# Conditionality and the Two Truths

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## THE PRINCIPLE OF CONDITIONALITY

> If this is, that comes to be; from the arising of this, that arises; if this is not, that does not come to be; from the stopping of this, that is stopped.[1]

THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF CONDITIONALITY, outlined above, could be the central doctrine in a system of religious thought may at first seem strange to those of us more familiar with a theistic approach to religion. It isn't easy for us to see the force of this idea, or to understand its liberating impact in the two central arenas of religious life: the fields of doctrine, on the one hand, and religious practice, on the other. The Buddha, however, was categorically clear about the centrality of this principle and, paraphrasing a number of quotes from a broad variety of Buddhist canonical sources,[2] he put it like this –

> He who sees the Principle of Conditionality[3] sees the Truth. One who sees the Truth sees the Buddha.[4]

How strangely abstract this all sounds to Western ears. For the last two and a half thousand years, countless numbers of Buddhist men and women have built their religious lives around this teaching. It has inspired them to great acts of devotion, renunciation, and dedicated spiritual striving, but to us it can all sound rather hollow – abstract and uninspiring. It's not at all obvious that these few words have the potential to completely re-orient the way in which we see the world: to give us a completely fresh understanding of the nature of existence and to ignite our potential for creative transformation. [82] Why is it that one who sees this principle 'sees the Buddha'? How can such an abstract sentence be so spiritually significant? A few examples might help:

## THE WEB OF CONDITIONS

I HAVE A PLANT growing outside my kitchen window, a shrub called *Lavatera* 'Barnsley', also known as Tree Mallow. Its fading autumn colours still bear a last October hint of the glories of August when the pale green leaves provided a subtle velvet background for an abundance of delicate, pale pink flowers. If we were to ask someone what conditions were necessary for the *Lavatera* 'Barnsley' outside my kitchen window to flourish as it does now, he or she would most probably begin to speak of the need for sun and rain, for a soil adequately rich in nutriments, for an absence of competing weeds and pests, and so on. This is all right and proper and we can easily see how these conditions are the first to come to mind, but if we look a little deeper we can see that a number of significant conditions have not been mentioned.

Despite its seeming delicacy, the *Lavatera* outside my kitchen window would probably sustain on soil far poorer than that in my garden. It would probably thrive in a climate much drier than the last few damp English summers have been and it is reasonably resistant to pests and encroaching weeds. What it really would not survive, outside my kitchen window, is my not liking it. Plants that I don't like get no space in this small patch of London garden. If I didn't like it, it would not be there now. An absolutely crucial condition for the continued existence of this shrub is my desire to have it where it is. My taste in flowers is a significant condition for the existence of that particular plant, and my taste in flowers, of course, is itself conditioned.

It depends, in part, on the way I was brought up, so my mother and father and their ideas of good and bad taste are important conditions for the existence of my *Lavatera*. If they had taught me differently, it would not be there. Indeed, if my mother and father had not met, at a tennis party, in Johannesburg in 1948 it would not be there, as I would not have been around to have planted it. If my mother had been too ill to attend a tennis party on that day, no *Lavatera*. Her good health on that day is an important condition [83] in its life. And it follows that if my parents didn't exist in the first place, neither would our plant, so another important set of conditions for its flourishing is the history of my entire ancestry. If any of my great-great-great-great-grandparents had not met, that shrub would not be what it is today. They are, every one of them, back into the infinite depths of history, conditions for its current existence.

If I didn't live in this particular house, I would not have planted the *Lavatera* here. The fact that I share my friend Kulamitra's house with him is another condition for its existence. So if Kulamitra and I had not met and become friends in Norwich in 1976, it wouldn't exist. In this way, Kulamitra's family history and my family history are all linked up in the network of conditions which make for the existence of the shrub.

Of course, the cultivar *Lavatera* 'Barnsley' has a history of its own. It's a plant of modern times, named after the village of Barnsley in Gloucestershire, where the garden designer Rosemary Verey created a renowned garden. Mrs. Verey spotted a variant of *Lavatera* growing in a friend's garden, took a few cuttings, and grew the plant on at Barnsley House. Mrs. Verey's keen eye and her taste in plants, are thus very important conditions for the existence of the shrub which grows outside my kitchen window.

In this way, a garden designer in Gloucestershire, my parents' first date in Johannesburg, my meeting up with Kulamitra in Norwich and every one of our ancestors are all inter-linked in the network of conditions which support the existence of a plant in my garden.

But there is more to it than that. As we look deeper into the structure of the plant itself, we see that it is made up of a vast complex of inter-related living cells, each broadly comprising a thickened cellulose wall which contains cytoplasm and a nucleus – the whole cellular organism looking, schematically, not unlike a kind of square-ish fried egg. The shrub outside my kitchen window comprises millions upon millions of these cells, each with its own unique shape and particular qualities, each getting on with the business of co-operative co-existence and it is essential to the existence of the shrub that they all continue to do so. The continued functioning in its particular way of each group of cells is a necessary condition for the continued existence of this particular *Lavatera* 'Barnsley'. [84]

Each cell and each aspect of each cell in turn comprises millions of atomic 'particles' – protons, neutrons and electrons – clustered in a particular way. The behaviour of each of these 'particles' is in turn conditioned by the qualities of the deeply mysterious sub-atomic environment within which they occur: gravity, the speed of light and other arcane factors each in turn conditioning the functioning of these atomic and sub-atomic events.

I hope we can now begin to see that the network of conditions which supports the existence of my *Lavatera* 'Barnsley' is infinite. Wherever one looks one sees another range of conditions and each of those conditions is in itself dependent upon another huge range of conditions. In every direction of time and space all we see are inter-related conditions. Looking at things in this way, we never arrive at any absolutely definitive 'essence', any fixed, final and absolute 'noumenon'.[5]

What the Buddha saw, when he gained Enlightenment, was that all the phenomena of the world, without exception, arise in dependence upon conditions and with the cessation of those conditions the phenomena which depend upon them also cease. Behind, above, beyond this vast

network of conditions there exists nothing at all. The entire vast unfathomable cosmos is nothing but an ever changing network of related conditions, and wherever we look into it, if we look with a calm, concentrated and fearless gaze, we see infinite depths of inter-connectedness. Seeing in this way, with the unclouded eye of spiritual insight, is

> To see a World in a grain of sand
> And a Heaven in a wild-flower,
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
> And eternity in an hour.[6]

Another image for this same spiritual insight is that of Indra's Net.

> Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net that has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant taste of deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each 'eye' of the net, and since the net is infinite in all dimensions, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars of the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to be-[85]hold. If we now arbitrarily select one of those jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.[7]

This is not, however, our normal mode of perception. We tend not to see things as they really are. Part of the reason for this is that we are beguiled by language.

Because we have a word or set of words to describe a phenomenon we tend to think that word or set of words points to an 'essence', something fixed and unchanging. I can speak of 'the *Lavatera* 'Barnsley' outside my kitchen window' and this certainly identifies one particular current pattern of appearances, events, waves and particles, but we must beware of thinking that because we can speak in this way and point to something which effectively approximates to that description for the time being, we have thus actually identified anything which has an independent existence over and above the current nexus of conditions which support it. 'The map is not the area it represents'. Words are not the things they point to. Because we have a generally applicable label for certain patternings of phenomena does not mean that those phenomena exist independent of the conditions currently occurring. And, of course, the same applies to each and every one of those conditions themselves: just because we can speak of cells, or atoms, or waves and particles, or events in history, does not mean that in identifying them we have identified anything more 'real' than the plant they comprise. Each of these in turn depends upon other conditions. All existence, without exception, is entirely contingent. When the conditions change, my *Lavatera* 'Barnsley' changes. It is in constant motion according to the seasons, according to the wind, sun and rain. It grows and decays, flowers in the summer, drops some of its leaves in the autumn and if the next occupant of this house doesn't like it will end up on the compost heap rotting. Although it makes sense in English to say 'it changes', there is, in reality, no 'it' to change, for when the *Lavatera* has become compost where is the 'it' which was the *Lavatera*? [86]

The Principle of Conditionality points to the fact that all phenomena are ultimately devoid of 'essence'. They are, to use an important Mahāyāna Buddhist concept, 'empty'. And the same is true of you and I: we have no fixed, final, identifiable self-hood. Everything that we call 'ourselves'

is simply a changing pattern of inter-relationships-patterns which are inextricably part of the great flux of conditions.

> No doer of the deeds is found,
> No one who ever reaps their fruit;
> Empty phenomena roll on:
> This view alone is right and true.[8]

And yet, to the extent that we are un-Enlightened, we all cling, however unconsciously, to the idea that we have a 'self', something which is 'us in our essential nature' something fixed and enduring, separate in its essentials from the rest of the universe.

This picture we have of ourselves is both false and limiting. Its principle limitation lies in its restriction of the possibility of change for the better. If we have a 'self', an essential nature which is fixed and enduring, then there is a limit to the extent to which we can grow as individuals. One hears examples of this idea all the time: 'I am who I am. I cannot change and you must accept me for what I am'. The idea that we were all somehow made to a particular pattern and set upon life's course by an unseen creator God runs deeply, albeit most often unconsciously, through contemporary Western society. We think we are who we are and there is a limit to the extent to which we can be expected to improve ourselves.

The Buddha's revolutionary insight, however, destroys this idea. The principle of conditionality makes it plain that we have no abiding essence. We are who we are solely in dependence upon all the myriad conditions which have preceded us. We become who we will become in dependence upon the conditions of the present and future. If we set about creating conditions which support change for the better then we will, inevitably, change for the better, and there is no limit to how much better we can become.

The Web of Conditions shows, in a two-dimensional model, how everything arises solely in dependence upon conditions and how all things are in-[87]ter-related. A more dynamic model, mobile and three-dimensional, might help us to see how we have become who we are and how we can begin to exercise choice and go beyond our current limitations.

## THE SEA OF CONDITIONS

THE SEA OF CONDITIONS is vast – infinitely deep: unbounded in all directions. It contains nothing less than the past and present of the entire universe. All 'matter' is contained in it – all cells, chemicals, particles and waves. It contains all of human history: all information, all ideas. All these ideas, cells, chemicals, and bits of information are themselves constantly changing and re-arranging as they flow together in an infinitely vast array of different patterns.

Looking over the surface of the ocean, we can see some of these patterns. Here the sea is smooth and calm, there it is rippled, in another place it foams and bubbles. Here it is choppy, there we see waves. In one section of the sea there are a large number of whirlpools – vortices of different sizes, different shapes. Each vortex is unique, each has its own characteristics. Some are larger than others, some are deeper than others, some are vigorous, some are languid. They come into being, subsist for a time, and then disappear as the sea flows and changes, in constant motion. Each vortex represents an individual human life. We come into being, take shape from the conditions available to us: the cells, chemicals, and biological matter and all the other conditions of our lives give shape to our being. Different fragments of the ideas of Marx, Christ, Thoreau, the Beatles, Rousseau, Walt Witman, Raymond Chandler, Freud, Picasso, Adam Smith, Jefferson, Keats, Einstein, the advertising industry, Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Henry Ford, Chaucer, Ian

Fleming, and the Buddha drift in this Sea of Conditions. They flow into our vortex, give it shape, flow down and flow out. The history of our parents and our culture, flows in, flows down and flows out. All our inherited ideas of good and bad; all the cells which replicate and die in our bodies; all the viruses which effect our health; all the colours, shapes, sounds, smells, tastes and ideas we ever experience, flow in, flow [88] down and flow out. All our memories, sensations, emotions, desires and actions flow in to the vortex, shape it and flow out.

In reality we are not ultimately separate from the rest of the Sea of Conditions, from all the vast immensity of life itself. But we don't see it like that. 'Human kind cannot bear very much reality'.[9] In order to get by from day to day, to get on with the apparently urgent business of survival, we narrow the scope of our vision to more manageable proportions.

Grabbing onto some conditions as they drift by, pushing away others, we each create an apparently workable ego-identity for ourselves and then spend the rest of our lives in a desperate attempt to preserve that identity.

Everything that lives is subject to decay. All conditioned things are impermanent. To be alive is to change. Without change we would be absolutely inert. But the un-Enlightened human condition is to fight change every inch of the way.

We are human and alive because we fight for existence. At any moment the Sea of Conditions throws up potential threats to our continued existence. Walking down any urban street, cars hurl past us at life-threatening speeds, sometimes only inches from where we walk. A single slip, a single misjudgement and we would be dead. If our temperature dropped just a few degrees for too long, we'd die of hypothermia; if it rose too high for too long, we'd die of heat exhaustion. We avoid poisonous food and bacteria, viruses and any number of life-threatening situations quite instinctively and unconsciously. The fact that we're now alive shows how skilled we are in avoiding death; how tenaciously, how desperately we cling to existence.

