

Lecture 22: The Buddha, Man or Superman Sangharakshita

(Words in square brackets ([]) are attempts by the transcriber to guess the correct word.)

Friends,

This morning were continuing the series of talks which were started yesterday. Yesterday you may recollect we tried to understand the subject of Evolution, Evolution Lower and Evolution Higher as illustrated by this chart, by this diagram. Now today we're continuing that series and today we're considering the subject of the Buddha, Man or Superman. I mentioned I think yesterday that I originally prepared this series of talks two or I believe, perhaps, even three years ago, and I recollect that when I was preparing this particular lecture, this particular talk, just to as it were stimulate myself or give myself a few ideas I was idly flipping through the pages of a very fat volume of quotations from all sources which I happened to possess. It was in fact presented to me about four and a half years ago by our friend Mike Rogers to provide me, as he hoped, with material for lectures. So sometimes it does prove very useful, when one's brain is running a little dry or one feels in need of a little intellectual variety, just to go through this volume quite idly and to see what one can find. So I recollect that on this particular occasion when I was preparing or supposed to be preparing this lecture, not being able to get on with it very well, I was just thumbing through this volume of quotations and it so happened that I just happened to keep it open at a section entitled *Fashion - see also Dress*. and I was looking through the quotations under this heading, under this sectional heading of *Fashion - see also Dress*, and became quite engrossed in some of them, forgetting for the time being all about my lecture on the Buddha, Man or Superman, and I found for instance that in the Eighteenth Century Lord Chesterfield had said in one of his letters I believe that if you're not in fashion you are nobody! And then I found that a little later on at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century William Haslett, always a rather caustic writer, had said that fashion is gentility running away from vulgarity and afraid of being overtaken. And of course at the end of the Nineteenth Century there was the inevitable quotation from Oscar Wilde, who is probably more quotable than anybody else except Shakespeare, and Oscar Wilde is quoted in this little book, or this fat book rather, as saying "After all what is fashion? From the artistic point of view it is usually a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months!" And so on and so on.

Now as I was going through these quotations on the subject of fashion in this desultory sort of manner, it occurred to me that there are fashions in thought as well as in dress. We don't change our ideas every six months but perhaps we do change them every six years. We certainly do change them every sixty years, certainly every century. And we find for instance that about a hundred years ago, that is to say at the height of the Victorian period, in the full bloom as we may say of Victorianism, not to say the full flush of Victorianism, one of the most popular, one of the most current, one of the most fashionable ideas was that of the hero. Most of you recollect I expect in this connection Carlyle. Carlyle wrote a famous book called *[On] Heroes and Hero Worship* and he makes the statement in that book and also elsewhere that history is the biography of great men. And for quite a while this was a very fashionable point of view, a very fashionable way of looking at history.

And if one turns from the more serious to the less serious disciplines, and if one turns from the study of history to the popular novel of the day, the fiction of the day one found that every novel had to have its hero. Without a hero there was no novel. To such an extent that when Thackeray, the really great novelist of the middle part of the last century published his novel *Vanity Fair* he gave it the sub-title *A novel without a hero* because in those days that was something extraordinary. When you started reading a novel the first thing you tried to do was identify the hero and then identify the heroine and the villain and/or the villainess, and then you had things well under control. But Thackeray's was very much the exceptional case and he felt no doubt obliged to put this sub-title on his title page - *A novel without a hero* - to make it quite clear to everybody concerned that he hadn't just forgotten to put the hero in but that the hero was not there quite deliberately and quite intentionally.

