

Aspects of Buddhist Psychology

Lecture 45: The Mandala: Tantric Symbol of Integration

Reverend Sir and Friends

Nowadays we all know quite a lot of people are very much exercised by what they call the problem of communication. Only this morning I happened to look into the window of a bookshop and I noticed a new book - at least, one of which I hadn't heard before - called "The Psychology of Human Communication", which seemed quite an interesting title. One might say it is significant in a way that communication should have become for many people nowadays a problem at all, but that is neither here nor there.

We may say, that very broadly speaking, there are two principal means or modes of communication between human beings. First of all, there is the conceptual - communication in terms of thoughts, ideas and so on; and secondly communication in terms of or in the form of images. The first type of communication, that through abstract ideas, through concepts, is addressed more particularly to the rational - even the critical - intelligence. The second mode of communication, that through images, aims rather at the unconscious depths which lie beneath the rational intelligence. The first type of communication (that through concepts, through abstract ideas) is employed by science, by philosophy; whereas the second (through images) is employed by all forms of imaginative literature.

Now religion we may say, spiritual traditions, we may say, employ both. They communicate through abstract ideas: they also communicate through images. But perhaps we may say that they tend to rely - certainly in their more popular forms - more on the latter; more on the images - they tend to try to communicate more with the unconscious depths; to move and to stir them.

Now in the course of this series of lectures on Aspects of Buddhist Psychology, we've passed as it were, from one mode or type of communication to the other. We started in the first lectures which we had with a more conceptual type of approach. But soon we found ourselves where we are now, in the midst of images, in the midst of symbols, even in the midst of archetypes. And today we come to the *Mandala*, which the subtitle of the lecture describes as the Tantric Symbol of Integration.

At once we can see that there are three principal topics which fall to be considered, or three questions which at this point we may ask, or which naturally suggest themselves. First of all, "What is a *Mandala*?"; secondly, "What do we mean by Integration?"; and thirdly, "In what way is the *Mandala* a symbol of Integration?"

We are going to deal with these three questions, but we are not going to deal with them in a strictly logical fashion. When dealing with material of this sort, we may say, this is quite impossible. We can't deal with material of this sort in a strictly logical sequence or order, and even if we could, it would give a false impression, perhaps, about the nature of the material itself.

First of all, before coming onto these three main topics or questions, I want to say something about this adjective *Tantric*. We say that the Mandala is the *Tantric* symbol of integration - but what do we mean by *Tantric*, what do we mean by *Tantra*? Or what are the *Tantras*? In order to understand this, we have to refer back to what I said about the three Yanas, the three vehicles the three ways, the three great stages in the development of Indian Buddhism, in a previous lecture. These three great stages or phases are of course, the *Hinayana*, the *Mahayana* and the *Vajrayana*. The *Hinayana* - the Little Way or little Vehicle, the *Mahayana* - the Great Way or Great Vehicle, the *Vajrayana* - the Adamantine Way or Adamantine Vehicle. And as I said these represent the three great phases or stages of development of Buddhism in India, the land of its birth. Each of these Yanas was dominant and flourished for a period of about 500 years, and each Yana produced its own distinctive, its own characteristic type of canonical literature or sacred Scriptures.

The *Hinayana* produced what we call the *Tripitaka*, the Three Baskets, the Three Collections, of Scriptures, consisting of the *Vinaya*, or Monastic Code; the *Hinayana* Sutras, contained mainly in the Middle Length or Long Discourses; and the *Abhidharma*, the Higher or further Doctrine or teaching about which we heard something in our first lecture. All of these exist in different versions.

The *Mahayana* produced as its contribution to the field of canonical literature, its characteristic scriptures, the *Vaipulya* Sutras. *Vaipulya* means extended or amplified because some of these sutras are very, very lengthy indeed, a single sutra, a single discourse is sometimes the length of a whole volume. So the *Mahayana* produced these - great texts like the *Saddharma Pundarika*, the *Lankavatara*, the *Prajnaparamita*, and so on. These are the *Vaipulya* sutras, sometimes called the *Mahayana* Sutras.

And the *Vajrayana*, this third great phase of Buddhism in India, the *Vajrayana* or Adamantine way, produced what we call the *Tantras*: the *Tantras* are the Scriptures of the *Vajrayana*. Now the word *Tantra* is from a verbal root meaning to weave, so a *Tantra* is that which is woven or that which is put together - or, in other words, that

which is compiled. In other words, a *Tantra* is simply a book, and the term *Tantra*, strictly speaking in Sanskrit literary usage, can be applied to any type of work. One has got for instance in Indian literature a number of works on mathematics which are called *Tantras*. So *Tantra* has got this general literary meaning.

But usually *Tantra* is applied within the field of Buddhism specifically to the *Vajrayana* Scriptures. We may say that there's a very large number indeed of *Tantras* in existence indeed, mainly in the Tibetan Canon. No-one knows exactly how many there are. For instance I have been told that there are no less than 300 *Nyingmapa Tantras* in Tibet, which are peculiar to the *Nyingmapa* school of Tibetan Buddhism and not recognised by the *Gelugpas*, the majority party. And I have heard (one of my friends has been doing research in this field) that the Sanskrit originals of a number of *Nyingmapa Tantras* which some scholars had suspected to be original Tibetan compositions have quite recently been located in Nepal in out of the way Buddhist monasteries and temples.

Now all these *Tantras* were originally written in Sanskrit, in what is technically called Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit or Mixed Sanskrit, and of course many of them have been lost in the course of centuries. Those which we do have, apart from those few which are available in Nepali and Sanskrit, are mostly found in the Tibetan Canon in Tibetan translation. It's a rather staggering thought that out of all these hundreds of important works, the *Tantras*, only one so far has been translated in its entirety into the English language. There's one which has been half translated and there are several extracts from which have been translated, but only one - the *Hevajra Tantra* - has been translated in its entirety in English. But I'm afraid that doesn't help us very much. I remember the distinguished scholar Dr Conze when he read the English translation of the *Hevajra Tantra*, with great interest (because not knowing Tibetan to that extent, he had no access to this material) he wrote a review and he remarked after reading the *Hevajra Tantra* in English that he was no wiser than before. Why this should have been may appear in a minute.

