

## 117: Buddhism and Psychoanalysis

Those of us who are students of language in any way, whether our own language or a foreign language, whether we study it scientifically or from a literary point of view, we know from our own experience that very often it is the simplest words which are, I won't say the most difficult to understand, but certainly the most ambiguous. Take, for instance, the title of our talk this morning: Buddhism and Psychoanalysis. Now, what is meant by Buddhism? At least in a very general way, should have become clear in the course of the last few days, even for those who have had no previous connection or association with Buddhism. And as for this word psychoanalysis, we encounter it very often, we read about it, we hear it referred to in conversations and when we listen to the radio. It is almost a household word. So, we have got some general, even if rather imprecise idea, about what is meant by psychoanalysis. So here are two words out of our three words in our title disposed of. We have got some idea of what Buddhism means, some idea of what psychoanalysis means. But the title of the talk is Buddhism and Psychoanalysis. So what is the significance of this very little, but highly ambiguous, word and. Obviously some kind of comparison, some kind of contrast, between Buddhism and psychoanalysis is intended. But why should one want to compare these things, these two fields of knowledge? Why should one feel impelled to contrast them? We may say that we make the attempt, we make the effort to compare things in this way, only when their existence constitutes for us a sort of problem. And it is the desire for the solution of this problem that constitutes the motive for the comparison. Now let me explain what I mean a little bit more in detail. Many of you know that from 1944 to 1964 I was in the East, mainly in India, and especially for the last twelve or thirteen years of my sojourn there, in the Indo-tibetan borderlands, more specifically in Kalimpong and in Darjeeling. And during the course of my stay in the East I was occupied with the study of Eastern religions and philosophies, especially of course Buddhism, both on the theoretical and the practical sides. And, as my studies progressed, as I became also a little more experienced, I took up a certain amount of preaching and teaching activity. While I was in Kalimpong, for instance, frequently going down into the plains at least once a year and engaging, I may say, in rather marathon sort of preaching tours all over the length and breadth of that vast subcontinent. One of the things I found, not only when I was staying in Kalimpong, not only when I was out on tour, but all of the time, I found in India that people used to come to me with their problems of various kinds. Now these problems were usually quite ordinary, one may say quite mundane. Many people used to come to me with domestic problems, either their son wouldn't study and had, according to their idea, to be made to study. So an irate father would come and say well, the boy has stopped going to school. I'm sending him to you tomorrow morning. Please make him realise he must study. And this was the attitude in the East, still parents are a little bit stern, a little bit strict, and the idea of discussing the question with the son or the daughter just doesn't arise. They are just really told what they have to do. And very often the parent wanted to get my co-operation and his idea was that I should put the full force of my authority behind this demand that the son should go back to school and study because that is the high road to a government job, which is the sort of Nirvana of modern Indian life nowadays. And sometimes of course, they would come with their matrimonial problems of various kinds. Either husband would come and complain about the wife, or wife would come and complain about the husband. And one would have to sort out various things. Or you find someone who has got mixed up with two or three wives, and quite a lot of sorting out was required, and xx####xx their various claims and all that sort of thing. And sometimes, though not so often, I must say, psychological problems. These came up very rarely, and sometimes people would come with spiritual problems, though these were rarest of all. Most of the people who came, came with just ordinary human problems, domestic problems and things of that sort. So it was my practice, it was my habit, my custom, in India, to help out as best I could and give advice, and this way, I think I may say,

developed quite an insight into different aspects of worldly life with which I had no direct personal connection. But I must say that during this whole period that I was in the East, studying Buddhism and other Eastern religions and philosophies, practising meditation, I had very little contact with psychology, that is to say, with modern psychology. I knew about it, of course, in a general way. I had some rather vague, general idea about it, but I never gave psychology, and of course I mean Western psychology, and modern psychology, any serious thought. In the East one gets along without psychology, I would say, quite well.

Buddhism, as you probably know, has its own system of what we call psychology, and in the Buddhist countries, they usually manage quite well with this, without any help from any of the various systems of modern psychology. But after I returned to this country, or rather I paid my first visit to this country, beginning of August 1964, the situation, so far as I was personally concerned, rather changed. And this change came about in a quite natural sort of manner. Almost from the day of my arrival in this country, here too people started coming to me with their problems. For instance, people often rang me up and they would say Could I come and see you, please, theres a problem I want to discuss with you or Theres a difficulty I want to talk to you about.

