

## Aspects of Buddhist Psychology

### Tape 40: The Analytical Psychology of the Abhidharma

Mr Chairman and Friends:

We find nowadays, whether in the modern East or whether in the West, whether in this country or in any other, a very widespread interest in what we now know as psychology, and it is perhaps very easy to understand why this should be, why there should be this great and widespread interest in psychology. Psychology, as the very term itself suggests, is concerned with the psyche; is concerned with mind. We may say, perhaps emphatically, that the mind is the most interesting thing about man. In fact it has been suggested that the word 'mind' itself and the word 'man' are etymologically connected, which is perhaps of some significance. But it does seem at the same time as though we are just only now beginning really to wake up to the fact that it is the mind of man which is the most interesting thing about man himself, and hence our renewed, our increased, interest in psychology.

Now psychology, as we all know, is both theoretical and practical. We all know, some of us only too well, that the strain and the pressure of modern living produces all sorts of mental tensions, mental strain, even breakdown and so on. And therefore we have in modern times, various systems of what is known as psychotherapy, to assist us and to relieve us in states and conditions of that kind.

Reference has been made to the fact that I returned to this country after twenty years in the East only some three years ago, and on my return as I got to know people, I was extremely surprised to find how many people suffered from nervous mental strain and tension in some form or another. I was in fact very surprised to find as I got to know people even better, how many of them had to have in the course of their lives what we know as analysis. I got almost used to people saying to me in the course of a conversation "Oh, when I had analysis" or "Oh, when was having my analysis" or "I said to my psycho-analyst" - this seemed to be part of the general currency of conversation. And some, I found, were still having analysis. Some had been having it for two years, some for three years - I remember the record case which I came across was a lady who had been having it for 17 years! I don't say daily, but certainly several times a week.

Now, not only is there this interest in psychology, theoretical and practical, but also, there is a growing interest, I find, in Buddhism. Very recently I have been up and down the country, visiting various groups, various Buddhist groups, giving lectures, holding meditation classes, and I do find that during the last few months, as compared with even a year or six months ago, there is a sort of quickening of interest everywhere. So much so, indeed, that some of us feel that a new stage in the history, in the development, of Buddhism, has been reached in this country - where we are reaching out to, as it were, wider horizons, to new dimensions, which were not known before.

Now with this great interest in psychology on the one hand and this growing interest in Buddhism on the other, albeit on a considerably smaller scale, it is inevitable, we may say, that sooner or later, Buddhism and psychology should come together, that there should be as it were, some sort of dialogue (to use the fashionable term) between them, and this is why we have decided to have, to organise, this course of lectures. And in the course of the next 8 weeks, we shall be studying, as practically all of you know already, Aspects of Buddhist Psychology. And this evening, we are starting with the topic, the very good introductory topic, of the Analytical Psychology of the Abhidharma. But before we start on this evening's topic itself, just a few general observations prefacing as it were the whole course, the whole series.

We are concerned, as I've just said, with aspects of Buddhist psychology. But first of all, before we embark on any consideration of Buddhist psychology, we have to understand, at least briefly, succinctly, "What is Buddhism?" We have to answer this question initially. Now there are many answers to this question; some people tell you Buddhism is this; some tell you Buddhism is that; but we're not going into any details of the matter this evening because we don't have time.

Historically, we may say, that Buddhism is the spiritual tradition, or the religion if you like, inaugurated by Gautama the Buddha in India some 2,500 years ago, about 500 BC. And this tradition which he inaugurated, which he founded, continues down to the present day, in the countries of south-east Asia, in Japan, and elsewhere. In all these countries, in all these areas, it is a living, vital tradition, still.

Essentially, we may say, Buddhism represents what we may describe as growth in, or the systematic development of, awareness at the highest possible level. And this awareness, when we examine it, when we look into it, we find, has several dimensions. And for Buddhism itself, two of these dimensions are the most important; one the dimension of Wisdom; the other the dimension of Compassion.

In this context, by Wisdom, we mean complete and utter freedom from subjectivity, both affective and

intellectual. And by Compassion, we mean the spontaneous activity which springs up, as it were, in accordance with the needs of living beings within the context, within the framework, determined by Wisdom. So much, perhaps, will suffice for a general definition or description of Buddhism.

