

I. Buddhism and Society.

Chapter 1. A General Introduction to Ethics and Social Philosophy

Definition

Ethics is the science of morality. It is concerned with conduct and character. Ethics attempts to construct a system of moral and to lay down a set of rules of behaviour. If and when a system of ethics is extended and applied to a society as a whole, correlated to specific social roles and orientated to secure collective social goals, it may then be termed social philosophy. Ethics and social philosophy have been important to man since the dawn of history. Not only have the great religions of the world all turned their attention to the question of human conduct and goals both individual and collective, but the question has also been addressed by a number of secular thinkers throughout the centuries.

Primitive ethics – east and west

Ethics as it is known today developed only gradually over the course of many centuries. Before the sixth century B.C., even in the cradles of what were to become the classical civilisations, only an indefinite and rudimentary form of ethics had been evolved. This was certainly the case in Greece before Plato. The picture that emerges of ethics in ancient Greece is one in which each city state had its own set of precepts and virtues. There was no way of universalising these sets of precepts and no way of extrapolating from one situation to another. What was virtue in Sparta need not necessarily be virtue in Athens.

In this prephilosophical context, what is right is determined by the standards of the group, in the Greek frame of reference, the city state. But the situation was not so different among the Aryan society of India. Like the early Greeks, it seems that the Aryans had no very well defined and universal set of ethical precepts before the sixth century B.C. in their case too, what was right was determined by the group, that is the tribe.

In China also, if one is to believe the evidence of the five classics, there existed no coherent ethics before the sixth century B.C. Although there were oblique references in the Books of Odes to the wickedness of rulers, goodness and wickedness are not systematically defined much less generalised to form what might be termed ethics.

In all these primitives prephilosophical societies, the values that were esteemed were severely circumscribed. They were values like courage and loyalty which contributed to the survival and cohesion of the group. In general no attempt was made at this stage in the development of ethics to extend these values beyond the limits of the social group or to include in the list of ethical values ones which might be universalised and held to be valid for all men regardless of the group to which they belonged.

Plato's search for the "Good"

In Greece, the search for universal principles that might serve as the foundation for an ethical system begins with Plato. It is Plato who poses the question. "What is good", and Plato who decides that good can only be successfully defined if one avoids subjectivity and establishes an universal set of rules of which good is a part. But what is good? Is it identifiable with pleasure? This is a question which has long plagued moral philosophers. Plato although he takes pleasure's claim seriously, eventually decides against it. Happiness, he said, is the good, but how does happiness differ from pleasure? It seems to have something to do with durability, but more of this later.

For Plato, ethics or morality must be vindicated within a social context – the Republic, and that social context is in turn vindicated by its relationship to a natural order. Plato tries out a number of basic morale formulae which could conceivably serve as the foundation of this ethics. He considers and discards for instance the formula "Do good to your friends and do evil to your enemies." This rule which might have done well enough for a prephilosophical form of primitive ethics is found wanting by Plato. Finally, Plato hits upon the principle of reciprocal self interest, a principle which as it will be shown existed in India and was also discovered in China. It is in one's own best interest, says Plato, to avoid harming others.

However Plato has another more characteristic, although in the light of current values less appealing dimension, to his ethics. He formulated a conception of social roles or stations within which the good of the citizens of the Republic was to be achieved. The ideal society, for Plato, consisted of three strata – the rulers, the auxiliaries and the ruled. At the apex of this system is the philosopher king. Only he has real access to the good through reason. He is able to ascent to knowledge of the good by virtue of his reason. For most men then morality remains a matter of the carrot and the stick. Indeed Plato does allude to a doctrine of reward and punishment in the after life.

Plato, as it has been said, answers the question "What is good," with

happiness, therefore his ethics obviously must be concerned with achieving the good, that is achieving happiness. But what of the man who is virtuous but suffer unjustly? Socrates had said that it is better to suffer unjustly than to inflict unjust sufferings, but this is an opinion which Socrates's own interlocutor hotly contests and one which even Aristotle, Plato's disciple, considers ill founded.

Again Plato has put his finger on a question which is at the very heart of ethics, but how well does he answer it? Plato says the just man is happier than the unjust one, because he has limited desires. Plato says that the just man is happier than the unjust one, because he knows the pleasures of reason as well as the pleasures of the senses. Finally, he says, the good man is happier because he enjoys the genuine pleasures of the intellect. Pleasures of the intellect, it seems according to Plato, are permanent, therefore they are greater. Once again in this suggestion there is evident a movement towards that distinction of happiness from pleasure along the lines of duration.

All of this is very well and good, but what about the problem of the good man who through no fault of his own is misjudged by society and suffers as a consequence? Plato could not have been ignorant of the possibility. After all, Socrates whom he much respected had been sentenced to death by the Athenians and was he not a good man? If the only solution Plato can provide is reward and punishment in the after life, then he must surely be counted as a religious philosopher of ethics.

Ethics and social philosophy in ancient India,

Meanwhile in India the Aryans as they settled down to enjoy the fruits of their conquest had gradually come under the influence of the indigenous Indus Valley Civilisation. Among the ethical ideas which the Aryans inherited from the Indus Valley Civilisation was that of reciprocal self interest, or in its specifically Indian formulation, the ideas of non-injury (ahimsa) and moral retribution (karma). Ahimsa teaches that one ought not to injure others, in this case not only other human beings, but all sentient beings. Karma for its part teaches that one will sooner or later experience the effect in kind of one's actions, good or bad. Therefore, if one injures others, one will in turn be injured. Consequently, in the Indian context, reciprocal self interest means that in order to experience security and happiness oneself, one has to refrain from threatening the lives and happiness of all sentient beings.

The concepts of ahimsa and Karma undoubtedly existed in India before the arrival of the Aryans in the second millennia B.C. They are an important

part of the Jaina doctrine which is certainly very ancient and they are clearly enunciated by the Buddha. They make their way into the literature and ethical philosophy of the Aryans rather late in the Upanishadic texts.

While the Jaines and the Buddhists had an equalitarian view of society, in which social roles were determined by worth rather than by birth, the Aryans gradually evolved the famous or infamous institution of castes. There are of course many theories about how caste actually came into being, but perhaps the most plausible is that the caste system reflects a process of differentiation which took place within Aryan society. According to this view, the priest and the warrior were naturally the most important members of Aryan society during the earliest period of Aryan civilisation. Later as the Aryans settled down to agrarian life, the farmer and merchant also become important. At this point, non-Aryans also began to be incorporated into Aryan society and formed the fourth caste.

Regardless of the origin one ascribes to the institution of caste, it must be said that there exists an interesting parallel between it and the Platonic institution of the tripartite state. The only difference is that in the case of the latter, the two lower castes those of the farmers and merchants and menials, are grouped together into one class – the ruled. As for the priests and the warriors, they are almost exactly paralleled in the philosopher kings who have access to the good or the holy and the auxiliaries who administer the state. The only difference is that in Aryan society, the priests were not responsible for the administration of the state in the way that the philosopher king is responsible in Plato's Republic.

Another feature of Aryan social philosophy which like the institution of caste distinguishes the Aryan view from that of the pre-Aryan civilisation represented by the Jainas and the Buddhists, is the ethnic distinction which they drew between those of pure race, i.e., the Aryans, and the barbarians. This inevitably meant that in theory, if not always in practise, Aryan society remained strictly circumscribed and in a sense tribal. This subtle form of ethnocentrism was of course not peculiar to the Aryans, but was also found in Greece and in China where even Confucius did not extend his so called silver rule to barbarians.

In India, the good had been defined by the Aryans in terms of pleasure or worldly happiness. The chief institution which their religion provided for achieving this end was the sacrifice. The early Aryans had only a very shadowy idea of the after life if they had any at all. The Aryan definition of the good was at variance with the definition of the good that was current in the Indus Valley

culture. There the good was equated with freedom. Not freedom in the Greek sense where it meant freedom to get whatever one wanted, but freedom in the Indian sense where it meant achieving a transcendental mode of being.

As Aryan conceptions came increasingly under the influence of Indus Valley ideas, the notion of pleasure or worldly happiness as the only good in life began to give way. Along side it, the goal of freedom began to be cherished. The innovation, like the introduction of the notions of non-injury and Karma, also took place in the Upanishads. As for the traditions which had their origins in the Indus Valley civilisation, the Jainas and the Buddhists, they acknowledged worldly happiness as a provisional good too, although for them, sacrifice was not the means to achieve it. Worldly happiness could be achieved by following the principle of non-injury. Such behaviour, because of the law of Karma (that is the impersonal moral law of action and reaction) would result in happiness in the present life, or if not, in a future life. For the Indus Valley people, the conception of rebirth was a natural extension of the law of Karma. The Aryans, along with the ideas of non-injury and freedom, accepted the ideas of Karma and rebirth and consequently Karma came to replace sacrifice as the primary means of securing happiness.

In the light of these considerations, it is clear that initially for the Indus Valley tradition, the Jainas and the Buddhists, and later for the Aryans as well, justifying morality in terms of happiness was not the problem it was for Plato, and as it will be seen for Confucius. For the Indians, there was a ready answer to the question posed by the case of the good man who suffers in this life. Although he may be good in this life, his suffering is the result of evil he had done in past lives, and although he suffers in this life, his goodness will be rewarded in a future life. Like the Indian religions, the theistic religions, Jewdeism, Christianity and Islam have a ready answer to Plato's and Aristotle's question. They are not constrained to justify morality on the evidence of this life alone.

Ethics and social Philosophy in Ancient China

In China, the credit for discovering the principle of reciprocal self interest rightly belongs to Confucius. It was Confucius who first said, "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you." This dictum has rather patronisingly been dubbed Confucius's silver rule by way of an unfavourable comparison with the so called golden rule of Jesus, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you:" merely because it is couched in negative terms. Nonetheless, the importance of this formulation cannot be undervalued. Its achievement was no less than to bring ethics into the realm of universals - of

rationality - in China. Confucius's solution to the problem of social disintegration was a moral one and it was in moral philosophy that he excelled. Although the superiority of Lao-tse in the field of philosophy may be acknowledged, it must be admitted that there are only vague and imprecise moral guidelines suggested in philosophical Taoism. But in the teaching of Confucius, morality is elevated to a system.

Like Plato and the Aryans, Confucius had definite social concerns. The amount of attention that he devotes to matters of state and to the division and delineation of social roles within a social order testify to the truth of this statement. Like Plato and the Aryans, the conception of Confucius is tinged with ethnocentrism, for after all, it did not occur to him to include barbarians in his ethical system, and he dedicates almost no space to the question of how one ought to act towards foreigners. It was left to Mo-tus to extend the silver rule to foreigners too and to sweep away the rather rigid Confucian barriers within human society.

Again the question of a justification for morality is a problem for Confucius. Like the early Aryans, and perhaps Plato as well, Confucius is by no means sure about the after life. A survey of the Analects reveals that his acceptance of the supra-natural was more a matter of convention than conviction. Therefore, like many post-European enlightenment philosophers, Confucius is forced to fall back on the defence that the good man's sense of satisfaction with having done good is sufficient reward even though he may be persecuted. This is hardly a sufficient justification of morality, hardly a sufficient inducement to be good, when the fruits of evil are so palpably accessible.

Aristotle's Contribution

Plato had believed that moral philosophy was primarily the concern of the philosopher kings. Like him, Aristotle proposes an ethics for an elite, but nonetheless, he makes a number of significant contributions to the evolution of moral philosophy in the west.

Aristotle takes up the question of defining the good where Plato left off. Like his mentor, Aristotle sees that pleasure offers a strong claim to constitute the goal of action. Again, like Plato, Aristotle holds that happiness, not mere pleasure, is the goal of ethics, but unlike Plato, Aristotle clearly sees that happiness cannot be completely divorced from ordinary pleasure. Happiness, says Aristotle, has intrinsic rather than instrumental value. One feels the need to ask or indeed to answer the question "Why should one be happy?"

therefore happiness is self-sufficient.

Aristotle identifies three elements which constitute happiness. They are life, feelings and rationality. In his choice of the first two of these elements – life and feeling – he comes very close to the Buddhist position, which holds that all sentient beings value life and freedom from suffering. Aristotle however is chiefly concerned with humanity, and not with sentient existence as such and so he neglects the first two elements in his definition and focuses upon the last – rationality – which he considers to be the very heart of humanity. He is thus led to conclude that happiness, the goal of good conduct, is none other than rational activity. Once again, the fruit of the moral life is really speaking reserved for philosophers.

Finally, Aristotle makes more specific the suggestion already found in Plato that happiness ought to be more durable than mere pleasure. In fact, Aristotle remarks that happiness should last a lifetime. Thus he indicates another criterion by means of which happiness may be distinguished from mere pleasure. It will be shown that a similar criterion is used in Buddhism where happiness is supposed to stand the test of a series of lifetimes.

Perhaps an even more important contribution of Aristotle's was his recognition of the importance of choice or volition in moral action. For Aristotle, unconscious and involuntary actions cannot be the subject of praise or blame. In other words, they carry no moral weight. Only in so far as an action is freely and consciously undertaken does it have positive or negative moral force. This comes very close to the Buddhist definition of Karma.

Finally, Aristotle realised another important fact about morality. He understood that a system of ethics could only be a system of generalisations. Therefore what should and should not be done cannot be specified without reference to a particular situation. Aristotle called the ability to apply general principles of morality to particular moral or immoral action is recognised ((question)) and the need to integrate these two poles of morality constitutes good conduct.

Morality in the Judaeo-Christian Tradition

God is the central character in the Christian cosmic drama. Man, in the final analysis, is incidental to God an extra as it were. In the Christian view, God – the father of man – commands him, and he – man- ought to obey, because God knows what is best. Man's good rests in obedience to God. It is because man has failed to obey God that he has become estranged from Him.

In order to be reunited with God, man needs to learn to obey his commandments.

Commandment and obedience therefore are the very heart of early Judaeo-Christian morality. The situation is one in which God, not man, is the law maker. Man is ultimately irrelevant to the establishment of the moral law. This is exemplified in the handing down of the ten commandments by Moses to the Jews.

Another idea typical of early Judaeo-Christian morality which goes hand in hand with the notion of God as the law maker is the idea of God as the enforcer of the moral law. In other words, God is the final judge of man's obedience. God administers reward or punishment in the after life in the form of heaven or hell. Early Judaeo-Christian ideas of morality and the ultimate purpose of observing the moral law rest exclusively upon the existence and power of God.

Self interest, reciprocity and the Christian contribution.

The early Christian church took root in the shadow of this monotheistic vision of the omnipotence of God, but it failed markedly to formulate any specific ethical code of its own. The moral precepts which are apparent in the Gospels and in the Epistles of Paul are appropriate only to a very special time in history – the time immediately before the second coming and the advent of the kingdom of God. It is only in the light of this expectation that, for example, injunctions to let the dead bury the dead and to live like the birds giving no thought for the morrow can be understood. For this reason, the ethics of the early church have been dubbed interim ethics. However, the second coming did not occur, and the history of Christian ethic ever since has been the story of the attempt to construct a durable moral code out of the bits and pieces of interim ethics taught by the founders of the church.

Early Christianity did however focus upon three ideas which although not new in the history of ethics - east and west - were significant contributions to moral philosophy. First of all, Christianity recognised the primary role of self interest in motivation. This is clearly acknowledged when for instance it is said to "Love thy neighbour as thy self." Self love is therefore clearly the foundation of Christian morality. Again, like the Buddha and Confucius, Jesus expressed the principle of reciprocity which has already been alluded to in the injunction "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Finally, Christianity championed an idea which as undoubtedly new and revolutionary in the middle

eastern and Mediterranean world. It was the idea of the equality of all men before God. It was noted that a number of the early formulations of moral and social philosophy in the west as well as in India and China relied heavily upon the idea of a division of social roles. Plato divided the citizenry of the Republic into rulers, auxiliaries and the ruled, the Aryans divided Brahmanical society into the four castes, and even Confucius had been preoccupied with the roles of ruler and subject. In this catalogue of early social philosophies, only Buddhism and Jainism which hearkened back to an even earlier civilisation are noteworthy for their equalitarian and democratic social attitudes. But now for the first time in the west Christianity proclaim the equality of man- a doctrine which within a few centuries appealed greatly to the impoverished masses of the Roman empire and which from time to time throughout the centuries has threatened established power structures here and there in the Christian world.

The renaissance syncretism

When renaissance Christian philosophers and theologians attempted to fill the vacuum which had been left by the interim ethics of the early fathers of the church, they naturally turned to the ethics of Plato and Aristotle with which they had recently become reacquainted. The result was that the morality of renaissance Christian philosophers virtually became a combination of the God of the Jews and the good of the Greeks. This is perhaps most evident in the thought of Thomas Aquinas.

