

General Introduction to Sangharakshita's Seminars

Hidden Treasure

From the mid-seventies through to the mid-eighties, Urgyen Sangharakshita led many seminars on a wide range of texts for invited groups of [Order members](#) and [Mitrās](#). These seminars were highly formative for the FWBO/Triratna as Sangharakshita opened up for the still very young community what it might mean to live a life in the Dharma.

The seminars were all recorded and later transcribed. Some of these transcriptions have been carefully checked and edited and are [now available in book form](#). However, a great deal of material has so far remained unchecked and unedited and we want to make it available to people who wish to deepen their understanding of Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

How should one approach reading a seminar transcription from so long ago? Maybe the first thing to do is to vividly imagine the context. What year is it? Who is present? We then step into a world in which Sangharakshita is directly communicating the Dharma. Sometimes he is explaining a text, at other times he is responding to questions and we can see how the emergence of Dharma teachings in this context was a collaborative process, the teaching being drawn out by the questions people asked. Sometimes those questions were less to do with the text and arose more from the contemporary situation of the emerging new Buddhist movement.

Reading through the transcripts can be a bit like working as a miner, sifting through silt and rubble to find the real jewels. Sometimes the discussion is just a bit dull. Sometimes we see Sangharakshita trying to engage with the confusion of ideas many of us brought to Buddhism, confusion which can be reflected in the texts themselves. With brilliant flashes of clarity and understanding, we see him giving teachings in response that have since become an integral part of the Triratna Dharma landscape.

Not all Sangharakshita's ways of seeing things are palatable to modern tastes and outlook. At times some of the views captured in these transcripts express attitudes and ideas [Triratna has acknowledged as unhelpful](#) and which form no part of our teaching today. In encountering all of the ideas contained in over seventeen million words of Dharma investigation and exchange, we are each challenged to test what is said in the fire of our own practice and experience; and to talk over 'knotty points' with friends and teachers to better clarify our own understanding and, where we wish to, to decide to disagree.

We hope that over the next years more seminars will be checked and edited for a wider readership. In the meantime we hope that what you find here will inspire, stimulate, encourage - and challenge you in your practice of the Dharma and in understanding more deeply the approach of Urgyen Sangharakshita.

Sangharakshita's Literary Executors and the Adhithana Dharma Team

The Last Vandana Seminar

Held at Padmaloka on 19 December 1982, 26 December 1982 and 2 January 1983.

Present: Venerable Sangharakshita, Subhadra, Prasannasiddhi, Subhuti, Kovida, Vessantara, Kevala, Vajrananda, Khemapala.

Sangharakshita: I think everybody knows that this Last Vandana as it's usually called was introduced from India. In India our Buddhist friends usually recite it or chant it at the end of all meetings especially the meetings which are held at night. And it was introduced I think only a couple of years ago into Britain. As far as I remember the selection of verses from the Dhammapada which make up the Last Vandana was made by Dr Ambedkar quite a number of years ago. I seem to remember hearing first this chant on an HMV record quite a few years ago, it must be well over twenty-five years ago, as part of the build up to the mass conversion in 1956. He got a quite well known Marathi musician to record refuges, precepts and various verses in a quite musical sort of way. I think there were two records in circulation, both HMV. As far as I can remember this Last Vandana was on one of those records and it sort of caught on more than, I think, the other things on the record. But anyway it is almost universally used that is to say, chanted or almost sung at the end of meetings among the untouchable Buddhists in India. It's quite an appealing sort of tune and I think was put to the words by this particular musician (and stretched over) two records and I think played on those two records. So it does seem that the chanting of this Last Vandana as it is called - Last or Final - In India people call it Last or the Final Vandana - () Vandana they call it in Marathi. They have it right at the end of the proceedings. Not Last Vandana in the sense that you'll never recite it again. It's the Final Vandana - once that's chanted it means the proceedings are definitely over. Hm? So I hope that since it's been introduced in England and since it is chanted at most Centres and most Communities it would be good if you at least knew what the Pali words mean. I think people actually on the whole don't know. Well it's quite clear from the way they chant because following our Indian friends they rhyme the first word of one verse on to the last line of the previous verse. It doesn't make sense at all. For instance () as regards the previous verse leaves out an important syllable as regards the succeeding verse. So clearly they don't know the meaning of what they are chanting. So I thought that we ought to go through these verses. I don't know how long it is going to take. It may take us an hour, it may take two hours, it may take up the whole period. We'll just see. But another reason I thought we could go through these verses was that in one of the verses occurs the word Dhammacari so this might give us an opportunity [2] to see what Dhammacari means, and also discuss perhaps some of the implications of the change over within the Order, from Upasaka or Upasika to Dhammacari or Dhammacarini.

Anyway let's first of all see what we've got in the Last Vandana. So maybe we could read the English translation - just straight through.

Kevala: The Last Vandana: Verses that protect the Dharma.

Not to do evil:

to cultivate the good:

to purify the mind:

This is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

Lead the righteous life,
not one that is corrupt.
The righteous live happily,
both in this world and the next.

He is not versed in Dharma who
merely speaks much. He who hears
but a little (of the Teaching) but
sees the Truth and observes it well
indeed, he is truly called 'one versed in Dharma'.

No other refuge than the wake,
refuge supreme is there for me.
Oh, by the virtue of this truth,
may grace abound and victory!

S: All right so first of all it's the Sabbapapassa akaranam - that verse is well known. I'll give you the reference in the text. This is verse 183 of the Dhammapada.

Sabbapapassa akaranam,
kusalassa upasampada,
sacitta pariyodapanam,
etam Buddhana sasanam.

It's the whole of the verse. So what came next after 'this is the teaching of the Buddhas'?

Kevala: The next verse ...

'Lead the righteous life,
not one that is corrupt.'

[3]

S: Ah. OK Let us stop there. (Pause) Yes 'Dhammam ducaritam care - Dhammacari sukham seti asmim loke paramhi ca.'

This translation reads - 'Lead a righteous life. The righteous live happily both in this world and in the other.' So this is verse 168. But it's only... the verse consists of four lines or four half lines. What is taken is three out of the four lines. The first line is omitted as not appropriate. So that's verse 168. The second third and fourth lines or half-lines

All right 'asmim loke paramhi ca'. Then it goes on to 'Na tavata dhammadharo' So that is verse 259 of the Dhammapada.

Na tavata dhammadharo
yavata bahu bhasati
yo ca appam pi sitvana
Dhammam kayena passati,
sa ve dhammadharo hoti

yo Dhammam nappamajati.

So that's the whole of verse 259.

Then comes:

N'atthi me saranam annam,
Buddho me saranam veram.
Etena sacca-vajjena,
hotu me jayamangalam

- repeated for the Dharma and the Sangha. This of course comes from the Tiratana Vandana. And then after that comes

Namo Buddhaya,
Namo Dhammaya,
Namo Sanghaya.

So that is the Last Vandana.

So a verse from the Dhammapada, three quarters of a verse, another whole verse and then those portions of the Tiratana Vandana concluding with the salutations to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. So is that clear?

All right. So let's go through these verses because in some cases the meaning isn't as clear as it might seem to be.

So Sabbapapassa akaranam. I don't know whether I've gone through this anywhere before. I have a feeling I have but never mind. Buddhadasa's translation here is 'not to do any evil' but that's not quite literal. Literally it's the non-doing of all evil. Sabbapapassa - 'all evil' that means, akaranam - 'the non-doing'. 'of all evil the non-doing' or - 'the non-doing of all evil'. Papa being equivalent to akusala.

Vajrananda: You said equivalent.

S: Or virtually synonymous. 'Kusala' of course means skilful. 'Papa' does mean evil or even sinful. It's nearer probably sinful than evil. The equivalent is the non-doing or non-performance of all sin. But the English idiom would be the non-doing of any evil. We wouldn't speak of abstention [4] from all evil, we'd say abstention from any evil. (Pause) But one could paraphrase it as complete abstention from the unskilful.

Subhuti: Does it have a different connotation at all to akusala?

S: I would say that papa has a more sort of emotional connotation. It's more sort of emotionally loaded. You know 'kusala' is a more neutral term you could say almost a scientific term, a more psychological term.

Subhuti: So there is a - in a sense a problem about the translation of words for evil, sinful and skilful into English because of the connotations of sin in a Christian context, but unskilful

seems rather cold in a way.

S: Weak.

Subhuti:: Yes.

S: You'll see in the next line 'kusala' which is the opposite of 'akusala' is introduced so this suggests that papa does in fact stand for or is equivalent roughly to 'akusala' because in the next line kusala is introduced and clearly there's an antithesis. But I don't know that we should be so shy of the word sin. I've more recently come to think that in objecting too much to the word sin people are almost trying to say that nothing should be considered wrong at all - in other words they should be able to get away with anything.

Subhuti: Probably the dangers have been sufficiently underlined by now.

S: Yes, I don't know whether it's worthwhile going into what sin literally means etymologically. Perhaps you'd like to go and get my.. the four volume dictionary. I don't think we've ever gone into it.

Subhadra: I usually think of sin as something very bad. (Laughter)

S: I'm just looking up 'papa' Vedic 'papa'. Latin (papor?) also English (Passion?) Greek (pemo) suffering evil. It's evil, bad wicked sinful.

I have got the Oxford English Dictionary but it doesn't give much information. "sin: Old English syn ... Old Scandinavian sundea ... Old High German suntea ... The stem may be related to that of Latin sons, sont-is, guilty... transgression of the divine law and an offence against God; a violation (esp. wilful or deliberate) of some religious or moral principle." [quotation revised] So sin then would seem etymologically to be derived from the idea of guilt which would have been originally a legal concept therefore. A legal concept [5] transferred to the ethical sphere. Whereas 'papa' represents an experience of suffering that is to say suffering is understood to be something evil. So 'papa' is really that sort of action the consequences of which are evil because they bring about suffering. Do you see what I mean? Whereas it's axiomatic for Buddhism that unskillful action is productive of unhappiness. So papa is that sort of action which is evil because it brings evil upon you. Do you see what I mean? There's a sort of cause and effect relationship between the two things. (Pause) So papa isn't really well translated by sin, it's probably better translated by evil because I mean any form of suffering is usually recognized as an evil.

