

Aspects of the Bodhisattva Ideal

Lecture 66: The Awakening of the Bodhi Heart

Mr. Chairman and Friends,

The present series of lectures, as those of you who came last week will not need to be reminded, began in what we might well describe as the depths of Winter, and they will end, if we are able to carry them to a successful conclusion, as we do hope, they will end, more or less, roundabout the beginning of Spring. And in between these two events, the beginning of the series and the end of the series - in the course of these eight weeks, during which the talks will be going on - there will have been, in the world about us, in the world surrounding us, what we may describe as a rebirth, as an awakening, of nature herself. In fact we might even go so far as to say, we might even be so bold as to say, that that awakening, that rebirth, has already begun. In the course of the week, even today, the weather has been unusually mild, unusually fine. We are told it's the mildest January for twenty years, and myself when I looked out of the window, while preparing these when I saw blue skies, clear blue skies, floating white clouds, I thought that for one moment that I was back in India, back in Kalimpong. But when, of course, I looked up into the blue sky for some glimpse of the Himalayas I didn't see any Himalayas, I saw rows and rows of rooftops and chimney stacks and spires and so on, and I realised of course that after all I was back in London, in the middle, or rather towards the end of January. But be that as it may, we know, we feel sure in our bones that Spring is in fact on the way, and it is therefore perhaps appropriate that tonight's lecture should deal with another kind of awakening, with another kind of rebirth on another plane. Should deal in short with a spiritual awakening, an awakening of the heart, an awakening of the spirit, should deal with an awakening of which Spring herself, nature, in all her glory, is often regarded as the most appropriate symbol.

So tonight's talk, tonight's lecture is entitled '*The Awakening of the Bodhi Heart*', and as you've just been reminded it's the second in our series on '*Aspects of the Bodhisattva Ideal*'. But before we begin let us just very briefly give a backward glance over last week's lecture. Last week's lecture dealt - you probably remember, those of you who were here - with the origin and development of the Bodhisattva Ideal, and you may remember that we were not concerned, on that occasion, with historical, even doctrinal factors, development, etc., but rather with what we may describe as the deep, the underlying, spiritual motivations which gave birth eventually to the Bodhisattva Ideal, in the course of the efflorescence of Buddhism, especially in India. We saw, we tried to point out last week that the Bodhisattva is in fact simply the Ideal Buddhist. The Bodhisattva, as the very term itself means, as the very term suggests, the Bodhisattva is one who lives for the sake of spiritual Enlightenment, who is one pointed, who is concentrated, who has that goal, that objective, that ideal alone before his eyes, and whose total energies and interests are oriented in that direction, the realisation of that Supreme Goal, that ultimate, that overarching goal, or Enlightenment.

So we saw therefore that the Bodhisattva Ideal was in general a statement, a broad statement a succinct statement, of the Buddhist ideal itself, the ideal of the attainment of Enlightenment, Buddhahood. The ideal, to put it into slightly more modern terminology, the ideal of the Higher Evolution, of the evolution of humanity in the person of its most gifted sons and daughters, from an unenlightened to an Enlightened state, a state of Enlightened humanity or Buddhahood. But we saw that the Bodhisattva, the Bodhisattva Ideal itself was at the same time rather more than that. We saw that the Bodhisattva was further defined as 'one who seeks to gain Enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings'. Not just one who seeks to gain Enlightenment, there's an amplification here, one who seeks to gain it for the sake of all sentient beings. So why the amplification? - Why that qualification, why that rider? - for the sake of all sentient beings, and in pursuing and exploring this matter we saw that after the parinirvana, after what we would call the death of the Buddha, which was simply the withdrawal of his physical form, amongst his disciples, especially his monastic disciples there arose two parties. Two parties. One party was quite satisfied with the Buddha's verbal teaching - Four Truths, the Eightfold Path, the Five Skandhas, the Twelve Nidanas - they concentrated on this and they thought "Here is Buddhism".

So they were satisfied with, they were contented with the verbal teaching. They identified this with Buddhism, they regarded this as constituting the whole of Buddhism, the teaching the verbal teaching.

But the other party, or rather the disciples who belonged to the other party, and they seemed to have been in the majority, were not so satisfied. They of course accepted the verbal teaching, they fully recognised the value and the importance of teachings like those of the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path and the Five Skandhas and the Twelve Nidanas, but they felt that this was not all, they felt that Buddhism wasn't just the verbal teaching. They felt that it was rather more than that. They felt that the personal life, the personal example of the Buddha himself also entered into the question. They felt that these two should be taken into consideration in any formulation of the teaching. They considered, in other words, that what the Buddha personally was by virtue of his supreme spiritual attainment, and what he did, these were at least as important as what he had actually said.

And we summarised the matter, as it were by saying that the verbal teaching of the Buddha gave expression to his Wisdom, but his life, his Enlightened life and activity, gave expression to his love and to his Compassion. And the second party among the disciples, the majority party, they contended that Buddhism comprises both of these

together, that it comprises both the Wisdom revealed in the teaching and the love revealed in the life, and it therefore also held that both were to be taken into consideration in the formulation of the spiritual ideal. And to underline this, as it were, to accentuate this, as it were, they said that the Bodhisattva, the ideal Buddhist, seeks to gain Enlightenment - yes, by all means - this gives expression to the Wisdom aspect of Buddhism, but they also said in addition that he seeks to gain Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, and this gives expression to the Compassion aspect of Buddhism. And in this way we see that the Bodhisattva Ideal is a balanced ideal, a balanced spiritual ideal. It derives its inspiration, not only from what the Buddha said, not only from the verbal teaching, but also from what he was and what he did. In other words the Bodhisattva Ideal incorporates, integrates, both Wisdom and Compassion. And it was in this way, out of these considerations, out of these sort of spiritual stresses, that the Bodhisattva Ideal, historically speaking, arose.