The *Tantras*, we may say, are very different from other types of canonical literature. The *Tripitaka*, the Three Baskets or Collections of the *Hinayana*, that is to say the *Vinaya*, the *Hinayana* Sutras and the *Abhidharma*, these are mainly conceptual in their approach, and this is one of the reasons for the great appeal of many parts of the Pali Canon of the *Theravada* School (one of the subdivisions of the *Hinayana*). The approach is rational, it's understandable; one can get at it with the rational intelligence.

Now the *Mahayana* Sutras, on the other hand, are of both kinds; some of them are couched in conceptual terms; other accounts more in terms of images, more in terms of myth. For instance, if you take the Perfection of Wisdom, the *Prajnaparamita*, this uses the language of concepts almost exclusively; it's a very intellectual sort of approach. But if you take the *Saddharma Pundarika*, you find that the approach here is more dramatic, more poetic, more mythical, more archetypal. And therefore Sutras like the *Saddharma Pundarika* are only just beginning, among Western Buddhists, to achieve some popularity.

Now we may say that the *Tantras* are entirely non-conceptual in their approach. The *Saddharma Pundarika* has at least got some sort of organisation from a literary point of view, but the *Tantras* are not only entirely non-conceptual in their approach, they're an absolute chaos in a sense, they're just a jumble from a literary point of view, of images, of archetypes and of very cryptic practical instructions. There's no logical sequence, no logical arrangement at all. And this is what Dr Conze, for instance, found so baffling in the English translation of the *Hevajra Tantra*. There's apparently no order, no organisation: just a flux, just a flow of images, concepts, practices, descriptions, advice, all mixed up. So it's very difficult to sort out - but we're not concerned with that now. I'm just giving some idea of what the *Tantras* are like.

Now among the various topics and subjects dealt with in the *Tantras*, in the *Tantric* literature in this sort of way there is what we call the *Mandala*. *Mandalas* are described, dealt with in the *Tantras*. So therefore we come back to our first question, "What is a *Mandala*?"

Literally, a *Mandala* is a circle; the word means just that. Some writers on Buddhism call it a magic circle, but this could be rather misleading - it depends of course on what you mean by the term 'magic'. Perhaps the best short description or definition of the *Mandala* is "a circle of symbolic forms". There must be, in a complete *Mandala*, at least five of these forms and they must be arranged in a certain way, in a certain pattern. There must be one of these symbolic forms in the centre, in the middle, and there must be one at each of the four cardinal points. In this way, you get five.

Now the symbolic forms are the forms of various Buddhas, various Enlightened Ones, and various Bodhisattvas - beings on their way to Enlightenment, personifications of various attributes of Enlightenment and so on. In other words, the symbolic forms are, what I described last week as archetypal images. In all these *Mandalas*, the central symbol, or the central symbolic form, the central archetype, represents Reality Itself, or rather, within

the context of the *Mandala*, we may say, it is Reality Itself. And the other four symbolic forms distributed at the four cardinal points represent the four principal aspects of that Reality, or the four principal aspects into which it is, as it were, split up when you try to break it down a little. So this is the basic scheme of the *Mandala*: five symbolic forms, five archetypes, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and so on, arranged in this particular pattern; one at the centre and four at the four cardinal points.

There are incidentally, many other features also of the *Mandala*, for instance, the symbolic forms - whether five, or eight or nine, or twenty-four, as sometimes happens, whatever the number - they're all placed within a square enclosure which has four gates. And this square enclosure is again placed within a series of three concentric circles, circles of flame and so on. What all this means, we shall see a little later on. Meanwhile, let us take a closer look at the symbolic forms, the archetypes, themselves.

As we've already said, these are forms, figures, of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and so on, and there are a number of different sets corresponding to different *Mandalas*. In fact several hundred different sets, but all obeying, all following, the same basic scheme. Some have got five figures and others more, as I've said. The basic scheme, however, always remains the same: the central point radiating in the four main directions.

Now the Chinese have a saying that one picture is worth a thousand words. So I shall try to 'paint', as it were, a picture of a *Mandala*. I'm going to take the simplest, in a sense, of all the *Mandalas*, but also, in a sense, the most important, and this is the *Mandala* of the Five Buddhas. We've briefly encountered these Five Buddhas before, we encountered them last week when we spoke on the Tibetan Book of the Dead but we had to content ourselves with just a brief reference to them, almost in passing, but today we are going to go into this question of the Five Buddhas and the *Mandala* of the Five Buddhas in somewhat greater detail and try to get, try to actually paint, a clear and vivid picture of them.

The First of the Five Buddhas is Vairocana, the Illuminator, the White Buddha.

Secondly, Akshobhya, the Imperturbable, the Dark Blue Buddha;

Thirdly, Ratnasambhava, the Jewel-producing, the Yellow Buddha;

Fourthly, Amitabha, the Infinite Light, the Red Buddha;

Fifthly and lastly, Amoghasiddhi, the Infallible Success, the Green Buddha.

These five Buddhas represent the five principal aspects of Buddhahood. In conceptual terms, they represent the Five Wisdoms, each Buddha being associated with one particular Wisdom. I'm afraid it's a point which rather adds to the confusion, but one finds that in different schemes, in different contexts, in different traditions, different Buddhas are associated with different Wisdoms, so one Buddha is not invariably associated with a certain Wisdom. It depends upon the general context, the general *Mandala*, the spiritual tradition and so on. But there are two or three more or less standard patterns and we're following just one of those this evening - but we should realise it's not an invariable one by any means.

Each of the Five Buddhas is also associated with a particular direction, a particular point of the compass, a particular colour, a particular emblem and *mudra* or gesture of the hands. So let us go into this a little more in detail, a little more systematically.

1. Vairocana, the White Buddha

The name Vairocana means the Illuminator, The One Who Lights Up. And originally in Vedic times and later, Vairocana was one of the names of the sun, or even of the sun god, so quite evidently there's a considerable amount of symbolism here. It's as though Buddhahood or Reality was conceived of as a sort of spiritual sun. Just as the material sun illumines the material world, so Vairocana, the Illuminator, as the spiritual sun, the sun of Buddhahood, the sun of Enlightenment, illumines the whole of the spiritual world. In fact in Japan, in the *Shingon* Sect, Vairocana, who is their principal Buddha, is known in Japanese as the "Great Sun Buddha", the idea being of a sort of spiritual sun of Buddhahood illuminating the whole of the spiritual cosmos.

