy and as Religion*
10. *Dr Ambedkar's Dhamma Revolution*
11. *Religion and Secularism*
12. *Going for Refuge*
13. *The Spiral Path*

These are all available from your local centre, or from AFI, 51, Roman Road, London E2 OHU



# Toby As I Knew Him

## Personal Reminiscences of Christmas Humphreys

By The Ven. Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita

Christmas Humphreys was born in 1901 and died in 1983. He was President of the Buddhist Society for over fifty years, and author of the Penguin *Buddhism* - one of the most popular studies of the subject ever written. Six months after his death it is much too early to try to assess the nature and significance of his contribution to Western Buddhism. A few personal reminiscences may however be in order.

I met Christmas Humphreys for the first time in 1942, at the Society's premises in Great Russell Street, not far from the British Museum. He was turned forty, and I was still very much in my 'teens. It was, of course, wartime. Meetings were held once a week and I remember that at one meeting, while we were 'meditating', a doodlebug exploded nearby, causing the windows to rattle; but nobody stirred. After meetings we often adjourned to a nearby restaurant for a meal. On one such occasion Toby (as he already was) treated the whole class to dinner. There were only seven or eight of us - virtually the whole effective Buddhist movement in Britain. Forty years later I would not like to have to take the whole present effective FWBO membership out to dinner. At least, I would not like to have to foot the bill. After the meal was over Toby recited his own French translation of a sonnet he had written, and a discussion ensued between him and one of the ladies present as to the best way of rendering one particular line, which so far as I remember was about his heart being 'caught in one of her tresses' (presumably a reference to Mrs. Humphreys, who was not present). We all thought Toby very clever.

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After my departure for India with the army in August 1944 Toby and I corresponded fairly regularly, though my real confidante continued to be Clare Cameron, the rather enigmatic editor of *The Middle Way*. The correspondence continued even when Toby himself went to Japan as junior prosecuting counsel in the War Crimes

Trials. Like Clare Cameron and several other English Buddhists I thought that for him to function in this way was inconsistent with his position as President of the Buddhist Society, and wrote and told him so. Toby sharply disagreed. The Japanese saw no inconsistency, he wrote, and he saw no reason why I should. Even as early as that, it would seem, he had formulated his famous theory of the law - and the lawyer - as the appointed instrument of Karmic retribution.

Correspondence continued after my settlement in Kalimpong in 1950, and in 1956 we met in New Delhi. The occasion was, of course, the Government-sponsored celebration of the 2500th anniversary of Buddhism. Toby was particularly keen to meet the Dalai and Panchen Lamas, both of whom were coming to India specially for the occasion. We in fact met the Dalai Lama together (thereby hangs a tale, but I will keep it for another time.) Subsequently I saw Toby in his room at the Ashoka Hotel. Perhaps because I had now lived in India for more than a decade, what struck me most about him was his extreme coldness of manner. He seemed the archetypal icy Englishman. Some time later he visited me at my Vihara in Kalimpong, and I took him to see Dhardo Rimpoché. On this occasion he thawed a little, though the only time he really softened was when he spoke of Puck (i.e. Mrs. H.), for whom he bought a pair of tigerstone earrings. "She's an old lady with white hair", he murmured sentimentally, half to himself.

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In 1964 I returned to England, partly at Toby's suggestion, though hardly at his invitation. From 1964 to 1966, when I returned to India for four months, I naturally saw quite a lot of him. One of my earliest reminiscences from this period relates to an incident that took place at the Buddhist Society's Summer School, which I attended some ten days after my arrival. Turning up at the Lec-

ture Hall one morning to give my first talk I found Toby waiting for me with every sign of impatience. "You're two minutes late!" he snapped, looking up at the clock above the door. "I'm sorry, but I don't have a watch," I explained. I had not owned a watch for years. (Wristwatches are regarded by the modern Theravada as a form of jewellery, and may not be worn by monks.) "You don't have a watch!" exclaimed Toby, thoroughly scandalized. The upshot was that the Society bought me a watch for my birthday, which fell a few days later. Nineteen years on I am still wearing that watch, a symbol of my bondage to clock time.

Every few weeks Toby visited me at the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, just to make sure I was doing things in the right way. Usually he came with a long list of matters that required some kind of joint decision, as between the Society and the Vihara (between whom there existed a good deal of bad feeling that both he and I were anxious to dispel). "I'm sure you will agree that...." he would say, rattling through the items on his list, and ticking them off one by one without giving me a chance to say anything. I shall never forget his look of genuine surprise when, after two or three such visits, I said, "Wait a minute Toby, I'm not sure that I quite agree with that." He was clearly unaccustomed to such treatment at the Buddhist Society. After that we always discussed things. Similarly I shall never forget the occasion on which he told me, in all seriousness, that I should think of myself as the Buddhist equivalent of the vicar of Hampstead. (Was he aware that to some irreverent English Buddhists he was known as the Pope of Eccleston Square?)