Now, having understood who or what a Bodhisattva is, there arises a most important, practical question, and that question is: How does one become a Bodhisattva? How does one embark upon the actual realization of this sublime, spiritual ideal, the Bodhisattva Ideal? And this is where we come in this week.

So let us, without further ado plunge straight into our subject. And the answer to this question - How does one become a Bodhisattva? - the answer to this question is quite short and quite straightforward, but it will require, it does demand in fact, considerable explanation. And the traditional answer to the question is: one becomes a Bodhisattva, one becomes one fully oriented in the direction of Enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings upon the Awakening of the Bodhi Heart. Upon the Awakening of the Bodhi Heart, and this, of course, is our subject for this week - 'The Awakening of the Bodhi Heart'.

Let us go back for a moment to the original Sanskrit term. And this is *bodhicitta-utpada*. *Bodhi* means of course, as we saw last week, 'spiritual Enlightenment', or 'spiritual awakening', which consists in the seeing of Reality face to face. *Citta* is one of these very ambiguous, multi-meaningful terms, which one encounters so often when one studies Buddhist Sanskrit. *Citta* means 'mind', it means 'thought', it means 'consciousness', it means also 'heart'; it means all of these things. *Utpada* means simply 'arising' or, if you like, more poetically, 'awakening'.

So this term, the *bodhicitta-utpada*, is one of the most important terms, we may say, in the whole field of Buddhism, certainly in the whole field of the Mahayana. And it is usually translated into English as 'the arising of the thought of Enlightenment', but let me say at once that this is exactly what it is not. In a sense you could hardly have a worse translation. It's not a thought about Enlightenment at all. We can think about Enlightenment as much as we like. We can read about it, think about it, talk about it. 'Enlightenment is both Wisdom and Compassion' the words come very glibly from our tongues, and we think we know all about Enlightenment. We are thinking about Enlightenment perhaps even now. We are thinking about Enlightenment. The thought about Enlightenment undoubtedly has arisen in our minds as we sit here, but the Bodhicitta has not arisen - we haven't become transformed, as we sit here, into Bodhisattvas. So the Bodhicitta is not just a thought of, a thought about Enlightenment, it's something very very much more than that indeed. Guenther translates it as 'Enlightened Attitude'. I personally sometimes translate it (I translated it like this in my recent *Three Jewels*) as the 'Will to Enlightenment'. And in the title of tonight's talk we speak of it as the 'Bodhi Heart'. And all these alternative translations - 'Enlightened attitude', 'will to Enlightenment', 'Bodhi Heart' - these are all considerably better than the 'thought of Enlightenment', but none of these renditions is really satisfactory. (This isn't altogether the fault of the English language. We may say it's the fault of language itself. We might even go so far as to say that 'Bodhicitta' is a very unsatisfactory term for the Bodhicitta.) The Bodhicitta is, in fact, not a mental state or activity, or function at all. It is certainly not a 'thought'. It's certainly not a thought which you or I can entertain. If we think of Enlightenment, that is not the Bodhicitta. It has nothing to do with thought. It is not even an 'act of will' I mean my personal will. It is not even 'being conscious', if by that I mean my being conscious or your being conscious of Enlightenment, or the fact that there is such a thing as 'Enlightenment'. The Bodhicitta is none of these things.

We may say that the Bodhicitta represents basically the manifestation, even the irruption, within us, of something transcendental. Something transcendental. In traditional terms - and I am thinking now of Nagarjuna's exposition of the Bodhicitta in a little work which he wrote on that subject - a very short but very profound work - in traditional terms the Bodhicitta is said to be not included in the 'Five *Skandhas*'. This is a very significant statement indeed, which gives us a tremendous clue to the nature of the Bodhicitta. Its not being included in the Five *Skandhas*. And this statement of Nagarjuna, representing the best Mahayana tradition, requires a great deal of pondering.

Some of you might not have encountered these 'Five *Skandhas*' before. *Skandha* is another of those untranslatable terms. It usually is translated as 'aggregate', or 'confection', or something equally unsatisfactory. It is really untranslatable. It literally means 'the trunk of a tree', but that doesn't get us very far, does it! But the 'Five *Skandhas*' are one of the basic, Buddhist doctrinal categories. Whether it's Pali literature, Sanskrit literature, Tibetan, Chinese, over and over again you get references to the 'Five *Skandhas*', the 'Five Aggregates', or, as Dr.

Conze delights to translate the term, the 'Five Heaps', which doesn't help us very much either! So what are these Five Skandhas. Let's refer back to them a little, so that we are quite sure where we are, and what we are dealing with and what we are trying to ponder on.

The Five Skandhas are first of all *rupa*. Rupa means 'bodily form'. In modern Hindi it means beauty, but that is also neither here nor there, simply bodily form. Anything perceived through the senses.

Secondly *vedana*. Vedana means 'feeling', it means 'emotion' - positive, negative, pleasant, painful, and so on.

Thirdly there is *samjna*, which is, very roughly, very roughly indeed, 'perception'. Sometimes it is translated 'sensation', but it seems that 'sensation' is a more suitable translation for vedana. So samjna is perception, the recognition of something as that particular thing. When you say, "that's a cloth", that is samjna; you've recognized it as this particular thing, you've identified it, pointed it out, labelled it, and so on.