Now what about Buddhist psychology? Strictly speaking, we have to confess, there is no such thing as Buddhist psychology. Now you might think it's rather odd that we are gathered together to hear a series of lectures about Buddhist psychology only to be told at the outset that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as Buddhist psychology! What do we mean by this statement? If we look at Buddhism - if we look at the whole Teaching, the whole tradition - we see that it is a fully integrated Teaching, a fully integrated tradition: it all hangs together. It's all of one piece, as it were: take up any one aspect of it; all the others automatically follow.

Now in this total tradition, this fully integrated Teaching, we find there are a number of different aspects. And when we study Buddhism, or what we call Buddhism but which Buddhists themselves call the Dharma or the Sasana, when we study Buddhism from a western point of view, we isolate these different aspects from the whole and we apply to them various western terms, and in this way we come to speak of Buddhist philosophy, or Buddhist ethics, or Buddhist logic, or Buddhist epistemology, or Buddhist ontology. We speak also of Buddhist art, Buddhist culture, we even speak of Buddhist sociology, Buddhist anthropology. But the important thing we have to remember is that really, truly, none of these terms fit. All these terms, whether philosophy, psychology and so on, belong to a totally different universe of discourse, and in applying them to Buddhism, in trying to make them fit Buddhism, we can quite seriously distort the whole picture of Buddhism. So it's the same when we use this expression 'Buddhist psychology'. In a sense, there's no such thing. In other words, there's no independent field of study within Buddhism which Buddhists know as psychology or which they label as such. At the same time, we have to make it clear, the term "psychology" in the present context, isn't entirely inappropriate. Otherwise we wouldn't have used it at all.

And so far as the present course of lectures is concerned, by Buddhist psychology, we mean simply, all Buddhism's teachings about the nature and functioning of the mind, especially as this has to do with, or has bearing on, the religious and spiritual life in general, and on the practice of meditation in particular.

Now in this course, we shall not be dealing with the subject in a strictly systematic manner, as you might have gathered from the titles of the various lectures. This in fact, is impossible. We may say quite categorically, that the history of Buddhist psychology, using that expression, has yet to be written. We don't yet have any complete systematic study by any scholar, of Buddhist psychology. A few aspects only have been touched upon, and then remotely and in passing, as it were. So therefore, we have selected for this course, certain important aspects, and these aspects will enable us to approach the subject from a number of different angles and attitudes, and to penetrate, we hope, deeply into them. At the same time, it is hoped, we should be able, through Buddhist psychology, to penetrate into the nature of Buddhism itself.

Now, having said so much by way of preface to the whole series, let us come on now to this evening's subject, the Analytical Psychology of the Abhidharma.

Despite the use of this expression, analytical psychology, I'm afraid there's no connection here with Jung. For some of you, that may be a disappointment, but we hope that in the course of the lecture, there may be compensations, and in any case we shall have something to say about Jung later on in the series in at least one or two of the other lectures.

Now the first question which suggests itself to us, the first question we have to answer, is "What is the Abhidharma?" I am quite sure that this term is completely foreign. Unless you've made a quite serious study of Buddhism, you will not have come across it. So what is the Abhidharma? This is the first thing we have to understand.

Historically, we may say that the Abhidharma represents one of the most important developments in the whole field of Buddhism. It is very widely, intensively studied in many parts of the East today, though I'm afraid that in some Buddhist circles in the East, a great mystery is made out of the Abhidharma. In some Buddhist circles in the East, when you mention the word 'Abhidharma', they hold their breath, as it were - they think at once of something very mysterious, something very profound, something which only the monks know anything about, and very often the impression is heightened by the fact that the books, the texts of the Abhidharma are written in gold on beautiful palm leaf manuscripts, and sometimes bound in golden covers, and sometimes the covers are studded with jewels, and in this way people get the impression, heightened by their devotional feelings, that the Abhidharma is something very aloof and mysterious, which ordinary people can't touch, which they can't even think about. But this mystery is really quite unnecessary. In principle the Abhidharma is, I won't say simple, but certainly straightforward.

Now, as to the meaning of the word Abhidharma, the second part or the second half of the word, '*dharma*', here means the Doctrine or the Teaching. That is to say, the Doctrine or the Teaching of the Buddha. And '*abhi*' is a prefix meaning higher, superior, or further. So the Abhidharma is the 'Higher Doctrine' or the 'Further Teaching'. This is the first thing we have to understand - the literal meaning of the word: the 'Higher Doctrine' or the 'Further Teaching'.