Bound up with this strong urge for survival is a deep desire for identity – to be fixed, to be separate, *to be real*. In consequence we cling to one part of the vortex only. We identify ourselves exclusively with one small aspect of our experience and try to block out all the rest. We try to keep our self-consciousness pinned-down at a low part of the vortex, where it cycles around a narrow point. We don't see the clear sky above or the surface of the vast sea all around. We pin ourselves down at a point where we think we can cope with what surrounds us and we call that point 'me'. That, we think, is what we really are; that is what we have to protect; that is what must survive. [89] And survive we do – but at a cost. Ordinary human life is marked by quite high levels of anguish and anxiety.

Modern psycho-analysis traces all neurosis, including the low-grade neurosis we call normality, back to anxiety.[10]

Towards the beginning of the Twentieth Century Sigmund Freud revolutionised psychological thinking when he suggested that repression was the key to the understanding of human anxiety. When a thought, feeling, memory or other mental occurrence makes us uncomfortable and we don't want to deal with it consciously, we may choose to ignore or 'forget' it. We can then get on with what we want to – but at a price. Part of our mental energy must be spent resisting what has been repressed, keeping it out of consciousness; so we experience persistent tension or, even worse, what has been repressed may return to consciousness in a distorted form as a symptom of neurosis or even psychosis, these symptoms being seen as symbolic representations of the repressed material.

The younger Freud, treating middle-class Viennese patients for hysteria and phobia, concluded that sexual repression was our primary repression. This is understandable, given the

circumstances in which he found himself, but as he got older his attention naturally shifted from sex to death and he broadened the scope of his enquiry to include issues such as the repression of the fact of death.

Buddhism goes one stage further. What we are really repressing, underneath everything else – at the very root – is the fact of our ultimate non-existence. More than anything else, we want simply to be, and all the anguish and suffering of our lives comes down to this fundamentally frustrated desire, a desire which can only be fulfilled by becoming truly real.

But none of the strategies which we implement in the face of this desire have the desired outcome. Our fundamental problem is that although we want to become truly 'real', we can only achieve this by letting go of what is 'false': that is by letting go of our limited, ego-delineated sense of ourselves – and that is not easy. The truth of conditionality points to the entirely contingent and provisional nature of our 'ordinary' view of ourselves. Like everything else, we are constantly changing. There is nothing we can identify as finally, ultimately, 'what we really are' – in our essential nature. Our [90] essential nature is 'no nature'. In reality we are not fixed, unchanging, separate selves but rather we are a part of ever changing flow of life – the flux of the Sea of Conditions. The only way to become 'truly real' is by letting go of any fixed, ego-delineated view of ourselves. Only by giving up our attachment to the illusion that there is a real, final and definitive boundary between ourselves and everything else can we ever become truly real.

According to Buddhism, we keep our consciousness pinned down at the bottom of the vortex by way of three fundamentally conditioning impulses – greed, hatred and delusion, reflexes of our relentless desire for continued existence.

Greed is the mechanism by which we try to augment and secure our ego-identity by including in it things from 'outside' of it. By grasping onto things we like, things which give us pleasure, things with which we wish to be associated, or be seen to be associated with, we constantly strive to build up a firm ego-identity.

Pleasure, power and status are qualities with which we all wish to be associated, and, although we may derive these from very different things and experience them in different ways, we are all united in our delusive quest to build our identities on these infirm foundations.

We use them to fill that empty feeling inside which is simply part of the ordinary, un-Enlightened human condition. Whenever we encounter this sense of inner emptiness we try to assuage it with something: anything. To this end we use chocolate bars, beer, mindless television watching, compulsive shopping, sex, stamp-collecting, train spotting, gambling, football, office rivalries and mindless chatter: anything to plug the gap, to give us a sense of 'being real', a sense of being present. This low-level sense of anxiety and inner emptiness is one of the main levers with which the Western advertising industry manipulates us so adroitly. It is the motive force behind consumerism.

Hatred is the mechanism by which we try to secure our ego-identity by rejecting any form of connection between it and the object we despise. Whether we hate our boss, our neighbour, aubergines, city life, or people of another race, religion or sexual preference, the fundamental mechanism is the same – we are fixing ourselves and seeking to preserve our experience [91] within the boundaries of the known and familiar. We define ourselves as much by what we reject as we do by what we accept. All the horrors of sectarian violence which this decade has witnessed come down in the end to the futile attempts of groups of people to establish secure ego-identities bounded by race, religion or cultural history.

Delusion is the endlessly beguiling notion that our ego-identities can in fact be preserved. It is the underlying unconscious belief which we all share that we can keep the universal tides of

impermanence at bay with the futile bulwarks which are erected by the forces of greed and hatred. Everything always changes. We always change. Nothing we can do can ever keep change at bay and yet, deludedly, we scamper about forever seeking to re-create a fixed and stable sense of ourselves.

This is the human condition. We experience some pleasure and some pain. The force of greed compels us to always attempt to incorporate into ourselves whatever we can of pleasurable experience. Hatred compels us to eject what we see as painful, and, oscillating between these twin poles of experience we hold ourselves within a narrow band of experience, painfully confined within the narrow segment of possible experience which we call 'ourselves', delusively unaware of the vast potentiality of being which is the Sea of Conditions – the entire cosmos.

Buddhism, however, asserts that this is not the only way we can be. We can begin to undo the bonds of greed, hatred and delusion. In doing so, to extend our analogy, we'll begin to rise up within the vortex and we'll see more of what surrounds us. By becoming more open to new modes of experience, new ways of being, we can begin to drop our narrow, delusive self-preoccupation, and consequent self-limitation. Instead we can develop new, more expansive modes of consciousness with greater awareness of the rest of reality and more empathy with the rest of life. Rising up the vortex we can begin to identify more with life itself, less with our own narrow segment of it.

Such an identification, however, is not merely an intellectual matter. It isn't enough simply to agree with the different ideas, images or formulations of Buddhism on an intellectual level alone, although most of us necessarily begin at this level. It's one thing to agree with things intellectually but it's [92] quite another to consistently behave as if they were true. In between these two positions lies the whole of the Buddhist spiritual path.