Quite appropriately the emblem or symbol of Vairocana is a golden *Dharmachakra*, that is to say a golden Wheel of the Law, very often highly ornamented, with eight spokes, beautifully decorated, and in art, in iconography, Vairocana is usually represented as holding this eight-spoked golden wheel in his hands. And his mudra, his gesture of the hands, is what is called the Wheel-Turning, the *Dharmacakrapravartana mudra*, which is associated in historical terms with the Buddha's first sermon at Sarnath, the title of the first sermon in fact is "*Dharmacakrapravartana Sutra*", the Discourse of the Turning of the Wheel of the Doctrine. Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine being a sort of idiom in Buddhism for preaching, for propagating the Buddha's teaching. So this mudra which Vairocana has or the mudra in which his hands are arranged, is this Wheel-turning mudra, turning the Wheel of the Doctrine, preaching the doctrine, or shedding the light of the doctrine on all living beings.

Vairocana, the Illuminator, is especially associated with, represents or embodies, the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu*. Out of the Five Wisdoms he represents or he embodies, if you like, the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu*, this is the basic Wisdom - in a sense, Enlightenment Itself. The other four Wisdoms are aspects of this Wisdom, just as the other four Buddhas, in a sense, are aspects of Vairocana himself. This is the reason why Vairocana occupies the centre of the *Mandala*, because he is associated with the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu*, which is the central Wisdom amongst all the five Wisdoms. This is also the reason why his colour is white. In Buddhist tradition white is the colour of the Absolute. White is, as it were, the union, the unity of all the colours of the rainbow. The colours are a sort of decomposition of the purity of the white light, so Vairocana representing the Absolute, Reality Itself in its central aspect, undifferentiated, is represented as white. And if in Buddhist iconography, you get any Buddha or any Bodhisattva represented in a white colour (you sometimes get a white Tara, or white Avalokitesvara), this means that they're represented in their Absolute aspect. Regardless of their conventional place in the pantheon, when they become white, they are, as it were, invested with all the attributes of Absoluteness, and become a symbol of the Absolute itself, of Buddhahood itself, in its perfection, in its Supreme state. So Vairocana is white because he is the central Buddha, the main Buddha, associated with the main Wisdom, the central Wisdom, the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu*.

Dharmadhatu is a very difficult term indeed. It's one, I would say, of the most difficult terms in the whole of Buddhism. *Dhatu* means a sphere, or a field, or a realm, or even a kingdom, and *Dharma* represents here Reality. Sometimes *dharma* means the teaching, the doctrine, sometimes a mental state, a characteristic - but here it means Reality. So *Dharmadhatu* means the whole Universe - the whole of the cosmos, the whole of existence conceived of as the sphere of manifestation, as it were, of Reality. The Field of Manifestation of Reality; this is the *Dharmadhatu*.

In other words the whole Universe as pervaded by Reality. This is what *Dharmadhatu* means. So the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu* is the Wisdom which sees directly that the whole universe, in all its heights, in all its depths, on all sides, in all directions, to infinity as it were, is pervaded by one sole Reality, which penetrates everywhere, just as the whole of space, as it were, is penetrated by the beams, by the light of the sun. So this is the Wisdom of the *Dharmadhatu*, the knowledge or the realisation or experience of the whole cosmos as penetrated by, or pervaded by, or non-different from Reality Itself. This is the central experience of Enlightenment. So much then for Vairocana, the Illuminator, the white Buddha at the centre of the *Mandala*.

2. Akshobya, the Dark Blue Buddha

Sometimes it is said that Akshobya is dark blue like the midnight sky without any stars. A very deep, dark, almost impenetrable blue, verging almost on black. The name Akshobya means the Imperturbable, the Unshakeable, the One Who Cannot Be Moved, who cannot be disturbed in any way, and Akshobya represents the firmness and stability and indestructibility, as it were, of the Enlightenment experience. Akshobya occupies the eastern direction and his emblem is the *vajra*. The *vajra* is the thunderbolt or diamond. In Sanskrit, *vajra* means both thunderbolt and diamond: they're not distinguished. But the *vajra* is the hardest of all things. The *vajra* can cut everything but nothing cuts the *vajra*. So Enlightenment, or Wisdom is like that. It cuts everything, but nothing cuts it.

The mudra, or the hand position, of Akshobya is what is called the Earth-touching. We heard something about this last week, because the earth-touching mudra is associated with the Buddha's victory over Mara, the Evil One, before he attained Enlightenment. You remember how, under the Bodhi tree, the Buddha sat unperturbed, unshaken, even though according to legend, he was attacked by the hosts of Mara, all these terrible misshapen forms. But he was able to repel them: all their weapons, their flames, their stones, fell harmless at his feet. So Akshobya, with his earth-touching mudra, is associated with this episode in the life of the historical Buddha.

Akshobya is associated with the Mirror-like Wisdom; the Wisdom which is like a mirror. This Wisdom represents that aspect of the Enlightened Mind, the Enlightened Consciousness, which sees everything. In other

words, it understands the true nature of everything. Just as a mirror just reflects everything, if the mirror is free from dust, if it's perfectly polished, it just reflects - wherever you turn it, in every direction, it just reflects. It reflects everything but it is not affected by anything; nothing leaves a mark, nothing leaves a trace on the surface of the mirror. The mirror can reflect a hundred things, a thousand things, but there's no mark left. Not only is there no mark left, but it isn't affected in any way by the reflections; there's no, as it were, sticking: nothing sticks. There's no, as it were, subjective reaction. So the mirror-like Wisdom represents the pure, the perfect objectivity of the Enlightened mind which reflects everything, sees everything, knows everything, understands everything, penetrates through and through everything, but is not touched, not affected, does not stick anywhere, does not settle down anywhere, but moves freely on. So much then for Akshobya, the dark blue Buddha.