Now what precisely does this mean? To understand this, we have to go back to the origins of Buddhism, we have to go back to the life, back to the Teaching of the Buddha himself.

The Buddha, as I reminded you at the beginning, lived about 500 BC. He taught very extensively, but, like Christ, like Mahomet, he wrote, himself, nothing. He taught orally. He walked from place to place. He met people - He met lay people, he met monks, princes, wealthy Brahmins, peasants, beggars, scavengers, courtesans, met them, talked to them, taught them. So this process, this ministry of his, went on for five and forty years. And in the course of those five and forty years of ministry, he must have delivered, he must have held thousands, even tens of thousands of discourses and dialogues, conversations, answers to questions and so on. And around him there was usually a circle of disciples, always there were with him a few devoted followers at least, and they, as best they could, learned by heart whatever he said. The words which fell from his lips, they treasured up, they reflected upon them, they repeated them one to another, in this way they committed to memory whatever he had taught them, or as much, at least, of it as they could remember. And when they were old, they transmitted what they had learned, what they had remembered, to their disciples, and they to their disciples in turn, and in this way, the Teaching was preserved for posterity. This process, incidentally, of oral transmission, went on for several hundred years, at least for 400 years.

Now what happened was, that after the Buddha's death, there was an enormous amount of material in existence. He had hundreds, thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of monk disciples. They used to gather together regularly at intervals, they used to recite congregationally what they remembered of his teaching, trying to reduce it to certain standard forms. So in this way there was an enormous floating mass of material in existence handed down.

But the important point, the point with which we're concerned, is the point that it was not systematically arranged. They remembered that on a certain occasion the Buddha had spoken in such and such a way to a certain Brahmin who asked a question, or they remembered that on a certain occasion he'd called the monks together and given a discourse on a certain topic. So they remembered all this - this discourse, that dialogue, that conversation - they remembered it all, repeated it all and handed it on, transmitted it - but it was not systematically arranged: it was all mixed up. Long discourses mixed up with short ones, poetry mixed up with prose, teachings about the mind mixed up with teachings about the elements, teachings about cosmology mixed up with history and legend and marvels and biography. So it was all mixed up after the Buddha's death.

But within a very few years, within a few decades, certainly within centuries, the monks gradually started sorting it all out. Some of the more brilliant, more retentive minds started studying the whole mass of the tradition, started organising it systematically, and in this way, it was all worked over by many hundreds of monks over a period of several hundred years. And the result of this sorting out process was what we call the Abhidharma: the Higher Teaching or the Further Doctrine.

Basically, broadly speaking, we may say that the Abhidharma does three things: -

- \* **In the first place, the Abhidharma establishes the meaning of technical terms.**  
Many terms in the teaching hadn't been very precisely defined; used in one context in one sense and another context in another sense - but the Abhidharma did away with all that. It delimited the meaning of terms: it established a certain technical meaning for them. And it developed what we may describe as a strict and almost scientific terminology.
- \* **Secondly, the Abhidharma collated different discussions of the same topics.**  
For instance, in this vast mass of traditions, the Buddha might have spoken about, say, Nirvana, maybe 20 times. But one reference to it was here, another reference was there; in one context he spoke from this point of view, in another context from that point of view. So what the Abhidharma did was to collate, to bring together, references of this sort, to compare them and try to extract from them a single, a common teaching, and to establish a definitive meaning, a definitive approach. This was the second thing that the Abhidharma did.
- \* **Thirdly, the Abhidharma expounds the whole teaching, the whole range of the Doctrine, the Dharma, systematically.**

Instead of having it bit by bit, according to circumstances, according to what question was asked, the Abhidharma instead of that, organises the whole Teaching into a totality and expounds it systematically.

So these are the three basic things which the Abhidharma does:

- \* establishes the meaning of technical terms
- \* collates different discussions of the same topic, and
- \* expounds the whole teaching systematically.

This is the achievement, this is the work, of the Abhidharma. And it is certainly, we may say, a very great achievement indeed. And the Abhidharma dominated Buddhism in India for about 1,000 years. It is a very, very important school; a very, very important tradition. And if we do not know something at least about the Abhidharma, its basic viewpoint, its recurrent themes, its distinctive emphasis, then we cannot really understand the course of the development of Buddhist thought, certainly not as it developed in India.

