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## AN ABSTRACT OF THIS THESIS

The thesis is concerned with a study of the Buddhist organizations in Great Britain.

The Buddhist organizations in this country began in Greater London in 1907 at first, and then many British Buddhists and Buddhists from the East, set up many Buddhist groups in Greater London and afterwards outside London. After the second world war the number of Buddhist organizations and their members is increasing. There are 36 Buddhist organizations in Great Britain in 1972.

As the majority of my field work was done among the 5 Buddhist organizations in Greater London, 17 provincial Buddhist organizations and 6 university Buddhist societies in the U.K. The greatest emphasis is on their structures, activities, eternal and external relationships and conflicts in their organizations, Buddhist movements in general, their religious belief, a comparison between British Buddhists and Thai Buddhists in Thailand, Buddhist population, and how Buddhism applied to the Western world.

It is noticed that Buddhist organization in Britain is a small minority organization, but according to the social change young people turned to interest in Eastern religions and ways of life, so there is a great demand for information about Buddhism and Buddhist organizations in Britain. I think that this thesis will give information about these from the beginning and up to the present day in more detail.

VEN. VORASAK CANDAMITTO

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BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS IN GREAT  
BRITAIN

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M.A. THESIS, 1972

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BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN

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M.A. THESIS, 1972  
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Thesis submitted for M.A. Degree

July, 1972

by

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## PREFACE

In this thesis I have tried to cover many aspects such as the history, movements and activities of Buddhist organizations in Great Britain from the turn of the century up to the present day. Special reference has been given to the period from September 1969 to November 1971<sup>why?</sup>.

I have personally interviewed the Buddhist leaders of 28 of the 36 Buddhist organizations in this country. I have also directly interviewed 101 British Buddhists and non-Buddhists and 110 Thai Buddhists and non-Buddhists in Thailand between 1969-1972. My own personal missionary work in this country since 1966 has also been of help to me, and furnished me with much useful material.

Miss Milada Kalab acted as my Thesis Supervisor, and it is to her I am greatly indebted, for very able and sympathetic guidance.

To all who contributed to my earlier training as an anthropologist, such as Professor Lucy Mair, Professor Eric Sunderland and the other lecturers in the Department of Anthropology, University of Durham, I would like to say a word of thanks.

I especially wish to thank Miss Helen Bigmore and many of my English friends who very kindly helped me with the English in this thesis.

Finally, thanks are due to Mr. Christmas Humphreys, the President of the London Buddhist Society, Mr. Russell Webb of the British Maha Bodhi Society and other Buddhist

leaders who kindly gave me information about their organizations in the U.K., as well as to other people too numerous to name individually, I wish to express my thanks to them all.

*V. Candamitto*

Ven. V. Candamitto.

## INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is 'the present-day Buddhist organizations in Great Britain.' Many people have begun to turn to the study of Buddhism since the second world war. Although from the British point of view it is an exotic religion, Buddhism has a universal appeal in that its tenets are applicable to all people everywhere. As a result of this Buddhist groups are increasing in numbers and there is a great demand for information concerning Buddhism, especially from students and school children. This thesis tries to cover the specific questions asked and to add the sparse store of information about Buddhist organizations in Britain both from an anthropological and an historical point of view.

The main topics for discussion are as follows:- the history of Buddhism in Britain, Buddhist organizations in Greater London, Buddhist organizations outside London, Buddhist movements and activities in general, a comparison of British Buddhists and Buddhist organizations in Britain with Thai Buddhists and Buddhist organizations in Thailand.

Part 1. The History of Buddhism in Britain. In this part I shall discuss how Buddhism came to the West, because there are not many people who know about the history of Buddhism in England and how Buddhism has come to be applied in this country. I shall discuss in Chapters I and IV the history of Buddhism in Britain from its first appearance up until 1972. Buddhism came to England through an English Buddhist missionary who came back to awaken his own countrymen to Buddhism.

