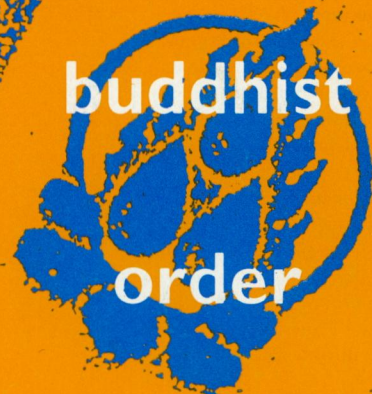


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the

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in its

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WHAT IS THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER?

The Western Buddhist Order is twenty-five years old. Although twenty-five years may represent a fairly substantial part of a single human life, in broader historical terms it is a rather brief span. We are still very young.

In an article which follows, Ananda admits that he had little idea what he was doing when he became one of the twelve founding members of the Order. Even though the Order was six years old when I joined it, I cannot honestly claim that I was much clearer. Had I understood the real nature and extent of the commitment my ordination was to involve, I honestly wonder whether I would have taken the plunge with such an easy mind.

These days, with hundreds of active Order members taking on all kinds of visible responsibilities and initiatives around the world, with a flourishing mitra system, Going for Refuge groups, and the Padmaloka, Guhyaloka, and Taraloka 'training processes' in full swing, men and women approaching ordination are probably highly aware—perhaps as aware as it is possible to be—of the meaning of the step they are about to take, and of the demands—both mundane and spiritual—that will follow it. But does that mean that they really understand what the Western Buddhist Order is? Does anyone, I wonder?

Most of us surely know some of the things it is not. It is not a 'body at law': it has no legal existence. It is not a society of Buddhist hobbyists, nor is it a monolithic group of 'Sangharakshita fanatics' united by a highly routinized and regimented life-style and a host of common opinions. It does not outwardly resemble any traditional Buddhist Order: no rules and no robes (except for those occasionally worn by some of our anagarikas). It is not a branch of some well-established sector of the Buddhist tradition with revered teachers and hierarchs occasionally casting their benevolent gaze over our fledgeling efforts from afar. Its members are not even able exclusively to define themselves as followers of the Theravada, Mahayana, or Vajrayana schools.

What the Western Buddhist Order is has sometimes been described as a 'free association of individuals committed to the Three Jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha'. But while true enough as a description this is hardly a definition. Although in these liberal—and even scandal-blighted—times it could perhaps gain a new kind of popularity by doing so, the Western Buddhist Order does not offer itself as a sort of highish level, but vague, 'umbrella organization' for sincere Buddhists seeking a relatively informal network of kindred spirits without institution or hierarchy.

Despite its apparent eclecticism (or, we might say, synthetic approach), despite its members' willingness to draw guidance

and inspiration from all branches of the Buddhist tradition (along with Western art, and so on), and despite its willingness to field 'representatives' at conferences and conventions where they can have contact with other Buddhists, the WBO sometimes appears, and I suppose *is* in this particular context, surprisingly 'exclusive'. We do not invite teachers from other schools to teach at our centres or to lead our retreats; when someone states their desire to explore things more deeply by becoming a 'mitra', we do not so much ask them to stop 'shopping around' in the Buddhist market-place as gauge the extent of their insight into the dynamics of a spiritual community by the natural willingness they show to stop doing so.

Members of the Western Buddhist Order take the Sangha Jewel and the Sangha Refuge very seriously indeed. While they feel great reverence for the Arya Sangha, the assembly of highly developed beings of the past who constitute that Jewel in its more technical, traditional sense, it is probably fair to say that it is the Sangha Jewel more broadly interpreted as 'the ideal of spiritual community' that acts upon them as a *refuge*. In other words, members of the WBO explore the meaning of the third Refuge above all by committing themselves to, and depending upon, *each other*. They do this by studying and practising the Dharma together, by creating residential communities, Dharma centres, and Right Livelihood enterprises together, by rejoicing in each other's merits and by offering helpful criticism, and above all by befriending each other and working to make their friendships stronger, deeper, and more relevant to the business of following the spiritual path. Even if it is still hard to define the Western Buddhist Order, these days one can certainly feel what it is like to be a part of it; it is a very strong experience.

To some, perhaps, an approach that combines institutional exclusiveness with relative inexperience may seem dangerously amateurish and naïve. But I wonder whether things were really so different in the Buddha's day. We are a new Order at the heart of a new movement, trying to uncover the brilliance of the Buddha's teachings—for ourselves and others—in the midst of a society that doesn't understand or particularly care. To help us we have access to 2,500 years' worth of texts, a founding teacher whose experience of, and insight into, the Buddhist tradition is widely acknowledged, a good number of people who have now been practising, and often working for, the Dharma for twenty years or more, and the collective enthusiasm, idealism, and insight of a constantly growing assembly of fellow Order members.

It's not a bad start at all. It's an experiment well worth continuing. □

Nagabodhi

Did Ananda realize what he was letting himself in for on 8 April 1968?

Is this the meditation class?

It's a cold, late November in London, 1966. The sky heavy with haze and dusk. A chill breeze edges down Monmouth Street, making me reluctant to stop and gaze into the pre-Christmas shop windows. I'm nominally on my way home from the BBC, where I work as a sound (some would say unsound) engineer. But home doesn't offer many attractions right now: a third floor bedsit near Baker Street, heated by a nineteenth century gas fire fed from a shilling slot meter, and lit by two bare forty-watt bulbs.

So I'm not over eager to reach the end of my journey. In fact what I seem to be doing is moving stealthily towards the Charing Cross Road and its warm, labyrinthine second-hand bookshops. But my drift is halted by a dimly lit shop window crammed with Chinese lamps, Japanese drums, lacquered screens, and Thai statues of a man with closed eyes and a beatific expression on his immaculate features. On a red lacquered notice-board by the door are stenciled the words 'Sakura: Buddhist Information Centre'. Inside it looks inviting and mysterious. The bookshops forgotten, I go in.

At the back of the shop there's a man in an orange cloak talking quietly with the shop's owner. The man is thin and sallow-skinned, has closely cropped hair, thick amber-framed spectacles, and an expression of incisive good humour on his face. He speaks in a softly cultured voice and, like the other, seems at once serious and mischievous. The shop is owned by Emil, a quiet Frenchman who introduces me in his soft-focused, Merlot-tinted voice: 'Stephen, this is the Venerable Sangharakshita. He's just returned from India. Will you have a cup of tea?'

These then were the clothes in which Buddhism first made itself known to me: bare candlelit rooms, books on Zen for Westerners, enigmatic gilded statues, Japanese incense, and a smiling man in an orange robe with a taste for good tea.

The idea of ordination was very far from my mind during those first years. I was writing the novel that would revolutionize Western literature, and also pursuing an attractive girl called Yvonne I'd met at the Chelsea Photographic club.

Ordination didn't fit in well with these goals. I reckoned I was too young to start giving up things I'd only just started enjoying. But this Western

Buddhism had several weighty points in its favour: I could win friends and be influenced by people; I could put my lonely, inept, and self-conscious personality into the background and enjoy the glittering lights of the meditation class in the basement of Sakura; I could go to festivals and take part in mystic chants; I could go on retreats and bathe in the golden glow of people who led their daily lives on higher planes, such as Emil who ate with chopsticks and actually knew a Japanese Roshi personally. I could even talk to people about ideas I'd nurtured in secret all my life but never dared expose to the cold and cynical world.

So early in 1968, along with eleven other men and women, I found myself contemplating the prospect of

taking the Upasaka ordination with very little idea of what this alien creature might be like. All I knew was that it involved following ten precepts in Pali, taking an Indian name, wearing a Japanese kesa, reciting the *Heart Sutra* in Sanskrit, and attending meetings with Sangharakshita and the rest of the ordinees once a week; meetings, I later found out, of which the imbibing of tea and the ingestion of digestive biscuits formed a significant part.

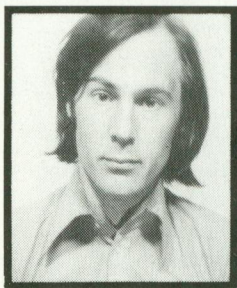
I suppose the truth is that I was, in Shaw's words, 'a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making me happy'. I was deeply in need of friendship and communication with others and saw ordination as something that might supply these needs. I think it is fair to say that I had very little idea of the 'spiritual' dimension of ordination, that is, the concept of sangha and of the spiritual renewal of Western society. And of course there was nothing like the present mitra system or the ordination training process to provide stepping-stones during the crossing of that flood. The weekly Order meetings—which as often as not consisted of Sangharakshita and a clutch of the more adventurous Order members—attempted to address this need through meditation instruction and discussion of points of doctrine, but most of it flew miles above my head, and the meditation often formed no more than an uncomfortable, knee-wrenching interval before the tea and biscuits came along.

The Order was for me a sympathetic social group of people with vaguely mystical leanings, who gathered together once a week—in a damp, underground whitewashed room with the London traffic roaring overhead—to chant and meditate, and afterwards go—not to the pub—but to a dimly lit, theatrical café, run by two very camp gays, to drink tea and talk about setting up a Buddhist newsletter, or the dangerously revolutionary idea of holding a residential 'retreat' somewhere in the country, where we could live and practise together for an entire week.

The concept of actually using such things as retreats and study classes to change oneself emerged only gradually over the first few years, as Sangharakshita tentatively turned up the heat, introducing such things as puja, study retreats, and the idea of *kalyana mitras*. Later, even more radical concepts were introduced: using one's order name in daily life, for instance, and giving up one's job in order to spend more time building a movement with one's spiritual friends. For many people, this was taking things too far: Buddhism was all right as something which could be added to one's existing life-style to give it some sparkle, but when it crossed that line to become a way of life in itself, many of the first Order members quickly discovered less invasive pastimes.

Sangharakshita gave many public lectures in draughty meeting halls around London, and gradually built up a following of sympathetic people. Most of these were married, educated, and thoughtful people

On retreat at Keffolds in 1971



Ananda



Sangharakshita with a television film crew in London, about 1969



in early middle age, who had dabbled in Theosophy and allied paths and found them wanting in some important respect. Many turned up to talks week after week for several years, drank tea, asked the occasional deep question, read the *Newsletter*, smiled deprecatingly, and then departed unspectacularly, leaving no address. They were replaced by young things in flared trousers, tie-dyed blouses, and beads who signed up for retreats and talked about setting up communities as though it were the most natural thing in the world.

Enthusiasm ran high. At one of the first retreats, at 'Keffolds' in Surrey, the idea of founding a community near Croydon was proposed over afternoon tea on the lawn. I found myself listening with muted excitement. If we lived together we could carry on the atmosphere of the retreat after it had finished without having to break up the party. We could eat together, make music, and have Dharma discussions late into the night. The vistas suddenly seemed endless: sharing experiences, working on the house and garden together, meditating together, studying Sangharakshita's books together, going away to the countryside for picnics. Suddenly life seemed a little less bleak and lonely.

Meanwhile the Order had come into being and was growing. The wide-eyed men and women with sweatbands and flared jeans had been ordained, and we were suddenly in business. Some of them took over the meditation and study classes from Sangharakshita, who took a much needed sabbatical in Cornwall. Yoga and karate were suddenly 'in'. Dharma study groups, alternating with all-night chanting sessions, blossomed across the capital. A notice printed in the fourth *FWBO Newsletter* announced:

'It has been decided that this year's Buddha's Enlightenment Day will be celebrated in an entirely new manner. There will be no speeches. Instead, there will be a two-hour programme of puja, chanting, meditation, readings (scriptures, poetry), music, and *silence*'. The shockwaves of this cataclysm could be felt from Potters Bar to Brighton.

But distant thunderclouds were gathering. Down in his Cornish retreat Sangharakshita had been developing something called the 'Path of Regular

Steps', which threatened to put a stop to all this rampant, unearned enjoyment. Out crept the love-ins and the lush Tibetan shrines, and in marched mindfulness and macrobiotics. The Order's childhood was turning into adolescence, as the slow realization that, if the new Buddhist movement was to last, high ideals had to be rooted in the rich soil of awareness and emotional integration, achieved its painful passage.