At the same time, it must be admitted, it must be confessed, that the Abhidharma had its negative side. The Abhidharma, we may say, banished from Buddhism the human element. It took out of the teachings, it took out of the traditions, everything which was biographical, everything which was historical - it banished myth, it banished legend, it banished, above all, poetry, from the Scriptures, from the teachings. And In the Abhidharma, we may say, the impersonal, the scientific and rational reigns supreme.

Eventually, of course, inevitably, the banished elements re-asserted themselves. And they did this, they re-asserted themselves, in what we call the Mahayana, the Great Way and in the Vajrayana, or the Adamantine way, that is to say, Tantric Buddhism. But that is another story. We're not concerned with that this evening. Let us therefore go back to the Abhidharma.

In the Abhidharma there are two major traditions: the tradition of the Theravada and the tradition of the Sarvastivada. These two great schools each had their own independent Abhidharma tradition. Each of these two great schools eventually committed to writing its own distinctive version of the Abhidharma. The Theravada version of the Abhidharma was written down in the Pali language and forms today part of the Theravada Pali Canon, which is found in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Cambodia; whereas the Sarvastivada version of the Abhidharma was written down in Sanskrit and in translation it forms today part of the Chinese Canon. The original Sanskrit texts have been lost.

Now the Teachings, the traditions, coming down from the Buddha through disciples and disciples of disciples, these were also written down in their unsystematised form, which was of course, the earlier form, and these constituted, when written down, what we know as the Hinayana Sutras. And these Hinayana Sutras of course form the Sutra Pitaka, or Sutra Collection, of the Canon of Buddhist Scriptures. The systematised versions, the systematised teachings, that is to say, the Abhidharma, these constitute the Abhidharma Pitaka, or Abhidharma Collection. And these two, the Sutra Pitaka containing the unsystematised teaching, and the Abhidharma Pitaka, containing the systematised teaching, these make up together with the Vinaya Pitaka, or Collection of Discipline, the complete Tripitaka, or Threefold Collection, of the Hinayana Schools.

Now both the Theravada and the Sarvastivada Abhidharma Pitakas contain seven books, seven quite voluminous books. But these two are quite different sets. The Theravadins have one set of seven Abhidharma books in their Abhidharma Pitaka; the Sarvastivadins have a quite different set of Abhidharma books in their Abhidharma Pitaka.

The Theravadins regard the Abhidharma Pitaka, this collection of Higher Teaching or further Doctrine, as being the word of the Buddha. According to the Theravada, the contents of the Abhidharma Pitaka were preached in the Tusita Devaloka, a higher heavenly realm, by the Buddha to the spirit of his deceased mother. And at the end of the day, he descended from that higher realm, according to the legend, and repeated what he'd taught his deceased mother, on earth to Sariputra, the wisest of his disciples, who taught it to his disciples, and in that way, the Abhidharma tradition was handed down. That's according to the Theravada.

But the Sarvastivadins, on the other hand, frankly admit that the contents of the Abhidharma Pitaka are the work of disciples, which would seem in fact to be the case.

Now the Abhidharma literature is by no means confined to the two Abhidharma Pitakas, that is to say the Abhidharma Pitakas of the Theravadins and the Sarvastivadins. These constitute only a beginning and subsequently, in the course of centuries, hundreds of other works were produced. From a literary point of view, the Abhidharma is a very rich, a very vast field indeed. But among all the workers, all the writers of

Abhidharma texts, two names, we may say, tower above all the others, both of them belonging to the fifth century AD.

On the Theravada side, there is the great scholastic commentator, Buddhaghosa, author of the *Visuddhi-magga*, or Stages of Purification or Path of Purification. He was a native of India, but lived and worked in Ceylon.

On the Sarvastivada side, there is the great figure of Vasubhandhu, the author of the *Abhidharma Khosa*, or Treasury of Abhidharma, which is the major Abhidharma work in existence. He lived and worked in north western India and in his old age he became a follower of the Mahayana, and one of the founders of the Vijñāna, or Idealist school of Mahayana philosophy.

But long before this, long before the days of Buddhaghosa and Vasubhandhu, the Abhidharma had gone far beyond its original objectives, and we may say broadly speaking, that from analysing and classifying the Buddha's teachings, it went a step further, in fact, many steps further, and it started analysing and classifying the whole universe, indeed, the whole of existence.