After my return to England in 1967 and the establishment of the FWBO, there followed several years during which we did not see each other at all, but gradually contact was re-established. During the last seven or eight years of his life we met at least once or twice a year. I could not help noticing that after the death of Puck - indeed, after her disappearance into a nursing home - he mellowed considerably. Each time we met he seemed more glad to see me than ever, and exuded greater warmth and friendliness. This was partly because there were few English Buddhists he had known for so long, or with whom he shared so many recollections. Sometimes he forgot exactly how long we really had known each other. "Do you remember that time in 1933," he would say, "when the Society...." "But Toby, I didn't start coming along until 1942," I would gently protest. "Of course, of course," he would mutter, not very pleased that he had been caught out. "Stupid of me. I should have remembered."

During the last three or four years of his life Toby was fascinated, indeed almost obsessed, by the subject of the FWBO, and would cross-examine me at length about it. With some difficulty he was able to grasp the difference between membership of the Order and membership of a Buddhist society, but at the time of his death he was still puzzling over what the FWBO actually taught. "But what do you teach?" he would ask me whenever we met, as though it was an impenetrable mystery. "Buddhism" I would reply, just to tease him, but this of course did not satisfy him at all. Perhaps Subhuti's book, about which he displayed intense curiosity, and which he wanted to see in manuscript (Subhuti did, in fact, send him a chapter or two) would have answered his question. It is 'symbolic' that he should have died only a few days after it was published.

I last saw Toby in the Summer of 1982, shortly before my departure for Italy. As we said goodbye on the doorstep of 56 Marlborough Place, where we had said goodbye so many times before, I felt the warmth and friendliness of his parting "Look after yourself" more strongly than ever, and the thought crossed my mind that we might not meet again - and we didn't.

## Dialogue at the LBC

On July 6th, the Venerable Sangharakshita entertained six visitors at Sukhavati. Four of them were members of the United Reform Church, one was a Church of England minister, and the other was a Methodist. Together they comprised an 'Other Faiths Committee' of the URC.

The committee hopes to enter into a useful dialogue with people of other faiths, so they were keen to meet Bhante, since they had all read *Buddhism and Blasphemy* and *Dialogue Between Buddhism and Christianity*.

The discussion covered themes like 'How do Buddhists worship without a God?', 'What does Buddhism do for Society?', and 'Can Christians become Enlightened?' Sagaramati, who sat in on the discussion, will present a fuller report in the next issue.

### STOP PRESS

The talk that Bhante gave on the Bodhisattva Principle, at the Wrekin Trust's 'Scientists and Mystics' Conference, is now available as a booklet entitled *The Bodhisattva: Evolution and Self-Transcendence*. It costs £1.00, and can be ordered from Windhorse Publications, 21 Hope St, Glasgow G2 6AB.



# T.C.H. Memorial

On the evening of May 25th, about 250 people came together at London's Caxton Hall to pay tribute to T.C. Humphreys, who died on April 14th.

It was a brief memorial service, lasting just less than an hour, but the organisers managed nevertheless to devise an occasion which recalled and honoured many of the diverse strands which formed the man's life.

Looking around the hall it was impossible to know who were the lawyers, who the family, who the Buddhists - except in one or two cases where an orange robe stood out among the suits. And although it was the London Buddhist Society that had arranged the event, it became obvious as the evening progressed that no one, nor any grouping could 'lay claim' to T.C.H.'s life. His range of interests had been very broad, the channels through which he had poured the various facets of his personality so varied.

A family friend spoke of happy times with him, and recalled his years at the bar where, in the footsteps of his father, he had made a successful and eminent career for himself.

A member of the 'Honourable Company of Saddlers', one of the City of London's oldest and most venerable guilds spoke of his years of service to

the guild and of his election to the 'fatherhood' of the company. He rued the fact that his passing brought to an end a long line of Humphreys who have served the guild.

Irmgard Schloegle concluded the formal speeches with a short reminder of his many services to the propagation of the Buddha Dharma in the West.

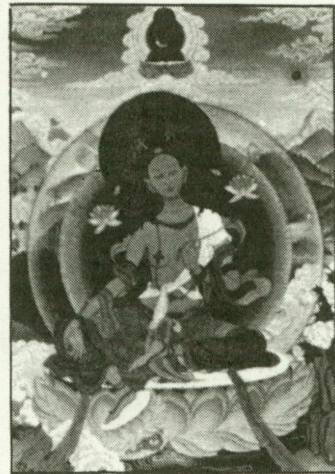
The talks were punctuated by selections of his favourite music, a reading of Edward Conze's translation of *The Heart Sutra*, and one of Christmas Humphreys' own poems.