By its third year the Order was starting to adapt to this realization. A sense of urgency made itself



(From left) Most Order members assemble at Keffolds, in 1972. Public ordination in 1968 with (from left) Sujata, Rev Jack Austin, Taishen Deshimaru and two Theravadin bhikkhus either side of Sangharakshita. Conferring ordination. Dipa at his public ordination in 1968.



apparent in Sangharakshita's frequent talks and seminars: the Dharma had something of inestimable value to offer people and somehow we had to transform ourselves into suitable channels for it to flow through. But what did this mean?

Well at first sight it meant enjoying life a bit less, being more controlled, more aware of other people's needs, remembering to buy food for the community and tea for the beginners' class. But above all it seemed 5 to mean knowing what the Dharma actually said and giving articulate talks on it at public classes and events.

The Path of Regular Steps was part of something so vast in its implications that very few of us at that time could see where it was leading. Certainly I myself saw it as a limitation, a door closing on freedom and spontaneity, and it was to be many more years before I could achieve the perspective to see discipline as freedom, and clarity as integration. As with so many things, it was only with the benefit of hindsight that I saw that it was precisely this Path of Regular Steps which had made possible the projects that were to occupy the energies of the Order for the decade to come: the establishing of Sukhavati, Padmaloka, and Vajraloka, and the spreading of the Order and the FWBO across ten countries.

What does the Order feel like after twenty-five years? Well, the short answer is very different indeed. It certainly feels to me that it has come of age, in the sense that it is both more serious and more light-hearted. Its members do genuinely seem freer, not so quick to apply ready-made rules to address their perceived needs. There is far more awareness of the spiritual path as inner process and not as another goal to be notched up by the achievement-hungry personality.

It is for me a far more interesting movement now than in its childhood. The richness of individuals is beginning to shine out; there is more acceptance of the validity of other paths and methods of exploration: less fortress mentality. We are learning to be in the world and to listen when it has something to tell us. Above all perhaps, in these times of poisonous hatred, mistrust, and social breakdown, we are learning how to be friends. □



Sangharakshita arrives in the UK in 1964 after 20 years away

In contact since 1974, and ordained for just a year, Kalyanavacha has passed through every 'process' yet devised. What has it done for her?

A budding bodhisattva

The Taraloka shrine-room was full. My feelings as I entered were mixed: nervousness, excitement, happiness, awe. The shrine was the most beautiful I had seen, covered with flowers, many of which had been sent in exquisite bouquets by friends. I was about to be publicly ordained into the Western Buddhist Order, to take the most significant step of my life, in the company of many of my oldest friends.

Newer friends were also present. I was the only person being ordained, and we had decided to open the public ceremony out to include any woman who wished to attend—an unusual occurrence nowadays. For many of the guests it was the first time they had witnessed an ordination. These days it is usually only those on the ordination retreat and a few selected guests who attend the 'public' ceremony.

While in many ways ordination is the beginning of effective spiritual transformation, it is also the culmination of a long process of effort by the ordinand, the members of the ordination team, and all those other spiritual friends who help along the way.

This process has, over the years, been slowly developing as ideas have been tried out, incorporated, modified, and even, sometimes, rejected as unhelpful. One of the most helpful features in the 'system' in my opinion has been the institution of Going for Refuge groups, in which people who have asked for ordination meet regularly to focus on and encourage one another in their efforts to transform themselves. From these groups has arisen the idea of Going for Refuge retreats, which have become the most consistently popular in the Taraloka calendar. Growing out of these has come an exciting new

development, the formation of a community of Order members specializing in developing the ordination process for women. Their current aim is to establish a retreat centre, specifically geared around the ordination process for women, by 1994.

Although I am still a baby Order member, having celebrated my first Order 'birthday' only three weeks ago, I asked for ordination eleven years before I was

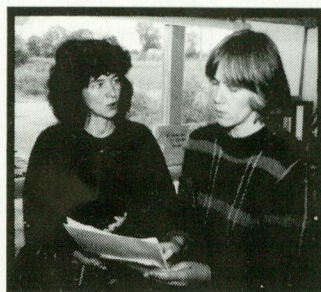
ordained. However, my very first contact with the FWBO was in October 1974, seven years before that. So I have had a long connection with the Movement and have watched it go from strength to strength, clarifying its strategy, institutions, ideas, and systems. 1974 was the year in which the mitra system was first introduced, the days of the Archway Centre and the Balmore Street squats. Memories remain vivid: rain beating down on the corrugated iron roof of the dilapidated Centre; pujas held upstairs in front of a shrine which magically appeared from behind wraps; armchairs which had obviously been recycled more than once; and above all people, whose warmth and friendliness lit the drab surroundings like bright

flames, and who seemed to survive perfectly happily on a diet of lentils and rice. I was attracted by the teachings of the Buddha right from the start, and by the friendliness of the people I met; but I have to admit that the squalor repelled me—I had only recently escaped the dire poverty of student life and did not want to repeat it.

But the Dharma seed had been sown, and it remained under my skin, dormant for a few years, during which I fell in and out of love, worked, and travelled around India, returning in 1980 to devote myself full-time to the spiritual life. I knew I wanted to join the Order, so I joined a women's community and became involved in helping to set up one of the earliest Right Livelihood businesses, Friends Foods in West London, which I later managed. I became a mitra in 1980 and asked for ordination six months later. At that time there was no formalized 'ordination process': I hoped to show that I was serious through living and working with other Buddhists. Slowly, an ordination system began to emerge, but I was baffled by it. I didn't understand why I wasn't being invited to go on the special ordination assessment retreats when friends with whom I lived and worked were being invited. What did they have that I didn't?

The years passed and my community disintegrated. I decided, after over seven years of working in Friends Foods, that I wasn't getting anywhere in my quest for ordination. I needed a change. Where to go? What to do? The answer, when it came, seemed obvious. Taraloka! There, I was sure, I would be in much closer contact with more Order members than had been possible in the West London Centre. There, I would penetrate the mystery surrounding ordination. I would be able to observe Order members at close quarters. I would be able to meditate more regularly than in the city. I would be less distracted by my environment. I would be helping to establish a unique situation for women, the retreat centre itself. Study would be easier, as there was a library of Dharma books and tapes. By this time, the six guide-lines for mitras who had requested ordination had been introduced. I felt that I would be able to follow those guide-lines best at Taraloka. My practice improved, but the 'system' still baffled me. I *still* wasn't being invited on the Pre-Ordination Course Retreats (as they were then known), and I felt a growing sense of frustration. I came close to giving up altogether. Visions of trekking down the long Taraloka track with my rucksack, back into the world, haunted me. I was as low as I had ever been in my life.

What saved me was my friendship with one of the Taraloka community members, Dayanandi, whom I had known for many years at the West London Centre, and with whom I had built up a deep trust. Together we descended into my hell realms, the realms of doubt and depression. Incredible as it seemed to me, she still cared about me. I was at my worst and still she cared. She was a real spiritual friend, challenging me, encouraging me, believing in





The Order members at Kalyanavacha's ordination in January 1992 and (below) with Dayanandi after the public ordination



me, but above all loving me.

I decided I would throw out the rule-book—it had never worked for me in any case—and try to find out what Buddhism really meant to me. I began to meditate in my own way, and reflected on the Dharma daily. I discovered for myself that the Dharma, when put to the test, really worked. I had not really done this before. I had been following the 'rules', trying to be a 'good' mitra. I stopped worrying about the 'process' and let go of wanting to be ordained, also of caring over much about what others thought of me. Paradoxically this seemed to be the key to being invited to go on the 'month' (shorthand for the month-long Pre-Ordination Process Retreat, as it was then called). This experience was one of the happiest of my life. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I felt confident that my commitment to spiritual change had really become effective, and although I knew that I was being assessed as to my readiness for ordination, that aspect of the retreat didn't particularly bother me. After all, I had been 'assessing' myself for well over ten years! The aspect of assessment does seem to cause strain in some people, however. It adds to the intensity of the retreat experience, and not everyone can bear the pressure of the anxiety engendered by it. My own feeling is that, if it were at all possible, it would be best to do the assessing outside of this retreat, so that the 'month' became the ordination retreat itself.

What was it like to be ordained by women? I have to admit that I had been disappointed when Sangharakshita withdrew from ordaining people, because I considered myself to be his disciple first and foremost and wanted to be ordained by him. But when it actually came to my ordination I was delighted

to be ordained by two of the members of my community, friends with whom I lived and worked, who knew me very well, and to whom I could turn for aid when the going got rough after ordination. Sanghadevi was my private preceptor and Ratnashuri my public preceptor. I feel that I have had the best of both worlds, because at the time of my public ordination I felt the presence of Sangharakshita quite strongly, even though he was touring India! Moreover, I am very happy to be part of this pioneering aspect of

the Movement, which as far as I know is the only one in the world in which women ordain other women.

There is certainly no shortage of challenge for the newly ordained.

Perhaps one of the

greatest is to withstand the many requests to teach, give talks, lead or support retreats, take classes, write articles... the list is infinite! Although we are very sensibly advised by our preceptors not to plunge straight into a host of activities, in my own case I did not take the advice. How could a budding Bodhisattva wait in the wings? However, this advice is indeed sensible, so this year I am trying to heed it!

I was ordained just over a year ago. Since then, another ninety-seven men and women have joined the Order. I think this speaks for itself in gauging the effectiveness of the ordination 'process'. Long may the Order grow and thrive! □

Growing in confidence

I was back in India after seven years. Once again I would be conducting ordinations. Another two Indian women would be joining the Western Buddhist Order/Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha. A young woman, a mitra of six months standing who had recently asked for ordination, told me that she wanted to become a preceptor because she was very concerned about the future of the women's wing of the Order in India. I admired her straightforward altruism—and felt somewhat embarrassed at the anxiety I was experiencing....

About nine years ago Sangharakshita was giving particular attention to the question of responsibility for the conferring of ordinations. He asked the Order to consider whom, apart from himself, we might have confidence in to conduct the ceremonies. I confess I was rather taken aback to realize the need to consider this question. But of course, when eventually Sangharakshita was no longer with us, how else would the Order grow?

Two years later, in 1986, I had the opportunity to go to India. Before going I asked Sangharakshita if there was anything specific he would like me to do there. There was. He wanted me to take Ratnashuri and, together with Padmashuri, who was already living there, conduct the ordinations of two Indian women. It is difficult to recall what my initial response was. I wasn't totally unprepared for the suggestion; I wanted to do whatever I could to help; but conduct an ordination ceremony? *Me?* I tried to hide behind the idea that I would be doing it on Sangharakshita's behalf, that I would simply be representing him. However, when the time came and I was sitting inside a tent made of blue saris, looking at the Buddha rupa and the photograph of Sangharakshita on the pure white shrine, waiting for Mrs Labhane to appear, waiting for her to repeat after me the three Refuges and the ten Precepts, waiting to witness her Going for Refuge, waiting to witness the 'birth' of Jnanashuri, a new sister in the Dharma, I became acutely aware that it was *me* sitting there, that it was *me* who was going to witness the 'birth'.

I had always assumed that I was inspired by the Bodhisattva Ideal and that I was making an effort to follow it. But when I began to act as a preceptor to others I felt obliged to make that effort like I'd never done before.

In 1988, during a talk entitled 'The Next Twenty Years', Sangharakshita had said that, ideally, every member of the Western Buddhist Order should be able to do what he had done. He was talking in connection with the handing on, the sharing, of responsibility for conferring ordinations. He made it sound so simple. We are all Going for Refuge to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. We come into contact with others and encourage them to go for Refuge too. We must be prepared to examine our own Going for Refuge, be confident in it, and act upon it with regard to others—to acknowledge and encourage

their potential and recognize when they are Going for Refuge as we are. It was a responsibility that followed on quite naturally from our own commitment. It was perhaps the most obvious expression of our own commitment.