Philosophically speaking, the position of the Abhidharma is one of what has been called, I think very well, by Dr Radhakrishnan, pluralistic realism. This describes the philosophical position of the Abhidharma: pluralistic realism. The Abhidharma believed that the whole of existence, mental and physical and spiritual, the whole of existence, conscious and non-conscious, can be broken down, as it were into a limited number of ultimately real, discrete, elements. It's a sort of psycho-physical atomism. These elements it calls 'dharma's'.

We must distinguish several meanings of this word 'dharma'. It usually means, of course, doctrine or teaching, but here, dharma, in this technical sense of the Abhidharma, means the ultimate discrete elements into which the whole of existence is analysed, and beyond which analysis cannot go. These are final, these are ultimate, these are irreducible. According to the Abhidharma, it is these dharmas, these ultimate irreducible elements which in various combinations, and various permutations, make up the whole phenomena of life.

Now the Abhidharma also maintains that these dharmas can be classified in various ways. In fact this work, this process of classifying dharmas, or ultimate irreducible elements, is the chief business, the chief work, of the developed Abhidharma. It goes into it, in fact in enormous detail, and we certainly cannot follow the Abhidharma into all this detail. We're concerned this evening, we can be concerned only with the main outlines of the matter.

The Sarvastivadins enumerate 75 dharmas - 75 ultimate, discrete, irreducible elements. The Theravadins have many more, as we shall see later on, but between the Theravada and the Sarvastivada there is really no difference of principle.

Now taking the entire mass of these dharmas, both the Theravadins and the Sarvastivadins divide them first of all into two great groups. These groups are called *samskrta* and *asamskrta*. These terms literally mean compounded dharmas and uncompounded dharmas. Usually the terms are translated as conditioned dharmas and unconditioned dharmas. According to the Theravada, there is only one unconditioned dharma, and that is Nirvana. If you like, the Absolute.

But according to the Sarvastivada, there are three unconditioned dharmas: one is space and the other two are the two kinds of Nirvana. But all the other dharmas, all the dharmas other than these three, or in the case of the Theravada, this one, are conditioned dharmas. So on the one hand you've got a very small group of unconditioned dharmas and on the other hand you've got a much larger group of conditioned dharmas.

But it is important to point out here that for the Abhidharma, this distinction between conditioned and unconditioned dharmas is not a distinction between real and unreal. This is rather important. For the Abhidharma, all the dharmas are equally real. All the ultimate elements are equally real, whether they are conditioned or whether they are unconditioned. All are ultimate in the sense that not one of them can be reduced to any one other of them. They are all equally as it were, ultimate.

Now the conditioned dharmas are divided into four great groups, and it is here that the Abhidharma departs from the sutra tradition, that is to say so far as the tradition of the unsystematised Buddhism. In the sutras, in the Buddha's original discourses, or what we can make out are the Buddha's original discourses, the Buddha divides conditioned existence into the famous Five *Skandhas*. If you have even a nodding acquaintance with Buddhism, you will have come across the five skandhas - the five heaps, or the five aggregates, as they're sometimes called. These are said in the sutras to make up, to comprise, the whole of conditioned, the whole of phenomenal, existence. Whatever exists phenomenally can be reduced to one or another of the five skandhas,

heaps or aggregates.

So what are these five skandhas?

- \* *rupa*, or material form;
- \* *vedana*, or feeling;
- \* *samjna*, or perception;
- \* *samskara*, or acts of volition; and
- \* *vijnana*, or consciousness.

In the Sutra teaching, the unsystematised teaching, the whole of phenomenal existence, especially the empirical personality or individuality, is reduced to just these five - these five heaps, these five aggregates.

But the Abhidharma adopts a quite different classification, and it is important to understand this, for those who want to study the Abhidharma. The Abhidharma divides conditioned existence, or the conditioned dharmas, into four great groups.

- \* first of all, and here there's an agreement with the five skandha classification, *rupa*, or material form;
- \* secondly comes *citta*, which means mind, or mental states;
- \* thirdly comes *caitasaka*; functions associated with mind, or with consciousness;
- \* fourthly comes *cittaviprayucta samskaras*, or elements dissociated from mind: existing independently of mind.

This is the fourfold classification of the Abhidharma so far as the conditioned dharmas are concerned. It is very important indeed to understand these: the whole of the Abhidharma turns on this grouping.

This classification, as you can probably already see, is much more systematic than the sutra classification into the five skandhas.