Part 2. Buddhist Organizations in Greater London. After missionaries and informed Westerners had set up the first

group in London at the turn of this century, Buddhism made slow progress in London, until after the second world war when it began to expand rapidly within London. Many British Buddhists and Buddhists from the East set up groups in Greater London, of which I shall give more details in Chapters I and II, mainly details about their activities, structures, relations, and the problems and conflicts which they encounter.

There are 5 main Buddhist organizations in London which act as the headquarters for most of the Buddhist organizations in Britain. Of these, 2 are Buddhist monasteries or residential organizations, 2 are non-residential religious organizations, and one is a small residential Buddhist community in Purley, Surrey. This, however, is not a monastery, but has wide ranging activities.

Part 3. Buddhist Organizations Outside London. After the last world war the number of Buddhist organizations increased outside London, both provincial Buddhist groups and University Buddhist societies came into being. There were 31 Buddhist organizations outside London in 1972, and some new groups and a centre have been set up recently in Oxfordshire and Northumberland etc. Within this thesis I shall mainly be concerned with the 23 groups with which I have had contact since 1966. Some of them are large groups such as the groups in Cambridge, Manchester, Birmingham, Dumfriesshire, etc., but some are much smaller i.e. the groups in Shropshire, Mousehole, Devon etc. However, they are still running as active groups, so I have included them in order to act as a comparison with the larger groups. It is necessary to study both the large and small groups comprising the Buddhist minority in Britain. This is done chiefly in Chapter III.

Part 4. Buddhist Movements and Buddhist Activities in General. It is over 60 years since Buddhism was established

in Britain. There are many Buddhist activities now, and more and more Westerners are being converted to Buddhism. In Chapter IV I shall talk about these people and their reasons for becoming Buddhists, and also what problems they had when their families are of a differing religion. Many Tables are included in this Chapter to put forward the subject matter clearly. In Chapter V I have attempted to explain what it is that Buddhists believe in, since to become a Buddhist necessitates changes from usual Western thought processes, attitudes and beliefs. The idea of a God is changed towards a concept of a Buddha, a common man but a great teacher, not the Son of a God, and indeed not a God at all. Buddhists do not believe in God, because there is no room for a God in their religion; however they do not deny or accept the idea of God. Buddhists have "a tolerant mind" and they believe that people can choose their own beliefs and live according to them. Also in this Chapter I have tried to explain something about Buddhist festivals and Buddhist ceremonies performed in this country. There are ways of practising Buddhism the same as in any religion, so I have explained religious practice in this Chapter too.

Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, in Britain appear to be interested in meditation, Buddhist, Hindu, or Christian meditation; Buddhist meditation seems however to be more popular, and there are 3 Buddhist meditation centres in Britain to which people can go for meditation instruction and meditation retreat. In Chapter VI I have discussed the 3 Buddhist centres in Britain, the types of meditation taught and practised and also the problem of drug-taking which occurs at some meditation centres. The different experiences between meditation and drug-taking are also discussed in this

Chapter.

Buddhist magazines, publications and translations of Buddhist texts have helped to make Buddhism known in the West, so in Chapter VII I have discussed these.