Aquinas attempted to forge a synthesis between the ethics of Aristotle and the Christian doctrine of salvation through union with God. In order to do this, he proposed two levels on natural and one supernatural. The principles of Aristotle's ethics were applicable to the natural world, but they had to be reinterpreted in order to be relevant to the supernatural world, that is to the special doctrines of Christianity. Thus natural ethic- the ethics of the Greeks and what may be termed supernatural ethics the ethics of Christianity were not contradictory, but complimentary.

For example of the natural morality is self – preservation, but the first principle of supernatural morality is that of the preservation of the immortal soul whose real nature is contaminated by attachment to animal desires. Again, natural morality enjoins the pursuit of natural desires like pleasure or happiness, but supernatural morality enjoins the pursuit of the saving vision of God. Finally, just as there are natural virtues like truth telling, there are supernatural virtues like faith, hope and charity.

The ingenious renaissance syncretism fashioned by Aquinas and others did not however remain unchallenged for long. Perhaps it was too

intellectual to suit the tastes of the majority of European Christendom. The fact is that it was soon superseded in importance and influences by a simpler but much less interesting view of morality a view which owed almost everything to the omnipotent God of the Jews and almost nothing to the intellectual good of the Greeks.

Luther and the Protestant reformation

Luther returned to the early Judaeo-Christian view of morality according to which ethics was just a question of commandment and obedience. For him, God's commandments are self justifying and do not need to be explained in terms of reason or much less desire. The inviolability of the commandments rests upon the power of God and they must be obeyed not because of but in spite of reason and desire.

However Luther emphasises an idea which is specifically Christian and which distinguishes his view from the view of the Jews. Jesus Had offered man salvation through faith when before he had faced only damnation under the law of the Jews. For Luther then, faith is paramount. Action, or to use the preferred Christian term, works, are of no avail. Faith is the only criterion for salvation which can only be affected by an act of grace on the part of an omnipotent God. Any other arrangement would diminish the all mighty and inscrutable nature of the divine.

By the sixteen century another important change in the moral outlook of European man was also virtually complete. The social vision of man's being which had been so important to the Greeks had all but disappeared. For Luther as for his contemporaries and successors, man is an individual. His identity no longer owes anything to his social role. In the final analysis, he is alone in the only confrontation that matters – the confrontation with God at the time of his death. The age of the individual had arrived.

Ethical hedonism and utilitarianism

The seventeenth century saw the application of empiricist principles to ethics and social philosophy. The movement began with Hobbes who lived in England in the middle of one of the most turbulent periods of English history. Hobbes's methodology was borrowed from Galileo and Newton.

Hobbes returned to a principle which to him appeared incontestable. The individual's primary motivation is self interest. Self interest can be seen in the common experience of all individuals who desire life and pleasure and fear

death and pain. Given this basic principle of human action, Hobbes formulated a social and political philosophy according to which individuals enter into a contract, as it were, an agreement to refrain from killing and injuring others, because they would rather renounce killing than run the risk of being killed. Precepts or prescribed action therefore, for Hobbes, were instrumental. One acts in a given way in order to obtain the goal of a secure life and the enjoyment of pleasure. It should be noted however that, for Hobbes, there is no ultimate or final goal of action, no supreme good or ideal society. So man's progress is from the pursuit of one desire to the next, from the avoidance of one danger to the avoidance of the next.

Hobbes's ideas have come in for much criticism largely because of the crudity of their presentation. This, it might be argued, was a result of the fact that for the first time since Aristotle, a social philosophy had been advanced which was free from the direct influence of the special doctrines of Christianity. Hobbes, therefore, was something of a pioneer. In any case, there is no doubt that in one form or another, Hobbes's ideas have had a great impact on social political and economic philosophy.

Bentham and Smith for example who followed in the tradition of social philosophy founded by Hobbes taught ethical hedonism. Like Hobbes, Bentham taught that people are motivated solely by the desire for pleasure and the fear of pain. According to their view, the only individual or social good is happiness. In other words, the greatest happiness of the greatest number was the accepted goal of social institutions including moral codes.

Hedonism, the view advocated by Hobbes according to which the only human motivation is the desire for pleasure and the aversion towards pain, and ethical hedonism, the view held by Bentham and Smith according to which the greatest happiness of the greatest number constituted the goal of society combined to form utilitarianism. Utilitarianism had a great and lasting influence throughout the centuries of empirical expansion and industrial revolution. Today more than ever, the doctrine continues to have a profound influence upon economic thinking in most sectors both public and private.

Kant's absolute ought

Kant is an important figure in the history of the evolution of ethics in the west. His views regarding morality still have wide spread influence today even when, as is often the case, the people who hold a Kantian position are not aware of its origin. For Kant, morality lay outside the domain of deductive mathematical principles and also outside the domain of inductive conclusions

arrived at through the collection and quantification of objective data. Therefore, morality for Kant was neither grounded upon rationalist nor empiricist principles.

Kant extolled what he called a good will, which he said shines with its own light like a jewel. A good will by means of which man is freely motivated to perform his duty however must operate in a completely uninterested way. In other words, if a duty, i.e., a moral act, is done for the sake of gaining something else, say happiness, or even out of an inclination to do it the intrinsic value of a good will is vitiated. One can immediately see that here Kant is arguing for a conception of moral precepts as intrinsic rather than instrumental. Indeed, for Kant, a moral imperative, that which is expressed by the word "ought" is absolutely and wholly divorced from ends, purposes, wants or needs.

But what may be called a moral precept in Kant's system? Kant's answer is that moral precepts are rules of conduct which may be universalised. A rule of conduct may be considered a moral law or precept if one can consistently will it to apply universally in the manner of a law of nature. For example, it would be inconsistent to will that telling lies be universally practised, for in that case one would not gain any advantage from telling a lie. In other words, it is only because truth telling is a universal law of moral conduct that a liar can hope to tell a lie and have it believed. But if lying was universal, then lying would cease to serve any purpose for the liar.

Kant's conception of an universal law unmotivated by any appeal to self interest and unrelated to reason and experience results in the establishment of an absolutely formal and one might say vacuous moral code. Such a moral code has to be invariable regardless of the actual situation of the agent. For such an agent, duty is duty irrespective of the circumstances or consequences. The Kantian attitude may be illustrated by a rather common reaction to moral questions, "You ought to do X;" says a Kantian. "But why?" asks his interlocutor. "Simply because you ought;" replies the Kantian.

Nonetheless, despite Kant's insistence upon duty for duty's sake, he admits that the good man is rewarded with happiness even though he must not seek it in the performance of his duty. This reward however comes to him only in the after life where happiness is assured the good man by God. Therefore, in the final analysis, Kantian morality does rest upon the doctrines of the church. The existence of God, the immortality of the soul and the freedom of the will.

Freedom and morality for Marx

For Marx, the goal of human action is freedom, but not freedom in the

Buddhist sense. The freedom with which Marx is concerned – because he is a materialist – is the freedom to obtain maximum material goods and maximum social opportunities for the majority of men. The means by which this goal can be achieved, according to Marx, is the replacement of a given social order (the Bourgeois social order) by a new one (the Marxist social order).

Given Marx's overriding concern with freedom in his sense, he naturally subordinates morality to his revolutionary purpose. Bourgeois society does not afford freedom to man, because it is composed of a dominating class and a dominated class. In order for freedom to be gained, this situation has to be changed, but it cannot be changed by means of an appeal to morality, for according to Marx, morality is not universal, but rather particular, that is confined to a particular class, be it the dominating or the dominated.

To summarise, Marx, unlike Kant, regards morality as instrumental rather than intrinsic. But he goes even further. For him, morality is largely irrelevant to achieving the goal of social transformation. Moreover, morality is not only largely irrelevant to the really important process of class struggle and social revolution, but it is also particular or relative, that is applicable only to a given class. The picture of Marxist ethics and social philosophy that emerges from these considerations is one that hardly differs from the primitive ethics of ancient Greece. There too, freedom meant the freedom to get what one wanted. Similarly, for the ancient Greeks, as for Marx, morality was particular rather than universal, that is it was confined to a particular city state. Therefore, Marxism conspicuously fails to supply a comprehensive goal of human action which has both an ultimate and a provisional component and to provide a general code of conduct whereby such a comprehensive goal might be achieved.

Twentieth century ethics in the west

Twentieth century ethics in the west may be divided into two phases, the second following more or less naturally from the first. The first phase which held sway at the beginning of the century and whose best known advocate was G.E. Moore was called the intuitionist phase. It pretended to be objective, but in actuality it was dogmatic. The second phase represented by moral philosophers like Ayer and Hare, has been called emotivistic. It sought to recoup some of the credibility of moral philosophy which had been lost because of the dogmatism of the intuitionists, but it succeeded only in casting moral philosophy into total and self confessed relativism. In the hands of the emotivists, morality becomes finally an arbitrary choice made by the individual.

Moore claimed that good was self evident like the colour yellow. One

does not need to define the colour yellow, because everyone knows what yellow is. Therefore, for Moore, knowledge of good is intuitive, but it is not as it was for Plato, an intuition reserved for the philosopher kings, the man specially trained to ascend to knowledge of the inner essence of things, but rather an intuition available to all like the experience of yellow. Moore and his followers, on their own admission, only sought to express what everyone already knows. That their view was dogmatic is revealed by the fact that they disagreed among themselves regarding what everyone is already supposed to know anyway. When one examines Moore's actual notion of the good, one finds that it consists of participation in human interaction and enjoyment of the beautiful. Finally, Moore turns out to be a twentieth century English Aristotle.

The recognition of the fact that the stance of Moore and his immediate successors was actually dogmatic, that is not an expression of objective fact, but rather an expression of personal feeling, led to the emergence of a movement collectively known as emotivism. The emotivist movement in ethics emphasised the primary role of choice in the adoption of a moral stance and the ability of moral judgements to influence the actions of others. For the emotivists, the naively dogmatic declaration of the intuitionists, "This is good;" becomes the subjective statement, "I like this;" coupled with the prescriptive statement, "Do it too." Thus the audacious attempt to foist an ego –centric and ethnocentric dogmatism upon moral philosophy inevitably led to the emergence of an universal subjectivism and relativism in the field.

This ultimately is the sorry situation of contemporary ethics and social philosophy in the Western tradition. The question, "What is good?" remains unanswered except in the most arbitrary and unconvincing way. Similarly, the variously proposed sets of actions which are supposed to achieve this undefined or arbitrarily defined good remain unsupported, either wholly so in the case of the popular residue of Kantian absolutist morality, or partially so in the case of the emotivist movement where the only sanction for codes of action is in the form of a prescriptive statement – "Do it too." Scarcely surprising then that contemporary conceptions of morality are in a state of extreme confusion, buffeted about by the conflicting and contradictory claims of Judaeo – Christian and protestant ethics, utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, intuitionism and emotivism.

Chapter 2

The Foundation of Buddhist Ethics and Social Philosophy

Naturalism and Absolutism

The foregoing chapter considered ethics and social philosophy both in the ancient world and in the West. A careful consideration of the contents of the chapter will reveal that once ethics evolves beyond what may be termed a primitive condition – a condition in which ethical systems are limited to a particular community – two general tendencies appear. The first of these tendencies may be termed as the absolutist tendency or absolutism.

The naturalistic tendency refers to an attitude in which ethics and social philosophy are based upon observation and analysis of human nature. The absolutist attitude looks to something beyond human nature, an absolute or transcendental foundation of ethics and social philosophy. The first attitude, the naturalistic attitude is empiricist, but the absolutist attitude is theist or in some cases rationalistic.

A survey of the moral philosophers treated in the last chapter will reveal that Plato, Aristotle and Hobbes clearly belong to the naturalistic tendency in ethics and social philosophy. On the other hand, the foremost moral philosophers of the Church – Paul, Augustine and Luther – obviously belong to the absolutist tendency. The same may be said of Kant. Although Aquinas attempted to forge a synthesis between the naturalistic and absolutist tendencies, its popularity was limited in time and space, and by and large the two tendencies remained clearly distinguishable.

By contrast, in Asia, ethics and social philosophy was generally naturalistic in its orientation. The naturalistic tendency in ethics and social philosophy was dominant in India as well as in China. It was characteristic of Buddhism no less than of Confucianism.

The Objective of Buddhist Ethics and Social Philosophy

Firstly, it should be stated that Buddhist ethics and social philosophy aims to achieve the objective of happiness. Happiness, in the Buddhist tradition, implies both happiness for the individual and for the society as a whole – happiness is the immediate situation as well as happiness in the longer term. It is at once evident that Buddhist ethics and social philosophy like the ethics and social philosophy of Plato and Aristotle are essentially instrumental.

This is not surprising, because instrumentalism is compatible with and indeed characteristic of the naturalistic tendency in ethics and social philosophy. Ethics or morality for the naturalistic philosopher is simply a means to an end which extends beyond morality. Buddhism, like the classical Greek moral

philosophers identifies happiness as the goal which is to be secured by means of ethics.

However, both Buddhism and the ancient Greeks, although they consider happiness to be the proper goal of ethics are careful to define happiness in such a way as not to limit it to mere sensual enjoyment. A key component in this special definition is the factor of durability. In other words, happiness, unlike sensual pleasure, has to last for a relatively long time. For Plato and Aristotle, happiness had to last a lifetime, but for the Buddhist, happiness has to last for many life times.

The General Imperative of Sentient Existence

Plato, in his search for ethical values that transcended the limitations of primitive ethics sought to find universal principles. Like Plato, Buddhism begins the construction of a system of ethics and social philosophy with the identification of universal principle. Buddhism begins with a general imperative that governs sentient existence. The general imperative of sentient existence which serves as the first principle of Buddhist ethics and social philosophy may be formulated as follows: "All sentient beings value life and happiness and shun death and pain." This is the general imperative of sentient existence valid not only for human beings but for all forms of conscious life without exception.

The similarity between the general imperative of sentient existence, the first step in the formulation of a system of ethics in Buddhism and certain notions of moral philosophers in the West should be apparent. Plato and Aristotle had both identified survival and happiness as fundamental elements in the formulation of ethical systems. Hobbes went even further and formulated the cardinal rule of his ethics and social philosophy in almost the exact words employed within the Buddhist tradition. Unfortunately, it must be said that Hobbes and his successors seem to have paid rather more attention to the negative half of the formula, and it was this that virtually became a maxim for statesmen and nation states.

The Principle of Reciprocity

Grounded upon the identification of a general imperative of sentient existence, is the second principle of Buddhist ethics and social philosophy. This is the principle of reciprocity. The recognition of equality of all sentient beings in so far as all are alike in valuing life and happiness and shunning pain and

death naturally leads to the formulation of a principle of reciprocity. The principle of reciprocity may be generally formulated as follows, "All sentient beings value life and happiness and shun death and pain. This is true of others just as much as it is of oneself. Therefore in order to secure life and happiness for oneself and for others, one ought to refrain from depriving other sentient beings of life and happiness." These two fundamental principles of Buddhist ethics and social philosophy, the principle of equality (that is the general imperative of sentient existence) and the principle of reciprocity underpin all codes of Buddhist morality, whether they are general or role-specific.

The Role of Ethics in Buddhism

In general, the Buddhist tradition offers two goals to the practitioner. It offers the provisional goal of happiness and prosperity here and now, and in the future, and it offers the ultimate goal of freedom. Ethics and social philosophy within the Buddhist tradition are immediately relevant only to the obtainment of the first and provisional goal, the goal of happiness and prosperity. Ethics and social philosophy are relevant to the ultimate goal only in a preparatory sense, that is only in so far as they contribute to the creation of a situation which is conducive to the pursuit of the ultimate goal of freedom. Freedom, the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice is therefore only indirectly gained through morality. It is directly gained through wisdom.

The presence of the two goals within the Buddhist tradition, the provisional goal and the ultimate goal may reflect the fusion of cultures which occurred on the Indian subcontinent between the second millennia B.C. and the first millennia C.E. it will be recalled that two civilisations shaped the culture of ancient India, the Indus Valley civilisation and the Aryan civilisation. While freedom was the foremost objective of the religious culture of the Indus Valley civilisation, happiness and prosperity was the foremost goal of the religion of the Aryan civilisation. The two goals acknowledged within the Buddhist tradition, the goal of happiness and prosperity and the goal of freedom, can perhaps be seen as an accommodation of the foremost goals of the two great civilisations of ancient India.

Chapter 3. Buddhist Codes of Ethics

Their pedagogical nature

In considering Buddhist codes of conduct, it is important to keep in mind that in consonance with the naturalistic attitude in ethics and social philosophy,

they are not absolutist in nature. The codes of conduct set out in Buddhism are rather pedagogical. In other words, codes of conduct can only be formal or general prescriptions for actions. They cannot be applied universally and absolutely to particular situations, but must necessarily be modified in accord with a given situation. indeed, one of Aristotle's contributions to the evolution of moral philosophy in the West had been this very recognition of the general nature of codes of conduct.