Buddhists are those people who accept the truth of the Buddha's teaching on conditionality, and who consequently seek to apply to their daily lives methods of personal development which have this truth as their basis and which in turn lead towards an ever deeper realisation of it.
One of the most basic statements of methodology in traditional Buddhism is embodied in the formula of the Four Noble Truths:

1. We experience life as intrinsically unsatisfying. We have a ceaseless itch to 'get what we need', to 'put things right'. Caught up in a narrow, ego-delineated level of experience we constantly bump up against the unsatisfactory nature of our own confinement. Because nothing lasts, and yet we always want pleasure to continue indefinitely, we are bound to experience frustration.
2. The cause of this kind of experience is craving (and its complement, aversion). So long as we are involved in this desperate process of grabbing for some things and pushing others away we will continue to experience the world as limited and painful.
3. If we can just let go of this tendency to grab or push away, then things will begin to change for the better.
4. There are ways in which we can do this. It is possible to change even these fundamental orientations. There is a path leading away from suffering.

## THE OPEN DIMENSION OF BEING

WE HAVE NO ESSENCE. Who we are is not somehow 'given'. We weren't made to a fixed, pre-determined pattern. We are more fluid than that, constantly changing in response to prevailing conditions.

By beginning to take control over some of the conditions of our lives we can begin to 'make' ourselves more consciously. [93]

We can speak of the lack of essence as 'emptiness', but perhaps this has too nihilistic an association. It might be more useful to use a term coined by Herbert Guenther: rather than 'emptiness', we can speak of 'the open dimension of being'. Because all phenomena, including ourselves, are devoid of essence, nothing is ever fixed and final. Everything always changes. In other words, there is an open, unpredictable, dimension to every event. As we shall see, the practical consequences of this fact are immense. It implies that everything can be changed for the better.

As we live our lives from day to day, we don't usually take the 'open dimension' into account. We tend to think that things are as they are and will continue to be so – they're going to keep running along the known, predictable ruts they've always run along. We derive a sense of security from this sense of pseudo-predictability, and we work hard to keep it in place. Although things may be a little boring at times, and we may be a little anxious, at least we seem to be fairly safe.

This view of things is fundamentally delusive. Nothing is ever finally predictable and we are never really safe. Anything can happen at any time. The unknown constantly breaks through into the known. From moment to moment, we can never be sure what is going to happen next. Just when we think everything is safely buttoned down an unpredicted event occurs and we have to re-arrange our view of things yet again.

We can take two different approaches to this inescapable fact of life. We can try to fight the unpredictability of things and anxiously try to keep everything tied down, or we can take a more creative approach

– Because things are intrinsically unstable everything can be changed. If they can be changed, they can be made better. In any situation it is therefore possible to move from 'less' to 'more'.

The move from less to more is the fundamental creative act. When we make something worthwhile which had not been before, we move from less to more. We can only do this by stepping outside of our rut, turning away from the predictable, the known, and entering the unknown: the open dimension.

This is the nature of every act of creation. Whether we make a picture or a poem; an omelette or a chair – we can do it with a staid, uncreative predict-[94]ability or we can bring something fresh and vital to it. We can only do that by leaving the known behind and by having the confidence to step out into the open dimension.

Creativity in this sense isn't confined to making objects. We can turn towards the open dimension in every aspect of our lives. As we shall see, Buddhism judges the quality of our actions in dependence on the mental state which gave rise to them. Creative actions arise from creative mental states. Creative mental states are those which are not primarily concerned in protecting a confined ego-identity by keeping everything running in safe and predictable ruts. Struggling to preserve predictability, we just go on producing the same thing, again and again: trudging the same dreary round, repeating the same conversations, reading the same literature, watching the same TV, experiencing the same limited range of mental and emotional states. Creativity comes from turning

towards the open dimension, accepting the ultimately unknowable nature of things, and thereby being free to move from less to more.

The Buddhist spiritual path is the constant attempt to move from less to more in every aspect of our lives. It comprises all those doctrines and methods which Buddhists over the ages have successfully used to foster and sustain creative mental states.

## THE TWO TRUTHS

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONDITIONALITY points to the ultimate 'non-selfhood' of persons. We have no self, no essence: we stand nowhere and there is no 'us' to stand. But this is not our normal experience. We all live as if we had a self, as if there was a firm basis to our being, and as long as we believe this and act in this way, we will experience the continual friction produced by the dissonance between what we believe, how we behave, and how things really are. Reality, rubbing up against our illusions, generates suffering – for ourselves and for others.

And yet we can do no other. Unenlightened, we pass our days in fields of attachment, driven by subtler or grosser forms of greed and hatred, delu-[95]sively questing for security within the intrinsically insecure. Phenomena constantly present themselves to us with an alluring seductiveness, holding out the vain hope of true being and lasting security. In the mental realm, the seductive character of mundane phenomena can be seen to manifest as a battleground of conflicting ideologies competing for our allegiance.[11]

Ideologies are seductive because in organising the world – our ideas and impressions – in a particular way, they give us a sense of the meaning of things and a sense of what our place in that structure of meaning is. The vast majority of ideologies support the delusion that we have a fixed and separate self.

Broadly speaking, there are two different kinds of ideology. Most common are those which seek to entrap. Once you are committed to them, they manifest conceptual devices to keep you within them. A Marxist who starts to doubt the validity of historical materialism will be told by his comrades to purge himself of his bourgeois tendencies. A fundamentalist Christian will be told that his doubts are from the devil and he must put them behind him and simply *believe*.

Then there are ideologies which seek to liberate. Such ideologies are designed to transcend themselves and be self-negating: to free us, ultimately, from dependence on all ideologies including their own. Buddhism, at its best, is a pre-eminent example of this. The Dharma itself is something to be ultimately transcended and left behind.

This idea is illustrated by the Parable of the Raft,[12] in which the Buddha describes the predicament of a man on a journey who encounters a large stretch of water blocking his way. The traveller proceeds to gather sticks and grass together and builds himself a raft with which to cross over to the other side. When he has successfully done this however, the Buddha asks his audience:

> '"I, depending on this raft, and striving with my hands and feet, crossed over safely to the beyond. Suppose now that I, having put this raft on my head, or having lifted it on my shoulder, should proceed as I desire?" What do you think about this, monks? If that man does this, is he doing what should be done with that raft? [96]
>
> 'No, Lord.'
>
> 'What should that man do, monks, in order to do what should be done with that raft? In this case, monks, it might occur to that man who has crossed over, gone beyond; "Now, this raft has been very useful to me. Depending on this raft and striving with my hands and feet, I have crossed over safely to the beyond. Suppose that I, having beached this raft on dry ground or

> having submerged it under the water, should proceed as I desire?" In doing this, monks, that man would be doing what should be done with that raft. Even so, monks, is the Parable of the Raft dhamma taught by me for crossing over, not for retaining.'