Kevala: That's what we have in the English translation - 'not to do evil'.

S: Ah, yes. Not to do any evil, yes. Though it's in a sense abstention from those actions or the non performance of all those actions which under the law of karma are going to bring suffering, are going to bring evil upon you. Actions are evil because of their consequences apparently, or at least that's partially the reason why they are. It's a slightly individualistic sort of approach but that is necessary to begin with. One doesn't consider the actions of other people though perhaps one could expand it. That is papa which results in evil to anybody including yourself.

Subhuti: I take it to mean that you could produce suffering for others.

S: Yes, it's really in a sense, you could say, the non-performance of any action productive of suffering. The non-performance of any action productive of evil for anybody whether for yourself or other beings. That would seem to come closer to the actual meaning. The implications that there are.

: Is there a term in Pali for sin?

S: Well in the literal sense, i.e. etymological sense of the English word, no. Because primarily it means guilt. Legal guilt transferred to the moral sphere.

Subhuti: It seems as if evil is also etymologically derived from a legal sphere connected with exceeding due limit - or moral sphere.

S: Well, that would correspond to adharma because dharma suggests a sort of norm or limit and adharma would be. (Inaudible) and dharma would be - that would be good. (Pause) So this particular line is usually understood [6] to cover everything that you understand by or include in sila. Remember there's the silas - the ethical precepts are all phrased negatively, aren't they? One undertakes to refrain from harming living beings, taking the not given and so on. So traditionally this line sabbapapassa akaranam - not to do any evil - is understood as covering the whole of sila, the whole of ethics hm? The first of the three or the four great stages of the spiritual path. I mean very often it's said, though this is, I think, not quite correct, certainly not quite correct () in the path of irregular steps that you have to give up doing evil before you can do good. I think that isn't strictly literally true, not in the sense that you cannot do any good before you've given up doing all evil. I think that obviously has been misconstrued. So 'Sabbapapassa akaranam - the non-doing of all evil or more idiomatically in English not to do any evil. And then kusalassa upasampada. So kusala here is of course the skilful but upasampada is quite interesting. Upasampada means to acquire, to obtain, to take upon oneself, and it is of course the term for the bhikkhus so-called ordination - one speaks of upasampada. It's the obtaining of or the acquisition or the taking upon oneself of the state of being a bhikkhu. Or membership of the Order - membership of the Sangha (Pause) So Kusalassa upasampada. The acquiring - the translation here says to cultivate good cultivate no, this is quite the wrong word if one is trying to translate it very literally. It's the acquiring, the attaining, the taking upon oneself, which, yes, in a way does mean cultivating or developing all that is kusala - skilful. i.e. associated with non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion or if you like, more positively, with metta, with generosity, with metta and with wisdom. But generally this line is understood to refer to samadhi - the second of the three great stages in the spiritual path. Because as one progresses into and through the dhyanas unskilful mental states are progressively eliminated. (Pause) So kusalassa upasampada means the acquiring, the obtaining, the taking upon oneself, or the development, the cultivation of all possible skilful mental states and this certainly suggests or invites a mind, a mental state which, as it were, is somewhat dhyanic to say the least. I think I have somewhere defined dhyana as an uninterrupted flow of skilful mental states. (Pause)

So Sabbapapassa akaranam
kusalassa upasampada
sacitta pariyođapanam

- citta is of course mind, heart, consciousness, thought and so on in the sense of one's own corresponding to the Sanskrit 'sva' as in svabhava. So sacitta is one's thought, one's own mind or even one's own heart and pariyodapanam is purification. I'll check this with the dictionary. I think it means a little more than just purification. I think there are connotations or suggestions of complete purification of all round purification. (Long pause) - cleansing, [7] purification.

Subhuti: That is pariyoda?

S: Yes, it doesn't say anything about complete. (Pause) pari - pertaining to growth and development in completion of a forward movement. So yes, there is a sort of suggestion of the process of purification being complete, so one could translate complete purification.

So purification of one's own mind, in the sense of complete purification of one's own mind, or of one's own heart, consciousness, thought and this is usually understood to refer to wisdom - prajna, in as much as the Buddha has said somewhere 'the greatest of all sins is the sin of ignorance'. Wipe off that stain and you'll be pure. That is a bit, as it were, commentarial, but there is a sort of correspondence of the first line with sila, the second line with samadhi and the third line with prajna.

Subhuti: The word citta seems rich in meaning. Could you just go into that a bit more. It seems to have quite a spread of meanings or is it...

S: It can be translated best by the English word 'mind'. But also heart, consciousness, thought - or even soul in a non-technical sort of way or non-theological sort of way. (pause) It's probably the most general term for the whole, as it were, subjective side of things. In that case it corresponds to mana. (Pause)

And then of course line four,- it says etam Buddhana sasanam This is the Teaching of the Buddhas. I have gone somewhere into this word sasana. I don't know if anyone remembers or remembers where. I have gone into it pretty thoroughly.

So it isn't so much teaching. I'll just say a few words briefly. It does come from a verb meaning to rule or to govern, so it has the connotation of being an imperative - something that you feel or experience as absolutely binding upon you. Something the demands of which are irresistible. It could be translated as directive or mandate. It's that which when really seen or really appreciated is recognized as absolutely binding. And then of course a more , as it were, recent usage, a usage that continues at present is of what we call Buddhism, that is the Dharma, the Buddha's teaching, as extant in certain institutions. Something like religious affairs so to speak. For instance in Burma there was a sasana council set up to look after religious affairs. It's the whole organizational side of the Buddhist tradition. That tradition as embodying or () a particular socio-religious organization, that is known as the sasana. First of all to () You notice Buddhas are mentioned and not just the Buddha. Buddhas in the plural. So this suggests two [8] things. First of all it could be that this verse is a quite archaic verse and the word Buddhas in the plural is used in a non-specialised, non-technical sort of way, simply the wise. But if that is not the case then it clearly indicates that all those who are enlightened, that is to say, they see the same Truth and see the same Reality - they also promulgate the same teaching. (Pause). So

Sabbapapassa akaranam
kusalassa upasampada
sacitta pariyodapanam
etam Buddhana sasanam.

So not to do any evil, to cultivate the good, to purify one's thought: this is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

So if this is in fact the Teaching of the Buddhas and if as we know Gautama the Buddha reduced this Teaching to the three or four great stages of Sila, Samadhi, Prajna and Vimukti then it's probably quite reasonable to identify line one with sila, line two with samadhi, line three with prajna. (Pause)

Kevala: What is etam?

S: Etam - this.

Kevala: This is the teaching of the Buddhas.

S: Mm. (Pause) This verse is often referred to as the most famous verse in the Dhammapada and possibly the most famous verse in the whole (Pali) because it epitomises the whole Teaching in a very few words.

All right then we go on or go back to verse 168 or the portion of it. The missing line or half line is (uttipe ma pamajjeya?). Uttipe means 'get up' in the quite ordinary sense of get up as you get up in the morning. Get up. And na pamajjeya - don't be heedless - don't be just heedless - don't be negligent. But anyway that line or half line is not included in the Vandana. The one included in the Vandana begins with the next line ...

Dhammam sucaritam care

- this is quite difficult if not impossible to translate literally. Dhammam is of course the Buddha's Teaching one might say provisionally. Sucaritam. This of course is - 'Su' is a prefix meaning well or happily. Caritam is a noun from the verb (cariti) Cariti means to go, to fare, to progress, to practise, to do, to live, to walk. It means all those things. One can say the primary meaning is to walk and then the sort of applied meaning is to practise or even to live. So dhammam sucaritam care means - care is the imperative mood - it means walk, practise, live. Dhammam sucaritam is literally 'practise [9] the well practised Dharma' or 'live the well-lived Dharma' or it is translated here as 'lead a righteous life'.(Pause) Or one could even say practise the Dharma which is good to practise. Dhammam sucaritam care - the Dharma which is good to practise, practise. Hm? Practise thou. I mean in poetry () Then the verse goes on to give, as it were, the reason for practising. Dhammacari sukam seti . So here we've got this compound Dhammacari - the one who walks the Dharma - one who fares in the Dharma. In other words who practises the Dharma or lives the Dharma. You get exactly the same word at the beginning of the Heart Sutra in relation to Avalokitesvara. -"Arya Avalokitesvara ... Prajnaparamita carya cara mana." - He was practising the practising, coursing in the course or walking in the walk. A combination of the verb and the noun form. So this word - I think - I'm just remembering - I think it's etymologically connected with chakra - wheel - because a wheel turns, rolls. But this notion of carya, this term carya is quite

important. I've pointed this out many times before. There's a whole series of terms. We've got Brahmacharya, we've got Dharmacharya and we've got Bodhicarya Hm? (Pause) So in the precepts you've got Brahmacharya or Abrahmacharya rather than the ten precepts for sramaneras. One has got in the Pali text some idea of Abrahmacharya in the sense of walking so to speak with Brahma or practising Brahma-like states. In other words higher states of consciousness. There's a whole series of terms there like not only Brahmachari and Brahmacharya but Brahmabutta even Brahmachakra.

Vajrananda: Would this Brahma... (END OF SIDE OF TAPE)

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Vajrananda:(continued) ... they used indiscriminately with enlightenment earlier on they were talking about the development on terms of living a deva life and so on. Is it that meaning or is it a meaning ... in terms of God?