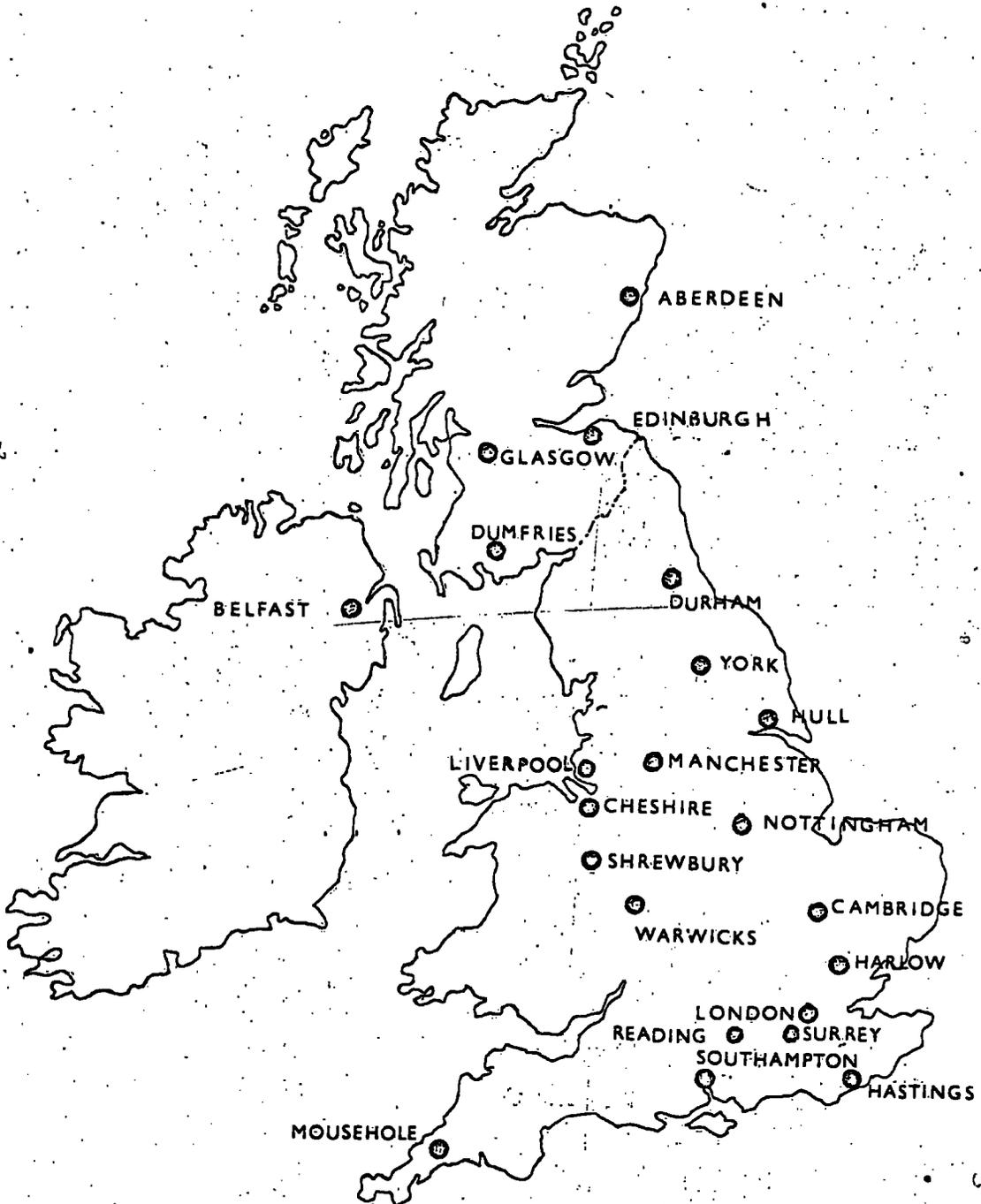
Part 5. Comparison between British Buddhists and Buddhist organizations in Britain and Thai Buddhists and Buddhist organizations in Thailand. British Buddhists or even Eastern Buddhists in Britain have to organise their activities in a Christian country and in the middle of a Christian culture. The social habits, the relative popularity of certain aspects of Buddhism, the Buddhist population, the system of study of Buddhism, and the traditions in both countries must obviously be different in Britain, because Thailand is a Buddhist country and Buddhism is the national religion. It is good to compare the Buddhist way of life and the Buddhist communities in both countries and to see how activities are organised in both places. I have discussed these in Chapter VIII.

In conclusion I have attempted to explain how Buddhism became applied to the West, with particular reference to the West as an industrialised society, how Buddhism has been affected by Christianity, and how Christianity has been affected by Buddhism, and the present and future needs in Britain.

This thesis examines and observes several Buddhist organizations in Greater London and outside London over a period of 5 years. 28 of the 36 Buddhist organizations throughout Britain have been covered, as shown on Map.1.

MAP 1

This map shows the Buddhist Organizations in Great Britain within the field of this thesis, 1971.