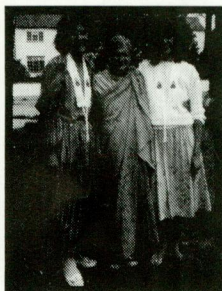
The following year Sangharakshita was at last satisfied that he could share this particular responsibility—at least in relation to men. I wondered what would happen for women that year. The conclusion I came to was that either Sangharakshita would ordain those women considered ready or that there would be no women ordained that summer. For some reason I didn't think that Sangharakshita would ask Dharmacharinis to conduct the ordinations just yet. I didn't think we were in a position to begin to take on that responsibility. Our ordination process still lacked a solid core; we didn't yet have even one Dharmacharini who could devote herself full-time to it. Another reason, I have to admit, was that I was aware that I was one of those whom Sangharakshita might ask, and I felt an enormous amount of reluctance to facing up to such a responsibility.

On returning home from an Order weekend my daughters told me that Sangharakshita had phoned. I couldn't imagine why. A few days later he called again. What were my plans for the summer, he asked. The penny suddenly dropped. Sangharakshita was asking me if I could attend the ordination retreat, if I could form an ordination team with Ratnashuri and Sanghadevi.... My grip on the telephone grew tighter and tighter as I tried to sound matter of fact. Because I'd decided it wouldn't happen it was all a bit of a surprise—and early September was a difficult time for me to go on retreat.... But how could I say 'Bhante, I don't feel up to it'? I felt honoured that he'd asked me. I couldn't but respond to him and to the needs of the Order. I felt strangely confident, affected by his confidence in me, and at the same time terrified of the implications of saying yes. I put the phone down and burnt the meal I was cooking.

Sangharakshita was asking us to take a very definite step towards the sharing of his responsibility within the women's wing. This time there was no excitement of a trip to a foreign land. There was no possibility of viewing it as a 'one off' event. It had to be the start of something which we must take more and more upon ourselves. As the news got around, people responded very positively. What particularly appealed was the fact that women would be ordaining women. I wished I could share in the general enthusiasm, but the heavy weight I felt upon my shoulders prevented me. I had already experienced the joy of ordaining someone. Why should I not do so again? Did I not want to express my commitment in that way? Did I not feel my commitment was strong enough to be so expressed?

Before the ordinations were due I went on solitary retreat, hoping to shed the resistance I felt and to reflect on the implications of what we were doing. As it turned out I found I was unable to give the issue much

Shrimala, Ratnashuri, and Sanghadevi, the three women's preceptors





'acknowledging where I was at' with 'that is where I want to remain'. Of course there was an element of the latter, even a rather large element, but that wasn't the end of the story. Why, after all, was I subjecting myself to this self-examination? I was doing so because I wasn't happy with the way I was. But was it simply understandable resistance—the gravitational pull—to deepening my own Going for Refuge and taking more responsibility, or was there really something wrong with me?

I gave a talk on 'Leaving Mother, Father, Husband and Children Too' which served to remind me of the efforts I had made to Go Forth. I'd picked myself up a bit and was now ready to be knocked down. A friend told me that my doubting of myself had encouraged a questioning, a doubting of me, in her mind also. I was devastated. I suddenly realized how much I needed her to have confidence in me. It was one thing to doubt myself but if one of my closest friends was beginning to doubt me what chance did I have of pulling through? That dreadful

attention. It was only when I returned to the Women's Order Convention that I could acknowledge that I was in a state of fear and self-doubt, and I didn't know how to ease it.

I recollected the intimate, moving experience of Jnanashuri's private ordination ceremony. Of course I wanted to take part in such an occasion again! My self-doubt and my resistance to further responsibility were not strong enough to deny me that. I tried to fathom what exactly I would be doing by witnessing another's Going for Refuge—and what would my duties be towards someone I had ordained? I needed to prepare myself. I wanted to do lots of meditation but my circumstances wouldn't permit that. So I simply put myself wholeheartedly into whatever I was involved in—cooking, washing the dishes, listening to my daughters' endless stories from their holiday abroad. I acknowledged that I wouldn't become a Stream-Entrant overnight but I could make an effort to develop and maintain a positive state of mind.

As soon as the retreat was over the fear and self-doubt built up again. Over the following months I subjected myself to a pretty tough self-examination. If I were to witness the Going for Refuge of others then I must be sincerely Going for Refuge myself. Were the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha firmly established at the centre of my mandala, I asked myself. Were they truly the three most precious Jewels in my life? It was a very painful time. It was difficult to acknowledge what I really felt. I seemed to be so far from living up to my ideals. How could I ask someone to repeat the Going for Refuge formula and the Ten Precepts after me when I knew that I wasn't always living in accordance with them? My reflections seemed to feed my self-doubt. I confused

Shrimala (right) conducts a public ordination in India and (below) with Sanghadevi at Taraloka



feedback turned out to be the very chance I needed. The sharp point hit home and when the pain had subsided I took a good look at my wound. The doubt I had been experiencing in myself was bad enough. Now I saw that through my indulgence it had spread. It had affected others, others whom I had relied upon to believe in me. I was spurred on to increase my efforts to acknowledge my own confidence in myself. Within this realization I knew that I might not have broken the Three Fetters, but I was sincerely Going for Refuge. My heart was after all in the right place.

... In a few days time I would have to sit in front of hundreds of people. I would have to speak to them and they would all be looking at me.

The shrine-room was practically full but we were still waiting for the loud-speakers. Lokamitra, Chandrashila, and I were waiting to be called and wondering whether the two ordinands were ready. Chandrashila noticed that I looked a bit anxious. 'They'll be all right' he said. I had to admit that it was not them I was worried about, it was *me*! We laughed and suddenly the load I was bearing lightened. I remembered Ratnashuri's words of advice when I'd admitted I felt nervous about conducting a public ordination ceremony. 'You have to put your ego aside; you have to forget about yourself.' I'd learnt my Hindi words, my sari was secure, all I had to do now was go and welcome two radiant, newly-born Dharmacharinis into the Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha. I had already witnessed the inspiring transformation of Kamalbai and Archana into Khemaprabha and Alokashri. Now it was for others to see that that transformation had taken place, for the Order to welcome the two desperately-needed sisters into its midst, and for everyone to rejoice. □

The challenges of the

In 1974 I became a member of the Western Buddhist Order at a Sufi farm. It was not that I had intended to become a Sufi but had come on the wrong week, but simply that at that stage in the Order's development we had no retreat centres of our own capable of handling the number of people who wanted to attend our summer retreat. So we had to rent a place from the Sufis. Mind you, the facilities did not need to be that large. The FWBO was still in its infancy, and the ordinations on that retreat brought the total active membership of the Order to something over forty.

Not only was the Order then very small, but our understanding of the implications of what we were doing was very limited. There were no team-based Right Livelihood businesses; we had yet to see clearly the need for single-sex activities; if anyone had mentioned the importance of celibacy some of us would have run away. Over the years some developments within the Order have come (at least to me) as rude shocks—painful dawns of the implications of what it meant to be committed to the pursuit of Enlightenment. Others have been delightful surprises. In 1974 there were no Indian Order members—indeed I had heard nothing of Dr Ambedkar and the ex-Untouchables, and virtually nothing of Sangharakshita's teachers. For me one of the happiest discoveries was that membership of the Order was going to involve, as an essential part of my Dharma practice, the development of strong friendships with other Order members.

Though nowadays the implications of what it means to join the Order are much more apparent, I do not think that everything is so clear that there are no more shocks or surprises in store for me. The future

development of the Order is far from predictable. Sangharakshita has said that, in future, Order members can change anything except the Going for Refuge. That basic commitment to grow forever towards more wise and compassionate states of mind can never be dispensed with. Everything else is open to scrutiny in the light of that aim. So I do not see the future of the Order as a mere continuation on a larger scale of how we are at present—just the same Order 'writ large'

with thousands rather than hundreds of Order members. In a living spiritual organism like the Order we can expect radical transformations from time to time. In any case, the steady increase in the size of the Order will itself necessitate some changes.

Whilst it may give rise to a certain amount of uncertainty, I see this capacity of the Order to undergo radical transformation as extremely valuable. It makes involvement with the Order an adventure, a co-operative quest shared by a growing number of men and women. The future of the Order is exciting and unpredictable. All that can be said with certainty is that we shall face many challenges over the coming years.

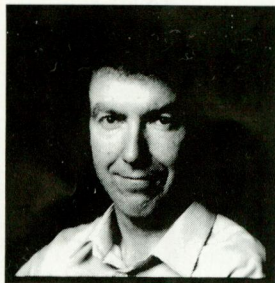
Last year I took on a challenge myself, by accepting

the post of Order Convenor. A 'convenor' is someone who brings people together, and I see my prime responsibility as being to promote communication, and ultimately harmony, within the Order. This partly involves making sure that the Order organizes itself in a way that encourages good communication. The Order has a number of structures designed to ensure that Order members keep in contact with one another. There is *Shabda*, the Order's communication sheet, in which any Order member can communicate whatever he or she wishes to the whole Order. There are weekly meetings of Order members at local level, called chapter meetings, as well as monthly regional or national meetings, and international meetings called Order Conventions.

These structures are the basic minimum required to ensure (insofar as structures can ever guarantee anything) that an Order which now has members on four continents remains united. One of the challenges of the future will be to adapt to the continuing expansion of the Order both numerically and geographically. Will it actually be possible to create a World Buddhist Order? It is already almost impossible for me as Order Convenor to know every Order member. In a few more years only my computer will be able to remember who everybody is. With size will come increasing diversity. We already have Order members of many different nationalities and social and educational backgrounds. We also have Order members of different predilections and interests within Buddhism. Does this mean that in years to come the Order will inevitably split into a number of separate Orders, on more or less friendly terms with one another? If that happened, would it matter?

Clearly, as the Order becomes larger, we may need to change our organizational structures, but if in future we create subdivisions within the Order they need not signify any breach in our spiritual unity. However, an actual split in the Order would be serious as it would probably indicate that the primacy of Going for Refuge had been lost sight of. In other words, Order members would be putting more emphasis on secondary issues: common nationality, or preferences for life-style or particular methods of practising the Dharma, rather than on what is fundamental: their common commitment to Enlightenment. To put it another way, they would be putting emphasis on their conditioning rather than on their common search for the transcendental, which goes beyond differences of age, sex, nationality, education, and all the likes and dislikes that spring from them.

There are undoubtedly many challenges to be faced in overcoming the human tendency to barricade oneself within one's national, cultural, or social group. To take one example, will the Order in India, which is mainly drawn from ex-Untouchables, be able to attract and welcome into its midst members of other castes? We shall only have fully established ourselves there once we have Order members drawn from many levels



Vessantara

years ahead



the Order should be able to function without his direction, and he will be able to leave everything to others, whilst still being around to intervene (assuming that he still lives for some years) if the Order were to start going off track. This very sensible policy should ensure that the Order, whilst mourning his loss, will be well able to continue without him.

On this topic, it is obviously very important that any Order members who disagree with aspects of Sangharakshita's teaching or with the direction in which the Order is going should speak out, and engage in vigorous, friendly debate with other Order members. If they fail to do so now, then doubts or disagreements may surface after Sangharakshita's death, when we shall not have the invaluable benefit of his spiritual experience to help us resolve them.

So far I have looked at challenges which, I hope, still lie some way into the future. Looking at the next few years, I see a couple of issues which I think the Order will have to address. The principle that underlies consideration of both of them is how we maintain both unity and diversity within the Order. We are not a group, all looking and thinking the same on all issues; nor are we a collection of unruly individualists, insisting on doing whatever we think best for ourselves at the expense of the Order as a whole. We aim to be a free association of individuals linked by common ideals and co-operating in a common endeavour.

The first issue concerns how far we can pursue different forms of spiritual practice whilst remaining one Order. Order members use many methods of spiritual practice introduced, or sanctioned by, Sangharakshita. There are certain meditations and rituals that are commonly used by 11

Order members throughout the world. For instance every Order member will know how to chant the Refuges and Precepts in Pali, the ancient language in which many of the Buddha's teachings were preserved. Every Order member will have practised meditation on the breath, and on loving kindness. All Order members will have been introduced to meditations designed to promote the experience of insight into Reality, including the visualization of archetypal Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. However, within that

common framework there will be individual variations. One Order member may prefer quite simple forms of meditation, such as the sharp cultivation of awareness without a predetermined concentration object which is known as Just Sitting; another may be very drawn to the Tantric approach, using much visualization and symbolic ritual. As time goes on, Order members are likely to want to introduce a still greater variety of methods into the Order.