S: Well, it's both. We've got this with Brahmavihara. So this can be interpreted, understood as dwelling in the sublime state, because Brahma means imminent, sublime or imminent or it can mean dwelling with the god Brahma but again on the other hand the god Brahma of course embodies this state. So you can think either in terms of an abstract, as it were, impersonal state or you can think of a person embodying that state. So it isn't sort of clear cut. It isn't definitely either this or that - it's both in a way. You can think of that superior - well just as you can think of Buddhahood or you can think of the Buddha. In the same way you can think of Brahma as representing the impersonal state or the divine [10] being who embodies that state or who is in a sense that state.

Vajrananda: So a Brahma is necessarily in a highly developed being.

S: Well, Brahma indicates either a highly developed state or a highly developed being, sometimes both. But anyway why I'm citing this here is just to indicate the way in which this word cari is used so the whole of the term Brahmachari, Brahmacharya which has got a number of related () terms and of course Dhammachari that is one who practises the Dharma experiences the Dharma and also Bodhicarya which of course is the more Mahayanic term, the Bodhi-walk it is sometimes translated, the Bodhi-practice, which of course is that of the Bodhisattva. And so you have a whole series of terms with Dhamma, you have a whole series of terms with Bodhi. I've gone over all this ground in some detail I don't want to repeat it all but broadly speaking the Brahma terms are seen to represent terms taken over by the Buddha: the Dharma terms are those which seem to be peculiar to (the Buddha himself) to early Buddhism and Bodhi terms are those which are specifically Mahayanic. Anyway that is all by the way. Dhammachari means one who practises the Dharma.

The translation is 'righteous life'. In a way acceptable - it overlooks - it actually doesn't bring out fully enough the Dharma.

So Dhammachari - the one who practises the Dharma. Sukam seti lives happily, dwells happily. This is why we are advised to practise the Dharma. Dhammam sucaritam care, Dhammachari sukam seti. So lead a righteous life, the righteous live happily. Then in the last line - Asmim loke paramhi ca - Both in this world and in the other.

Vajrananda: ... this world and the other.

S: The other meaning the world after death. That is to say if you practise the Dharma you'll not only live happily in this world but after your death you'll live happily in the other world, that is to say you would go to a happy world, you would go to heaven. So one could say that Dhammacari roughly corresponds to Buddhist. Because in as much as the Buddha's teaching is called the Dharma, one who practises it is called a Dhammacari. So, if the Dharma means roughly Buddhism the Dhammacari is the Buddhist or simply one who practises the Dharma. So this brings us to this question of the reasons for the change-over from Upasaka and Upasika to Dhammacari and Dhammacarini. So this might be an opportunity just to clear up any confusion that exists on this score. And since all those present except for those who weren't ordained at the time have been through this change, presumably they understood the reasons for the change. Maybe someone would like to briefly [11] summarize them.

Vessantara: One seems to be that the term upasaka has become devalued in traditional Buddhist countries where one's a 'born Buddhist' in inverted commas - said to be an upasaka. We wanted to differentiate ourselves as serious practitioners of the Dharma.

Vajrananda: It seems that Dhammacari is more of an active term.

S: Not necessarily because upasaka means one who practises upasana. Upasana meaning spiritual practice or meditation.

Subhuti: It gets us away from the whole framework of monastic and lay for a start.

S: You see Dhammacari - sort of - how shall I say ? bridges the gap, the sort of socio-religious gap between the so-called monk and the so-called lay person. It's quite independent of those sort of categories, that sort of division.

Subhuti: Does it appear anywhere as an epithet of the individual... in the Pali Canon?

S: Well yes it's used here. It does occur elsewhere in the Canon. I mean the fact that it occurs in the Dhammapada itself is significant. It does occur in the Majjhima Nikaya and I believe elsewhere too.

Subhuti: But never in the same way as say the term Bhikkhu or...

S: No it seems not to have become a sort of recognized term for a certain kind of socio-ecclesiastical person. So this is one of the great advantages of having this term because it has a definite spiritual significance but it has not yet in the course of Buddhist history acquired what I've called a socio-ecclesiastical significance or let us say socio-religious significance. Do you see the point? I mean originally Bhikkhu was just a very general term with, you know, a spiritual significance, likewise upasaka, but their meanings became hardened. They assumed a very definite almost rigid socio-religious meaning within a particular sort of ecclesiastical structure but the term Dhammacari never underwent that development. The Dhammacari is one who practises the Dharma - that is one who has Gone for Refuge to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. It says nothing about the way in which he lives, whether he lives as a monk in a monastery: whether he [12] lives as a hermit in a cave: whether he lives as a - I was going to say lay person but that is not really the proper term -

whether he just lives at home, so to speak, with wife and family and having an ordinary respectable occupation. The term Dhammacari doesn't correspond to any such differentiation, any such sort of special development. The Dhammacari is simply one who practises the Dharma. He may be living as a bhikkhu, he may be living as an upasaka.

Subhuti: What I wonder about is whether it actually has a rather more exalted meaning in a way than somebody who's just following the Dharma. It's somebody who's practising the Dharma in the sense of - who's faring in the Dharma in the sense of in transcendental states. Is that not a sort of implication?

S: I think not to the exclusion of positive mundane states but though faring in transcendental states certainly wouldn't be excluded, it's the practise of the Dharma on whatsoever level whether mundane or transcendental.

I suppose if you wanted to be a bit scholastic you could argue well it couldn't be transcendental because it refers to dwelling happily in this world and the next because if it was really transcendental there wouldn't be a next world for you.

If you were an Arhant and practising the Dharma to that extent there wouldn't be a next world as far as you were concerned there would not be any future rebirth.

Prasannasiddhi: But that just refers to the other two words in that line. It doesn't actually refer to Dhammacari itself. It's the way someone has used the term Dhammacari () you know it has been put into that context. But whether the term itself refers to another world after this one - another life - seems... (inaudible)

S: Well one could argue like that but I think the direct meaning of the verse would be that the Dhammacari lives happily in this world and in the next world which suggests that the Dhammacari - or for the Dhammacari - there is a next world i.e. there is a future birth i.e. there is karma leading to future birth, i.e. he has not yet reached certainly the higher stages of the transcendental path.

On the other hand (Laughter) one need not exclude the Mahayana aspect, that well, there could be a future life, future birth, even if one had reached the end of the Transcendental Path because of one's Bodhisattva Vow. One wouldn't, as it were, remain in Nirvana. One would take a vow of voluntary rebirth which certainly would happen in that future world, one could possibly argue that, but that would be going way beyond the Pali [13] Canon, perhaps from the Sanskrit texts too, a perfectly, as it were, respectable, spiritual term which has not been in use and has not been debased or down-graded in any way, which has got a very broad, plain and simple meaning - just one who practises the Dharma, at any level as it were, in any way, in any form, within any particular socio-religious context.

Vajrananda: Well in a sense we have... it's not any () division because presumably to some extent anybody who's provisionally practising the Dharma isn't necessarily a Dhammacari. If we're taking it as being those who are ordained... (inaudible) we are making it more specific.

S: Well we're making it more specific in the sense that we don't really recognize any practice that isn't effective as practice. We don't recognize conformity with cultural tradition as constituting practice of the Dharma. Well Buddhism itself doesn't recognize that as practice

of the Dhamma.

Vajrananda: I was speaking of the distinction between sort of cultural conformity and provisional practice of the Dharma.

S: Well, I use provisional for cultural, and then above provisional there comes effective and above effective there comes real.

Vessantara: We're now styled Dhammacaris but there's still the upasaka ordination. Would it be possible to go a step further and actually change the wording of the ordination to make it a Dhammacari ordination?

S : Well that would seem to be a logical development and very likely it will take place but then I think we sort of in a sense are definitely outside the existing framework because if you go along say to a Buddhist country and you say you're an upasaka, that's understandable to them. In a way they've misunderstood but you are intelligible, you are acceptable, you can be from their point of view relegated to a definite position. Do you see what I mean? You can take - well - a function and all the bhikkhus are sitting there, bhikkhunis if they have them are sitting there and upasakas are there. They'd know exactly where to put you. So you do fall within the existing framework by virtue of your name even though you don't really by virtue of the significance that has come to be attached by you to that term. But if you were now to say you were a Dhammacari then you'd present them, well let's say, confining ourselves at present to the Theravada countries, you'd present those countries with quite a problem. They'd probably solve it by saying you weren't a bhikkhu, so you should just sit up with the non-bhikkhus hm? But then you might say well I'm not an upasaka, I'm a Dhammacari and that would present them with something of a problem. So long as members of the Western Buddhist Order say they are upasakas well the [14] whole order can be subsumed under - as a lay Buddhist organization. So it isn't perceived as any sort of threat, to say, the monastic order. But if you say you're in the order of Dhammacari and that you transcend the distinction between monastic and lay and that some of you may be doing as much as lay people but you don't consider that sort of distinction especially important then you really do quite noticeably constitute a new departure. Though, in a way, not so much a new departure as a new version, to something more like the way things were at the very beginnings of Buddhism as far as we can see.

Vessantara: What do you think in the present situation are the pros and cons of making the change from upasaka ordination to Dhammacari?

S: It's quite difficult to say. But it would certainly mean a sort of break with the letter of tradition, I think one would be clear about that. But I don't think it would make very much if any practical difference, certainly not in the West, probably not even in the East. But if we did go to or we tried to establish Buddhism in centres in countries where Buddhism is already established especially Theravada countries it might be difficult. I don't know, perhaps not. Perhaps people might find it quite easy to deal with a body of people who were neither definitely bhikkhus nor definitely upasakas, neither monk nor lay.

Subhuti: What has been the consequence in India. Is it approximately the same?

