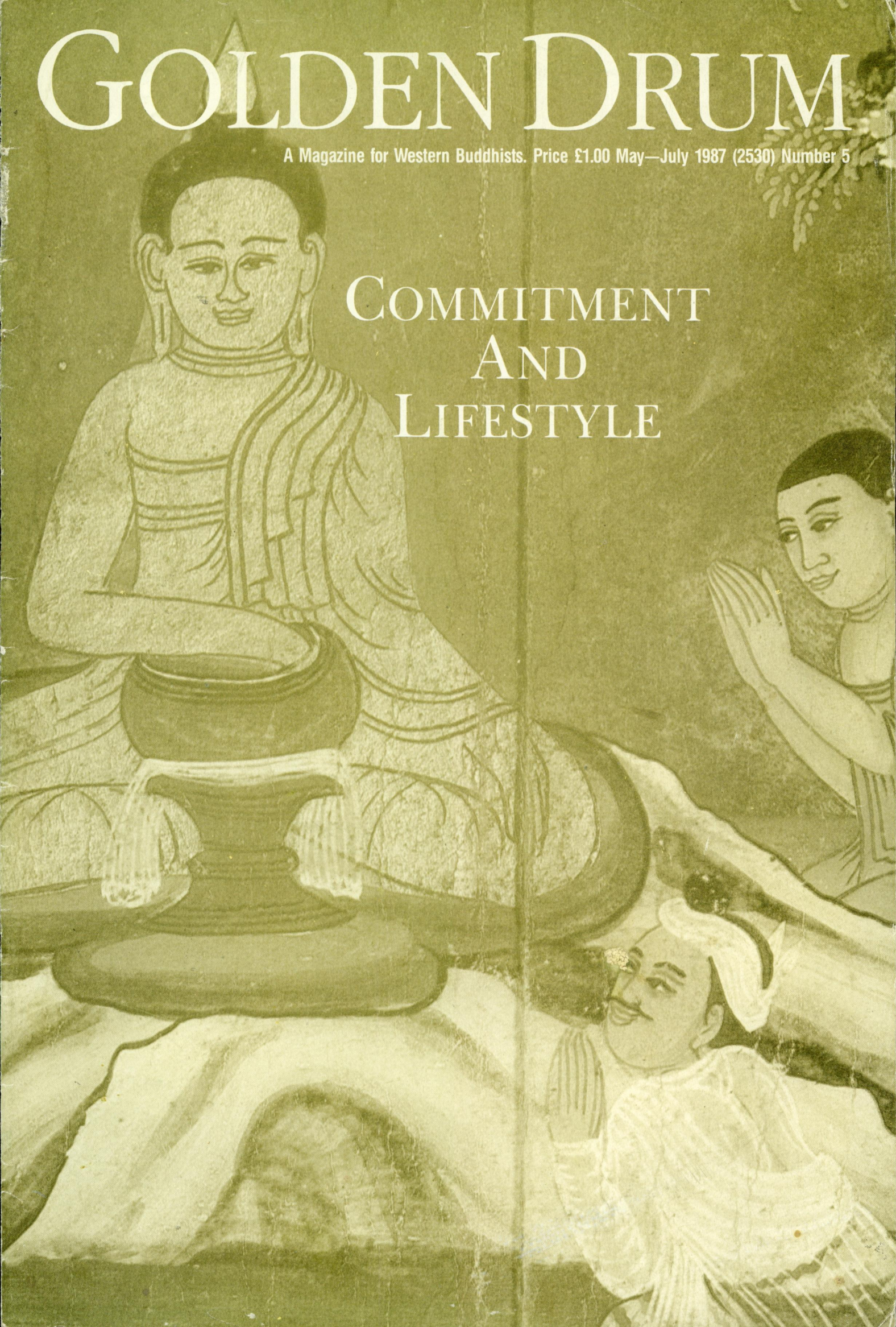


GOLDEN DRUM

A Magazine for Western Buddhists. Price £1.00 May—July 1987 (2530) Number 5

COMMITMENT AND LIFESTYLE



GOLDEN DRUM

(Formerly the FWBO Newsletter)
Published by Windhorse Publications
for the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order
51 Roman Road, London, E2 0HU
© Windhorse Publications 1987

C O N T E N T S

Editor Nagabodhi
Editorial Assistance Shantavira
Design Dhammarati, Paramabodhi
Printing Aldgate Press,
84b Whitechapel High Street,
London E1 7QX

Subscription address & advertisement enquiries: 136 Renfield Street, Glasgow G2 3AU
Subscriptions £4.75 pa (UK & surface) £6.25 pa (airmail)

DATA PROTECTION ACT

If you receive your *Golden Drum* through the post it means that your name and address (only) are being kept in our computer files. The Data Protection Act requires that we inform you of this. Should you have any objections to being 'stored' in this way, please let us know.

- 3 **Editorial** Commitment and Lifestyle
- 4 **Transitional Moments** Abhaya explores daily life as a spiritual testing-ground
- 6 **Rules, Precepts, and Principles** Tejananda suggests that principles can be far more demanding than rules
- 8 **Getting Money In Perspective** Virabhadra on the perils and possibilities of paid employment
- 10 **Two Lives, One Goal** A full-time retreatant and a globe-hopping businessman: who is the *real* Buddhist?
- 14 **Book Reviews** *Sex is not Compulsory*, *Ballbreaking*, and *Into Every Life a Little Zen Must Fall*
- 18 **Outlook** Trends and developments in the Buddhist and non-Buddhist world.
- 20 **Around the World** Recent events around the FWBO



COMMITMENT AND LIFESTYLE

There was a story that, in the early days of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO), Sangharakshita used always to carry a *kesa* in his brief-case. A *kesa* is the thin strip of white silk, (now) emblazoned with the Three Jewels motif, that members of the Western Buddhist Order (WBO) wear for ceremonial occasions. The punch-line of the story was that, one day, Sangharakshita just might meet someone whom he would feel able to ordain 'at first sight'.

This never happened. The record for closing the gap between 'first contact' and ordination—or more properly: Going for Refuge to the Three Jewels—stands at just over one year, and is unlikely ever to be broken. These days, few people are ordained much less than five years after making contact with the FWBO, and a ten year preparation period is not unknown. After two years one would be doing well to be accepted as a 'mitra'—someone clearly working to deepen his or her involvement with the Movement, possibly, but not necessarily, with a view to eventual ordination.

There are special retreats, study groups, and courses for those preparing to Go for Refuge, but the criteria that determine a person's readiness to take that step have nothing to do with knowing certain texts off by heart, of being able to pronounce Pali words correctly, or of 'giving up' some specific list of worldly attachments. Rather, they have to do with the business of determining whether a spark of spiritual insight has yet arisen: the spark that illumines—if only briefly and dimly—the implications of a lifelong commitment to a Transcendental Goal—and which inspires one to make that commitment. They have to do with one's readiness to place that commitment at the heart of one's life so that it will somehow find expression in everything one does—because one wants it to, and because one is prepared to let it.

All this calls for spiritual practice, self-knowledge, self-testing, receptivity, openness . . . and a great deal of time.

And yet, if you are a man, you can fly to the East tomorrow and return next week as a monk. Moreover, for just so long as you felt able to follow the lifestyle of the monk, you would be treated in the East as a *real* Buddhist, someone in a totally different category to the laity. Few, if any, would even think to question your commitment to the spiritual principles and ideals of Buddhism. If you weren't too careful, neither might you.

This is how things are in the Buddhist East, particularly in the Theravada countries, where the monk-lay divide is psychologically absolute. The monks are the ones who are expected to *practise* Buddhism, and often assume that they are doing so simply because they are able to follow the monk's lifestyle; the lay-people are content to practise 'indirectly', by supporting the monks.

This, as Sangharakshita said in a talk given this April to mark the FWBO's twentieth anniversary, is 'self contradictory, and quite opposed to the fundamental teachings of the Buddha himself. According to the Buddha, the Dharma is something that you have to practise yourself, because it is only if you practise it yourself that you'll develop—just as it's only if you eat food yourself that you'll be nourished, and will grow.'

There are currently 298 members of the WBO: 247 men, and 51 women. They range in age from their early twenties to their seventies. While some of them have taken a few specific personal vows, most observe just ten ethical precepts—rather than any long lists of rules. About a sixth of them are married; as many again describe themselves as celibate. Almost half of them work full-time in some kind of FWBO context, the rest have ordinary jobs, live off savings, or various forms of

pension. About half live in FWBO communities; others live with their families (about a sixth), with non-Buddhist friends, or alone. Just five of them wear the robe.

It will be immediately obvious that this Order bears little resemblance to many other branches of the Sangha to be found in the East. But then, nor does its general level of commitment and dynamism. Sangharakshita's intention never was to transplant a set of Eastern ecclesiastical conventions in the West, but to establish an Order, and a Movement, based entirely on practice and deepening spiritual experience: one that would have no place for the kinds of 'self-contradiction' and nominalism that have so compromised the Sangha in the East.

In his talk, Sangharakshita stressed that the WBO offers an essentially Buddhist 'Middle Way' between the extremes of 'rigid, formalistic monasticism' on the one hand, and 'lax laicism' on the other.

'In the FWBO and WBO,' he said, 'whether you are a monk or a layman, or a nun or a laywoman, is of secondary importance. What really matters is whether you are spiritually committed . . . whether you are committed to the path of spiritual self-development and "Other-development". Whether you are committed to the Path of Supreme Enlightenment.

This attitude has found expression in a little maxim . . . "Commitment is primary; lifestyle is secondary". This, of course, *could* be understood as meaning that lifestyle is not important . . . that any lifestyle can be an expression of spiritual commitment. The fact is that lifestyle is very important indeed. But it is of secondary importance: that is, it is important only as an expression of commitment.

The individual member of the WBO is, first and foremost, simply a Buddhist: simply one who is committed to the Three Jewels. Whether he or she lives *more or less* as a monk, or *more or less* as a member of the laity—so-called—depends on the particular nature of his or her spiritual needs. And those needs are not always necessarily the same—not the same, so to speak, from one year to the next.

It is not easy to be "simply a Buddhist", not easy to be committed to the Three Jewels. In the East, a monk . . . assumes himself to be leading a spiritual life simply because he shaves his head, wears a yellow robe, and observes various rules. Similarly, the layman often assumes that he is not committed because he is not doing any of those things. . . Thus, both the so-called monk and the so-called layman are able to evade the demands of the spiritual life.

But in the case of a member of the WBO no such evasion is possible—or not for very long. In one way or another, he or she, the member of the WBO, is constantly being brought up against the question, "Am I deepening my commitment to the Three Jewels? And is my lifestyle—whatever it may be—giving adequate expression to that commitment?" For this and other reasons, it is not easy to be simply a Buddhist, not easy to be a member of the Western Buddhist Order.

In this issue of *Golden Drum* we have tried to show a few ways in which the WBO functions as a medium for a deeper, ever more effective commitment to the Buddha-Dharma. It is very difficult to make contact with the FWBO without encountering the challenge of higher development, impossible to join the Western Buddhist Order unless you are willing and able to accept that challenge.

Nagabodhi

TRANSITIONAL MOMENTS

Life presents all of us with opportunities, demands, and occasional crises. Abhaya explains how, in the context of the spiritual community, such times are the essential trigger for spiritual development.

In the early days of my acquaintance with the FWBO, it gradually dawned on me that to continue eating meat and fish—so clearly unnecessary to my survival—was not in accordance with the ethical principles of Buddhism, which I was learning to respect and follow. On my way home from a steak dinner in a high class restaurant, I decided I would not eat meat any more. In my own chosen environment, I found it easy; the luring whiff of bacon gradually dwindled into insignificance. Sticking to my decision when I visited my family a few weeks later was a different matter. There I experienced the discomfort of non-conformity and the temptation to avoid the possible confrontation involved in explaining my new ways in a meat-eating stronghold. Perhaps a few prawns would be all right? They were deemed small enough not to matter. But I resisted and managed to survive the test.

That was a significant moment of transition for me. There have been plenty since then and I trust there will be others to come. They are points at which the tension between wanting to settle down and wanting to evolve is experienced keenly. They might also be termed 'crunch' points, and our attitude to them is somewhat ambivalent. One flinches, often, at their approach, yet one learns, in retrospect, to rejoice in their arrival and accept these periodic challenges to change one's life as built-in hazards on the Path to Enlightenment. To succeed in 'negotiating' such moments is a sign that one is still moving forwards. Without them, one is spiritually moribund: it all becomes too safe, like church on Sundays or the occasional discussion on the nature of Enlightenment.

Some people, when they first encounter the FWBO, and linger, perhaps suspiciously, on its fringes, are often intrigued to discover that you do not have to be a monk or nun in order to make progress on the Buddhist Path. They are also interested to hear that Order members are not 'lay' either, though they find it difficult to accept this; after all, these 'full-timers' wear ordinary clothes and lead, outwardly at least, ordinary lives. It is true they have those funny names, but . . . can they really be taken seriously? It is only when they take up the spiritual practices that the FWBO offers, seriously and for a prolonged period, that they begin to see that genuine spiritual progress has nothing to do, intrinsically, with the clothes you wear or how much hair you have. For it is only then that they experience for themselves the significance of transitional moments.