There exists necessarily a degree of tension between an ideal theory of action and the real practise of action. Without an ideal theory of action formulated in the shape of general prescriptions for action, the agent will find himself adrift in a sea of relativism. This in fact is the predicament in which twentieth century emotivism found itself. Nonetheless, if the general prescriptions supplied by codes of conduct are sought to be applied absolutely to particular situations, they will prove to be unworkable. In many cases, they will controvert the very objective for the achievement of which the codes of ethics have come into existence. This contradiction of the fundamental objective of ethics cannot be tolerated by a naturalistic tradition of moral philosophy. An absolutist like Kant on the other hand may not be troubled by it, but despite his indifference, the codes he proposes will remain irrelevant.

In Buddhism, there are codes of conduct which are both general and role specific. These codes are founded upon the general imperative of sentient existence and upon the principle of reciprocity. However, in practise, the application of the prescriptions embodied in the codes of conduct must constantly be judge against the background of the general imperative of sentient existence and the principle of reciprocity. Only by referring a particular behavioural prescription contained in one of the codes of conduct back to the principles upon which it is grounded on the occasion of its application in a particular situation can one be certain in a given case that the prescription will not controvert the principle. To put it simply, one must have recourse to both the letter and the spirit of the moral law, and one must refer the letter to the spirit in the context of action to be sure that the letter does not in a given case controvert the spirit.

Ethics in the context of the Eightfold Path

Firstly, happiness which is the objective that Buddhist ethics and social philosophy seeks to achieve entails security. Security applies to four areas of individual and social existence. They are first and foremost – life, then property, then personal integrity and lastly communication. Security with reference to these four areas of existence has to be achieved in order that the

provisional Buddhist goal of happiness and prosperity be achieved.

Within the context of the Eightfold Path which is one of the primary vehicles for achieving both the provisional and the ultimate goals of Buddhist practise there are three constituents given over to morality. They are termed: Right Speech, Right action and Right Livelihood. It is apparent that in these three constituents of the path there is reflected the concern for achieving security in the four areas indicated above. Firstly, Right Speech reflects the concern for the security of communication. The avoidance of the four categories of wrong speech, i.e., lying, slander, abuse and malicious gossip, implied by the practise of Right Speech achieves the security of communication.

Right Action, the second of the three constituents of the path that belong properly to ethics has three applications. They are the avoidance of taking life, of taking what is not given and of sexual misconduct. In these three applications of Right Action, there are reflected three of the areas whose security is sought by Buddhist ethics, that is – life, property and personal integrity. The prohibition of killing implies the security of life. The prohibition of taking what is not given implies the security of property and the prohibition of sexual misconduct implies the security of personal integrity and personal relationships. Foremost among the specific referents of sexual misconduct is adultery, the violation of a personal relationship. Besides, other sexual offences like rape and the sexual abuse of children also come under this category, and all of them imply the violation of personal integrity.

The last of the three ethical constituents of the Eightfold Path is Right Livelihood. Right Livelihood also affects the areas of security mentioned above, but it affects them indirectly. In the context of Right Livelihood, there are five occupations not recommended for one whose objective is provisional happiness and ultimate freedom. The five occupations which are discouraged are: trade in animals for slaughter, trade in slaves, trade in deadly weapons, trade in poisons and trade in narcotics and intoxicants. Again, the five prohibitions entailed by Right Livelihood reflect the concern for life and personal integrity. The last can also be seen to reflect a concern for the security of life in so far as narcotics and intoxicants affects the mental and physical well being of persons.

The ten unwholesome actions

In addition to the prohibitions implied in the three ethical constituents of the Eightfold Path, there exists another codification of prohibition known as the

ten unwholesome actions. The ten unwholesome actions include three of body, four of speech and three of mind. The first seven of the unwholesome actions included in this codification merely duplicate the three applications of Right Action and the four applications of Right Speech already considered. The new entries in this case are the last three unwholesome actions of mind. They are envy, malice and error. The three unwholesome actions of mind are important, because they indicate the place occupied by psychological factors even in the formulation of behavioural codes in Buddhism.

The five instructional precepts

The five instructional precepts are probably the most widely observed of any of the codes of conduct among Buddhists today.⁰ The five instructional precepts normally accompany the taking of the threefold refuge which represents a person's formal commitment to the Buddhist tradition, and many lay Buddhists renew them regularly in the context of temple observances.

The significance of the name instructional precepts should not be overlooked, because once again, it provides a clear indication of the pedagogical nature of even the most basic codes of conduct in Buddhism. The five instructional precepts enjoin the avoidance of taking life, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies and intoxicants. Nonetheless, in keeping with the pedagogical nature of even the most basic precepts in Buddhism, it is taken for granted that the precepts will be broken and will have to be assumed again. Moreover, even if a lay Buddhist observes only one of the five, he is still believed to have made significant progress towards the goal of happiness and prosperity.

Role specific codes of conduct

Thus far, the general codes of conduct that exist within the Buddhist tradition have been considered. They are called general codes of conduct because they apply generally to all intelligent free agents. But the Buddhist tradition also contains what may be called role specific codes of conduct. These are codes of conduct which apply to agents within a particular social role. The Buddha identified twelve specific social roles which operate in the context of six social relationships. The social roles and relationships enumerated by the Buddha are those of children and parents, husbands and wives, students and teachers, friends, employers and employees and disciples and religious masters.

Once again, in the delineation of the responsibilities which pertain to each of the twelve agents in the context of the twelve social roles which

constitute the six social relationships, the principle of reciprocity is uppermost. For example, in delineating the responsibilities of children and parents, it is said that children are expected to undertake the support of their parents in old age. However, conversely, parents are expected to allow their children to inherit the wealth of the family at an appropriate time. Similarly, reciprocal responsibilities are delineated for participants in the marital relationships. In that context, for instance, both husband and wife are enjoined to be faithful to the other.

The principle of reciprocity continues to be evident in the delineation of the responsibilities appropriate to participants in extra-familial relationships also. Students, for example are expected to cultivate intellectual curiosity, while conversely, teachers are to see that students master the material taught. Friends are expected to look after each other's safety and the security of each other's property. Similarly, the responsibilities indicated for employers and employees reflect the principle of reciprocity. The Buddha's delineation of the responsibilities of employers and employees are a remarkable anticipation of the principles of co-operative industrial relations which are only now in the twentieth century beginning to be more generally applied. It may not be too much to suggest that if the indications set forth by the Buddha had been more widely adopted in the past, the problems that attended the industrial revolution as well as the political reaction to those problems might well have been avoided.

Chapter 4. Buddhist Social philosophy

Buddhist economics

Contrary to popular belief, the Buddhist tradition has accorded an important place to the consideration of the economic life of man. As it has been said, the provisional goal offered to practitioners by the Buddhist tradition is happiness and prosperity. In the context of this provisional goal, material well being has an unassailable place.

Like Aristotle, the Buddhist tradition has recognised the fact that although material well being is not sufficient to guarantee happiness, nonetheless, material well being is an inextricable part of happiness in the larger sense. Therefore, material well being is a legitimate part of the provisional goal of Buddhism, and moreover, in so far as it is an inextricable part of the provisional goal, it also has a preparatory role to play in the achievement of the ultimate goal of freedom.

There is no conflict between material well being which is a part of the

provisional goal of practise and the ultimate goal of practise within the Buddhist tradition. One might go even further and say that generally a degree of material well being is an indispensable prerequisite for any genuine application to the pursuit of the goal of freedom.

Historically this in fact has been the case. Even if one examines the accounts of the career of the Buddha, one will find that not only was the Buddha the product of an economically privileged class, but one finds that many of the Buddha's foremost disciples also belonged to an economically privileged class. Maha Kashyapa, Anathapindika and Visakha, to name only a few, all belonged to an economically privileged class.

The Buddha indeed recognised the importance of material well being. He began by identifying what He called the four necessities. The four necessities constitute the minimum requisites of material well being to which all human beings are entitled. The four necessities identified by the Buddha are clothing, shelter, food and medicine. The Buddhist tradition has throughout its history encouraged society to endeavour to provide its members with these four necessities.

Above and beyond the four necessities, one is encouraged to augment ones economic well being in accord with the provisions of Right Livelihood. The augmentation of economic well being affords additional felicities of which the Buddha also spoke. The four felicities of which the last is none other than the very exercise of Right Livelihood include: the felicity of financial security, the felicity of expenditure and the felicity of freedom from debt. These are the felicities of a person participating in the economic life of the community.

In addition, the Buddha had something to say regarding the management of resources and the allocation of income. In this context, he said, that ones income should be divided into four parts. According to the Buddha's advice, only one quarter of ones income should be devoted to the day to day support of oneself and ones family. One half of ones income, He said, should be given over to investment, while the remaining quarter of ones income should be saved in case of emergency.

Although the allocation of one half of ones income to investment may well appear excessive, the stipulation has to be seen in the context of a society in which a majority of members were self employed farmers and merchants. Surely, it would make good sense for a farmer to allocate one half of his income to the purchase of seed and other farm implements. Similarly, a merchant would surely invest at least half of his income in the purchase of merchandise.

Even today there do exist a number of compulsory deposit schemes both private and public which it may be suggested reflect a philosophy of the management of resources in which a relatively large portion of ones income is allocated to investment.

Again, the Buddha indicated behaviour patterns which should be avoided in order to conserve ones economic well-being. In this context, the Buddha suggested that one avoid gambling, costly entertainments, bad friends, laziness, drink and frivolity. By avoiding these patterns of behaviour, one can prevent the erosion and loss of ones resources.

The foregoing provides ample evidence of the Buddha's concern for the economic well-being of man. First and foremost the four necessities supply the minimum standard of living commensurate with humanity, thereafter, the legitimate felicities of an economically successful individual are indicated as well as the means by which economic success and material well being may be maintained.

Buddhist politics

The Buddha and the Buddhist tradition have always tended to favour a democratic political model. This is only natural given the political environment with which the Buddha was most familiar. In the sixth century B.C., political institutions in India were in the process of transformation. The tribal political organisation which the Aryans had brought with them when they entered India in the second millennia B.C. allowed for the participation of all the adult members of the tribe in the process of political decision making. As the Aryan people began to take up an agrarian and sedentary life, territorial states began to evolve. Some of these new territorial states also began to develop more centralised administrations and gradually monarchies began to emerge. Perhaps the best example of these emerging monarchies was the state of Magadha which was ruled in the time of the Buddha by King Bimbisara.

However, if one considers the political organisation of the Buddha's own country, the state of Shakya, one will find that the form of political organisation in use was still largely tribal. Decisions were taken at public assemblies at which all adult members of the community were present and at which all were free to express their opinions. There are even some suggestions that the sovereign of the Shakyian state was periodically elected by the populous and that after a stipulated period, he would relinquish the position in favour of another elected ruler. All of this implies that the political organisation of the state of shakya was republican if not democratic. These republican and democratic values which were in vogue in Shakya, and one might add in many

other of the states of northern India at the time, are reflected in the Buddha's own prescriptions for public life.

The Buddha encouraged frequent public assemblies and free and public discussion of national issues as an important not to say essential prerequisite for arriving at a consensus with regard to national policy. While this may not constitute a prescription for a fully fledged democracy, nonetheless, it does constitute a political philosophy in which the right to assemble publicly and the right to express one's opinion freely are important values. Moreover, it is clear that for the Buddha and for the Buddhist tradition, consensus constitutes the only real and legitimate sanction for a particular national policy. This pattern of political organisation was incidentally also reflected in the organisation of the monastic community which was noted for the democratic nature of its institutions.

Again, the Buddhist tradition places a very high premium on justice in the application of judgment within the context of a public penal code. There are in fact five principles set out for the correct administration of justice. The first principle requires that in any case, criminal or civil, the first priority must be the accurate ascertainment of the facts of the case. The second principle demands a consideration of whether or not the judicial authority has legitimate jurisdiction in regard to the matter in hand. The third principle requires that in considering a case, the judge must enter into the minds of the plaintiff and the defendant and must judge the deed in the light of the intentions of the defendant in order to ascertain whether or not criminal intent is involved. The fourth principle asks the judge to apply only the punishment which is appropriate to the crime and to avoid harsh and inhuman punishments. The last principle enjoins the judge to administer justice with sympathy, condemning the crime, but not the criminal.

These ideals are elaborated in many Buddhist texts throughout the ages. In all of them, the key to the treatment of criminals is the desire for correction rather than for punishment alone. It is said that in punishing wrong doers one's attitude should be similar to one's attitude in punishing one's own offspring, that is, one punishes them in order to correct them and make them worthy.

The Buddhist tradition goes even further and suggests that even when wrong doers are convicted and imprisoned, they ought to be released as soon as possible. There ought to be general amnesties declared periodically and specially those who are weak or ill should be released within a matter of days. Even those who have to be imprisoned for longer periods should be treated properly. They should be provided with barbers, baths, good food and

medicine.

It is interesting to note that it was only in the 18th and 19th centuries that in the wake of the European enlightenment, correction rather than punishment began to be recognised as the true object of the penal system in the west. Earlier, under the influence of the notions of original sin and the freedom of the will, punishments had been cruel in the extreme. By contrast, in the Buddhist tradition, a humane and constructive attitude towards crime and punishment was characteristic from the very earliest period

In the context of social welfare too, one finds that Buddhist masters throughout the ages encouraged kings and administrators to see that taxation of the populous was not overly heavy. Similarly, they encouraged kings and administrators to invest in public works like the construction of hospitals, the digging of wells and the planting of trees and gardens. In addition, kings and administrators are encouraged to provide for the disabled within the state. The blind, the cripple and the orphaned, it is said, should be provided for equally. In all the above ways, Buddhism has encouraged a benevolent and socially conscious use of political power.

In regard to the quality of public life, Buddhism encouraged kings to bring to their administrations men of honesty and integrity. Sovereigns are warned against corrupt ministers who are concerned only with their own profit and advancement. They are warned against gathering around them sycophants who will be unwilling to come forward with useful although possibly unpleasant advice. In all these cases, the foremost criterion, both for administrators and for the sovereign himself, is the level of self cultivation and the level of dedication to the values embodied within the Buddhist tradition.

Even in regard to national defence, Buddhism had always encouraged whenever possible the adoption of non-violent means of safeguarding the well being of the state. Buddhist kings are advised to consider three ways of ensuring the security of their realms when they are threatened by conspirators or by external aggressors. They are asked to consider how they can safeguard their kingdoms without resorting to force of arms. They are asked to consider means by which the enemies of the state may be captured and disarmed with the minimum loss of life. Only as a last resort, are they permitted to consider force of arms as a means of guaranteeing the security of the state.

Chapter 5. The Transcendental Ground of Buddhist Ethics and Social Philosophy

The problem of reward and punishment

Firstly, it should be pointed out that the term transcendental which appears in the title of this chapter is used in an advised sense. If this is not borne in mind, it may be thought that the distinction drawn in chapter 2. between naturalism and absolutism in ethics is undermined. This, however, is not the case because here transcendental merely means the ground which transcends the limits of this life. It does not refer to an ultimate or absolute reality.

In the course of the introductory chapter, it was shown how moral philosophers from Plato to Kant had somehow to come to terms with the problem of the good man who suffers in this life and conversely with the problem of the wicked man who prospers in this life. There were various solutions proposed to this problem. For moral philosophers of a largely secular bent, like Confucius, a possible solution was to emphasise the inherent satisfaction that accrues to one who knows that he has acted morality. For theistic moral philosophers, the problem was not as difficult to solve. The theistic moral philosopher has a ready solution in the religious doctrines of the after life and in the doctrine of an omnipotence of God. For the theistic moral philosopher, the inequalities and injustices of this life will be set right in the after life where God will reward the good and punish the wicked.

For the Buddhist tradition too, the value of adhering to the principles and codes of ethics need not and indeed cannot be wholly demonstrated upon the evidence of one life alone. In Buddhism, not only life after death, but also life before birth is acknowledged. It is in the light of this continuity of existence over the course of many lives that the problem of the good man who suffers and the wicked man who prospers has to be seen. Therefore, there exists a ground or support for Buddhist ethics and social philosophy which transcends the limitations of a single life.

Karma

The first element in the transcendental ground of Buddhist ethics is Karma. Karma is not fate, nor is it predestination. Karma is action that is conditioned by past action and that conditions future action. The objective circumstances have been, are and will be conditioned by action. Therefore, in brief, Karma implies action and reaction. It may be suggested that it is an ethical counterpart of the law of action and reaction that operates in the physical universe.

Just as in the formulation of the law of action and reaction in the physical universe, there is included the provision that for every action there is not only an equal, but also an opposite reaction, so in the formulation of the law of Karma, there is added the provision that for every action there is not only an equal, but also a similar reaction. This is traditionally illustrated through the examples of seeds of rice and wheat. One cannot sow rice and expect to reap wheat, nor can one sow wheat and expect to reap rice. Therefore, an unwholesome action, like the taking of life, may be expected to have an equal and a similar reaction like the cutting short of the life of the agent who committed the deed.