So just as in India, so in this country, people came with problems of various kinds. But I started noticing a difference. Hardly anyone came with any domestic problem or anything of that sort. Nearly everybody came with psychological problems. I would say 9 out of 10 of the people who came to consult me, came not to ask so much about Buddhism, not because they were concerned about a particular problem of Buddhist philosophy or Buddhist thought, they came to ask for advice and help about their own psychological problems. Usually, they started off by telling the story of their lives. Sometimes, it was a long and interesting story, sometimes it was a long and not so interesting story. Some would go into very great detail, others would just mention a few salient facts. But most people who came in this way, with these psychological problems, would tell the story of their lives. So I naturally used to listen patiently, take it all in, make a few mental notes, and gradually I could see two facts emerging. Not only emerging, one might say, even sort of jumping up and calling, even clamouring, for attention. The first thing that struck me, the first fact that impressed me, was the very large number of people who were mentally and emotionally disturbed in this country. This is the first fact that emerged. I think I would say, quite definitely, that the percentage of mentally and emotionally disturbed people is much higher in this country, probably in the West as a whole, than it is in the East. In the East people seem on the whole, though there are exceptions, much more relaxed, much more emotionally and mentally balanced, than they very often are here, especially in the big cities. So this is the first fact that emerged, which dawned, or perhaps even flashed upon me, in the months that followed my return to this country. Namely, the very large number of people in modern society, in the West, who are mentally and emotionally disturbed, sometimes very seriously, in one way or another.

The second fact which emerged was how many of these people coming to me had, at one time or another, been psychoanalysed. Some following a Freudian analysis (and I very quickly picked up these term). Someone had a Freudian analysis, someone had a Jungian analysis, someone had existentialist analysis, and so on. But an extraordinary large number seemed to have had analysis at some time or another, or were even still having it. Some had had it for months, some had had it for two or three years, and one woman whom I remember, who came to me, she claims the record: shed been having analysis, and still having it, for 17 years, two or three times a week. And she doesnt seem noticeably better, as far as I could see. Thats not, Im sure, the fault of psychoanalysis, but that is how it did seem to be. Now in India, and perhaps India is in advance of many Eastern countries, in India psychoanalysis is available only in two or three of the big cities: probably Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi. Very likely not available, or not very easily available, elsewhere. So one

can see from this that psychoanalysis plays quite an insignificant part in the live of people in India, in fact in the East generally. But in the West, certainly in this country, it became obvious to me, after my return, psychoanalysis plays a very important part indeed. To xxxparryxxx the words of a well-known advertisement - 'psychoanalysis is in our life a part of it'. And I think we have to accept that situation, and I think that nobody in this country who is concerned in any way with the teaching of whether Buddhism or any other religious system can possibly ignore the presence and the influence here of what we call psychoanalysis. So thus it happened that within some months of my return to this country in 64 I started thinking about, started turning over in my head, the connection, the relation, between these two: on the one hand Buddhism, and on the other hand psychoanalysis. So this morning I am doing no more than sharing with you some of my thoughts on this particular subject. Obviously this is a very vast and a very complex subject, one which one cannot fully explore in the course of an hour or so. One cant even attempt a proper introduction to such an exploration. In the first place, Buddhism itself, which is a very ancient tradition, contains hundreds of different schools of thought, and they dont always speak with the same voice. Theres Theravada Buddhism, current in Ceylon, Burma, and Thailand. Theres the Mahayana, the Zen, theres Tibetan Buddhism, there are all these great major forms of Buddhism, and also there is subdivisions. They represent different aspects of the total Buddhist tradition, the metaphysical aspects, psychological aspects, ethical aspects and so on. But we have in Buddhism this vast plethora of schools, teaching the same basic things but with many important differences of emphasis and so on. Now, psychoanalysis is of course a very much younger movement. Whereas Buddhism is 2,500 years old, psychoanalysis was started, by Freud, only about the beginning of this century. So its not even 100 years old. But already there are quite a number of different versions of psychoanalysis. We know that in the case of Buddhism, within a century of the Buddhas passing away, eighteen schools sprung up, eighteen schools of Buddhism came into existence within the hundred years immediately following the Buddhas death. Now, almost as many schools of psychoanalysis developed in Freuds own lifetime. First of all theres Jung, and his analytical psychology, theres Ardler [?] and his individual psychology, and at present there are orthodox Freudians - the psychoanalytical movement has developed its own orthodoxy you see - and various kinds of what are called neo-Freudians, or revisionist Freudians. Now, weve also got the humanistic type of psychoanalysis and the existentialist type of psychoanalysis. And in addition to these there are schools of, for instance, Henry Stack Sullivan [?], of Erich Fromm and Karen Horney [?]. So obviously, when youve got so many types, so many schools, of Buddhism on the one hand, so many types, so many types, so many schools, of psychoanalysis on the other, its not possible to make a detailed comparison between the two systems - Buddhism and psychoanalysis - in the time at our disposal. We can only speak in very general terms indeed, and just get some idea of the subject in a very broad way, in a very, very bare outline. So all that I propose to do this morning, or to attempt to do, is to compare what we may call basic Buddhism with basic psychoanalysis. By basic Buddhsim I mean the body of teachings common to all the different schools and by basic psychoanalysis I mean principles common the orthodox Freudians, to the Jungians, the xxxxxxxx, the neo-Freudians, and so on. And I hope that in this way those that are more interested in Buddhism may be stimulated to study a little psychoanalysis and those who are perhaps more interested in psychoanalysis may be stimulated to go a little more deeply into Buddhism.