Fourthly, the *samskaras*. More and more untranslatable. Usually translated by some German scholars, 'steering forces'. But we may say, very roughly indeed, 'volitional activities', acts of will, and so on.

And, fifthly, *vijnana*, or 'consciousness': consciousness through the five physical senses, through the mind at various levels and so on.

So these are the 'Five Skandhas': *rupa* (material form), *vedana* (feeling, emotion), *samjna* (perception), *samskaras* (volitional activities), *vijnana* (consciousness). And I must warn you that if you want to make anything of Buddhist thought at all, especially on its more technical side (its philosophy, its metaphysics), you must know these five off like that - rupa, vedana and so on. You must be able to reel them off, and know what you are talking about, otherwise you don't get very far with Buddhist philosophy. Now we are not dealing now so much with Buddhist philosophy. This is just by the way, but we may say that in Buddhist thought, generally speaking, these five, these 'Five Skandhas' are regarded as exhausting our entire psychophysical existence. In the entire range of our psychophysical existence, on all levels, there's nothing - no thought, no feeling, no aspect of our physical existence which does not fall under, which is not included in one or another of these 'Five Skandhas', these Five Aggregates, these Five Heaps. And this is why, at the very beginning of the *Heart Sutra*, what does it say, what does the text say? - that the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, coursing in the profound Perfection of Wisdom, looked down, looked down on the world (looked down on conditioned existence), and saw Five Heaps (Five Skandhas). That is just what he saw. No more than that. He saw that the whole of conditioned existence, psychophysical conditioned existence, consists of just these five things; that nothing occurs, nothing takes place, nothing exists, on the conditioned level of existence (the *samskrta* level) which is not includable under one or another of these 'Five Skandhas'.

But the Bodhicitta is not included in the 'Five Skandhas', The Five Aggregates, the Five Heaps. So what does this mean? The 'Five Skandhas' comprise all that is phenomenal, all that is conditioned, all that is of this world. So when we say that the Bodhicitta is not included in the 'Five Skandhas', it means that it is something altogether out of this world, something transcendental. Certainly not a thought, certainly not a volition, but something out of this world, something, as I've said, transcendental. Not a thought, not an idea, not a concept, but - if we must use words at all - a profound, spiritual (read 'transcendental') experience: an experience which orients, which re-oriens our whole existence, our entire being, our total nature.

Perhaps I can make this rather obscure matter clearer with the help of a comparison - and it is only a comparison - from the Christian tradition. You can imagine someone in a Christian context talking about 'thinking of God'. When you talk about 'thinking of God', even if you are a pious churchgoing person, it doesn't mean very much, does it?. You just think about God. You wouldn't describe that as a spiritual experience or anything like that. You might think of God as a beautiful old gentleman seated in the clouds, or you might think of God as Pure Being, Knowledge, Wisdom and so on. But 'thinking about God' would just be thinking about God. So not a very profound sort of experience. But suppose then you think in terms of, or you speak of 'the descent of the Holy Ghost' or 'the descent of the Holy Spirit', this would be a very different thing indeed. Thinking about God is one thing, but having the Holy Spirit descend upon you, and into you, so that you are filled by the Holy Spirit, this is a quite different sort of thing.

So it is just the same in the case of 'thinking about Enlightenment' (or the 'thought of Enlightenment') on the one hand - just something mental, intellectual - and the actual arising of the Bodhicitta on the other. If the thought of Enlightenment is analogous to thinking about God, the arising, the awakening, of the Bodhicitta, the Bodhi Heart, is analogous to the descent upon you - in full force, as it were - of the Holy Spirit. Now this comparison is just for the purpose of illustration - if possible, illumination. There's no question of equating these two different

sets of doctrinal and spiritual concepts. I am concerned only to try to make clear the nature of the difference between these two things. That the Bodhicitta is not just a thought, not just an idea, about Enlightenment, but a profound spiritual experience, even a profound spiritual, transcendental 'entity', if you like.

Now not only is the Bodhicitta transcendental, but the Bodhicitta is not individual. This is another point that Nagarjuna makes, it's not individual. We speak of the Bodhicitta as arising in this person or that person, and one might then therefore think that there were in existence a number of Bodhicittas - there's your Bodhicitta and your Bodhicitta and my Bodhicitta - apparently a glorious plurality of Bodhicittas arising in different people, making them all Bodhisattvas. But in fact, it isn't so at all. Just as the Bodhicitta is not a thought of Enlightenment, in the same way, it's not an individual thing - it is not anybody's individually - so there is no plurality of Bodhicittas arising in different people just like ideas or thoughts, different ideas, different thoughts might arise in different people, even if they were thoughts of the same thing. Your thought of Enlightenment is your thought of Enlightenment, my thought of Enlightenment is my thought of Enlightenment; there are many thoughts. But your Bodhicitta is my Bodhicitta, and my Bodhicitta is your Bodhicitta; there is only one Bodhicitta.

The Bodhicitta is only one, and individuals in whom the Bodhicitta is said to have arisen participate in that one Bodhicitta, or manifest that one Bodhicitta, in varying degrees. And of course the Mahayana writers bring in that very well-worn, but still very beautiful, illustration of the moon, the full moon. (I don't know whether it is full moon day tonight. I think perhaps it's tomorrow. But we have outside, as you probably noticed as you came along, a very, very beautiful, almost full, moon, shining in the clear blue sky, with just one or two stars in, as it were, attendance.) So this old Buddhist illustration or simile tells us that the Bodhicitta is like the moon (like, if you like, the full moon), and it's reflected, as it were, in different people, arises in different people, just as the moon is reflected variously in different bodies of water. There are many reflections, but one moon. In the same way, many manifestations, but one Bodhicitta.