Rafts are ultimately to be left behind. But this does not mean that we don't need a raft to cross to the further shore. We cannot simply dispense with all ideologies at will. To do so (imagining such an impossibility for a moment) would be to propel us into a state of disorganised mental chaos and confusion. That is not the 'further shore' which Buddhism speaks of.

But if a raft is something to be merely left behind – if language, ideas, concepts, thoughts are all ultimately to be transcended – what is their status here and now? If they are all equally non-transcendent, how then can we distinguish between them and how can we make any use of them? Aren't they all equally flawed, all of them merely provisional? Buddhism addresses this question by distinguishing two different categories of truth. Ultimate Truth[13] and Conventional Truth.[14]

Ultimate Truth is absolutely ineffable. Every predicate by which we seek to define it will ultimately contradict our attempted definition. The structure of language and conceptualisation is such that we can only affirm something in relation to an implied negation and negate something in relation to an implied affirmation. By whatever means we seek to describe a state which transcends the distinction between subject and object, being and non-being, affirmation and negation, we can, conceptually, only take our stand in one or another of the above polarities. The structure of language and conceptualisation ultimately allows of no other position and thus Ultimate Truth is ultimately inexpressible. [97]

Ultimate Truth is beyond dualistic understanding and beyond dualistic expression. It is 'transcendental'. That the transcendental is inexpressible, however, does not mean that it is unattainable, although it cannot be 'attained' by a limited ego-identity, as if it were merely another attribute that the limited ego-identity could add onto itself. Rather, it involves the complete abandonment of ego-identity. Thus, to demonstrate the paradoxical nature of discussions of this nature, we can strive to gain Enlightenment, but 'we' can never be Enlightened.

Enlightenment, Buddhahood, Nirvana – are all expressions which point to the transcendental dimension. They are all, to use a popular Zen Buddhist expression, 'Fingers pointing to the Moon', and we must never mistake the finger for the moon. The expression does not exhaustively define the state expressed. So far as we are concerned, the transcendental is 'over the horizon' and there is nothing we can ultimately say of it. But this does not mean that there is no path leading towards the horizon, nor does it mean that we cannot see a strong glow at the horizon and that we cannot see highly significant signs and images which, although clearly on this side of the horizon, nonetheless indicate that there is something very significant taking place beyond our current field of vision.

Ultimate Truth is over the horizon. This side of the horizon we only have Conventional Truth. But that word 'only' doesn't signify a low level of value, for Conventional Truth includes the whole range of doctrines and methods which point to the horizon. That I am writing this at a computer in a cottage in Norfolk, England, is a statement of Conventional Truth. It may not describe the Ultimate Truth of what I am, but it does make it plain that I'm not now in London. Conventional truths are 'operative concepts'. They work. They provide an adequate description. If we act upon them, the outcomes are consistent with our expectations. Conventional Truth thus includes all the doctrines and formulae of the Dharma: whatever genuinely conduces towards Enlightenment. Conventional Truth is therefore the raft by which we reach the further shore, it is indispensable to anyone seeking the goal of Enlightenment. Although 'only' relatively true, its value is beyond price. [98]

We are currently deluded. We are not Enlightened. The Buddhist path begins with the recognition of this fact. We may be able to range towards the horizon with our intellect: by considering the doctrinal formulations of Buddhism we get some limited idea of what it is that lies over the horizon. Moving toward the horizon with our imagination, we envisage images of Enlightenment, such as the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures depicted in Buddhist art. Ranging towards the horizon with our emotions, we engage in acts of devotion towards the magnificent prospects which our imagination reveals at the further reaches of the path. But essentially we live and act very much on this side of the horizon. We live as if the world were made up of ultimately discrete subjects and objects. Our actions are mainly governed by the motivations of appropriation and rejection. We constantly strive for recognition and affection. We act as if the things we possess, or wish we possessed, could give us lasting happiness and security. We are angry and disappointed when we don't get what we want, and we grieve when we lose what we thought we had. In short, we cling, however subtly, to views which stand in direct contradiction to the principles of the Dharma as expressed within Conventional Truth.

But, un-Enlightened, we cannot live without an ideology. Indeed, we are, in a sense, made up of nothing but competing ideologies. It is therefore very important to become conscious of the ideologies we hold and to replace Wrong Views (the ideologies which keep us entrapped) with Right Views (the ideologies which liberate).

Our views, however unconsciously we hold them, determine our actions. As we believe, so we do; as we do, so we become.

> Unskilful mental states are preceded by mind, led by mind, and made up of mind. If one speaks or acts with an impure mind suffering follows him even as the cart-wheel follows the hoof of the ox.
>
> Skilful mental states are preceded by mind, led by mind, and made up of mind. If one speaks or acts with an pure mind happiness follows him like his shadow.[15]

One of the most concise and fundamental expressions of Right View in the Buddhist tradition is the teaching of the Three Characteristics of all Phenomena.[16]

> All Conditioned things are impermanent. When with understanding one sees this, one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.
>
> All Conditioned things are painful. When with understanding one sees this, one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.
>
> All things whatsoever are devoid of unchanging selfhood. When with understanding one sees this, one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.[17]

All conditioned things are impermanent, unsatisfactory and insubstantial. To see things like this is to see them as they really are.

The Principle of Conditionality shows the impermanent and insubstantial nature of all phenomena. A consequence of this is that they cannot, of themselves, provide us with any lasting satisfaction. And yet we constantly treat the world as if it were permanent, substantial and ultimately satisfying. Thus deluded, we are wedded to a nexus of suffering. Not recognising the impermanent and insubstantial nature of phenomena, we cycle between the twin poles of attraction and repulsion: endlessly unsatisfied, grabbing onto this, pushing away from that. And so it will go until we replace Wrong View with Right View, until we cease to behave as if phenomena are permanent, substantial and satisfying and start of behave as they are impermanent, insubstantial and

incapable of providing ultimate satisfaction. In other words, we need to treat the Conditioned as the Conditioned.