I think it is still an unresolved issue just how much variety of practice is best for the Order. Personally I think there has to be a middle way between uniformity and diversity in this area. Order members have to be able to follow the deep currents of their being, to pursue whatever aspects of the Dharma they find most effective personally in transforming their consciousness. At the same time, we also need to be able to come together as one Order and be able to use rituals and meditations with which we are all familiar. Shared practice is one of the things that will keep the Order united—common meditation and devotional practice conduces to a real meeting of minds. Clearly, too, even if Order members differ in their personal methods of spiritual practice, it is

of society. Because of the deep hold of the caste system on the Indian psyche, which is reinforced by economic factors, there are great difficulties for our Order there in expanding to embrace people from all parts of society: from ex-Untouchables to ex-Brahmins.

Without the Dharma, without a vision of the potential that lies in all human beings, I believe the task would be virtually impossible. Even with it, there is a tremendous amount of work to be done.

A similar challenge lies in the fact that our Movement is growing in India at a faster rate than it is in the West. If current trends continue, there will soon be more Order members in India than there are in the rest of the world put together. This will again bring people up against their conditioning. How will Western Order members such as myself come to terms with the change in the centre of gravity in the Order that this will entail?

A further challenge to which the Order will have to rise, sooner or later, will be the death of its founder and head. Sangharakshita is a universally respected figure within the Order. He has been extraordinarily successful in translating the principles of the Dharma to make them accessible to people around the world. He also has a tremendous ability to communicate with people from all kinds of backgrounds. He still personally takes many decisions that affect the Order's future. When he is no longer with us, as someone who has the trust of the Order around the world, will his successor or successors gain universal acceptance? I think that Sangharakshita himself is doing everything he can to ensure that the Order rises to this challenge. At every opportunity where he feels it safe to do so, he is passing on responsibilities to senior Order members. Before long

Will the Order in India reach beyond the ex-Untouchable community?



Sangharakshita

essential that all Order members should be able to understand how the spiritual practices used by other Order members relate to the path to Enlightenment. If I as an Order member cannot see how the methods that other Order members are using could be an expression of Going for Refuge, then there will inevitably be a severe limitation placed on the extent to which I shall experience a sense of spiritual community with them.

The other issue involving unity and diversity concerns the development within the Order of *anagarikas*—men and women who have committed themselves to 'go forth' from family responsibilities and live a life of chastity and simplicity. Whereas most Order members wear white kesas to symbolize their membership of the Order, *anagarikas* wear golden-yellow kesas and, on certain occasions, yellow unpatched robes. This raises a number of issues for the future of the Order. One of the fundamental principles of the Order is that we are a unified Order of people of different life-styles. Sangharakshita experienced all too often during his years in the East the negative effects of rigid demarcations between a monastic sangha (regarded as the 'full-timers', the serious practitioners) and a laity (who were not regarded as being capable of serious spiritual practice, and whose duty was seen as being to support the monks, the full-timers). Sangharakshita has insisted again and again, as did the Buddha, that anyone, whether living a more 'monastic' or 'lay' life-style, can make spiritual progress, can go for Refuge, and therefore can be part of one Order—focusing itself on common spiritual endeavour rather than divisions based on life-style.

Nonetheless history has shown that it is quite easy for people to end up seeing those living a more monastic life-style as the 'real Buddhists', the first class Buddhists, and to see those living in the world as second class Buddhists. The Order will have to guard very carefully against any manifestations of this tendency. Also, given that life with worldly responsibilities (with all its distractions and demands on one's time) can be a difficult context in which to practise the Dharma, Order members who are in that position will have to ensure that they are really keeping up the momentum of their Dharma practice, otherwise they will be in danger of being left behind by those who, by luck or by judgement, are free of worldly responsibilities. At the same time there is a danger that *anagarikas* could settle down, as some members of the monastic sangha have done in the East, feeling that their simple and renunciant life-style guarantees their spiritual development. They may become self-satisfied,

viewing themselves as the first class Buddhists, and looking down on those who are still more involved with the world—whereas sometimes people with many responsibilities, recognizing the difficulties they face, make more effort in their everyday life, and use their time more carefully when they are able to attend classes and retreats. It is essential that the Order maintains the sense of unity between *anagarikas* and the rest of the Order, and that Order members continue to judge one another on their merits and not by the colour of their kesas.

More generally, in order to survive and maintain its richness, the Order needs to be able to span different modes of being—the Apollonian and the Dionysiac,

the rational and the mystical—and to be able to encompass people drawn to different spiritual archetypes: the pure renunciant, the yogin and magician, the spiritual warrior, and so forth. This is a tremendous challenge, but if we succeed we shall produce a spiritual assembly of tremendous richness.

One minor example of the way in which the Order has to span diverse approaches is the topic of *anagarikas*' robes, about which there has been some debate in the Order recently. Some *anagarikas* find their robes very helpful as reminders of the life they aspire to lead, and in helping them to feel a strong emotional connection with the Buddhist tradition; others argue that they are an irrelevancy in an Order whose stated aim is to avoid Eastern exoticism and to present Buddhism in a way that is appropriate for modern industrial society.

Another challenge that will confront us before too long concerns whether the Order will be able to look after its members adequately. One of the wonderful things about a spiritual community is the network of love and gratitude that links many of its members. Through our common membership of the Order, we have a responsibility towards one another which is every bit as strong as that between the members of a family. But will we as an Order be able to care for the members of our spiritual family, our brothers and sisters in the Dharma, when they become old or sick? Some Order members are prominent within the FWBO and could already rely on a tremendous amount of resources being channelled to help them if they were in need. However, the real challenge will not be in looking after the prominent and the much-appreciated, but those who have lived more quietly—perhaps just occupying themselves with meditation or artistic work, or those who may have rather fallen by the wayside. The first positive ethical precept taken by all Order members—and perhaps the most fundamental—is to engage in deeds of loving kindness. We could use the way in which the Order cares for its members as a yardstick of how much the Order is living up to that precept, and therefore of the spiritual health of the Order as a whole.

So far I have outlined a number of challenges for the Order to rise to in the future, but what can we be doing now to ensure that when the time comes those challenges will be met successfully? Here I can look at the question only in general terms, but it seems to me that the Order will safeguard its future if it fulfils three conditions:

Firstly, we have to put great effort into our personal study of the Dharma and our practice of meditation. Through working to penetrate deeply into the meaning of the Dharma, and the nature of our own minds, we shall come to an unshakeable understanding of the principles that must guide the Order.

It is only if we have a strong grasp of the principles of the Dharma that the Order will be able to adapt to different situations. Sangharakshita has done his utmost to provide the Order with clear guidance for the future. But no spiritual teacher can foresee all that the future holds. In times to come we shall need people whose clarity about the fundamental principles of the Dharma enables them to apply them to any situation. It is only a deep understanding of the principles of the Dharma, which Sangharakshita has so clearly expressed, that will enable the Order to stay united. If our understanding does not go deep enough, then the Order could eventually become a collection of fragmented groups, probably based on national or cultural lines, all derived from

'Order members have to be able to follow the deepest current of their being, to pursue whatever aspects of the Dharma they find effective personally in transforming their consciousness.'

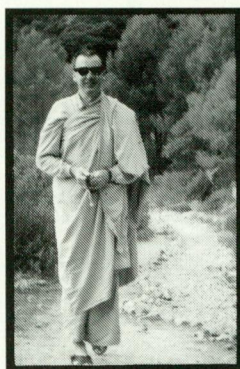
Sangharakshita's teaching and yet separate, perhaps not even recognizing one another, feeling perhaps that they alone are the true descendants of the early Western Buddhist Order, following correctly in the footsteps of Sangharakshita and the early Order members (who by that time may be elevated to legendary status).



Secondly, to safeguard our future we must develop as many channels of communication as possible within the Order. As the Order grows it will be impossible for all Order members to know each other. What holds the Order together at present are the personal friendships (in some cases already of more than twenty years' standing) between Order members. It is essential that there should be as much face-to-face contact between Order members from different parts of the world as possible. Otherwise it will be all too easy for misunderstandings and difficulties to arise. Even now, where different parts of the Order have no direct contact there is always the danger of some Order members failing to keep a feeling of being 'on the same side' as other Order members—losing the sense that we are all engaged in a common project. Without personal contact and communication, human nature being what it is, there is the danger that people begin to see the Order in group terms: the Order members in Britain, the senior Order members, the male Order members, the female Order members, the anagarikas, etc. etc. It is quite easy to reify such concepts and to feel critical about, and alienated from, a category of Order members without really being aware of the living, breathing, meditating, striving human beings who actually make up that category.

Human beings have a tendency to attribute negative views and motives to those who they see as strangers. But within the Order, strangers should just be friends one has not yet met. So personal contact and a network of friendships around the globe, embracing all aspects of the Order, are essential if a process of gradual contraction and xenophobia, a hardening of the spiritual arteries, is not to take place within the Order.

Senior Order members on retreat at Guhyaloka in 1992



Suvajra in robes, a helpful reminder—or Eastern exoticism?

The third factor that will prevent spiritual atherosclerosis is a strong emphasis on the Bodhisattva Ideal. Any spiritual body which is not expanding is decaying. The Order is not a self-satisfied coterie of spiritual lotus-eaters, but a group of dynamic people who all, in their different ways, are manning the lifeboat of the Dharma to rescue people from the

floods of mundane existence. So the Order should constantly be going out to the world. In doing this, more and more people should be encouraged in their turn to commit themselves to the path to true freedom and join the Order. Thus there should be a constant stream of new blood entering the Order's veins.

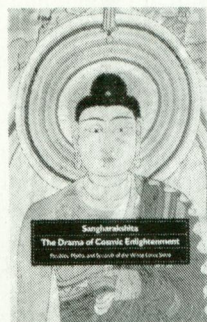
In this article I have outlined a number of challenges that will face the Order in years to come. There is no guarantee that we shall meet them successfully. The Western Buddhist Order may yet become a footnote in Buddhist history. However, the story so far suggests that this is unlikely to happen. One of the advantages of having been involved with the FWBO for over twenty years is that I can see how things have developed. Even where there are aspects of the Order and of Order members that are still less than impressive, I can see the progress that has been made. Sangharakshita's exceptional

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clarity and perception, spanning both East and West, have given us a wonderful basis. The Order is growing vigorously.

If Order members continue studying and meditating to imbibe the principles of the Dharma, if we keep in regular friendly communication, and if we keep on offering the Dharma to the world, then by the time we celebrate our fiftieth anniversary the Order will have become an even more impressive and delightful association of human beings. By then we should have a large number of Stream-Entrants—people who have gained direct experience of Reality, and as a result cannot fail to continue making progress toward Enlightenment. A sizeable core of men and women who understand the nature of life and death and whose practice of the Dharma has become unshakeable will give the Order tremendous stability and conviction. It will also make the Order a great joy to be part of, or associated with. One lovely aspect of Stream-Entrants is that their consciousness tends to soar, like a hot-air balloon, when the ropes that hold them to the earth are loosed. People whose minds are so free and lucid are a pleasure to be around.