And again if one turns from literature whether historical literature or fiction. If one turns from literature to life, one finds that a hundred years ago in public life in England (probably on the Continent also at that time) the great politicians or at least the well known politicians, the great writers, the great poets and explorers, were all regarded 'very much as public figures. They were very much in the public eye. If you think of people for instance like Gladstone, people like Tennyson, Browning, Newman, Dickens, Gordon, Florence Nightingale - they were all public figures, they were incredibly well known to the public, and they were hero-worshipped to an extent which we tend to find inconceivable today. For instance if you go to some museums you will see scores, even hundreds of china figures made of these great people, all sorts of souvenirs about them. You may recollect that for a while, you probably know this, the poet Tennyson did live not very far from here and there's a walk nearby which is called *Tennyson's Walk*, and apparently especially towards the end of his life he was very much pestered by people just coming to see him and they'd hide in little groups behind trees and then when they saw him coming along in his cloak and his broad brimmed hat they'd just peek out from behind the tree and "There he goes, there's Tennyson!" and sometimes there were hundreds of them. He used to feel absolutely hunted and absolutely persecuted, and everybody recognized or was able to recognize these great public figures and really look up to them and really sort of hero-worshipped them. And this is perhaps the reason or is one of the reasons why the great Victorians appear even in retrospect, even after a hundred years, so very much larger than life. Even a comparatively minor figure say like Matthew Arnold seems very prominent when we look back on him. And these people occupied a place in the public life and in the public estimation which we don't find politicians and writers and poets and artists occupying today.

It's perhaps thirty or forty years ago that the fashion started to change. Perhaps just a little more than that. Thirty or forty or perhaps even fifty years ago heroes went or started going out of fashion, and perhaps we can say, perhaps we can speculate that the Great War, the first Great War had something to do with it. That wasn't a very heroic affair. But whether it had something to do with it or whether it was the chief cause or not for the fact that heroes or the idea, of the hero went out of fashion, there was a reaction, very much a reaction, against the whole conception of the hero and the hero figure lost his popularity. In the golden days of the Victorians a biography was an exercise in hagiography. As soon as a great Victorian died within a year, usually, out came at least three thick volumes of memoirs. You can still find them in the public libraries, sometimes six volumes, sometimes seven collected life and letters, and some of the older libraries are full in their biographical sections of material of this sort. And reading through the lives and the letters, the collected letters, or rather they were really selected, and we know that now, but collected letters and memoirs of these eminent people, you got the impression that they really were someone. You saw of course the imposing external facade. It wasn't very often that you got a glimpse behind the scenes. When that did sometimes happen as in the case of Harold Froude, when his memoirs were published or memoirs of him were published in two comparatively small volumes after his death, because he died young, some people were rather shocked by the revelations and the glimpses that they were given of his rather heretical opinions and so on, but usually that was not allowed to happen. The three volumes or the six volumes or the eight volumes were intended as a permanent monument and there was the great man exhibited in all his glory striking the pose or the attitude in which everybody wanted to see him. So in this way in the Victorian period, biography was very much an exercise in hagiography.

But later on after the hero had started going out of fashion there was a tendency for biographies when they were published to become rather exercises in debunking. In debunking. And instead of trying to show how great the great man had been as the Victorians did, how great the prominent men of the past had been, the new type of biography, the more debunking type of biography, tried to show, on the other hand, how small and how petty they really and truly were. And it's perhaps significant that at this period biographies tended to become much shorter. Not three massive volumes but one modest volume, and sometimes the volumes were very slim indeed, and as probably you know the classic example of this sort of tendency is or at least was Lytton Strachey's *The Great Victorians* [*Eminent Victorians?*], a very slim volume devoted to no less than four Victorians all in one volume. Well the Victorians themselves would have regarded [as] simply as shocking. If you don't give a great man or great woman even one whole volume to themselves, you squeeze them all in this way within the covers of a single volume, it's