## CHAPTER I

### I. HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

Buddhism made its first real impact on the Western mind in the early years of the present century, but the ideas were already in circulation at the end of the last century. The way had been prepared by the Pali and Sanskrit translations of Max Müller, Fausboll, Warren, Rhys Davids and a number of other orientalists. Also Sir Edwin Arnold's poem "The Light of Asia" (first published in 1879), had given thoughtful readers an insight into the heart of the Buddhist ideal.

#### Early Western Buddhist Movement

We have to know the early Buddhist movements in Britain before we begin to study Buddhist organizations in this country.

The Pali Text Society founded in 1881, was the creation of Professor Rhys Davids. The great work of Professor Max Müller on 'the Sacred Books of the East' series, gave the Western World the light to study Buddhism, this applied, especially to the social scientists; as Malefijt says "It has become conventional to place the beginnings of the study of religion in the middle of the nineteenth century, and to name Tylor or Frazer or Max Müller as its founder or originator."<sup>1</sup>

In 1900 Max Müller died, having completed the Sacred Books of the East series. Rhys Davids, Lord Chalmers, Mrs.

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1. Malefijt, Annemarie de Waal, RELIGION AND CULTURE, 1968, p.16.

Rhys Davids and F. L. Woodward carried on a similar series co-operatively, known as 'Sacred Books of the Buddhists;' which Max Müller had begun before his death. They also produced 'the Jatakamala,' i.e. Stories of Buddha's former incarnations. Meanwhile Mrs. Rhys Davids had entered the field of active scholarship. Her husband encouraged her to specialize in the study of women in early Buddhism.

#### The First Buddhist Missionary to England

In 1908 Ananda Metteyya (Charles Henry Allan Bennett) was the first Buddhist missionary to come to England. He was born in London on December the 1st, 1872, and had trained as an Analytical Chemist. He then studied all available translations of the Buddhist Scriptures. In 1898, he entered Ceylon as a self-converted Buddhist, where he studied Buddhism deeply, under a noted Thera, and made friends among prominent Buddhists of Ceylon.

About this time he made up his mind to lead a Buddhist Mission to England, and formed the view that such a Mission could only succeed if carried out by a representative of the Buddhist Sangha (community of monks). He decided to enter the Order. He therefore sailed for Burma, to Rangoon, which he found to be a more favourable centre for carrying out his plans.

In 1901 Allan Bennett was formally declared a samanera (novice-monk), the first step towards entering the Order, and on the 'Day of the Full Moon' in May, 1902, he entered the Burmese branch of the Buddhist Sangha which had been founded by the Buddha in India during the sixth century B.C. There he was given the name Ananda Metteyya.

Even at this date his plans for the future were mature. He was already in touch with eminent Buddhists in England, America, and Germany, and announced his intention to found an International Buddhist Society, which was to be known as Buddhhasasana Samagama. This Society began in these Eastern Countries, and later extended to the West. The first meeting of the new society was held on March 15th, 1903, when the constitution and rules were fixed, and officers were elected. Ananda Metteyya himself appears in the printed Prospectus as Secretary General, with Dr. E. R. Rost, of whom more later, as Hon. Secretary.

The list of Honorary Members is impressive, Sir Edwin Arnold heads the list, followed by Professor and Mrs. Rhys Davids, numerous other well-known Buddhist scholars, and distinguished Bhikkhus from Ceylon and Burma. The Society at once attracted considerable attention, three hundred persons attending a conversazione held a few months later in Rangoon.

#### The Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland

For the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland it was necessary to choose a President, and Professor Rhys Davids, with some demur, accepted the offer, Professor Edmund T. Mills, agreeing to be Vice-President and Chairman, with Capt. J. E. Ellan as Hon. Secretary. Among the first members were Alexander Fisher, St. George Fox-Pitt, the Hon. Eric Collier, and Capt. Rolleston. Quoting from the Buddhist Review, which appeared in January, 1909:

"At a private house in Harley Street, London, on the evening of November 3rd, 1907, there was a gathering of some twenty-five persons, either Buddhists or those interested in study of Buddhism.

The result of this meeting was that the persons then present, formed themselves into the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and a Committee was charged with the duties of drawing up a provisional prospectus, constitution and rules, and, the convening of another and larger meeting."

