

Aspects of Buddhist Psychology

Lecture 42: The Depth Psychology of the Yogacara

Reverend Sir, and Friends

Our course of lectures week by week is proceeding. We have dealt already with the analytical psychology of the Abhidharma; we have dealt also with the psychology of spiritual development. The first lecture, we may say, was concerned mainly with some of the more important themes and technicalities of early Buddhist psychology. We shall, incidentally, be referring back to some of that material more than once in the course of the coming lectures. The second lecture in the course, on the psychology of spiritual development, was concerned much more directly than the first lecture was with the spiritual life. You may remember that we traced the ascent of humanity up the stages of the spiral from the round of existence, from Samsara, even to Nirvana. Today we come to our third lecture, our third subject, which is the Depth Psychology of the Yogacara.

This evening we are concerned to some extent with psychological themes and technicalities, as we were in the first lecture, but we're also concerned, as we were in the second lecture, with the spiritual life itself. We are concerned with the first as subordinate to the second, as we shall see in due course. So we may say, broadly speaking, that this evening's lecture follows a sort of middle way, or middle course, between the type of subject matter we had in the first lecture and the type of subject matter we had in the second.

Now a question which immediately arises, and which must have occurred to most of you when the title of the lecture was announced, "What is the Yogacara?" I'm sorry that in the course of the lectures we keep on having to have all these Sanskrit and Pali names and titles and so on, but until they become as it were naturalised in English, there's no other way.

So what does the word 'Yogacara' mean? Literally, it means the practice of Yoga: *acara* means simply practice, or application, or even conduct. We shall be going a little more deeply into this later on. But for the present, all we need to know is that Yogacara is one of the schools of ancient Indian Buddhism. Buddhism was extinct in India for many centuries until its revival in the present century and the Yogacara school is no longer known there, except to some extent as a subject of academic study. So the Yogacara is a school of ancient Indian Buddhism.

More specifically, the Yogacara is a school of the Mahayana form of Buddhism. Some of you may remember that the Mahayana was mentioned in the course of the first lecture. You may remember that after dealing with the Abhidharma psychology, after going to some extent into the technicalities, even the scholastic by-ways, of that Abhidharma system, I remarked that much in the way of poetry and myth - the whole non-rational approach - had been banished from Buddhism practically by the Abhidharma. And I also went on to say that those elements, those more mythical, poetic, intuitional elements which had been banished by the Abhidharma from Buddhism, re-asserted themselves in what were called the Mahayana and the Vajrayana.

Now let us look into this a little bit more. We all know that Buddhism originated in India. And it's not always appreciated that Buddhism lasted in India for one thousand, five hundred years. That is, we may say, longer than Christianity has been known in this country. That is the length, that is the extent of the history of Buddhism in India - one thousand, five hundred years from about 500 BC, in round figures, to about 1000 AD or a little after, when it was finally destroyed by the Muslims. And in the course of that 1,500 years of history, Buddhism passed in India through three great stages, or three great phases of development. And these three great stages of development are known in Buddhism as the three Yanas. *Yana* means literally a vehicle, but in this connection, in this context, it means rather a path or a way. So we find that each of the three Yanas - we shall learn their names in a minute - was dominant for 500 years in the course of the history of Buddhism in India. For 500 years one Yana was dominant, for the second 500 years, another Yana, and for the third 500 years, yet another.

So what were these three Yanas? As this is only introductory to our main subject matter, we have to be very brief, and very schematic.

The first Yana is what we call in Buddhism the *Hinayana*, which means literally the 'Little Way'. This is the first phase or first stage of the development of Buddhism in India, lasting 500 years. And the Hinayana, the Little Way, is so called because it taught the goal of individual salvation, individual emancipation, individual realisation and attainment of Nirvana, without thinking so much of the other person. It tended to emphasise one's own personal development, one's own personal spiritual advancement somewhat to the detriment to one's concern with and for other people.

And the Hinayana, we may say, also stressed very much, ethics, especially in the form of disciplinary rules, and, as we saw in the case of the Abhidharma, it stressed very much analytical psychology. The Hinayana also attached very great importance to the monastic life. And it tended in practice, practically to identify the spiritual life and the monastic life. It said in effect that if you want to lead a religious, a spiritual life properly, thoroughly, you have to become a monk or a nun; there is no other way.

Now the Theravada and the Sarvastivada, about which we spoke in the course of the first lecture, when we mentioned their respective Abhidharmas, are both forms of the Hinayana, and perhaps the two most prominent representatives of that particular phase or stage in the history of the development of Buddhism.

Now the second great phase, the second great stage, is what is known as the *Mahayana*, which likewise was dominant for a period of about 500 years in India. Mahayana literally means 'Great Way' or 'Great Path' or 'Great Vehicle', and it is so called because it teaches the goal of universal emancipation or salvation. It says, as it were, as the Bodhisattva Vow makes quite clear, that one should not be concerned only with one's own spiritual progress, one's own spiritual development; one also should be concerned with that of other people, and try to help them to the utmost of one's ability, according to one's own spiritual qualifications and experience and so on.