Now, though we've used the expression 'reflection', which is a bit static, we are not to think of the Bodhicitta in purely static terms. What is known in the Mahayana tradition as the 'Absolute Bodhicitta' - the Bodhicitta in its Absolute aspect, outside space and time - this Absolute Bodhicitta is identical with Reality itself. And being identical with Reality, the Absolute Bodhicitta is as such beyond change, or rather, we may say, is beyond the opposition between change and non-change. But this doesn't hold good of what is known to the tradition as the 'relative Bodhicitta'. The relative Bodhicitta is, as it were, an active force, an active force at work. And this is why, as I said a little while ago, I prefer, personally, if I have to translate the term 'Bodhicitta', to speak of it as the 'Will to Enlightenment' (bearing in mind that one is speaking of the relative, as distinct from the Absolute, Bodhicitta). The Will to Enlightenment. But this Will to Enlightenment is not an act of will of any individual. The Bodhicitta is not something which I will. Just as it is not my thought, it's not my will. The Bodhicitta is no more an act of anybody's individual will than it is anybody's individual thought. We might, in fact - though here we have rather to grope for words - think of the Bodhicitta as a sort of 'Cosmic will'. (I don't quite like to use this word 'will', but there's really no other.) A sort of cosmic will. If you like a will at work in the world, at work in the universe, in the direction of what we can only think of as universal redemption: the liberation, the Enlightenment, ultimately, of all sentient beings.

We may even think of the Bodhicitta as a sort of 'spirit of Enlightenment', immanent in the world, and leading individuals to higher and ever higher degrees of spiritual perfection. So, this being the case, it is clear that individuals do not possess the Bodhicitta. If you possess it, it's not the Bodhicitta (it's something else; it's your own thought, it's your own idea); but the Bodhicitta - the transcendental, non-individual, cosmic Bodhicitta - you've missed, you've got hold of something else. Individuals do not possess the Bodhicitta. We may say that it is the Bodhicitta that possesses individuals. And those of whom the Bodhicitta 'takes possession', as it were, in whom this Bodhicitta arises, or within whom it manifests, become what we call 'Bodhisattvas'. They live, that is to say, for the sake of Enlightenment; they strive to actualize, for the benefit of all, the highest potentialities that the universe contains.

So much, then, for the Bodhicitta. Very much more could be said about it. Some of the Mahayana sutras in particular, are never tired of singing the praises of the Bodhicitta. I remember that a few years ago, when I was in Kalimpong, I was compiling a book on Buddhist canonical literature, the whole field of Buddhist canonical literature. And I came, amongst other things, to the Mahayana sutras, and among other sutras to the *Gandavyuha*, and I wanted to quote just a few verses of what the *Gandavyuha* said in one place about the Bodhicitta. And, believe it or not, there were hundreds and hundreds of clauses, and hundreds and hundreds of illustrations, comparing the Bodhicitta to this, comparing it to that, comparing it to a gold mine, comparing it to the sun, comparing it to the moon, comparing it to everything, and you got the impression, after going through this vast array or similes and comparisons, that the Bodhicitta for the Mahayana author (traditionally, of course, the Buddha), of the sutra, the Bodhicitta was just everything. It was hymned and it was praised almost as though it were a sort of deity. You certainly didn't get the impression of someone's thought or someone's idea, but something vast, something cosmic, something sublime, which descends into, and penetrates, and possesses,

people who are receptive to it. Not anything individual, not anything limited in any way. So the Mahayana sutras (not only the *Gandavyuha*, but many other sutras) sing the praises of the Bodhicitta inexhaustibly.

But tonight we have no time to say anything more on the subject of the Bodhicitta, so this must suffice for the present. A further question arises for our consideration, to which we now have to turn. All right, we have understood what a Bodhisattva is, we have understood how one becomes a Bodhisattva through this arising within one of this glorious Bodhicitta, but the question which arises is: How does the Bodhicitta itself arise? How does it come to manifest itself within us. And this is a very mysterious matter, it's a very deep, a very dark and a very difficult matter. The Mahayana sutras supply one of their unfailing similes. They say that the arising of the Bodhicitta within us is like a blind man finding a priceless jewel on a dunghill at night. This is what the arising of the Bodhicitta within us is like. It is so wonderful, it is so unexpected - who would think that a blind man just poking his way round the dunghill in the middle of the night would find a priceless jewel? So, in the same way, who would have thought that in our case, living as we are in the midst of the world - earning our living, doing our jobs, raising our families, going along to meditation classes once a week - who would have thought that in us this Bodhicitta should ever have arisen? So this is the sort of comparison, this is the sort of simile that the Mahayana sutras give.

But, wonderful as it is, unexpected as it is, the arising of the Bodhicitta is not altogether, in fact not at all, a matter of chance. It is one of the general most fundamental principles of Buddhist thought, Buddhist philosophy, that whatever arises in the world, in the universe, at any level, arises in dependence on causes and conditions; not by chance, not as a result of 'fate', not as a result of the 'will of God', but in dependence upon natural - and even the supernatural is natural - causes and conditions. And this applies also to the arising, in the sense of the manifestation, the breaking out, the breaking forth, of the Bodhicitta within us. The emergence of the Bodhicitta within us. That event, that phenomenon, depends upon the creation of certain mental and spiritual conditions. And these mental and spiritual conditions, in dependence upon which the Bodhicitta can manifest itself within us, these conditions we can create within ourselves. And when we create them, the Bodhicitta will then arise.