### Missionary's Arrival

All being ready, a deputation of members of the Buddhist Society, accompanied by an interested press, went down to the London Docks, when, on April 23rd, 1908, they received the first recorded Buddhist Missionary to these shores.

The Buddhist Missionary reached London on April 23rd, 1908, as Benedict said:

"Both Buddhism and Islam received religious impetus in England by the arrival of missionaries. In each case this resulted in the establishment of an association and the publication of a journal. The Buddhist Mission was led by an Englishman, coming to convert his own countrymen. The Muslim Mission was led by an Indian Muslim coming to convert foreigners. The Buddhist Mission, though it came from Burma, was the result of a Western movement. It sprang from theosophy and was the result of a Buddhist association founded by the missionary himself in Rangoon and supported by other Englishmen and a few philanthropic Burmese."<sup>2</sup>

Ananda Metteyya joined with the Buddhist Society to propagate and promote Buddhist Teachings in Britain. The Buddhist activities seemed to be progressing.

On 2nd October, 1908 he sailed from Liverpool with Dr. Rost for Burma, again.

## II. BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS IN GREATER LONDON

### 1. THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY

The London Buddhist Society is the oldest and largest Buddhist organization in Britain, founded in 1924, it is the

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1. The Buddhist Review, Journal of the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland, January, 1909, p.1.
  2. Benedict, Burton, Muslim and Buddhist Associations in an unpublished thesis, London, 1954, p.314.

successor to the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland (1907-1923). It adheres to no one school of Buddhism, and is international in membership, which is open to all who sign an application form, in which they undertake to support the object of the Society, which is:

"To publish and make known the principles of Buddhism, and encourage the study and practice of these principles."

The Buddhist Society is the headquarters of most Buddhist organizations in Great Britain at the present time. There are 36 Buddhist groups, societies, centres, communities, associations and Buddhist monasteries throughout Britain, and some new groups and societies which have been set up recently (see Map 2).

Most of the Buddhist organizations in Britain are in contact with the Buddhist Society. Map 2 shows the relationship between the headquarters and other Buddhist organizations in Great Britain. There are some Buddhist organizations such as Sarum House Buddhist Community in Surrey, Vipassana & Research Centre, London, and Buddha-Dhamma Association, Manchester etc. which do not have links with the headquarters.

The President and founder of the London Buddhist Society is Mr. Christmas Humphreys, who is a judge, a Buddhist scholar and author. He was interested in Buddhism when he was young as he said in his book "my interest in Buddhism dates from the day when I wandered into a bookshop, near the British Museum, and bought a secondhand copy of Coomaraswamy's Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism, which bears the date 26/8/18, when I was seventeen."<sup>1</sup>