And the Mahayana, we find, stressed metaphysics, in the sense of ontology; it was preoccupied with the nature of the Absolute, and it stressed, also, devotion. In the Mahayana, we find a much greater place given to the whole emotional and devotional side of the religious or spiritual life, including ceremonies, rituals, devotions to different Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and so on. The Mahayana also attached very great importance to living in the world but not of it. And it said, it maintained, that the dedicated household life, devoted to the realisation of spiritual objectives, was just as good as the monastic life lived in the monastery. This was the Mahayana, the Great Way, the second great phase or stage in the development of Buddhism in India.

Then thirdly, there was the *Vajrayana*, which means the Adamantine Path or Way. And the Vajrayana is also known, perhaps better known, as Tantric Buddhism. The Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism also accepts the Mahayanistic goal of universal salvation, but it teaches its realisation, as it were, by means of a 'short cut'. It very much stresses symbolic ritual and it stresses also the practice of what we may describe as esoteric meditation. So this is the Vajrayana, or Tantric Buddhism; the third, the final, even the culminating phase or stage of the development of Buddhism in India.

This evening there's no time to say any more on the subject of the three Yanas, but it must be stressed, it must be emphasised, that an understanding of these three Yanas, their distinctive features and so on, is vital for an understanding of the whole history and development of Buddhism, not only in India, but throughout the whole of Asia. (This topic is dealt with in a seminar to be given on Boxing Day on The Three Yanas.)

It's time we got back now to the Yogacara. The Yogacara is one of the schools of the Mahayana, or the Great Way, that is to say, one of the schools of Buddhism that arose in the course of the second phase or stage of development of Buddhism in India.

On the philosophical side, it is well known that there are two great schools of the Mahayana - that is to say, of the Indian Mahayana - and these are known as the Madhyamika and the Yogacara.

The term Madhyamika means Middle Way, and this school is so called because it followed a middle way between the extreme metaphysical positions of affirmation and negation. It tried to see reality, not in terms of existence; not in terms of non-existence; but in terms of a third factor, above and beyond, as it were, those two extremes. The Yogacara, as we've already seen, means the practice of Yoga.

Now these two schools, the Madhyamika, the School of the Middle Way, and the Yogacara, the School of the Practice of Yoga, share certain fundamentals in common. They are both schools of the Mahayana form of Buddhism, but each of them has its distinctive emphasis.

The Madhyamika, we may say, emphasises the primacy of Wisdom, and its approach to Reality is what we may describe as dialectical - logical, philosophical, even intellectual in a general sense.

The Yogacara, on the other hand, emphasises much more, meditation and the meditational approach. It approaches Reality, we may say, not dialectically, not through the intellect, but approaches Reality through meditation, through one's own inner spiritual experience.

Now each of these two great schools, the Madhyamika and the Yogacara, is associated with a particular group of Mahayana sutras. Sutras are discourses given by the Buddha, and they represent the most important Scriptures.

The Madhyamika is associated with a group of Scriptures known as the Perfection of Wisdom, or Transcendental Wisdom, sutras, or in Sanskrit, *Prajnaparamita*. There are more than thirty of these texts in Sanskrit and Chinese and Tibetan. Most of them survive in the original Sanskrit, and they have all been translated into English by Dr Edward Conze. This is probably the biggest Buddhist achievement, especially single-handed achievement in the field of translation, in this century at least. The Madhyamika then, is particularly associated with these Perfection of Wisdom sutras.

The Yogacara School, on the other hand, is associated not so much with the Perfection of Wisdom sutras, as with a sutra called the *Samdhinirmocana*, which means Explication of Knots; and the *Lankavatara*, or to give it its full title, the *Saddharma Lankavatara Sutra*, which means the Descent or the Entry of the Good Law, into the island of Lanka. And out of these two sutras, the Yogacara is especially associated with the latter, that is to say, with the Lankavatara Sutra, or as we say, for short, the Lanka.

Now the Madhyamika movement or school was initiated by the great Indian thinker and sage, Nagarjuna, and the Yogacara was founded or initiated by Maitreya, or Maitreyanatha. I have to mention here that there's a dispute among scholars that's been carried on for some time now, in books and pamphlets and articles, a dispute as to whether Maitreya, or Maitreyanatha, the founder or inspirer of the Yogacara movement, is a historical figure or a non-historical figure. You get lots of disputes, I'm afraid, of this sort in the field of Buddhism. Some people dispute whether Bodhidharma was a historical figure or not - some people even dispute whether the Buddha was a historical figure or not. Scholars do tend to be fond of disputes and discussions of this sort.

According to tradition at least, according to the Buddhist tradition, Maitreya or Maitreyanatha, the founder and inspirer of the Yogacara tradition, is identical with the Bodhisattva Maitreya, that is to say, the coming Buddha. Most of you know that among Buddhists there is a belief that another Buddha will come in the future, another great Enlightened teacher will arise when the teaching has been forgotten, and once again proclaim it to mankind. So most Buddhists, in fact Buddhists of practically all schools, believe that the next Buddha is now the Bodhisattva Maitreya, and exists or lived or lives on a higher plane of existence imperceptible to human beings, except in advanced states of meditation.