3. Ratnasambhava, the Yellow or Golden Buddha

His name means the 'Jewel Producing One', the one who is productive of jewels and Ratnasambhava represents the aspect of beauty and richness and abundance of the Enlightened Mind. He occupies the southern quarter of the *Mandala* and his emblem is the *cintamani*, or wish-fulfilling gem. In Hindu and Buddhist mythology, the *cintamani* is rather like Aladdin's lamp. If you hold it in your hand and wish, then whatever you wish you get. So in Hindu mythology, especially, all the gods and powerful kings are always trying to get this *cintamani* so they can hold it and just wish. But what is the true, the real *cintamani*? The true *cintamani* is the Enlightened mind itself, because that gives you in the highest sense in the ultimate sense, everything, whatever you can wish for: all beauty, all riches, all abundance: it's all there in the depths of your own mind. So Ratnasambhava, the jewel-producing Buddha, has as his emblem this *cintamani*, this wish fulfilling gem, suggesting that the true wish-fulfilling gem is Enlightenment Itself.

Ratnasambhava is also connected with the earth. His colour in fact links him with the Earth. The colour of the earth in the East is yellow in the East, and Ratnasambhava's colour is yellow. The earth is, as it were, the depth from which all treasures come; whether it's gold, silver or jewels - they're all dug up from the depths of the earth. It's the same with all spiritual treasures, if you like archetypal treasures - they're dug up, as it were, from the depths of the Enlightened mind, and especially we are told, what is known as the jewel of the *Bodhicitta*, the jewel of the Will to Enlightenment, the urge, the aspiration to gain Enlightenment not just of oneself, but all living beings.

The mudra, the finger position of Ratnasambhava, is the *varada*, supreme giving, because Ratnasambhava represents that aspect of Enlightenment which, as it were, bestows all spiritual gifts on all people without any discrimination at all, and therefore also Ratnasambhava is associated with the Wisdom of Equality, or the Wisdom of Sameness, because the Enlightened Mind sees things with complete objectivity: no preferences, no likes, no dislikes, no reactions, whether positive or negative. Therefore the Enlightened Mind is the same towards all - sees all equally; the same love, the same compassion, towards all.

I remember in this connection - this is just by the way but it perhaps illustrates a point - a certain archbishop of Canterbury was asked if he supported apartheid. He was asked whether all human beings, whether black or white, were equal in God's eyes. So he said, "They're all equal in the love of god, but they're not equal in the sight of God." He was asked, incidentally whether he supported apartheid or not and this was his reply, that all living beings are equal in the love of God but not in the sight of God. If we put that into Buddhist terms, we may say that all living beings, regardless of all these distinctions, all things whatsoever in the universe, are equal in the sight of the Enlightened Mind - this is the Wisdom of Sameness, and because they are equal in the sight of the Enlightened Mind, they're also equal in the love of the Enlightened Mind. You can't have the one without the other. The light, as it were, of the Enlightened Mind falls equally upon all, just like the rays of the sun on objects on the surface of the earth. So this is Ratnasambhava, the yellow Buddha.

4. Amitabha, the Red Buddha

The word Amitabha literally means the 'infinite light'. Not just light, but also warmth. So Amitabha, the Red Buddha, represents what we may call the love aspect of Enlightenment. Red in Buddhism, a very deep, rich, brilliant red, is the colour of love. And the emblem of Amitabha therefore is the red lotus - a deep, rich, brilliant red lotus. Amitabha also represents what we may call the maturing power of love. We all know, both psychologically and spiritually, love is necessary to growth. I remember reading some time ago, (I don't know whether it was an experiment which had been performed, but it had happened in some way) that in an orphanage, a certain number of infants (I think they were about six months old) were treated in a very objective, hospital-routine sort of way, without any personal attention or handling, and another group of children were treated quite differently - they were handled a lot, carried about a lot in people's arms and given a great deal of personal attention, but otherwise everything else was the same. And they found that those who were not given the personal attention and the handling, or in other words, the love, the human contact, almost withered. They

didn't really thrive. But those who were given the human contact, the sympathy, or in a word, the love, they did very much better. The difference was very, very marked. So we can see on the psychological level in the case of small children, in the case of babies, even in the case of all human beings, even all animals, some element of love is necessary for growth, for development on all these different levels. So Amitabha symbolises this. Amitabha, the red Buddha, symbolises the love aspect of Enlightenment, that aspect of light and warmth of the Enlightened Mind which matures, spiritually, all living beings.

Amitabha's mudra is the *dhyana* mudra, the mudra of meditation, and he occupies the western quarter, the quarter where the sun sets. Amitabha is associated with the setting sun. And to some Buddhists, especially those in Japan, the setting sun, with its very deep, dark, rich red colour, is very reminiscent of Amitabha. When the sun goes down, light is gradually withdrawn, and this withdrawal of light from the earth represents or symbolises our own withdrawal of our consciousness, our attention, from the senses. When the light fades away darkness comes, in the same way, when we withdraw our attention from the senses, when we focus the mind within, it's as though the external world, even our own body, was as it were, a darkness to us. So that is why Amitabha, the red Buddha, with this gesture of meditation, is associated with the western quarter, the setting sun and with meditation itself.

He is also associated with the Discriminating Wisdom, sometimes called the Distinguishing Wisdom. The mirror reflects all things equally - reflects one object just as well as another. But at the same time, the mirror doesn't confuse or blur the distinctive features of any of the objects which it reflects. This is a very important point. The Enlightened Mind sees things in their unity, sees them under their aspect of sameness - but It also sees them in their aspect of diversity. The one doesn't obstruct the other.

The Enlightened mind sees things at the same time as one; and at the same time as different - as diverse. So therefore in metaphysical terms, Buddhism is neither a monism nor a pluralism. It neither reduces difference to unity, nor unity to difference. It sees both - in a sense it goes beyond both. In Buddhism, the unity doesn't obliterate the difference: the difference doesn't obscure the unity. Both are seen together by the Enlightened Mind.

In the *Gandavyuha Sutra*, this sort of state is compared with a sort of mutual intersection of innumerable beams of coloured light. They all intersect, they all, as it were, penetrate through one another from all directions, rays of light of all colours, as it were, but they all retain at the same time, their own individuality - neither the same, nor different.