S: No, I've no feedback at all. The Order members themselves are very pleased because there

are so many people considering themselves upasakas just because they repeat the refuges and precepts. So it distinguishes them from that body of people and that's necessary because they weren't bhikkhus. I mean people will understand bhikkhus aren't upasakas but a dasasila upasaka is quite different from a pancasila upasaka, that's a bit more difficult. That anagarikas are not upasakas, that one's easy, but not FWBO upasakas are quite different from the ordinary run-of-the-mill nominal Buddhist - that was a bit more difficult. So Order members are very pleased with the changeover. They're very keen on it. It makes it quite clear they are a different category. They take it to mean more, sort of full-time, active, Buddhist worker. (Pause) Anyway perhaps that's enough about practice.

So
Dhammam sucaritam care
Dhammacari sukham seti
asmim loke paramhi ca.

Lead a righteous life. 'The righteous live happily both in this world and the other.' Or alternatively, [15] 'practise the happily practised Dharma because one who practises the Dharma lives happily both in this world and the other'.

Subhuti: Haven't you missed out a bit? - Na tam ducaritam care.

S: No, that follows, we're going on to that. I mean I hope I've got it in the right order. No.

Kevala: This second verse, it starts - Dhammam care sucaritam which we've done - Na tam ducaritam care.

S: Ah, this is more of a chopping and changing. Fair enough. So we've got that verse. What verse was that? Sabbapapasa akaranam - that's verse 183. Then we've got line two of verse 168... Then where do we go? Then we go to...

Kevala: Line three, 168

S: Say that again ...

Sabbapapasa akaranam
Kusalassa upasampada
sacitta pariyodapanam
etam Buddhana sasanam

Then Dhammam sucaritam care...

Kevala: No, Dhammam care sucaritam. The second line of verse 168 which is the first line of the second verse. The third line of verse 168, the second line of this verse - na tam ducaritam care.

S: Ah that's right, yes. It's 169 not 168. It's the whole of 169 which repeats part of 168. That's right yes. So you've got Dhammam care sucaritam which was the same as before - na tam ducaritam care which simply is the opposite, not one which is ducaritam means a bad or evil practice. Does the Vandana have the line Dhammam sucaritam care or Dhammam care

sucaritam?

Kevala: Dhammam care sucaritam... That's why I was a little bit confused when you missed out a bit just now.

S: Ah, so forget about the missing line of Sanskrit. So it's Dhammam care sucaritam which is as explained before though the order of words is different.

Na tam ducaritam care - do not practise the evil practice - or do not practise the bad practice or do not live in a bad way. Or as the translation here has it 'lead a righteous life but not one that is corrupt'.

[16]

Kevala: Then we have Dhammacari sukam seti.

S: Yes, and then it goes on to 259 - na tavata...

Kevala: And then we haven't explained sukam seti or asmim loke paramhi ca.

S: Sukam seti - 'lives happily' or 'dwells happily' hm? Probably that doesn't need much (explanation)

Subhuti: Is seti a term - word to be (inaudible)

S: No (inaudible) (Long Pause)

S: (reading) 'To be in the conditioned, to dwell, to () to lie down' even. Sukam seti is an idiom for to be at ease or to be happy. Lives happily both in this life and in the life after death.

Kevala: Asmim loke paramhi ca means?

S: Asmim means 'in this' - no 'this' - loke 'world'. Literally 'this world in - other in also' In this world and in the other. (Pause)

Is that clear then? Maybe we should stop now for a cup of tea.

TAPE STOPS AND RE-STARTS

(Mumbled conversation)

S: ... not very necessary or beside the point. This is because the Japanese have got a completely different attitude towards sexuality than Indians.

Vajrananda: Wouldn't a Zen monk

S: Well you say monks but what do you mean by monks. They don't use that term. They don't use it in the sense of Bhikkhu - well unless they are scholars using definitely monk for bhikkhu usually. If you say Zen monks living in a Zen monastery well they are not people

who've received bhikkhu upasampada. They may be observing something of the same rules - they mostly observe what are called (Haichow?) - pure rules of people living in what we call monasteries. But they haven't got Bhikkhu upasampada. At a certain point they do take the Bodhisattva ordination which is - has become - a sort of ordination into the priesthood. In China they did have and still do have in some areas I think the sort of double tradition of Hinayana and Mahayana. You have the ordination as a bhikkhu in the full sense, followed immediately by ordination as a Bodhisattva. That is the [17] Chinese monastic ordination. The Japanese have dropped the Hinayana element completely it seems. It hardly exists at all. But whether among the Japanese there's anything corresponding to upasaka ordination or what is the status of Japanese lay people it's difficult to say. What is in fact the ecclesiastical status. Usually in Japan for centuries (this is due to governmental regulation) household's have been registered with temples. There's no individual lay membership, there is a collective lay membership by your household or your family.

Kovida: What was Hui Neng?

S: Well he was Chinese. He seems to have been a sramanera not a bhikkhu. But Milarepa who may have been a sramanera is doubtful. He's certainly not a bhikkhu.

Subhuti: He may have been an upasaka.

S: Yes indeed. Well it shows how far you can get without formalities. But I don't think many people realize the quite chaotic conditions (that exist) within the Buddhist world with regard to ordination. I mean at the very beginning of the FWBO sometimes the point was raised, well, what about Buddhist countries recognizing our ordinations? Well I had to point out that there was no mutual recognition even among themselves.

Subhuti: There does seem to be a sort of recognition doesn't there more a recognition of importance or something like that. If you got a group () they'll have you sit on their platform if that's what you're worried about.

S: But I mean for instance it depends on what you mean by recognition. For instance in Thailand the bhikkhus of one (Nikaya) will not sit near bhikkhus of another (nikaya) ordination. So in that sense they don't recognize one another. But they are polite to one another - friendly.

Subhuti: For instance, when you went to Wolverhampton the lay people would serve Bhikkhus with the Theravadins but they wouldn't serve us.

S: Though whether the bhikkhus were bhikkhus is doubtful. For who were these Tibetan bhikkhus? Because (obscured by noise of teacups)... Better check on that (laughter)

Vajrananda: Would... in Zen monasteries - rules necessarily include celibacy?

[18]

S: Oh no, there were sort of rules of organization and behaviour but they might have implied it. I don't think they required it. But I won't be sure about that. I'll have to look it up.

Subhuti: It does feel that as we have to deal with teachings in general... to clear a path through

it, sift it out, maybe that's what we need to do with regard to ordination itself. You can't - there's too much of a mess to be systematized in any sort of way, it has to be gone back - the original spirit has to be gone back to.

S: Yes, yes.

: (inaudible) (something about Japanese)

S: They in a sense have already done that. You know quite a number of groups with sort of ordinations with () which don't really correspond to anything in Classical Buddhism. I think this is certainly the case with the Shin Buddhists who are () the biggest group, the biggest sect in Japan anyway.

I mean I remember there was a leading Shin Buddhist called Ruri Nakayama who used to visit India quite frequently on pilgrimage and he used to come wearing robes and had a shaven head so it was assumed he was a monk and he was treated with all the deference due to a monk. Also he was the head of the Shin-Worshippers Association, who gave large donations to the Maha Bodhi Society. But anyway one day he turned up on pilgrimage with what was his six grown up sons. Apparently he was not a monk at all but () He still shaved his head, he wore robes but he was a family man at the same time, running his Shin-Worshippers Association which derived most of its reciprocal funds from running Buddhist crematoria.

But even when I was in India the Theravada bhikkhus changed their attitude quite a bit. Originally they wouldn't allow anybody to sit on the same platform with Theravada bhikkhus, not even Tibetan (Gelongs) and so on. But after a while they did allow, it was said ought to allow, and then after that even sort of 'priests' in inverted commas of different Buddhist sects whose actual monastic status was quite ambiguous, they also in the end came to be included. I think that is the trend.

Subhuti: My impression is that they're happy with most things apart from eating - that's the only thing that they didn't do.

S: Eating together. - Because among the ex-untouchables I insisted that there shouldn't be this distinction. Bhikkhus not eating with lay people [19] shouldn't be observed. Because I said that would be breaking the Sangha spirit among the ex-Untouchables. So that isn't...

Anyway we'd better go on to verse two. So

Na tavata dhammadharo
Yavata bahu bhasati

But dhammadharo. This is translated here by Buddhadasa as one versed in the Dharma. But dharo comes from the verb dharati - to bear. It comes from the same root actually as the word Dharma itself. So dhammadharo is one who bears the Dharma, who carries the Dharma, in other words who practises the Dharma, who knows the Dharma. or who is versed in the Dharma.

One might ask well what is the real difference between Dhammacari and Dhammadhara?

There is a difference in connotation. Dhammacari definitely means one who practises the Dharma and Dhammadhara definitely One who bears the Dharma in the sense of has a knowledge and understanding of the Dharma. But again the connotation may be more of a theoretical or intellectual understanding. There's that possibility, that connotation as it were, it shades off into that. Because if you bear something there's a sort of distinction between you and what you are bearing. So that is - one versed in the Dharma - that probably represents the meaning quite (well) though not in the highest possible meaning of the term.

Vessantara: Has Dhammadhara also the connotation of somebody who is a supporter of the Dharma without practising?

S: I think it could hardly have that, not in this sort of context. But it does suggest one who certainly understands the sort of theory of the Dharma as it were as well as actually practising it. There is a sort of flavour of one learned in the Dharma though as the next line makes clear that can't really be divorced from practice. So Na tavata dhammadhara Yavata bahu bhasati, which Buddhadasa translates as 'he is not versed in the Dharma merely because he speaks much' - about the Dharma. One is not necessarily well versed in the Dharma or is as it were practising the Dharma just because one talks much, the implication being 'about the Dharma Tavata and yavata are sort of - tavata means something like on account of and yavata is the correlative of that grammatically speaking.

Subhuti: Are they two words or one?

S: Well they are the same word at different ends of the correlative.

Subhuti: But I mean is it ta vata - two words?