These are not just moments; they can

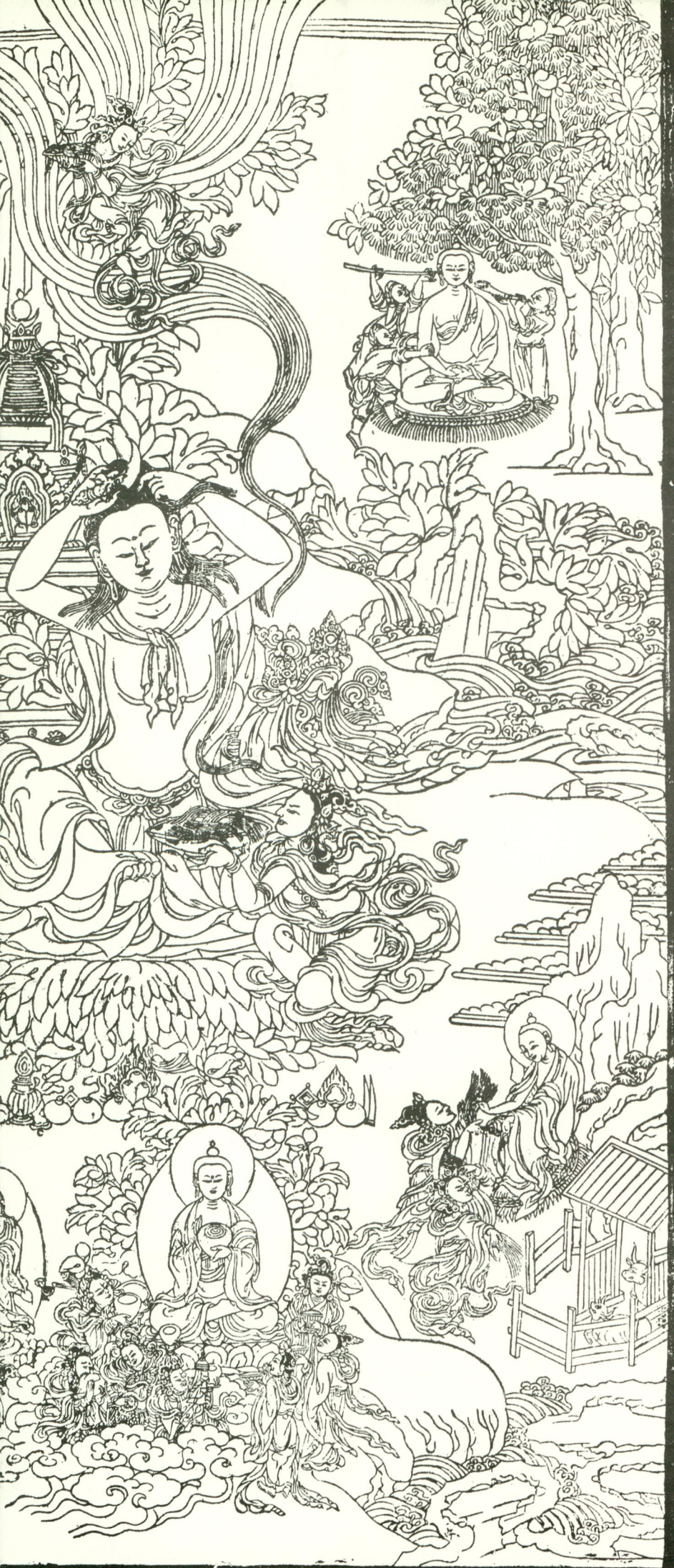
also be phases, lasting for varying periods of time. They are spiritual landmarks by which one can plot one's progress on the map of the spiritual journey. We each have a different route, of course. Looking at mine, I can see, 'Oh yes, that is where I decided to stop eating meat; that is where I went on retreat instead of going on holiday.' Someone else points out a significant turning point for himself: the year he decided, for the first time, to go on retreat at Christmas. (What would the folks say? Home, surely, is where you should be at Christmas.)

If one is to experience transitional moments, it is necessary, of course, to be in transit. In order to change one has to move forward and one is not going to move forward when there is a powerful force pulling in the opposite direction, which there is, as we all know, unless fuelled by a powerful counterforce. The fuel is the spirit of Going Forth, which in turn, cannot be borrowed or bought. One has to generate it, by means of vigorous spiritual practice. The Buddha went forth literally from home to the homeless life in search of Truth. We may not literally have to leave behind a whole way of life—though that *may* be what is required—but we have constantly to go forth from whatever is holding us back, whether it be material possessions, our way of relating to people, or a cherished emotional or intellectual attitude.

Many Westerners involved with the FWBO discover that they have somehow smuggled their Christianity in with them, now nicely dressed in Buddhist garb. It is usually one's spiritual friends who spot the disguise, and after a certain amount of encouragement from them, the urge to blaspheme against a 'jealous god', and thus shake off a lifetime's irrational psychological authority projection, may suddenly irrupt into the space of a peaceful meditation or a beautiful puja. Then one can experience a transitional moment, or a transitional half hour, *par excellence!* This is perhaps to oversimplify. One might feel a need to blaspheme intermittently for years before barriers that have been holding one back for a lifetime finally give way to widening vistas. In this, as in other ways, one learns for oneself that life in the FWBO is far removed from the kind of armchair Buddhism so widely indulged in during the late sixties.

In the FWBO, the archetypal moment of transition is ordination, going for Refuge. Even asking to go for Refuge is not a point many people arrive at easily or lightly. Going for It can present one with even more of an existential crisis, which is not surprising. It is at the supreme moment of personal surrender





to the Three Jewels, to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, that one commits oneself to generating and welcoming these focal points of change, and vows never to flinch from them, until Enlightenment. In other words, one commits oneself to the flames of transformation, to the phoenix fire from which one will arise (provided one does not relapse) spiritually reborn.

Change often comes as a result of prolonged deliberate effort, as the goal we have been *striving* for. But sometimes, it is thrust upon us.

A friend of mine climbed into an aeroplane, leaving behind a safe existence in his paradise for the sake of closer contact with the FWBO in England. He came halfway round the world in search of ordination, only to be informed, in the concentrated atmosphere of an ordination retreat, that he needed more time to prepare himself and would have to wait. A transitional moment he had not bargained for! Not being exactly submissive by disposition, he dallied, alternately, with thoughts of either taking arms against his troubles or running away. The sort of moment when the jaws of hell gape wide, it seems. But he tottered from the brink, accepted the challenge of his spiritual survival and lives to tell the tale.

The turning point could well be—and often is—a breakthrough in communication. It is in this area above all, perhaps, that we human beings flinch from the truth and succumb to the impulse to run away. We tend to go for living and working situations in which it will not be necessary, we hope, to respond to the demands of being oneself. We would rather live in a situation in which our safe image of ourselves is not likely to be challenged. Our single-sex communities are of great value in this respect. I know many people who might well quote their decision to move into one as a crucial moment of transition. When the community is in top gear—and it isn't always, I know—it brings its members into real, albeit sometimes abrasive, contact with one another. The moment of truth can be painful; it may mean a little death, but the new life one moves into is a taste of freedom.

It would be a pity to give the impression that moments of transition are necessarily painful. Someone, in need of more time for meditation, decides to change from full- to part-time work and adjusts to the change outright, without guilt or qualm. But decisions such as these are often only preludes, for the increased practice they afford yields richer fruits: the scarcely noticeable passing of a flaw one has grappled with for years; a sudden clearing of the way ahead that lets one stride with greater faith to the next landmark.

Whether transitional moments are painful or pleasant or a mixture of the two or whether they are more like phases than moments, is not really the point. The important thing is to come to them.

Questions of ethics have long been debated in the West. Perhaps the most radically opposed views being, on the one hand, in St

Augustine's 'God's thundering commands are to be obeyed, not questioned' and, on the other, in Alastair Crowley's 'Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.'

The Buddhist approach—true to the principle of the Middle Way—avoids such extremes. Particular actions are neither 'right' nor 'wrong' in themselves; what matters is whether the underlying *motivation* is 'skilful' or 'unskilful'—whether or not they spring from craving, aversion, or delusion.

This means that, for Buddhists, there can be no question of ethical action being a matter of following to the letter a list of rules or commandments, to be applied like a sort of moral bludgeon. In practice, though, committed Buddhists do undertake to practise sets of *precepts*. Members of the Western Buddhist Order practise one of the oldest—and arguably most thoroughgoing—sets in the Buddhist tradition: the Ten *kushala-dharmas* (or, simply, the Ten Precepts).

Precepts of this kind—unlike commandments—essentially point *beyond* themselves. Their function is to assist the development of an awareness of underlying ethical *principles*. Precepts provide an immediately practicable way

lifestyle—how many robes a monk may own, and so forth. A danger to which any system of this sort is liable is that it tends to award the 'letter' more importance than the 'spirit'. Thus the strict observance of the *bhikshu lifestyle* can loom far more prominent than awareness and practice of ethical principles. It thus becomes 'permissible' for a monk to do something unskilful (e.g. to watch trash on television), without technically breaking any rules. Sometimes it may even mean his *not* doing something skilful because it goes against the rules.

Nothing is absolute proof against such literal-mindedness, but the nature of the Ten Precepts makes it far less likely to arise. The precepts systematically apply the principle of the elimination of craving, aversion, and delusion to all possible areas of human action: action of body, of speech, and of mind. So, a thorough practice of the precepts is both more demanding and more far reaching than that of any fixed rule. Life itself constantly presents us with practical ethical challenges. Facing up to those challenges skilfully is the *primary* way in which a person who goes for Refuge expresses his or her commitment to attaining Enlightenment.

It is precisely in 'real-life situations' that rigid ethical views, or large numbers of rules—even 250 of them—are of little practical value. To be aware of a situation in the light of the Ten Precepts, however, is to be aware of the principles involved. To go for Refuge effectively, a person must be trying to develop such awareness all the time.

Issues are as varied as life itself. There are the implications of one's whole lifestyle: issues such as money, work, food, sex, relating to others, one's living situation and so on. These areas involve us in many decisions: should one eat meat, work in advertising, take the 'Pill', drink, or smoke? How far does one get into the 'consumer society'—or the ecology movement, or CND? There are also those difficult issues which may arise occasionally: is it all right to fiddle a tax return that no one can check; or to 'fall into bed' with someone else's sexual partner; or to 'solve' an unwanted pregnancy with an abortion?

Much could be said about each of these issues, but the point is to see how the Ten Precepts aid awareness of the ethical principles involved in *any* situation. A committed Buddhist will try to make *all* areas of his or her lifestyle as conducive to skilful action as possible. For example, a member of the WBO could hardly countenance running a pub or a betting shop as livelihood. Both provide facilities for others to act unskilfully—even to harm themselves severely—which, apart from anything else, goes against the principle of non-violence embodied in the first precept.

Such issues are relatively clear-cut; but many may not be so straightforward. What if someone lives with a partner who is unsympathetic to their efforts to

RULES, PRECEPTS, AND PRINCIPLES

Members of the Western Buddhist Order observe ten ethical precepts. Tejananda believes that these make more radical demands than many traditional lists of rules.

to develop an active awareness of the skilfulness, or unskilfulness, of one's motivations.

Life is highly complex, and the world is always changing. This is why general ethical principles, rather than specific rules, must serve as the basis for ethical action. Fixed rules, however immediately relevant, do ultimately tend—if they are not allowed to change with circumstances—to become hindrances in themselves. This is largely why members of the WBO adopt the Ten Precepts as their principal means of ethical training, rather than the 227 or 250 rules of the *Bhikshu Vinaya*.

The *Vinaya* is the Rule of life of the Buddhist 'monk', passed down unchanged since the early centuries of Buddhism. Whilst it contains *pratimoksha* rules embodying most of the ethical principles embodied by the Ten Precepts, the *saiksha* rules have little or no ethical significance at all, dealing as they do with matters of etiquette, decorum, and

At one time the Blessed One was living at Vesali in the hall with the pointed roof in the Great Wood. Then a certain Vajjiputtaka bhikkhu went to the Blessed One. . . and he said:

'Lord, every fortnight more than a hundred and fifty rules of conduct come up for recitation. Lord, I cannot train in all those.'

'Can you train in three training rules, bhikkhu? The training rule of the higher virtue, the training rule of the higher consciousness, and the training rule of the higher understanding?'

'I can train in those, Lord.'

'Then, bhikkhu, train in those three training rules. As soon as you have completed that training, then, being completely trained, lust, hate, and delusion in you will have been abandoned. With that you will no more do unprofitable acts or cultivate evil.'

Later on, that bhikkhu completed that training; then, being completely trained, lust, hate, and delusion in him were completely abandoned. With that he no more did unprofitable acts or cultivated evil.

Anguttara-Nikaya III, 83. Trans: Woodward



practise Buddhism? Is the relationship more important than finding a more helpful situation? Maybe not—but then, what if children come into the picture? Such a situation demands rigorous honesty and clarity, without fixed preconceptions such as that it is always more skilful to maintain the integrity of the family, or that it is unquestionably better to move to a more spiritually challenging situation straight away.

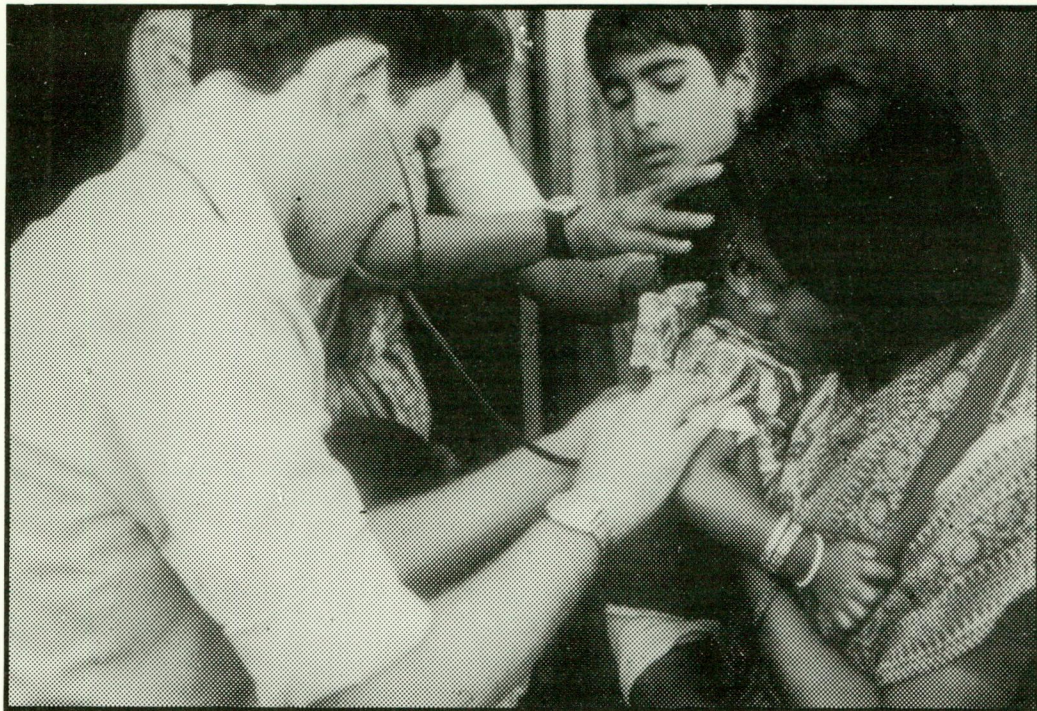
Other issues may not be 'black and white'—for example, the question of involvement in the 'consumer society'. Given the nature of modern Western society, it is almost impossible not to 'consume' at all. But the principle involved is that of the eighth precept: non-covetousness. Applying this, one must ask, 'is my approach one of craving—is it compulsive, appropriative? Do I want this just for the sake of *having* something?' 'Consumerism' is very much a matter of degree and attitude.