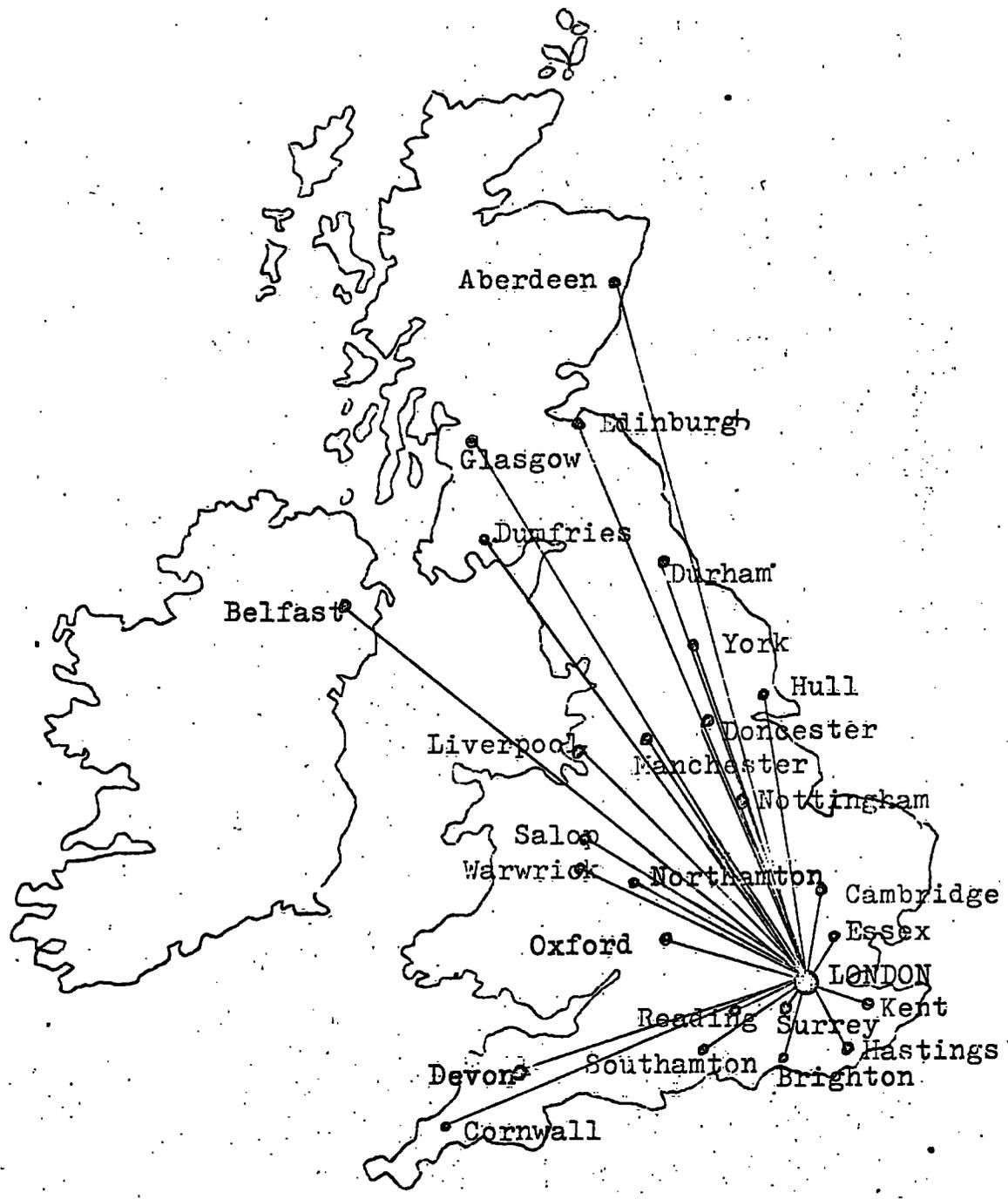
To understand the organisation of the Buddhist Society it is necessary to study their rules.

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1. Humphreys, Christmas, SIXTY YEARS OF BUDDHISM IN ENGLAND, 1968, p.18.

MAP 2

Showing the links between London Buddhist Society and Buddhist Organizations in Great Britain in 1971.



The Constitution and Rules of the London Buddhist Society

The Object of the Society: To publish and make known the principles of Buddhism, and to encourage the study and practice of these principles.

The Premises contain a large Meeting Room, a Library, and an Enquiry Room. They are open every weekday from 2-5 p.m.

The Library contains over 5,000 books on Buddhism and allied subjects. The most valuable are in the Reference Library and the rest in the Lending Library. It contains a growing art collection. There is a limited postal service for members in the U.K.

Meetings: There are public meetings on alternate Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated. There are classes most evenings of the week, including an introductory course open to the public, and others for members only, on Theravada Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Meditation and other aspects of the Teaching. Every Saturday at 3 p.m. there is either a class or discussion group (open to the public).

The Annual Fee for Membership is £2.10 for the Greater London and Home Counties. Fees include subscription to the Middle Way, use of Library and attendance at Meetings and classes. Members resident elsewhere in the U.K. and overseas pay £2, married couples (with one copy of the Middle Way) £3.

Student Membership of £1 is available for students over 16 and under 21. Those under 18 must obtain the written consent of parents before applying for membership. A similar reduction can be arranged for retired persons.