S: No it's one word. Tavata is one word and yavata is one word.

[20]

S: Why do you think grammatically correlative? We don't have these things so much in English. It's only more in the classical languages - we do have a few simple ones. I can't think of any. Perhaps we don't have!

Vajrananda: Could you say what yavata means?

S: On account of - that is the correlative. You get a lot of correlatives in Pali.

Vajrananda: You mean it's used in a different ...

S: Perhaps I'll try to construct one in English. All right we had this...

END OF TAPE

... you wouldn't have 'he (). You'd have a slightly different word - 'He who practises the Dharma. He ()

Vajrananda: So that sort of (inflection) would be suggested in that second term.

S: Yes.

S: So 'He is not said to be versed in the Dharma on account of his much speaking.' - This is a sort of literal translation. I can't really translate the correlative... (inaudible)

Subhuti: Could you repeat that translation - 'he is not said to be... '

S: 'He is not said to be versed in the Dharma simply because he talks much or speaks much'. Presumably about the Dharma itself.

Vajrananda: Would the tavata and yavata, sort of, a qualitative... (inaudible)

S: They are purely part of the (inaudible) (Pause) Sort of young tongue... (inaudible)

(Long Pause)

Yo ca appam pi sitvana
Dhammam kayena passati.

The translation is this 'he who hears little of the teaching but hears the truth mentally.' 'Appam' is little. 'Yo ca appam pi sitvana' that is literally he who hears little of, or he who has heard little i.e. of the teaching. Dhammam kayena passati. This Buddhadasa translates 'but sees the truth mentally'. He translates kayena as 'mentally'. Usually this is translated 'personally'.

[21]

So then one would say 'he who sees the Dharma personally'. That is to say who isn't dependant for his sight or understanding or vision of the Dharma on what others say. (pause) Mentally, in a way, comes to much the same thing. It suggests one who has a, sort of, personal experience of the Dharma. One who actually sees the Dharma. Has a vision of the Dharma himself. Therefore 'he who hears little of the teaching but sees the truth' - the word which Buddhadasa translates as teaching and truth is in both cases the word 'Dhamma' - 'mentally and observes it well, indeed he is called versed in the Dharma.' He's actually turned the grammatical construction around quite a bit. It goes more like this - 'he who has heard little of the Dharma but sees the Dharma personally he is indeed versed in the Dharma who is not unmindful of the Dharma.' (Long Pause) Anyway do you get the general meaning?

Yo ca appam pi sitvana - he who has heard little

Dhammam kayena passati - but is understood sees the dharma personally.

Sa ve dhammadharo hoti - he is well versed in the Dharma or can be called well-versed in the Dharma.

Yo dhammam nappamajati - he who is not unmindful of the Dharma. (Long Pause) But Buddhadasa renders it 'he who hears little of the Dharma but sees the truth mentally and observes it well indeed', putting the last line in that place. 'He is called versed in the Dharma'. Do you see the difference? The Penguin translation is almost a paraphrase. It isn't very literal at all. What does that version say for the first two paragraphs?

Subhuti: 'A man is not full of righteousness because he talks much learned talk but although a man be not learned he forgets not the right path, if his work is rightly done then he is a follower of righteousness.

S: 'If his work is rightly done'. The text says nothing about 'if his work is rightly done' That contains quite a few more words.

: (So in this verse we take the 'yo' which should go with the 'dhammam nappamajati' and we put it after the 'hoti'.)

S: Ah that's right yes. We put that 'Yo' (chants) 'hoti yo' as though it's (connected) - no it should be Sa ve dhammadharo hoti

Yo dhammam nappamajati NOT 'sa ve dhammadharo hoti-yo' No, it scores the metre and it dislocates the meaning. But I'm afraid that came from India. That's how they do it in India.

Vajrananda: Does it scan musically?

[22]

S: Musically it's all right but...

Vajrananda: Is it? Because I'm trying. I've been trying to get it. To break it up.

S: But (chants)

'Sa ve dhammadharo hoti
yo dhammam nappamajati'

It goes something like that. I wouldn't make a rule of this. Usually in India they say it incorrectly

'Sa ve dhammadharo
Hoti-yo
Dhammam nappamajati'

They make the hoti-yo almost a sort of separate line.

Subhuti: Yes, that's what we do.

S: Sa ve dhammadharo
hoti-yo
Dhammam nappamajati

No that's wrong.

Sa ve dhammadharo hoti
yo dhammam nappamajati.

The yo must come before Dhammam and part of that line not after hoti and part of that line.

So anyone hearing this little chant. People chanting in that way - well they don't understand what they are chanting. (Pause) It's like if you hear someone in church say, 'our father which art in / heaven' Then you would know they are not understanding what they are saying. (Pause) Oh yes it's correlatives. He and who in English are correlatives. I mean you could do it here:

Sa ve dhammadharo hoti
yo dhammam nappamajati.

- He is versed in the Dharma who of the Dharma is not unmindful of. But in Pali it's rather different. It's much more elaborate. Correlative is the right term isn't it? It's a form of correlative. (long Pause)

In this last line - 'Yo dhammam nappamajati' Nappamajati meaning simply he's not unmindful or he's not heedless - with regard to the Dharma. That's translated by Buddhadasa 'and observes it well indeed'. It's a bit of a paraphrase.

Vajrananda: Is 'na' the...

S: Na is the negative prefix. (pause) Well does that verse seem clear? So what do we have after? We've got these three verses from the Dhammapada one after the other. The 'Sabbapapassa akaranam' And then the, what's the other one? 'Dhammam care sucaritam' verse and the 'Na tavata dhammadharo' verse. Then after that there's the 'N'atthi me saranam annam'. That I've translated in the Tiratana Vandana. The translation that Kevala read out was the verse translation which is in 'The Enchanted Heart' translated in 1949. But for explanations we refer to the seminar on 'Salutation to [23] The Three Jewels'.

So 'N'atthi me saranam annam
Buddho me saranam veram'.

For me there is no other refuge than the Buddha, or the Dharma or the sangha.

'N'atthi me saranam annam
Buddho me saranam veram'

The Buddha is my supreme or best refuge and

'Etena sacca-vajjena'

- by the virtue of this truth ...

'Hotu me jayamangalam'

- May there be victorious auspiciousness for me. I've explained it for you in that seminar. No need to go into it now. So it's for the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. And then it's

Namo Buddhaya
Namo Dhammaya
Namo Sanghaya

- Which means simply salutation to the Buddha, salutation to the Dharma, salutation to the Sangha. (Long Pause)

It was quite well chanted by the women I noticed when we had the ordinations in Norwich recently. They seem to have got the tune, the melody quite well.

Vajrananda: Also I personally find chanting it at the end of pujas a bit inappropriate. It seems like a song on the end of... it's not a chant... on the end of the puja. A bit too light.

S: Oh maybe that's partly because people aren't aware of the meaning of the words. But in India, of course the Last Vandana is usually chanted or sung at the end of mass meetings. In pujas (it doesn't) usually happen outside the context of the FWBO.

Vajrananda: It seems somehow that singing seems a bit ethnic.

S: Do you mean English ethnic or Indian ethnic or just ethnic in general?

Vajrananda: I think ethnic in general and somehow I find it more difficult to connect with as a practice. Somehow, not like say chanting a mantra or the Tiratana Vandana. I mean I think it does help... (unclear)

S: I think it does make a difference because when I hear the Last Vandana chanted, well I follow every word. I think even the grammatical construction. I think that makes quite a big difference. And also if one knows, if one understands the meaning of the words or if one knows what is the appropriate feeling to put into the actual chanting or singing, into the melody.

Vajrananda: I think another point around that is that if you're singing a [24] song, so to speak, then it's more complex than chanting, and I think less people are able to sing well than are able to chant well... if you see what I mean. And it seems that you are trying to get quite a rough finish.

S: I must say that in the case of the women at the ordinations the singing was not in the least rough. They seemed to have been well practised by some means or other - better than I usually do hear it. Better than it was in Tuscany. I mean a lot of them had come up from a retreat in the Peak District. They must have done it there where they practised. But they did it very well indeed. (Pause) Perhaps someone had explained the meaning to them.

Vessantara: But even in quite a lot of the classes at the LBC now it's not being done as badly.

Subhuti: We could do it here actually in the evenings. I've been wondering about that. Is that policy or just...

Vajrananda: It seemed to just drop for almost all retreats.

Kovida: I don't think we did it at the end of the puja. I think that I feel that the puja finishes with Shanti and I appreciate that and I feel as if I'm starting everything up again.

S: Well originally the idea was that the shanti should conclude everything. But the Vandana

was introduced and it became a practice, not on my recommendation I may add, to add it on at the end. I'm quite happy if you want to do that. But as I said, earlier in, in India the practice is that it comes at the end of big mass meetings and it brings everything quite nicely together just for a couple of minutes if you have a different kind of meeting. They have (it) even when there's a sort of political meeting of Buddhists, per se Buddhists only they conclude with that. Or a celebration of Buddhajyanti or somewhere where there are a lot of speeches and so on they conclude with that. But there it's hardly ever, if ever, preceded by a puja as is the case here.

Subhuti: I must say, usually I find the slot doesn't, it's almost as if it's like your puja becomes more and more concentrated and then suddenly you have to go into a slightly different gear to do that bit in the end, the Last Vandana, which is a bit jarring sometimes.

S: Whereas in India it's quite different because you go into a different gear but in a... you step up, as it were, or calm down as the case may [25] be. In other words you definitely strike a definitely Buddhist note having, perhaps, been only partly Buddhist up to that point.

Vajrananda: It's almost as if that is the puja.

S: Yes, yes indeed.

Subhuti: I think it's appropriate sometimes at the end of a puja. Perhaps sort of, a big festive puja where you don't end up with a sort of, on a very meditative sort of note.

S: Ah yes.