Now this fact draws our attention to a most important principle of the entire spiritual life, and that is the need for preparation. The need for preparation. We are usually, most of us, in far too much of a hurry. I don't mean just that we are working hard. I don't mean just that we are putting a lot of effort into things. I don't even mean that we are doing things quickly. I mean that we are just in too much of a hurry. This means that we usually want results rather quickly. And, because we are so anxious to secure the results we very often neglect the preparations, we neglect the very conditions upon which the results depend. And this is one of the reasons, if not the main reason, why we so often don't succeed, why we so often fail. But, on the other hand, if we make sufficiently careful preparations we can usually quite safely leave the results to look after themselves, and we shall find that we almost succeed without noticing it.

This applies, one might say, very much to meditation. If one wants to meditate, for instance at home, how should one go about it, not just sit down and just think you can meditate, just maybe leave the telephone or finish doing the washing-up and sit down and meditate - no, that isn't possible. What should one do? Well in the East there is a tradition that when one wants to meditate, you should first of all go into the room in which you are going to meditate, in which you are about to meditate, and, very slowly and carefully, you sweep the room, you sweep the floor with a broom, and you dust the room, you tidy the room - if necessary, you dust the image of the Buddha there. Doing it all very slowly, gently, mindfully. And then in a meditative sort of mood you change the flowers; you throw away the old flowers - in some Eastern countries you throw them into running water, not on the dust heap - and you cut perhaps fresh flowers, you put them in a vase, you arrange them thoughtfully: you take your time over it. Then, you light maybe a candle, maybe light a stick of incense. You look around, just to see that everything is in order - maybe the window open for a bit of fresh air, the door shut to keep out disturbances. Then you arrange your seat, make sure it is placed square, and that if you are sitting on a piece of cloth it is properly folded, and then you sit down. You just adjust your clothing, put your feet into the proper posture - your hands. Even then, very often, you won't start meditating, you'll recite the Refuges, the Precepts, a few invocations to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And then you will start meditating - and only then. And if one proceeds in this way, preparing, paving the way, then there is a very much greater chance of success. Not just with regard to meditation, but even with regard to comparatively ordinary, daily activities. If you want to write something, if you want to paint a picture even. Even if you want to cook, the secret lies in the preparation. It is just the same with regard to this matter of the arising of the Bodhicitta, the Awakening of the Bodhi Heart. One should not even think of becoming a Bodhisattva. It is not anything that you can become; it's not anything that you can sort of go into, follow a course, get a certificate - you are a Bodhisattva. (I'm sorry to say that even in the East there are establishments which give certificates of this sort and which people get framed and put up on their wall for all to see - "I'm a Stream-Entrant", or "I'm a Bodhisattva" and so on. It's a sort of ecclesiastical rank or dignity, which is nonsense.) So it's not a question of that. One shouldn't even think of developing the Bodhicitta. One can't even do that. One can't even think of it. It's out of the question. It's a waste of time. But, one can very well think of creating within oneself the conditions which will enable the Bodhicitta to manifest.

Now there are two ways of doing this. One way is associated with the name of Santideva, the other way is associated with the name of Vasubandhu. And both are great Indian teachers, great Indian masters of the Mahayana - Santideva in the seventh, and Vasubandhu probably in the fourth, centuries AD, and both of them are traditionally recognized as being themselves Bodhisattvas. And their two methods, though different, are, we may say, complementary, and can even be combined.

Santideva's method is, frankly, more devotional. It is known as *anuttara-puja*, or 'Supreme Worship'. If you like 'Supreme Adoration' even. It consists in a series of what we may describe as seven spiritual exercises. Or we may speak of these exercises as being expressive, each of them, of a certain phase of the religious consciousness. And when we go through externally certain ceremonies, or even certain recitations, corresponding to these different phases of the religious consciousness, then the Supreme Worship is known as the 'Sevenfold Worship', which of course, we are quite familiar inasmuch as it's this 'Sevenfold Puja' - or Sevenfold Worship - that we recite every Friday evening after our lecture, before we disperse. But, though we perform externally - though we recite with our lips - we must always recollect that the Supreme Worship, even the 'Sevenfold Puja', is essentially a sequence of devotional and spiritual moods and experiences, which, between them, pave the way for experience of, the manifestation of, the arising of the Bodhicitta. Now many of you are familiar with the Supreme Worship, many of you are familiar with the 'Sevenfold Puja', and have joined us in reciting it here in this very room but, for the benefit of those who are new to it, and those who perhaps haven't participated in it ever before, let me just very briefly go through these seven items.

First of all, there's what we call 'Worship' itself, worship proper. And this is of course addressed principally to the Buddha: not just to the human, historical figure, but to the Buddha as the symbol, the representative of the Ideal of Enlightenment itself. And when we perform puja, or when we adopt the attitude of worship within our own hearts, it means that we recognize with deep devotion, with great reverence, with awe if you like, the sublimity, the worthiness, the value, of this Ideal of gaining, of attaining Enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. And, feeling in this way, feeling so strongly, so powerfully, so profoundly filled, if you like with this devotion or with this adoration, we cannot but make offerings, we cannot but give something. And the most common, the most popular offerings, as I'm sure you know, are flowers, lights, and incense (though there are indeed many other things). And these are offered before the Buddha image, symbolising or representing, if you like, our attitude, our feeling of worship, of devotion, even, as I've said, of adoration, for that Ideal, that as yet very distant Ideal, of Supreme Enlightenment. So this is the 'Puja', the 'Worship'.