Now first of all, with regards to the general subject matter, the general subject matter of Buddhism and of psychoanalysis, with what are these disciplines concerned? This is the first question which we must tackle. Now Buddhism and psychoanalysis are both concerned with man. It might seem an obvious statement, but it is very important and the point needs to be made that Buddhism and psychoanalysis are both concerned with man himself. In other words they are both humanistic. They are man centred, they are not God centred either of them. Neither Buddhism nor psychoanalysis is concerned with God, with any form of supreme being, except quite empirically,

as a psychic image. So this is the first point that we must stress: that Buddhism and psychoanalysis are both humanistic. For this reason it is sometimes doubted whether Buddhism is a religion at all. If you read books about comparative religion written by Christian ministers for instance or missionaries sometimes they say well, Buddhism is a very decent sort of system, it teaches you to be good and not to kill, not to steal, but it isn't really a religion. Or certainly they will say it is not a religion of the highest type. Now whether one defines Buddhism as a religion or not depends of course, in turn on how widely one defines, or how narrowly one defines, the word religion. If you define religion as meaning belief in of, worship of a supreme being, then obviously Buddhism is cut out. But if you define religion more broadly, as any sort of system, any way of life, which takes into account the existence of something transcending the senses and the mind, some ultimate spiritual reality behind the universe, and informing the universe, filling the universe if you like, then Buddhism is a religion in this broader sense. Nowadays, of course there is the tendency to broaden the meaning of the word religion, to use it in a wider and wider sense. People are beginning to recognise that, broadly speaking, there are two major kinds of religion in the world: what we may call a theistic and what we may call the non- theistic. There are all those systems which posit the existence of God, a personal god, a supreme being, a creator, these are called theistic religions- that is to say, all the Semitic religions: Judaism, Islam, Christianity and some popular forms of Hinduism and so on. And on the other hand, one has a number of very important religions which are non- theistic, which get along quite well without the concept, the idea of a personal god, a supreme being, a creator and governor of the Universe. And in this group of religions you've got the more philosophical forms of Hinduism, like the Vedanta, you have got the religions of China, that is to say Taoism and Confucianism. The religion of Japan ( the indigenous religion) Shinto (?), and also you have in this group, in this category, Buddhism itself. So it's important for us to realise this- that religion is not necessarily theistic. In this country, we've been brought up to think that religion is necessarily theistic. Religion itself means "belief in God". Practise of religion is going to church and worshipping God on Sundays, if not for other days of the week, at least on Sundays. But until very recently, people were not aware of the fact that there was such a thing as non- theistic religion. A religion which was complete in every way, but which had no belief in a personal god, a supreme being. Now in modern times, quite recently, even within Christianity, some quite extraordinary developments have been taking place. People have been talking about religion -less Christianity, for instance they have been talking about Christianity without God, a sort of non - theistic Christianity, centred upon Christ rather than God. And this sort of idea, this sort of outlook, as some of you no doubt know, is associated with the name of the Bishop of Woolwich. He seems to believe that the traditional Christian concept of God is finished, it must be got rid of , and he suggests that we replace it with the idea, the concept, of the "ground of being" which has a sort of oriental and Buddhistic ring we may say. In fact I can't help thinking that his concept is a sort on non-thesitic Christianity, the Bishop of Woolwich, is moving, whether he knows it or not, really in the direction of Buddhism. And no doubt, being a modern man and a modern mind, he has been influence to some extent by psychoanalysis. And Freud has tried to show that the traditional conception of "image of God" is really a sort of father figure. What do we mean by this ? When we're born, when we're infants, we're completely helpless. We don't recollect at this stage, so often we tend to overlook it, but when we're born, the human infant, for quite a long time, for several years, is completely helpless, it cannot do anything for itself. It has to be fed, it has to be clothed, it has to have it's nappies changed and all that sort of thing, everything done- it has to be carried about, until it can crawl at least. So it's condition of complete helplessness and dependency. There's only one thing that the infant can do, which it usually does very well. What's that? Oh yes, it can cry at the top of it's lungs. It can certainly cry. So if it wants anything done, if it's cold and wants warmth it cries. If it feels hungry it cries. If it feels afraid, it cries. If it feels angry it cries, very loudly indeed. So this is only thing an infant can do. When it gets into difficulties , when it wants something, it just cries. Now the infant of up, becomes a child, becomes