According to the Yogacara tradition, the great teacher Asanga, who lived in the fifth century, was supposed to have visited the Tusita heaven, where Maitreya lives, and is supposed to have received instruction from him. This instruction he embodied in five works which are known as the Five Books of Maitreya, as well as in various independent works of his own, and these works constitute the literary foundation of the Yogacara School.

Some scholars maintain that Maitreya is not the Bodhisattva Maitreya; they dismiss this legend altogether. They say that Maitreya, or Maitreyanatha, is a human and historical teacher of the Fourth Century and Asanga simply received instruction from him.

Perhaps, in a sense, in a way, it doesn't matter very much. But there's at least one point of interest in the traditional account. As I've said, according to the traditional account, Asanga visited Maitreya in the Tusita heaven. A heaven in Buddhism, a *devaloka*, is a higher plane of existence, a higher plane of being, a higher plane of consciousness. You may remember that in the first lecture we saw that the Abhidharma classifies mind according to its planes - there's not only the plane of sensuous desire, there's the plane of pure form, the archetypal plane; and also the formless plane. In other words, many planes of being, many planes of consciousness, rising above the level of so-called 'normal' consciousness. So the Tusita devaloka, the Tusita heaven represents, we may say, one of the higher planes or states or stages of consciousness. And the story, the traditional account of the origin of the Yogacara School, may be taken to mean that the great teacher Asanga received the inspiration, if you like even the guidance, for his work from a higher plane or level of consciousness or being.

In other words, he gained the inspiration for his work, gained his insight, in the course of his own practice and experience of meditation. He drew down, as it were, something from on high in the course of his spiritual life and spiritual experience. And this is, we may say, in perfect keeping with the whole emphasis of the Yogacara School; it's certainly in keeping with the very name of the school, which as we've already seen, means simply practice of Yoga.

Now you've all heard about Yoga - nowadays the word yoga has become quite familiar, even popular. Even when you travel by underground, you can see advertisements for yoga classes, so people have got all sorts of ideas about what yoga is, but in this context at least, yoga doesn't mean physical exercises. In this context yoga means meditation. So when we say that the Yogacara is the school of the practice of Yoga, we mean primarily, that it is the school of the practice of meditation.

Now we come at his point to a very important principle, which is that one who meditates, whether a follower of the Yogacara School or any other, sees things, looks out upon the world, in a way very different from one who does not meditate. At this point in the lecture, this is the first thing that we have to realise, otherwise we shan't understand very well what follows.

One who meditates sees the world very differently from one who does not meditate.

Now the ancient Indian Yogacarins meditated. That is to say, they attained, or they realised or they experienced higher states or stages of consciousness above and beyond the states, the stages, the functions of the ordinary conscious mind. They experienced states and stages are very much nearer to Reality than those which we usually or normally experience. Not only attained to them, not only, as it were, touched them, but as it were dwelt in them, abode in them, even lived and moved and had their being in those higher levels, higher planes, and not on this lower plane where we have our life, where we live and move and have our being.

It's only natural therefore that these Yogacarins, these practitioners of Yoga, of meditation, these experiencers of higher states of consciousness, should have seen things very differently from other people. They saw them truly, saw them as they were in Reality, and they formulated what they saw, they formulated their vision or their experience in terms of what we, using a quite different type of terminology, can only describe as the Yogacara philosophy.

We use this word philosophy, but it certainly isn't philosophy in the modern academic western sense of the term. I remember in this connection a little incident which occurred a couple of years ago when not long after my return from India, where I spent some twenty years, I paid a visit to Oxford in order to give a lecture. Before the lecture I was having a talk with that very eminent scholar, Dr Conze, whom I've already mentioned as the translator of the Perfection of Wisdom sutras. And Dr Conze was then living in Oxford - he was in fact giving lectures there; he wasn't quite a full professor - Oxford has got all sorts of strange things about those who are full professors and those who are not and so on, but anyway he was living there and giving lectures, and in the course of conversation, knowing his great reputation, his great knowledge of Indian thought and Buddhist philosophy, I said "Well, surely in Oxford there must be a tremendous interest in Oriental philosophy, especially since you are here." So he smiled a very bitter smile and he said "Interested in oriental philosophy? In Oxford? Good heavens, no. They're not even interested in western philosophy here." And then he said with his usual very scathing expression, "All they're interested in here is linguistic analysis!"

So I tell this little story just in passing just to indicate, just to illustrate the fact that although I use this term philosophy, it's not philosophy in the modern western academic sense, certainly not philosophy in the sense of linguistic analysis and so on.

The Yogacara philosophy, like any other form of Buddhist philosophy, even the Abhidharma, attempts to describe, attempts to explain, attempts to formulate what is essentially a spiritual experience.

Now in the case of the Yogacarins, what was the nature of this experience? What was it that the Yogacarins saw in their meditation?

We can put this very simply. The Yogacarins themselves have done so.

What they saw in these higher states of consciousness, in their meditation, was that nothing existed but mind: that all things were, in reality, mind, and that mind was all things.

This is what they saw, what they realised - not something they thought about - the thinking came later - something which they saw and realised and directly experienced. That all was mind and mind was all.