almost like burying four people in one grave. It's positively indecent. But in a later time, and we're perhaps still living in this period or perhaps we're beginning to see it come to an end now, at a later period the hero seems to have disappeared from literature altogether. Nowadays if you pick up a novel or a play you don't expect to find the traditional sort of hero any more, except of course one may say - there are always . exceptions - in the more unsophisticated women's papers. In some quarters, in some literary quarters we may say in fact, the villain or the personage who formally would have been regarded as the villain of the novel or the play has now become the hero. And of course the hero has disappeared from public life. Mr. Gladstone was regarded as a hero, he was worshipped by many people, so was Disraeli. People used to write in asking for just a lock of his hair or something of this sort, to enclose in a golden locket and wear round the neck, but we can't say that or we can't feel that about the politicians of our own day. If we were asked to select from .the ranks of say the Labour Party or the Conservative Party or the Liberal party or even the Communist Party or even no party at all, even from the House of Lords, a really heroic figure, one who could be regarded as a hero, I think we'd be rather at a loss. And whether they were really a hero or not there's no question that not one of them is popularly regarded as a hero by people today in this country in any sense at all.

So if the hero figure does survive at all in our day it's only in very debased and perverted forms such as that, for instance, of James Bond. And this we may say is a great pity. It's a great pity that things have come to this pass, that they've reached this extreme. Admittedly the Victorians themselves very often went to extremes in their hero worship[ped], then they adulated, they glorified, they projected, they indulged in exercises in hagiography to a quite in a way unforgivable extent, but we have gone right to the opposite extreme [and] their extreme was at least positive whereas ours, unfortunately, is rather negative. And to us the hero figure, the whole idea of the hero is rather ridiculous, rather absurd. And this is perhaps at least partly because we cannot take seriously as it were someone who is serious about something. If we look at the whole question more in terms of principles we may say that the hero is fundamentally the serious person. the hero is one who cares deeply about something, and who is at the same time a person of exceptional even of extraordinary, ability. So perhaps we may say that it's time that we got onto the middle path, avoiding these two extremes, the extreme of the Victorians and the extreme of our own day. It's time in other words that we revalued, perhaps upvalued, the hero. And in doing this perhaps it would help if we dropped the word hero and used instead the word genius, and regarded the hero as being also the man of genius, especially for the time being at least as the man of literary or artistic or musical genius or any combination of these three.

Now the question which arises at this stage is what is the difference between such a person and an ordinary person? What is the difference between one who is a hero and one who is not a hero? One who is a genius, a man of genius or a woman of genius, and an ordinary person? What's the difference? Where does the difference lie? And perhaps we can say that the difference between the two, between the man of genius and the ordinary person is not so much one of kind as one of degree. It's rather as though what was undeveloped or even just a very little developed in us is highly developed, even fully developed in him. Take for instance the question of musical sensibility, appreciation of music, of beautiful meaningful sounds. Well we all have this to some extent. There's hardly anybody who doesn't have some appreciation of music. There are one or two notorious examples in history. There's the example for instance of Dr. Johnson who used to confess, in fact who used to boast almost that he couldn't distinguish the tune of *God Save The King* - he was as insensitive to music as that. But very very few people indeed are of this kind, practically everybody has got some appreciation of music, even perhaps we can say some very minor undeveloped musical gift. But in the case of say a musician, a great musician like Bach or Mozart, the same faculty, the same faculty of appreciation of music, creation of music, sensitivity to music, which we find in ourselves in just a rudimentary form, an undeveloped form, is developed to a high, even to an extraordinary degree. And it's just the same with regard to literary and artistic sensibility. We all write but we may write just a letter or two occasionally, but it's the same talent, the same ability, the same capacity for expression in that particular form that is carried to its highest possible pitch of perfection in great poetry and fiction and drama and so on. In the same way we all have a capacity for philosophical reflection - we all reason, we all philosophize. Someone once said it isn't a question of dividing the human race into those who are philosophers and those who are not. Everybody is a philosopher, everybody has a philosophy.