The goal of the Buddhist spiritual life is not the merging of oneself with an unchanging, all-embracing, Unconditioned Absolute – however that may be characterised. The goal of the Buddhist spiritual life is rather the insight into the true nature of the Conditioned itself. To borrow an expression from Krishnamurti:

> The unconditional acceptance of the Conditioned is the Unconditioned. [100]

In our modern, 'heady' culture we cannot over-stress the fact that such an insight is not merely an intellectual matter, although the path to it may well begin with intellectual understanding.

'Insight', as we have seen, refers to a process of complete re-orientation – a complete re-arrangement of all our faculties of thinking, perceiving and feeling such that we are irrevocably changed: so that our whole being accords more fully with the way things really are.

One of the greatest hindrances to the arising of insight is our attachment to wrong views about ourselves and the world: ideologies which run counter to the truths revealed by the Dharma. In order to create the conditions from which insight can arise, we need not only to develop a rudimentary state of self-integration, through the practice of ethics and meditation, we also need to give thought to the views which we hold, the ideologies we cling to-consciously or otherwise.

## VIEWS

AS WE ARE USING the word here, 'view'[18] means more than simply opinion. We tend to be conscious of our opinions, but our views are often unconsciously determined, emerging from a deeper layer of the psyche, where they are arise in dependence upon fundamental emotional predispositions.

Wrong Views,[19] ideologies which entrap, are the product of 'defilements'[20] such as greed, hatred and delusion. They are the mental underpinning of the structures from which we try to build a secure, fixed and separate ego-identity. Right Views,[21] ideologies which liberate and are ultimately self-transcending, are free from the defilements. They are the raft which carries us to the further shore, beyond all views altogether.

The most fundamental wrong view – that we have a fixed, stable self-universally– manifests as one or another of two further views: eternalism and nihilism.

Eternalism asserts that we have a 'soul' or 'essence' which exists independently of the flux of conditions which have come together to make us what we are and that this soul, or essence will continue to exist, even after death. This view is commonly held by the theistic religions and, in a modi-[101]fied form, the idea that we all somehow have a pure, undefiled inner essence continues to move us in subtle ways long after we may think we have abandoned theism. A subtle version of this view is responsible for much of the irrational guilt that many people in our society suffer from. 'Sex is dirty, only virgins are really pure'. Such views, however subtly and unconsciously maintained, can lead to repression, distortion and debilitation, and we do not get rid of them simply by refuting the doctrines on which they are based. In extreme cases, a little therapeutic blasphemy[22] can do wonders in purging the mind of unconscious theism.

Nihilism is the belief that who we are is simply identical with all our physical and mental processes. That these came into being, from nowhere, at birth and that, with their dissolution at death, we are completely annihilated. This view is generally held by science and rationalist materialism, and even though we may not hold onto it consciously, the idea that we emerge into the

world, out of nothing, as a kind of blank slate of mute genetic predisposition upon which society then imprints all our values and habits is commonly held by many of us today.

Nihilism and eternalism both share in an assertion of the ontological reality of the self. Eternalism sees the self as ultimately identical with the soul. Nihilism sees the self as ultimately identical with its physical and biological processes. Buddhism, on the other hand, adopts a middle way between these two positions. It sees the self as neither ultimately existent nor non-existent, but as merely a conventional designation for an ever changing stream of conditions.

Like everything else, the self is ultimately 'empty'. It is devoid of substance, devoid of permanence. None of the means by which we try to pin it down is ultimately true. Realising the fact of this ultimate emptiness we become free from entrapment. Such a state is characterised by the arising of Wisdom.

## THE THREE LEVELS OF WISDOM

WISDOM, and its emotional counterpart, Compassion, are the two primary aspects of the state of Enlightenment. [102]

Herbert Guenther translates the word *prajñā*, which is normally rendered as wisdom, as 'analytical appreciative understanding', and, although too clumsy for normal use, gives us a much better idea of what is meant here. There is an aesthetic dimension to wisdom. It is a state in which we not only see things as they are, we simultaneously appreciate them for what they are. As well as being an analytical state – a state of heightened acuity and penetration into the true nature of occurrences – it is at the same time a state of warm, emotional responsiveness. Free from craving and grasping, the wise have no need for anything to be other than it is, in its fullness, where every moment is a source of quiet delight.

There is a beautiful, and pithy, description of the state of wisdom in the Zen tradition:

> How wonderful, how marvellous. I chop wood. I draw water.

The wise transcend the world only in the sense of being completely free from negative emotions. They are fully in the world – completely present, sensitive to all its changing nuances – but not in any way attached to it.

Wisdom such as this is not the same as mere intellectual understanding. It is one thing to intellectually understand the truth of conditionality and the corresponding fact of universal emptiness. It is quite another to realise it for ourselves. To understand that something is true is only the very start. To come to ultimately embody that truth, so that all our actions, beliefs and emotions proceed from it and accord with it, is the task of lifetimes. Nonetheless, it is a task in which we can make substantial progress here and now, and every hard won inch forward along the path leaves us larger, freer, happier and more creative. The path is marked by stages of progressive realisation.

## LISTENING

WE BEGIN BY LISTENING. In Buddhist terms, if we want to become wise then we have a lot to learn. Fortunately, we have many opportunities available to us for such learning. There are Buddhist centres in most major cities which conduct regular teaching programmes. Even if we cannot easily get to a Buddhist centre, then most of them run regular programmes of study re-[103]treats, where it is possible to go and learn about the Dharma from experienced Dharma teachers.

We cannot ultimately learn the Dharma only from books, although the written word can be very helpful at every stage of the path. Although aspects of the Dharma can be communicated in writing, we come nearest to it when we see it embodied in the Sangha. Committed Buddhists, in

everything they do, express the way the Dharma works in real life. Their particular level of Going for Refuge, or active committment to Buddhism, will be expressed in their behaviour in ways which the written word cannot adequately emulate.

It is important here to distinguish between a Dharma teacher and an academic whose speciality is one or another aspect of Buddhism. There are Dharma teachers who are also qualified academics, but not all academic Buddhologists are Dharma teachers. Learning the Dharma isn't the same as learning about Buddhism, and no amount of knowledge about the history, methods or philosophical beliefs of Buddhists past or present in itself qualifies one as a Dharma teacher.

For someone to be qualified to teach the Dharma they must have a living experience of it. They should themselves have been taught by an experienced teacher or teachers, and they should have been living an active, committed Dharma-life, practising ethics and meditation and studying the Dharma for many years. One cannot learn the Dharma from someone who is not effectively Going for Refuge.