Secondly there is what is known as the 'Obeisance', which literally, of course, means 'bowing down'. And this consists simply in the payment of outward physical respect. Buddhist tradition says it is not enough just to feel something mentally. You are not just a brain, you are not just a thought, not just a 'thinker', you've got speech, you've got a body, too. So, in any religious exercise all three must participate, all three must partake - body, speech, and mind, not just the mind, not just the feelings, but the body too. So one makes an external obeisance. At least, one puts the hands together in reverence and in salutation. And this is a sort of gesture, also, of humility; we not only see the Ideal shining in the distance, but we recognize that as yet we are far from it. The Ideal is there, just like the Himalayan peaks in the distance, and we are here. We have just put our foot onto the ... I won't even say onto the road, but onto a little path, leading to a lane, leading to a road, which leads to the pathway, leading to that sublime Enlightenment. So we, as it were, bow down, we make obeisance from a distance, seeing the Ideal shining afar off. And this is what is meant by the 'Obeisance'.

Thirdly, there's the 'Going for Refuge'. Going for refuge to the Buddha, to the Dharma (or Teaching), and the Sangha (or the Spiritual Community). So what does this mean? We began in the 'Worship' by recognizing the Ideal (by just seeing it, by venerating it, responding to it emotionally); and then, in the 'Obeisance' we recognize (by our salutation, by our obeisance) the distance at which we stand from it, how far we are from it. And now, in this third stage, as it were, this third phase, of 'Going for Refuge', we commit ourselves to the actual realization of the Ideal. We recognize the Ideal 'there', we recognize that we stand 'here', and now we resolve that we will go forward from 'here' to 'there'. We commit ourselves to the realization of that Ideal; we commit ourselves to the Way leading to that realization; and we commit ourselves to the Company - the spiritual brotherhood and sisterhood - of all who walk that Way to Enlightenment along with us. So this is the 'Going for Refuge'.

Then, fourthly, 'Confession of Faults'. Some people don't feel quite happy about this - I don't know whether it is because they feel they don't have any faults, but what it really means, what it really represents is a sort of 'recognition' of the darker side of ourselves, that side of ourselves which we would rather other people did not see, which we would rather ourselves not see - which we try to forget, but which is always dogging us, always pursuing us, just like Mephistopheles dogging and pursuing Faust in Goethe's great poem. But, though we recognize this darker side, though we recognize our little weaknesses, our little shortcomings, our little backslidings, our little meannesses, our little furtivenesses, even our own, downright, plain, open, honest wickedness - this is not a matter of breastbeating. It is not a matter of proclaiming oneself the greatest sinner that ever lived. It is merely a sort of realistic appraisal of our own shortcomings and our own weaknesses, as well as

the resolve that, in future, we shall do our best to overcome them - because they are just so much luggage, just so much impedimenta, just so much extra weight that we have to carry on this journey to Enlightenment, on which, of course, we have to travel light, very light indeed. So, 'Confession of Faults'.

And then, fifthly, 'Rejoicing in Merits'. And what does this mean. This means that we think of the lives of others - good, noble, virtuous, holy people; Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, great saints and sages; even, if you like, great poets, great artists, great musicians, scientists, even ordinary people whom we know - who have exhibited, or who do exhibit, in their lives, outstanding human and spiritual qualities. We read their lives, we admire them. We read their works, we recollect them, and we think, "What a wonderful example - what heroism," or, - "what nobility, what self-sacrifice, what fortitude, what determination, what purity, what love, what compassion!" And we derive tremendous encouragement and inspiration from all this. We think, "Isn't this a marvellous thing that here in this world, this wicked world, where one can encounter so much meanness and so much misery, well at least from time to time, there do appear people of this sort", You meet them, and you feel a little better, you feel a little uplifted; you read about them even, you feel a little better, you feel a little uplifted, that the world can't be such a bad place. And you rejoice in the fact that the world can produce people of this sort. You rejoice in the fact that good and holy and enlightened people live at every age of human history, in every part of the world, succouring and helping the rest of humanity in so many different ways - whether saint or sage or teacher or mystic, or even as a scientist or administrator, or as a humble worker in a hospital, or anything of that sort - a visitor to prison - anybody who helps in any way to lift, to raise humanity to higher, more divine heights.

So this is what is meant by 'Rejoicing in Merits': feeling happy in their virtues, feeling happy in their good qualities. Not denigrating, not debunking - which now seems to be the fashion - but appreciating, and enjoying, and feeling happy in the contemplation of other people's good qualities and good deeds and good nature.

And then, sixthly, 'Entreaty and Supplication'. And what does this mean? This means that we request those who are more enlightened than ourselves to teach us. It doesn't mean that unless we ask they are not going to teach. It doesn't mean that they have to be begged or cajoled into teaching. This expresses or should express our own attitude of inner readiness and receptivity. We are saying, as it were, "I am open, please teach me. I would like to receive, please give." So unless there is this sort of attitude of openness, this sort of attitude of receptivity we can gain nothing, much less still the Bodhicitta. So this is 'Entreaty and Supplication'.