Issues which provide the greatest challenges may not be testing because they are particularly 'difficult', but because they are so easy to slip into. You are able to falsify a tax return, or copy an expensive piece of computer software; no one will know—it's just between you and your conscience. Yet these are examples of breaking the second precept: taking the not-given. Is something any less 'not-given' because it is easy to take?

Again, we might, with relative ease, contemplate a sexual involvement with somebody else's partner. The immediate power of sexual passion easily swamps considerations of what might be skilful or unskilful. And yet, along with rape and abduction, adultery is traditionally regarded as one of the most serious kinds of sexual misconduct. Much restraint, and a little forethought, should enable one to realize what painful and distressing consequences invariably arise from such a situation, for all concerned.

As a final example, abortion is now an everyday occurrence; and yet it can be seen as a highly unskilful act—the deliberate taking of human life (there being no question, from the Buddhist point of view, but that an embryo is 'human' from the very moment of conception). Abortion—especially as a means of enjoying sex without consequences—is no less out of the question than is taking a child's life *after* birth (and this includes those sorts of contraceptives—pills or otherwise—which prevent already fertilized ova from implanting in the uterus).

Clearly, to put into practice the principles of skilful action demands awareness and integrity, courage, and determination. What is skilful may not necessarily be either socially acceptable, or what one instinctively desires to do! Yet there is no way to Enlightenment *except* through skilful action. As such, the Ten Precepts—as a complete embodiment of the principles of skilful action—are the indispensable foundation of practice for *all* committed Buddhists, members of the WBO and otherwise.



GETTING MONEY IN PERSPECTIVE

As a registrar in an English hospital, Virabhadra earns far more than he did as doctor and project supervisor on AFI's Poona Project. But does this mean he's lost his spiritual edge?

In the Buddha's day, the 'Bhikkhu' or Bhikkhuni' followers wandered around the villages seeking their daily meal by begging alms from the local people, many of whom were 'lay' followers. As the monastic Sangha developed, the pattern changed from the daily alms-round to royal patronage of monastic communities. Thus, during the era of the great Buddhist monarchs, the Sangha flourished. In later centuries, patronage was eroded in the face of the Brahminical revival; monastic communities, and thus the very existence of the Dharma in India, were seriously weakened even before the great Muslim invasions.

This lesson has not escaped the attention of modern Buddhists. In India, Dr Ambedkar warned new Buddhists that the committed should remain in contact with the common people, rather than becoming isolated in monastic centres and dependent on patronage. He envisaged a new kind of Buddhist worker, one who would function within society and help to effect a transformation of society.

Within Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha (as the FWBO is known in India), a serious

attempt is being made to develop an economic structure for the Indian Buddhist movement. Those who come to work full-time for the Movement join a wage structure which attempts to reflect real needs rather than rank or position. This poses practical problems in a society where there are many pressures and responsibilities associated with the family. One may decide to live simply for oneself, but one's wife, or cousin, or children, may be less enthusiastic! However, those who have joined make considerable efforts to put the principles into practice, while those working outside the Movement are included in a scheme under which they contribute a proportion of their wages to fund Dharma activities such as lectures, publications, and retreats.

For a single person with no dependants the choices are less complex. During my time in India I was in the happy position of being able to join in such a structure while trying to live on a basis of 'real needs'. This did not mean a colourless existence on the breadline, but involved an effort to consider personal expenditure in terms of the overall needs of the Movement, and a conscious avoidance of consumerism. Perhaps the most important aspect was not so much what I did or spent, but rather that I managed to introduce awareness into an area which was previously taken for granted.

Since returning to the UK I

have become involved in a lot more personal earning and spending than was the case in India. Acquiring a mortgage, credit cards, and a car throws up new questions. Where is the spiritual commitment in such a lifestyle?

Materialism and the urge to consume are antithetical to spiritual life. But there is nothing inherently spiritual in poverty either. The issue cannot simply be one of wealth or poverty; rather, it has to do with one's attitude towards money as a 'resource'. Unless a spirit of *dana*, or generosity, pervades one's personal economic life, a large proportion of one's effort, and therefore of one's resources, will be diverted.

The distinction between 'lay' and 'full time' Buddhists cannot therefore be made according to material criteria alone. What really matters is the extent of one's personal spiritual practice, and of one's work for the benefit of others.

A person's economic choices will no doubt reflect his or her state of mind, and his or her underlying attitude to material wealth. A committed Buddhist will surely recognize that money is required to finance the Buddhist movement. Indian history suggests that the Western Buddhist movement would be foolish to place its reliance on such modern forms of patronage as government grants. This 'outside' finance may be useful, even indispensable for certain specific projects, but spiritual independence necessarily implies material independence. This must be the objective. Public centres, communities, and retreat centres all require participants prepared to help finance their activities.

Wealth, or even material comfort, presents pitfalls. There is a gravitational pull towards consumerism, and it is not difficult to rationalize such a tendency in terms of personal 'needs'. As an antidote to this we need frequently to be reminded of the state of the world, to remember the constructive projects that could benefit people in the West that are being held back by lack of finance, and the more extreme position of Dharma brothers and sisters in the developing world for whom adequate food, clothing, and housing remain an impossible luxury.

C L E A R V I S I O N

FULL CATALOGUE
NOW AVAILABLE

HIRE PRICES
ON REQUEST

IN PRODUCTION:
"GUHYALOKA"

THE LATEST RELEASES

► AMBEDKAR AND BUDDHISM

£29.99 105 mins

► ORDINATION AT IL CONVENTO

£24.99 60 mins

► DISCERNING THE BUDDHA

£24.99 70 mins

► BUDDHIST DAWN IN THE WEST

£29.99 130 mins

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

► A PADMALOKA MEN'S EVENT

£29.99 85 mins

► SANGHARAKSHITA IN INTERVIEW

£19.99 45 mins

► BUDDHISM FOR TODAY

£15.99 30 mins

ALSO DISTRIBUTED

► BUDDHISM, WORLD PEACE AND NUCLEAR WAR

£24.99 Approx. 100 mins

► THE TASTE OF FREEDOM

£24.99 Approx. 100 mins

► THE GLORY OF THE LITERARY WORLD

£19.99 Approx. 75 mins.

TO ORDER Direct from CLEAR VISION (formerly Vajra Films) 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9QA. State title and include full payment Plus postage and packing:- 5% inland, 10% Europe 15% elsewhere.
All videos are colour VHS (PAL)

TWO LIVES, ONE GOAL

Kulananda hopes to take a million dollars this year; Ratnashuri will probably attend twenty retreats. Can two people with such different lives both be working out a full-time commitment to Buddhism?

Nagabodhi investigates.



Kulananda: Riding the Bumps

In 1981, Dharmachari Kulananda came to the conclusion that if the FWBO was going to do much good in the world, it would need money. The reflex of this insight was 'Windhorse Trading', a wholesale gift-ware venture which now keeps 1200 UK retailers supplied with 'innocent and amusing giftware products': notebooks, desk-tidies, wallets, pens, crystals, inflatables, and jewellery. Initially, this was to be a limited commitment—perhaps eventually pumping £50,000 into the Movement's financial blood-stream. Today, as annual turnover approaches the \$1,000,000 mark £50,000 worth of dana *each year* (most of which is earmarked for the Movement's work in India) seems an attainable goal.

At some time or another, Kulananda has performed every task the business requires. He has driven 'showroom' vans around the country, attended countless trade shows, managed the books and accounts, packaged and despatched orders, designed products, and done his share of worrying—mainly about cash-flow hiccups and staff shortages.

A succession of Order members and mitras have worked with him. Today, eleven men (five Order members and six mitras) form a bigger, more stable team than ever before, based in a community conveniently close to the business's Cambridge office-warehouse complex. As a kind of managing director (though receiving the same pay as everyone else: basic living expenses plus £25 personal spending money per week), Kulananda specializes in angling for big orders from major store chains, initiating new products and design styles—which involves an exhausting schedule of overseas trips—and maintaining a general

overview.

Kulananda begins each day with a session of meditation. After a quick breakfast—also in the company of his fellow workers/community dwellers—he's off down the road to check the mail, the telex, and 'fax' terminals. Such state-of-the-art office and warehouse facilities—which include a brand new five-station, 20-megabyte computer system, are a source of some pride. But everything has its purpose.

'We are renowned for being able to do what the customer wants us to do. If a client phones in the morning wanting something from the Far East, I'll send a "fax" out that day and get a reply to them the next. It's always been our principle that we must succeed or fail on a commercial basis. Windhorse Trading is owned by a charity, The Windhorse Trust, but we don't deal with people on the basis that we are a charity, or Buddhists, and that they ought to support us. We are simply honest, ethical, and efficient, giving the retailers what they need. We pride ourself on our efficiency, and on the speed of our communication.'

But has Kulananda learned how to balance the calls of worldly success with those of spiritual development?

'It is very difficult to know where the balance would lie. Sometimes the day-to-



'... giving the retailers what they need'

day work—and the worry it throws up, is the spiritual dimension of my life; sometimes that is the cutting edge. The deciding factor is a strong volition to change, and the expectation—on my part and on the part of those around me—that things can be better. If I get caught up in worry or inertia, my friends expect me to be more lively, more radiant, more clear and joyful. The attempt to maintain and manifest positive mental states under these conditions is what seems to make it all a spiritual practice.

‘Obviously, this work is a tremendous opportunity for *kalyana mitrata* (spiritual friendship). One is getting and giving support and spiritual sustenance all the time. If someone is having a tough time, for whatever reason—if they’ve had some problem with their family, or if something has “come up” from their past, or if they’re finding the work too demanding or too boring, well, we just try to help each other, try to be supportive and sympathetic, try to lend some objectivity to their experience.

‘Naturally we have to keep each other up to scratch for the simple good of the business. But someone who can turn their minds away from their subjective experience towards a more objective orientation is surely going to benefit by doing so. The people I work with are concerned for the situation in India.

They’re concerned that the Dharma gets spread in Britain. To work with that motivation seems far better than working with subjective motivations. So, to help someone overcome subjective inertia in order to be able to give to the objective situation is to confer enormous benefit.

‘It has certainly benefited me incredibly. I’m much more clear-headed, much more objective, much stronger, much more energetic than I was when I started. When I go away on retreat, each one is better than the last. When I get the opportunity to meditate in ideal conditions, then I find the work I’m doing really pays off. It’s much easier to get concentrated, much easier to put forth and sustain energy; I’m less thrown by small bumps, because, actually, day to day, I receive quite big bumps. I seem to have a sense of proportion, be less involuted and concerned with my own psychology, because I am used to working in a very objective world with very objective criteria.

‘Sometimes I do yearn for a more peaceful life. I’d like the opportunity to meditate and study more, because those are delightful pursuits. But I wouldn’t feel happy to leave Windhorse Trading without passing it on as a functioning entity. Windhorse is far more valuable to the world than my living in a monastery would be. The Bodhisattva ideal in the

modern world has got to be undertaken with some resources. If you are serious about changing the world, then you need some money, and you need some energy, and you need some worldly *nous*.

‘I can now talk to businessmen *as* a businessman, and yet I’m not motivated by greed, or by the desire simply to set up my own private nuclear family. We are trying to set a sort of living example of a different way of being. It’s possible to live in the world in order to change the world. Perhaps we’re also demonstrating that in order to be a Buddhist one doesn’t have to wear a saffron robe and retire to a monastery. One can be a Buddhist: an effective, wholehearted, twenty-four hours a day Buddhist, and yet involve oneself in the hassle of day to day commerce.

‘I’d be quite offended if anyone thought of me as a “lay” Buddhist. My whole life is based around my Buddhist life. I live in a spiritual community and do spiritual practices with my Buddhist brothers. We work together, eat together, talk together, meditate together, and we run a business which is taking a tiny thimbleful of resources from the vast ocean of *samsara* in order to do an astonishing amount of good. Everything we do is motivated by our attempt to practise the Bodhisattva ideal as best we can.’



Ratnashuri, sewing her robes



Ratnashuri: No Easy Option

Beryl Carey knew that Buddhism was going to be right for her the moment she stepped into the newly opened Norwich Meditation Centre in October 1976.

'I sometimes think, "Why should I have been so attracted to Buddhism? Why did it appeal to me so much?" It was as if I'd come home, right from my first contact with the Dharma. I knew I was going to get involved, knew I was going to stay with it.'

Her friends at the Norwich chocolate factory where she worked thought her mad when she tried to tell them about her interest in meditation and Yoga. But in the end it was the world of the factory that she left behind.