The only difference is that some people are good philosophers and others are bad philosophers. Some have a good philosophy and others have a bad philosophy, but everybody has a philosophy of some kind developed to some extent. Meaning thereby the as it were conceptualized version of their own total attitude towards life, and sometimes it's very interesting to meet . people - quite homespun sort of people - who have developed their own philosophy and sometimes this can be quite remarkable. Sometimes in the most extraordinary places one finds people who have developed a quite systematic sort of philosophy; they've got a quite well integrated, quite consistent attitude towards life as a whole, existence as a whole, towards being alive as a whole, which is even intellectually articulated, and therefore one does find, as I say, these sort of philosophers, these sort of philosophies, in all sorts of extraordinary places. So it isn't just the great ones who are philosophers - everybody to some extent is a philosopher, even if it's only a very embryonic one or even a rudimentary one or a very poor one indeed.

So we may say that the great creators, the great literary geniuses, the great artistic geniuses, musical geniuses, people whose names for instance spring very readily to our lips, like Shakespeare or Michelangelo or Plato, these people are great because in them our ordinary human faculties have been developed to an almost superhuman extent. Some people say, some people like to think that there's a difference of kind as between the genius and the ordinary person, but this I feel is not so. It's not a difference of kind between them and us, it's a difference of degree and this is shown by the fact that we are able to appreciate them. We may not be able to pen a Mozart symphony but when we hear it we can appreciate it. We may not be able to write a Shakespeare tragedy but when we see it played in a theatre we can appreciate it, even fully appreciate it. And we can appreciate the music, we can appreciate the poetry only because there's some music and some poetry already in ourselves. We've an affinity, however undeveloped, for that sort of thing. This is why we find one of the mystics (I think it's one of the German mystics) singing in one of his songs or poems that the eye could not behold the sun unless the eye had in it something which was sun-like, and he uses this as an analogy and he says that the human soul could not perceive the divinity unless in the human soul there was something of the divine. So we can't appreciate the music of Mozart unless there's something of Mozart in us. We can't appreciate Shakespeare unless there's something of Shakespeare in us. We can't appreciate the Buddha, although this is going a bit ahead, unless there's something of the Buddha in us as well.

But of course this isn't very easy, this sort of appreciation. Sometimes we're really sort of stretched to the utmost of our capacity, sometimes it takes centuries for ordinary people to begin to appreciate the creative work of the great creators. It may take even centuries. It may be that only after many hundreds of years ordinary people begin to be able to appreciate what the great musicians and painters and thinkers were really getting at or trying to get at. But eventually it does happen. This is a very sort of common thing in the history of the arts especially. Many great artists or innovators - at first they're not appreciated - people think that what they're doing is strange or weird or extraordinary. We're told that even in the case of Mozart who isn't regarded as an innovator, some of his later works contained harmonies which some of his friends just didn't like, and there's one story I believe (I don't know whether it's true or whether it's apocryphal) that when he sent a copy of one of his later works to a friend the friend thought that a mistake had been made in the copying of the work because there were certain what he regarded as disharmonies. But now we know that those disharmonies were only a higher type of harmony. But we do find this sort of process going on all the time. We find the artistic genius or the musical genius raising the general level of sensibility. At first he's the only one, he has the creative vision and then after that, a few others begin to appreciate, then more and more people, more and more people. more and more. And in the course of centuries practically everybody begins to appreciate and in this way the whole level of sensibility practically of the human race we may say, or certainly of the more cultured portion of the human race, is raised and this is why there's a saying, as I remember (I forget who said this) and it goes that even the most wretchedly painted signboard of a village inn shows that a Rembrandt once lived in the world. And this is the sort of thing that we see, and at the same time we see the opposite sort of process taking place. We see that the higher the general level of artistic attainment, the more this helps to pave the way for the appearance of genius. We find for instance that Austrian society, Viennese society in the days of Mozart was intensely musical, so this helped the appearance of someone like Mozart, and we find that Michelangelo appeared at the height of the Italian Renaissance and

we find that Shakespeare was not a solitary great dramatist - he was the brightest star, we may say, in a whole galaxy of dramatic poets living in the Elizabethan and Jacobean days; and Plato similarly in Athens was the product of a city, product of this Athenian city state humming with philosophical discussion and activity and inquiry.