And seventh and lastly, 'Transference of Merit and Self-surrender'. According to Buddhist tradition, when you do any good deed, any good action, you acquire a certain amount of merit which helps you on your way. So, if you perform the ceremony of the 'Sevenfold Puja', if you within your own heart enact the Supreme Worship, if you go through these experiences, experiencing these religious moods and states of consciousness and so on, you acquire also a certain amount of merit. It accrues to you. But, what do you do with it? At the end, when you've got it, you've accumulated it, you've gained it, you give it away. You say, "Whatever merit I might have gained by this performance," - whether it's puja, whether it's meditation, whether it's listening to a lecture, whether it's giving some money to a charity, you say well, "let that merit, let the good deriving from this, be shared by all, not just by me; not just for the sake of my own individual Emancipation (not just so that I can go to heaven leaving aside other people), but for the good, for the benefit of all."

So, at the end of this Puja, at the end of this series, this sequence, of spiritual and devotional experiences, one resolves, "Let this be for the benefit of all, not just for me, for the benefit of all". And when one lifts this to a higher, and ever higher spiritual level, this of course becomes the Bodhisattva Ideal itself; though one doesn't seek to gain even Enlightenment, even Nirvana, even Buddhahood for one's own sake, but for the sake of all. And of course at this point we verge upon the Bodhisattva Ideal itself very, very closely.

So this is the method, this Supreme Worship, this Sevenfold Worship. This is the method of Santideva, and I repeat that even though we may recite it, even though we may chant it, perform it, it's not just a ceremony. It is not even just a set of spiritual exercises. It is essentially a sequence of devotional and spiritual moods and experiences. The performance of the external Puja, the recitation, the chanting may help induce of course, the appropriate, the corresponding religious moods and experiences, and it is on account of these that we can become transformed to some extent. If our hearts are filled with sublime feelings of reverence and devotion and worship; if we really feel the distance which separates us from the Ideal; if we are really determined to commit ourselves to the realization of the Ideal; if we truly and clearly see the darker side of our own nature; if we honestly rejoice in the good deeds of others; and if we are really receptive to higher spiritual influences and forces, and if we really wish to keep nothing back for ourselves alone - then, we may say, in dependence upon these states of mind and consciousness, the Bodhicitta, one day, may be able to arise. This is the soil, as it were, in which the seed of the Bodhicitta, once planted, can grow, can flower.

Now as I've said, Santideva's method is more devotional. Vasubandhu's method is more, as it were, 'philosophical'. Here, in Vasubandhu's method the arising of the Bodhicitta depends upon four factors. Let us briefly see what they are.

First, it arises in dependence, Vasubandhu says, on the 'Recollection of the Buddhas'. One thinks of the Buddhas of the past; one thinks of Sakyamuni, Gautama the Buddha, and of his great predecessors in remote aeons of human - I was going to say history but really it's 'pre-history' (what scholars would refer to as legendary times): Dipankara, Kondanna, and so on. And one thinks, one reflects, in the words of the sutras, "As they were, so are we. As they became, so may we become." In other words, they started off as human beings, so do we. They started off with weaknesses and imperfections, so do we. They started off with all sorts of limitations, so do we. But then, look what happens to them, look what they achieved. They overcame their weaknesses, they transcended their limitations. They became Buddhas. So they were human, we are human; what they achieved, we too may achieve - if only we make the effort. So this sort of reflection is called the 'Recollection of the Buddhas', deriving inspiration from their example. This is one of the factors upon which the Bodhicitta arises.

Secondly, 'Seeing the Faults of Conditioned Existence'. Conditioned Existence is a technical term in Buddhism for phenomenal existence of every kind: physical, mental, and even what we might call in the West 'spiritual'. Whatever arises in dependence upon causes and conditions - all this is called Conditioned Existence. And it is axiomatic for Buddhism as a spiritual tradition that all conditioned existence is impermanent. It arises, it passes away. It may be an idea, it may be an empire. It may arise and disappear in an infinitesimal fraction of a second, or it may arise and disappear over a period of millions, even billions, of years, as in the case of a great galactic system. But whatever arises, sooner or later, ceases, disappears. So everything conditioned is impermanent, transitory, and therefore also - Buddhism says - sorrowful, in the sense of not ultimately satisfactory, not ultimately most deeply satisfying, because, however great the satisfaction, an impermanent thing cannot give permanent satisfaction. So, sooner or later pain comes; the separation comes, the wrench comes, and then comes suffering. And everything also is, in a word, unreal: not in the sense that it doesn't exist and it isn't there, but what we think of as that particular thing, that particular existence, is only the surface of something deeper. It isn't real in and by itself. It's only partly real, it's only relatively real. So one sees that conditioned existence as a whole has these 'faults', as they are technically called: it's impermanent, it's riddled with unsatisfactoriness, and it isn't ultimately real, and one knows that nothing of this sort, nothing conditioned can permanently fully satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart, which is always craving for something permanent above and beyond the flux of time, something blissful, something permanently satisfying, something which does not pall after a while - something of which one never becomes weary, never becomes tired, and something also which is fully and entirely real and true. So in this way one 'Sees the Faults of Conditioned Existence', piercing and penetrating through the conditioned to the Unconditioned beyond. And, in dependence upon this factor also, this 'Seeing the Faults of Conditioned Existence', arises the Bodhicitta.