Further, the concept of Karma allows for the possibility that the equal and similar reaction to a given action may not take place immediately. The reaction may also occur after a more or less lengthy intervening period. Traditionally, Buddhism speaks of three varieties of Karmic reactions – reactions which occur in this life, reaction which occur in the next life and reactions which occur only after many lives. Here to there exists an analogy with one of the laws which govern the operation of the physical universe. In this case, one may refer to the law of the conservation of energy. Traditionally, the examples of seeds of differing species has also been used to illustrate this idea, for it is a fact that the seeds of certain fruits require far longer to produce fruit than do those of others. The seeds of a watermelon, for example, bear fruit within a single growing season, while those of a durian require as long as ten years to do so.

The idea here is in brief the following. Although the reactions or effects of certain actions occur in this way life, the effects of other actions occur only after this life. Such effects occur only in the next life or after many lives, because of the nature of the actions themselves, or because of the presence or absence of auxiliary conditions just as the presence of extreme cold or the absence of water may delay the germination of a seed. The conception of effects of actions which occur in the next life or only after many lives naturally implies the conception of rebirth.

Rebirth

It is sometimes said that belief in rebirth is an instance of dogmatism which exists uncomfortably within a tradition- the Buddhist tradition – which has always emphasised objective observation, analysis and criticism. However, the real question is whether the Buddhist belief in rebirth is merely a species of dogmatism or whether it is rather an hypothesis which is capable of verification. Granted, that it may be capable of verification only under special condition and with the aid of specially developed techniques. The need for special conditions and special techniques of verification may be readily admitted without doing damage to the view that the Buddhist belief in rebirth is of the nature of an hypothesis. There are many hypothesis even in science which are not verifiable merely with the aid of the naked eye. such hypothesis have to be verified under special conditions and with the aid of special techniques and instruments. With this in mind, one can profitably consider the entire spectrum of evidence in support of rebirth.

Firstly, there is the evidence of cultural history. A simple survey of the cultural history of man will reveal that the belief in rebirth has existed in almost every cultural tradition – East and West. Belief in rebirth has not only been common in India, but even in the Mediterranean world. It was only in the sixth century C.E. that rebirth was declared heretical by the Christian church. Before then,

there had existed a significant community within the Christian fold that believed in rebirth. Again, Judaism, particularly the Kabbalistic tradition has even to the present accorded a cardinal place to the conception of rebirth. Therefore, belief in rebirth has been as element in the cultures of many diverse peoples.

Second, although the Buddhist tradition does not emphasise reliance upon scripture or testimony, there does exist scriptural evidence in support of rebirth. The Buddha and many of his prominent disciples who were both contemporaries and successors of his have been able to recollect their own and others former lives. Consequently, they have testified to the reality of rebirth.

Thirdly, there exists a wealth of spontaneous evidence in support of rebirth. In this category are contained all the experiences of ordinary men and women which suggest an existence prior to the present life time. The experiences of immediate familiarity with people and places, the fact of inexplicable inclinations and uncanny talents encountered among people are all suggestive of an existence prior to this life. Occasionally also, persons have been able to recall spontaneously and in totality the events of one or more former lives.

Finally, there exist a considerable and growing fund of experimental evidence in support of rebirth. Over the course of the last few decades, a whole host of psychologists, parapsychologists and psychiatrists have unearthed evidence in support of rebirth through the use of hypnotic regression and similar techniques. Using these techniques, hundreds of subjects have been induced to recollect their former lives. The results of these experiments have been carefully documented and published in a number of books and papers available to anyone who is interested enough to consider the evidence.

Therefore the transcendental ground of Buddhist ethics and social philosophy does not imply the existence of an omnipotent God, nor even the existence of an absolute and independent reality. The

transcendental ground of ethics and social philosophy in Buddhism merely requires the formulation of a conception of the function of action in the areas of ethics analogous to the function of action in the Physical universe. Beyond this, it only requires that one adopt an hypothesis which is suggested by ample empirical evidence and which is capable of direct verification given the appropriate conditions and techniques.

II. Buddhism and Psychology

Chapter 1. A General Introduction to Psychology

Definition

Psychology is the study of the psyche. The latter is a Greek term which variously means: the soul, spirit, mind, the principle of mental and emotional life (conscious and unconscious). From the above definition, it is immediately clear that the subject matter of psychology is extremely broad and encompasses the concerns of religion in the conventional sense as well as those more objective concerns of mental health and mental development.

Psychology in ancient Greece

In as much as the term psychology is derived from the Greek term psyche, one may well begin a consideration of the subject with a look at psychology among the ancient Greeks. This is all the more helpful, because as it will be seen presently, early Greek conceptions about the soul or the mind did not differ very greatly from those in India and China.

By the sixth century B.C. in Greece, two basic and fundamentally opposed conceptions regarding the nature of the soul or mind had been evolved. They were: 1. that the soul or mind and the body (the empirical individual) are identical and 2. that the soul or mind and the body are different. There were of course a number of intermediate steps on the way to the development of these two radically opposed conceptions and by the period in question, the sixth century B.C, there had already been a number of attempts to reconcile the two alternatives by means of some kind of synthetic or syncretic formula.

Perhaps the best example of the first alternative among the early Greek thinkers is provided by Democritus. Democritus taught that the world as well as all living things were made up of tiny material particles, in other words atoms. Mental life, he said, is just an expression of the ways in which the atoms combine and interact, and life and thought end with the death of the body. Democritus's way of thinking and of course not altogether new. Altogether more sophisticated than the materialistic conceptions which had preceded it, the idea that mental life is identifiable with the body and its processes was also common among primitive men who doubted the possibility of life after death.

But just as there was a primitive identification of the soul or mind with the body, there were also factors in the primal experience of men that seemed to

indicate that the soul or mind was detachable from the body, independent or different from the body. What about the experiences of dreams, delirium and trance? The conception formed of a soul or mind different from the body. At first this conception was indistinct and not clearly differentiated from the primitive identification of the soul or mind with the body. The detachable or independent soul was thought of as rather like the body. Accounts of the departed souls in Greek literature picture them in a way not very different from the way they looked in life. The same transitional conception of a detachable soul which nevertheless possesses the attributes of the body may be found in the Brahmanical literature of India.

Gradually however the idea of a detachable independent soul different from the body was purified, polarised and radicalised. Eventually, the soul came to be thought of as absolutely different from the body. Plato is commonly looked upon as the best example of the conception of a soul independent of and radically different from the body. For Plato, the soul is invisible. It not only survives the death of the body, but also transcends all the limitations of material objects. Plato, it seems, believed that the soul knows a higher better world than the world of the senses. For him, it is the soul, not the body or the empirical individual that is at home with the ideals of goodness, beauty and the like. This in fact was the beginning of that Platonic dualism which was to have a lasting influence on both the philosophy of the church in the west and on the whole rationalistic tradition encompassing figures like Descartes and Kant.

Psychology in Ancient India and China

As suggested above, these two fundamentally opposed conceptions of the relationship between the soul or mind and the body were also present in ancient Indian and Chinese psychology. In India, the Aryans seem initially to have identified the soul with the body. Even when they did begin to think of the mind or soul as not wholly identifiable with the empirical individual, they adopted a transitional conception like the one described earlier. It was not until much later after the advent of the Ipanishadic literature following the sixth century B.C. that the Aryan civilisation and the Brahmanical tradition developed the conception of a soul independent of the empirical individual which was immaterial and transcendent. The first alternative identifying the soul with the body was however preserved in India by the Materialists (Carvaka) tradition. Ajitakeshakambalin, a contemporary of the Buddha, whose views are cited in the Pali canon seems to have been a representative of the materialist standpoint and despite criticism from Buddhist and non-Buddhist camps, materialism in India survived throughout the centuries.

The second alternative which conceived of the soul as different from the body seems to have been common among the people of the Indus Valley civilisation and it continued in large part to influence the Shramanical tradition.

In China, as in India, the two alternatives appeared early and were championed by important figures and major traditions. While the position of philosophical Taoism is difficult to categorise and may be sympathetic to the critical and dialectical attitudes of Buddhism and the Greek sceptics to be discussed in a moment, classical Confucianism with its emphasis upon man as a social being and its agnosticism with regard to the after life seems to have favoured the first alternative. This of course is in marked contrast to the popular practise of ancestor worship and to the conceptions of the Book of Rites which seems to assume the existence of a soul different from the body, though perhaps retaining some of the attributes of the latter. If in favouring the first alternative classical Confucianism is distinguished from earlier indistinct ideas about the soul different from the body, it is even more clearly distinguished from the views of religious Taoism which arose in the first century B.C. Religious Taoism did not hesitate to teach the independence of the soul from the body and built its philosophy of salvation upon the immortality of the soul. Therefore, in China, as in India and in Greece, the two alternatives of primitive psychology, the one affirming the identity of the mind or soul with the body, the other affirming their difference are evident.

Reconciling the Alternatives

As mentioned earlier, there were several attempts to reconcile these fundamentally opposed conceptions. In Greece, Aristotle tried to unite mind and body by giving each a particular role to play in the life of an individual. Body or matter, he said, was the substance of life, but mind or soul was its form, its potential, its function. Matter by itself does not constitute life. The functions of perceiving, feeling, willing and so forth give form and meaning to matter. In other words, they give it a soul and turn it into a living being. In India, the Jainas advocated the view that soul and body are both identical and different, and in China too there were attempts to reach a compromise between these two uncompromising alternatives.

The Critical Approach

But reconciliation and compromise between two fundamentally opposed views is extremely difficult. Such solutions have a tendency to be unstable and precarious. One is always liable to topple into one alternative or the other, so a new approach was sought by insightful thinkers in the east and west. It was the

critical or dialectical approach. This approach recognised that two fundamentally opposed views regarding a single issue neither of which is wholly adequate or satisfactory in effect cancel each other out. According to this point of view, the best solution is not the combination of the two alternatives, but the rejection of both in favour of an entirely new approach, a critical approach which avoids the rigidity and dogmatism of both alternatives.

This approach was clearly indicated by the Buddha when he refused to agree to the two alternatives of identity and difference with regard to the soul and the body when they were presented to him in the fourteen so called inexpressible propositions not conducive to edification.

It does not appear probable that the Buddha was altogether alone in developing this critical and dialectical insight. In China, Lao-tsu and Chuang-tse, although they did not articulate it precisely, were almost certainly acquainted with it. In Greece too, it does not seem likely that the sceptics among whom the critical and dialectic consciousness was so highly developed could have neglected to apply it to the fundamental question of primitive psychology. Unfortunately the critical and dialectical tradition of Greek philosophy was all but lost to the western world with the collapse of the Roman empire and the rise of Christian orthodoxy. When Greek philosophy was rediscovered during the renaissance, it was the constructive philosophy of Aristotle, not the critical philosophy of the sceptics that received the attention of Europeans. Had this not been the case, the history of the development of western psychology might have been very different, but as it was the fundamental alternatives of the identity or difference of the mind or soul and the body continued to appear and reappear in western psychology until this very century.

Psychology in the European Middle Ages

During the long centuries of the middle ages when memories of the golden age of Greek philosophy had almost disappeared, it was the doctrine of the church that dominated western psychology. There was only one important idea still retained from Greek psychology, Plato's radical distinction between mind or soul and body. Naturally the idea of the absolute difference of soul and body appealed to the church fathers with their abhorrence of the world and of the body and their preoccupation with sin. They saw the distinction between soul and body as essential to the salvation of the former. After all if the soul and the body were not in reality different, how could the soul escape from the evil of the world, purify itself of animal like fleshly concerns and be united with God?

The situation only began to change in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As Europeans rediscovered the Greek classics, largely through the good offices of the Arabs who were then great collectors and purveyors of culture, the ideas of Aristotle impressed themselves upon their minds. One effect of this was to be seen in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. He attempted to fuse Aristotle's naturalism with the cardinal tenets of Christianity. But Aquinas's attempt was just the first sign that times were changing.

The Birth of Modern Science

The European renaissance which reached its apex in the sixteenth century ushered in the age of science as it is known today. Two great ideas lay behind the scientific revolution, the first deductive, the second inductive. A host of figures, great and small, from Copernicus to Newton were driven by these two overriding convictions: that there existed a mathematically perfect natural order from which the laws of nature might be deduced, and that every theory might be put to an experimental test in order to determine its truth through direct observation. These two ideas which can be seen at work in the new philosophy of the west in the form of the movements called Rationalism and Empiricism can also be seen in the development of modern western psychology, because like philosophy, psychology after the renaissance sought to follow in the footsteps of the natural sciences. Indeed important movements in modern psychology like behaviourism and Gestalt may be attributed almost exclusively to the adoption of ideas borrowed from the physical sciences.

The Birth of Modern Psychology

The Frenchman Descartes has been called the father of modern western philosophy and so too he may be called the father of modern western psychology. Although his conceptions may now seem to be absurd and contrived, they have had a tremendous influence on the development of both philosophical and psychological thought in Europe. Descartes reflected the concern of his age. He was still steeped in the doctrines of the church, but he ventured to formulate theories of his own. He was impressed by the logic and perfection of mathematics, but he recognised the importance of observation. Like most transitional philosophies which encompass a number of disparate elements, Descartes' system raised more questions than it answered. It was an inherently unstable edifice which was liable to lean increasingly in any one of a number of directions, and this is what in fact happened.

Descartes inherited the mind – body dualism of Plato and the church fathers. If anything, he made the distinction between mind or soul and body

even more absolute; holding that the soul is an immaterial substance not located in space, while the body is material and located in space. He admitted however that the body was capable of functioning mechanically and independently of the soul. This in fact happened in the case of animals which Descartes believed had no souls and were so to speak automatons, animated toys. This was also true in the case of the lower forms of human behaviour. But the higher forms of human behaviour, Descartes maintained, were governed by the soul which interacted with the body through the pineal gland (whose function was then unknown). It didn't take long for thinkers less steeped in church doctrine than Descartes to see the contrived nature of this arrangement. They happily did away with the soul and its improbable relation to the body and laid the foundation of what came to be called mechanical psychology. Of course, it can be readily seen that this is nothing but a form of the first alternative of primitive psychology.

But Descartes had also made his own consciousness the very basis of his philosophy in the famous dictum, "I think, therefore I am." The primacy which Descartes accorded to the principles of mental life, his fascination with mathematics and his insistence upon the transcendental nature of the soul continued to inspire the proponents of rational psychology, men like Leibnitz and Kant. In general, they may be seen to reflect the second alternative of primitive psychology.

The Empiricists

The empiricist movement in Great Britain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries numbered in its ranks individuals who were very different in their initial concerns as well as in their eventual conclusions. Hobbes and Bentham for example, were interested in social psychology and directed their energies towards the ordering, prediction and control of political and economic life using the principle that all human behaviour is motivated by the desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain. Berkeley was a man of the church who used empiricist principles to deny the reality of the external world and then went on to claim that in the absence of objective reality, only God and the soul could account for the order of human experience, for the possibility of communication between individuals and for the sense of self. Locke and Hume were liberals who believed in the rationality of man and in an enlightened social order. Their relentless pursuit of empiricist methods led the former to deny the objectivity of qualities like colour and taste and the latter to deny the existence of the soul which, as he says, he had been unable to locate in experience.

Despite their differences, the empiricists from Hobbes to Hume were

united by three things. First, their use of an analytical method by means of which they reduced experience to what they believed were its constituent parts. Second, their attempt to apply models taken from the physical sciences, especially Newtonian physics, to explain the processes of perception, feeling and volition. Third, their insistence on the view that the whole of mental life was derived exclusively from experience. The empiricists, as their name suggest, were unanimous in identifying the mind or soul with the empirical individual and so represent a continuation of the first alternative of primitive psychology.

The protest of Kant

In Germany, Kant sounded a note of caution in opposition to this tide of empiricist and mechanistic psychology. Kant was fundamentally a product of the rationalist tradition, but he was not deaf to the appeal of direct experience. Nonetheless, he held that the soul, in as much as it is the subject of experience, can never be the object of experience. Thus Hume's failure to find the soul in experience did not mean that the soul did not exist. For Kant, the soul was a reality, but a transcendental reality not directly knowable by men. The soul was not an object in experience, but the necessary basis of experience, for without the soul, who would be there to experience?

One can easily see how Kant's position seeks to correct the one sidedness of the empiricists by salvaging something of the rationalism of Descartes. Sympathetic to the concerns of religion, Kant represent the reaffirmation of the second alternative of primitive psychology in eighteenth century Europe.

Behavioural Psychology

Behaviourism has been the last great movement within the tradition affirming the first alternative of primitive psychology, the identity of the mind or soul with the body. Beginning with Democritus in ancient Greece, implicit in the animal psychology of Descartes and developed by the empiricists, the mechanistic view of psychology assumed greater and greater importance in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries despite the protest of Kant and his successors. Partly this was the result of Darwin's theory of evolution which once and for all removed the line of distinction between man and the animals and made it all the easier to reduce human psychology to animal behaviour as Descartes had understood it. Partly, this was because of the appearance of a new analogy, that of plant life or tropism. Just as a plant responds to its environment automatically obeying the laws of interaction of factors like light, warmth, moisture, acidity and so forth, so too the human organism responds to

its environment automatically. In this system, no recourse need be had to the notions of mind or soul, or to the conscious processes of perception, feeling and volition usually associated with them. In this way mechanistic psychology progressively reduced human psychology to animal behaviour and animal behaviour to plant physiology.