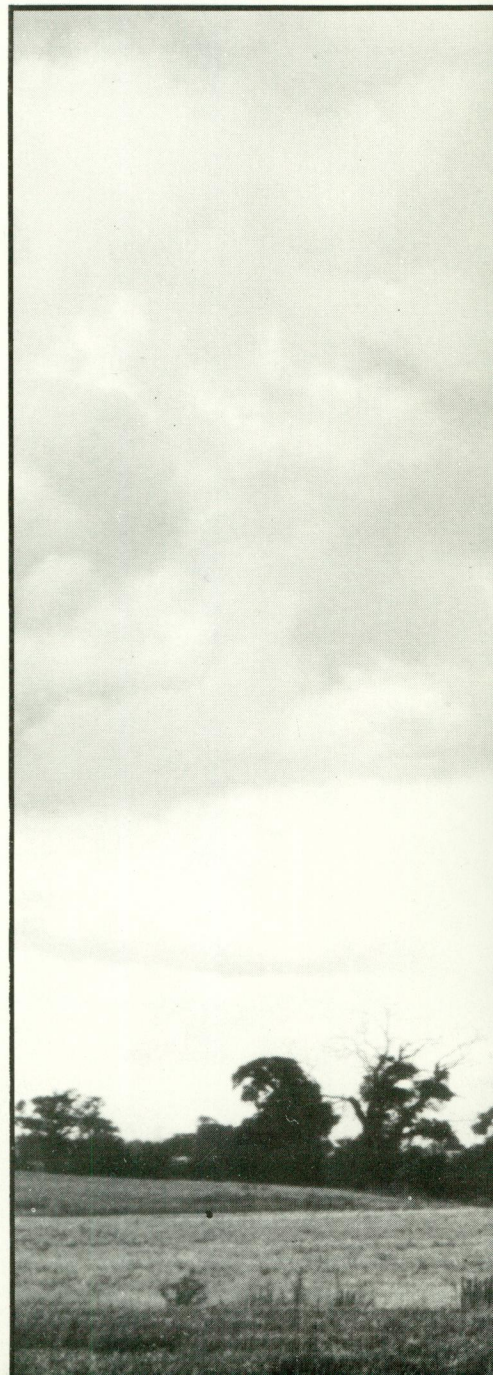
'I had recently parted with my husband and was now living on my own, making a fresh start. But even before I left my husband, perhaps as far back as the end of the war, I'd known I wanted to do something. I'd been a cabbage for long enough. I knew I had to grow and do something with myself;—either that or I wouldn't have lived.

'Do something' she did, and eleven years later, as Anagarika Ratnashuri, her hair close-cropped, occasionally resplendent in orange robes, she lives at Taraloka, the women's retreat centre in Shropshire, England. She moved there as one of four founder members, late in 1985, a move that has fulfilled an ambition as old as her involvement with Buddhism itself. Although, as a mitra and as an Order member, she had worked in the Rainbow Restaurant, with Kusa Cushions, and on the *Mitrata* research and editorial team, Ratnashuri always harboured the hope that she

would one day satisfy her love of the countryside, meditation, and retreats by living in a rural retreat centre.

The Taraloka setting is peaceful, green, and spacious, the lifestyle regular and relatively unhurried. With the recent, major exception of a trip to India as a member of the women's 'ordination team', Ratnashuri rarely leaves Taraloka at all. She is able to meditate and perform pujas several times each day; there are regular community Dharma-study groups. . . . But does this mean that Ratnashuri and her companions have found an easy option?

'I suppose, in a way, it's not as peaceful as I would have expected. There are retreats—weeks, fortnights, and weekends—taking place here for more than half the year, and our retreat programme is getting fuller all the time. Women come from all over the world—as well as from just down the road. Apart from when one is actually on one of the retreats—when we pick up our bedding and move across from the community house to the retreat centre buildings—we are all very busy indeed. There is a lot going on. The retreats have to be organized and led; the facilities are still being created, furnished, and decorated; there is the money side of things, and a



The Taraloka setting is peaceful, green, and spacious

lot of administration. This means a lot of work, a lot of meetings, and a lot of demands.

It's not easy-going at all. I'm actually meeting myself and other people in a much more challenging way than I did in any working situation before. You see, there aren't that many people in our community and we can't be distracted by the outside world. We can't go off to the cinema, or meet a lot of different people, because we are a long way from anywhere else; we're not even near any other FWBO centre. Living here you are up against yourself all the time. One is certainly not running away from anything by living here—though one might feel like running away from *here* occasionally! But you don't, because you are trying to face up to things far more, in the meditation, and in the community.'

But there are compensations. 'Obviously, it's very rewarding to see people getting so much from the Centre. We are helping to bring another element into the Movement's mandala. There are a number of women—particularly those who work in the money-earning situations—who need retreats, and we are very definitely needed to run them. If we didn't have a retreat centre there could be

no retreats for these people.

For example, when women from The Cherry Orchard (the vegetarian restaurant in East London) come on retreat at Taraloka, you really notice the difference when they've been here for just a week. Working in a busy Right Livelihood situation like that, they are facing many of the challenges that we are working with. But having worked in a restaurant myself, I know that, good and worthwhile though it is, you can get very speedy! Taraloka is able to remind them of the more directly spiritual ideal. They appreciate Taraloka very much: and they're very proud of it as well.

My being an *anagarika* (literally "cityless one") perhaps has a similar effect. It is something personal to me, but people who come on retreats seem to find it beneficial too. When I wear my robes at pujas (which is the only time I wear them in England) people really feel that it does make a difference: the outward show that I'm an *anagarika*. I don't feel that because I take the *abrahmacharya* vow (to abstain from "non-chastity") there's any difference in other respects at all. People don't bow down before me; they treat me quite naturally; I can have really good communication,

even with beginners.

What I like above all is seeing people grow. It's really good to see people change. I find that very inspiring. The only thing I *don't* like is saying goodbye to people, then seeing new people come, and saying goodbye to *them*. It's these changeover days that I find the most difficult. I think we all do.

I've never particularly thought of Taraloka as being "monastic", though I suppose we do lead a sort of monastic life. We never use that word, though; we always talk about the "Retreat Centre", probably because so much of our time is spent in dealing with the work of Taraloka. Of course I would like to live in a more remote retreat situation one day, with no coming and going at all. I think everybody would like that in some ways. But that's not likely to happen for a long, long while.

But then, in a way, it's all the same, isn't it? Yes, we are working for Taraloka, but we are also working on ourselves. It's really difficult to make a distinction between working on oneself and working with other people, because by working with other people—*on* other people—you are working on yourself as well.'



CHASTE THOUGHTS

Sex is Not Compulsory: Giving up sex for better health and greater happiness

by Liz Hodgkinson
Columbus Books, London,
1986

pp. 192. Paperback. Price £4.95

Sex is good for you. It gives you energy and makes you a happier and more loving person. It cements relationships, and if you love someone you will naturally want to have sex with them. Everyone has a right to a satisfying sex life, and to be deprived of it is a disaster, for, as Freud demonstrated, all our problems stem from sexual repression.

This is the legacy of views bequeathed to us by the so-called 'sexual revolution' of the sixties, and until the advent of AIDS, perhaps, it was the new orthodoxy of the eighties. The author of this valuable new book used to subscribe to these views herself, but through a process of critical thinking and reflection she has come to hold opinions completely opposed to these fashionable assumptions. Armed only with a little research and a great deal of common sense, Liz Hodgkinson defies the massed ranks of psychoanalysts, sex researchers, and doctors who are today's 'sexperts', and argues for the benefits of *celibacy*.

Ms Hodgkinson has had the courage to ask whether the new era of sexual permissiveness has increased by one jot the extent of human happiness. As she points out, far from bringing about Utopia, twenty years on from the 'swinging sixties' the incidence of heart disease and other stress-related illnesses is rising, the divorce rate soars, cases of rape and child molestation are on the increase, and people are not noticeably any happier than they were before.

The author who, though married, has herself given up sex, suggests that celibacy—at least for periods of time—has a great deal to offer the world. Her book discusses it in relation to men, women,

young people, marriage, creativity, intimacy, and other topics (including a chapter on food, which strongly advocates vegetarianism).

Whilst she herself holds no religious views, the author notes that celibacy is valued by many spiritual traditions, and is prepared to concede that they may know a thing or two. Buddhism, of course, has always valued celibacy, both as a way of 'clearing the decks' for the undistracted pursuit of higher states of consciousness, and as the natural expression of those higher states. It is interesting to see how—from very down-to-earth experience—the author has arrived at a number of ideas about sex and celibacy which are current within the FWBO.

Firstly, the book does not advocate celibacy for the sake of it: 'If one thinks about sex all the time and has to deny oneself, celibacy has no value.' (p. 11). Yet it makes clear that sex has become severely overvalued: 'The search for self-knowledge and autonomy is a far more rewarding one than the search for sexual satisfaction, and, unlike sex, there are guaranteed positive results.' (p. 97). It argues that most sexual relationships involve a trade-off of needs, and that people often give up their psychological independence and integrity as individuals in return for the gratification of their sexual needs.

Furthermore, it suggests that these supposed needs can never be more than temporarily fulfilled: 'As sex is basically an addiction, the more it is fed the more it will be wanted and expected.' (p. 132). By contrast, celibacy promotes calm and emotional balance, avoiding the danger of such negative emotions as sexual jealousy and possessiveness. Moreover, overcoming this addiction frees emotional energy for true creativity. (The author, who has two teenage sons, is scornful of the idea that women are fulfilling their creative potential merely by producing children.)

Perhaps the greatest gain

from celibacy, to which the book gives a number of testimonials, is that it gives more time and opportunity for truly human friendships, with people of both sexes. Celibacy declares a truce in the 'battle of the sexes' and allows men and women to value one another more as human beings, rather than reducing one another to objects of varying degrees of sexual interest.

Ms Hodgkinson questions the idea that people have been endowed with any 'right' to sexual fulfilment. She also argues very cogently that the semantic confusion of intimacy with sex is the reflection of an ideological confusion. She denies any real relationship between sex and true intimacy.

Her chapter on celibacy and health is very telling. Obviously, celibate people do not succumb to sexually transmitted diseases, some of

which are now of epidemic proportions. Neither do they succumb to maladies which are induced or aggravated by sexual intercourse (for example, nuns never suffer from cervical cancer). Nor do they run the risk of side-effects from contraception, abortion, or vasectomy. More than this, studies have shown that celibate people have lower levels of blood pressure, and of heart disease and cancer. They smoke and drink less, are more likely to be vegetarian, and are less likely to succumb to any form of addiction. Celibates, in fact, tend to live longer and healthier lives than non-celibates.

Obviously, there may be factors other than celibacy influencing these findings. Nearly all celibate people available for such studies are following some kind of spiritual tradition, and this

**SEX
is not
compulsory**

LIZ HODGKINSON

**GIVING UP SEX FOR
BETTER HEALTH AND
GREATER HAPPINESS**

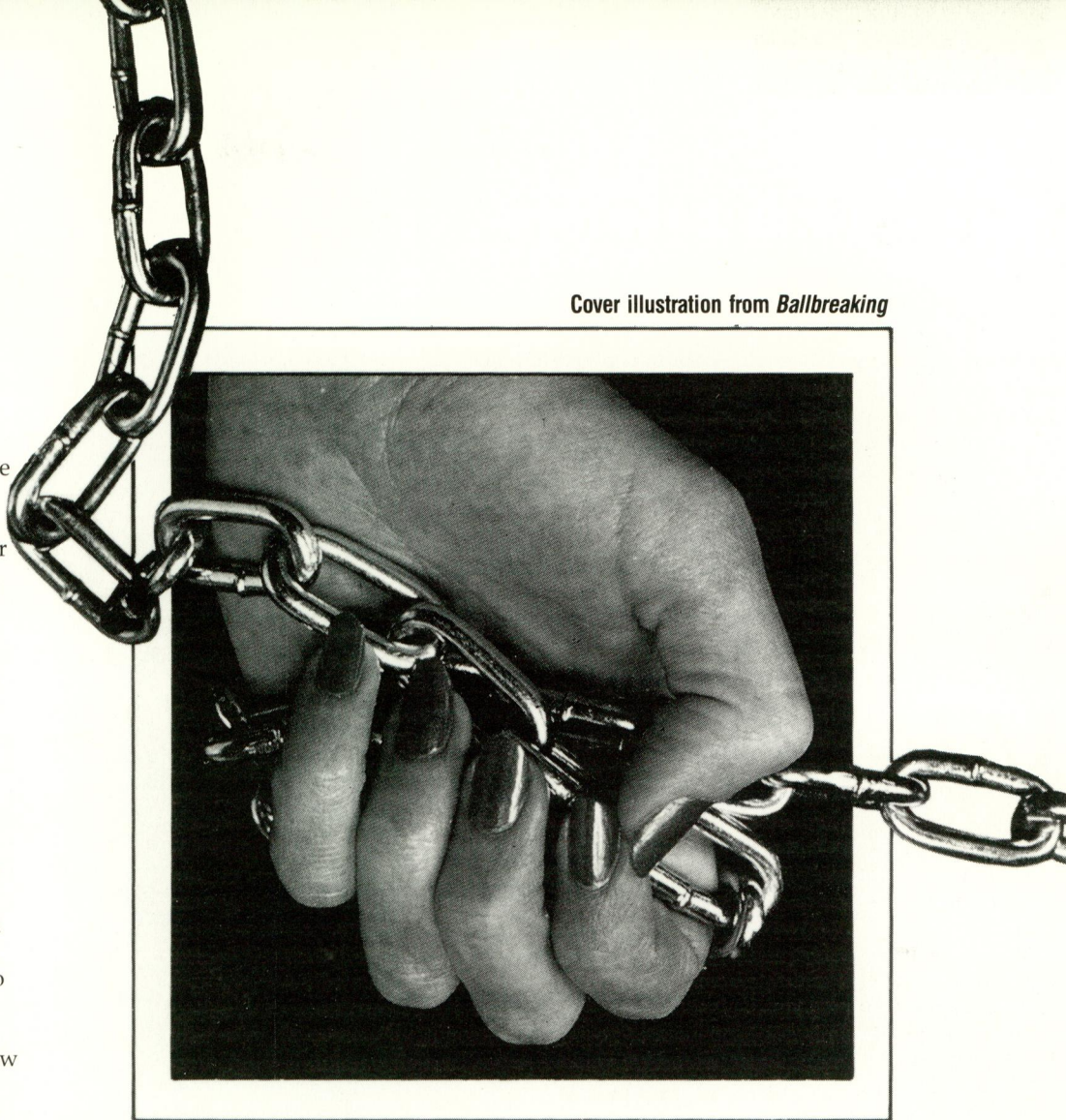
may well in itself promote greater calm and health. Nonetheless, the book demonstrates clearly that concern about, and indulgence in, sex puts a constant strain on the system.