Now what is the general significance we may enquire of all this? Cultural development, we may say, takes place largely through the efforts of individuals. We don't find much done by groups or schools or institutions. They usually stifle the **arts**. It's the solitary individual doing things on his own by himself, whether it's the writer, whether it's the poet, the dramatist, the artist, the musician, usually he's working on his own. Maybe in touch with others, maybe in touch with a few people who appreciate but on the whole working on his own and producing on his own individually. It's only later on that other people are able to appreciate and participate. So we may say, generalizing, that the heroes and the geniuses are today what the generality of people, what the masses, will be tomorrow or at least we hope the day after tomorrow. The heroes and the geniuses appear we may say therefore as forerunners in the evolutionary process - they've gone a little way ahead. The others are trying to catch up but the hero, the genius is the forerunner, a few steps, a few leagues, a few miles ahead of the rest of humanity in the evolutionary process, leading the way as it were which eventually everybody will be able to follow.

And this of course brings us back to yesterday's talk, to the Higher Evolution and the Lower Evolution and it also brings us back to our chart, back to our diagram. Today we've got a much more beautiful one because it's been done not by me but by somebody who knows how to do these things. So let's just take a look at it. Let's just remind ourselves of what it's all about.

First of all there's the Lower Evolution, in other words the whole process of evolution from the sub-atomic unit or from the amoeba in biological terms, up to the self-conscious or the self-aware human being. This is the process of the Lower Evolution. And then there's the Higher Evolution which represents the whole process of evolution from self-conscious man right up to Enlightened man or Buddha. And these two, the Lower Evolution and the Higher Evolution, they form, they constitute one continuous process of development. The first however, the process of the Lower Evolution is governed by a cyclic principle and the second, the Higher Evolution, is governed by the spiral principle. We won't recapitulate today yesterday's material at this point.

Now on our chart the Lower Evolution is represented by the line or that section of the hypotenuse reaching from zero up to two. This is the Lower Evolution, and then the Higher Evolution is represented by the sections called two right up to the symbol for infinity. And you notice that each of these two, the lower half representing the Lower Evolution, the upper half representing the Higher Evolution - each of these - is divided into two segments. Now the Lower Evolution is divided by the number one (or the figure one) at this particular point, and this is the point at which emerges ordinary human consciousness halfway up the process of the Lower Evolution. And the Higher Evolution or the section representing the Higher Evolution, this is divided into two sections again - by point three - which represents the emergence of the transcendental consciousness or awareness. This as you saw yesterday is the point of true spiritual birth or rebirth, the point of Stream Entry, the point of [No Return].

So we see that this scale, zero to infinity is divided by these points one, two and three, into four sections This section representing the sub-human, this one representing the human and then the third one representing the superhuman and then the fourth one, the one at the top from three to infinity, representing what we call the trans-human.

Now that's very briefly the ground which we covered yesterday. So now let us try to relate what we've dealt with so far today, the material that we've dealt with so far today, to this same chart.

Now whereas yesterday we were concerned with the whole of the hypotenuse, today when speaking of the hero and the genius and so on, today we're concerned simply with this section, with this right-angled triangle within the bigger one. We're concerned with this middle section, that is to say from point one to point two and from point two to point three. This is the area with which we're concerned today. In other words we're concerned with the Higher section of the

Lower Evolution and the Lower section of the Higher Evolution. Now for the sake of clarity let's just concentrate on this particular right-angled triangle and on its sub-divisions. Originally I remember we had a separate chart - we enlarged this to the size of that, we haven't done that today, perhaps it isn't really necessary. So this line from one to three represents the whole scale of the cultural development of man. That's the middle section of the whole Evolutionary process, and it's divided of course by point two as before which represents the point of emergence of self-consciousness. Now each of these sections, that is to say one to two and two to three, each of these, can be sub-divided into two and they're sub-divided by these points *1a* and *2a* and what do these represent? *1a* is the point we may say of the average human consciousness, halfway between the lowest human consciousness just emerging from the brute and self-consciousness in the sense of a comparatively aware, responsible, intelligent human being. This is the point of the average human consciousness. *2a*, halfway between the point of the emergence of truly human awareness and the point of the emergence of transcendental awareness, point *2a* represents what we may describe as the highly cultured consciousness.