The architects of this modern behaviouristic psychology were two Russians and two Americans, Pavlov and Bekhterev and Watson and Skinner, The central idea of behaviourism is conditioned response. The principle of conditioned response was first identified by Pavlov in his famous experiments involving the salivation of dogs. Pavlov discovered that dogs in the laboratory would respond to the footsteps of the keeper who customarily fed them by salivating. The footsteps of the keeper were therefore the stimulus that touched off a conditioned response, that of salivation.

Building upon this principle of conditioned response, Pavlov and his successors soon found that experimental subjects could be conditioned to respond in particular ways to a variety of stimuli and so the possibility of extending this idea to the whole of animal and human behaviour dawned upon them. The movement proceeded to reduce all mental life – perception, feeling, volition and even language – to the principle of conditioned response. A new formulation had been evolved, a psychology without a soul or mind. The first alternative of primitive psychology had truly come of age.

Gestalt Psychology

Gestalt or form psychology arose in Germany during the first quarter of the twentieth century. It was one of a number of movements that challenged the assumptions and methods of behaviourism. In particular, gestalt was opposed to the analytical dissection of experience into its constituents or elements. Analytical dissection of this kind had been a part of the psychology of the empirical movement and it remained characteristic of behaviourism.

Gestalt insisted that the constituents or elements isolated by means of analytical dissection were nothing in themselves. By contrast, it emphasised the importance of the whole and of structure. The constituent parts or elements of the whole, gestalt argued, acquired their character only from their membership in a whole, their participation in a structure through which they were related to other elements. Take a particular colour found in a painting. It has no meaning or value in itself, but acquires meaning and value in relation to the other elements of the painting which participate in a structure which makes up the whole painting. Similarly, the constituents of mental life have no meaning by

themselves. They acquire their meaning and character through their relations to other elements in a structured whole. There was a structuring or centring principle at work that constantly tended towards the regular and harmonious organisation of experience.

Like mechanism before it which had drawn its inspiration from the model of Newtonian physics, gestalt was profoundly influenced by a model borrowed from the natural sciences. In this case, it was the new picture of the universe that had emerged as a result of the twentieth century development of quantum and field theory and the new view in biology which emphasised the interdependence of organisms and species. It also found confirmation of its view in neurological studies which revealed that it was not possible to think of separate parts of the brain as having special functions, because when those parts were damaged or destroyed, other parts of the brain took over those functions. Moreover, in such cases, it was also found that the individuals affected restructured their experience in a regular and harmonious way.

Gestalt, in its preference for the whole and in its emphasis upon the presence of a structuring principle in reality, tended to lean toward the second alternative of primitive psychology, the affirmation that the mind or soul and body are different. Nonetheless, in providing a credible alternative to behaviourism and one that is moreover in keeping with the latest trends in the natural sciences, gestalt may have created an opening towards the development of a truly critical and dialectic approach to the fundamental problem of primitive psychology, even if such an approach has yet to be fully developed in the west.

Applied Psychology and Psycho-therapy

Up to this point, this monograph has been almost exclusively occupied with pure psychology, not applied psychology or psycho-therapy. Nonetheless, applied psychology and psycho-therapy have been an important part of psychology over the course of the centuries. IN India and in China, applied psychology and psycho-therapy were the principle subject matter of psychology in general. Even in the west, psychologists, ancient and modern, did turn their attention from time to time to applied psychology and psycho-therapy. There is reason to believe that the Greek sceptics were interested in a form of transpersonal psycho-therapy which closely resembled practises common in India. The church fathers too during the European middle ages were interested in psycho-therapy, and later in the seventeenth century, thinkers like Hobbes and Bentham applied psychology to political and economic questions. It was however not until the end of the nineteenth century that applied psychology and

psycho-therapy began to be taken seriously in Europe in the fields of education, commerce and medicine.

In France, it was found that disorders like paralysis could be cured through the making of a suggestion to a subject while the latter was under hypnosis. Not only could this and similar disorders be cured by hypnotists through hypnotic suggestion, but they could also be induced. The conclusion was clear. Ideas in the mind had the power to create and cure diseases. This thesis experimentally verified at a number of clinics in Europe startled the scientific community of the day, because it now had to be admitted that there were disorders whose origins and cures lay not in physiology, but in psychology. Thereafter, psycho-therapy came to be established as a legitimate means of affecting the cure of a wide variety of complaints.

Psycho-analysis and Ego Psychology

Sigmund Freud, a Viennese physician familiar with the phenomenon of hypnotic cure, began to give his undivided attention to the possibilities of this new discovery. The fact that such cures were effected under hypnosis indicated that while the causes of a disorder were clearly mental, they operated at a level which was different from the level of ordinary consciousness, in other words they operated unconsciously. While philosophers like Spinoza and Leibnitz had glimpsed the possibility of unconscious mental factors as early as the seventeenth century, it was Freud who first fully grasped the significance of the unconscious in the west.

Freud developed a new method for seeking out and neutralising the unconscious causes of psycho-physical disorders. It was called psycho-analysis. It involved extensive interaction between the psycho-analyst and the subject. During periods of interaction with analyst, the subject was encouraged to relax, usually on a couch, and to talk freely and in an unstructured way about his impressions, experiences and problems. In this way, the unconscious causes of the disorder were raised to the conscious level and neutralised.

Freud believed that the analytical method had distinct advantages over the hypnotic one. For one thing, in analysis unlike in hypnosis, the subject remained conscious and so the analyst was able to enlist his active participation in working out his problems. Nonetheless, Freud continued to believe that altered states of consciousness were important in effecting cures and this was reflected in the attention he gave to the significance of dreams.

Freud came to believe that the ego was the central principle in human

experience. For him, it was the ego that gave form and order to the chaotic energy of life. But the ego had both a conscious and an unconscious level. This view came to be called ego Psychology.

For Freud and his successors, the reduction and elimination of conflict through adjustment was the primary objective of psycho-therapy. Adjustment had to be both intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal adjustment meant that the chaotic energy of life had to adjust to the controls imposed by the ego. Interpersonal adjustment meant that the ego had to adjust to the presence of other egos in the wider social context. The achievement of a condition relatively free of conflict both intrapersonal and interpersonal through adjustment was tantamount to mental health.

Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology

The twentieth century has seen the rise of a new movement in western psychology. Termed humanistic psychology, the movement like others was initially inspired by developments in other disciplines. This time however the developments in question did not take place within the sciences, but rather in philosophy. For the time in several centuries, two philosophical movements Existentialism and Phenomenology, had a tremendous impact not only on psychology, but on western culture in general.

The limitations of this monograph do not allow for a detailed presentation of the philosophies of Existentialism and Phenomenology. Nonetheless, it has to be noted that each precipitated a significant change in the fundamental orientation of many psychologists. Firstly, Existentialism with its insistence upon the priority of the totality of the human experience and its emphasis upon the nature of the human predicament brought psychology back from the laboratory and clinic into the context of everyday life. Secondly, Phenomenology with its emphasis upon direct awareness of the content of consciousness and its insistence upon the subjectivity of experience returned the attention of psychologists to the original object of their discipline, the study of the mind.

Soon there arose within humanistic psychology another movement with even more far reaching implications. The movement came to be known as transpersonal psychology. Its proponents were dissatisfied with the unambitious and largely static goal of adjustment which had been offered by Freud and his successors and which was broadly acquiesced by most psychologists. They sought not intrapersonal and interpersonal adjustment, but rather the transcendence of the whole conception of ego personality. Although

there is still a high degree of unclarity regarding the goal envisaged by transpersonal psychology and regarding the means through which it is to be obtained, one thing is clear. Transpersonal psychology has much in common with the ancient and yet still exceedingly vital traditions of Asian psychology. Today, this affinity has prompted increasing contacts between psychologists and expanding comparisons between psychologies, east and west.

Chapter 2. Psychology and Psycho-therapy in Buddhism

The therapeutic motivation

The Four Noble Truths, perhaps the best known formulation of the Teaching of the Buddha state that there is suffering, its cause, its end and a way to end suffering. It has been noted that the formula of the Four Noble Truth bears a striking resemblance to the fourfold formula of disease, diagnosis, cure and treatment well known to the practitioners of the medical arts in ancient India. Again, the Buddha is called the king of physicians and one is encouraged to look upon him as the therapist, His Teaching as the medication, oneself as the patient, ones impurities of mind as the illness and ones practice of the Teaching as the treatment. It becomes immediately clear that the alleviation of suffering is the foremost concern of the Buddhist tradition and the Teaching of the Buddha and its practise are the means of achieving this goal.

Now without the mind, there can be no experience at all and can sequent no experience of sufferings. No-one has yet suggested that mindless and insentient beings like sticks and stones suffer. Therefore it is obvious that suffering one only exist in the case of sentient beings endowed with minds.

Moreover, if one examines the causes of sufferings, one find that foremost among them are craving and ignorance, both mental factors. Therefore, not only is the mind the necessary precondition of the experience of suffering, but mental factors like craving and ignorance are chiefly responsible for the origination of suffering. Even the particular forms of suffering can traced to mental factors. Volition, a mental factor, Is the determining component in action (Karma). Overt bodily or verbal action is in reality just the ultimate expression of volition. Thus the variety of experiences had by sentient beings in the various realms of existence are all ultimately attributable to the mind and mental factors. The fact is reflected in the Buddha's declaration that the three spheres (dhatu) are just mind.

One might multiply arguments and examples drawn from Buddhist toys in support of the idea that the mind and mental factors are responsible for the

entire gamut of experience. To do so would be tedious. The conclusion is clear. The Buddhist tradition had long ago hit upon the fact that mental factors condition and determine overt behaviour and material circumstances. This basis intuition was worked out with great attention to detail over the course of many centuries. If the origin and nature of suffering can be attributed to the mind and mental factors, it follows that a solution to the problem of suffering must also be found in the mind and the mental factors. This places psychology, or more precisely psychology-therapy, right at the heart of the Buddhist tradition. In the light of this, the late nineteenth century discovery that overt disorders could be attributable to mental factors and the wealth of experimental verification that has followed it can only be seen as a late and almost trivial occurrence.

Buddhist psych-therapy

The Buddha repeatedly rejected the two alternatives of primitive psychology that the soul or mind is identical with the body or that it is different. He said that the fourteen alternatives viz that the world is external, not, both or neither, that the world is finite, not, both or neither, that the Tathagata exists after death, or not, or both or neither that the soul or mind is identical with the body or that the soul or mind are different from the body, do not conduce to calm, insight and freedom. He called the fourteen alternatives dogmas, and likened them to a wilderness, shackles and a fever. He specifically opposes the therapeutic formula of the Four Noble Truths to the speculative theories embodied in the fourteen alternatives.

The Buddha rejected the propositions that the mind and body are identical and that they are different along with the other twelve propositions contained in the fourteen alternatives, because they do not conduce to calm, insight and freedom. The two alternatives of identity and difference of the mind and body do not conduce to calm, insight and freedom, because each of them make it impossible to alter or determine the course and the nature of one's existence. Therefore, calm, insight and freedom, in other words the complete alternation in the nature of one's experience that is Nirvana, are impossible if one accepts either alternative.

If not instance one accepts that the mind and body are identical, then death writes the full stop to one's existence. The end of the experience of suffering will occur as a matter of course at the time of the dissolution of the body, and therefore nothing need to be done to achieve its permanent alleviation. Moreover, one is free to indulge one's desires and to commit all sorts of unwholesome actions, because the effects of one's actions will not follow one beyond the grave. As an exponent of this view in ancient India once put it,

"One ought not to hesitate to borrow extensively to pay for ones expensive habits, because dead men say no debts."

On the other hand if one accepts that the mind and body are different, then too one can do nothing to alter or determine the course and nature of one existence. In this case, as the mind and body are different, no action or experience of the body of wholesome or unwholesome, happy or unhappy – can ever effect the mind. On this alternative the soul or mind would be bound or freed dependent upon factors altogether separate from the body. Once again, it would be impossible from men and women to find and follow a way to freedom.

The Buddha had in fact said that to agree to the first alternative would be to side with the annihilationist and materialists who believed that at the death the individual was completely annihilated and did not survive. But to agree to the second alternative would be to side with the eternalists who believed in an unchanging and transcendental soul. From the above it is clear that the Buddhist psycho-therapy is founded upon a rejection of two alternatives of primitive psychology, the propositions that the soul or mind and body are identical or different. Precisely because the soul or mind and the body or empirical individual are not identical and not different, it is possible to alter and determine the course and nature of ones existence. By means of the practises of Good Conduct, Mental Development and Wisdom, over the course of a series of lives, the freedom of Nirvana can be won.

The Buddhist philosophy of experience

Once the dogmatic alternatives of primitive psychology had been disposed of, it was possible to arrive at a new view of experience. First of all the conception of a soul which is external and unchanging is abandoned, because an external and unchanging soul would have to be different from the empirical individual. It is replaced by a conception of the mind as ever changing and infinitely diverse. Moreover, in the context of the new view, mind and body are more generally matter are simply two forms of experience. Through observing, analysing and synthesising this experience, the course and nature of ones existence can be changed and one can achieve freedom. Indeed, the observation, analysis and the synthesis of experience is all that is needed to evolve an understanding of the Four Noble Truths, impersonality and emptiness.

In as much as the Buddhist tradition emphasises the important of experience and encourages analysis, it may be thought to resemble the teaching

of the empiricists, and in fact there are marked similarities. Like the empiricists, Buddhism teaches that mental factor – feelings, perceptions and volition – have their origin experience, and like the empiricists, Buddhism teaches that experience may be analysed into its constituent parts. However unlike the empiricists, Buddhism does not hold that feelings, perceptions and volitions originated from the experience of one life alone. Locke had said that at birth, the mind is like a clean slate, but from the Buddhist point of view, this could hardly be further from the truth, for at the beginning of each life, the mind carries with it the totality of past experience acquired over the course of countless lives. One of the most intractable problems for the empiricists was that of explaining the remarkable order and community of human experience and the persistence of the sense of self. Berkeley, it will be recalled resorted to God and the soul to explain these phenomena. Later others sought to explain them through instincts inherited genetically. But for the Buddhist tradition, the solution is clear and easy. The order and community of human experience and the persistence of the sense of self are explained by the fact that habits of mind have been created by repeated experiences occurring over the course of countless lifetimes.

The empiricists, because they failed to admit the continuity of experience over the course of many lives and because they attempted to apply a mechanistic model borrowed from physics to psychology, universally adopted the first alternative of primitive psychology. This led them to contingency and indeed encouraged the development of a wholly mechanistic view of psychology. Behaviourism pursued this general line of thought and evolved as a view of psychology in the context of which there was no scope whatsoever for free will in as much as human existence was wholly conditioned and wholly determined by stimuli. This of course precluded the possibility of ultimate freedom. Buddhism, on the other hand, never admitted the first alternative of primitive psychology, and while it recognises the role of conditioning in experience, it emphasised equally the role of free will in altering and eventually transforming the nature of experience.

Again, although Buddhism encourages the use of an analytical investigation of experience similar to that used by the empiricists, unlike the empiricists, the Buddhist tradition is acutely aware of the one-sidedness and limitations of an exclusively analytical approach. Indeed, it may be said that Buddhism brilliantly, anticipated by many centuries the objections raised by Gestalt psychology to the reductionism of the empiricists and insists upon the use of a synthetic method of investigation along with an analytical one.

Finally in Buddhism the mind and the mental factors are responsible for the

nature of experience. They condition experience. But experience also conditioned the mind and the mental factors. Gradually over the course of many lives, impressions are formed in the mind which shape current experience. Mind and experience therefore participate in a circular and reciprocal relationship, each conditioned and conditioning. It is the task of Buddhist psycho-therapy to break this circle of reinforcement so that the quality of experience may be improved and ultimately transformed.

Chapter 3. The Foundations of Buddhist Psychology

Mental Development

Mental Development has always been accorded a central place in the practise of Buddhism. The Buddha declared, "A void evil; do good and purify the mind." Generosity, Good Conduct and Meditation are considered necessary in order to progress toward happiness and freedom and the Noble Eightfold Path prescribes Right Effort, Mindfulness and Meditation for those who would aspire to the peace of Ninvana. Indeed, these three practises may be considered the fundamental components of Buddhist psycho-therapy. Their importance can hardly be doubted when it is remembered that they alone account for more than half of the thirty-seven factors conducive to Enlightened.