Understandably, the author makes her most telling points with regard to women. She considers that it is easier for women to be celibate, and looks to them to lead the way in this area. Celibacy, she considers, rather than promiscuous sex, will lead to the true emancipation of women. She has some hard, but largely true, things to say about the extent to which, for men, sex is often bound up with the desire for power and control. Occasionally, though, she pushes her arguments too far. Are space rockets and missiles *really* just symbolic phalluses? It is hard to see how the laws governing aerodynamics can really stem from a patriarchal conspiracy.

A weakness of the book is its failure to examine the nature of the love which women feel for men in sexual relationships. The author tends to assume that women are more unselfish than men, inasmuch as they are less concerned purely with sex, and wish to get to know their sexual partner. She does not consider whether this 'love' may not spring just as much from a biological need as the man's. After all, the natural result of sexual union is the production of children, and a woman needs to get to know the person who may father her child.

But these are minor failings in what is overall a sensible book. Western Buddhists, who are trying to lead lives of calm and contentment in a society which bombards them with incitements to sexual activity, will find in it much solace. Through reading it, they will strengthen their belief that the development of detachment rather than the quest for excitement, and of individuality rather than mutual dependence, are the ways to true happiness in life.

Vessantara



BRAVE THOUGHTS

Ballbreaking

by Robert Spicer
Published by Animo,
Australia, 1983
pp. 223. Paperback. Price £4.50

'A brutally honest expose, revealing how women can and do catch, control, and exploit a world of gullible, naive, male slaves.' So runs the cover blurb of *Ballbreaking*. One's immediate reaction is perhaps to make a contemptuous expostulation and turn to the next book.

This would be a mistake. *Ballbreaking* has no literary style to speak of, is over-long and often over-stated. Yet what the author is saying is so shocking, and has such radical implications—even if partly true—for men and women, that it demands careful consideration.

Spicer's basic thesis is that, while men and women are born with equal potential, neither sex realizes that

potential fully. The main reason for this is a characteristic weakness on the part of either sex. In the case of men, it is dependence on women as a source of sexual gratification and supposed emotional security. In the case of women, it is a tendency to exploit this weakness in men, and use it to manipulate them, in order to gain their own desires.

By choosing the path of manipulation, a woman effectively makes herself into an 'inferior creature'. Her interests are limited to superficialities—make-up, hairstyles, fashion—aimed at creating an appearance of sexual desirability which keeps men 'in a perpetual state of sexual excitement'—and thus highly malleable. In this way, she 'earns' the comfortable and undemanding—but for that reason very empty—lifestyle she seeks.

Men, on the other hand, tend to retain their idealism,

but this, too, is compromised: 'He is satisfied to some extent with one-sided religious relationships, like praying to an entity who doesn't speak or even appear to exist, but prefers a deity of more demonstrable substance.' So, he makes a woman into his very own 'goddess', but what he desires in her is only a 'projection' of his own qualities; his desire can never be satisfied because the woman is simply not what he believes her to be. But on the basis of this 'projection', he willingly submits to manipulation by the 'goddess'.

What is the relevance of all this to Buddhists? *Ballbreaking* characterizes a pattern of reaction between the sexes which, whether we like it or not, women and men are liable to fall into. Spicer brings our awareness to areas which are deeply detrimental to spiritual development, yet rarely written about, or even spoken of. So do (critically) read, digest, and act on this book: there is no place whatever for the *Ballbreaking* syndrome in the life of a Buddhist, male or female.

Tejananda

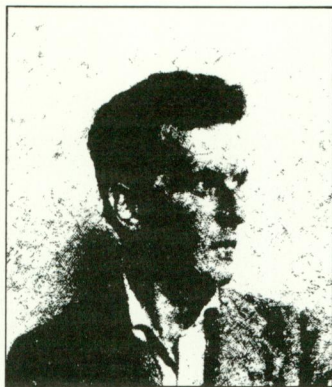
ZEN THOUGHTS

Into Every Life a Little Zen Must Fall

by Alan Keightley.
Published by Wisdom
Paperback. Price £6.95

Wittgenstein's published notebooks reveal a tormented and troubled man. But he was able to say on his deathbed, 'Tell them I've had a wonderful life.' The fierce unhappiness may well have determined the particular versions of Christianity to which he was attracted. In 1937 he wrote, 'Christianity . . . is not a theory about what has happened and will happen to the human soul, but a description of something that actually takes place in human life. For "consciousness of sin" is a real event and so are despair and salvation through faith.' In 1944 he wrote, rather tellingly, that 'The Christian religion is only for the man who needs infinite help, solely, that is, for the man who experiences infinite torment. . . The Christian faith . . . is a man's refuge in this *ultimate* torment.'

It might seem strange to write a book which attempts a marriage between the thoughts of Wittgenstein and those of the perhaps excessively untortured Alan Watts, though that is what Alan Keightley has in part attempted to do. Keightley himself does not appear to share Wittgenstein's version of Christianity, though the nature of his own is in some doubt, given his interestingly decentred Christology, a genuine attempt to save the spiritual baby from the fate of the theological bathwater. Keightley is described by his publishers, perhaps through no fault of his own, as a Christian philosopher looking to Alan Watts and the East. The



Ludwig Wittgenstein

description inevitably raises questions about the relation between being a Christian, or a Buddhist for that matter, and being a philosopher. Wittgenstein himself remarks in *Zettel* that the philosopher 'is the citizen of no community of ideas'.

He is also reported to have said, about doing philosophy, 'Go the bloody hard way!' This is sobering advice for anyone who sets out to offer a popular exposition on the state of the philosophy of religion and the way it may be liberated by some of Wittgenstein's important reflections on the nature of language and its relation to reality. Such an exposition would have to point the reader in the direction of the *difficulties*, and refrain from giving them the illusion that they had crossed the terrain. 'It is as though I had lost my way and asked someone the way home. He says he will show me and walks with me along a nice smooth path. This suddenly stops. And now my friend tells me: "All you have to do now is find your way home from here."' (Wittgenstein)

It is not always clear that Keightley knows what to do with Wittgenstein and his followers. He is clearly aware of the 'expression' view of language, but he then wonders

how a Wittgensteinian might 'analyse a form of religion which had at its heart an alleged direct apprehension of reality outside all language-systems' (p. 97) (this does not include falling over a chair), partly because he thinks that the claim that one 'cannot have religion without religious discourse' (Dewi Phillips) implies 'that the language we use is inseparable from the experiences *described* through it' (my italics). A Wittgensteinian would be cautious about assuming that we all understood the *application* of such expressions as 'direct apprehension of reality' or 'higher state of consciousness' etc. After all, these are expressions in the language too. But what are the conditions under which we come to see the point of their use? One would have to start describing changes in one's own life; religious language may appear on the horizon and beckon us, but we should not appropriate it prematurely: the meaning only dawns slowly, like the meaning of a poem. After all, one may be fascinated for a long time by the calm, inward gaze of the Buddha figure before it occurs to one to look in the same direction. It is sobering that Wittgenstein also thought that religion was a matter of changing one's life. His proposed refuge, though, seems too much like a product or a rebound from states of mind whose causes and conditions go unexamined. Awareness of these is a first step towards an entirely different form of 'refuge'. But these are hard questions and a brief review is no place for them. Meanwhile Keightley is to be commended for helping to make the philosophy of religion less dull.

Mike McGhee

ALSO RECEIVED:

Buddhism Under T'ang

by Stanley Weinstein
Cambridge University Press.
£25.00

The Columbia Book of Later Chinese Poetry

Translated and edited by
Jonathan Chaves
Columbia University Press.
\$29.95

William Blake:

Prophet of Universal Brotherhood
by Bernard Nesfield-Cookson
Aquarian Press. £9.95

In Praise of Tara

by Martin Wilson
Wisdom. £13.95

Tibetan Dhammapada

Trans: Gareth Sparham
Wisdom. £7.95

Beyond Therapy

ed. Guy Claxton
Wisdom. £9.95

The Anointed

by Z'ev Ben Shimon Halevi
Arkana. £5.95

The Puppet Master

by Liz Greene
Arkana. £5.95

A Meditation Retreat

by Alan & Jaqui James
Aukana Publishing. £5.95

Diary of a Zen Nun

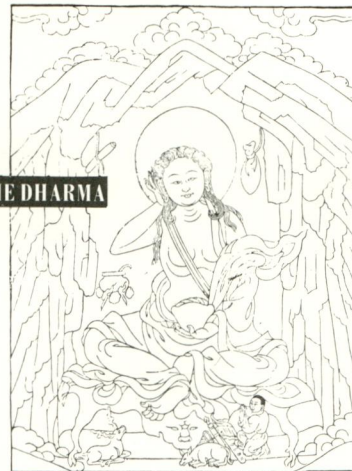
by Nan Shin (Nancy Amphoux)
Century. £5.96

(The inclusion of a publication on this list does not preclude a review at some future time.)

Sangharakshita's new book

AMBEDKAR AND BUDDHISM

is now available from
FWBO bookshops, commercial booksellers
or direct from
WINDHORSE PUBLICATIONS
136 Renfield Street
Glasgow G2 3AU
Price £5.95
(please add 50p for post and package)



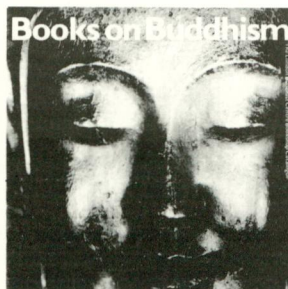
LISTENING TO THE DHARMA

Over 200 taped lectures on Buddhism by The Venerable Sangharakshita and Members of the Order give you unique access to the Dharma.

For our catalogue, please send a stamped addressed envelope to

Dharmachakra Tapes
PO Box 50
Cambridge
CB1 3BG

Books on Buddhism



The London Buddhist Centre's Catalogue.

Free: Send large SAE.

Mail Order.

Bookshop open Mon – Fri 10am – 5pm.
London Buddhist Centre
51 Roman Road
Bethnal Green
London E2 0HU
Tel. 01 981 1225

SPECIAL OFFER

The Three Jewels? Alternative Traditions? Travel Letters? Going for Refuge? The Way to Wisdom? The Puja Book???

If you take out a year's subscription to Golden Drum, we are inviting you to order any two Windhorse Publications at 20% off the normal retail price.*

One year's subscription costs £4.75pa (UK & surface)
£6.25 (airmail)



For full list of Windhorse Publications,
send s.a.e. to

Windhorse Publications,
136 Renfield St,
Glasgow, G2 3AU.



*(Subject to availability)

M·I·T·R·A·T·A

A Bi-monthly Magazine for Practising Buddhists

The entire subject of the **Bodhisattva Ideal** is comprehensively covered within 16 bi-monthly issues of MITRATA.

In this new *Mitrata* series the Ven. Sangharakshita applies this vitally important teaching of Mahayana Buddhism to the living of the Buddhist life in the modern world. He succeeds in making relevant to daily life and practice teachings inherited from the Buddhist tradition which can sometimes seem baffling and obscure.

In edited lectures and discussions with his own students, he gradually reveals the real meaning of the Bodhisattva Ideal.

For further information send a s.a.e. to:
MITRATA, 14 Ashby St., Norwich,
NR1 3PU England



A Windhorse
Publication



WOMEN SEEK A NEW DEAL

After some initial hesitation, the Buddha allowed his women followers to create an Order of *bhikkhunis*, or 'nuns'. While the Chinese branch of the Mahayana Buddhist world—which includes Korea and Taiwan—does still number ordained women in its ranks, the Theravada position is that, since the *bhikkhuni* ordination tradition died out hundreds of years ago, there is, technically, no way in which it can be restored.

This February, perhaps in sympathy with current developments in the Christian Church, Buddhists from around the world, including 150 nuns and laywomen, gathered at Bodhi Gaya to discuss the position of women in the Buddhist community.

In his address to the

conference, His Holiness the Dalai Lama spoke sympathetically of the women's case. At a time when women are fighting for, and gaining, equality in a number of areas, he said, 'Buddhists cannot be isolated.'

As a result of the conference, a new organization was formed: *Shakyadhita*, or 'Daughters of Shakyamuni', with the goal—among others—of establishing a new, international *Bhikkhuni Sangha*.

If any Dharmacharini members of the Western Buddhist Order attend a meeting of *Shakyadhita*, they will be able to report that their Order is open to women, and encourages and nourishes the spiritual development of Buddhists of both sexes.

By emphasising commitment

rather than lifestyle, title, or 'rank', the WBO seems to be steering a course through—or perhaps above—a number of traditional anomalies.

Perhaps there will be those whose particular terms of reference will bid them question the *purely technical and traditional* validity of our ordination tradition. But Dharmacharinis, who attend Order meetings, Order conventions, study groups, and retreats, who regularly lead classes, courses, events and retreats, who have their own co-operatives, communities, and retreat centres—who have, in other words, no need whatsoever to feel uncatered for, unacknowledged, or 'underprivileged'—may wonder whether that really matters.

AS OTHERS SEE US

Congratulations are due to the Zen Buddhist Temple in Ann Arbor, Michigan, not just for the continuing excellence of their journal *Spring Wind*, nor even for some kind comments on our own *Mitrata*, but also for their journal's frank—and sometimes witty—outspokenness.

The latest edition deals at considerable length with the theme of 'Women and Buddhism'. It also features a 'Cross Cultural Events & News' section, which this time includes a challenging editorial, entitled 'The Little Old Dharma Peddler'.

Why is it, the editor asks, that 'Buddhism in modern North American society has been presented in the context of all those zany purveyors of clouded thinking that occupies the pages of journals of alternative spirituality'? This, surely, is a fascinating and urgent question: one to which Buddhists throughout the Western world must address themselves. Has the alliance we have allowed to develop between Buddhism and a host of vague and woolly fringe cults and alternative pursuits done the Dharma any good at all?