This is the famous Buddhistic, specifically Yogacarin, doctrine of *cittamatra*, usually translated as Mind Only, or only mind, nothing but mind. The Lankavatara Sutra to which I've already made reference, expresses this truth or this realisation, or this insight or this experience, in a number of different ways in various passages. In one place it says, or the Buddha says, rather, revealing his own inner experience, "The world is nothing but mind." Again, in another place, "Nothing is seen outside the mind." In yet another place, "The triple world" (that

is to say, the three levels of existence; sensuous, archetypal, pure form) "is mind itself." And again, "The triple existence is nothing but mind." And even more briefly, even more simply, "All is mind."

Similar statements are found throughout the whole of Mahayana literature, especially, we may say, in Zen literature, where they are particularly abundant, and particularly famous. For instance, the great Chinese Ch'an or Zen Master, Hwang To, who lived and flourished in the ninth century says in the course of his teaching, as recorded by one of his disciples from his verbal instructions, *"All the Buddhas and all sentient beings are nothing but the one mind, beside which nothing exists. This mind, which is without beginning, is unborn and indestructible. It is not green or yellow, and has neither form nor appearance. It does not belong to the categories of things which exist, or do not exist. Nor can it be thought of in terms of new or old. It is neither long nor short, big nor small, for it transcends all limits, measures, names, traces, and comparisons. It is that which you see before you. Begin to reason about it, and you at once fall into error. It is like the boundless void which cannot be fathomed or measured. The One Mind alone is the Buddha. And there is no distinction between the Buddha and sentient things. But sentient beings are attached to forms, and so seek externally for Buddhahood. By their very seeking, they lose it, for that is using the Buddha to seek for the mind, and using mind to grasp mind. Even though they do their utmost for a full aeon, they will not be able to attain it. They do not know that if they put a stop to conceptual thought and forget their anxiety, the Buddha will appear before them, for this mind is the Buddha. And the Buddha is all living beings. It is not the less for being manifested in ordinary beings, nor is it greater for being manifested in the Buddhas."*

So this is the Mind Only Doctrine of Buddhism in general, of the Yogacara specifically. Now this Mind Only Doctrine can be understood in two different ways, or it can be understood on two different related levels. I say related because these levels are not mutually exclusive - they, as it were, merge one into the other. The Mind Only Doctrine can be understood in the first place, epistemologically, in the second place it can be understood metaphysically.

Understood epistemologically, it constitutes what we would call in the west a form of subjective idealism. Understood metaphysically, it constitutes a form of what we would call absolute idealism. Though one must realise that one is speaking not in terms of an academic philosophical construction, but in terms of an expression of inner spiritual experience in both cases. Western philosophy, incidentally, does tend to distinguish between subjective idealism and absolute idealism, but not so in Buddhism. In Buddhism the two are rather opposite poles or different poles of the same doctrine, the same content, the same realisation, the same experience.

Let us therefore just spend a few more minutes over this matter, and then go on to the Yogacara psychology. I need hardly remind you at this stage, especially those of you who heard the first lecture, that for Buddhism, what we call epistemology, metaphysics, psychology and so on, are all interconnected, and all also related ultimately to the concerns of the spiritual life.

Now, epistemologically speaking, the Yogacara denies the existence of an external object. That is to say, it denies the existence of any object external to the mind. It maintains that all that we perceive are ideas. By ideas, in this connection, in this context, one means mental presentations. What we think of as an external object, the Yogacara says, is simply the sum total of a number of impressions or a number of perceptions.

For instance, we say that we see a tree. But what do we really see? We have certain visual impressions; a visual impression of green; a visual impression of brown; visual impression of a certain shape, a certain size, and so on. And this assemblage of impressions we call a tree. And according to the Yogacara argument there is, there exists behind those impressions, as it were, no object independent of those impressions which possesses them - possesses the qualities of green, brown, shape, size and so on - as qualities of itself. Such an object of that sort, behind the impressions, behind the perceptions, the Yogacara would say, is an erroneous mental construction.

All this is more or less familiar ground. This is very similar, in a way, to the subjective idealism of Bishop Barclay in the eighteenth century. And it's very similar also to the position adopted by Jung when he points out that all reality is psychical, in the sense that we cannot perceive a thing apart from our perception of it. So that, so far as we are concerned, at least, and Jung certainly goes as far as this, nothing exists except ideas, impressions, perceptions.

Now both the Yogacara and Bishop Barclay of the eighteenth century appeal to the testimony of dreams in this connection. They both say that, as we all know, one dreams, one sees certain things, experiences certain things in the dream state, but there's no corresponding external object. You can lead a whole life, live a whole life in a dream, but there's no corresponding external object. So here we have a clear and generally admitted case of something perceived but without any objective, as it were, material substratum.

So both Bishop Barclay and the Yogacara say, Well, if this can happen during the dream state, then why not also during the so-called waking state? In both cases, there is a stream of impressions, a stream of perceptions. In neither case is it necessary to refer them to an external objectively existing object. In other words, in principle, there's no difference between the waking state and the dream state, no difference from this point of view at all.