### REFLECTING

HAVING LEARNT SOMETHING about the Dharma we can move onto the next level of wisdom – thinking, or reflecting. Here we begin to turn what we have heard of the Dharma over in our minds. Thinking it through for ourselves. Trying to put it into practice and observing the results. We discuss it with others and try to become clearer about the doctrines and methods that we've learned. At this level we begin to sort through our own deeply held views. We start to distinguish right views from wrong views and, by identifying them, we begin to loosen our grip on some of the wrong views from which we've constructed our current personality. [104]

### MEDITATING

THE THIRD LEVEL of wisdom comes from direct meditation experience or any other direct confrontation with the existential situation. As we saw earlier, there are a range of insight meditation practices which are designed to bring about the development of wisdom. But we can also develop wisdom by reflecting on the truths of the Dharma in any existentially acute situation, where our energies are galvanised and focused. In moments of acute disappointment or even grief, when we are fully emotionally present, rather than give way to negative emotion, if we are able instead to turn our minds to the fact of universal impermanence, insubstantiality and unsatisfactoriness, we may have a direct experiential insight into the nature of reality.

These levels are sequential. No matter how much we may have learned about the Dharma, until we begin to think it through for ourselves and thus begin to identify some of our own deeply cherished wrong views, we will not be in a position to move onto the third level.

### WRONG VIEWS

THE FUNDAMENTAL wrong view is the belief that we have a fixed self. This belief manifests either as eternalism: the idea that we have a soul, or inner essence, which is our true, abiding identity; or else as nihilism: the idea that we came into being from nothing at birth and that we will be totally annihilated at death. But there are a host of other gross or subtle views and ideologies which keep us from seeing the true nature of things.

All wrong views come from the defilements. They are underpinned by greed, hatred and delusion. Right views, on the other hand, accord with the process of Going for Refuge. They run counter to the whole drift and trend of the conditioned world. They aren't 'natural'. The 'natural world' is driven by greed, hatred and delusion. The spiritual quest goes against the grain.

Sometimes the tradition speaks of those who have won liberation as having 'gone upstream'. Right view goes upstream, wrong views just go with the flow. [105]

## RELATIVISM AND RELATIVE TRUTH

THE HISTORY of the last two thousand years, culminating especially, perhaps, in that of this last century, has left people in the modern West deeply suspicious of all ideologies, especially of anything which smacks of ideological certainty. Hitler, Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot have all left us with an abiding suspicion of any ideology which claims to be true.

From Nietzsche through to Jaques Derrida, European philosophers have systematically whittled away at our sense of certainty. Truth is no longer absolute. The previous arbiter of truth, God, is either dead or, due to ecological disregard, the arms race, global poverty, and spiritual bankruptcy, stands severely discredited.

Nietzsche *et al* wiped away the dividing line between god and man. God came to be seen as merely a human construct and, without an arbiter, truth became 'perspectival' – what is true for you is not true for me: who am I, for example, to interfere with the gastronomic habits of cannibals? (So long as they're far away!). I don't share their taste in food – but these things are just cultural constructs. There is no absolute reason why we should uphold our own values against theirs: to do so would be, well… somehow food-ist.

Once it was only a matter of perspective, or interpretation; but once truth came to be merely a value-judgement, values themselves simply collapsed for there was no effective means to arbitrate between them.

We cannot say that anything is true any more. There are just different opinions, different 'readings' of the situation, and no one reading is intrinsically better than any other.

What began in the academies in the study of philosophy and literary criticism, soon spilled out onto the streets of Europe and the United States. Liberal minded people began to think that the only way of preserving tolerance and pluralism of belief and social conduct was to eradicate the certainties which, they thought, necessarily gave rise to intolerance. And with that a deep apathy concerning matters of value has descended on parts of the Western world. At the time of writing the ruling party in Britain has been trying to rouse the public with the cry of 'back to basics' and a return to 'family values', but the whole idea of values has become so discredited that all they have managed to do is to stir up a tabloid hornets nest as the media have [106] cynically exposed the equally cynical sexual hypocrisy of some members of the current government.

Value relativism has brought us to a moral malaise.

In opposition to such thoroughgoing relativism, Buddhism proposes the idea of conventional, or relative, truth.

There is no God over the horizon - what lies beyond our current field of view is not eternally separate from us. Given sufficient commitment, effort and the right conditions we can all become Buddhas. But the path to the horizon is not arbitrary. It is marked by relative truth. Ideas like 'actions have consequences'; 'behaviour founded in greed, hatred and delusion produces misery'; 'becoming less attached we become more creative'; are simply descriptions of the way the world actually works. They give us a basis for a system of values which – although not dictated to us by an omnipotent, unseen Absolute in the form of God – are nonetheless not arbitrary.

Relative truth provides the foundation upon which a coherent hierarchy of values can be built. We can establish degrees of moral and aesthetic values by judging whether or not the actions which give rise to them and the mental states from which they are produced are skilful or unskilful. Unskilful mental states arise from greed, hatred and delusion. They keep us entrapped within a

confined ego-identity. Skilful mental states are marked by generosity, kindness, and clarity – they move us away from self-preoccupation.

But the idea of hierarchy has itself become contentious these days.

## EGALITARIANISM AND SPIRITUAL HIERARCHY

I WAS ONCE at a Buddhist conference in South East Asia. One of the speakers, an American woman, was explaining how Buddhism is being transformed as it arrives in the United States. The feminist movement in the United States, she told us, and the strong interest in meditation occurred in the same time period, from the 1960–70's until the present. The contemporary American Sangha, with its understandings of liberation, always joined with the feminist movement and its understandings of liberation. [107]

But now, she said, it was time for American Buddhists to go one step further in their quest for liberation and in understanding the feminist contribution. We may think about the logic of domination. Our Buddhist tools of mental training are excellent for seeing into the nature of domination and dualism. For where there is domination and dualism, there is separation. And this is not true Dharma, because true Dharma is inter-related, non-dualistic, does not separate into higher and lower, superior and inferior, man and nature, us and them. Dharma is inclusive; it brings us all together. Feminism, she asserted, exposes the logic of domination.

At first glance this might sound fine. Yes, the Dharma is non-dualistic. It teaches the ultimate inter-relationship of things. There is no place for domination, or any other act of power, in Buddhism – true.