Vajrananda: I've noticed at the end of retreats they seem to, you know, be waiting for it to happen and also even during the day pujas can replace it... even more displaced. (?)

S: But in India it is the signal when you have the Last Vandana everything is over. Definitely the last item, with nothing after that. You definitely get up and go home.

Vajrananda: Is it or do you think it is necessary to do it at the end of things like pujas? I mean I can't see any particular reason why it should go at the end of ...

S: Well it has come to us as the Last Vandana, but that is a sort of title fixed by the people in India. I mean the verses, as such, could sort of be chanted on any occasion. They don't have to come at the end of anything. It's only the use that they've been... to which they've been put in India. They could be the first Vandana so far as we're concerned.

: Perhaps we ought to drop that term. It has more freedom.

Subhadra: I quite like it at the end of the puja. It seems to underline more things. It, sort of, ties up. One thing it does, one reason I simply don't like it - it sounded a bit sentimental.

S: The words or the tune?

Subhadra: The tune. Well I think because of the tune.

S: That sounds a bit suspicious to me.

[26]

Kovida: The reason we stopped it here was because most people said that they started to get pent up again. It was a conscious decision to stop.

Vajrananda: When was it decided?

Subhuti: I think it was up to the leader of the week.

Kovida: Yes, well we did decide that, yes. That most people don't do it. Yes it was up to the leader of the week whether they wanted to do it. I think most people who led decided not to do it.

S: It might mean, just thinking over and trying to compare the situation in India with the situation, say, in England. It could be appropriate in much the same way as it's appropriate there, say at the end of a big meeting. For instance, as you know, when I give, say, lectures in inner London with a lot of people and if maybe after the lecture and the announcements when you need to sort of, definitely to conclude and with something definitely, as it were, devoted, one could well conclude with that, with all those who know it joining in. Do you see what I mean? The sort of way in which it is used in India. The closest that we could get to the way that it's done there.

Prasannasiddhi: But I think that some people might have quite a reaction. I think it would be OK within the FWBO but it could be a bit like, you mentioned the other day, Punyavati and Ratnapala doing a course in South London. They introduced the Sevenfold Puja and they lost all the attendance of the course. So it could be some people might have a bit of a reaction to coming along to a, sort of, talk or something and at the end there's this big, kind of sing-along. Well that's what they... maybe how they would interpret it.

S: At least they wouldn't understand the words.

Vajrananda: Well that in fact, the thing that would happen more likely the association with a hymn. You know hymn number...

Prasannasiddhi: Not only that but they wouldn't know the words. So they would think, they would also associate it, perhaps, with some sect which was just brought wholesale from some eastern tradition, sort of thing, you know, like the Tibetans... chanting and beads. You don't know the meaning. (Pause) When Buddhism is the basis of the country then perhaps you could then... (Long Pause)

S: Anyway any further point? (Long Silence)

[27]

Prasannasiddhi: So should we just let this sort of ride, the Last Vandana, and just... if people aren't going to do it in the FWBO it could well destroy it.

S: Well it would seem that when they were doing it they didn't understand the meaning. Now they understand the meaning they are not doing it. (Laughter)

Prasannasiddhi: So should we sort of try...

S: I never said anything. I didn't introduce it in this way. I didn't make any comment that I wanted it introduced. If people wanted to do it I was quite happy. On the other hand I didn't say anything when people stopped doing it. I must say I quite like it in India. It goes down very well there, and the way that they sing it, yes, is very effective. And I think that sort of emotional element is needed much more in a puja whether they get it in the Last Vandana or not. That's why I said I was a bit suspicious about this comment that it sounded a bit sentimental as though someone was, sort of, shying away from emotion. I never felt this sounded sentimental. I mean the way people chant it in India, they do know or know what feeling, the general meaning of it. It's very powerful. Just the opposite of sentimental. (Pause) I think it can be regarded as optional. I don't have strong feelings about it being used or not used. It would be good if it could be used just because it does represent a strong emotional element. But on the other hand, it doesn't seem quite appropriate at the end of our pujas. After the mantras and the threefold Shanti - which is observed to calm everything down and you tear away into silence. It doesn't seem really appropriate to start up after that. However good it is you know that particular piece of chanting and say what it means. On the other hand it does seem to conclude things. The Last Vandana does seem suitable to conclude things but it doesn't seem altogether suitable for concluding a puja. I mean in the way that you celebrate the pujas here. (Pause) I mean it does conclude as I say, a rather noisy or lively meeting in India with lots of talking and thousands of people quite well. But that is a quite different situation from a puja where you've maybe got five or six or ten or twelve community members who have just chanted the mantras and threefold shanti.

Kovida: We could do it after the refuges and precepts and then you sit.

S: A bit redundant because it does speak of the refuges, doesn't it? Because it says 'N'atthi me saranam annam' (Pause) But it would seem to be quite appropriate for those occasions where proceedings need to be brought to an end, striking a definite Dharmic note and where there hasn't [28] been a preceding puja. Whether there are any such occasions within the context of the FWBO I don't know. Maybe karate retreats and something like that.

Subhuti: Maybe karate and karate clubs.

Vajrananda: The only one I can think of that is vaguely like that is a reporting in, on Order weekends.

S: Ah you mean when things have been a bit noisy and lively and need calming down and mindfully brought back to the Dharma.

: Maybe we should start with that. (Laughter)

S: Also a psychological upheaval and problems (pause) I notice when the women did it, to harp back to them again, there's quite a long pause. It was Anjali who led the Last Vandana. She must have paused a full three minutes after the concluding mantras.

But even then it is a starting up again, I mean, in a sense, the longer the pause the more of a starting up again.

Subhuti: Yes, I used to find that. That you'd almost be waiting for the puja to start up again.
(Pause)

S: I think, perhaps, that it just needs to be left to the discretion of whoever is leading what. If he thinks it is appropriate to include it, fair enough. If not, not. Or if anyone does include it without sufficient justification or it doesn't go well even if he has included it no doubt he'll get some feed-back later on from other Order members.

Khemapala: I hope I'll try and get a few musicians together to do some experiments, () chants. I'm hoping, I was thinking mainly of introducing () and things like that, just as an experiment. How do you feel? Is that on?

S: Well it depends how well it's done. We haven't been able to do it so far. I mean people have tried to do it - Order members and of course it was the time that Anoma used to song songs of Milarepa to her own tunes, but it seemed quite inappropriate in the context of the puja. It seemed quite out of place, due to the differences of style. (Pause) I mean the Tibetans do have their musical accompaniment. So do the Chinese. There's a quite different sort of music. We have to remember that. I don't know how to describe it. I mean the Chinese, like the Japanese, use only percussion.

[29]

Vajrananda: Sort of textural.

S: Mm. All sorts of clappers and gongs, and bells and drums. All percussion. But Tibetans of course, do have wind instruments. But again they're wind instruments of a kind to which we are not accustomed, playing in a way for which we are not accustomed. It's a quite different musical basis. I mean it has been described in terms of having a direct effect on the nervous system. It's not like music, it's just sort of rumbling, it just rumbles along. It's just sort of waves of sound carrying on. That's how it is. It's really deep trumpets and that sort of clarinet type instrument. It just isn't... There's no form to it in a way. There's no composition, no structure though it does produce a very definite effect. There's no melody, no harmony.

Vajrananda: It's not contrived at all.

S: Well the musicians know what they are doing. It's not just spontaneous. In a sense it is contrived. But there's a definite tradition. There's a definite way in which it is done which they learn. It's not haphazard. There's no question of improvisation.

Subhuti: Is it Indian originally?

S: It seems not. It seems, just to my ear, it has no resemblance to Indian music whatever. It seems perhaps, it's a bit nearer Chinese music. It does put a different face to Western music.

Vajrananda: I was thinking the difference between sort of ethnic and folk type music. Where the classical music is, somehow, played around a bit, sort of contrived in that sort of way, whereas from what I've heard of Tibetan pujas they tend to be more sort of, developed out of the moods that people put into pujas rather than being thought out and contrived.

S: Why. It wouldn't say... I mean moods suggests an emotion, but they seem to bypass the

emotions, and attack the nervous system directly. (Laughter) Yes but that's the impression one gets. They don't rouse one emotionally. It's a quite different sort of thing. Unfortunately, I mean, though there are records of Tibetan puja music which has that effect. One just doesn't get the same effect from a record or a tape as one gets from seeing it alive. It has a definitely, and a very strong effect but not an emotional effect, in a way. (Pause) It's usually very loud and very powerful. It's never soft and gentle - I think I can say that - never soft and gentle, It's almost deafening usually. But it doesn't go on all the time. Only it punctuates the service. It comes in at certain points.

[30]

Kevala: It seems to, the music of the East, to bring things to a sort of crescendo.

S: Mm. There are crescendos yes

Kevala: I think there's a chant, a long chant and then the music starts coming towards the end and it gets very very powerful, and then suddenly stops. Then the chanting starts up again slowly.

S: You Sometimes get a sort of accompaniment to the chanting, but that's just on... with the drum. Pom, pom, pom, pom, you know - doing a sort of rhythm. No more than that. (Pause) I think it's going to be a long time if ever, before something of that sort will be developed in the West. I mean some of the Tibetan instruments are quite extraordinary. These long, long trumpets - these seven, eight, nine foot trumpets. Quite difficult to play. They loosen the teeth I was told, if you play them. You put the mouthpiece inside the mouth and there's a circular disc on the end which you fit behind the teeth but the vibrations go straight on your teeth all the time. I was told that your teeth can become loosened.. or will become loosened after a while. (Pause)

I suppose that it's not a simple business to introduce music into a puja. It isn't. It seems as though music in the ordinary sense just doesn't fit. I mean you could take, say, some verses from the Dhammapada, you could versify them and fit them to a tune and sing them like a hymn but, I mean, you'd then just create something akin to... maybe with the atmosphere of a Protestant service. Though that would be something of a very different nature. Perhaps something that you wanted to do. I believe some American Buddhist Churches, as they call them, do this.