The Yogacara, however, goes a step further than Bishop Barclay. The Yogacara is able to appeal also to meditation experience. In the course of one's meditation, one sees in certain stages, even in not so very advanced stages, one sees all sorts of eidetic images. Your eyes can be closed, there can be no influx from the senses at all, you may not be conscious of the physical body, but you see certain images. They may be abstract, they may be discs of colour, light and so on, maybe flowers, maybe mountains, maybe an image or figure of the Buddha, maybe a mandala, but it's all what we would call in our usual language, subjective: there's no external object corresponding to that perception. So this we know, or at least, the Yogacarins, the practitioners of yoga, know, occurs in the experiences of meditation: images are perceived, vividly perceived, even more vividly than things we see on this earth here and now. But no external object which is being perceived. It's what we would call subjective.

So from this source, the Yogacara argues that all that we perceive is like this. If you can perceive an image in a dream or in a state of meditation without any independently existing object which is perceived, which is the object of the perception, then there's no reason why you shouldn't experience the same sort of thing during what we call waking life. So in this way the Yogacara abolishes the object altogether. There's a stream of these impressions, perceptions, forms, images, and so on, but no external object standing as it were behind them. The Yogacara therefore concludes that all that we perceive are ideas. And that there's no such thing as matter in the popular, ordinary sense of the term. No real external object. All that exists according to the Yogacara, is the mind itself, perceiving ideas.

But one can go even further than this! All right, supposing there is no object. Supposing one has really abolished the object. Suppose there are only ideas, presentations to the mind. Well, in that case, there's no subject, either, no ego either, no empirical self, either. Because, the two, the object and the subject, are correlative. If the object is there, well, yes, the subject is there, too. If the subject is there, the object is there, also. But when you abolish the object, when you reduce the object to just a set, a group, of impressions, ideas, when you abolish the object in that way, you abolish at the same time the subject. In this way, the whole subject/object discrimination or duality breaks down: you break down the object; you break down the subject.

So what is left? According to the Yogacara, when one breaks down subject and object in this way, what is left is the One Mind - Mind Only in the absolute, the metaphysical sense, of the term. Mind free from the division into subject and object. Mind which is pure, mind which is radiant, illuminating - mind which is blissful, mind which is calm - and mind which also is *sunyata* or voidness.

According to the Yogacara, this One Mind is to be experienced - it isn't just something to be discussed, isn't just something to be speculated about, as in fact we're doing at present. It's something to be experienced. And the Yogacara therefore emphasises very strongly indeed the importance of experience, of inner experience, of realisation. And this emphasis we find resounding throughout the Lankavatara sutra. The Lankavatara sutra, for instance, doesn't make much use of the term *Bodhi*, which we usually translate as Enlightenment, because *Bodhi* is just a wee bit too intellectual, as it were. The Buddha, in the Lankavatara, wants to avoid the intellectual emphasis. So the Buddha in the Lankavatara usually speaks of *pratyatmagocara*, which is a Sanskrit word meaning inner perception; inner realisation - not Enlightenment - inner realisation, inner perception.

It may be partly for this reason that the Lankavatara sutra was so popular with Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen, the man who took Zen from India to China. According to legend, he went wafting over the ocean on a reed, and he didn't take anything with him, just his robe and his bowl - except one other thing: he took with him, we are told, according to tradition, a copy - it must have been a palm-leaf manuscript - of the Lankavatara sutra. And the Lankavatara sutra, with its tremendous emphasis on personal experience, the inner realisation, had a tremendous affinity with and influence upon the development of Ch'an or Zen in China and in Japan.

Now the Yogacara realises, it sees quite clearly, that this experience of Mind Only, the One Mind, nothing but mind - so far up as you can look, only mind, as far down as you can look, only mind; all around as far as you can see only mind - the Yogacara realises that this experience is quite opposed to all our ordinary experience. Ordinary experience such as we have all of the time, or for most of the time, the greater part of the time, is firmly and securely based on the subject/object dualism. All our experience, all our knowledge, all our thinking, takes place within the framework of this dualism - subject and object, object and subject, interrelated, interdependent and inseparable. But the One Mind - *cittamatra*, Mind Only, is free from this sort of dualism.

It just doesn't attain there. So far as one sees in all directions, as I've said, up, down, on all sides, just One Mind, without any trace of duality, without any trace of subject, without any trace of object. Just like a great depth, a great expanse of water, absolutely pure, absolutely transparent, with nothing in it, not one single speck, other than the water itself.

So therefore, between the experience of the One Mind and the experience of the empirical self, the experience of the subject/object relationship, between these two kinds of experience there is surely a great gulf fixed. And to go from the one to the other, to go from the empirical consciousness, involved as it is in the subject/object dualism, to the One Mind, to see the One Mind, or realise the One Mind, to go altogether beyond this subject/object dualism, requires obviously a tremendous change, a complete and absolute reversal of all our usual attitudes. And the Yogacara insists most firmly and most strongly upon this. It says, as it were, that the religious, the spiritual, life doesn't consist in a little chipping away here or a little chipping away there, a small improvement here or a slight improvement somewhere else, the spiritual life doesn't mean this. It means a complete reversal. It means a great death, as the Zen people say, and then a great birth, a great new life. So the Yogacara emphasises very, very strongly indeed that there must be a complete changeover, a complete turning about or if you like, a turning upside down, a turning topsy-turvey of all our established values and attitudes and ways of looking at things. A complete reversal before we can go from this mind, the empirical mind, to that mind, the One Mind, or Mind Only.