5. Amoghasiddhi, the Green Buddha

Siddhi means success or ripeness or perfection, and *Amogha* is unobstructed or unimpeded. So Amoghasiddhi is the Unobstructed Success, or the Unimpeded Perfection, and he represents the practical aspect of Enlightenment. Amoghasiddhi represents the mysterious, almost the occult, activity of the Enlightened Mind. Not necessarily an external activity - it may be an activity of non-activity - action in non-action, as the Taoists and Zen people say - but something very mysterious, or occult as I said, and very efficacious. Amoghasiddhi occupies the northern quarter of the *Mandala* and his emblem is the double *vajra* - two *vajras* placed one across the other. This symbolises, this represents the union of the positive and negative forces of the cosmos and of the human psyche. Just as the colour green is a sort of union of blue and yellow, in the same way Amoghasiddhi's emblem, the double *vajra*, the crossed *vajra*, represents the union, the conjunction if you like, of all the positive and negative forces in the universe.

The mudra of Amoghasiddhi is the *Abhaya* mudra, the mudra of fearlessness, the mudra which says, "Fear not. Don't be afraid." So this represents the fact that the experience of Enlightenment bestows fearlessness, or confidence. One can't imagine an Enlightened person being afraid.

There are many episodes in the Buddha's life which reveal his very characteristic confidence and fearlessness, whether it was going through a very dark jungle infested with bandits or whether it was when certain people wanted to beat him up, even murder him, he didn't mind. Once it so happened, we are told in the Scriptures, that a band of murderers had been hired to do away with the Buddha by his enemies, and the Buddha's disciples were very alarmed, so they gathered together and made a great ring around him. They were going to protect him. So the Buddha called them and he said, "What is this?" So they said, "Lord, a report had been received that certain enemies of yours have set on murderers to do away with your life. So we have gathered to guard you, to protect you." So the Buddha said "You may all go away. A Tathagata (a Buddha) needs no protection from anyone." So he sent them all away and he sat there all by himself all night. And of course nothing happened. All those people apparently just melted away, so there he sat all night and nothing happened. So Amoghasiddhi

represents, with his *abhaya* mudra, his gesture of fearlessness, this aspect of Enlightenment - this aspect of fearlessness and confidence.

In the *Mahayana* especially, great importance is attached to this. If you're not fearless, if you're not confident, if you're not even bold, then you make no approach to Enlightenment. One need not, of course, be aggressive, you need not be over-confident, but there's no need to be timid or hesitant or humble in the Uriah Heep sense - these are not Buddhist virtues.

Amoghasiddhi is associated with the All-performing Wisdom, because the Enlightened Mind, the mind of a Buddha, actively devotes itself to the welfare of all living beings, and devises many skilful means, *Upaya kausalyas*, as they're called, to help living beings and does this very naturally and spontaneously - there's no question of sort of thinking it out: "How can I help? What can I do?" It just happens quite naturally and quite spontaneously.

So these are the Five Buddhas: the white Buddha, the blue Buddha, the yellow Buddha, the red Buddha, the green Buddha - and this is the *Mandala* - the circle of symbolic forms, of the Five Buddhas: one at the centre (the white one), the blue one to the East, the red one to the West, the yellow one to the South, the green one to the North, but I must warn you, as I said, that sometimes the correlations vary just a little.

So I hope now with the help of your imaginations and your charts, you can see this picture of the *Mandala* of the Five Buddhas standing out quite clearly.

The Five Buddhas are also correlated with various other sets of five, correlated with the Five Aggregates, the Five *Skandhas*, into which all of conditioned existence is analysed (that is to say, form, feeling, perception, impulses and consciousness.) They are also correlated with the Five Poisons or passions, the five elements, five animals etc. All this is included in your chart and its significance will emerge, I hope, a little later on.

Now having described a typical *Mandala* scheme, let me go on now to the second of our three questions, "What do we mean by integration?" It might help us if we put the question in another way - "What do we mean by *dis*-integration?" Disintegration is the state of being split up, being broken, being fragmented. And modern man, we may say, is very much in this condition: broken, split up, fragmented. He is we may say, above all, psychically disintegrated. There's a great split, a great chasm if you like, between his intellect, his rational intelligence, his conscious mind, and the deeper, the more unconscious or even totally unconscious - as they appear from the standpoint of the conscious mind - levels of his psyche. And this sort of split, this sort of chasm is reflected, we may say, in man's increasing alienation from nature. We're getting further and further away from nature, further and further away from a natural way of life, especially those who live in cities, who have become industrialised and urbanised and commercialised and computerised and programised, and all the rest of it.

And we may say that that part of ourselves which is responsible for all this, which does all this, that is to say the intellect, the rational intelligence standing by itself, has got almost completely out of hand. It has become autonomous - it has broken loose almost from the rest of the psyche and it has cut itself off almost, except for a thread, from the deeper sources of life and vitality. It is functioning almost in a void. Sometimes of course the unconscious rebels, and sometimes it erupts into consciousness, into the world of the intellect in a very violent, a very disruptive manner in various forms of what we usually call insanity, which we may say is a sort of forcible attempt on the part of certain unconscious contents to secure some kind of recognition for themselves. Of course the majority of us don't go as far as actual insanity - at least it's nice to think that we don't! - but there's still very considerable tension - the split is still there; the gulf, the chasm still yawns.

There's a conflict between the conscious and the unconscious. Not just the personal unconscious - it's not just a question of repressed desires which are incompatible with the conscious attitudes - it's something much more than that - it goes much deeper than that. It's a conflict, we may say, between the ego-centred intellect on the one hand and the deeper, the transpersonal even, psychic and spiritual life deep down within ourselves, on the other, from which we become divorced. In Buddhist terms, there's a tension and a conflict between what we call the *manas* and what we call the relative *alaya* (as explained in Lecture 3).

So in this sort of situation with this conflict, this split, this chasm, we need some higher, some third, reconciling factor - something which will unite, something which will combine the clarity and precision of the conscious mind, the intellect - its sharpness - its crystalline purity if you like, with the richness, the colour, the , the activity, of the unconscious. So this third factor, this higher factor which can come in here reconciling and uniting these two extremes is what we call the *Mandala*.