And thirdly, the third factor in dependence upon which that Bodhicitta arises - 'Observing the Sufferings of Sentient Beings'. And what a lot of sufferings there are! One has only got to open one's newspaper just to see, just to read about some of them. People hung, people shot, people executed, people burned to death. And in the common run of things, people dying in all sorts of painful ways, from all sorts of dreadful diseases, or from hunger, from famine, from flood, from fire. Everyday, almost every hour, we may say, almost every minute, we may say, of the day - even as we are sitting here so peacefully - in other parts of the world, in other lands, even at this very instant, we may say, many people must be dying very painful deaths, many people must be suffering in all sorts of horrible, and dreadful, and agonizing ways. One doesn't need very much imagination to be able to realize this when one thinks in terms of volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes, and aeroplane crashes, to say nothing of war, to say nothing of battle, to say nothing of sudden death in all those fearful and horrifying forms. Even if one thinks of something to which, in our callousness, we have become very used, very accustomed: deaths on the roads - due to careless driving very often, or to careless walking - even that is sufficiently horrible.

So one thinks of, one reflects upon, one observes, all these sufferings to which human existence is heir, to which flesh itself seems heir. Even the struggle of getting on in the world, of 'making both ends meet', of leading a happy human existence: sometimes it seems very very difficult indeed. Sometimes it seems as though everything is against it. You strive and you struggle to do the decent thing, to do the right thing, to do the honest thing, to lift your head a little bit above the waves. You've just got your head above the waves, and you're swimming with all your might, as it were, and you're sort of gasping for breath, and what happens? - a great wave comes along and overwhelms you again. Down you go, and maybe up you come yet again, and go through it all over again - again and again. And this is human life.

So if one looks at it objectively one sees that in many ways - no doubt this is only one side of the picture, but it is a side which we very often ignore - human life is very often a painful and miserable thing - as one of the

English philosophers said, "nasty, brutish, and short". And these are the sort of things that we should bear in mind. So when we observe the sufferings of sentient beings, and I have mentioned only human beings, but what about the animals? What about all those animals that are trapped for fur. Things like that - slaughtered for human consumption or just for human pleasure, for 'sport', as it's called: - "the unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable", as somebody said. So if one thinks of these things. If one thinks, if one really observes, if one feels the sufferings of sentient beings, then this also, Vasubandhu says, is a factor in dependence upon which the Bodhicitta arises.

Then, fourthly and lastly, there is the factor of the 'Contemplation of the Virtues of the Tathagatas' '*Tathagatas*' means the Buddhas, the Enlightened Ones. There are several ways of doing this. One can contemplate those virtues - and 'virtues' here doesn't mean just the ethical virtues, it means the spiritual qualities. One can contemplate them by reading, say, the life of the Buddha, or the life of Milarepa, who also was an Enlightened One. One can do it by just performing, say, a *Puja*, a ritual worship in front of an image, just sitting, perhaps, and looking at the image, trying to feel what is behind the image - what it represents, what it symbolizes. Or, as in Tibetan Buddhism, one can contemplate the spiritual qualities of the Buddhas by means of visualization exercises, by conjuring up a sort of vivid mental picture, a sort of archetypal vision, of the Buddha, or of a Bodhisattva who also symbolizes Supreme Enlightenment. And what one does in these practices and this, of course, is summarizing very drastically indeed, is to see this visualized form more and more brightly, more and more vividly, more and more gloriously, and then gradually feel oneself, as it were, merged with it. Whether it is the Buddha of Infinite Light, or whether it's the Buddha of Eternal Life, whether it's the Red Buddha or the Blue Buddha, whether it's the Bodhisattva of Compassion or Wisdom, but you contemplate them, you see them, you visualize them clearly, you feel yourself connected, you see yourself connected with them by a beam, a shaft of light which gets brighter and brighter, shorter and shorter, until the two of you merge. Your heart, as it were, merges with the heart of the Buddha, the heart of the Bodhisattva, the heart of Enlightenment. And in this way one contemplates, one assimilates, one becomes one with, the Virtues of the Tathagatas. And in dependence on this factor also, the Bodhicitta arises.

So this is Vasubandhu's method. The Bodhicitta here arises in dependence on: Recollection of the Buddhas; Seeing the Faults of Conditioned Existence; Observing the Sufferings of Sentient Beings; and Contemplating the Virtues of the *Tathagatas*. In dependence on all these four factors jointly, simultaneously, the Bodhicitta arises. And surely, without going into, without even understanding these traditional details too much, too closely, it isn't very difficult to understand why and how this should be. By the Recollection of the Buddhas one becomes convinced that Enlightenment is possible. They have gained, why should not I gain? They have attained, why should not I attain? And in this way energy and vigour is stirred up. On Seeing the Faults of Conditioned Existence - how impermanent it is, how basically unsatisfactory, not ultimately real - one becomes detached from the world, detached from conditioned existence, indifferent to it. One's thoughts, the trend, the stream, of one's existence sets in the direction of the Unconditioned. And then, by Observing the Sufferings of Sentient Beings - whether in imagination or, close at hand in actual fact - surely, in this way compassion arises, love arises, sympathy arises. We don't think only of our own salvation, we want to help, we want to succour. And then, by Contemplating the Virtues, the spiritual qualities, of the Tathagatas - their Purity, their Peace, their Wisdom, their Love, their Enlightenment, their Eternal Life, their Infinite Light - then gradually, as I described, we become assimilated to them, and approach the Goal.

And as these four, as it were, coalesce; as energy, and detachment, and compassion, and this 'becoming one', as it were, with the Buddhas, as these all coalesce or start coalescing within our hearts - then the Bodhicitta arises, then the 'Awakening of the Heart' has been achieved, then a Bodhisattva is born.