And this reversal, this great change, or if you like, this great death and rebirth, the Yogacara terms *pravriti*. *Pravriti* means, literally, turning about, turning round, turning upside down. And *pravriti* - turning about, revulsion if you like, is the central topic, the central theme of the whole of the Lankavatara sutra. We may indeed say that it is the central theme, the central concern, of the spiritual life itself.

If the spiritual life doesn't turn you upside down, if you don't feel as though you're hanging head downwards in a void, then it isn't the spiritual life. If you feel all safe and secure and firm and nicely going ahead step by step, then you haven't really got onto the spiritual path. As I have said, you're only really in the spiritual life, only really on the spiritual path, when you feel as it were suspended head downwards, upside down, in this void.

Now, *pravriti* - turning about - in this sense we may say, is synonymous with conversion as we usually call it, in a very deep and radical sense of this term.

The Yogacara explains the whole mechanism of this whole turning about, this revulsion, this incredible transformation or conversion, with the help of its teaching of the eight *vijnanas*.

Vijnana is usually translated as consciousness. But a more literal translation would be 'discriminating awareness'. *Jnana* is awareness, *vi* is to discriminate, to divide: so discriminating awareness. And these eight *vijnanas* or eight types of discriminating awareness, work or operate at four or five different levels.

So there's a difference as it were, of depth here, and that is why we are able to speak in terms of the depth psychology of the Yogacara, which is the title of our talk.

Now the Yogacara, we may say, goes even deeper, sounds even greater depths than modern depth psychology. The eight *vijnanas* are, as categories or levels:

- * Firstly, the five sense *vijnanas*;
- * Second, going a little deeper, the *manovijnana*, or mind consciousness,
- * Thirdly, the *manas*, or *klistomanovijnana*, the afflicted or soiled mind consciousness;
- * and, fourthly, the *alayavijnana*, repository or store consciousness.

And you can see these on your chart. Just a few words about each of these in turn.

First of all, the five sense *vijnanas*, or the five sense discriminating awarenesses. These are:

- * discriminating awareness through the eye; or form and colour;
- * through the ear; of sounds;
- * through the nose; of smells;
- * through the tongue; of tastes;
- * through the touch; through the skin, of heat, cold, hardness, softness, and so on.

There is no need to say much about these five sense *vijnanas* - this is quite clear and straightforward.

Secondly, The *manovijnana*, or mind consciousness. In other words, discriminating awareness, through the mind, of ideas, or mental objects, objects of mind. Mind, by the way, or the *manovijnana*, mind consciousness, is usually classified in Buddhism as a sort of sixth sense - it isn't given a very eminent position as compared with the five sense *vijnanas* or five sense consciousnesses. There are, according to the Yogacara psychology, two aspects of the *manovijnana*, or mind consciousness.

The first aspect consists in its awareness of what we may describe as ideas of sense, in other words, the mind's awareness of impressions coming into it or presented to it, by the five senses.

The second consists in its awareness of ideas which arise independently of sense perception - out of the mind itself, we may say. And the latter is of three kinds:

- * Firstly, ideas and impressions arising in the course of meditation, as when one sees a light - this doesn't have its origin in any sense impression: it comes from the mind itself;
- * Second, functions such as those of imagination, comparison and recollection;
- * Third, the images perceived in dreams which come not from sense impressions, but again directly from the mind itself.

So this is the *manovijnana*, or mind consciousness, the second of these four levels.

Thirdly, the *klistomanovijnana*, also known as the seventh consciousness. *Manovijnana* means of course, mind consciousness. *Klista* literally means afflicted or suffering and also it means defiled. So the *klistomanovijnana*, the afflicted or defiled mind consciousness, is so called because it is afflicted or defiled by the dualistic outlook because it sees everything in terms of subject and object.

Very often the *klistomanovijnana* is referred to simply as *manas* - and *manas* is often translated as simply mind, just as *citta* is translated, and this tends to produce a certain amount of confusion, because they are used very often in a single context, but with rather different meanings.

The seventh consciousness, *manas*, or rather the *klistomanovijnana*, the afflicted or defiled consciousness, is what we usually regard as the empirical self.

It may also be described as the middle consciousness, because it is situated as it were between the sense *vijnanas* and the *manovijnana* on the one hand, and the *alayavijnana* on the other.

On your chart you will observe that the eight *vijnanas* are arranged or depicted horizontally. But if you turn your chart sideways, you'll see it as it were vertically, or in depth. Turn it so that you have the *alaya* at the top and the sense *vijnanas* at the bottom.