Put together, the threads of the service provided us with a portrait of a man whose life had been unified by an underlying, and even overpowering, sense of allegiance to tradition - whether that of family, profession, guild, country, or Buddhism.

But, significantly and happily, there is one British tradition that, in the end, Christmas Humphreys failed to uphold. In the 1920's he espoused an almost unknown, exotic Eastern religion. He could so easily have been remembered, therefore, as a mainstream English eccentric. But thanks in some large measure to his own efforts, he will instead be remembered as one of the first Western Buddhists.

Nagabodhi

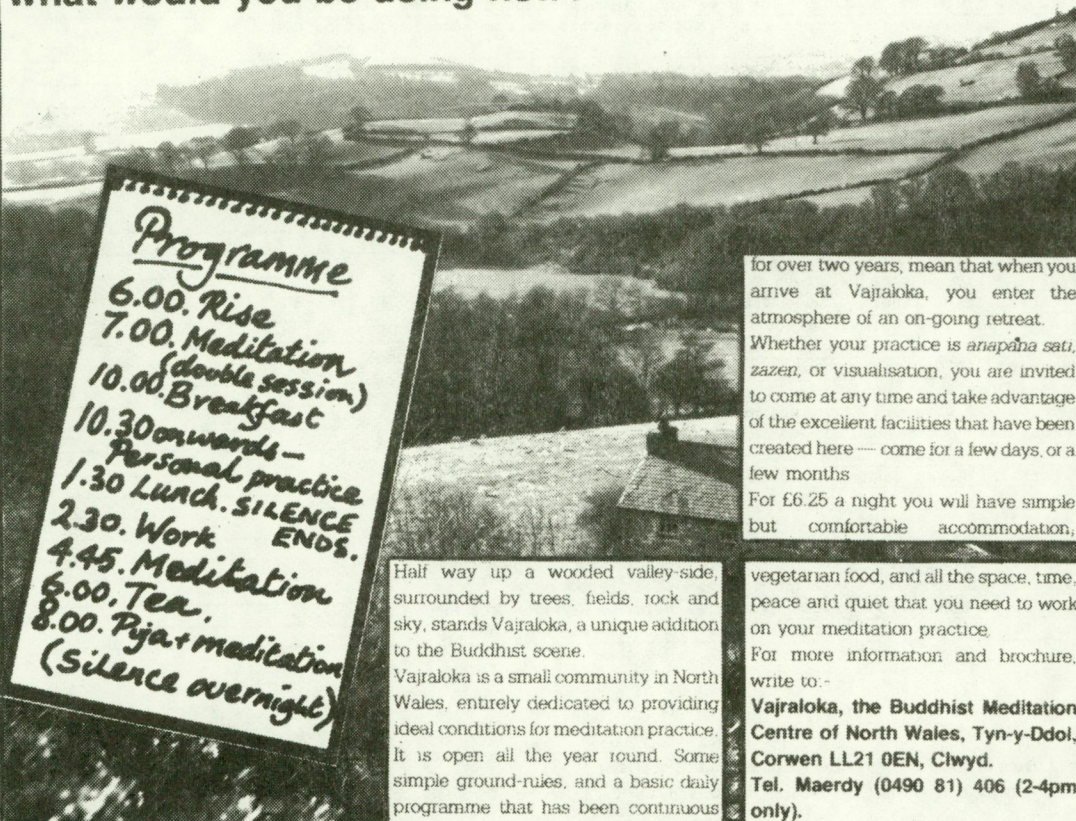
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## Programme

6.00. Rise  
7.00. Meditation  
(double session)  
10.00. Breakfast  
10.30 onwards —  
Personal practice  
1.30 Lunch. SILENCE  
2.30. Work ENDS.  
4.45. Meditation  
6.00. Tea.  
8.00. Pjya + meditation  
(Silence overnight)

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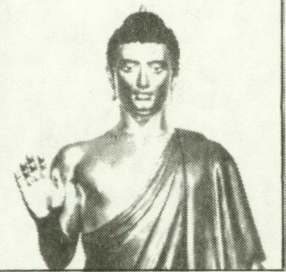
Vajraloka, the Buddhist Meditation Centre of North Wales, Tyn-y-Ddol, Corwen LL21 0EN, Clwyd.  
Tel. Maerdy (0490 81) 406 (2-4pm only).

\* Vajraloka is a men's retreat centre which is open to women at particular times of the year — for details of women's retreats contact London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, London E.2., Tel 01-981-1225.

## Buddhism for Today

A Portrait of a new Buddhist Movement

Dharmachari Subhuti  
(Alex Kennedy)



## Buddhism for Today

Dharmachari Subhuti's book about the history, teachings and practices of the FWBO can be bought at your nearest centre.