a man or woman, and as this person grows up, it begins to experience, begins to encounter all sorts of difficulties, in living, dealing with other people, and so on. Now sometimes the person concerned, the man or the woman, may succeed in coping. But only too often, it happens, for one reason or another, the person can't cope, something goes wrong. The person doesn't know what to do, it wants to do something but can't succeed, can't manage on its own. So very often what happens, according to Freud, is that the grown up person, in desperation as it were unconsciously regress to an infantile attitude. Just as the child has a sort of omnipotent mother or father who can do anything you want if only you cry, if only you let out a loud enough yell, mummy or daddy will come running and do whatever you want done, so when an adult person gets into difficulty there's a tendency, according to Freud, to regress to this infantile attitude. So, the adult person, the grown-up person imagines this all-powerful figure, someone who can do it all for you when you can't do it yourself. So when a person gets onto difficulty, instead of letting out a yell, as the infant does, the adult person, the grown-up person prays for help: please do it for me. This is essentially what ordinary prayer is : please do it for me, I can't do it for myself. Just as the infant lets out its wail, which means I can't do it for me, please do it for me, so in the same way, the adult man regresses, imagines a personal god, an omnipotent being, and prays, cries out just as the child does. Take for instance the case of the savage, the uncivilised man, in early times, who was unable, for instance, to control the rainfall. Thus you are dependent for your actual existence, your subsistence, on the success of the crops. That rainfall is a very, very important matter to you. I've seen this in India - I mean, we don't realise it, we don't even bother whether it rains or not. To be honest, rain is just a nuisance. It's something that gets in the way of going out for a nice afternoons walk. Whereas in early times it wasn't like that. Man's life, man's living depended upon that rainfall. And sometimes the rain didn't fall. Sometimes primitive man had ploughed his land he had planted his seeds and everything was coming up nicely when on rain. Only the sun as you see it in India, quite pitilessly, mercilessly as it were shining all day and a crop gradually drying up, gradually withering and man can do nothing. Primitive man, before irrigation was thought of, before water storage was thought of, could do nothing - he felt completely helpless. So what did he do? He regressed, and he started, as it were praying for rain. God, please give me rain. I've seen this myself in India and in Nepal. I remember, when in Nepal about 20 years ago I was staying in a little village just over the boarder into Nepal, and one day around the bazaar, I saw a terrific procession going, led by the governor of the locality the magistrates, the police, a few soldiers, the merchants, all the local population, with images of gods and goddess all going round. And they were shouting out: Maha Dava Pani Dot, Maha Dava Pani Dot, which means Oh great god, give me rain, Oh great god give me rain.. And I asked Well what is it they are doing? And I was told they are praying for rain. We haven't had any rain for a long time, the crops are all withering, we are praying for rain.' So this is the sort of thing which goes on. And probably, I suspect, that if you went into the depths of the countryside in this country, in summer, you might, in some village churches, hear people, hear the parson, praying to God for rain. Now, you may in a way smile at this, may think that this sort of picture which I have given, which I have presented, is a sort of caricature of what goes on. You might even think that in insisting upon this point we are sort of flogging a dead horse as though really people don't behave in this way any longer, they don't regress in this way any longer. But the question which arises is well, do they? Is it correct to say that people don't regress in this way any more? Has modern civilisation entirely wiped out this sort of attitude?

But if we think of it, if we reflect, we realise that, we realise that it is still a very human tendency that when you get into difficulties you pray for someone to remove these difficulties for you. Now, I remember during the war in this country whenever things were a bit sticky, what would happen? A day of national prayer would be ordered and you'd pray to God for victory. But basically it is the same sort of attitude. And far from being just an occasional occurrence here and there, this was a sort of official policy. The edict went forth, as it were, either from the Crown or the Government

that such and such a day would be a day of national prayer. And you'd pray for victory on that day. In other words a pure and simple regression to an infantile attitude. Of course some of the Germans and others were praying too this only goes to expose the absurdity of the whole procedure. Or according to psychoanalysis this sort of thing is really, is clearly an example of, sort of mass regression to infantile attitude and to be discouraged. Now such regressions are not uncommon, not only in time of war but really at anytime.