So in this way the whole section from one up to three is divided by points two and *1a* and *2a* into four sections to which we've given these smaller letters. *a* is the section of no culture at all, *b* (small *b*) is the section of folk culture including tribal religion. The great majority of people in the world formally were at this level, but now we find that folk culture almost everywhere has been replaced or is in process of being replaced by mass culture which we may say is really no culture at all. Section *c* here (small *c*) is the level of higher culture and section *d* is the level of what we may call ethnic religion. Now having made that clear, to come back to the material that we've dealt with so far this morning, our heroes or our geniuses, they come in this section, two to three, they occur anywhere along this particular line, depending upon their greatness, their degree of development. Probably the majority of heroes and geniuses come here in *c*, just a few of the very greatest come right up there in *d*. But whether they come in *c* or whether they come in *d*, what distinguishes them from the mass of comparatively ordinary people is the fact that they are individuals, they are really and truly individuals, as distinct from units in a mass. We like to think that we're individuals but most of the time we are not. We're numerically individual but we're not psychologically and spiritually individual. A true individual is self-conscious and self-aware and so on and the mass of people are simply not that. They're simply statistically individual, mathematically, arithmetically individual but they're not as I've said psychologically and spiritually individual because they don't have true self-consciousness or true self-awareness.

So it is only the people who are up there in sections *c* and *d* (small *c* and small *d*), the heroes and the geniuses, who can be described as real, true, individuals. Sometimes in Buddhism we talk about going beyond individuality and going beyond the self and realizing the truth of no-self, but for most people this is quite out of the question. They haven't even developed a self yet not to speak of realizing the non-self. They're just an amorphous mass of conditionings. So the first thing that one has to do very often is to become an individual before you can think of transcending individuality. So the geniuses and the heroes they have become to a great extent true individuals and that's the path that we also have to follow, and then perhaps a long way beyond that we can think of going beyond individuality. But we have to realize, we have to recognize that so far we haven't succeeded in developing individuality, true individuality, and if one looks round among one's friends and one's acquaintances one will have to recognize there are very few individuals amongst them. They're too conditioned, they're too conventional, they're not really being themselves and for this reason they can't be described as individuals. They're not in a way really people. They're human objects or humanoid objects, but not really people because they haven't achieved true individuality.

Now having said that let's compare our two charts taking this as one chart and this as another chart. Let's compare these two. We find one or two interesting things. We find for instance that the Buddha (up here) is to the Stream Entrant (down there) as the Stream Entrant (here) is to the highly cultured person (there) and we find therefore that these three, the highly cultured person, the Stream Entrant and the Buddha, constitute one continuous series or process of development within the Higher Evolution. So we can now perhaps begin to see the analogy between the Buddha (up here) and the genius or the hero (comparatively down here). Not just an analogy we may say even but perhaps a real, perhaps a true correspondence. We may say that the genius