Perhaps, for a while, in the sixties and early seventies, the 'alternative scene' could act as a forum for those who genuinely hoped to build an alternative world. But does it still? It may be habitual—and cheap—to advertise Buddhist activities in astrological magazines, or 'New Age' broadsheets; there is still a market out there: plenty of people, sated with crystal gazing, dowsing, or bio-energetics, ready to try Buddhism next. But is this the image, and are these the disciples, that Buddhism deserves?

It saddens *Spring Wind's* writer that a thinker like Douglas R. Hofstadter should dismiss the challenge of Zen as 'akin to the challenge of the occult and of pseudo-science . . . a worldview totally antithetical to my own.' Surely, Hofstadter is exactly the kind of enquiring, sceptical person to whom the Dharma, well-presented, should most appeal. How many of us know the sad and frustrating experience of being treated by the media, or even by friends and relatives, as if we really were as 'zany', irrational, and woolly as Buddhism's popular image would suggest?

Obviously, it is not enough to complain. As *Spring Wind's* columnist argues, Buddhism will be taken seriously only when Buddhists think, behave, and even advertise, seriously, and when some more appropriate bridges link Buddhism with Western culture. The image of Buddhism will change in the West only when we Buddhists take full responsibility for it, and transform it until it represents, as accurately and accessibly as possible, the potent, and quintessentially 'realistic' vision that has always inspired its committed followers.

A CONTINUING NIGHTMARE

The 'Outlook' section of *Golden Drum*, issue 1, carried an article, entitled, 'Genocide in Bangladesh?', about the plight of the Buddhist 'Chakma' tribespeople of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

As the horrifying catalogue of rapes, beatings, burnings, and murders continues to grow, it is perhaps hardly surprising that desperate young Chakmas have turned to guerrilla action, believing that their very survival depends on armed struggle.

A recent edition of *India Today* reveals that continuing harassment

by the Bangladesh army has forced thousands of Chakma refugees to flee their country altogether, and take up residence in primitive camps across the border in Tripura, India—a situation that is causing a mixture of embarrassment and serious moral and political concern in Delhi. It is to be hoped that this concern will give rise to some vigorous diplomatic action, before it has become too late to arrest the spiralling descent into violence.

The Chakmas are in no doubt that the massive, government-backed immigration of Pakistani Muslims into their traditional

homelands, and the army's campaign of terror, will soon lead to their extinction as a people. They also suspect that they are the world's 'forgotten refugees'. Whether or not there is much that we can do to alleviate this progressively worsening situation, we can and must at least keep the Chakmas in mind, and offer whatever support we can.

More information can be got from, and donations can be sent to: The CHT Support Group, c/o John Phillips, 77 Walton Road, Wavendon, Milton Keynes MK17 8LY, England.

NUCLEAR NONSENSE

'We know that the Christian, Jewish, and Hindu civilizations have this capability (to deploy nuclear weapons). The Communist powers also possess it. Only the Islamic civilization was without it. . . .

So spoke Pakistan's Mr Bhutto in 1979. In an interview recently published in the *London Observer*,

Dr Abdul Qader Khan, Pakistan's leading nuclear expert, hinted that his country may now indeed have joined the 'nuclear club'.

It seems extraordinary that something as appalling as nuclear destruction should be spoken of as if it had some connection with the religious domain. Certainly, the very idea of a 'Buddhist Bomb' could never be anything but a

massive and cynical contradiction in terms.

In 1974, Indian military scientists chose the code-phrase 'The Buddha is smiling' to signify the successful test-detonation of a nuclear device. Few events in history would have made the Buddha smile less.

VAJRALOKA

The Buddhist Meditation Centre
of North Wales



A year-round meditation retreat in ideal conditions, offering a valuable opportunity to take your meditation deeper.

For more information
Phone 0490 81 406 , or contact

Vajraloka,

*The Buddhist Meditation Centre of North Wales,
Tyn-y-Ddol, Corwen, Clwyd LL21 0EN*

tārāloka

BUDDHIST RETREAT CENTRE FOR WOMEN

Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr. Whitchurch, Salop SY13 2LX. Tel. 094875 646.

A programme of retreats in the countryside for both newcomers to Buddhism and meditation and those more experienced.

A variety of weekend events offer introductions to Buddhism and meditation, Yoga, Massage, Tai Chi and the Alexander Technique.

For our brochure, contact the secretary.



SOME MAJOR EVENTS AT PADMALOKA MEN'S RETREAT CENTRE

MEN'S EVENT

'ENTERING INTO REALITY' 22-25 May

This event falls on the Spring Bank Holiday, and will last for three days. Including three full-length talks on the Three Levels of Wisdom.

OPEN DAY 31 May

All are welcome to our annual Open Day. It is an opportunity for you to find out more about Padmaloka or to simply come and have a look around.

SUMMER RETREAT 10-21 July

You are welcome to attend whether or not you have previous experience of meditation. A leaflet giving full details is available from the Retreat Organiser.

PADMALOKA is situated on the outskirts of Surlingham, a peaceful Norfolk village about six miles from Norwich. A wide variety of events are held here. Write to the Retreat Organiser for our full programme.

The Retreat Organiser
Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham
Norfolk NR14 7AL ☎ 050 88 8112



SANGHARAKSHITA DIARY

What little there could have previously been in common between the president of the most powerful nation on Earth and the head of a small but growing Buddhist movement was briefly amplified by an ironic coincidence. On 4 January, just as Ronald Reagan was entering hospital in Washington for a much-publicized prostate operation, so too was Sangharakshita simultaneously donning a theatre-gown in Norwich hospital for the same reason.

The problem had arisen the previous month while Sangharakshita was in Spain, viewing progress at Guhyaloka Retreat Centre and giving public lectures in surrounding cities (see last issue). An acutely painful urinary obstruction had to be relieved by the local doctor and his assistant—who arrived quickly despite this all happening in a remote spot early in the morning on Christmas Day! Pain-free and comfortable afterwards, Sangharakshita returned home a week early in order to get things sorted out as soon as possible.

Within days he was in hospital, for the first time in fifty years—pleased to hear that chloroform was no longer used as an anaesthetic, and highly impressed by the skill and efficiency of both nurses and doctors. He was even heard to speculate on what his own secretariat would be like if it ran so well!

For a few days, Sangharakshita received just a few visitors, but was nevertheless surrounded by flowers and cards from well-wishers in England and abroad. As he began to regain his strength, he saw more people, and finally, a week after the operation, returned home. This was fortunately timed, for one day later the village of Surlingham was severed from Norwich by twelve-foot snow-drifts!

Unfortunately, a month later, he suffered something of a set-back in the form of a post-operative infection and was, for a few days, quite unwell. He was soon over the worst of it, however—despite the persistence of a single pocket of infection—and back

to work on his memoirs.

This volume of memoirs will be the sequel to *The Thousand-Petalled Lotus*, but progress has been slow owing to the pressure of other work commitments. This present return to the memoirs actually follows a gap of almost two years—during which Sangharakshita has attended two Tuscany courses and written *Ambedkar and Buddhism*, to name just the major undertakings.

Sangharakshita commenced writing his memoirs when he was thirty-one, but even now, thirty years on, he has only reached the year 1952 in his account! Hearing that I would soon be thirty-five, he jokingly advised me to commence my memoirs as soon as possible, or it would be too late.

Before his recent illness Sangharakshita saw a number of visitors, including Anne Parkes, a Friend from California. In the last three months a total of fifty-two Order members, mitras, and Friends have made their way to Padmaloka to spend time with him including three Norfolk women whose Kalyana mitra ceremonies he conducted.

Naturally, after his operation, Sangharakshita was not seeing as many visitors as usual, but he was pleased to entertain Lawrence Haines, who paid a visit in late January. Lawrence is the administrative director of the English Sangha Trust, and works at the Amaravati Buddhist Centre, where Ajhan Sumedho is based. He is also involved with our West London Centre.

Golden Drum readers may remember that Satish Kumar, editor of the magazine, *Resurgence*, interviewed Sangharakshita last autumn. We have heard that this interview should be published in the July-August issue.

While recovering, Sangharakshita has been able to catch up on a little more reading than usual. An avid reader, he can read three hundred pages of fiction in a day, and has recently been working through a substantial stack of books! In this way it is not surprising that he has built



Sangharakshita at the FWBO's 20th anniversary celebration

a large collection, much of which forms part of the Order Library at Padmaloka.

This collection, which amounts to some six thousand volumes, recently received a welcome boost. Anagarika Ashvajit, a British member of the Western Buddhist Order, has been working in Sri Lanka for almost two years now. He kindly donated to the Order Library a collection of 250 books—which had been held in store in London. The bulk of this carefully chosen set will go to Guhyaloka, since Sangharakshita is establishing a second library for use when he goes there for long stays. But it will no doubt also be appreciated by the many members of the Order who will be ordained at Guhyaloka over the coming years. One can picture the scene: the hot air heavy with the chirp of crickets, and the Sierras in the distance. What a memorable way to enter the world of the romantic poets, or the Mahayana philosophers, or indeed any of the other treasures in this new library.

Dharmadhara

A MESSAGE OF THANKS

I would like to thank all those friends who, during my recent stay in hospital and afterwards, sent me flowers, fruit, 'get well' cards, book tokens, and energy bars. These expressions of their affectionate concern moved me very deeply and made me feel, in the midst of the difficulties I was having to face, that I was surrounded by the spiritual community and supported by their positive feelings towards me.

Sangharakshita

DUDJOM RIMPOCHE AND CHOGYAM TRUNGPA RIMPOCHE

We are very sad to have heard of the deaths of Dudjom Rinpoche (17 January) and Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche (11 April). We will print appreciations of these two important teachers in our next issue.

SANGHARAKSHITA IN PRINT

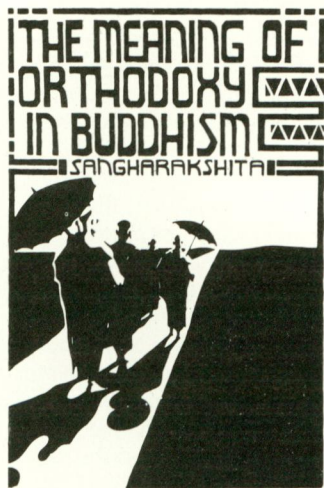
An extract from Sangharakshita's paper, *Buddhism, World Peace and Nuclear War* has appeared in a book recently published by the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. The book, compiled by Archbishop Runcie and Cardinal Hume, is presented as an attempt to 'extend the vision of Assisi', where the Pope held his 'Day of Prayer for Peace' last year.

Bordered by quotes from Mahatma Gandhi and Dag Hammarskjöld, the extract chosen from Sangharakshita's paper deals with the urgent need to reinstate the notion of objective truth, in order to remedy the enormous failures of communication that have arisen in its absence.

Buddhism, World Peace, and Nuclear War has proved to be an extremely popular work, and is now in its second edition. Another booklet reprinted last year was *The Bodhisattva: Evolution and Self-transcendence*, a paper delivered by Sangharakshita to a Wrekin Trust conference in 1983.

1986 was a busy year for Windhorse Publications. As well as launching *Golden Drum* and issuing a valuable introductory booklet, *Meditation and the Transformation of Mind*, we also produced three new books by Sangharakshita: *Alternative Traditions*, *Conquering New Worlds*, and *Ambedkar and Buddhism*.

The first publication to appear this year was *The Meaning of Orthodoxy in Buddhism: A Protest*, (to be reviewed in our next issue). Next, in May, will come a revised edition of *Human Enlightenment*, followed in July by *Crossing the Stream*: a compilation of three previous publications: *Crossing the Stream*, *The Path of the Inner Life*, and *Glimpses of Buddhist Nepal*. Towards the end of the year we will be publishing *The Religion of Art*, again a compilation of Sangharakshita's early writings, comprising *The Religion of Art*, *Buddhism and Art*, *Paradox and Poetry in the Voice of the Silence*, and *Advice to a Young Poet*. This year will also see the publication of the new edition of *A Survey of Buddhism*, from Tharpa Publications.



A new Windhorse booklet

Mitrata continues its serialization of Sangharakshita's lectures and seminars on aspects of 'The Bodhisattva Ideal'. A recent review of the series in *Spring Wind* concluded with these words: 'On every page of this issue of MITRATA (pt 1, issue 56) Ven. Sangharakshita's consummate skills as a scholar, a communicator and a thinker are evident, as is his deep concern for and first-hand familiarity with the Buddhadharma. . . Any Buddhist or non-Buddhist who wishes to gain a deeper insight into the Buddhadharma and who is willing to be made to think will find this series of MITRATA a real treasure.'

Sangharakshita's writings are now available in ten languages, though the tally is rising all the time. Subhuti has recently supervised the translation—and publication—of Sangharakshita's 'Eightfold Path' lectures in Spanish; the booklet *Going for Refuge* has been translated into French, and Devamitra has collaborated with friends on an Italian version of *The Essence of Zen*.

The costs of publishing are high, while the returns—in our somewhat 'specialist' field—can be slow. Although Windhorse Publications is running on an increasingly 'commercial' basis, gifts and donations are still extremely welcome. The work we are trying to do is invaluable, and promises to become ever more exciting as Sangharakshita produces new works, and as an increasing number of Order members take up the mighty pen.

WRITING UP THE SPOKEN WORD

In the past fourteen years Sangharakshita has led approximately 125 seminars and question-and-answer sessions. These have covered a wide range of traditional Buddhist scriptures as well as a number of modern commentaries.

With an average of 150 hours spent in these sessions each year, he has now led a total of 2100 hours of study. These sessions were tape-recorded and, when transcribed, they will comprise some 30,000 pages or 13,800,000 words—a substantial legacy!

For several years, a small number of people involved themselves in an *ad hoc* process of transcribing these seminars. However, during the Tuscany Ordination course in 1982, Cittapala and Silabhadra decided to look for a way of informing people of Sangharakshita's *current* thinking, and so organized a team of transcribers to help with the project.