If we just think about ourselves and our own lives and our own experiences; suppose we do get into any really difficult situation, suppose we are really up against a great problem and there seems no way around it we. We can't resolve it, we can't settle it ourselves, we feel completely helpless when confronted by this problem. But we want to solve, we want to do something. In fact something must be done about it then what do we do? Well most people regardless of religious beliefs or xxxxxxxx? They just pray. Sometimes they don't even know to whom they are praying or what they are asking for, but their attitude is to pray. In other words to regress to this infantile sort of attitude. Even the atheist we may say, and this isn't a proof for religion sometimes well meaning theists say well, it is one of the proofs that there is a God that even the atheist, when he gets into difficulties, even he prays, so it shows there must be a God. But no, it doesn't show that at all, it only shows how strong our tendency is to regress to infantile attitudes of dependence, so that even the convinced atheist can't help himself sometimes. When he gets into real difficulties he regresses and he prays. It reminds me of a little story, as it were a little illustration sometimes given by the great modern Indian teacher Ramakrishna. He says you catch a parrot and you teach the parrot to recite the name of God. This is what they sometimes do in India and not only Hindus but Buddhists do this sort of thing. I remember Dharpo Rimpoche, my old friend in Kalimpong, had a very curious collection of birds and cats and dogs and one of his birds a mynah he had taught to recite om mani padme hum and believe it or not this was bird hung up in a cage on the verandah and as you went up the stairs to see the Rimpoche the bird would sing out om mani padme hum just like that and you would look around at first thinking it was a human being but it was this bird. And if the Rimpoche wanted to show the bird's tricks to a visitor he would just go up and give it a little piece of fruit and he would say mynah om mani padme hum and at once the mynah would say om mani padme hum clearly as the Rimpoche. So this is the sort of thing that they do and in this country we teach parrots to I'm afraid to say swear words very often. In the east they teach talking birds to say holy words so Hindus also have this and they teach mynahs and other birds to say Sita Ram, Sita Ram which is one of the names of God, in the Indian languages. So Rama Krishna said all right you teach a parrot or a mynah to recite the name of god and it will be doing this the whole day. But supposing it happens that suddenly the cat springs up and catches the bird by the neck will he continue saying the name of god? No he forgets all about that and he lets out his natural squawk and so in the same way when you are not in difficulties yes you maybe a secularist, and an atheist even a Buddhist, having nothing to with god but when you get into difficulties when you are really seized by the throat as it were, the tendency is to regress to the infantile attitude and say "oh god please help me". All your philosophy is put aside then. So this as I have said that there is a god after all, it only goes to show easily we revert to our original nature, not original nature in the Zen sense but original nature in the evolutionary sense. Now in this way we see that according to psychoanalysis the idea of god, supreme being, personal god, father in heaven, is a sort of father figure. And we find the same sort of thing also in early Buddhist teaching. God as believed in by contemporaries, or some contemporaries of the Buddha is represented by the Buddha himself in his teaching as a sort of father figure and the Buddha made it clear in his teaching that believe in a personal god makes man or tends to make man dependent, and tends to stultify his own ethical and spiritual life the Buddha says that if you pray to someone outside to help you even to transform you or change you, you don't get on with the job yourself. If you think it is going to be done for you, you don't do it yourself. So the Buddha said if you think that god does everything that god will save