Now each of these four groups, that is to say *rupa*, *citta*, *caitasaka* and *citta viprayukta samskaras* is subdivided again. The Sarvastivadins reckon as follows: The Sarvastivadins include under the group of material form 15 dharmas or ultimate elements. Under the second heading, that is to say under mind or *citta*, they include only one dharma - mind itself. Under the third heading, that is to say functions associated with mind or consciousness, they include 47 dharmas, and under the heading or dharmas or ultimate elements not associated with mind they include 14 elements or dharmas. This is the Sarvastivadin breakdown.

Now the Theravadins, incidentally, do not recognise the fourth subdivision. They recognise only three subdivisions and not four. They divide the conditioned dharmas, that is to say, into only three great groups, not into four, as the Sarvastivadins do. But unlike the Sarvastivadins, the Theravadins divide the second group, the group of *citta* or mind, which the Sarvastivadins leaves as just one single dharma into 89 dharmas or 89 ultimate elements. That's the Theravada breakdown of *citta*, the second of these four great groups.

The Sarvastivadins argue that mind is essentially one, that there are many mental states but that they are all phenomena of consciousness itself, they are not independent. But the Theravadins do not agree with this, so the Theravadins reckon 89 dharmas, or ultimate elements under the heading of *citta*, or mental states, or mind.

Now perhaps at this point we can begin to see why we speak of the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma - it is not, obviously, quite in the Jungian sense. The Abhidharma is an analytical psychology because it is, to begin with, an analytical philosophy, and its analysis of mind we may say is one aspect, one application, of its analysis of the whole of existence, the whole of life.

And for Buddhism of course, this application, this aspect, that of analysis as applied to mind, is the most important of all. Why and how this is, we shall see in a minute.

Meanwhile, let us go back to our four groups of conditioned dharmas. Let us go into them just a little further.

The first group is that of the dharmas which make up material form - *rupa*. The Sarvastivadins enumerate 15 dharmas under this heading - 15 ultimate elements included under the heading of *rupa*, or material form. The Theravadins, however, enumerate 28 - we are not concerned with them in detail this evening. But broadly speaking, we may say that the Abhidharma investigates the nature of what we would call matter, and this investigation of course belongs more to philosophy than to psychology, so we need not pursue it here.

The fourth group is that of the dharmas dissociated from mind. These are 14 in number, and here we have in western terms a mixture of philosophy, psychology and epistemology. So we have no need to pursue this group further, and in any case, as I have already observed, its existence is not recognised by the Theravada. So having disposed of the first and the fourth groups, that leaves us with the second and third groups only - that is to say, with *citta*: mind and mental states, and *caitasaka*, the functions associated with mind. And the interest of the Abhidharma as an analytical psychology centres here.

So let us devote a little time to these two groups. Let us see what the Theravada has to say about *citta*, and then let us see what the Sarvastivada has to say about *caitasaka*. In that way, I hope we shall get a balanced picture of the Abhidharma.

Now as we've already seen, the Theravada enumerates 89 *cittas*, or mental states. The Abhidharma texts give the complete list - 89 of them - it's another of those famous Buddhist lists. One of the most celebrated and one of the most difficult. But this evening, I'm not going to give you the complete list, though if you are interested, I can refer you to books which do give complete lists. We are going to concern ourselves with certain general principles of classification, certain groupings, according to the Abhidharma, of mental states.

The first and most fundamental grouping within the Theravada grouping of the 89 *cittas* is what we may describe as an ethical one, or perhaps more correctly, a karmical one. In the first place, the Theravada Abhidharma distinguishes three kinds of *citta*, three kinds of mind or three kinds of mental state;

First what it calls *kusala*, which means skilful or wholesome mental states - or in a word, just good. Those states of mind which make for ethical and spiritual progress and which are productive of good karmical consequences. Of these there are altogether 21. 21 *cittas*, 21 mental states which are ultimate elements under this heading of *kusala citta*, or wholesome mental states. All these 21 wholesome or skilful states of mind or mental states are dissociated from craving, dissociated from hatred and dissociated from delusion: hence they are wholesome, skilful or *kusala*.