represents what the average man can become culturally speaking, in cultural terms, or in terms of cultural life; whereas Buddha represents what the highly cultured man can become spiritually. The Buddha is the first historical example we may say of what all men are potentially. The Buddha is a being, we may say, different from others not in kind but in degree of development, in degree of manifestation of his inner potentiality. And this sort of thing, this sort of fact, this sort of truth is brought out very beautifully in the scriptures with the help of a simile, a comparison. We sometimes find that the Buddhist scriptures make use of very ordinary homely comparisons and this one is very homely indeed. The Buddha says to begin with, "suppose a hen has laid a number of eggs" - Now there couldn't be anything more homely than that, a hen laying a number of eggs. So he says, "What happens? The hen sits on the eggs. I forget how many days the poor hen has to sit on them but she sits on them patiently until they start hatching. Now what does one find happening? One finds that one egg hatches first. They don't all sort of jump out simultaneously - one comes first." So according to the Buddha's simile what happens is one little chick emerges first and once that little chick has emerged and stands clear of the eggshell what does he start doing? He starts tapping with his little beak on the other shells, helping the other chicks to get out of their shells. So this is the comparison, this is the simile. So the egg represents the state of sleep, the *state* of unawareness, the state of spiritual darkness and ignorance and men are all involved in that. They're all within the membrane, within the womb, within the egg of darkness and unawareness and ignorance. And the Buddha, we are told is like the little chick that is the first to come out, the first to break out of the shell and having stepped out of the shell he then directs his attention to rousing the others, tapping vigorously on their shells. Maybe he hears a little return tapping, returning from inside and he taps more vigorously and then the little chick inside taps more vigorously and out he comes from the shell. This is what happens. The Buddha comes out first, then he helps others also to come out, to emerge. And this is why the Buddha has among his titles the title of [*Lokajestha*] or *Lokajettha*. This is usually translated as *World honoured One* but this is a bit misleading; It doesn't give the real meaning or at least it doesn't give the first meaning. *Jettha* or [*Jestha*] really means the first born son. This is still I found when I was in Kalimpong and Darjeeling, in colloquial use among the Nepalis. The Nepalis usually have lots and lots of children - ten or a dozen are quite common - and they usually address them as first son, second son, third son, fourth son or daughter as the case may be and they've got special words for this and the eldest son is still called *Jet tha*. The second son as far as I remember is called [Kaila] and the third one is called [Maila] and so on right down to (untare, tantare] and the rest, and similarly for the daughters. So the Buddha is called the [*Lokajestha*] or *Lokajettha* which means the elder brother of humanity, the first born of - I was going to say creation but it's not quite like that! - the first of the the spiritually born, the spiritually reborn. Because he's the first human being according to Buddhist tradition to attain full Enlightenment within historical times.

So what is the difference between him and his Enlightened disciples? This question is raised in the scriptures and the Buddha clearly says the only difference between himself and his Enlightened disciples spiritually is that he attained Enlightenment first without any help; they attained it subsequently with help from him. Just as in the case of the chicks, the first one gets out without any help and the others get out with help from the first chick to emerge. So it's said that the Buddha, the Tathagata is one who shows the way, not only shows the way, he finds it. He discovers the way but once he's found it, once he's discovered it, others can follow it by of course their own efforts.

.Now let's come back to the question which stands as the title of our talk today - *The Buddha, Man or Superman* - and before dealing with that let's just refer back very briefly to yesterday's chart where we saw that there were four stages of evolution which we described, as we saw a few minutes ago, as the sub-human stage, as the human stage, the superhuman stage and the trans-human stage. Now the Buddha represents according to Buddhist tradition and according to our chart, the climax of the fourth stage, the climax of the trans-human stage - not even the superhuman but the trans-human stage. So the Buddha is neither human in a sense nor superhuman but just fully Enlightened. But at the same time we must recollect, we must remember, that the higher does not exclude the lower. A superhuman being is still human and an Enlightened being is still superhuman and human. The higher includes the lower. The Buddha is a man but at the same time he's more than a man. Not just a man as we are but man plus, as

it were, a superman but more than a superman. And we find that in the scriptures, in the Buddhist scriptures, especially the Pali texts, they mention quite a number at times the contemporary conception in India of what was called the *manapurisa*, the great man or the superman, and there's a full description of him in a sutta called the [*Mahapurisalakkanasutta*], the sutta of the characteristics of the superman, and in Buddhist literature there are said to be thirty two (32) major and eighty four (84) minor signs or characteristics of the superman, and these quite clearly embody the highest contemporary aesthetic and cultural and religious ideals. And it's quite clear that the Brahmins of the Buddha's day regarded him as *Mahapurisa*, as superman, as embodying this highest aesthetic, cultural and religious ideal that had been attained in India so far. And this is very significant because it shows, it reveals that the Buddha did not as it were bypass human perfection, even physical perfection, but incorporated it into the higher perfection, the higher dimension of Enlightenment. We speak of human beings as distinct from animals but really humanity [does not include (Sic)], does not exclude the animal side. It includes it but it includes it in subordination to the truly human. We've all got an animal side to our nature. We may be very, very human indeed, we might have developed all our human characteristics and functions and qualities and attitudes, but we do it not so much by rejecting the animal but by including and integrating the animal into the human. So in the same way just as we as human beings include and integrate the animal, so Buddhahood includes and integrates the human side subordinate to the Enlightened personality.