you that god will help you this prevents you with getting on with the process of your own spiritual evolution yourself with your own efforts. So therefore Buddhism discourages or discounts belief in the personal god. The Buddha said don't rely on anyone outside yourself do it yourself, be self dependent, be independent, be responsible, realize that your own spiritual and ethical development and evolution depends upon your own efforts. And however great the difficulties are that arise don't regress, don't think that any father in heaven is going to sort it out for you, you've got yourself into a mess and you've got to get yourself out of it. And this applies not only to the individual it applies even on a national even on a global scale. Man nowadays had got himself into a sort of mess, with his atom bomb, his hydrogen bomb and all the rest of it. But it is no use just thinking that when you get into a real mess if everybody goes to church and prays to god to get the human race out of it that god will send down help from above and everything will be nice again, and we will be saved from the consequences of our own folly. Buddhism and also psychoanalysis says "no you've got yourself into this mess, the human race, and you've got to get yourself out of it". And if you think that when things get really bad god will intervene then you're only postponing the day of the eventual solution of all these problems by which you are confronted. So realize this if nothing else that you are responsible for your self and to expect help to come from outside or to pray for help to come from outside is only a regression to a very infantile attitude. Now the figure of God, or Brahma as he is called does appear from time to time in the Buddhist scriptures but I am sorry to say he appears as a sort of comic figure. Now this is rather strange to people in the west that God should be introduced into a religious scripture as a comic figure, but this is what happens. Brahma does appear as I say in the Buddhist scriptures but he figures not only as a comic figure, but a childish figure because he represents according to the Buddha's teaching a sort of childish attitude, or belief in God represents a sort of childish attitude. There is a very interesting story in the Digha Nikaya or collection of lengthy discourses of the Buddha. There was a monk who had a problem, in his case it was a spiritual problem or rather a sort of problem of psychology. I'm not going into the problem at the moment but what happened was the monk tried naturally to find an answer to his problem. He couldn't find it on earth apparently couldn't get the answer from his teachers, so what did he do he went up into heaven. He ascended into the various heavens and he asked the gods and the goddesses, and the angels and the archangels, but he couldn't get any answer, they kept referring him higher up you see to the higher authority. So he was going from one heaven to the next higher and higher to ever superior and more superior gods but he wasn't getting an answer to his problem. And eventually he found himself in the highest heaven of all and in the presence of God, Brahma. So he thought well now I really have come to the right person at last. I am in the presence of God, so I am going to ask God the answer to this question to solve this problem for me, this metaphysical problem. So he put the question he put the problem. So what did God what did Brahma reply? He said "I am the great god I have made everything, I am omnipotent, I know everything, I can do everything". So the monk said "excuse me I haven't asked about that I want the answer to this problem. But again God in a very loud voice said "I am the great God, I am all powerful, I know everything, I can do everything". But again the monk very patiently, very politely said "but excuse me I am not interested in all that I just want the answer to my problem". So eventually God said "just come here", he pulled him by the sleeve and took him aside. He said "I didn't want to say anything in front of all these other minor gods but I don't know the answer, I don't know the answer to your problem" He said "But I think I know, I think I know, I know someone who does know , or who might know the answer to your question". He said "there is someone called Gautama the Buddha. He is a human being, he is said to be Enlightened you better go back to earth and ask him". So the monk Kevada went back to earth he descended down through all those heavens, he found the Buddha, he went to the Buddha put his question and the Buddha was able to resolve the question. So what does this mean? Brahma, God referred Kevada the monk back to the Buddha, the Enlightened one, this means really that mans questions must be answered by man himself. The Buddha we regard as an Enlightened man not as a god not as an incarnation

not as a prophet but as an Enlightened man. So man's own questions can be resolved only by man himself. The Unenlightened man's problems can be resolved only by the Enlightened man. Not by any God not by any being outside man himself and it is significant incidentally that Kevada's question related to the nature of the mind a metaphysical question about the nature of consciousness and so on. So we see therefore in this way in this very general way Buddhism like psychoanalysis is not concerned with God its concerned with man. And therefore we say that Buddhism like psychoanalysis is humanistic. all right Buddhism is concerned with man psychoanalysis is concerned with man, but how are they concerned with him in what way? They are not we may say concerned with him in the abstract as an idea or a concept they are concerned with man very much in the concrete. they are concerned with him not just theoretically but also practically which means in simple language that Buddhism is not just a philosophy not just a system of metaphysics, however wonderful but also a way of life and in the same way psychoanalysis is not just a psychology, not just a system of descriptive psychology giving a catalogue of mental states and functions, but also a therapy. And I think we may quite correctly describe Buddhism also as a therapy. It is significant perhaps that the Buddha himself the Enlightened one is known in the scriptures as the great physician. The great physician of the ills of men. It is rather interesting, rather instructive to have here a comparison with Christianity. Christ is very often called the good shepherd. So this is quite interesting you get the Buddha called the good physician Christ is called the good shepherd. So if you compare the founder of a religion with a physician to what are you implicitly comparing the followers? If the teacher is a physician then what are the followers? The sick, the patient. So what about the shepherd if the teacher, if the founder is compared with a shepherd then the followers are compared with sheep. This is interesting this is significant because before his death Christ said to the apostles "feed my sheep, feed my sheep". Now patients have to cooperate intelligently with the doctor. If you go to an analysis even if you, you may lie down on the couch but he doesn't it all for you, you've got to cooperate intelligently. But it isn't quite like that with sheep, sheep simply allow themselves to be led. And I think this isn't a coincidence, it isn't a coincidence that Christians tend to think of themselves as sheep. It is in accordance we may say with this whole attitude of infantile dependence which is encouraged by all forms of theism, all forms of belief in a personal God a supreme being. Now the fact that Buddhism is a therapy or can be described as a therapy is not only indicated by the fact the Buddha is called the great physician but also by another fact namely that in Buddhism what we call the four Noble Truths occupy a very important place. Now very often these four noble truths are regarded as summarizing the whole of Buddhism. The first noble truth is suffering, that there is there is suffering in this world, mental and physical. Secondly the cause of suffering which is basically our own wrong mental attitude especially our thirst or craving. Third noble truth the cessation of suffering which comes about through the cessation of craving the correction of our wrong mental attitude, and this cessation of suffering ultimately is identical with a state of complete or supreme bliss or Nirvana. And fourthly the way leading to the cessation of suffering in other words the Noble Eight Fold Path. So according to scholars these Four Noble Truths of Buddhism are based on an ancient pre-Buddhist medical formulae. First of all the disease, secondly the cause of the disease, thirdly the cure and fourthly the treatment leading to the cure. So this sort of coincidence this sort of resemblance is we may say no accident because in order to discover the causes of suffering or of disease one has to go very, very deeply. And therefore we find that both Buddhism and psychoanalysis are concerned with man and concerned with man in depth. Because the sources of suffering the sources of disease are not found on the surface in either case they are found in the depths. So both Buddhism and psychoanalysis are concerned with man in depth, they are not only concerned with the conscious mind the surface mind they're concerned with the subconscious, with the unconscious and we do get these conceptions in traditional Buddhism. In the Theravada Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma, for instance you get the conception of the *bhavaṅga sota*. Which means quite literally the stream of unconscious mental activity in a very