Prasannasiddhi: I must admit some of the church music that one does come across is good. I mean Handel and most people who are writing for the church. It does have quite an effect. I know my mother and my sisters just go into the Sunday mass. There was on special occasions, a live accompaniment, a large organ and an orchestra, or at least a choir and they would definitely get something.

S: Yes but there's church music and there's church music. There's quite a difference between say early church music and later church music which is written, in some cases, by writers of operas. I mean some of the Popes have laid down restrictions about the sort of music that can be introduced into churches. Though I think that isn't observed much now. But if you listen carefully some of the older music conveys a quite different feeling than... I mean like the Gregorian chanting, or like for instance, later than that, Palestrina or (unclear) Monteverdi but then you come on to, say, [31] the church music if you can call it that of say Mozart and

Handel - that is of a different kind. But if you come again to the Nineteenth Century to the church music of, say Verdi or Rossini - again it's of a very different kind and you don't get... you get a lot of emotion but not, perhaps, much real deep religious feeling. (Pause) It's as though the further back you go the more you are in touch with something genuine. But then again, if you go back, say, to the Gregorian chants - this is supposed to have been modelled originally in Classical Greek music which is, of course, now lost. Though there have been attempts made to reconstruct classical Greek music.

Subhuti: The chanting in Greek orthodox churches sounds quite up in that sort of way - primordial.

S: Unaccompanied?

Subhuti: Yes.

S: Well Gregorian chant is unaccompanied but it's almost as though there is no place for individual emotion. It's too subjective. In other words, a puja to be genuinely a puja, in a way, thinking out loud a bit here, can't be too subjective. It should go beyond anyone's individual private subjective emotions, even devotional. It's as though they're inappropriate. Do you see what I'm getting at? They're sort of impersonal but not impersonal in a sense that negates personality or individuality but in a sense almost rises above it. (Pause) The hymn is very individual, It expresses individual feeling usually.

Kevala: I think it wouldn't be a difficulty in the sense of you get some kind of simple percussion accompaniment to pujas which to my mind wouldn't be expressing individual emotion.

S: But percussion maybe more than any other sort of instrument does have a sort of more than emotion... a sort of effect on the nervous system which is non-individual so to speak, or not subjective in the psychological sense. I mean some years ago Ananda used to accompany the chanting of the Padmasambhava mantra with little cymbals. He was the only one who did I think. Or maybe others did but that brought out... END OF SIDE A.

SIDE B

... But probably percussion would be the safest way in for some kind of musical instrument in the puja.

[32]

Khemapala: It was percussion I had in mind anyway.

S: You know perhaps experiment with different kinds of gong. We don't have any really beautiful gongs - such are sometimes...

Kevala: You said to do with pujas there's not a place for subjective emotion. Including devotion?

S: Well Subhuti in connection with Gregorian chanting used the word 'primordial'. I think it's as though the Tibetan type 'music' - inverted commas - touches at that sort of level. (Pause)

Which in a way bypasses the, let us say, the personal rather than the individual.

Subhuti: It's exactly why the Last Vandana doesn't fit because at the end of it you are, sort of, soaked in a primordial level of consciousness, almost, much broader than the individual. Then suddenly you have to poke your little head up, as it were. It seems quite wrong - jarring.

S: whereas of course, in India there has been the big mass event and you need to have a little bit of, as it were, individual consciousness at the end.

: We were saying in these, sort of primordial... , it's not an emotion really but it's akin.

S: Well it is an emotion in that individual people are feeling it, but it's not an emotion in that, sort of, petty personal sense.

: But you normally describe devotion as emotional in the petty personal sense.

S: It's some... it's a bit more austere. I think than what people usually - it's not a sort of, sweeping devotion.

Subhuti: It's very serious isn't it?

S: It's very serious and very deep.(Pause) Sober.

Subhuti: I've often reflected on this because we talk about pujas being a way of cultivating devotional feeling and I certainly don't feel in the puja sort of devotional, in a...

Kovida: Sentimental.

[33]

Subhuti: Yes sentimental.

S: Yes whereas the Indians, the Hindus have that sort of devotion (carefully) when they are playing on accordions and rolling their eyes and gazing around and all these things heard and Krishna is beautiful - all that sort of thing. That's certainly quite out of place in Buddhism, I believe.

Subhuti: The sort of, the more you feel very, sort of serious and deepened, as if you'd been... you'd touched something.

S: Whereas this sort of operatic type church music, it just doesn't convey that at all. That's why it seemed totally out of place in comparison with the earlier classical, even Baroque, and certainly medieval church music.

Subhuti: It's quite interesting being in a Greek Orthodox church because the service just goes on and people come in and they just stand and they maybe only stand for half an hour and they just go out again. And it's as if all that they come to do is just to be soaked in that atmosphere for a while.

S: Well that's the idea, this is the Orthodox idea which was originally a Catholic idea too,

until recently, of the liturgy as something that went on, as it were, on its own account. I mean there's a sort of, performance that went on which didn't require anyone to be present. Didn't require any audience. It was, I mean ideally, it was a sort of reflection of the archetypals who (had a) liturgy-Heaven which was being conducted all the time by the angels and archangels, you see. It was just a reflection of that. It didn't require an audience and it didn't require people to participate. They might come and sort of listen, on the fringes, as it were, but the participants were the priest. But now that these modern (positive) and secular ideas of audience participation which the Catholic church has succumbed to to some extent.

Subhuti: I'm glad you've made this clear because there is a sort of pressure, in a way, almost to have an audience participation. It's a very modern idea.

S: And also, this ties up with the modification of our seating arrangements. Because the way, the new seating arrangements, which are the traditional ones, suggest you are not an audience. Even a participating audience. You are actually part of the total structure. You are the Sangha.

Subhuti: It does have that corresponding feeling, as if you are sitting [34] in the midst of something, not facing something - you are in the midst of it.

S: I think if somebody should stand in the door and sort of overhear, well fair enough, you don't mind but you don't require any audience. You are not doing it for anybody's benefit. It's not a performance in that sense. You're just doing it because you want to do it. Well that's the way, so to speak, you are living. Well that is your life, so to speak.

Kevala: I can remember a thing at Bodh-gaya, the Tibetans were doing a puja at night under the tree. There must have been maybe thirty or forty at least of us amongst the puja and they had these hundreds and thousands of butter lamps all over the place and that's exactly the emotion that was brought up for me was that - it was primordial emotive. I felt it was like the voice had a sound... (unclear). It was very stirring indeed.

S: This is stirring rather than emotionally exciting and stimulating. And I think very often there is this - I don't think we have talked about this before, but it's as though in the FWBO... (unclear)... though no doubt outside as well. In the context of the puja people are looking for emotion of the same kind, almost, that they would experience if they went to an opera or they went to see a good film. They expect to be sort of, emotionally moved in that sort of way. But I think puja is really a different sort of thing. Yes it does involve your emotions but not in that sort of way. (Pause) The appeal is, as it were, more archetypal. And the music, if you have music, should be, for want of a better term, archetypal music, yes, rather than any other. The Tibetans seemed to have developed that successfully. The Gregorian is quite faint and quite weak in comparison with that, though it is of the kind in a way. And certainly the Russian church music which is chanted by a male choir is very powerful and effective. But singing in the ordinary sense seems quite out of place even in a church, not to speak of Buddhist temples. (pause) But though, perhaps, people are looking, in a way, in the puja for the wrong sort of thing and reproaching themselves for not experiencing it and almost trying to force it.

Vajrananda: It's almost as if there's a sort of superficial layer of emotion and then there's this deep, sort of, axis of emotion and you've got to go for that rather than the...

S: And perhaps that can develop or arise or you can experience that only when the, sort of,

surface emotion has subsided. So perhaps there may be a period when you just don't experience very much in the puja but you just do it.

[35]

Kevala: I would say there are two things that I've found that are not conducive to that kind of feeling in our pujas. One is special pujas we have. Making of offerings and giving... doesn't... I think it's good in one way but it doesn't stir you up in this kind of way, and in fact gets in the way. And the other is the length of our pujas. I don't think they are long enough, nor do we put enough effort into the mantras to generate this kind of feeling. It's sort of all gone before you've got a chance to really get into it.

Subhuti: I think, maybe, the special offerings, often they're too personal and maybe if there is a special offering it should be part of something transpersonal.

S: Yes I think sometimes the offerings are too subjective. I certainly saw that in Tuscany, both this year and last year. Both last year and the year before, I should say. The offerings were quite subjective in some cases almost psychological not to say psychotherapeutic. You probably know what I'm getting at.

Subhuti: It's sort of fun sometimes but a bit frothy. Where some of the best special pujas we've had have been, well to my mind, have been the ones connected with the Five Buddha mandala, where people were just... it wasn't that they had to think out what was the nicest thing for them to offer. They had to offer something in connection with it.

S: No, originality is quite out of place.

: Do you think there is any room for as it were, communication in a puja? I ask this because during the pujas on the retreat I've been catching the eye of another person and, as it were, doing the puja sort of a bit in unison with another person, and that seemed to have quite a strong effect.

S: Well my experience in the past was when people started catching each other's eye, in the context of pujas it led to a lot of giggling.

Vajrananda: Well it does tend to have that effect sometimes. I mean you can actually... that can all cool down, you can actually... sort of especially if you get on with the person.

S: But then there is the point that when you're doing the puja where is your mind, where is your consciousness supposed to be directed? I mean it's supposed to be directed to the appropriate Buddha or Bodhisattva. So in a way you relate through that.

[36]

Vajrananda: I'm not thinking that you are actually communicating too, but you are just aware of somebody else doing the same thing as you. Almost like communication exercises. That was the sort of feeling that I got.