By that time too, we should have in the Order people who have been friends with one another for forty years or more, who have developed a great reservoir of knowledge of, and trust in, one another. We shall also have people who have spent a lifetime meditating, or studying the Dharma. By that time the Order can have become a source of spiritual nourishment, a fountain of wisdom, and a source of tremendous joy to many hundreds of thousands of people. I hope I live long enough to see it and participate in it. □



**The Drama of Cosmic Enlightenment:
Parables, Myths, and Symbols of the
White Lotus Sutra / Sangharakshita**

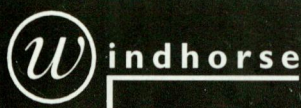
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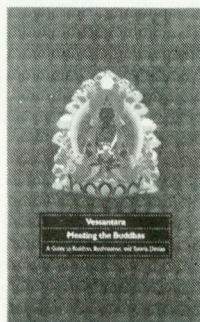
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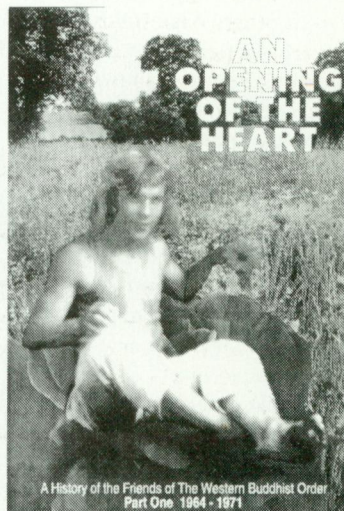
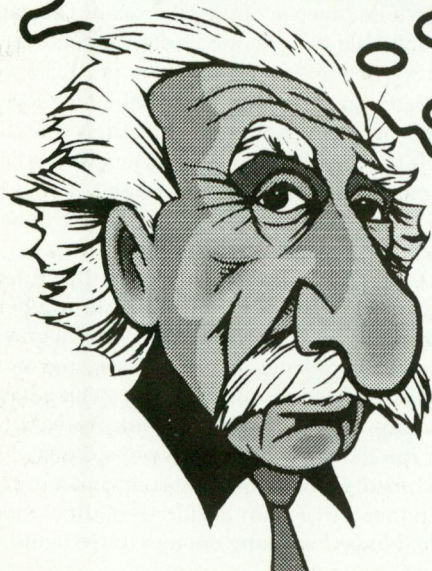
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by Kamalashila

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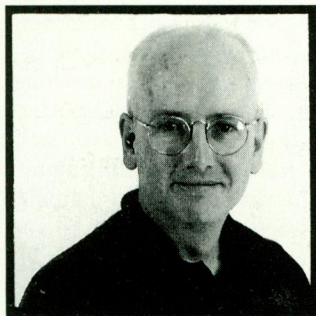
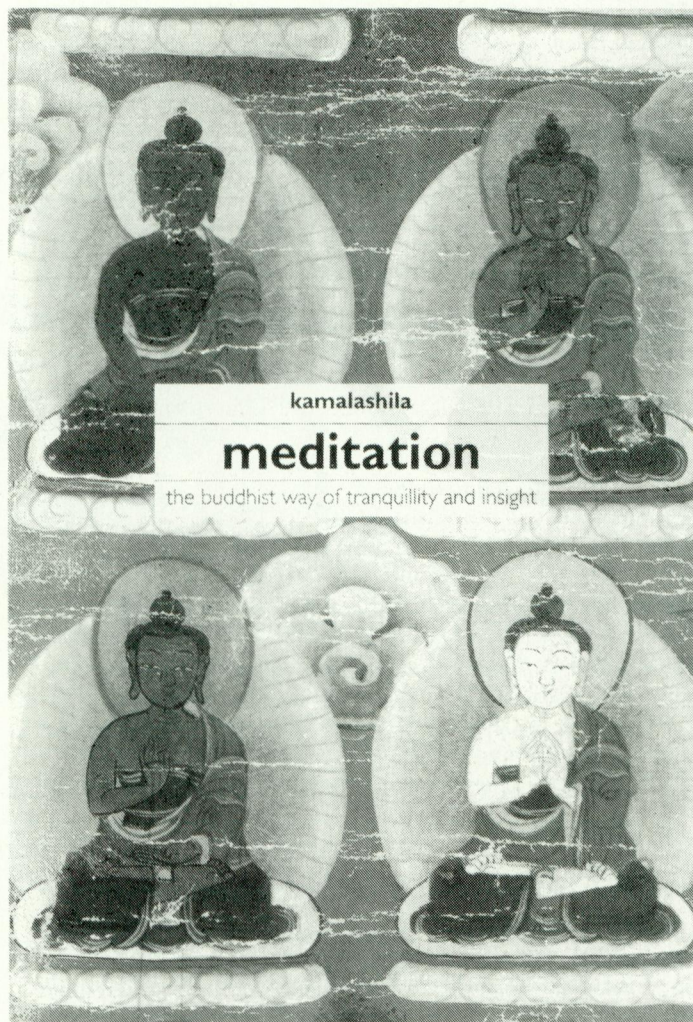
It is often said that 'first impressions count'; this was certainly the case when, one cold December morning last year, the postman delivered my copy of Kamalashila's new book. Its simple, pleasing cover, its clear, well laid-out typography and useful illustrations, together with a table of contents which promised many pleasurable reading hours, made me want to drop everything and start the book then and there.

The publication of Kamalashila's book marks an important landmark in the history of Windhorse Publications which, thus far, has mainly been concerned with publishing the works of Sangharakshita. Indeed, as far as I can recall, only three (full-length) books by other authors have been published by Windhorse. But clearly things are developing, and several other books by members of the Order are in

great deal of helpful information; established meditators will find it equally useful as a reminder of the basics. Chapter One gives a very clear (and for me uplifting) description of the Mindfulness of Breathing. In the following chapter, however, I was somewhat puzzled by Kamalashila's adding of a sixth stage to the Metta Bhavana practice, when as far as I know the rest of us still teach it in five! Chapter Three introduces several important issues associated with 'Establishing a Meditation Practice', including understanding and dealing with the five hindrances.

For me, the high-point of the book came with the two chapters that form Part Two. Here, in a clear and straightforward manner, the theory behind Buddhist meditation is described. Looking first at the relationship between the different levels of consciousness—ordinary consciousness, access concentration, and *dhyana*—Kamalashila gives a description of what might be called the 'anatomy' of different mental states. With the help of a succession of useful charts, he shows how the five hindrances, the five (or six) *dhyana* factors, and the six realms of existence relate to the different levels of consciousness and to each other. Then, on the basis of the development of higher meditative states through *samatha*, he describes the process of the arising of insight (*vipassana*) and where this fits into the Buddhist scheme.

Describing the relationship between *samatha* and *vipassana*, Kamalashila suggests that the former is concerned with developing our mental potency, whereas the latter uses that potency in order to 'penetrate into the truth of things' (p.88). Later,



preparation. So *Meditation—The Buddhist Way of Tranquillity and Insight* appears to be marking the start of a productive new era.

Kamalashila's style is on the whole both readable and informative (though one or two sections could benefit from more thorough editing). The first part of the book provides an extended introduction to meditation which offers beginners a

he writes 'samatha refers to a healthy state of consciousness: it is joy, strength, and power; it is calmness, tranquillity, receptivity and openness' (p.90) whereas insight or *vipassana* 'turns us upside down and inside out—its impact is shattering,' (p.99).

Following on from this concise description of the theory of Buddhist meditation, in Part Three the text takes a much more practical turn. In a series of usefully illustrated chapters we are offered something akin to a 'workshop manual' of meditation. Advice is given on creating the right conditions, on developing good posture, on working in meditation, and on developing insight through reflection. Finally, a description is given of several traditional methods of insight

(Above) the book, and (opposite) the author, Kamalashila

meditation, including the Six Element Practice and the meditation on the cyclic and spiral *nidan*as.

Throughout the book, Kamalashila uses refreshingly plain language, free from jargon, and gently affirmative. Guided by his encouraging words, the reader may easily begin to believe that they too may experience the bliss of *dhyana*, that they too may eventually develop insight. *Meditation—The Buddhist Way of Tranquillity and Insight*, is certain to become the standard text on the subject, at least within FWBO circles, and deserves to sell well for many years to come. □

Satyapala

COMPREHENSIVE STAGES

Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand

by Pabongka Rinpoche

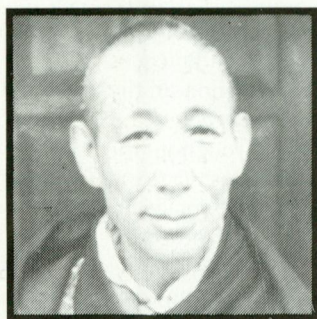
Published by Wisdom

pp.978, hardback, \$37.50

The title *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* suggests a small book.

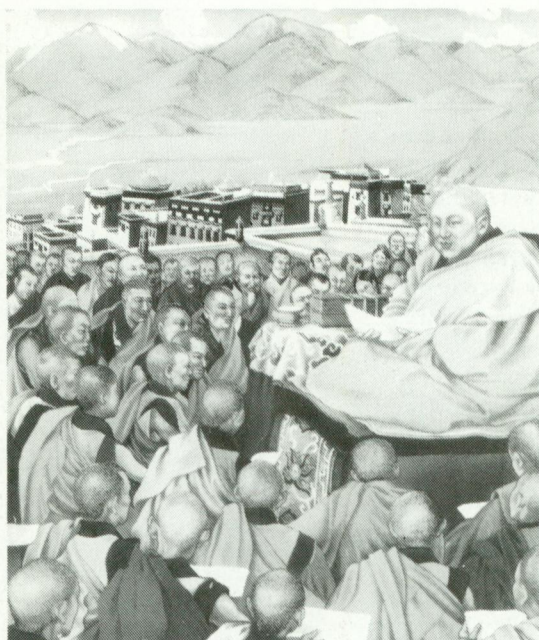
This is exactly what it is not. The main text fills over seven hundred pages, and a further three hundred are given over to a detailed structural outline of the text, translations of two additional short works referred to in the main text, textual notes, an extensive bibliography, two glossaries, and a very full and useful index. A number of full-page line drawings illustrate the text.

16 The main text is a record of a twenty-four-day seminar delivered by Pabongka Rinpoche in 1921 at the Chuzang Hermitage, near Lhasa. The talks were delivered to a gathering of about seven hundred people. Notes were taken and edited into a book by Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, and Michael Richards has translated the work into English. According to the translator, Pabongka



Rinpoche's seminar has extended a powerful influence on the Gelugpa presentation of Lam Rim ('stages of the Path') teachings throughout this century.

The source of the Lam Rim tradition, consisting of literary works and teaching method, was the great eleventh-century Indian teacher Atisha. His *A Lamp for the Path* is the foundation for



all Lam Rim texts. Atisha's work, and the Lam Rim tradition generally, was an attempt to synthesize the whole field of Buddhist teaching. This attempt, combined with his emphasis on Going for Refuge—Atisha was known as the 'Taking Refuge Lama'—will strike a resonant chord in those familiar with FWBO teaching. Since the publication of *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* in 1959 there have been translations of a number of Lam Rim texts and modern commentaries. This new book is important in that it not only covers the basic material common to all Lam Rim works, but also conveys the spirit in which these teachings were delivered. It reveals both the literary form and the oral tradition.

The translation is faithful to Pabongka's very personable style of teaching. His endless illustrations in the form of humorous anecdotes, down-to-earth examples, and stories of miraculous happenings, are entertaining and illuminating. The text follows the traditional form by starting with chapters about the founders of the tradition and the value of the Dharma. These are intended to

establish the authority of the material and to stimulate the reader's faith. The following chapters investigate how to study the Dharma, how to prepare for the path by making ritual offerings, and the importance of a spiritual guide. The main teaching comes in three parts, directed to those motivated to make the best of this life and have a good rebirth, those motivated to make an end to their own suffering in the cycle of rebirths, and those motivated by compassion for all beings. The teachings of impermanence, taking Refuge, and karma and rebirth are given for the first type, the teaching of the unsatisfactory and delusive nature of conditioned existence for the second, and the development of the Bodhichitta through the practice of the six perfections for the third. The text thus takes a wide range of Buddhist teachings and arranges the many formulations of the Dharma into a unifying structure.

As with all unifying structures, one needs to be careful to avoid taking the structure too literally and thereby losing the depth of meaning of the individual parts. For example, although



ethical practice and Going for Refuge are associated with the early stages of the teaching, they are not practices engaged in briefly at the beginning of one's spiritual career. Pabongka stresses that they are the indispensable basis of the spiritual life and the route to an ever-deepening spiritual practice and experience. If we avoid the fatal trap of thinking that only the later, 'higher', teachings are for us, then the Lam Rim provides a good framework for grasping something of the whole sweep of Buddhist teaching.