modern context but one which Buddhism has had in the Theravada practically from the beginning. And then again in the Yogacara school there is the conception of what is called the Alaya Vijnana or store consciousness in which impressions are stored up and the contents of which we are usually unconscious of. So both Buddhism and psychoanalysis regard the mind as existing as it were on different levels. They're aware that the mind has depths, that beneath the conscious there is the subconscious even the unconscious and both further regard the mind, whether conscious or unconscious, regard it as dynamic, as a process not as a thing, not as a tabula rasa as it is called a sort of blank sheet of paper as Locke thought, conceives it dynamically as a force as an energy. Psychoanalysis for instance speaks in terms of libido which means sort of vital impulse or energy, especially sexual energy. And Buddhism in the same way speaks of man, ordinary man, unenlightened man as being dominated and controlled and driven even by tanha or thrisna which is literally thirst in the sense of craving. And in Buddhism there are three kinds of thirst or craving; that for sensuous experiences, experience through the five physical senses. That for continued individual existence and that for annihilation. It is rather significant, it is rather modern in a way that Buddhism traditionally has always recognised that there is in some people a sort of craving for death. It is what we may describe as something corresponding to Freud's death wish and its rather significant as I've said that Buddhism also does recognise this. We may also say I think that in the Buddhist conception of craving for conditioned or continued existence and also craving for annihilation these two I think we can see here also a correspondence with what Fromm calls xxbiophiliyaxx, or love of life and xxnecrophiliyaxx or love of death. It is also significant that the Buddha seems to have regarded many of the religious teachings of his time as not so much religious or spiritual teachings as rationalisations of craving, either for continued personal existence, or the craving for annihilation. And traditionally in Buddhism, theism any form of belief in a supreme being with its corollary personal immortality after death is regarded as a sort of rationalisation of our craving, our thirst for continued personal existence. Now psychoanalysis also speaks in terms of what is called the id. This term was coined by Freud and it means an impersonal mass of interacting energies or forces constituting the unconscious. And with this we come we may say to the heart of the therapeutic process. Freud says; and this is the sort of slogan of psychoanalysis, "where there was id there shall be ego", ego with a capital E not in the ordinary sense. Ego represents the conscious personality, the conscious individuality if you like. And psychoanalysis is essentially concerned with the transformation of the unconscious into consciousness. With the transformation of the incoherent mass as it were of the id into the comparatively organised patterned harmony of the ego. Ego again in the Freudian sense not in the popular undesirable sense. So psychoanalysis effects this transformation of id into ego saying "where there was id there shall be ego", effects it by means of various techniques of pre-association. Now Buddhism has the same sort of preoccupation it wants to replace thirst or craving by Nirvana. In the language of the Mahayana it wants to transform the passions into Enlightenment, wants to transmute the five poisons into the five wisdoms and so on. And it does this, it effects this transformation and this transmutation by means of mindfulness, by means of concentration and meditation. And under these three headings there are various practices as some of you know, we've no time for details. And we see therefore that both Buddhism and psychoanalysis emphasizes the importance of self knowledge. Not only self knowledge but self understanding, this is not sort of objective rational knowledge, not knowledge of oneself as an object because this would be merely descriptive psychology and it would have no therapeutic value, but it means rather a living experience in awareness of ones own being of what one is.