It can also be ordered from:

Element Books  
The Old Brewery  
Tisbury  
Salisbury  
Wilts

It costs £4.95



## Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

### Centres and Branches

*London Buddhist Centre*, 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 OHU. 01-981 1225  
*Brighton Buddhist Centre*, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. 0273-698420  
*Croydon Buddhist Centre*, 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey CRO 1ND. 01-688 8624  
*Manchester Buddhist Centre*, 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9PY. 061-445 3805  
*Glasgow Buddhist Centre*, 329 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. 041-333 0524  
*Baker Street Buddhist Centre*, 24 Baker Street, London W.1. 01-258 3706  
*FWBO Bristol*, 120 Long Ashton Road, Long Ashton, Bristol, Avon. 027580 2463  
*Norwich Meditation Centre*, 41A All Saints Green, Norwich, Norfolk. 0603 27034  
*Helsingen Buddhalainen Keskus*, PL 288, SF-00121, Helsinki 12, Finland.  
*Auckland Buddhist Centre*, PO Box 68-453, Newton Auckland, New Zealand.  
*Wellington Buddhist Centre*, PO Box 12311, Wellington North, New Zealand.  
*Boston Buddhist Centre*, 470 Centre Street, Boston, MA 02130, USA. (617) 522-0336  
*Sydney Meditation Community*, 13 Rocklands Road, Wollstonecraft, NSW 2D65, Australia.  
*Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha, Sahayak Gana*,  
 2A Parnakuti Housing Society, Yerawada, Pune 411006, India.  
*Vajraloka Meditation Centre*, Tyn-y-ddol, Tre'rddol, Nr Corwen. N.Wales. (Visitors by  
 appointment). 049-081 046 (between 2 & 4pm)  
*FWBO Stockholm*, Hillbersvagen 5, S-126 54 Hagersten, Sweden. Stockholm 97 59 92

### Representatives

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*Dharmaloka*, c/o Jansen, Rechstr. 9, 43 Essen 11, West Germany.  
*Jyotipala*, Bungalow Number 2, Cantonement, Aurangabad, India

### Co-operatives

*The Blue Lotus Co-operative Ltd*, 34 Daventry Street, London NW1. 01-258 3706  
*Golden Light Co-operative*, PO Box 68-453, Newton. Auckland, New Zealand.  
*The Padmaloka Co-operative*, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norfolk NR14 7AL. 050-88 8112  
*The Pure Land Co-operative*, 51 Roman Road, London E2 OHU. 01-980 1960  
*Windhorse Associates*, 119 Roman Road, London E2 OQN. 01-981 5157  
*Windhorse Enterprises Ltd*, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. 0273-698420  
*Windhorse Wholefoods Co-operative Ltd*, 13 Kelvinside Terrace South, Glasgow G20.  
 041-946 2035  
*Phoenix Community Housing Co-operative Ltd*, 119 Roman Road, London E2 OHU. 01-980 1069  
*Rainbow Co-operative Ltd*, 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey CRO 1ND. 01-688 2899  
*Windhorse Trading Ltd*, 29-31 Old Ford Road, London E2 9PJ. 01-980 7826

### Communities

(Visitors by  
arrangement only)

*Amitayus*, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. 0273-698420  
*Arunachala*, 29 Old Ford Road, London E2 9PJ. 01-980 7826  
*Aryatara*, 3 Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey. 01-660 2542  
*Grdhrakuta*, 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9PY. 061-445 3805  
*Heruka*, 13 Kelvinside Terrace South, Glasgow G20. 041-946 2035  
*Kalpadruma*, 43 Gleneldon Road, Streatham, London, SW16. 01-677 7381  
*Khadiravani*, 42 Hillhouse Road, London SW16. 01-677 1592  
*Padmaloka*, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norfolk NR14 7AL. 050-88 8112  
*Ratnadvipa*, 34 Daventry Street, London NW1. 01-258 3706  
*Sitavana*, 141 Rosary Road, Norwich, Norfolk. 0603 29965  
*Sarvasiddhi*, 71 Kilburn Park Road, London, NW6. 01-328 1578  
*Sukhavati*, 51 Roman Road, London E2 OHU. 01-980 5972  
*Suvarnabhasha*, 3 Ickburgh Road, London E5. 01-806 5222  
*Vajracchedika*, 95 Bishops Way, London E2 9HL. 01-980 4151  
*Vajrakula*, 41B All Saints Green, Norwich, Norfolk. 0603 27034  
*Vidyahara*, 30 Cambridge Park, Wanstead, London E11. 01-989 5083  
 329 Sauchiehall Street (top right), Glasgow. 041-333 0524  
 24 Birchfield House, Birchfield Street, Limehouse, London E14 8EY. 01-515 2226  
*Udyana*, 16 North Road, Brighton, Sussex. BN1 1YA. 0273-603188

#### The Office of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

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