There are many aspects to this text that the non-Tibetan reader will find difficult to appreciate. The visualization meditations in the sections on Preparation are very complex and bewildering. The seeming naivety of Pabongka's world view might jar with a mind trained in the modern Western world-view. One finds oneself wondering if this clearly intelligent man really believes what he is saying. Is he speaking poetically or symbolically? Is he pulling our leg? It is difficult to tell. One can only assume that he is attempting to communicate the Truth—and then take a leap of faith to enter into his world.

FINAL LEGACY

The heavens and hells that he describes are not geographical locations, but neither are they simply a fantasy universe. They are as real to those who inhabit them as our world is to us. As his many stories indicate, Pabongka is equally at home in the world of the imagination and that of practical reality; he uses the most appropriate approach to communicate his meaning. Like most Gelugpa lamas, Pabongka appeals to traditional authority in a way that is not easy for Westerners to accept, but the clarity that arises from his faith is itself most persuasive.

His discussion of many topics may not be immediately accessible, but a careful and considered study will reveal many treasures. This weighty book is one that I think I will return to again and again over the years. It is the richest and most enjoyable volume from the Lam Rim tradition that has been published to date, and I am sure it will become as important to English-speaking Buddhists it has been to Tibetans. □

Manjuvajra

(Clockwise from left)
Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche,
the editor of *Liberation in the
Palm of your Hand*,
its cover,
and the source of the teachings,
Pabongka Rinpoche;
Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche,
author of *Enlightened Courage*

Enlightened Courage
by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche
Published by Editions
Padmakara
pp. 120, paperback, £10.95

Anyone who has had anything more than a fleeting brush with Buddhism soon comes to realize the sheer vastness and range of the Buddhist teachings. With over 2,500 years of development, through such diverse cultures and countries as India, China, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan, and Vietnam, such diversity is hardly surprising. Further, with hundreds if not thousands of different canonical works all claiming to be authentic teachings of the Buddha, as well as many other teachings given by the innumerable Enlightened men and women who have followed in the Buddha's footsteps, it is difficult for the individual (unenlightened) Buddhist to gain an informed overview as to what is *really* important.

It is fortunate for us, then, that through the centuries Buddhist teachers with some degree of authentic spiritual experience have sorted out what is relevant from what is not, so that they could pass their particular understanding of the Dharma on to their followers. This kind of synthesization and systematization of the Buddha's teaching has occurred again and again throughout Buddhist history. It could be said to have started with the Buddha himself when he systematized his own teachings into such schemes as the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, and it has continued through notable teachers of every school and lineage of Buddhism right up to the present—a contemporary example being, of course, Sangharakshita, with his

'nonsectarian' approach to Buddhism and his emphasis on the centrality of Going for Refuge.

Enlightened Courage is an excellent recent example of such a systematization of Buddhist teaching into an easy, memorable form which can be practised and benefited from by the novice and the spiritually experienced alike. The root text on which it is based was

composed by the Indian master, Atisha. After his arrival in Tibet in 1038, he taught it to his disciples under the title of the 'Seven-Point Mind Training'. Atisha presented these seven key points as embodying the essence of the Bodhisattva path which, if learned, reflected upon, and fully realized, would be sufficient to ensure full and perfect Enlightenment.

The main reason this text is likely to exert a fascination on many people involved with the FWBO is that Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was one of Sangharakshita's chief teachers when they were living in Kalimpong, in northern India, some thirty years ago. At the same time, the book does contain a great deal which is very useful and worthy of study, even if its approach to the spiritual life, being firmly rooted in the Tibetan tradition, means that a few sections may be a little difficult for Western readers to feel a real affinity for.

The book consists of the original root text, together with a commentary which Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche gave to disciples in France in 1990, just a year before his death. It falls into seven main sections, corresponding, as



may be expected, to the seven points of mind training themselves. These points are: the basis for the practice of Bodhichitta; Bodhichitta; carrying difficult situations on to the Path to Enlightenment; practice as a way of life; standards of proficiency in the Mind Training; the commitments of the Mind Training; and guide-lines for the Mind Training.

In each chapter, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche clarifies and expands on the basic points with examples from everyday life which show a warm and lively mind, as well as a thorough understanding of just how difficult it is really to practise the holy Dharma and to eradicate the deep selfishness which is the root of all our problems. Although there are many (perhaps rather too many) comparable books from the Tibetan tradition on the market nowadays, I do think that this work will delight many readers and inspire them to make greater efforts towards helping and benefiting others—for it is this which comes across as the essential message at the very heart of the book, and which is also Dilgo Khyentse's final legacy to us all. □

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Augustine, Rousseau, or the Buddha?

In Britain a dreadful incident has helped revive a debate which highlights an important dilemma in Western thinking. A small child was abducted and killed. Security cameras revealed that two children carried out the abduction, and two ten-year-old boys have now been charged with murder. Apart from sparking some extraordinary passions, the event has triggered an argument about the causes of crime and violence: in particular, are human beings are born evil or good?

Evident within this debate are two contrasting positions. The first is a very traditional Christian view, exemplified in the writings of St Augustine: we are born with the taint of 'original sin' upon us, and are thus inherently evil (unless 'saved' by the 'grace of God'). Associated with this view is a tendency towards emphasizing punishment, hierarchy, and control. The second is a more modern view, one of whose earliest champions was Jean-Jacques Rousseau: we are born inherently good but can be corrupted by society or other people. This view places great value upon 'spontaneity', and engenders deep suspicion of all control and hierarchy.

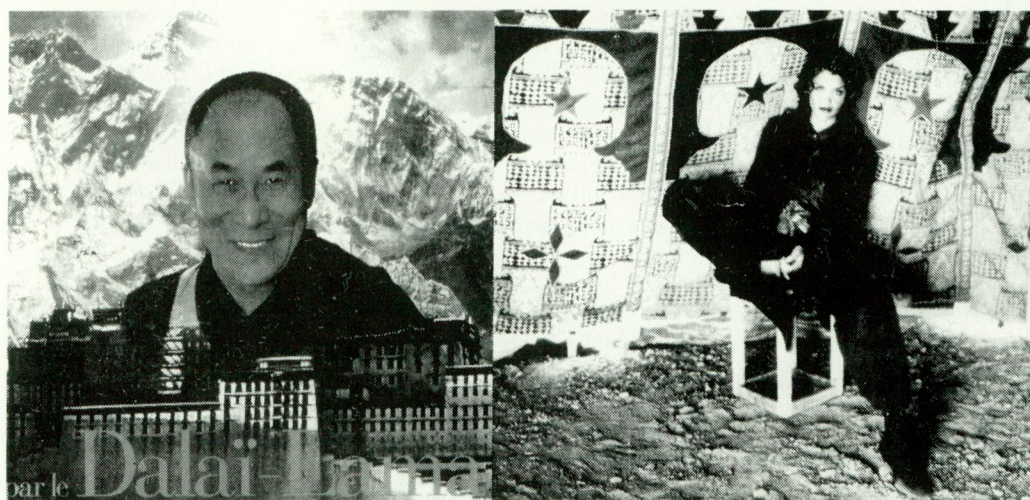
Buddhist doctrine contradicts both of these views, each of which can be understood as representing an extreme. Within Buddhist tradition it is recognized that we are born with the potential for acting with both unwholesome and wholesome motivations. On the negative side we are born with the 'unwholesome roots' of craving, hatred, and delusion. On the positive side, we are born with their opposites, the 'wholesome roots', as well as with the potential for Enlightenment—a state of being in which the unwholesome roots have been eradicated. The traditional, Augustinian, Christian view is, from a Buddhist perspective, seen to inculcate the destructive emotion of irrational guilt (as

well as a fear of a vengeful god, and hatred of those who dare step out of line). On the other hand, the latter-day 'Rousseauesque' view encourages an unwillingness to accept responsibility, an over-emphasis on victimization, and resentment towards whoever is believed responsible for making

society the way it is.

Much of Western thought and practice is influenced by these polarized views, which often seem to reinforce each other in a strange symbiosis. Politics, education, and psychology have in many ways been dominated by them. As Westerners wishing to practise Buddhism, it is *vital*

that we recognize their influence upon us, which can be very strong indeed, emotionally and intellectually. One needs to follow the teaching of the Buddha, not that of Augustine or Rousseau, or some confused amalgam of the two, in whatever guise it might appear. □



SARTORI MEETS THE SARTORIAL

19

Paris *Vogue*, the first home of *haute couture*, has a tradition of inviting a celebrity to be guest-editor, and for last Christmas's issue it chose the Dalai Lama. Indeed so delighted were the *Vogue* staff to work with His Holiness that they gave him a record sixty-eight pages in glorious colour devoted exclusively to Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism (interspersed with adverts for jewellery, make-up, lingerie, and 'un parfumerie different').

The result shows the Dalai Lama to be a master at using the things of this world without becoming worldly, and of maintaining the difference without causing offence. He has to tread a fine line. What, asks the *Vogue* interviewer, is the attitude of His Holiness to artifice and fashion? 'A nice smile, a kind look are more precious than the most fantastic jewel. Put the most beautiful ornaments on an unkind face ... it would not improve anything.'

A good answer, and the Dalai Lama is able to set out his position with humour, insight, and an eye to the sensibilities of his readers. He says 'Non' to abortion, anger, and the ego, 'Oui' to compassion, democracy, and tolerance (and to Shambhala, oracles, and astrology). There are extraordinary thangkas, spectacular photos of Tibet and Tibetans, and an opportunity to promote the Tibetans' political concerns.

But that is not all; *Vogue* has its own agenda. An additional section provides a consumer's guide to Tibetan artifacts, travel, and restaurants, and even the magazine's regular

features have been affected. The 'Mode' fashion section features *Le Souffle des Couleurs*—purples, reds, violet: Tantric colours are in. The model has a dreamy downcast look; the clothes are soft and fluid. She walks along a gravel beach, she squats in front of a victory banner. *Eclat d'âmes*. And here she is in full monastic dress, vermilion lipstick to match the robe. Another spread has a stern-faced model with close-cropped hair gazing steadily at the camera, wearing imitation-sackcloth gaberdine by Issey Miyake. In another she wears what looks like a hair-shirt. This is designer asceticism, renunciation chic.

For all the pictures of wise old Tibetans there are none at all of Western practitioners and no direct encouragement to take up some kind of practice. This is spirituality safely distanced from real life, and where the two threaten to interact a note of modish disdain may be heard. A journalist describes Karma Kagyu Ling, the Tibetan monastery in south-west France, as '*une enclave baba cool, un phare de méditation dans cette région châtelaine, un peu boy scout*'.

In truth, however well their differences are elided, *Vogue* and the Dharma are wildly incongruous bed-fellows. However sincere the editors' intentions this becomes a way of telling women that, as well as being beautiful, successful, and thin, they should also possess '*richesses intérieurs*'. But if you can't manage that, never mind: you can always wear the clothes. □

TWO NEW ARTS CENTRES

BETHNAL GREEN

On 1 May 1993, a team of people associated with the London Buddhist Centre will take over a large space just down the road from the Centre which, it is hoped, will grow into a fully-fledged Buddhist arts centre.

The space consists of the two upper floors of Eastbourne House, a huge Victorian building which dominates a square just off Roman Road in Bethnal Green. Eastbourne House is owned by Globe Town Community Association, who cannot find a use for the space themselves. But they have been so impressed by the impact of Buddhists on their locality over the last eighteen years that they have offered the space at a knock-down rent. The Globe Town committee said that they now see the Buddhists as 'real locals'.

The lower floor consists of two rooms which will be used as artists' studios, while the upper floor has two further studio spaces and a very large 'activities space'. This area is ideal for workshops, performances, talks, and exhibitions, or as a commercially let rehearsal space. Within the next eighteen months several more rooms will become available for use as studios and offices. The activities space is over twice the size of the LBC's shrine-room and will be able to seat perhaps 150 people, so it will clearly be a very valuable asset for the whole LBC mandala.