Then secondly, second great classification of *cittas* according to the Theravada, those *cittas* which are *akusala*, or unskilful or unwholesome. Which bind us down to the world and which result, under the law of karma eventually, in suffering. These are 12 in number. It is rather interesting to note here that out of these 12 unskilful or unwholesome mental states, not less than 8 of them are rooted in craving, according to the Abhidharma: 8 out of 12. Only two are rooted in hatred, and two in delusion. So this has a certain significance: it suggests, as it were, that we have to be much more on our guard against craving than against either hatred or delusion. Because according to the Abhidharma, amongst these 12 unskilful or unwholesome mental states, no less than 8 are rooted in craving. This should give us food for thought!

Now the third group, or the third sub-group here is what is described as *abjakata*, or non-ethical or karmically neutral mental states. These are neither skilful nor unskilful, good or bad, and they are 47 in number altogether. They can be further broken down, according to the Theravada, into 2 subgroups, the first consisting of 44 mental states which are the results of good and bad karmas committed in the past, and three which are automatic mental functions. This second group, the automatic mental functions, is particularly interesting. It consist of three dharmas, firstly, automatic mental functions connected with the five senses; secondly automatic mental functions connected with the mind; and thirdly, and this is perhaps rather beautiful, the smile of the Arahant: that is to say, the smile of the Enlightened one - this is considered to be automatic, or in this case, spontaneous. It has no real cause - it just comes. So it is classified here - when you wander in the rather arid wastes of the Abhidharma, you are somehow rather pleased and relieved when you come across the smile of the Arahant - it cheers you up, as it were, on your journey!

So much for the Theravada's ethical classification of the *cittas*, or mental states.

The Theravada also classified the *cittas* or mental states according to the plane on which they occur. According to Buddhism in general there are three planes in the phenomenal universe:

- \* Firstly, the *kamaloka*; or world of sensuous desire;
- \* Second, the *rupaloka*, or world of form;
- \* Third, the *arupaloka*, or formless world.

Or we may paraphrase these terms and speak of the material world; the archetypal world and the spiritual world.

The first world is that experienced through the five senses. The second and third worlds are experienced only in higher states of meditation. There is also a fourth plane, which is not a plane, and this is the transcendental

plane which is not the fourth, as it were, above the third, but a fourth like a fourth dimension, in a quite different direction altogether. On this plane which is a non-plane, a plane of the transcendental, there occur the thoughts - not just ideas, but thoughts, experiences - which have as their object the unconditioned dharma - or Nirvana.

The Theravada proceeds to distribute its 89 mental states, or its 89 *cittas*, among these four planes. For instance, you will find that karmically wholesome and karmically neutral *cittas* occur on all four planes - but unwholesome *cittas* occur only in the world of sensuous desire, only in the material world.

Broadly speaking, we may say that the Abhidharma analysis reveals that the higher the plane, the smaller the number of *cittas*, the fewer mental states there are involved. This fact is very well illustrated by the Abhidharma's treatment of the five *cittas* belonging to the world of form, or the archetypal world: these are identical with the five dhyanas, or five superconscious states which are experienced in meditation. In the first dhyana, the first superconscious state, there are 5 mental factors present - five dharmas. In the second dhyana, there are only four, in the third, only three, and in the fourth and the fifth, there are only two.

So what does this mean? What does this represent? This represents the fact, the truth, that in meditation, there is a process of progressive unification of consciousness. In the lower stages of meditation, many factors are in play, in operation, but as the mind becomes more concentrated, as you ascend the different stages of superconsciousness in these jhanas or dhyanas, mental factors are progressively eliminated, and fewer and fewer mental factors are left.

So therefore we find Lama Anagarika Govinda in one of his works on the Abhidharma speaking in terms of a pyramid of consciousness - a broad base: in the lower realms of consciousness, many mental factors operate, but as you go higher, as you go to the world of form and the formless world, more and more factors are eliminated, fewer and fewer are left, and consciousness - mind - is progressively unified and integrated.

So with the help of the Abhidharma classification and distribution of dharmas, we see this process very clearly and, I may say, very beautifully, also.

Now, modern psychology as we know, is familiar only with normal mental states - that is to say with the usual mental states - and with what it calls abnormal mental states. But the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma, we may say, extends to the supernormal states - to the states experienced, the functions occurring in, states of meditation, of superconsciousness. So therefore the Abhidharma analytical psychology includes also a psychology of what we may describe as mystical states or mystical experiences. And this it does not in any vague or woolly way, but in what we may describe as a cool, almost a scientific, manner.