Effort

The importance of effort and energy, a mental factor with which it is closely related, was emphasised by the Buddha. This emphasis is wholly in keeping with the Buddha's rejection of the two alternatives of primitive psychology. It was shown in the last chapter that on either alternative, whether the mind be identical with the body, or whether it be held to be different, progress toward freedom is impossible, but what does this seem in practical terms? There are in fact two attitudes which are associated with the two alternatives cited above. The first which follows from identification of mind and body abdicated individual responsibility and surrenders man's destiny to an impersonal fate. The second which follows from the differentiation of mind and body likewise abdicated individual responsibility and places its faith in an act of grace on the part of a supreme being. In either case, man is not thought to have the power to determine his own future. In the west as in India, now as then, adherence to either of the two alternatives of primitive psychology has led advocacy of the associated attitude. In India, there were materialists who chose the first alternative and held that man had no control over his destiny which was determined by impersonal and mechanical force. There were also priests who

believed in the independence of the soul from the body who relied upon the power of the gods to effect its salvation. Later in the west, the behaviourists who advocated the identity of the mind and body came to believe that human destiny was wholly determined by conditioning. They believed that human responses were no more free than the responses of plants to stimuli of warmth, moisture and so forth. On the other hand there were those like the church fathers who believed in the independence of the soul and who trusted in the grace exercised by God to save it. The Buddha however having rejected the two alternatives of primitive psychology was likewise steadfast in rejecting the associated attitudes that incline toward fate and grace, because both attitudes allow the destiny of man to be decided by forces outside his control, whether impersonal or personal. The Buddha's emphasis upon effort and energy is the positive expression of His rejection of the passive acceptance of faith and grace, an expression of His confidence in the ability of man to determine his own destiny.

Mindfulness

The Buddha referred to mindfulness as the one way to freedom. Perhaps more than any other factor, it expresses the Buddha's explicit rejection of the first alternative which wholly identifies the mind with the body. Indeed, it is because the mind is not wholly identifiable with the empirical individual that the awareness of the body, feelings, ideas and even the mind itself – the various applications of mindfulness – is possible.

In the chapter it was said that the mind and experience are reciprocally conditioned and conditioning. This is just another instance of the circularity that characterises unenlightened existence, a circularity that is reflected in the image of the wheel of life. But the circle can be broken by mindfulness, by the awareness of the circularity of existence.

Suppose that one is trying to find the house of a friend for the first time. One may well experience some difficulty. One may find that one has been driving for an inordinately long time without finding the house of one's friend. Then suppose suddenly one notices a land mark that one had passed some time before. At once one will become aware of the fact that one has been going around in circles, and one will try a different route. The circle is broken. This awareness is nothing other than mindfulness and it breaks the circularity of experience.

Indeed, the favourite principle of behaviouristic psychology, the principle

of conditioned response would appear to be perfectly valid in the case of most types of unmindful behaviour. It may be ventured that the behaviour of the vast majority of people is after all not very different from that of Pavlov's dogs. They like Pavlov's dogs respond mechanically to a variety of stimuli – the sight of an advertisement, the sound of a siren, the scene of a woman's perfume or of cooking food. They behave like cogs in a machine, responding automatically to stimuli. Are they awake at all? But awareness can change all that. Simply by becoming aware, by becoming mindful, one can seize the initiative so to speak, go on the offensive, change over from a reactive to a creative type of existence in which one ceases to be merely conditioned and becomes conditioning. This is why the Buddha placed so much importance upon mindfulness.

Meditation

The third fundamental component in Buddhist psycho-therapy is mediation. The practise of meditation did not originate with the Buddha. There is evidence that the practise goes back to the earliest period of civilisation in India, to the Indus valley civilisation which flourished during the third millennium B.C. Nonetheless, mediation has largely been misunderstood.

Meditation is a method of concentrating the mind single-pointedly on an object. Although the particular objects used in meditation and the particular elements of the method may differ from tradition to tradition, the goal of meditation remains the same, the concentration of the mind one-pointedly upon an object.

Within the Buddhist tradition, meditation has an instrumental value only. In other words, it is a means for penetrating the true nature of reality. It has to be joined with wisdom or insight in order for this to happen. The role of mediation in the Buddhist search for liberating knowledge might be likened to the focusing of a camera in order that a clear image of the subject be obtained. In this case, one's own mind might be likened to the camera, meditation to the process of focusing and reality itself to the subject.

Now obviously meditative concentration is an altered state of consciousness like hypnosis, dream and even psycho-analytic condition of mind so favoured by Freud and his successors. That is to say, it is a state of consciousness different from an ordinary or normative state. Meditation has been accorded an important role in Buddhist psycho-therapy just as hypnosis, dream psycho-analysis and even pharmacologically induced states of altered consciousness have been accorded important roles in other psycho-therapeutic systems. The important thing to note however is the difference between the

altered state of consciousness induced by meditation and the altered states induced by hypnosis and the like.

Here again the key to an understanding of the nature of meditative consciousness is the avoidance of two alternatives through the adoption of a middle way. In this case however the alternatives are not those of primitive psychology, they are rather alternative affective mental states.

If the altered states of consciousness other than that produced by meditation mentioned above are considered, it is immediately evident that many of them are states characterised by a condition of utmost relaxation or even unconsciousness. Freud was unhappy with hypnosis, because the subject was passive and unable to contribute to his own cure, but even the psycho-analytic situation encourages the subject to relax and to adopt a free associative and undirected pattern of mental activity. Dream too is clearly a semi-conscious and undirected state of mind. Alternatively, a number of pharmacologically induced altered states of consciousness as well as altered states of consciousness observed in cases of psychosis are characterised by excitability and agitation almost frenzy. By contrast, meditative consciousness is anything but unconsciousness or frenzy. It combines optimum relaxation with optimum alertness.

This idea is clearly indicated in the incident involving the Buddha and the monk Sona. Sona had been having trouble with his meditation, and as a result, he became discouraged and considered leaving the order and returning to lay life. The Buddha understanding his difficulty, asked him to recall his life prior to joining the Order when he had been given playing the lute. The Buddha put the question to Sona of which of the strings of the lute produced a harmonious sound. Was it the string that was overly tight, or was it the string that was slack? Sona replied that of course it was neither. It was the string that was not too tight and not too loose that produced a harmonious sound. The Buddha then likened meditative consciousness to the correctly tuned string of the lute. In meditation, the mind should not be too loose, that is too relaxed, nor should it be too tight, that is too excited. Meditative consciousness should combine optimum relaxation with optimum alertness.

This idea is further elaborated in the Abhidharma literature which supplies detailed and specific instructions for inducing meditative concentration. There it is stated that two obstructions must be overcome in order to achieve correct concentrating. They are on the one hand sloth and torpor and on the other hand agitation and worry. The cultivation of mental factors that will act as antidotes to these tendencies initial application and happiness – is prescribed.

Meditative consciousness is therefore an altered state of consciousness qualitatively different from the altered states of consciousness which have commonly been used by psycho-therapists in the west. Combining as it does optimum relaxation with optimum alertness, one might say that it enables one to be both analyst and subject. This is in fact what happens when the mind concentrated and made one-pointed through meditation is directed to the analysis of personality.

Chapter 4 Buddhist Psycho-analysis

Non-ego psychology

The psycho-analytic method pioneered by Freud in intended to eliminate specific neurosis through eliciting their unconsciousness causer. Freud treated a wide variety of complaints in this way, from an ????? to stand and walk to aversion to drinking from a glass. As he ????? to cure his patients of such incapacitating or rarely ?????????????? he gradually evolved a mere generally conception of the goal of ????? psycho-therapy. It was the goal of adjustment outlined in ??????. Because Freud's concerns were fundamentally conservative ones, ????? not envisage a radical transformation of experience, but mother a ????? to the accepted normal pattern of behaviour where value no did not question.

In keeping with this quite limitation therapeutic objective, Freud developed a view of experience and behaviour in which energy and ego each ????? indispensable role to play. Illness, or ?????,???????????????? attribution to either of these two basic components in experience, it was the result of an imbalance or conflict between them. Therefore if ego had energy could be put back into their proper places, health or adjustment might be achieved. This meant allowing the ego to exercise its proper restraining as structuring role in regard to ones inner experience and also in regard to ones special relationships. Clearly then, the ego is central to the psychology of Freud, and this is why his school came to be called that of ego psychology.

One need hardly look far for the origins and antecedents of Freud's ideas. Really, his ego-energy syneretism is nothing more than psychological restatement of Aristotle's conception of the roles played by form and matter in experience. Equally, the theory reflects the west's historical preoccupation with man's ostensible angel and animal natures. The tension between the two

natures had of course been at the heart of medieval Christian psychology and it had continued to exercise philosophers like Descartes and indeed virtually everyone who did not opt with the empiricists and behaviourists for the animals rather than the eagles. Freud did much to lift the veils of prevalent taboos in Europe particularly in regard to sexuality, but his psychology remains a compromise not a revolution.

In the case of Buddhist psycho-therapy, the situation is very different. Here the concern is not with the cure of particular complaints having particular causes hidden in the unconscious mind. Buddhist psycho-therapy is concerned with nothing less than the universal symptoms of suffering like birth, old age, death, disease, separation, frustration and so forth. Like the symptoms, the causes the afflictions – desire, ill will and ignorance – are universal. The above symptoms as well as their causes would be considered quite normal by Freud and his successors. Indeed one might say that what is mental health for Freudian psychology is mental disease for Buddhism.

Given the radically different therapeutic objectives of Freudian and Buddhist psychology, it is not surprising that the scope and application of their respective analytical methods should differ greatly. While Freud was concerned with adjusting the balance between energy and ego in order to achieve relatively conflict free situation, Buddhism unambiguously identifies the ego or self as the basic cause of universal mental disease and the accompanying universal symptoms of suffering. Buddhism therefore seeks to achieve mental health, or the elimination of suffering, by means of the analytic destruction of egoism, or in Buddhist terms the belief in an independent permanent self or soul.

The Buddhist tradition identifies ignorance as the fundamental cause of the universal symptoms of suffering and ignorance which is not merely an absence of knowledge, but actual delusion is none other than belief in an ego or self. It is the sense of self that dichotomises and polarises experience into a self and an other, and it is on the basis of this dichotomy that desire and ill will operate, because one then desires that which is seen to enhance and support the self and one is averse to that which is seen to threaten and injure the self. Therefore the removal of the ego or the sense of self is indispensable for the removal of universal suffering and it is toward this end that Buddhist psycho-analysis and Buddhist non-ego psychology is directed.

One last question has to be answered before proceeding to an examination of Buddhist psycho-analysis. According to Freud, the chaotic energy of life is controlled and structured by the ego. Now if as Buddhists say the ego or the self is in the final analysis a fiction, then how does Freud's energy of life come to be

ordered? The Buddhist answer is that the energy of life obeys the laws of cause and effect. Life, conscious existence is not determined by an ultimate principle like the ego. Rather it is conditioned by causes and conforms to pattern established over the course of countless lifetimes of experience. As it was pointed out in chapter 2, for the Buddhists it is not God, or the soul, or even the ego that accounts for the order and community of human experience and for the sense of self, but merely conditioning over the course of countless lives.

Buddhist psycho-analysis resembles contemporary humanistic and transpersonal psychology more than any other system of western psychology. Like humanistic psychology, Buddhist psycho-analysis is acutely aware of the human existential predicament, and like humanistic psychology, Buddhist psycho-analysis assumes the subjectivity of human experience. Finally, as it has been shown, Buddhist psycho-analysis, like modern trans-personal psychology, undertakes to transcend the individual ego, self or personality in order to attain freedom in a higher trans-personal transform of role of being.

The Buddhist analysis of personal experience

The Buddhist analysis of experience is consistently phenomenological rather than metaphysical. This means that it deals with objects as they present themselves to a subject it experience, not with objects as they might be supposed to be in themselves. The subject matter of the analysis is therefore the data of experience or phenomena, not the metaphysical substance or essence of things in themselves.

The Buddhist analysis of experience beings by dividing experience into an objective and a subjective component, in other words, phenomena that are experienced in the form of a subject and phenomena that are experienced in the forms of objects. To put it more simply, experience is divided phenomenologically into mind (nama) and matter (rupe).

This twofold division is reflected in the well known scheme of the five aggregates (skandha). In that scheme, the subjective form of experience accounts for four aggregates: namely, consciousness, mental formation, perception and feeling, while the objective form of experience accounts for one only, the aggregate of matter. Collectively the phenomenal contence of the subjective form of experience are known as the mind (citta) and the mental factors (cetasika).

The objective form of experience or matter may be subdivided into four primary elements. The elements of matter are not however substances, but

sensory qualities that give rise to the experience of matter. They are: 1, extension, 2. cohesion, 3. heat, 4. motion. The four elements of matter combine to produce the five physical sense organs and their objects are as well as experiences like those of lightness, softness and so forth. In all according to the popular enumeration, there are twenty-eight elements of matter. As it was said, the subjective form of experience collectively known as the mind and the mental factor accounts for the four aggregates – consciousness, mental formation, perception and feeling. Consciousness according to the same popular enumeration, may be divided into 121 elements. The 121 elements of consciousness may be grouped in two ways, either regard to their object, or with regard to their subjective value. If they are classified with regard to their object, they fall into four categories according to whether they have as their object the sphere of sense desire, the sphere of form, the formless sphere or the supramundane experience of the holy personalities(aryapudgala).. if they are classified according to their subjective value, they may be divided into four categories according to whether they are causally wholesome, causally unwholesome, resultant or neutral.

The 121 elements of consciousness are like the frame of a building. The mental factors supply the materials that are needed to complete the building. There are in all 52 mental factors. Two of them, perception and feeling constitute aggregates of their own, but the remaining fifty, all belong to the aggregates of mental formation.

The aggregates of feeling has three major components – happiness, pain and indifference. The aggregate of perception may be divided according to the degree of the impact and clarity of a given perception upon the mind. But the most interesting of the aggregates is the aggregate of mental formation containing fifty mental factors.

The fifty-two mental factors may be divided into three categories – causally wholesome, causally unwholesome and indeterminate. The indeterminate mental factors are so called because they have no definite wholesome or unwholesome causal efficiency in themselves and only acquire wholesome and unwholesome causal efficiency in combination with other factors. Perception and feelings are indeterminate mental factors. A number of other mental factors are also indeterminate like contact volition, one pointedness, vitality and attention. However the vast majority of the mental factors are either causally wholesome or unwholesome, in other words they have the power to produce happiness or suffering in the future. It is therefore these causally wholesome and unwholesome mental factors that condition the circumstances of existence now and in the future. In short, the causality wholesome and unwholesome mental

factors are the building blocks of Karma. The interaction of the wholesome and unwholesome mental factors with the indeterminate ones determines the course of one's existence for better or worse.

Here again, there is a clear example of the Buddhist alternative, the middle way. Human action is neither wholly free nor is it wholly determined in so far as action is associated with wholesome factors like confidence, mindfulness and wisdom, it is free and creative. But in so far as action operates instinctively and mechanically, it is determined by established patterns of behaviour.

The Buddhist analysis of experiences into factors is wholly consistent with the attitude of empirical psychology in Europe. Like the empiricists' analysis of experience, the Buddhist analysis is founded upon the data provided by introspection. Like the empiricists' analysis, the Buddhist analysis accords a place to conditioning. However unlike the empiricist analysis, the Buddhist analysis accepts the fact that conditioning has occurred over the course of countless lives and unlike the empiricist analysis, the Buddhist analysis accepts the possibility of free will in the context of human action. After the period of British empiricism, the gap between Buddhist psychology and empiricist psychology grew wider with the advent of the behaviourist movement. This was because the latter, while accepting the method of elementary analysis, rejected the data of introspection in favour of the data of overt behaviour, and began to rely largely on quantitative studies of overt behaviour.

The unconscious in Buddhist psychology

Among factors isolated through the Buddhist analysis of personal experience is found the factor of life continuum (bhavanga). As the name implies, the factor has the function of preserving the continuity of life when conscious factors are not in operation, for example in dreamless sleep. The factor of life continuum is one of the 121 elements of consciousness, and it is resultant in character. In other words, it represents the effect of previous action, and although it is an unconscious factor, it determines the general circumstances of rebirth. This is the seed of the Buddhist doctrine of the unconscious.

In the Mahayana tradition, much is made of the so called store-house consciousness (alaya vijnana). The doctrine of a store-house consciousness is tantamount to a full blown doctrine of the unconscious. The store-house consciousness is said to be like a river which carries along with it the seeds of former actions and experiences. The store-house consciousness is therefore the

support of the six empirical consciousnesses eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. In effect there are two streams of consciousness, one conscious and the other unconscious. The latter supports and conditions the former.

But the store-house consciousness is not an ego or self as Mahayana teachers are quick to point out. The store-house consciousness is a series of moments of consciousness constantly changing and always in the process of being reconditioning by conscious experience. While the store-house consciousness is not an ego, Mahayana psychology has given a place to the ego of Freud. It is the consciousness which receives the name of the afflicted mind (klišta manas). The afflicted mind mediates between the store-house consciousness and the six empirical consciousness. It is responsible for the sense of self, but far from being a necessary and welcome principal of order, it is the source of the delusive dishotomi that is the basis of the universal experience of suffering.