A branch of FWBO (Arts) has been formed to run the new centre and a steering committee composed of Mallika, Chintamani, Devapriya, Lokabandhu, and Vishvapani has handled the negotiations so far. The most pressing need is for people to administer the centre and for funds to complete the conversion.

Before these things are available it will not be possible to run a full programme of events, and a large number of questions remain open. It is clear that the arts centre will try to give expression to Sangharakshita's view of the arts as a means of human development, but it remains to be decided whether it will be primarily a facility for people within the FWBO or whether it will concentrate on providing activities and

facilities for the local community. As yet, the centre does not have a name.

In spite of this, the go-ahead has been given for the first artists to move in in early May and it is clear to everyone who has seen the space that its potential is enormous. □

BRIGHTON

In a parallel development, Indrabodhi of the Brighton Buddhist Centre has been instrumental in initiating a Buddhist arts centre in Brighton. At the time of writing details have not been finalized, but it has been decided that two or three floors of the building above the Brighton 'Evolution' shop will become an arts space. There are four rooms which will be used as studio space for eight artists, and other spaces

which can be used for classes and workshops. Initial plans are to hold evening classes in sculpture and life-drawing as well as weekend workshops in other art forms including story-telling and music.

The arts centre, which is on the border between Brighton and Hove, is in a different part of the town from the Buddhist Centre so it also represents an opportunity to expand the Centre's activities. There will be yoga classes and possibly meditation courses as well as the arts activities. If it is possible to have the use of the whole building, Indrabodhi hopes to see a natural health clinic on one floor. He hopes too that as much of the studio space as possible will be let to Buddhists, and would like to hear from anyone who is interested. □

BUDDHIST ART IN MANCHESTER

The Western discovery of Buddhism has come about in many ways, not least by way of the visual arts. To begin with, Buddhist art from the East was seen simply as a product of a national culture: as Japanese, or Thai, or Tibetan art. More recently an awareness has grown that the Buddhist works from such countries have as much in common with each other as they do with their host cultures, and that they express the universal values of Buddhism.

An exhibition called 'Expressions of Enlightenment', held at the Manchester Art Gallery throughout March and April, took the understanding of Buddhist art a stage further. Buddhist artifacts from the museum's

collection were displayed alongside works by living Buddhist artists to suggest that the values embodied in the work are still alive today and as relevant as ever.

The exhibition was instigated by Kalyanaprabha of the Manchester Buddhist Centre as part of the celebrations of the FWBO's twenty-fifth anniversary. She worked over a number of months with Ruth Shrigley, the museum's curator, to gather the exhibits and organize the display.

In the exhibition which resulted ancient temple art, carvings, and statues were placed alongside works by Aloka and Chintamani, (including masks depicting forms of Padmasambhava). There were also contemporary *thangkas* by Andy Weber, the well-known artist who practises in the Tibetan tradition. Perhaps the highlight was a Hokusai work, entitled 'The Bridge of Light'. The exhibition was accompanied by a series of talks by Order members which drew out the links between Buddhist principles and the art on display.

A spokesman for the gallery said that something which could have been a mere hotchpotch of exhibits was a great success: the ancient and modern exhibits had 'the same quality uniting them'. □

Ratnaguna (left) and the Director of the Manchester Art Gallery at the opening of the Buddhist exhibition.



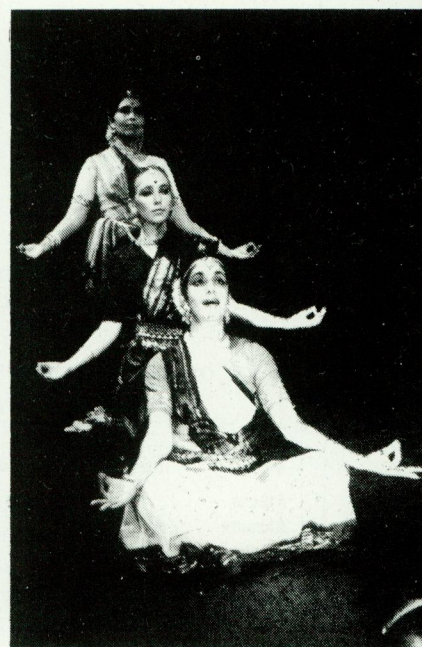


FUN RAISING

A innovative new fund-raising group at the West London Buddhist Centre will be presenting an account of the life of the Buddha entitled 'The Rhythm of Life'. The work will be performed by an Indian classical dance company called Sanchari Dance Co, and will take place at the Rudolph Steiner Theatre on 20 May.

Tickets are available from FWBO centres and proceeds will go to towards the women's ordination retreat centre. □

(Below) Indian classical dancers with the Sanchari Dance Co.
(Right) A rupa from the Manchester Art Gallery collection



IN THE MEDIA

The FWBO is now regularly involved with the national and international media via the FWBO Liaison Office. One recent event was a half-hour 'Buddhist service' broadcast on 31 January on the BBC World Service to an audience of up to 120 million people around the world. The service, which was led by Kulananda and recorded at the London Buddhist Centre, was devised specially for the occasion. It was based on the Threefold Puja, but included two sessions of guided

meditation and a talk, and concluded with the Last Vandana.

Meanwhile, a friend of the FWBO has generously sponsored a series of thirty-two eighteen-minute programmes on Sunrise Radio to be provided by the FWBO. Sunrise Radio broadcasts to the Asian community in West London, Leicester, and Bradford and has a world-wide audience, via satellite, of up to a million.

Each Sunday morning there will be a

talk by an Order member on an aspect of Buddhism. The series will start on 6 May with a talk by Vishvapani.

Sangharakshita and the FWBO will feature in a Radio Three documentary broadcast on 11 May. The programme concerns the interest in Eastern religions which developed in the 1960s and asks what happened subsequently. It will feature interviews with Sangharakshita, Vajradaka, and Dhammadiinna, and will be heard throughout the UK. □

1993

Karuna is currently looking for men and women to be part of its two month fundraising appeals during the summer and autumn of 1993. Doing an appeal gives you an excellent experience of Spiritual Community and Right Livelihood.

ORDINATIONS IN INDIA

17 January saw the public ordination ceremonies of Kamalabai Wanshiv and Archana Phulpagar at Bhaja Retreat Centre near Poona in India. They became Khemmaprabha and Alokashri respectively. Alokashri first contacted the FWBO in 1989 and for the last two years has been living in Poona at Vishrantwadi, the women's training community, and has been the warden of the girls' hostel there.

Alokashri and Khemmaprabha are the first Indian women to be ordained for six years, so the ceremonies represent an important step forward for TBMSG. The circumstances of most women involved with the Movement's work in India are such that it is very

much harder for them to make the step involved in ordination than it is for many of their male counterparts. Shrimala, who came from England to conduct the ordinations, expressed her hope that from now on such occasions will become a much more regular occurrence.

Meanwhile, on 25 March, thirty-two men were ordained at another ceremony at Bhaja. This too was an important development as it was the largest number of ordinations into the WBO ever to have taken place at a single time. Together, these two sets of ordinations take the number of Order members in India to 158 and represent an increase of more than twenty-five percent. □

KULANANDA'S TRAVELS

March saw Kulananda, the FWBO's liaison officer, out and about at various conferences and meetings in Asia. In Thailand he attended the fifth annual conference of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) where he showed slides on the work of FWBO/TMSG focusing on the work in India. From Thailand he travelled with an INEB delegation to Dharamsala in northern India, where they sought to become more acquainted with the plight of the Tibetan community there. Staying on in Dharamsala, he joined a meeting of Western Buddhist teachers from many traditions and many countries. They met for ten days to discuss issues pertinent to the spreading of the Dharma in the West. The Dalai Lama gave the meeting four days of his precious time and a very fruitful dialogue developed. We shall report more fully on these meetings in our next issue. □

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LOKAMITRA IN TAIWAN

In February Lokamitra paid his third visit to Taiwan with the purpose of fundraising for the work of Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha Sahayak Gana (the name of the FWBO in India). TBMSG now has a growing number of Chinese friends, and on this trip Lokamitra addressed no fewer than eighteen meetings in nine days. He gave a slide-show presentation of the Movement's very extensive Dharma and social work activities and at each meeting he also gave a talk.

Lokamitra was able to raise substantial funds towards the cost of a proposed 'Nagarjuna Institute for Dhamma and Social Work Training' in Nagpur in central India. The first phase of this project will provide facilities for training in Dharma and social work, but it is hoped that the Institute might eventually grow into a Buddhist Research Institute.

Taiwanese friends have already provided the funds for the Huang Tsang Retreat Centre at Bhordharan in the countryside near Nagpur. Sangharakshita opened the first phase of the Centre in January 1992 in a ceremony attended by some of the donors from Taiwan. It is hoped that many more of them will be able to attend the opening of the completed buildings in October. □

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Subhuti and (inset) Suvajra during ordinations in India



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SANGHARAKSHITA DIARY

Sangharakshita spent the Christmas holiday period at Padmaloka attending to the work of the Order Office, his correspondence, and giving a number of personal interviews.

He returned to London in early January and did a considerable amount of writing. He completed two more chapters of his memoirs, and a paper to be published in August. In this paper he shares some reflections on the place of *bhikkhu* ordination in relation to the act of Going for Refuge.

On 1 February he attended the funeral of his maternal aunt, Mrs Audrey Kets Kemety at Putney Vale Crematorium. At the funeral Sangharakshita saw many relations, some of whom he had not seen for fifty years, and a friend whom he last met in Calcutta in 1945.

During this period, and especially between his two 24 bouts of literary work, Sangharakshita gave a large number of personal interviews



to Order members and others from the UK, Japan, India, and Hong Kong. Among his visitors was the venerable Sanghasena from Ladakh (a disciple of Sangharakshita's old friend Buddhakarshita) whom he had met on his last visit to India.

From 15–23 March Sangharakshita visited Scotland and the north of England. On Monday 15 March he spent the evening

with Grdhrakuta Community in Manchester, and conducted the anagarika ceremony of Priyavadita. The following day he went to Edinburgh, visiting Ripon Cathedral, Durham Cathedral, and the Gulbenkian Oriental Museum *en route*. On 17 March he visited the Scottish National Gallery and had supper with members of the local sangha, after which he led a meditation and puja. On 18 March he went to Glasgow and dined with members of Heruka Community. The next day he visited Glasgow's museum and art gallery before travelling, in the evening, to the new Scottish Retreat Centre.

The dedication ceremony of the Centre on Saturday 20 March was the principal focus

of Sangharakshita's trip, and around forty people were present for the celebrations. Sangharakshita announced the name which has been chosen for the Centre—Dhanakosha—and led a puja which included the mitra ceremony of Douglas Hastings. Next day he planted a commemorative horse chestnut tree and had supper with twelve Scottish Order members.

On his way back south, Sangharakshita stopped at Carlyle's birthplace in Echlefechan and visited the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle. He spent the evening with Order members and mitras living in Sheffield and stayed overnight in Sheffield before returning to London. □

(Above) Bhante (third left) after planting a tree at Dhanakosha and (left) stalls at FWBO Day



FWBO DAY

On 3 April several hundred people gathered at Goldsmiths College in South London to celebrate this year's FWBO Day. A rail strike the previous day meant that many were not able to attend, and numbers were rather lower than the previous year. Nonetheless the day passed off successfully, and highlights included several cultural events.

One such event was the *premiere* of a film entitled 'An Opening of the Heart' chronicling the early history of the FWBO. The film, which has been put together over the last three years by Suryaprabha, is something of a labour of love. Using archive material, old home-video footage, and interviews with the protagonists, it charts the emergence of the FWBO from two very different sources. On the one hand was the respectable and rather staid British Buddhist establishment which predated the 1960s; on the other the vibrant but chaotic counter-culture 'scene' which attracted young people to Eastern religions. In between, and transcending the two, was Sangharakshita. The movement he started was increasingly influenced by the latter group—these were the days when an FWBO event might consist of a group of people heading off to a free rock concert with a huge papier mâché Buddha. The film was very well received and the next instalment, taking the story to 1977, should be out next year.