I'm sure most of you know that Jung found in the course of his work that his patients produced *Mandalas* - these symbols of integration - quite spontaneously in the course of their treatment, in the course of the individuation process. *Mandala*, though the word itself is Sanskrit, is a universal symbol. We find *Mandalas* everywhere. I remember that Coleridge said about Sir Thomas Browne, referring especially to his garden of syrahs (?), that he saw quincunxes everywhere. A quincunx is a sort of arrangement of five points, just like a *Mandala*. So Browne saw them everywhere - in the heavens and on earth. But we can also say quite truly that we can see and find *Mandalas* everywhere. In all religions, all spiritual traditions, great art, great literature, we find *Mandalas* everywhere. One has only got to think of some of our great English cathedrals, some of the great continental cathedrals with their enormous rose windows filled with stained glass of beautiful colours, where you have all these, as it were, filaments raying out from a centre - these are *Mandalas*. In the same way, all patterns of stars, with rays streaming from a central point, all sorts of jewel-like structures, flowers - especially lotuses, chrysanthemums and so on, also wheels - these are all very often *Mandalas*.

And everywhere, wherever we encounter them, whether in the east or in the west, whether in art or literature or religion or philosophy or in dreams - they all have the same significance. They all represent a resolution, or at least the beginnings of the resolution, of this great conflict between the conscious and the unconscious. They all represent a re-integration of the total psyche on higher and ever higher levels - a re-integration in which nothing is left out - no element is excluded or repressed - everything finds its proper place in one complete and harmonious, completely organised and unified pattern.

The Buddhist *Mandalas* represent or symbolise this integration or are a symbol of this integration on the highest possible level, which is the level of complete or supreme Enlightenment. And the fact that Enlightenment can be thought of, can be conceived, can be pictured in this way, shows that Enlightenment isn't just a blank, featureless, inert sort of state, something just negative. Usually when we speak about Nirvana or you speak about Enlightenment, people get the impression, "Well, how dreary - a sort of just void, some sort of great empty hole, as it were, in which you tumble headlong, and this is Enlightenment - a great blank - there's nothing there." After all, you are told that there's no body there, there's no mind there, no thought there, no speech there - so what is there? It seems a rather dreary sort of place, rather like the Christian heaven in a sublimated sort of way.

But really Enlightenment isn't like that, and the *Tantras* and the symbol of the *Mandala* make this clear. Enlightenment conceived or pictured in this way is a state of beauty, of harmony, even of colour. It's much better to think that Enlightenment or Nirvana is red or blue or green than that it is just as a state of nothing. It's much better to picture it pictorially than to picture it just, as it were, negatively. So this *Mandala* also represents, also symbolises the fact that Enlightenment is like this, a state of beauty as I said, harmony, colour, spiritual life and spiritual activity, not just a dull inert state.

And it's very interesting to note that historically speaking, the *Mandala* or the *Mandala* symbol arose at a very critical stage in the history of Indian Buddhism - at the very end of the *Mahayana* period and at the beginning of the *Vajrayana* period - that is when the *Mandala*, as it were, emerged on the stage of Buddhist history. So why? What had happened? In those days, the last days of the dominance of the *Mahayana*, the teaching, Buddhism itself, had become very much over-intellectualised. It had retreated into the big monastic universities - you got ten, fourteen thousand monks studying, going through the old academic routine, places like Nalanda and so on, studying texts, writing commentaries, debating, refining the principles of logic and so on. And in this way, the whole teaching, the whole tradition became very very much over-intellectualised and very over-conceptualised. So the *Mandala* at this stage when Buddhism itself in India seemed to have lost contact with its own sources, when it became too intellectual, too much an affair of the conscious mind, at this point, at this stage, the *Mandala* it seems arose or emerged, and became a means of re-integration for Buddhism itself. The *Tantras* really represent a re-birth of Buddhism, not a corruption or degeneration, as many people think, without even studying these traditions, but really a rebirth, a renaissance, by establishing contact once again with the primordial depths, contact with which had been lost.

So the *Mandala* in one or another of its forms can do the same for us even today. The *Mandala* isn't just an exotic symbol, it isn't just something which floats in from the East, with all the colours of the East upon it, as it were: the *Mandala* represents or reflects, if you like, processes which are going on within each one of us all the time - certainly within all those who are attempting in any way to lead any sort of spiritual life, to achieve any sort of understanding of themselves and the universe in which they live.

Like the great Tibetan Wheel of Life, the *Mandala* also represents or is a picture of the contents of our own mind.

Now we come to our third and last question, which is perhaps the most important of all: "In what way is the *Mandala* a symbol of integration?" The question has already been answered this in very general terms, but it's time now for us to be more specific.

First of all, let us take a closer look at some of the details of the standard or typical *Mandala*. After that I shall have something to say about some of the sexual symbols of the *Tantras* in general and the *Mandala* in particular.

Let's consider first of all the two extreme points of the *Mandala* - that is to say, the centre and the circumference.

At the centre of the *Mandala* is a symbol or image, and this symbol or image at the centre, the central point, represents the nucleus of the new self, born out of the conflicts of the old: that nucleus around which the entire contents of the psyche at all levels must now be grouped and organised. In the *Mandala* of the Five Buddhas, of course, at the centre is Vairocana - in other words, Enlightenment itself.

Now let's go to the circumference. At the circumference of the *Mandala*, we find three concentric circles. First of all, the outermost circle is a circle of flames. Within that is a circle of *vajras*, within that a circle of lotuses. These three circles enclosing the whole *Mandala*. What do these three signify?

Flame, fire, is a symbol of transmutation, transformation. One must imagine, as it were, the *Mandala* as a sort of disc of light, a disc of light standing out, as it were, against the darkness of the unconscious, and one must imagine, one must see, as it were, that this disc of light has fiery edges - that its edges are, as it were, burning, and burning the surrounding darkness. In other words the light of consciousness, not just the consciousness of the intellect, but the light of the higher consciousness is transmuting, burning the surrounding darkness, the surrounding chaotic forces of the unconscious. Not only burning them and transmuting them, but transforming them into various beautiful shapes which can then be admitted within the limits, within the confines, of the *Mandala*. So this is the significance of the circle of flames, the outermost circle of the *Mandala*.