S: I suppose that there's a difference of degree but I would have thought that if you're really doing the puja you would be, in a sense, almost oblivious of other people. Anyway not that you were really oblivious but you wouldn't be thinking in terms of other people but of the

object of the puja, which should be the Buddha of Bodhisattva or whatever. Any other awareness was sort of incidental and peripheral. (Pause) I think I've said in the past that I thought the best way to conduct a puja, say, if you're leading it especially, is in a quite matter of fact way, not trying to pump emotion into it. Just do it. It's quite simple.

Prasannasiddhi: Don't try to create an experience.

Vajrananda: I did quite a lot of this just looking at Surata, it certainly () an entire puja and I mean after the initial sort of difficulty in actually just doing it you kind of... I found it had quite a strong effect. Especially things like the refuges and precepts and referring to the Sangha. It made it all the more real whereas you can get sort of caught in the little world of your own and...

S: Well no, the idea is that you get caught up into the Buddha's world.

Vajrananda: I think there are dangers with actually not being aware of anyone in a puja, in the collective...

S: Well that is quite possible, but that suggests someone in a quite alienated state and not even in a position to do puja really at all. Well it is sometimes I see people like that, in a glassy eyed sort of state vaguely repeating the words after you but with their eyes wandering around.

Vajrananda: You certainly... certainly if you're distracted at all you can't be vaguely looking at someone for very long without realizing you've lost it. You're not connected at all.

S: But in a way you could think that you are saying the words of the puja to the Buddha. (Pause) I don't think it's a question of trying to be more aware of others when doing a puja. I think we have got to be quite careful.

Vajrananda: I did notice that with some people I actually couldn't think... (unclear)

[37]

S: But that suggests a certain element of subjectivity. It's as though the puja is sort of 'collective' but with inverted commas, if you know what I mean. I mean we've spoken about the Greek Orthodox church - they attach great importance to... well they've got a word which is actually one of the untranslatable Russian words. It is something like 'Subornos' - Subornos - does anyone know it. It's sort of like collectivity or solidarity but it's what you do of a spiritual nature together which is something more than just individual efforts. I mean it's sort of superficial. It looks like something collective but it isn't really something collective. We'd say, sort of, it pertains to the spiritual community. So it's as though puja should be an act of the spiritual community. That is to say collective, as it were, on a higher level. It's the collective act, if you can use that sort of expression of a number of individuals. We just don't have a term for this in English. So therefore, there a purely separate individual sort of approach is out of place. Like separate individual emotion is out of place. Do you see what I mean. I hope you do. So puja is a sort of 'Collective' inverted commas, act. (Pause) Well it's as though every element in it should subserve that and not detract from that. You're not doing your own thing in a puja - that would negate the very idea of a puja. (Pause) That's why, in a sense, there is no such thing as an individual puja. If you recite the Sevenfold puja by yourself

it's a different thing. If you like it's a different experience.

Kevala: In what way?

S: Well in the way that I've mentioned. It's just you instead of the whole spiritual community.

Kevala: But I thought that one of the ideas of doing the puja on your own when you have to or when you can't do it with others is that it can lead you into communication with the rest of the Sangha.

S: I mean that is true but it is still a different experience. I mean unless you can actually feel, so to speak, that you are doing it with them and that they are present. Well that would be a different thing. (Pause) Then you would be doing it with them even though they weren't physically present.

Vajrananda: Well I gathered from what you were saying that it's puja as a rule that is collective, a collective practice.

S: Yes what I'm talking about now is puja as a 'collective', inverted commas, practice but I'm not saying you can't have something of the [38] same sort of feel by yourself but I think it, unless you are, sort of, physically aware of others in the spiritual community doing it with you, unless you are aware in that sort of way, then it is a different kind of experience if you are literally just doing it on your own. (Pause) I think it is different from a group meditation so-called because in the case of group meditation, in a way, you are with drawing into your own subjectivity. But in the case of puja you're going out. You are performing actions or saying things which are part of the, what someone called public reality.

Kevala: How does that fit in with you saying... (unclear)...

S: It's a bit like, let me give an example or parallel. It's a quite different experience, say, reading poetry to yourself quietly and reading poetry to a whole audience of people. Would people agree with that? It's a different dimension. Do you see what I mean? So in the same way it's a quite different experience in that sort of way, meditating, even in a group but you meditate to yourself, as it were, and there's the sort of the over-performance of the puja. You know, all of you together, so to speak, the over-action, the over-speech.

Kevala: I find it quite a different experience meditating with other people rather than alone.

S: Yes, it's less introverted. But when, in addition you actually do and say things as you do with the puja, well the extroversion is even greater. The introversion is even less. I mean you could even arrange a whole sort of hierarchy. You've got meditation by yourself at the bottom, so to speak I'm not grading according to value, only in a certain kind of way. Meditation by yourself. Then above that puja by yourself. Then meditation together and then puja together, representing different ascending degrees of extroversion and, as it were, 'collective', inverted commas, activity.

Vajrananda: So even when you do... when you are performing a puja in that collective group there is a certain amount of awareness of the people around you doing this.

S: Oh yes, by very definition in a way.

Vajrananda: Right, I think that this is... some of the feeling that I've been sort of getting at is...

S: But it's not him and me.

[39]

Vajrananda: No quite - but there is...

S: It's all of us.

Vajrananda: A strong awareness.

Subhuti: It's a mutual participation.

S: You know, also, therefore, if you have in the midst of the puja , as an item, the puja stops and you have a solo, somebody's song pouring out her soul, it's completely incompatible with the puja. I mean this is why people didn't feel happy when we had those songs of Milarepa sung, sometimes by Anoma, although she did it very beautifully - but it seemed quite out of place in the context of the puja. So I imagine it was for that sort of reason. You came down bump from the level of the archetypal to the individual not to say personal. There's a sort of - the puja stops and you have another kind of item and then the puja goes on again. It's not really that the song is part of the puja. It can't be.

Vajrananda: So, in a way, even leading the song shouldn't be at all like a performance.

S: Oh no.

: Because there's a sort of personal

S: No. No it shouldn't also be too subjectively chosen. 'Oh this is my favourite reading' - this sort of thing, well that's quite irrelevant in the context of the puja - whether it's your favourite reading or not.

Kevala: Presumably it should always be Dharma as well.

S: Yes, and this is why I'm not too keen on poems being read. Not even my own which are occasionally read. And certainly not sort of non-Dharmic material. Well that's just another level altogether. I mean it might be a beautiful poem but it can't be included just because it's beautiful. Maybe if it's good poetry and a thoroughly appropriate Dharma point - that's different. Even if it doesn't come from the Sutras, perhaps. One has to be quite careful about that.

Khemapala: In something like that there is sometimes at Vajraloka... (inaudible)...

S: I remember we've got the dedication ceremony in one edition of the puja book - this was attributed to me. Well yes, I did compose it but, in [40] the new edition, I cut that out because I felt personal attributions were quite out of place in the context of the puja. Work is anonymous. The fact that it happened to be written by me is totally irrelevant.

Kevala: The puja is the sea...

S: Hm?

Kevala: The puja is the sea in the sense that all the rivers flow into the sea.

S: Yes, quite, indeed. So although this dedication ceremony is by Bhante, well that's quite out of place. That is of historical interest only not of any liturgical relevance.

Subhuti: Literature should have no authorship. It should just be almost as if it is just going on all the time.

S: Primordial. It's always been like that. (Pause) It shouldn't be dated or associated with particular names. All real hymns are anonymous, so to speak. (Pause) This is why even in a church if someone stands up and says 'we're now going to have mass in C by so and so', well that's quite inappropriate isn't it? Or if there's applause it's inappropriate. I mean sometimes they ask that there should be no applause, if a concert is done in a church. In a way that's quite in keeping. The Christian view is, well, you're not there to praise man but to praise God. That is another way of putting it but the same thing. (Gong Sounds)

S: So just one last point one could say that in a Buddhist Monastery eating, that is to say a meal is to be regarded as a liturgical performance. Do you see what I mean? Not each person individually going and getting their fodder, grabbing it and swallowing it by themselves. It's a sort of 'collective' - inverted commas, act. In fact the Tibetans almost incorporate it into the puja because they have tea and tsampa sometimes served up in the course of the puja itself.

Subhuti: In the heat of it (laughter) In the... (Inaudible)...

S: That was very naughty (Laughter)

Subhuti: But very true.(laughter)

S: There would be frequent fasts. (Laughter)

[41]

Subhuti: Kevala and I would get fat! (Laughter)

Kevala: In that puja I saw at Bodh-gaya somebody came round with a basket full of loaves of bread and just handed one loaf of bread to the monk as he was chanting and then money as well. And gave money during the puja.

S: Anyway perhaps we'd better leave it there. You can carry on afterwards if you want to.

END OF SEMINAR

Sabbapapassa akaranam
Kusalassa upasampada
Sacitta pariyodapanam
Etam Buddhana sasanam

Dhammam care sucaritam
Na tam ducaritam care
Dhammacari sukham seti
Asmim loke paramhi ca

Na tavata dhammadharo
Yavata bahu bhasati
Yo ca appam pi sitvana
Dhammam kayena passati
Sa ve dhammadharo hoti
Yo dhammam nappamajjati

Natthi me sarnam annam
Buddho me saranam veram
Etena sacca-vajjena
Hotu me jayamangalam

Natthi me sarnam annam
Dhammo me saranam veram
Etena sacca-vajjena
Hotu me jayamangalam

Natthi me sarnam annam
Sangho me saranam veram
Etena sacca-vajjena
Hotu me jayamangalam

Namo Buddhaya
Namo Dhammaya
Namo Sanghaya

Sadhu
Sadhu
Sadhu

Spellchecked and put into house style Shantavira December 1998