Analysis and synthesis

In Europe the tendency of the empiricists and behaviourists to reduce the whole of experience to its ?????????? parts by ????? of analysis was challenged by Gestalt psychology. Gestalt pointed out that in reducing experience to elementary factors, analysis missed the whole point. The factors of experience surely only have meaning in relation to each other. Considered as ultimate independent constituents, they have no meaning at all. Gestalt attack revealed an inherent weakness in the analytical method. If relied upon to the exclusion of any other method, it leads to a fragmented view of reality. The analytical dissection of experience leave one with bits and pieces of experience and with the even greater problem of having to relate them to each other in a meaningful way. But is the Buddhist psycho-analysis also liable to the same criticism? Foes it like the empiricist and behaviourist analysis of experience leave one with a fragmented and ultimately useless view of reality? The answer is no, because the Buddhist tradition anticipated the objections of the Gestalt movement by more than two thousand years.

The Buddhist tradition consistently advocated the use of two complimentary methods of investigation, one analytic and the other synthetic. The two methods are enshrined in the two most important books of the Abhidharma Pitake, i.e., the Dhamma Sangani and the Patthana, and the need to apply both methods to the investigation of personal experience was recognised by Buddhist teachers throughout the centuries. While the analytic method concentrates upon the internal complexity of experience, attacks the apparent unity of experience and demonstrates its composite character, the synthetic

method attacks the notion of independently existing elements of experience and demonstrates their relative and interdependent nature. By using the two methods together, one can arrive at a view of reality which avoids both the vague and naive interpretation of experience which fails to notice its composite nature and the fragmentary interpretation which fails to appreciate its interdependent holistic and dynamic character.

Buddhist psycho-analysis supplies a means of implementing the liberating truth of impersonality in the *????* of meditative and non-meditative experience. Through the combination of analytic and synthetic methods, one is encouraged to abandon the delusion of personality, the sense of self that is the basis of the universal symptoms of suffering. *????* a transformed mode of experience beyond ego, self and personality is rendered possible. The door to Nirvana is opened.

Chapter 5. Development Psychology in Buddhism

The development metaphor

In the twentieth century, behaviourism, gestalt and psycho-analytic ego psychology all turned their attention to development psychology. Again two developments in the science induced psychologists to turn their attention to developmental questions. First there was the new emphasis in biology upon evolution ushered in by Darwin's theories. Second, there was the growing preoccupation of physics with processes. As a result, psychologists in Europe and America began to be concerned not so much with human psychology as it is, but rather as it becomes.

In practical terms, for most psychologists this meant the study of the development of the individual from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. As had so often happened before, western psychologists were misled even in their application of the new process model of developmental psychology by the accepted belief that human experience has a precise beginning and end in time, that is it is circumscribed by birth and death. This assumption caused them to concentrate wholly on the course of development within a single lifetime.

It happens that Buddhist psychology too is interested in development. It was after all the Buddhist who had always emphasised becoming and change. Buddhism also uses the language of childhood and maturity, but as one might expect, for Buddhism, the scope of developmental psychology is much wider, covering not only one life, but a series of lives, not only one form of sentient

existence, the human form, but the sentient existence of the other realms as well.

Therefore in the Buddhist context, the use of the language of childhood and maturity is symbolic. Buddhist texts often refer to the need for sentient beings to mature. Developmental psychology, as it is usually understood in the west, is a metaphor. It is a metaphor for the whole process of development from an unenlightened egocentric mode of being to an enlightened integrated mode of being, a metaphor for the transformation of an embryonic Buddha into fully evolved Buddha.

The five factors of concentration

The second chapter described the central place of the mind in Buddhist psycho-therapeutics. It is therefore evident that the enhancement of the power and efficiency of the mind must be central to Buddhist developmental psychology. Indeed before anything definite can be done toward achieving freedom and enlightenment, the ability of the mind to act as an effective instrument for change has to be increased. For this reason, the five factors of concentration (dhyana): initial application (vitarka): sustained application (vicara), interest (priti), happiness (sukha) and one-pointedness (ekagrata) represent key components in Buddhist developmental psychology.

While the five factors appear with almost monotonous regularity in a wide variety of Buddhist literature, they are all too often misunderstood. Perhaps the most common of these misunderstandings is the assumption that the factors of concentration are relevant only to the practice and achievement of the four or five supernormal states of concentration. Although the factors undoubtedly have an indispensable role to play in the achievement of supernormal states of concentration, to assume that to be their exclusive function only encourages many to mystify them along with the prevalent mystification of meditation in general.

The fact of the matter is that the five factors do not belong only to the experience of yogins. The five factors are often present in the experience of ordinary men and women and sometimes they may even be found in the experience of animals. The latter shows that, for Buddhism as for post-Darwinian western psychology and human psychology. This is not however to side with the behaviourists who would make human psychology mechanical. It is to accord to the animals a degree of the freedom of action enjoyed by human beings.

Again contrary to what one might assume, the factors of concentration are not necessarily causally wholesome. All five of the factors belong to the category of indeterminate mental factors, factors which assume a causally wholesome or unwholesome nature only in combination with other mental factors. This serves to underline the neutral character of the five as mere factors of concentration. Their effect is simply to enhance the power and efficiency of the mind. Whether this increased mental capability is directed towards wholesome or unwholesome ends is as yet undecided.

Initial application is also sometimes called applied thought or even discursive thought. It refers to the initial application of the mind to an object. The relevant commentaries explain it in terms of the directing of the mind towards an object, or even of the routing of the mind upon an objects. Sustained application is also sometimes called sustained discursive thought and in other contexts even investigation or analysis. It is said to be continuous pressure of the mind upon an object, occupation of the mind with an object and or the anchoring of the mind upon an object. Interest, the third factor, is also sometimes called joy or rapture, but interest is a better translation because interest is not a feeling, but a mental formation a predisposition. Interest encourages, inspires and refreshes the mind. Interest is likened by the commentators to the hearing of a report by a man on the desert of a pool of fresh water in a forest at the edge of the desert not far away. Naturally, he would be encouraged and inspired by such a report. His feeling upon actually reaching the pool, quenching his thirst and bathing his limbs would be analogous to happiness the next factor. One-pointed ness, of mind is likened to the steady glow of an oil lamp in a room in which there are no drafts.

The five factors of concentration enhance the power and efficiency of the mind by correcting mental factors that obstruct it ability to act effectively to change the nature of ones experience, be it in the short term or in the long term. These mental factors are the five obstructions (nivarana): sloth and torpor, doubt, ill will, restlessness and worry and agreed. Each of the five factors of concentration counters one obstruction as follows. Initial application counters sloth and torporl sustained application counters doubt: interest counters ill will: happiness counters restlessness and worry and one-pointed ness counters agreed. When the five factors of concentration have freed the mind from the five obstruction: the power and efficiency of the mind is consequently enhanced. The mind Is then able to effect dramatic changes in the nature of experience. The achievement of supernormal states of concentration and the miraculous powers which they can bring – powers to alter the conventionally accepted forms of reality – are only the most conspicuous evidence of the change.

Non-meditative developmental psychology

Anyone who has ever read an exposition of Buddhist meditation or a manual of Abhidharma is aware of the role of the five factors in the achievement of the four or five states of concentration pertaining to the sphere of form (rupadhatu). One may even be aware of the progressive diminution of factors as the yogin ascends the levels of concentration how at the level of the first concentration, all the five factors are present, while at the level of the second only four are present, the first factor – initial application – having been left behind and so on until upon reaching the fifth concentration, only one-pointedness remains. It may be hazarded however that such awareness is of real value only to those actively pursuing the achievement of meditative concentration or perhaps also to those engaged in detailed academic studies of Buddhist meditation. ??? is surely of more immediate relevance is the development benefits to cultivating the five factors of concentration here and now in an unstructured informal context.

Cultivation of the first two factors of concentration, initial application and sustained application, enhances the intellectual powers of the mind. In countering sloth and torpor and doubt they foster alertness and precision of thought. Eventually, initial application and sustained application can lead to the acquisition of wisdom, but even in the context of daily life, their cultivation can bring significant developmental benefits in academic and professional pursuits.

The cultivation of interest too can bring immediate developmental benefits. Everyone is aware of the sorry plight of the retired who all too often having nothing to interest them decline rapidly into senility and death. Conversely everyone is aware of instances of old people remaining alert and vital for many years simply because they have an interest to sustain them. Interest counters ill will. Even now interest can enhance one's performance in many areas of life. Interest can supply the encouragement, inspiration and enthusiasm that is essential if one is to accomplish one's tasks efficiently.

It hardly seems necessary to dwell upon the immediate benefits of happiness. Happiness which counters restlessness and worry contributes to mental and physical health, and it enhances one's ability to live and work harmoniously with others. One can consciously cultivate happiness in order to experience these benefits.

Lastly one-pointedness too has a developmental role to play both within

the context of meditation and outside of it. Within, the context of meditation, one-pointedness occupies a central place. It alone remains when the other factors have gone. It is responsible for the obtainment of the miraculous powers that enables a yogin to fly cross-legged through the air, walk upon the water and read the minds of others. But one-pointedness of mind is not only found in meditative states of consciousness, but in every conscious state. Through cultivating one-pointedness and raising it from a subordinate position to a position of control in one's mental life, one can achieve a calm and collected mind. The unsettling effects of greed are no longer experienced because the mind is undistracted by objects other than that which it is immediately occupied.

In this way, the five factors of concentration have a developmental role to play in the lives of ordinary men and women as well as in the experience of yogins. Although cultivating the five factors, whether it be within the context of formal meditation or in one's daily life, leads to a diminution of suffering and to a higher degree of integrating of experience, it does not lead to the ultimate goal of Buddhist psycho-therapy and developmental psychology. It will have been noted that among the five obstructions overcome by the five factors of concentration, ignorance was not counted. This is a significant indication that if freedom and enlightenment are to be achieved, more is needed.

Chapter 6. Buddhist Transformational Psychology

The circle and the spiral

Although the provisional goal of Buddhist psycho-therapy in some cases be happiness, its ultimate goal is freedom. The provisional goal of happiness falls within the limits of a circle, the circle of samsara. The goal of freedom lies outside the circle of samsara and to achieve it one needs to accomplish a qualitative change in the direction of one's movement. The symbol, that perhaps best expresses this change is the symbol of the change movement in a circle to movement in a spiral.

In specifically Buddhist terms, this means that there are two types of experience and two types of individuals who experience them. There is the world or mundane experience familiar to the enlightened and there is the other-worldly and superabundant experience known to the holy personalities. While the former includes the three spheres of existence: the sphere of sense desire (kamadhatu), the sphere of form (rupadhatu) and the formless sphere (arupadhatu) and the sentient beings who inhabit the six realms of existence. The latter includes the four stages of perfection: stream entry, once-returnership, never-returnership and Arhatship and the irreversible stages of the Bodhisattva

path and the individuals who have gained the stage. The former may afford great happiness and even tranquillity for limited periods of time, for example in the spheres of form and in the formless sphere gained through the practise of meditation, but it is conditioned by afflictions and karma. Therefore existence within the circle is determined. Alternatively, when the afflictions and karma are ended, one existence is transformed. It then becomes unconditioned, determining rather than determined. This is the spiral movement of the holy personalities who are on the way to achieving the final transformation of experience that is the attainment of freedom and enlightenment. The achievement of this final transformation, like all progress on the Buddhist path depends on the mind and the mental factors. While in the last chapter, Buddhist developmental psychology was explained in terms of the five factors of concentration, in the final chapter, Buddhist transformational psychology will be explained in terms of the five controlling faculties (indria).

The five controlling facilities

The five controlling facilities are: confidence (shraddha), energy (virya), mindfulness (smriti), concentration (samadhi) and wisdom (prajna). They are called controlling facilities because they control, or exercise mastery over their opposites. That is to say, confidence controls lack of confidence; energy controls indolence; mindfulness controls lack of mindfulness; concentration controls distraction and wisdom controls ignorance. They are also called facilities because like the sense facilities the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body which enables one to perceive the world of physical objects, the spiritual facilities confidence and so forth enable one to perceive the transformed world of the unconditioned.

Confidence is traditionally said to be confidence in the triple gem, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, in the law of karma and in the Four Noble Truths. Energy, as one might guess, is closely related to effort, the sixth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path and is therefore defined in terms of the four right efforts. Mindfulness too is identical with the seventh factor of the path and is explained in terms of the four applications of mindfulness. Concentration is one-pointedness of mind and wisdom, the last of the facilities, is the realisation of the Four Noble Truths and the truth of Dependent Origination.

The five controlling facilities operate in combination with the five factors of concentration. In this sense, the key components of developmental psychology combine with the key components of transformational psychology to bring about the evolution of the individual from the egocentric condition of immaturity to the fully integrated mode of being of an enlightened one. Thus

confidence functions in conjunction with interest, happiness and one-pointedness. Mindfulness and concentration function in conjunction with interest and wisdom function in conjunction with initial application and sustained application.

It is said that in order to practise Buddhist, two things are necessary confidence and wisdom. Of these, wisdom is most important, but confidence is preliminary. The truth of this statement is mirrored in the arrangement of the five controlling faculties. Confidence appears at the heads of the list, because without confidence successful practise of any development and transformational discipline is impossible. But while confidence is an indispensable prerequisite, wisdom is the actual achievement of the practise. Therefore, wisdom which ends the list of the controlling spiritual faculties represents the actual completion of the practise. Similarly, while confidence may be sufficient to secure the provisional goal of Buddhist practise, happiness, wisdom is needed to achieve the final goal, freedom.

The relative roles of confidence and wisdom in the context of Buddhist practise in general and specifically in the context of the five controlling faculties is therefore clear, but what about the intermediate three faculties – energy, mindfulness and concentration? The occurrence of energy, mindfulness and concentration which is incidentally parallel almost exactly the three factors of the Mental Development group of the Noble Eightfold Path, midway between confidence and wisdom indicate the intermediate position of Mental Development in the entire scheme of Buddhist practise. Mental Development – the enhancement of the power and efficiency of the mind although is still belongs to the circular developmental pattern and does not transcend conditioned existence, nonetheless prepares the way for the acquisition of wisdom which can transform the circle of experience into an upward spiral that will take one out of the conditioned world and into the unconditioned world of utterly transformed experience.

The five powers

As the five controlling faculties grow strong they undergo a metamorphosis and are transformed into the five powers. Apparently identical with the five faculties, the five powers nonetheless express a new reality. While the five faculties are transformational, the five powers are transformed. While the five faculties are instrumental, the five powers are objective. While anyone may cultivate the five controlling faculties, the five powers are the exclusive property of the personalities. Having won through to a transformed and liberated mode of being, the faculties become firm and absolutely

unshakable. Thus it is that only at the stage of irreversible enlightenment does confidence altogether eliminate and so forth.

Balancing the five faculties

The five controlling faculties are symmetrical in arrangement, and in order for them to have the optimum transformational effect, they have to be balanced by the practitioner. Only if the proper equilibrium is maintained between the symmetrically arranged faculties can be transformation of the mode of being that one seeks be made possible and be achieved smoothly.

It has already been noted that confidence and wisdom are placed in a purposefully arranged position at the head and tail of the list of the five faculties. It has been shown that each has a particular role to play in the transformation of experience that is the goal of Buddhist practise. This suggestion that they may a particular relationship each to the other and that they may be in a sense reciprocal. In fact this is the case. But not only do confidence and wisdom stand in a very particular relationship to each other, energy and concentration also do and mindfulness stands in the most particular relationship to all the four.

Indeed, equilibrium has to be maintained between confidence and wisdom on the one hand and energy and concentration on the other. If equilibrium is maintained between confidence and wisdom, then each will compliment the other and their optimum transformational effect will be achieved. But if either is confidence or wisdom is allowed to dominate and suppress the other, then the transformational effect of the faculties will be impaired and maybe lost altogether. If confidence is allowed to dominate and suppress wisdom, the result will be an impairment of ones intellectual capabilities, ones powers of analysis and criticism. On the other hand, if wisdom is allowed to dominate and suppress confidence, the result will be an impairment of ones initial positive commitment to practise. In other words, the indispensable preliminary for the practise of Buddhism will be undermined. The truth of what has just been said is reflected in the experience everyone had had of personalities flawed by a predominance of either of the factors in question. Everyone has known at some time or other individuals who because their confidence has been permitted to dominate wisdom are unable to exercise the most basic analytical or critical faculties. Conversely, everyone has also encountered individuals who have called wisdom to dominate and suppress confidence. Such persons are usually unable to undertake anything, because the critical and sceptical faculties have so eroded their ability to commit themselves to a promising venture.

In the same way, a balance has to be maintained between energy and concentration. If energy is allowed to dominate and suppress concentration, the result will be agitated mind and erratic behaviour. On the other hand if concentration is allowed to dominate and suppress energy, the result will be stagnation, fixity and ossification. As in the case of confidence and wisdom, nearly everyone had known individuals prone to one or the other of the behavioural patterns described.