Next, within that, is the circle of *vajras*; of diamonds or thunderbolts; placed end to end just like a chain round. So the *vajra* of course is the thunderbolt or diamond, it is indestructible, and it represents the transcendental, the Absolute, if you like. So it signifies the fact that the *Mandala* is a higher state of consciousness, a sort of higher self, if you like (a psychological rather than a theological higher self) which cannot be destroyed - a sacral area which cannot be destroyed by the forces of the unconscious. Here the symbolism is linked with that of the Buddha's diamond throne, the *Vajrasana*, which we mentioned the week before last - the *Vajrasana* represents that point of absolute, immutable stability, that transcendental space, as it were, on which the Buddha seats himself to gain Enlightenment. So the diamond always represents this, the *vajra* always represents this, the sort of consecrated, immutable, sacrosanct area which cannot be touched, which at the highest level is the area of Enlightenment itself - the *Bodhi Mandala*, as it's called.

Then within the circle of *vajras* is the circle of lotuses. The *Mandala* itself is a lotus and it's surrounded by lotuses and the lotus is always a symbol of spiritual rebirth, spiritual awakening, if you like of initiation, and in both Buddhist and Hindu mythology a cosmic lotus, often a golden lotus, floats on the waters of existence. The waters are the primordial unconscious if you like, the lotus is consciousness which is born there, which arises there, which opens there. So in the *Mandala*, we've got the same sort of symbolism transposed to the highest level. Rebirth, awakening, if you like initiation at the highest level; that of Enlightenment.

Now in between the second and the third circle, the circle of *vajras* and the circle of lotuses, one often finds a circle of eight graveyards. Strictly speaking these are burning grounds, cremation grounds. What do these signify? In India, as you know, cremation is very widely practised: usually they don't bury their dead, they burn them. So the burning ground is yet another symbol of transmutation. The burning ground is, as it were, the gateway between two worlds; the lower world, this earth; and the higher world - if you like, the world of the heavens.

I remember that in the East I've seen this quite clearly a number of times. I remember one particular cremation where I officiated, it was a friend of mine who had died, a very old lady. Her children were also friends of mine. So we took the body at about four o'clock in the afternoon on a lorry down to the River Tista, down from Kalimpong and the body was cremated on the banks of the River Tista. And we set fire to the pyre with the body on it just as the sun was setting. And it was very beautiful in a way - one had all the four elements there. There was earth, that is to say, the riverbank; there was water, the river flowing by; there was fire, of course, fire was there burning the corpse; there was air, the sky, and as the sun set the stars came out, and I think I can say I have rarely, if ever, seen a more beautiful scene than this. The water and the earth below, the sky above, and in

between, the fire, the pyre, burning with the corpse on it. One could see very clearly how the fire and the pyre were symbols of transmutation, the gateway as it were from one world, a lower world, to a higher world. One could literally see the physical body being transmuted by the fire into something subtler - into smoke, into ash which was eventually just blown away. The last ashes are usually thrown into the river and nothing is left - the transmutation, the transformation is complete.

So the graveyard, the cremation ground, symbolises something of this sort; the transmutation of the lower into the higher - the transmutation of the individual, the human, mind into the higher mind, the Universal Consciousness.

But why eight graveyards in the *Mandala*? Why eight? All these numbers have a significance in Buddhism. The eight graveyards or eight burning grounds represent the eight *vijnanas*, the eight discriminative consciousnesses. And as we saw in the third lecture, these eight *vijnanas* must all be transformed and transmuted into the Five Wisdoms.

Now I could mention many more details of the *Mandala*, but there's no time. Just one more point, though, before we pass onto the sexual symbolism. Within the three circles of the *Mandala*, the three circles I've just mentioned is a palace. This palace is the *Mandala* proper. The five divisions of the *Mandala* with the Five Buddhas are all located here. The symbolism of the palace, by the way, is a whole subject in itself, I'm not going into that - at present I'm concerned with just one point, and the point is that the palace has four gates opening towards each of the four directions, and each gate has a guardian, a very dreadful, a very terrible figure, usually black or blue, very wrathful in appearance with a red tongue hanging out, glaring eyes, a great thick body, and surrounded by flames. So what is this?

This is the guardian of the gate, guardian of the gate of the *Mandala*, guardian if you like of the integrity of that higher self. But it's not just a guardian - it's not just a question of keeping out the surging forces of the unconscious. The guardian is ready also to take the offensive - to sally forth from the gate.

In other words, the higher consciousness must not only defend itself against the inroads of unconsciousness - it must actively appropriate the contents of the unconscious and transform them, transmute them and include them within the *Mandala*. So that in a sense the *Mandala* gets bigger and bigger, including more and more until eventually, we are told, in a sense the whole earth, the whole of existence - at least the whole psyche - becomes one great *Mandala*, with everything integrated, everything harmonised - and that state is the state of Enlightenment.

Now let us come onto the sexual symbolism of the *Tantras* and the *Mandala*. We've described the Five Buddhas - white, blue, yellow, red, green, but we've described them singly, by themselves. But they're usually represented with their consorts. These consorts are the Five Wisdoms. Now the Five Wisdoms here are not to be confused with the Five Wisdoms already mentioned. In Sanskrit, the first Five Wisdoms, those already mentioned, are the Five *Jnanas*, these are the Five *Prajnas*. Both words are translated as Wisdom. So these are the Five Wisdoms in the sense of the Five *Prajnas*. These are also known as the Five Female Buddhas. Some of you might be surprised to learn that there are female Buddhas - you probably thought that only masculine Buddhas exist - but no, not in the *Tantras*. Everywhere else only male Buddhas, but in the *Tantras*, you get female Buddhas, too. And they're also known as the Five Great *Dakinis*.

Vairocana, the Illuminator, has as his consort Vajradhateshvari, which means the Lady of the Sphere of Infinite Space. Vairocana himself represents the sun or the light or the rays of the sun, and his consort, the Lady of the Sphere of Infinite Space, represents the infinity of space through which the light shines.

Akshobya, the Imperturbable, has for his consort Lochana, which means the Seeing one, the One with an Eye, in other words, awareness, knowingness.