Then you can see that the *manas* faces two ways: the *manas* looks outwards or downwards towards the five senses and the mind consciousness, and it looks inwards or upwards towards the *alaya*. From below, the *manas* receives impressions of sense, receives ideas - and these it interprets in terms of an external world existing objectively behind the impressions. So you see what happens; through the senses, through the ordinary mind, all sorts of impressions, all sorts of perceptions are flowing in upon the *manas*. So the *manas* isn't content as it were to perceive just these perceptions, just these ideas; all this red and blue and green and big and small and hot and cold: it constructs behind them a mental world of objects to which it refers them, in which it regards them as it were, as inhering.

In the same way, from above, it receives, reflected in itself, the *alaya*. There's a reflection of the *alaya*, the eighth consciousness, in the *manas*, the seventh consciousness. And this reflection, the *manas* interprets in terms of a separate, real, self. And it's in this way that the dualistic pattern of experience is set up: in the *manas* misinterpreting on the one hand the impressions from the senses and the mind; and on the other, misinterpreting the reflection of the *alaya* in itself, setting up out of these elements, these impressions and reflections, a dualistic world revolving around the experience of subject and object.

Fourthly comes the eighth *vijnana*, which is the *alayavijnana*, known as the eighth consciousness. Strictly speaking, the *alayavijnana* is not a *vijnana* at all, because here there's no discrimination. The word *alaya* literally means a repository or a store, or an abode or a treasury, as for instance in the word *Himalaya*. You've all heard of the Himalayas: *hima* is snow; *alaya* is abode or repository or store. So Himalaya means the store or treasury or abode of snow, because the snow never passes from the peaks of the Himalaya. So in the same way we speak of the *alayavijnana*, *alaya* here being the store or repository. We'll see what that means in a minute.

Now the *alaya*, the eighth consciousness, has two aspects; a relative aspect and an absolute aspect.

The relative aspect of the *alaya*, or the relative *alaya*, consists of all the impressions left or deposited by, our past, our previous experiences, in this life and in previous lives. And this relative aspect of the *alaya* we may say, is something like or at least not unlike Jung's collective unconscious.

And the impressions left there, impressions deposited in the relative *alaya* are conceived by the Yogacara as seeds. They're not just passive, not just like prints, or imprints; or impressions made in, say, wax, by a seal; they're like seeds, because they're active, and whenever the right conditions obtain, whenever conditions are favourable, these impressions, these seeds, can as it were sprout again and produce fruits, produce results.

The *alaya* in its Absolute aspect is Reality itself. That is to say, pure awareness free from all trace of objectivity, free from all trace of subjectivity. In other words, the absolute aspect of the *alaya*, or the *alaya*, the eighth consciousness, in its absolute aspect is the One Mind. When we say the One Mind, we don't mean of course that Mind is numerically one, we mean that it is metaphysically One.

So these are the eight *vijnanas* of the Yogacara.

Now the *pravriti*, the Turning About, the turning round, the revulsion, the convulsion, takes place at the level of the *alaya*, not at any other level. And that is why this experience, of *pravriti* or turning about is also called Revulsion at the Base, or if you like Revulsion in the Depths. It doesn't take place at the level of the *manas*, the level of the ordinary mind, the empirical self. It takes place at a much deeper level indeed than that. The Lankavatara Sutra itself is not perfectly explicit, but it seems clear that *pravriti* takes place on the borderline practically between the relative and the absolute *alaya*. It takes place just there.

So what exactly happens when that takes place? This isn't very easy to describe.

We may say that as the result of mundane existence, mundane life and experience, there accumulate in the relative *alaya* more and more impressions. And these are known as impure seeds. All the seeds, the active impressions which we deposit, as it were, at this level as a result of our ordinary, mundane thoughts, words and deeds. And these are ultimately, according not only to the Yogacara, but according to Buddhism, causes in the future of rebirth.

But it's also possible, according to the Yogacara, to accumulate what are known as pure seeds. Pure seeds are impressions, active impressions, produced or deposited by what we may call higher or religious or spiritual thoughts, words and deeds. So the more we devote ourselves to things of this sort, the more actions of this sort we perform, with body, speech and mind, the more these pure seeds accumulate in the relative *alaya*.

And when there's a sufficient number of them, as it were, when they're sufficiently strong, the absolute *alaya*, which is just verging on them, can as it were, press upon them. Not only press upon them, but, as it were, push them against the impure seeds and push the impure seeds right out.

And it's this pushing out of the impure seeds when the *alaya* as it were presses on the pure seeds, that constitutes at the level of the *alaya*, this turning about or revulsion, or *pravriti* according to the Yogacara. And this *pravriti* brings about a transformation in the entire *vijnana* system. It's all reversed, it's all reorganised; it's all, we may say, transvalued.

And the eight *vijnanas*, after this revulsion, after this experience takes place on the level of the *alaya*, the eight *vijnanas* are all transformed into what we call the five *jnanas*. In other words, transformed from modes of discriminating awareness to modes of pure awareness or Wisdom.

The five sense *vijnanas* are collectively transformed in to what is called the All-Performing Wisdom.

The mind consciousness is transformed into what is called Distinguishing Wisdom. The mind perceives the differences of things - there's nothing wrong in this, according to the Yogacara; nothing wrong in perceiving all the infinite variety of existence, but one must not construct as it were, behind that variety, an unreal world, an objective world quite separate from it.