The intervening years might be said to have been a period of hard work in which the basic

structures of the FWBO have been established and a fund of spiritual experience developed. It might also be said that the current period is one of expansion and of flourishing diversity. This was underlined by the wealth of artistic events on the programme. The Ashvaghosha story-tellers were in attendance and their work included a stand-up comedy routine by Jayamati. In a similar vein, Bodhivajra and Sarvananda performed 'Harry Maclean's Sunday', a show with words and music depicting 'a detective's search for truth', while later on Sarvananda and Kovida performed three monologues.

Towards the end of the day came a recital of a solo piece for flute entitled 'Vision and Transformation', written and performed by Howard Dyer, a soloist and music teacher. He was inspired to write the piece for a festival at the Croydon Buddhist Centre in 1992 on reading Sangharakshita's exposition of the Eightfold Path. The work uses music suggesting 'Vision' or wisdom, to link the works in other sections, each of which relates to a limb of the eightfold path.

There were stalls from many parts of the Movement, slide shows, talks, and a puja. Finally, the day saw the launch of *The Drama of Cosmic Enlightenment: Parables, Myths, and Symbols of the White Lotus Sutra*, a new book by Sangharakshita, edited from his lectures on the theme by Karen Stout. □



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ARYALOKA BARN PROJECT

Work started recently at Aryaloka Retreat Centre in the USA on a long-awaited project: the conversion of a large barn into a men's community. Up to now the community has had to make do with a smaller space within the main Aryaloka building, which has limited its ability to develop as it needs to. Earlier this year, however, Manjuvajra managed to secure the loans necessary to enable the project to progress. A team consisting of Mike Shank, Baladitya, and Buddhapalita (l-r below), is now working on the conversion work and plan to have it completed by the autumn.

The new community will provide living space for nine men instead of the current five, enabling more Americans to experience community life. In the UK the opportunities for shared spiritual practice and friendship which communities can provide have proved central to the development of the Movement, but in the USA residential communities, along with the FWBO's other institutional structures, are still very much in their infancy. This accounts for the priority which is being given to the establishment

of the new community. In a similar spirit, Paramashanti has recently arrived at Aryaloka and is being financially supported primarily to put his time and energy into the community. The conversion of the barn, which has been standing empty for ten years, will also significantly increase the property value of Aryaloka as a whole. And, last but not least, with the community moving out there will be more room in the main building for classes and retreats. □



SWANSEA FWBO

An FWBO group has been meeting in Swansea (marina above) for the last three years—the Movement's only presence in South Wales. The group was started and has been led by Alan Kerslake, an experienced mitra, and now numbers 15–20 people. Further development has been limited by the absence of an Order member, Pbut members of the group are actively trying to attract any Order members looking for a challenge to come to their city. □

LIVERPOOL ACTIVITIES

Activities in Liverpool continue to thrive with the regulars class meeting in the house of two friends who are involved with the group (and not yet in rented premises as we indicated in the last

Rivendell

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Rivendell is
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Retreat Centre owned by the Croydon Buddhist Centre. It is an attractive, comfortable house set in five acres of woodland and garden, situated in the quiet country village of High Hurstwood in Sussex. Rivendell specializes in providing introductory meditation and Buddhism retreats

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- 25 June – 2 July **Creativity and Meditation Retreat**
£225 (£165 conc)
- 16 – 23 July **Summer Retreat 'Alchemy of Emotions'**
£165 (£115 conc)
- 23 – 30 July **Yoga Week**
£200 (£165 conc)
- 21 – 29 Aug **Summer Retreat, on mindfulness**
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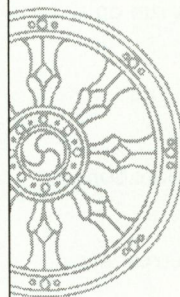
Rivendell is also available for groups who require a venue with retreat conditions. Phone Tuesdays – Fridays, 12 – 5pm

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For more information and bookings contact

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VAJRALOKA



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BUDDHIST MEDITATION
RETREAT FOR MEN

- 30 Jan – 13 Mar **Rainy Season Retreat**
For men Order members
- 19 Mar – 2 Apr **Brahmaviharas Retreat**
- 9 Apr – 16 Apr **Spring Retreat**
- 16 Apr – 30 Apr **Mindfulness Retreat**
- 7 May – 21 May **Meditation and Insight Retreat**
- 23 May **Open Day**
- 29 May – 1 Jul **Building Project**
- 9 Jul – 23 Jul **'Mandala of Enlightenment'**
- 24 Jul – 3 Aug **Five Spiritual Faculties**
- 6 Aug – 19 Aug **Hot Season Retreat**
- 21 Aug – 4 Sep **Brahmaviharas Retreat**
- 7 Sep – 17 Sep **Meditation Refresher Retreat**
- 17 Sep – 30 Sep **Women's Insight Retreat**
For women Order members
- 8 Oct – 22 Oct **Men's Insight Retreat**
For men Order members
- 22 Oct – 5 Nov **Meditation and Insight Retreat**
- 13 Nov – 27 Nov **Mindfulness Retreat**
- 29 Nov – 10 Dec **Teachers' Retreat**
For men Order members
- 11 Dec – 18 Dec **Open Practice Retreat**
- 18 Dec – 2 Jan **Mitra Winter Retreat**
For men who have asked for Ordination



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Further details from The Secretary,

Taraloka, Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield,

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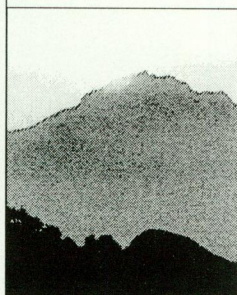
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SUMMER RETREATS

This summer we will be holding two retreats at Guhyaloka:

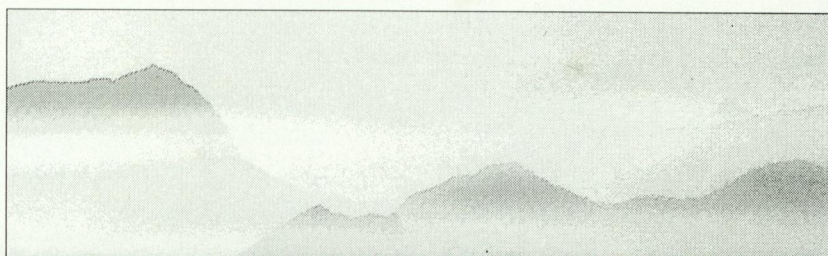
The Three Jewels—27th July to 3rd August

The Five Spiritual Faculties—24th August to 7th September

Both retreats will be led by Yashodeva and supported by a team
of Order members. For either retreats you may stay for one or
two weeks. This year we will also offer to arrange your flight and
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Retreat cost £105 per week.

For more information and bookings contact The Retreat
Organiser at Padmaloka.



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Where to find us

MAIN CENTRES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER

London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU. Tel: 081-981 1225

Birmingham Buddhist Centre, 135 Salisbury Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8LA. Tel: 021-449 5279

Brighton Buddhist Centre, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex, BN2 3HF. Tel: 0273-698420

Bristol Buddhist Centre, 9 Cromwell Road, St Andrews, Bristol, BS6 5HD. Tel: 0272-249991

Cambridge Buddhist Centre, 25 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8EG. Tel: 0223-460252

Croydon Buddhist Centre, 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1ND. Tel: 081-688 8624

Glasgow Buddhist Centre, 329 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3HW. Tel: 041-333 0524

Lancashire Buddhist Centre, 301-303, Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancs, BB5 3HS. Tel: 0254-392605

Leeds Buddhist Centre, 148 Harehills Avenue, Leeds, LS8 4EU. Tel: 0532 405880

Manchester Buddhist Centre, 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LD. Tel: 061-860 4267

North London Buddhist Centre, St Mark's Studio, 12 Chillingworth Road, London, N7 8QJ. Tel: 071-700 3075

Norwich Buddhist Centre, 41a All Saints Green, Norwich, NR1 3LY. Tel: 0603-627034

West London Buddhist Centre, 112 Westbourne Park Road, London W2 5PL. Tel: 071-727 9382

Centro Budista de Valencia, Calle Ciscar 5, pta 3, 46005 Valencia. Tel: 06-374 0564

FWBO Germany, Buddhistisches Zentrum Essen, Herkulesstr. 13, 4300 Essen 1, Germany. Tel: 0201-230155

Helsingin Buddhalainen Keskus, PL 288, SF-00121, Helsinki 12, Finland

FWBO Netherlands, P.O. Box 1559, 3500 BN Utrecht, Netherlands

Västerländska Buddhistsordens Vänner, Södermannagatan 58, S-116 65 Stockholm, Sweden. Tel: 08-418849

TBMSG Ahmedabad, Triyana Vardhana Vihara, Vijayanagar Society, Kankaria Road, Ahmedabad 380002, India. Tel: 0272-50580

TBMSG Aurangabad, Bhim Nagar, Bhausingpura, Aurangabad 431001, India

Bhaja Retreat Centre, c/o Dhammachakra Pravartan Mahavihar, Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India

TBMSG Bombay, 25 Bhimprerna, Tapodhan Nagar, Bandra (E), Bombay 400051, India. Tel: 022 6441156

TBMSG Pimpri, Maitreya Vihar, Gautam Nagar, Pimpri, Poona 411018, India

TBMSG Poona, Dhammachakra Pravartan Mahavihar, Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India. Tel: 0212-58403

TBMSG Ulhasnagar, Block A, 410/819 Subhash Hill, Ulhasnagar, Thane, 421004, India

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TBMSG Wardha, Bhim Nagar, Wardha 442001, India. Tel: 07152-2178

FWBO Malaysia, c/o Dharmacharini Jayapushpa, 2 Jalan Tan Jit Seng, Hillside, Tanjong Bungah, 11200 Penang, Malaysia

Auckland Buddhist Centre, P.O. Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel: 09-378 1120

Wellington Buddhist Centre, P.O. Box 12-311, Wellington North, New Zealand. Tel: 04-787940

Melbourne Buddhist Centre, 34 Bishop Street, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, Australia. Tel: 03-386 7043

Sydney Buddhist Centre, 806 George Street, Sydney, Australia. Tel: (02) 212 6935

Aryaloka Retreat Center, Heartwood Circle, Newmarket, New Hampshire 03857, USA Tel: 603-659 5456

FWBO Seattle, 2410 E. Interlaken Blvd, Seattle, WA 98112, USA

Kathmandu Buddhist Centre (February-May, October-April), PO Box 5336, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal

Padmaloka Men's Retreat Centre, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 05088-8112

Rivendell Retreat Centre, Chillies Lane, High Hurstwood, Nr Uckfield, Sussex, TN22 4AA. Tel: 081-688 8624

Taraloka Women's Retreat Centre, Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2LD. Tel: 094875-646

Water Hall Retreat Centre, c/o London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, London, E2 0HU. Tel: 081-981 1225

Vajrakuta Buddhist Study Centre for Men, Blaenddol, Treddol, Nr Corwen, Clwyd, LL21 0EN. Tel: 049081-406

Vajraloka Meditation Centre, Tyn-y-Ddol, Treddol, Nr Corwen, Clwyd, LL21 0EN. Tel: 049081-406

Guhyaloka Retreat Centre (Spain), c/o Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 05088-8112

The Office of the Western Buddhist Order, Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 05088-310

FWBO Liaison Office, St Mark's Studio, 12 Chillingworth Road, London, N7 8QJ. Tel: 071-700 3077

Karuna Trust, 186 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UE. Tel: 0865-728794

Dharmachakra Tapes, P.O. Box 50, Cambridge, CB1 3BG

Clear Vision (videos and prints), 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LD. Tel: 061-881 0438

Windhorse Publications (editorial office), 354 Crookesmoor Road, Sheffield, S10 1BH. Tel: 0742-684775

Windhorse Publications (distribution and accounts office), Top left, 3 Sanda Street, Glasgow, G20 8PU. Tel: 041-946 5821

Activities are also conducted in many other towns. Please contact your nearest centre for details.