So let's now just very briefly summarize the conclusions that we've reached this morning. We've seen I think, I hope, that cultural progress and spiritual development are strictly analogous, that they represent the lower and the higher sections of the Higher Evolution, and both are the work of individuals who are far in advance of the general mass of humanity. Cultural progress is the work of heroes and geniuses. Spiritual development is the work of Enlightened minds, the first of whom, historically, was Gautama, the Buddha, and with their help the level, the general level of humanity, is gradually raised. So that we see that hero worship or the hero worshiping attitude is by no means a bad thing provided it is directed to the right objects, that is to say towards those who are truly, those who are really more highly developed than we ourselves are. Not just directed towards the rich or the famous or the popular and so on. Nowadays, as I mentioned earlier at the beginning, we tend to adopt a rather cynical attitude towards greatness. We even doubt sometimes the possibility of human greatness - we like to debunk, to discover weakness and to discover imperfection. But this sort of cynicism, this sort of unwillingness to believe in anything ideal or anything truly great, we may say is a sort of soul corroding attitude, even a sort of vice, and on the contrary we should try to develop more a spirit or a feeling of admiration and reverence and respect and devotion, not just for men as they are but also for men as they might become. Sometimes it's said in Buddhist literature that when you've got a monarchical sort of government, when you've got a king sitting on the throne, even the heir to the throne is respected even when he is a child, because you know that though he may be small now, though he may be a baby now, a little boy now just running about and playing with his rattle, you know that one day he's going to sit on that throne and he's going to take the places of his father. So one finds in a monarchical system, in a society which is governed according to the monarchical principle, the heir to the throne is respected even as a little tiny child. And if one reads biographies of kings of the past one finds that some of them were very, very conscious of this and I remember reading once about a little medieval crown prince in medieval times, who at the age of four severely reprimanded a very elderly courtier who was a Duke for not rising as soon as he entered the room. The little boy was only running through with his rattle but he knew he was the crown prince and he knew that the Duke ought to stand up, and this was the general sort of feeling.

So Buddhism says you should have this feeling towards all sentient beings. They may be anything now, they may be thieves or they may be prostitutes or they may be financiers. They be anything you like now they may even be politicians but one day they're going to become Buddhas. So you should respect them and not only for what they are but for what they can be, however degraded, however undeveloped their condition or their situation now, you should respect them on account of or for the sake of their potentiality, which one day surely will be realized, will be manifested. And this is again one of the reasons why in Buddhism in the East generally there's very great reverence for the spiritual teacher or for the Guru, because the Guru usually represents what we can become or what we want to become or what we will become in the future when we've made

the necessary effort. So therefore the Buddhist feeling or the Buddhist attitude very much is that if we've no reverence for this higher ideal as embodied in human beings, both famous people of the past and people who are alive now, if we've no reverence for the ideal in those forms then it's going to be very, very difficult for us to attain for ourselves that ideal. If we don't respect the ideal as it's embodied in those with whom we have some sort of contact, even through the pages of a history book at the present.

Now yesterday morning we concluded with a question and the question you may recollect was what the right angle of the triangle represented, but I'm not giving the answer this morning. We're going tomorrow a little more deeply into the nature of the Buddha and tomorrow morning our topic will be *The Buddha, God and Reality*, and we'll try to answer that question tomorrow morning.

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