Four years later we now have a small team of transcribers and typists, concentrated in the UK, using good quality equipment. Many of the team audio-type direct from the tapes, though some transcribe a 'first draft' by hand. One member of the team, a professional transcriber with forty years' experience of

such work, is handling *all* new seminars and question-and-answer sessions. This means that many seminars can be in a readable form within four to six months of the event. The remaining team concentrate on the gradually diminishing 'backlog'. To date, sixty-five seminars have been published or re-issued, and another nineteen are in preparation. On average, one 'fresh' seminar is being produced for use within the FWBO every six weeks.

The team is *now* searching for more volunteer 'checkers' to correct handwritten manuscripts as well as typescripts against the original tapes, and also for two or three copy typists to prepare checked manuscripts for publication.

These transcripts have many uses. A great deal of seminar material appears in *Mitrata* and in other Windhorse publications; it is of immense value to study group leaders, those leading courses in meditation and Buddhism, and to Order members giving public talks.

If you would like to help, please contact Silabhadra at The Transcriptions Unit, 119 Roman Road, London, E2 0HJ. All the necessary equipment can be provided. If you *can* help, please *do*!



Sangharakshita on a study seminar

TWO WOMEN ORDER MEMBERS FOR INDIA

The Hindu caste system is a system of graded inequality, backed by the authority of holy scripture. According to that system, one remains a member of the caste into which one was born, performing one's caste-duty, and being subservient to those of higher caste. To be an Untouchable was to be an outcast in Hindu society, one who could pollute others by his mere touch. To be a woman and an Untouchable was to be the most lowly of lows.

Those who converted to Buddhism under the leadership of Dr Ambedkar in 1956 left behind a life of degradation, and chose a life based on love and generosity, non-greed, truthful communication, and clarity of mind.

Having once been the 'lowest of lows', it is perhaps no surprise that it has taken a while for some women to feel able to leave behind generations of negative conditioning and take the step of 'Going for Refuge' to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, thereby committing themselves

to the ideal of human perfection. But on 17 January, Mrs Lebhane from Aurangabad, and Mrs Karat from Bombay took that step, thereby forming a women's wing of our Order in Maharashtra.

Being unable to come to India himself, Sangharakshita asked two Order members from England: Anagarika Ratnashuri and Dharmacharini Shrimala, along with myself, to act on his behalf.

The ordinations took place during a women's mitra retreat at 'Saddhammapradip', the retreat centre at Bhaja, overlooked by the ancient Buddhist caves where, 1200 years ago, monks (or perhaps nuns) once lived and practised the Dharma.

It was a still, moonlit night when, during a *metta bhavana* meditation practice, each of the two women in turn made her way to a small shrine to take the three Refuges along with the ten precepts in the presence of one of the Dharmacharinis. This 'private' ceremony symbolized the

individual nature of 'Going Forth'.

The following day some four to five hundred Dharmacharis, mitras, and Friends arrived at the Centre to witness the public ordination ceremony. This ceremony, which was led by Ratnashuri, symbolized the fact that, in actuality, the new Order members were not alone: there was a vigorous community of committed Buddhists, now heartily rejoicing in the fact that two women had gone for Refuge. Their heartfelt response and welcome reverberated around the valley in three mighty shouts of 'SADHU!'

Ordination is like a new life, a rebirth, and so the ordinees were given new names, chosen for them by Sangharakshita. Mrs Lebhane was thus 'reborn' as Jnanashuri, combining the qualities of *jnana*—knowledge in its highest sense—with the pioneering and heroic qualities of *shuri*. Mrs Karat was 'reborn' as Vimalashuri—'pure and stainless heroine'.

Padmashuri

PADMAVAJRA'S PROGRESS

Since landing in Bombay for a six-month stay, Anagarika Padmavajra's feet have hardly touched the ground. While visiting Dr Ambedkar's reliquary stupa, at the Dadar Chowpatti, on 6 December (the anniversary of Ambedkar's death) he was approached by Maharashtra Doordharshan (television), and gave an interview which was transmitted all over Maharashtra.

Over the following six weeks he led a number of classes, study groups, and courses, gave thirty-seven lectures—as well as attending the normal round of classes and events that make up the normal weekly programme in Bombay.

Visiting Ahmedabad at the end of January, he gave ten public talks in as many days and led a one-day retreat. For Padmavajra, the highlight of this visit was a talk to he gave to a community of construction workers at Rajiv Nagar, a primitive, unlit locality of rough brick structures on the outskirts of Ahmedabad.

A visit to Sindhudurg district in February, along with Bodhisen and a number of Bombay mitras and Friends, brought TBMSG activities to this beautiful coastal district for the very first time. Audiences, drawn from a wide range of local communities, gave his six talks a good reception, and by the end of the week TBMSG had not only been offered a plot of land, but Padmavajra had been invited to visit Vasco da Gama in Goa region.

This turned out to be the second-ever Buddhist meeting in Vasco, and the first held by TBMSG. Two hundred people attended his talk on 'Spiritual Friendship', and many implored him afterwards to return as soon as possible to begin regular activities!



Ratnashuri conducts the public ordination ceremony

THE WORLD'S BUDDHISTS MEET IN NEPAL



Bodhidharma, Manjuvir, Lokamitra, and Vimalakirti at the WFB Conference

Lokamitra, Bodhidharma, Vimalakirti, and Manjuvir spent ten days at the end of last year in Kathmandu, Nepal, attending the fifteenth General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, of which TBMSG is a Regional centre.

About 300 delegates from many sects and movements of all the major Buddhist traditions attended the Conference: a medley of talks, discussion sessions, and cultural activities, organized by the Dhammodaya Sabha.

The TBMSG delegates concentrated especially on the Conference's Youth section, and on furthering friendly contacts with a number of delegates from India, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Nepal.

Lokamitra was especially pleased to meet an old and good friend, Mr Leong. Mr Leong is President of the Young Buddhist Association in Malaysia—who recently gave TBMSG a gift of 2,000 copies of a book they have just published: an edited transcript of Sangharakshita's lectures on the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path.

A by-product of their stay was that the four Order members became convinced that Nepal is ripe for some kind of FWBO/TBMSG initiative. When Lokamitra gave a short talk to members of the Young Buddhist Association of Nepal, his listeners were especially impressed by the social dimensions of TBMSG's work

in India. Lokamitra left Nepal with just a few reservations. Many of the discussions in the main conference had seemed to become dominated by sectarian or purely political issues; alcohol flowed disappointingly freely in at least one reception he had attended. But all in all the trip was well worthwhile. It was good to get a chance to meet and talk with Buddhists from other areas of the world, and good to renew old friendships. For the three Indian Order members, this was an excellent opportunity to widen their Buddhist horizons, and to gain confidence in what Buddhism and TBMSG has to offer, not just in India, but throughout the world.

BAHUJAN HITAY

Balwadis, or kindergartens as they are known in the West, are an important element in the work of Bahujan Hitay, the Movement's social wing in India. By attending sessions at these simple facilities, children from slum areas, with little or no tradition of education or even literacy in their family backgrounds, get a feel for the learning process, and for classroom discipline. Thus, when the time comes for them to attend school, they are as ready to benefit as are their classmates from more privileged backgrounds.

Maitreyanatha, who directs Bahujan Hitay's work in Poona, reports that as the balwadi programme extends it is not always easy to find trained teachers. Bahujan Hitay therefore organized a ten-day course this March, which was attended by twenty-six local women—including the eight who are already running our balwadis. The course was very helpful indeed, and will doubtless make more balwadis possible.

The recently completed medical centre at Dapodi is functioning more fully all the time. Dr Tony Sharkey, a mitra from Manchester, has recently spent a few months there helping Bahujan Hitay to establish a pathology laboratory, and Mr Makashir, a local expert, has initiated a regular monthly series of BCG vaccination camps. Sixty-eight children and their mothers attended the first camp, this February.

RETREAT CENTRE EXPANDS

Soon after the women's ordination retreat came to an end at the Bhaja retreat Centre, work began on the construction of another hall. This building, the third to be built at the *Saddhammapradip* complex, will be used as a dining area during the dry seasons, and as a shrine-room during the rains. With more and bigger retreats taking place all the time, yet more buildings are planned, in order to allow at least a hundred people at a time to be accommodated in comfort.

A small but significant

event took place at the Centre early this year: a retreat for non-Buddhists, led by Padmashuri, Sudharshana, and Lokamitra. Such retreats may be the norm in the West, where most of those who attend our open retreats would not describe themselves as Buddhists. In India, however, where Buddhism is still seen by many as something of a 'caste phenomenon', this display of interest in Buddhism by high-caste Hindus is a radical development.

Traditional social divisions still run deep in India,

sometimes even within the Buddhist community itself. While on a lecture tour of the Amaravati District, Jyotipala arrived in a village to find an extremely tense atmosphere. A young couple from different 'sub-castes' wanted to get married, but were encountering tough opposition from their respective families. Jyotipala and his team were able to bring the families together, however, and in the end a Buddhist marriage went ahead.



Vaccinations in Dapodi

SECOND PERFORMING ARTS RETREAT

Those who read the last edition of *Golden Drum* may be interested to hear that a second 'Performing Arts Retreat' took place at Padmaloka from 13-20 February.

Thirteen people took part in a programme of meditation and pujas, and some further explorations of the performing arts—the main area this time being mask-making and the use of masks. We were very lucky to have Paul Filipiak (ex-'Moving Picture Mime Show') with us, who led us through a series of mask-making workshops.

During seven hectic days we also touched on the following: mime with masks, the creation of improvised scenarios using masks, the use of stage lighting, music, and sound effects in stage and video work.

Towards the end of the retreat, the main complaint was, as ever, the lack of time. However, despite its brevity, the retreat was a great success, and on the final day we discussed how we would like the Movement's Performing Arts aspect to develop. There was a strongly expressed urge

to have longer retreats, to work together more often, and to engender a tangible product, possibly even a production.

Next comes a week-long retreat near Stratford-upon-Avon, where we intend to study a text and see some plays performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company. It is also possible that we will begin to plan a longer, performance-oriented retreat and thus take further steps towards putting Buddhist performing arts firmly on the map.

Kovida

MANAGING STRESS IN EDINBURGH ...

Although Tejamitra wants to point out that there is as yet no FWBO Centre in Edinburgh—and won't be until the autumn—this does not mean that the team who moved there a few months ago have not been active.

For, as Tejamitra suggests, 'It does seem to be easier for many people to enrol for an Adult Education (AE) course than to walk into a Buddhist centre. And that is what we have been doing: AE courses in meditation, and also courses in "Stress Management through Meditation" for some other organizations.'

These courses have been attracting a great number of people—and tend to increase rather than decrease in size as they get under way. During the winter break in the academic year an informal class was held, by popular demand, in the community flat, so that new friends could keep in touch with their practice.

Some of these educational activities already constitute a kind of Right Livelihood business, now known as 'Clear Mind'. As Tejamitra makes contact with more businesses and organizations, offering his courses in stress management, not only are more people coming into contact with the Dharma, but a financial basis is already being laid for the future Edinburgh Centre.



Paul Filipiak with apprentice mask-makers

PROMOTING FEARLESSNESS

This January, Bill Hard, a mitra from Sudhurya community, Bristol, who trains nurses and other care staff who work with mentally handicapped people, led a course in 'assertiveness training'. The weekend course, at the Bristol Centre, was attended by two Order members, two mitras, and two Friends.

The course began with an exploration of assertiveness as a middle way between submissiveness and aggressiveness—both of which can be damaging to oneself and others; one could say that they represent the 'reactive' modes caused by fear, while assertiveness is creative, it is standing one's ground whilst allowing others to stand theirs.

Ultimately, assertiveness is the action of the fearless. It is also about total honesty: stating what you really think and feel, but being open to being wrong, or to someone else thinking and feeling differently.

Next came a practical session of working with assertiveness techniques. These, while having no value when applied to living situations in a mechanical way, gave those of us practising them a feeling for what assertiveness is. An essential part of the weekend consisted of feeding back—assertively—to the others our experience of them. Assertive feedback means communicating openly and honestly your experience of a person without taking

away their integrity by assuming that you are being totally objective—which can be very damaging. Thus the other person is able to take your feedback into account, and still come to his own decision as to what he really is like—which means that he is free to disagree with you.

In order to get a more objective view of ourselves, we had a session with a video-camera. Each of us in turn talked about ourselves for two minutes, into the camera, and then watched the video playback, whilst receiving comments from the others.

The weekend concluded with a few hours spent enacting 'role plays'—which were also video-recorded and

played back. The idea here was that the rest of the group acted out roles in 'real-life' situations chosen in turn by three people who wanted to understand and experiment with their own habitual responses and attitudes. This was particularly rewarding, as well as enjoyable; it gave us a strong feeling for the dangers of compromise, and for the feelings of satisfaction and integrity gained through the practice of assertiveness—even when we could not get what we wanted. Indeed, this seemed to be the most important aspect of assertiveness; it's not about getting what you want: it's about expressing who you are.

Maitripada

... AND IN MANCHESTER

An organization known as 'Lifeline' approached Manchester Centre last September asking whether Order members could provide some meditation and relaxation classes for ex-drug addicts and for those still trying to sever their addiction to drugs. The classes, led by Suvajra, have now been going for six months, and seem to be the

most successful aspect of Lifeline's programme.

Inspired by Tejmitra's efforts in Edinburgh, Ratnaguna and Suvajra have also been offering courses in 'stress control' to the staff at Manchester College. Feedback has been favourable, so a further course, next term, seems likely.

THE FWBO ARRIVES IN MELBOURNE

Towards the end of March, Buddhadasa, Gunapala, and Paul Kennelly set in motion the project that has occupied their minds for the past three years. Saying farewell to friends in Wellington, New Zealand, they took a plane for Sydney, en route for Melbourne where they plan to start FWBO activities.

They spent just a couple of days in Sydney, long enough to catch up on recent developments at our centre there, and to buy a 'Holden Kingswood' station wagon, before setting off for their new base.