Now I've mentioned only two groupings of the 89 *cittas*; that is to say a grouping according to ethical value and a grouping according to plane. And these are certainly among the most important groupings or classifications. But there are very many more in the Abhidharma. There are scores and scores of other principles of classifications, other groupings. You can lose yourself in this maze if you're not careful. But in any case, we've no time to go further into this matter this evening.

We now have to proceed to the Sarvastivadin treatment of mental functions. According to the Sarvastivada, there are 46 mental functions - that is to say, 46 dharmas under the heading of mental functions, and these are divided into six subgroups of mental functions:

Firstly, one has 10 mental functions which are found in, which are common to all mental states or *cittas* whatsoever, whether ethically good, bad or neutral.

There are 10 mental functions of this type, according to the Sarvastivadins. One of these mental functions is of special interest: samadhi, or concentration. It is interesting to see that according to the Sarvastivadin Abhidharma, concentration or samadhi is present in all mental states whatsoever. It is one of those functions which occur all the time: in every mental state, in every experience, an element of concentration, samadhi, is present. So this suggests that the capacity for developing concentration, samadhi, the capacity for meditation, is there all the time. Very often people say that they find it difficult to concentrate - but you are concentrated, at least in an embryonic sense, all the time: concentration, samadhi, is a universal mental function. It is never not there. You are always concentrated on something - the only thing is to develop your concentration and switch it onto the right object. And that development of concentration and switching it onto the right object - this is what we call meditation. But as a potentiality, meditation is present in every mental state. It's an omnipresent mental function. This is one of the very striking insights of the Abhidharma.



Secondly, one has the subgrouping of mental functions which are common to all wholesome or skilful mental states.

Whenever one has an ethically good mental state, there are certain mental functions which are present always, which are common to all good mental states whatsoever, and these also are ten in number:

Then third and fourth we have mental functions arising in connection with unskilful and defiled states of mind. The complementary to the first, and these are altogether 8 in number.

Then fifthly, there are mental functions arising in connection with certain defiled states of mind but not in connection with others - these are 10 in number.

Sixthly and lastly we have mental functions which are not included in any of the previous five groups. There are eight of these.

Just to illustrate, let us enumerate the mental functions common to all good mental states, all wholesome, ethically good mental states. According to the Sarvastivadins, there are ten of these, and they are:

- |               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1. faith      | 6. freedom from craving |
| 2. energy     | 7. freedom from hatred  |
| 3. equanimity | 8. harmlessness         |
| 4. modesty    | 9. peacefulness         |
| 5. shame      | 10. mindfulness.        |

Whenever one entertains an ethically good, wholesome, skilful thought or mental state, all these ten mental functions are simultaneously present.

So much for the Sarvastivadin classification of the mental functions. One could say very much more on this subject: the classification, the analysis, the study, the explanation, exposition, of mental functions occupies in the Sarvastivada Abhidharma an absolutely central position and volumes upon volumes have been devoted by the great Abhidharma writers to this particular topic, but we haven't time for anything more this evening..

Before concluding, just a few words on the bearing of the Abhidharma on the spiritual life. The Abhidharma has such a bearing, of course, because it is an aspect of Buddhism, which is concerned with the spiritual life, with the development at the highest possible level of awareness.

First of all we find that the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma helps us to sort out our own mental states. It helps us to distinguish skilful states from unskilful states, wholesome from unwholesome, good from bad and so on. And when we can distinguish in this way, we shall know what we have to cultivate and what we have to eliminate. This knowledge is extremely useful, especially to the meditator, the one who practices concentration and meditation. And it makes clear, for the meditator's benefit, the whole rationale of the spiritual life.

In the second place, the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma helps us to see, helps us to understand, even to realise, that what we usually think of as the self, or "I" is nothing but an ever-changing combination of mental states and mental functions. And this realisation is for Buddhism, of absolutely supreme importance.

For Buddhism, this constitutes Wisdom: thinking not in terms of "I", not in terms of "me", not in terms of mine, but contemplating the flow, the flux, the impersonal procession of the dharmas, in their various groupings and their various combinations: mental states and mental functions.

I hope therefore that this evening, I have been able to give you some idea at least, at least a glimpse, at least an introduction to the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma. I hope I have been able to make clear in what sense the Abhidharma is analytical, in what sense it is a psychology, and also the general nature of its connection with its great parent, Buddhism.