Ratnasambhava, the Jewel producing, has for his consort Mamaki. Mamaki means Mine-maker, because the Enlightened Mind regards all things, all beings, as its own, as 'mine' - not in a sense of belonging to me, but mine in the sense of my own, dear to me, beloved by me. So Mamaki is that aspect, if you like of the Buddha Mind, the Buddha Nature, the Enlightened Mind, which regards all things as dear, all things as beloved and so on.

Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light, has for his consort Pandaravasini, the White-Robed One, also known as the White Tara, who is a form in her own right also.

Then Amoghasiddhi, Infallible Success, has as his consort Tara, the Green Tara which means the Saviouress. She represents the saving, the redeeming power of Enlightenment.

Now we come to an important point. All these five Buddhas are represented in the Tantras as being in sexual union with their five consorts. Not only so far as the description of the *Mandala* is concerned, but also iconographically in images and thangkhas. They are always shown in sexual embrace. Now some people naturally find this rather surprising, and some find it even rather shocking that religious representations should be of this sort, that a Buddha and a female Buddha should even be represented in statues and paintings as in sexual embrace. But the attitude of the Tibetans and the Nepalese is quite different. They regard representations of this sort as being particularly sacred; a rather different attitude from our own. When a Tibetan sees a representation of this sort, whether in the form of an image, or a picture or a painting on the wall, he is not shocked. There is no reaction of an erotic nature. There is no little giggle, no little laugh or anything like that. I've seen myself on many occasions, there's a Tibetan going into a temple or gompa with these sorts of paintings on the wall and at once, he says, "Ah, Yab-Yum". At once his attitude is one of devotion and respect. So we have to try to understand the meaning of these things.

The Buddha, that is to say, the masculine Buddha, represents the active Compassion aspect of Enlightenment. His consort, the female Buddha, represents the passive Wisdom aspect of Enlightenment. And the sexual embrace, the sexual union, represents the inseparable unity of these two elements, these two aspects. They are not two persons. Iconographically they are two persons, but spiritually, truly, they are just one person, one Enlightened Mind fully integrated at the highest possible level - Wisdom fully integrated with Compassion; Compassion fully integrated with Wisdom.

Integration is necessary of course not only at the highest level, but all levels and all aspects of the spiritual life. And therefore one finds in the *Tantras*, in *Tantric* literature sexual symbolism repeated again and again and again. Just to give one rather striking, not to say extraordinary example, in many *Tantras*, the person practising, according to the *Tantric* discipline, is advised (one can see this in the *Hevajra Tantra* also) that he should have intercourse with an untouchable or low caste maiden. This comes again and again. One is told that it would be a very good, a very desirable thing, if one were to have intercourse with a low-caste, an untouchable, maiden. Now what does this mean? Surely this is an extraordinary thing - the *Tantras* are supposed to be leading you to Enlightenment, but apparently they are encouraging immorality. So therefore some people have said "Well, the *Tantras*, ooh, well they're the lowest depths of Buddhism, a total degradation, a betrayal, of the Buddha's teaching!" and their hair stands on end when you mention the *Tantras* (if they have any hair, that is!).

So what does it mean? The clue to all this is in 'untouchable' or 'low caste'. Why an *untouchable* maiden? Why a *low caste* girl? Why have intercourse with her rather than with a beautiful Brahmin maiden, for instance? This is very interesting. In India, we all know, the caste system is very rigid. Originally, there were four castes, the Brahmins, or the priests, the Kshatriyas, or the warriors, the Vaishyas, or the traders and the Shudras, or the labourers. But they became divided and subdivided, and now you've got about two thousand subdivisions. And many of them do not intermarry, do not interdine, and observe various forms of purity and impurity as among themselves. And the Untouchables and the outcasts, are right at the very bottom of this system. And they are looked down upon by the higher castes: an untouchable or an outcast, a washerman or a barber, is regarded down here, as just dirt to the higher caste man. And the higher caste man when they see a lower caste man or woman says "They're so low: they're uncultured, they're very immoral; they've got all sorts of dirty habits, they don't wash..." and so on and so forth. This is the attitude of the higher castes towards the lower castes: in other words, psychologically, the higher castes project onto the lower caste people their own unrecognised bad or evil selves.

And I've seen this for myself very clearly in India in the course of my own contacts with Indians of various castes. The higher castes project, project their own shadow, if you like, onto the Untouchables, onto the lower caste people, just as you may say the white Americans do very often to the Negroes. If you have a dream of a black man, a Negro, according to some analysts, it very often represents your own shadow side.

So it's just the same with these Untouchables. So in this way, the Untouchables, especially Untouchable women, become identified with the unconscious in the widest sense. The higher castes of course are the more

conscious, the more cultured, the more intellectual - and actually it is so that the higher caste in India, especially the Brahmins, are very, very intellectual. People at the other end of the scale are not so intellectual - they're much more emotional. I've seen this for myself in my own experience. So the higher castes represent the standpoint of the conscious mind.

So the *Tantras* are saying as it were, to the person of this type, that no spiritual progress is possible unless you recognise the unconscious. Unless you overcome that gulf, that cleavage, unless you, as it were, marry the untouchable girl, who represents in social terms, your own unrecognised unconscious, not just your repressed part, but the whole deeper unrealised side of your psychic life.

So this is a rather dramatic illustration of the way in which the *Mandala* functions as a means of integration. You can imagine what a shock it gave some respectable Brahmin or some holy monk when he read these texts and he read that he had to have intercourse with an untouchable girl. Well, the shock itself which he got should have got him thinking, "Well, why should I be shocked?" So this is how the symbolism of the *Mandala* helps as a means of integration. This is just one example which could be given out of many.

But it's time to close now. But before we close, a reminder.

As I've said, the *Mandala* is not just an exotic symbol. It's not just of artistic interest. We all suffer from psychic disintegration, a disintegration no less chronic than the Indian split between Brahmin and Untouchable. So we too are in need of a means of integration. We too must find that higher third, that higher point, that nucleus, which reconciles conscious and unconscious. And around that we have to organise, re-organise, re-integrate our own psychic contents, must give birth, if you like, to our own *Mandala*, and then we shall truly understand for ourselves, the *Mandala*, the Tantric Symbol of Integration.