Now you might be thinking by this point that Buddhism and psychoanalysis are practically the same thing. I've had to traverse quite a lot of ground rather rapidly, but I think it should have become clear that there are a number of very important points of resemblance, even coincidence,

between Buddhism and psychoanalysis. So you might have begun to get the impression that they are more or less the same thing. One eastern, the other western, one ancient, the other modern, one religious, the other scientific, and this brings us back to the point that we started from, that is to say back to the people coming to me with problems of various kinds. Now, I've had the experience that some people have come to me after analysis. They come and say that according to the analyst that they have been going to, whether Freudian, Jungian and so on, they are cured. There is nothing wrong with them, they are all right. So you may wonder why do they come along then? Because so far as psychoanalysis is concerned, they've got no problems. But they do come along sometimes and they say, well, the analyst says that I'm perfectly all right, there's nothing wrong with me, but I feel terrible. I feel that life is completely empty. I feel that I've got nothing to live for. I've got no meaning and no purpose, and this makes me feel absolutely awful. So here we begin to come to the crux of the matter, and we begin to become aware of certain limitations of psychoanalysis. We can see these perhaps more clearly if we reverse or try to reverse the situation. We've seen just now, that people who are cured, so far as psychoanalysis is concerned may be still not really happy, even not at all happy. But just imagine say a Buddhist going to an analyst, not an ex-patient going to say a Buddhist monk, but a Buddhist going to an analyst, and the Buddhist says to the analyst, "I've got a problem. According to Buddhism, I'm enlightened. I've gained Nirvana, I've got full wisdom and compassion, I'm a real life bodhisattva, I've got everything but life is so empty. I've nothing to live for." Well the mere idea is absurd. One can see that immediately. And of course the analyst may not let us get away with this so easily, the analyst may say that if anyone comes to you after analysis saying he or she isn't happy then they're not really cured. Maybe they don't want to adjust. Maybe further analysis is required. But this indicates to my mind a certain rather great weakness in psychoanalysis, at least in many of its forms, this tendency to think of cure or the return to health or normality in terms of adjustment to existing conditions. There's a tendency amongst many psychoanalysts to think, well if you're disturbed or neurotic, or unbalanced they give you a few sessions and what is the criterion that you are cured? That you can go back to your job and work there happily, and commute back and forward every day and take out a mortgage and get a house and that's a sure sign that you are cured, that there's nothing wrong with you. Return to normality, adjustment to the status quo. There's a very great tendency among many psychoanalysts to think of the cure in terms of enabling you to carry on within the existing set-up. In other words, this sort of psychoanalysis tends to perpetuate the status quo. They help you to adjust to the existing order of things, regardless of whether that order is good or bad or indifferent. Now some psychoanalysts are perfectly aware of this danger. It is true of course that any given persons lack of adjustment may be due to truly neurotic causes. It may be that you can't carry on with your work, can't settle down, get married, have children, all the rest of it, because you are neurotic. But there's also another way of looking at it that could be true in certain other cases. In many cases we find that when the neurosis is removed, the person readjusts quite happily. But sometimes the person as it were refuses to adjust, it is as if they are rebelling. And this kind of neurosis can be fundamentally quite healthy. It is not that the person is neurotic. The fault may lie, not with the individual at all, but with the conditions in the midst of which he lives, including himself as he is at present. So we do sometimes find, and as I've said, this is beginning to be recognised by at least some psychoanalysts, that many examples of so-called neurosis or even quite severe mental disturbance are not really neurosis to be cured so that one can adjust but quite healthy symptoms of rebellion against a social order and set-up which itself is fundamentally unhealthy. In other words the roles are reversed. Not that the individual is unhealthy because he won't fit into the healthy society, but the individual is healthy and refuses to fit into the unhealthy society. So this particular fact some psychoanalysts are beginning to be aware of. So this goes to show that psychoanalysis as a whole will have to deepen its understanding of man. It will have to enlarge its conception of his potentialities, not think that the aim and objective of human existence is to adjust to the existing social order. To think that man, or to realise that man has got many capacities and potentialities which cannot be satisfied by

the existing order, the existing set-up, so that what really needs to be done is that the existing order, the existing set- up needs rather to be changed so that a healthy person can live in a healthy environment. So psychoanalysis has to take note of these greater potentialities of man, which it does not always tend to do at present, and in taking them into consideration, enlarging its conception, it can certainly take the help of a non-theistic religion like Buddhism. As I've show, or tried to show, there are many similarities as between Buddhism on the one hand and psychoanalysis on the other. And there's no reason therefore why the two should not co-operate where they can co-operate, each benefiting the other, and both contributing to the advancement of the human race and the greater happiness in all respects of mankind.