Thirdly, the defiled or afflicted mind consciousness is transformed into the Wisdom of Equality. Formerly, the *manas* saw everything in terms of subject/object. Now it perceives everything in terms of the One Mind: it sees only the One Mind everywhere. So the Wisdom of Equality - all things equally Mind - equally *sunyata* - equally real.

Fourthly, the relative *alaya* is transformed into the Mirror-like Wisdom, so called because it reflects everything impartially, but like the mirror, it does not stick or cling to anything. Just reflects - there's just pure awareness.

And fifthly, the Absolute *Alaya* is not transformed at all, because there is no need for it to be transformed at all: the Absolute *Alaya* equals the Wisdom of the Dharmadhatu or we may translate it, the Absolute Wisdom.

So in this way the eight *vijnanas*, the eight discriminative consciousnesses, are transformed into the Five Wisdoms, the five Non-discriminating awarenesses.

These five Wisdoms are personified as five Buddhas, of five different kinds. And of these five Buddhas, with their different colours and insignias and so on, we shall be hearing later on, in a later lecture in this series.

When the eight consciousnesses have been transformed into the Five Wisdoms, then the One Mind has been thoroughly realised in all its aspects. Enlightenment, to use the more well-known Buddhist terminology, has been attained.

But a practical question also arises, and this practical question is how is this turning about, this *pravriti*, this Conversion, to be induced? Obviously it doesn't come about by accident.

Normally we function at the level of the seven consciousnesses; sense consciousnesses, mind consciousness, defiled or afflicted mind consciousness. We're not aware of the *alaya*. We're not aware of the relative *alaya*, the abode of the seeds of purity and impurity; much less still are we aware, perhaps not even conceptually aware, of the Absolute *alaya*.

The highest level that we know, the highest level that we experience, is the *manas*. So we have to start from there. We have to start from within the dualistic framework, within the dualistic pattern, and we have to take up religious practices and exercises which are based, to begin with at least, upon that dualistic framework, that dualistic pattern.

We have to take up especially the practice of meditation, and in this way, as we practise, day by day, week by week, year after year, pure seeds, more and more pure seeds, will be deposited in the relative *alaya*, until the relative *alaya* becomes as it were, saturated, it becomes, as it were, full of them and in this way, eventually, the turning about, the revulsion, will take place at the level of the *alaya*. But this will take time. It's not something which can be accomplished in a day.

But though it takes time, though it takes much effort, also, one should not be discouraged.

There's a little story - quite a simple, but perhaps effective story, which illustrates this point, and with this perhaps we should close our account of the Depth Psychology of the Yogacara.

I remember many years ago when I was in India, in fact when I was in south India, I spent some time in the Ashram of a very famous Hindu teacher, in fact one of the most famous Hindu teachers of this century, who is now deceased. And I remember one day he told the following story. Someone apparently had asked him, "How is it that we practise week after week, month after month, year after year, but there is no result; nothing seems to happen. We do all this meditation, we read all these Scriptures, we give all this dana and so on, but nothing seems to happen - we're the same person apparently as we were before. How is this, what is happening? Is there no change? Is there no improvement?"

So in reply to this question, he told the following little story. He said, "Once upon a time, there was a man who wanted to break, to split in two, an enormous rock. So he went up to the rock with an enormous sledge hammer. And swinging it with all his might, he delivered a terrific blow, right in the centre of the rock. But nothing happened. So he waited, he drew a deep breath, flexed his muscles again, and then gave another great blow on the same spot. Nothing happened. The rock was just as it was before. Perfectly intact. So like this, sweating more and more, struggling more and more, panting for breath, he delivered nineteen tremendous blows. But nothing happened. Not a mark, not a dent. The rock was just as before, apparently. So he thought, All right, now or never. He collected all his strength, and one last tremendous crack he gave. And with that twentieth blow, the rock split, neatly, cleanly and quietly into two sections."

So this teacher said, "All right. Were the first nineteen blows completely useless? Was it just one blow which did the trick? No, it was all twenty. Every time he gave a blow, whether it was the first, the second, the third, right up to nineteenth, though no effect, no result could be seen, the rock was being weakened along that

particular line where the hammer struck. And the twentieth blow just gave the last touch which was necessary to split the rock."

"So," he said, "it's just the same with our spiritual practice. It's just the same with our practice of the precepts, practice of meditation, practice of Wisdom, it's just the same as that." We're as it were, hammering this rock of the empirical self with tremendous blows again and again and again. Or in the language of the Yogacara, we're depositing seeds, again and again and again. But you can't see the seeds. They fall right down into the depths, they're accumulating there, they're sprouting there, they're gathering strength there, but we can't see it. It's all, as it were, in the darkness, at least for a long time.

So this little story is just intended to give us hope and to give us encouragement, and to make us realise that all we really have to do is just to carry on. And then one day the rock will split - the *pravriti*, the turning about, will take place and our whole eight consciousness system will be re-organised, re-oriented. The Five Wisdoms will spring forth, and the aim and object of not only the Yogacara but of the whole of Buddhism - namely the realisation of the One Mind, or Enlightenment, will at last have taken place.