There are a great many Buddhist groups already active in Melbourne, so the newcomers see their first task as being to take stock of the situation before deciding how best to proceed. Meanwhile they will be setting up a community, hopefully in a place of their own, and sorting out a measure of financial security. Having gained valuable experience with the highly successful 'Friend's Gib-stopping' (plasterboarding) business in Wellington, they are hoping to do similar work in Melbourne.

WORK FOR EVERYONE IN HOLLAND

When she came over to England, to attend the women's ordination course at Taraloka, Vajragita was leaving behind what has now become an increasingly busy life in Holland.

As well as leading a two-week women's retreat in Germany early in the year, she has been leading day retreats every month, a regular programme of weekend

retreats (the next is at the end of May), a thriving mitra study group, and a series of courses and classes in Utrecht, Rotterdam, and Arnhem. Indeed, FWBO activities seem to be growing so quickly that Vajragita is now unable to lead all the events in demand, with the result that a number of mitras are now leading classes too.



Vajragita (centre), with supporters, on retreat

BUSY RETREAT SCHEDULE IN NEW ZEALAND

More retreats have taken place in New Zealand during these past summer months than ever before. A hundred or more Order members, mitras, and friends made their ways to an assortment of venues near Auckland and Wellington to participate in two separate 'open' retreats, two men's retreats, and a women's retreat.

Over the Christmas/New year period itself, most of the Order members currently

resident in New Zealand gathered within the native bush surroundings of Huia, just outside Auckland, for a ten day retreat.

For several NZ Order members, the next occasion on which they will be spending time with large numbers of other Order members will be on one or another of the major international Order conventions being held in England this July.



Wellington men's retreat

AUCKLAND QUEST

Curtain making contracts, benefit dinners, a sculpture workshop, garage sales, WOWs ('work one week—and donate all your income to the fund), and regular monthly donations had, by 23 February, brought \$44,500 to the Auckland sangha's New Centre Fund. Now, teams of Friends are working their way around the city, maps in hand, looking for suitable premises for a centre. With so many people involved in the search, it shouldn't be long before we can report a breakthrough.

MAKING A START

The team that moved to Oxford have acquired office premises and a community. Although they are primarily concerned with the work of Aid For India they have maintained a background plan to start FWBO classes as soon as possible. Even though they have done nothing to publicize their presence as a Centre, a class is already underway for a handful of Oxford residents who have made contact with the FWBO by way of the LBC's open retreats in Sussex.

DEVELOPMENTS IN DISS

Pete and Julian work on Penny's house and drive to work in cars repaired by Anne's husband. When a chimney fell on Julian he went for treatment to Debbie the acupuncturist who, like Francis and Glynnis, moved to Diss because it is the only rural part of Britain which has an FWBO sangha.

According to Julian Burgess, the money earned by these 'mutual-aid' enterprise schemes not only supports an Order member in India, but finances the activities of the FWBO in Diss.

Diss FWBO celebrated its fourth anniversary in February. With nine mitras and one local Order member (Dharmacharini

Tarashri), the group has a good base and potential for growth, both spiritually and in terms of numbers.

The group meets each week in the library of Diss Junior School, though they have to leave promptly at 10 p.m. when the caretaker comes round jingling his keys—often just when things seem to be getting interesting. Even though Dharmamudra is supervising work on an outbuilding at Street Farm, Aslacton, which will give the group a base for weekend events, a search is on for somewhere with a better atmosphere for regular weekly classes.

VAJRALOKA TEAM IN EAST LONDON



The LBC benefit evening for Vajraloka

Record-breaking snows and low temperatures during January—bringing in their wake the inevitable breakdowns in transport and telephone systems—meant that the London Buddhist Centre's highly publicized 'Open Week' brought disappointingly small numbers along to classes, demonstrations, and open nights.

Even so, attendance figures at the Centre improved progressively as the session developed, so the effort spent on promotion seemed in the end to bear some fruit.

A highlight of the session was a six week visit from

Dharmananda and Vajradaka, two full-time members of the Vajraloka meditation community in Wales. While in London they ran two six-week meditation courses, led a meditation weekend, and held a fund-raising evening for Vajraloka's expansion project. Between times they forayed out to other centres, to lead workshops and events there.

There was great enthusiasm for the content and quality of the Vajraloka team's teaching work; their visit should have an impact on meditation classes and courses at the LBC for a long time to come.

MEDIA INTEREST IN FINLAND

After being spotted chanting Buddhist sutras in a Helsinki market square last summer, Punyaraja was interviewed by *Helsingin Sanomat*, Finland's largest newspaper. The article, entitled, 'It is Difficult to Get Enlightened in Finland' appeared in February, and included a short personal history of Punyaraja.

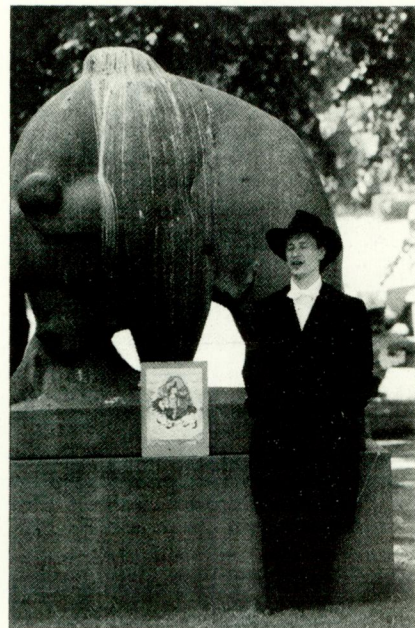
Sarvamitra was also interviewed at the end of last year, by *Me Naiset*, a leading Finnish women's magazine. The resulting article, sub-titled

'Buddhism Believes in a Developing Human Being', appeared alongside interviews with a prominent actress, philosopher, theologian, and magazine editor, in an article generally entitled, 'Raiders of the Lost Ideology'.

Sarvamitra admits that it is hard to know what effect these interviews might have had on the wider public, but a few enquirers have definitely contacted the Centre as a result.

Suomessa on vaikea valaistua

Kun suomalainen buddhalainen haluaa keskittyä munkkiuteen, hänelle tarjotaan sosiaalihuollossa atk-kursseja. Hän voi saada kerjuuluvan, mutta tarvitsee valmiiksi täytettyjä pankkisiirtolomakkeita. Uskonnonvapautta on monenlaista.



Punjaradza on parhaiten hyödyksi buddhalaisena.

"Ihmisen täytyy tunnistaa motiivinsa."

Punyaraja in print

26

BUDDHAS FOR SALE

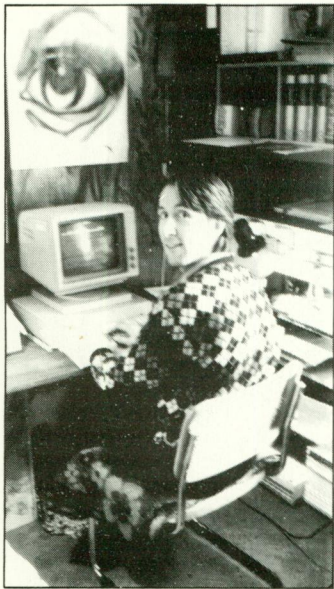
If you would like a nine centimetre tall image of the meditating Buddha at Kamakura, then contact Sarvamitra at the Helsinki Centre.

Using a mould made by Aryamitra in Leeds, Sarvamitra has been making gold, bronze, black, and white versions of the image, and selling them for about £5 each.

Initial response to a small

advertising campaign was encouraging, earning enough funds to subsidize Ratnaguna's visit in April, when he led a men's retreat.

Each image is sold with a sticker bearing the Helsinki Centre's address and phone number, so the project has a valuable promotional aspect as well. Sarvamitra hopes that other FWBO centres will follow his lead.



Sarvamitra

ERRATA

For a Western Buddhist, the counting of years from the birth of Christ is convenient but inconsistent with his beliefs, and various Buddhist movements have attempted to remedy this by estimating how many years have elapsed since the time of the Buddha. There is still no general agreement on this between the followers of different traditions, but in 1957 the 2500th *Buddha Jayanti* was celebrated, to mark two-and-a-half millennia of Buddhism. In line with many other Buddhist groups, we are therefore numbering this year 2530. However, because the Buddhist

year should really begin at Wesak, our last issue was wrongly dated.

* * *

At the beginning of Tejananda's review of *Heart of Wisdom* (Tharpa Publications) in issue 4, an enthusiastic but absent-minded editor inserted the term *Vajracchedika* as being the Sanskrit title for what we know in the West as the 'Heart Sutra'. The *Vajracchedika Sutra* is of course the 'Diamond Sutra', while the Sanskrit title for the Heart Sutra is the *Prajna Paramita Hridaya Sutra*. Apologies to readers and to Tharpa for this lapse.

In the last issue it was incorrectly stated that Aid For India has now raised £3,000,000. AFI has asked us the say that since the charity was started in 1980, 1,200,000 has been donated into their account, and a further £1,100,000 has been pledged to the charity by way of covenants and bankers' orders, to be received over the next few years. We apologize for our error—adding, however, that AFI's achievement is still a notable one.

summer retreat AT BATTLE, SUSSEX FOR MEN & WOMEN AUG 22 – SEP 1

This retreat is an ideal situation for anyone who is relatively new to meditation and for those who wish to take their meditation further. It will be a chance to relax, to escape from habits and distractions, to take a fresh look at yourself and your life and to spend time with experienced meditation teachers. The setting is an old country house in beautiful grounds where

walking, swimming and yoga will be available to exercise and refresh the body. You may book for the whole retreat or you can come for five nights on either the 22nd Aug or the 27th Aug. For further information write or telephone the London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Rd, London E2 0HU Tel. 981-1225

COST £15 PER NIGHT (£8 CONCS)



'When to the sessions of sweet silent thought, I summon up remembrance of things past...' Sonnet 27

27

growth



Friends Gardening is growing...

No experience is needed.
Contact Martin at the West
London Buddhist Centre, 7 Colville
Houses, W11. **Tel: 727 9382**

THE CHERRY ORCHARD VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT 241 GLOBE ROAD E2. 01-980 6678

*'One of the best traditional vegetarian
restaurants in London. Cosy but
elegant... prices are very reasonable.'*

Company

*'A charming and inexpensive place...
exceptionally good value. I found the
food to be of the highest quality and the
service very friendly.'*

LAM

*'Delicious wholesome food in a
pleasant, friendly atmosphere.'*

Time Out Student Guide

*'Imaginative dishes made from fresh
and wholesome ingredients. They do
miraculous things with aubergines...
Some of the freshest salads in town.'*

City Limits

*'Run with cheerful enthusiasm... offers
carefully prepared vegetarian food.'*

'Delicious sweets.'

Egon Ronay's Just a Bite

'Altogether a useful place to know about.'

City Limits

*Open Tues-Sat 12-9.30pm (last orders)
Thurs 12-2.30pm. Closed Sun & Mon
4 minutes from Bethnal Green tube*

Where to find us

MAIN CENTRES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER

London Buddhist Centre , 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU. Tel: 01-981 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 , 120 Long Ashton Road, Long Ashton, Bristol, Avon, BS18 9LS. Tel: 0272 392463
Cambridge Buddhist Centre , c/o 17 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8EG. Tel: 0223 329756
Croydon Buddhist Centre , 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1ND. Tel: 01-688 8624
Glasgow Buddhist Centre , 329 Sauciehall 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 , 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9QA. Tel: 061-445 3805
Norwich Buddhist Centre , 41a All Saints Green, Norwich, NR1 3LY. Tel: 0603 627034
West London Buddhist Centre , 7 Colville Houses, London W11 1JB. Tel: 01-727 9382
Padmaloka Retreat Centre , Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 050-88 8112
Vajraloka Meditation Centre , Tyn-y-Ddol, Trerddol, Nr Corwen, Clwyd, LL21 0EN. Tel: 0490-81 406
Taraloka Women's Retreat Centre , Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2LV. Tel: 094875 646
FWBO Midlands , 135 Salisbury Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8LA. Tel: 021-449 5279
The Office of the Western Buddhist Order , Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 050 88 310
Aid For India , 186 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1EU. Tel: 0865 728794

Helsingin Buddhalainen Keskus , PL 288, SF-00121, Helsinki 12, Finland
FWBO Germany , Klopstockstr. 19, D 43 Essen 11, W. Germany. Tel: 0201 668299
FWBO Netherlands , P.O. Box 1559, 3500 BN Utrecht, Netherlands
Vasterlandska Buddhistordens Vanner , Hillbersvagen 5, S-126 54 Hagersten, Sweden. Tel: (Stockholm) 97 59 92
TBMSG Ahmedabad , c/o Bakul Bhavan, Behind Gujerat Vaishya Sabha, Jalampur, Ahmedabad 380001, India
TBMSG Aurangabad , c/o P G Kambe Guruji, Bhim Nagar, Bhausingpura, Aurangabad 431001, India
Bhaja Retreat Centre , c/o Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India.
TBMSG Bombay , 25 Bhim Perena, Tapodhan Nagar, Bandra (E), Bombay 400051, India
TBMSG Pimpri , Plot 294, Ishwarlal Chawl, Lal Bhahadur Shastri Road, Pimpri, Poona 411017, India
TBMSG Poona , Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India. Tel: (Poona) 58403
TBMSG Ulhasnagar , Block A, 410/819 Subhash Hill, Ulhasnagar, Thane, 421004, India
Bahujan Hitay , Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Pune 411012, India. Tel: (Poona) 58403
FWBO Malaysia , c/o Dharmacharini Jayapushpa, 29 Medan Mahsuri Satu, Off Jalan Tengah, 11950, Bayan Lepas, Penang
Auckland Buddhist Centre , P.O. Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel: (Auckland) 789 320/775 735
Wellington Buddhist Centre , P.O. Box 12-311, Wellington North, New Zealand. Tel: 04-787 940
Sydney Buddhist Centre , 806 George Street, Sydney, Australia
Aryaloka Retreat Centre , Heartwood Circle, Newmarket, New Hampshire 03857, U.S.A. Tel: 603-659 5456
FWBO Seattle , 2410 E. Interlaken Blvd., Seattle, WA 98112, USA.