It is evident then that it is of the utmost importance that the controlling faculties: confidence and wisdom and energy and concentration be kept in balance so that they may compliment each other and achieve the greatest transformational efficiency. As one might guess, it is mindfulness strategically placed right at the centre of the five that kept watch on the others. It is mindfulness that sees whether confidence is likely to dominate wisdom or vice versa and ensures that this does not occur by restoring equilibrium. It is mindfulness too that sees whether energy is threatening to dominate concentration or vice versa and takes steps to restore the balance between them. No wonder then that the Buddha called mindfulness the one way to freedom.

Part III. Buddhism and science

Chapter 1. a General Introduction to the Methods and Principle of Science and their Application to the Fundamental Teaching of Buddhism

Aristotle's philosophy of science

Aristotle was the first in the West to formulate a scientific methodology. He believed that knowledge could only be gained through the use of what we called the inductive –deductive method. Although Aristotle's inductive-deductive method has been refined by later philosophers of science in Europe, particularly during the 17th century scientific revolution, the general pattern of the method has remained constant throughout the history of science in the West.

In brief, the inductive-deductive method insists upon beginning scientific investigation with induction – that is the observation and enumeration of the facts of experience. This is the first movement of the scientific method called induction. Next, general principles are formulated based upon the facts which have been observed earlier and consequences affecting other particular facts of experience are deduced from the general principles. This is the second movement of the scientific method proposed by Aristotle known as deduction. Therefore, for Aristotle, knowledge was acquired through a method, which proceeded from the facts of experience, to the formulation of general principles and then back to the facts of experience.

The scientific revolution in Europe

Of the many men who contributed to the 17th century scientific revolution, Galileo and Francis Bacon are the most important for the purposes of this study. Although both of them objected to particular consequences of Aristotle's philosophy of science, they nonetheless accepted the general form of the inductive-deductive method, as did virtually all the important figures of the century.

Galileo developed ideal abstraction as an important technique, which he used to achieve surprising results in the study of mechanics and motion. Ideal abstraction involves extrapolating the conception of a state not immediately present in experience by means of observing a series of states which incline progressively towards the ideal state that is to be conceived. Galileo, for example, used this technique to arrive at the concept of a body's through a vacuum by observing the behaviour of bodies falling through liquids of decreasing density.

Galileo also made important advances in the development of the methodology of experiment. He was perhaps the first in Europe to purposely introduce variables into the experimental situation to ascertain the effect they would have on the behaviour of the subjects of the experiments. For example, in conducting his experiments involving the behaviour of balls rolling down inclined planes, he carefully varied the angle of inclination, length and so forth of the planes and noted the relevant variation in conditions and behaviour.

The importance of experimental confirmation of the consequences of the deductive phase of scientific investigation also received greater attention during the 17th century. Galileo occasionally emphasised the importance of experimental confirmation, but it was Bacon who absolutely insisted upon it. The insistence upon experimental confirmation of the consequences of deduction was of course little more than a rigorous application of Aristotle's directive that deduction had to be once again applied to the facts of experience.

Francis Bacon made two more important contributions to the refinement of scientific methodology in the 17th century. The first of these lay in the emphasis which he placed upon the importance of objective observation as the only sound basis for induction. Aristotle of course had required observation, but it was Bacon who explicitly stipulated that the natural scientist should rid himself of all preconceptions and prejudices.

Moreover, Bacon added another method, the purpose of which was to secure the authenticity of induction. While Aristotle had been happy with mere enumeration, Bacon required that induction exclude negative or contrary instances. The principle of exclusion or the method of agreement and difference outlined by Bacon made it more likely that induction would lead to genuine principles founded upon careful objective observations.

In the following century, two great figures, one primarily a scientist and the other primarily a philosopher, continued to develop the philosophy of science in the directions established by Aristotle, Galileo and Bacon. They are Isaak Newton and Immanuel Kant.

Newton reformulated the method of induction –deduction established by Aristotle. He called his formulation analysis-synthesis. He, like Bacon, insisted upon the need for experimental confirmation of the deduced consequences. Moreover, he emphasised the importance of new applications of the deductive or synthetic phase of scientific investigation to the facts of experience. In this way, he established the philosophical grounds for the growth of the applied sciences.

Many philosophers of science had been concerned with the nature of causation. Aristotle had attempted to define a cause and so had Newton. Now in the 18th century, Kant advanced the idea of universal causation. He believed that it was a necessary law of experience that every event must be preceded by a cause. By applying Bacon's principle of exclusion of Kant's idea of universal causation, one can arrive at a conception of causation which is not very different from one advocated by the Buddha and the Buddhist logicians as it will be seen in a moment.

The importance of causation in Buddhism

The principle of causation is central to both the Four Noble truths and the teaching of Dependent Origination which are absolutely fundamental doctrines of Buddhism. If one examines the conceptual

arrangement of the Four Noble Truths, one will immediately see that the Second Noble Truth – the Truth of the Cause and the First Noble Truth – the Truth of Suffering, stand in a relationship of cause and effect. Similarly, the Fourth Noble Truth – the Truth of the Path and the Third Noble Truth – the Truth of Cessation, also stand in a relationship of cause and effect. Again, the twelve constituents of Dependent Origination are traditionally divided into causal constituents, i.e., ignorance, mental formations, craving, clinging and becoming, and resultant constituents, i.e., consciousness, name and form, the six sense-spheres, contact, feeling, birth and old age and death.

The Buddhist conception of the relation between cause and effect may be expressed as follows. If A, then B; if not A, then not B. This formulation of the relation between cause and effect current among Buddhists since the days of the Buddha clearly reflects not only the inductive method, but also the application of the method of agreement and difference. Buddhist logicians of the fifth century C.E. in fact went even further and introduced to Indian logic the notion that a relationship of invariable concomitance, in order to be valid, had to be substantiated both by positive and negative concomitance, and that they must in be illustrated in an example found in experience.

The Four Noble Truths

The First Noble Truth is clearly an example of the application of inductive, that is the objective observation of experience. All four common physical and three mental forms of suffering classically included in the definition of suffering: birth, old age, sickness, death, separation from the beloved, contact with the unbeloved and frustration of desires, are available to any objective observer in experience provided of course that he has rid himself of preconceptions.

The Truth of the Cause of Suffering is first grounded upon the principles of universal causation. In as much as every event has a cause, so suffering has a cause. This general principle is then

followed by the formulation of a more specific hypothesis, that is greed, anger and delusion are the causes of suffering. The hypothesis then receives initial experimental confirmation in the following way. One is asked to observe whether the presence of greed and anger in the mind is followed by suffering, and alternatively whether when greed and anger are absent from the mind, their absence is followed by the absence of suffering. In this advice given by the Buddha to the Kalamas there is evident the application of a form of experimental methodology complete with the introduction of variables.

The Truth of the Cessation of Suffering in the case of the neophyte initially require the application of the scientific method of ideal abstraction. One is asked to consider a series of mental states that are relatively free from suffering and to extrapolate from them a conception of a state altogether free from suffering. In this way, an image or obstruction of a goal of practise, i.e., Nirvana, is constructed.

Finally, the Truth of the Path provides conclusive experimental confirmation of the truth of the hypothesis embodied in the Second Noble Truth. The Path, which its eight parts arranged in its three ways of practise progressively eliminates greed, anger and delusion. When the conditions which cause suffering cease to exist, so suffering too ceases to be. Therefore, the entire process is once again confirmed by the effect which it has upon experience. The inductive-deductive method of science is vindicated with reference to the fundamental teaching of Buddhism.

Chapter 2. Buddhism and Contemporary Movements in Science

Reductionism and Holism

In general, reductionism refers to an analytical approach in science or philosophy. The reductionist analyses or reduces a complex phenomenon to its component parts. The assumption of reductionism is that the process of reduction of a given phenomenon to its component parts will render it more intelligible.

Reductionism has dominated modern science for the past three hundred years. So complete was its domination that the reductionism approach came to be regarded as virtually synonymous with the scientific attitude *par excellence*. In the physical sciences, biology, medicine and even in psychology as it can be readily seen in behaviourism, reductionism was the order of the day.

Gradually, however, over the course of the past century, there was developed a growing uneasiness with whole scale and rampant reductionism. The question was asked, whether it is always reduction of a complex phenomenon that makes it more comprehensible. If, for example, a Mozart symphony or a Shakespeare play are reduced to the notes or words of which they are composed, does it really help one to understand them better? Some problems after all can only be solved by putting parts together in a particular relationship. A jigsaw puzzle, for instance, can only be solved by putting the parts together in a particular way, not by taking them apart.

The holistic approach is a synthetic one which emphasises the importance of relation and structure. It highlights the role of what are termed emergent qualities, in other words qualities like the beauty of a symphony or the theme of a play which emerge only when the relation and structure of components are understood as a whole.

In the twentieth century, holistic attitudes have begun to make their influence felt in many areas of science. Like reductionism before it, the holistic approach has gained ground in the physical sciences, biology, medicine and even in psychology with the advent of Gestalt.

It was soon recognised however that neither reductionism nor holism alone supply adequate descriptions of reality. The alternative descriptions of reality supplied by reductionism and holism are therefore not exclusive or contradictory, but rather complementary. Moreover, certain problems lend themselves more readily to the reductionism approach, while others lend themselves to the holistic

approach. This recognition is reflected in the actual practise of scientist today who freely use a combination of reductionism and holistic techniques in tackling practical problem.

In Buddhism too, there is early and ample evidence of the application of reductionism and holistic approaches to the problem of comprehending reality. The Abhidharma Pitaka, the canonical books of philosophy and psychology contain two volumes, Dhammasangani and the Patthana which make expert and elaborate use of reductionism and holistic approaches.

The Dhammasangani reduces or analyses the whole complex phenomenon of personal experience into its component parts. Initially, personal experience is divided into the five aggregates. Thereafter, each of the aggregates is further divided into its component parts or factors. The entire process is a model of the rigorous use of the reductionism approach.

The Patthana, on the other hand, considers in great detail 24. modes of conditionally by means of which apparently separate phenomena interact and are interrelated with other phenomena. In its emphasis upon the interrelation and the interdependence of phenomena, the Patthana is clearly holistic in character.

Indeed, the Buddhist treatment of Dependent Origination is a perfect example of the general conception of a holistic reality as it has been conceived in the West. Holism emphasises the importance of relation and structure and the role of emergent qualities. The doctrine of Dependent Origination describes how the interrelation of components in a particular way give rise to emergent qualities like suffering and rebirth.

Buddhist too, have always appreciated the importance of using a combination of the reductionism and holistic approaches in the attempt to understand reality. The use of the two methods, analytical and synthetic, in combination has consistently been advocated in the Buddhist tradition. Moreover, acute Buddhist thinkers have

recognised the relative and interdependent nature of even the reductionism and holistic approaches themselves. Indeed, the concept of a multitude of components is dependent upon the concept of a whole, just as much as the concept of a whole is dependent upon the concept of a multitude of components. Therefore, while reductionism and holism may be useful tools for understanding reality, once reality is understood, they can be discharged. Finally neither one nor many can be predicated of the ultimately real. This is something of which the Western scientific tradition seems as yet to be only dimly aware.

The quantum theory and its Buddhist parallels

The twentieth century has seen a veritable second scientific revolution. The two great pillars of this revolution are the quantum theory of relativity. The quantum theory is the less known, but the more important, of the two. Substantiated by a wealth of experimental evidence, quantum theory is primarily a practical branch of physics. It has made possible a host of practical inventions from the laser, to the transistor, to the micro computer, to nuclear power. But it has also very profound implications for the entire understanding of man and his universe.

In the twentieth century in the West, many noted scientists have turned their attention to the study of the atom and of subatomic particles like electrons and photons. Heisenberg and Bohr pioneered in this work in the twenties and thirties, but some of the most conclusive experiments have only recently been performed. The investigations of the atom and of subatomic particles have revealed that the atom is not a thing at all. Atoms and subatomic particles do not have a definite location and a meaningful motion. Moreover, the phenomenon of atomic decay appears to be random and unpredictable. These discoveries have led scientists to conclude that the atom and subatomic particles, the building blocks of reality, are "ghosts." At best, they are imaginary constructions which scientists have found useful to explain or describe their observations. But, notwithstanding, the basis of the world of appearance – the micro world of atoms and subatomic particles – is intrinsically fleeting,

nebulous and indeterminate.

A particularly convincing example of this fundamental indeterminacy of the micro world was provided by the instance of the behaviour of light. Experimentally, light was found to behave both in the manner of waves and in the manner of particles. Now, in scientific terms, waves and particles can hardly be more different, so to say that light, and indeed any subatomic particle, behaves both like waves and like particles is to say that the nature of these phenomena is essentially uncertain and indeterminate.

At this point, the question arises, "What is it then that fixes the indeterminate world of atoms and subatomic particles in a particular way?" "What is it that makes the decision whether light will behave like waves or like particles?" Quantum theorists have replied that the decision is made by none other than the observer, that is the experimenter. To put this another way, the mind of the observer determines the nature of observed phenomena – the nature of reality.

The situation was encapsulated in the famous case of Schrodinger's cat. Suppose that a cat is placed in a closed room. In the room with the cat is a container of poisonous gas which will only be released if and when a radio-active material decays within a given period. There is no way to predict whether or not the radio-active decay will occur or not within the given period. The chances are precisely 50:50. therefore, until the room is opened and the cat observed, it must be assumed to be half alive and half dead. Moreover, the status of the cat will be decided only when the experimenter makes the observation and determines the situation of the object of the observation.

Quantum theorists have gone still further and suggested that reality is not merely determined or constructed by the mind of the observer in two ways as in case of the wave-particle and live cat-dead cat dualities, but that in fact there are countless realities constructed by countless minds. All these realities are equally real or equally unreal. They may be very like each-other – almost indistinguishable

or they may be virtually opposite in nature.

The Buddhist tradition has always maintained that ultimate reality is indeterminate or inexpressible. Not only are one and many not applicable to the ultimately real, but similarly, existence and non-existence, eternity and annihilation and a virtually unlimited list of predicates are not applicable to the ultimately real. Many terms have been used in Buddhism for this ultimate reality including: Nirvana, Emptiness, Suchness and more. All the preceding however are only names provisional and conventional designations. The real nature of ultimate reality is indeterminate – neither this nor that. It seems apparent that so far there exists a remarkably close parallel between the Buddhist view of ultimate reality and the view of quantum theorists regarding the nature of the foundations of the universe.

Moreover, in Buddhism, it is the mind that determines or constructs the indeterminate nature of ultimate reality in a particular way. Given particular conditions, the mind constructs reality in a determinate way, generally, in terms of existence or non-existence, eternity or annihilation and more specifically in the form of the six realms of existence the experience of the gods, the demigods and so forth. Again, the parallel seems inescapable. Is this not the many world- the parallel realities- of quantum theory?

The theory of relativity and its Buddhist parallels

The theory of relativity was almost exclusively the work of Einstein. The special theory of relativity explains the relation of time and motion, while the general theory of relativity takes into account the effects of gravity as well. The theory of relativity has been a favourite of inspiration for science fiction writers, but the theory itself is no fiction and after eighty years since its first announcement, one had been able to falsify it. On the contrary, its basic tenets have been experimentally confirmed.

Before the beginning of the twentieth century in the West, it was generally believed that time and space were universal and absolute.

Time and space were held to exist independent of objects and observers or subjects. Einstein's theory changed all that irrevocably.

According to the theory, time and space are relative to motion and to gravity. Therefore, time and space are relative to the observer and to his special situation. In principle, both time and space are elastic and can be stretched and shrunk. Given the right conditions, one can reach the years two thousand in a few hours or touch the other edge of the solar system by extending ones hand.

Both time and space can be stretched or shrunk, but the more time is stretched, the more space is shrunk. The most bizarre and extreme consequences of this are encountered in the case of the so called time-space singularity, in other words, a black hole. There, it is suggested, time stands still and space collapses. The black hole is therefore a non-place beyond the end of time.

Within the Buddhist tradition, time and space have also been regarded as relative. Buddhist philosophers have devoted considerable attention to rejecting the absolutist view of time and space advocated by some of their scholastic opponents like the Naiyayikas. Time and space, for the Buddhists, as for contemporary scientists, do not exist independent of observers and objects. Time and space can be stretched, shrunk or even altogether transcended given the right conditions.

In the preceding pages, it had only been possible to touch very briefly upon a few of the more remarkable parallels that exist between the discoveries of contemporary science and the ancient wisdom of Buddhism. In fact, parallels like the ones that have been suggested here have attracted the attention and interest of both scientists and academics. Indeed, it was a few decades ago that Einstein professed his sympathy with Buddhism and that Bohr, when knighted, chose for his coat arms the Taoist symbol of the Yin and the Yang. Today, there exist a number of books which explore the similarities between the new science of the West and the old philosophy of the East. It would be a safe guess that more are currently in the making.