But is the separation into higher and lower, superior and inferior, merely an expression of 'domination'?

What is going on here is that two different levels of truth are being conflated. At the ultimate level, there are no distinctions whatever. No dualism, no domination; no higher, no lower; no superior, no inferior. Also, no speaker, no audience, no conference, no feminism, no Buddhism, no United States – it doesn't make sense to try to speak in this way, as if from the level of ultimate truth, and draw inferences from that position about the way in which we operate at the relative level.

We live on this side of the horizon. We are not Enlightened. So far as we are concerned higher and lower, good and bad exist. Although the Dharma teaches ultimate non-duality, from the point of view of the unenlightened, and therefore from the point of view of spiritual practice, there is a duality between Enlightenment and unenlightenment. Unless we accept the fact that we are not Enlightened we can never progress towards Enlightenment. If we are not Enlightened that means that there is a duality between us and Enlightenment. Only when we have completed the practice will that duality cease to exist. Thus, whilst we are in the process of practising, there is an absolute duality between us and Enlightenment. Buddhas, of course, don't see things like this. But then they are Buddhas. From their point of view there is no duality between us and them, us and Enlightenment. But we are not Buddhas. [108]

I cornered the speaker after the talk. 'Surely,' I put it to her, 'if we speak of people as being able to develop then some will necessarily have developed more than others. Granted, we must uncouple the idea of spiritual hierarchy from any idea of worldly power or authority, but not all hierarchies are necessarily hierarchies of power. Can't you imagine a hierarchy of love, or of wisdom, or of insight?'

'No,' she replied, 'that word hierarchy always implies power, dominance over others. The whole idea has got to go. It has to be replaced with complete equality.'

We batted this about for a while. Soon there was a group of ten to twenty people around us – all of them Westerners. They looked at me with a kind of benign pity. Here was a rare being indeed: an Anglo-Saxon type of the post 1950's generation yet holding quaintly unreconstructed antediluvian views. What to do with him?

'But look,' I said 'surely as Buddhists we can all agree that the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas are all more developed than we are…'

'No, I don't like that idea "more developed"', came back the response from someone in the crowd, "differently developed", perhaps… yeah, differently developed.'

And with that, I thought, the Dharma finally left the room.

We fear the idea of hierarchy because we think of it always in association with dominance, and in consequence we bring everything down to the same level. This is another manifestation of absolute value-relativism, where everything has the same value as everything else and any discrimination between values is deemed to be 'judgmental', where that term is used in a highly pejorative sense, implying intolerance and the abuse of power.

But it need not be so. A spiritual hierarchy is just the opposite. The higher up the hierarchy we ascend, the less intolerant we are, the less we incline to any form of exploitation whatever.

There are two modes of spiritual hierarchy in Buddhism. There is the clearly vertical hierarchy which exists between those whose Going for Refuge is 'real', the members of the noble Sangha, who have irreversibly entered upon the transcendental path, and there is a more fluid hierarchy, less absolutely vertical, which exists between those at lower levels of Going for [109] Refuge. At the provisional and effective level we all have our off-days. Our Going for Refuge depends upon conditions. Sometimes those conditions are fortuitous, sometimes they are adverse. Some of us will also have had more experience on the path than others. Merely through having practised for a longer period, we will be more easily able to generate and sustain skilful mental states.

We can always learn from people who are more developed than we are. If we Go for Refuge to the Three Jewels then we naturally cultivate a sensitivity to the quality of other people's mental states. We therefore adopt a receptive attitude to those who, whether permanently or temporarily, are further along the path than we are, and we give help and guidance to those beneath us. We can do all this quite freely and naturally, in a spirit of kindness and harmony, with no trace of servility or dominance.

The Dharma steers a skilful middle way between all the dualisms which we in the West hold so dear. Reflecting on doctrines of Conditionality and the Two Truths we can begin to discern something of that middle path for ourselves.

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**Notes**

[1] *Majjhima-Nikāya* II.32, trans. I. B. Horner in *Middle Length Sayings*, Vol. II, Pali Text Society, London, 1975, p.229.

[2] Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its Relation to Hīnayāna*, Luzac, London, 1930, p.51, gives nine canonical references for this composite 'quotation', from Pali and Sanskrit sources.

[3] *paṭicca-samuppāda*, *pratītya-samutpāda*.
[4] Pāli *dhamma*, Sanskrit *dharma*.
[5] As opposed to 'phenomenon'. The division of the objects of existence into 'noumena' and 'phenomena'; essences and appearances; God and man; body and soul; body and mind; runs like a red thread through the history of Western thought. Buddhism denies the existence of noumena as such. There are no essences apart from appearances.
[6] 'Auguries of Innocence', in *Blake: Complete Writings*, ed. G. Keynes, Oxford 1966, p.431.
[7] Francis H. Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra*, Pennsylvania State University Press 1977. Indra's Net occurs in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, a text which has had an enormous impact on Chinese Buddhism. Indra, of course, is not a Buddhist figure, but the Buddhist tradition never hesitated to incorporate elements of local mythology for didactic purposes.
[8] *Path of Purification*, Ch. XIX. Trans. Ñāṇamoli Thera, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 1979.
[9] T.S. Eliot, 'Burnt Norton', in *Four Quartets*, *Collected Poems*, Faber & Faber, London, 1963.
[10] I am indebted for the following analysis to David Loy, 'Buddhism and Money', published in *Radical Conservatism: Buddhism in the Contemporary World*, I.N.E.B., Bangkok, 1990.
[11] Again, I acknowledge my indebtedness to David Loy, ibid., footnote 28.
[12] *Majjhima-Nikāya* I.135, trans. I. B. Horner in *Middle Length Sayings*, Vol I, Pali Text Society 1967, p.173.
[13] *paramattha-sacca*, *paramārtha-satya*.
[14] *sammuti-sacca*, *saṃvṛti-satya*.
[15] *Dhammapada* verses 1 & 2, translated by Sangharakshita in unpublished work.
[16] ti-lakkhaṇa, tri-lakṣaṇa.
[17] *Dhammapada* vv.273–9.
[18] *diṭṭhi, dṛṣṭi.*
[19] *micchā-diṭṭhi, mithyā-dṛṣṭi.*
[20] *kilesa, kleśa*.
[21] *sammā-diṭṭhi, samyak-dṛṣṭi*.
[22] See Sangharakshita, *Buddhism and Blasphemy*, Windhorse Publications, Glasgow, 1989.