The Subscription to the Middle Way costs £1.12 in the

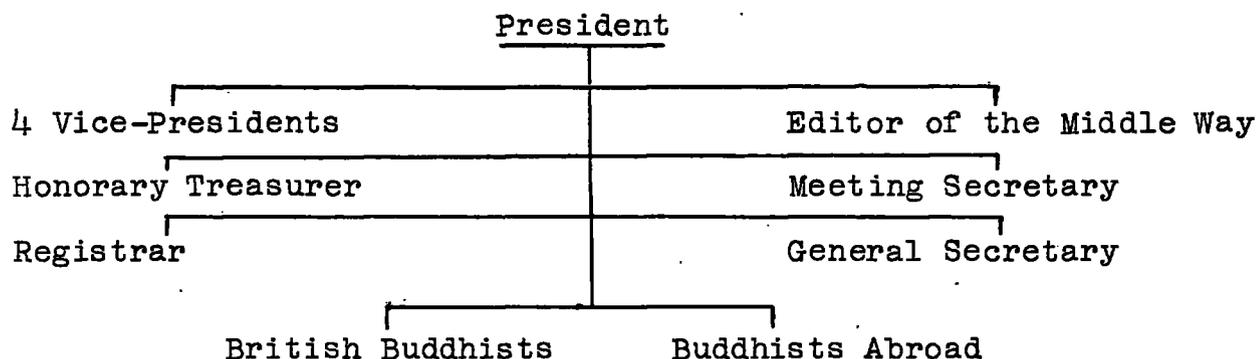
United Kingdom and \$ 3.00 overseas (U.S.A. and Canada).

Life Membership is £25 for those resident in the U.K. and £15 for those resident abroad. For special reasons it is sometimes possible to join the society for the privilege of using the Library at a fee of £2 a year.

The Dana Fund at the Society exists to help members in need to pay the travelling expenses of lecturers to and from the Society, it also serves the needs of the Sangha. Its income derives from donations and subscriptions. Many members help by subscribing 10/- or £1 a month. Now we come to study the structure of the London Buddhist Society (see Diagram 1).

#### DIAGRAM 1

Showing the structure of the Buddhist Society as follows:



This Society is led by the President, 4 Vice-Presidents, the Editor of the Middle Way (the journal of the Society), the Meeting Secretary, the General Secretary, and the Registrar. The headquarters of the Buddhist Society is at 58 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1.

### Membership

The Buddhist Society is the largest Buddhist organization in Britain. There are 1,600 members, 700 subscribers to their journal, and another 200 members and subscribers in the United States and 150 members and subscribers abroad. Altogether about 2,650 people are connected with this society.

When interviewing the Registrar and the Librarian of the Buddhist Society I was told that most members of the Society live in Greater London and the Home Counties, but some members live in the provinces. 75% of all members of the London Buddhist Society belong to the middle class. All members have the right to use the Library, attend all meetings, classes, lectures and discussions or groups which the Society arranges. The Society normally opens from 2 to 5.30 p.m. on weekdays.

Now let us examine the membership of the Buddhist Society by nationality in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Showing membership of the Buddhist Society  
by nationality

Nationality	Number
United Kingdom	1,600
America	200
United Kingdom Subscribers	700
Others Abroad	150.
Total	2,650

TABLE 2

Showing attendance at the Buddhist Society

Attendance	Male	Female	Total
Frequent attendance*	193	112	305
Occasional attendance*	650	350	1,000
Rare attendance*	187	108	295
Total	1,030	570	1,600

Note: \* Frequent attendance = Over 50% of the time  
 Occasional attendance = 20-50% of the time  
 Rare attendance = under 20% of the time

An Examination of Why People Become Buddhists

The following is an examination as to why certain members of the Buddhist Society became Buddhists. A married man aged 56, a lecturer at London University answered, "I became a Buddhist by reading the book named 'Buddhism' by Christmas Humphreys, then I became a member of the Buddhist Society. I liked that book, and I became a Buddhist because of that book, but now I criticise that book." He and his wife have been in Japan and Thailand twice, in order to visit Buddhist countries and to study and practise Buddhism further. His late wife was also a Buddhist, and she taught a Basic Meditation Class for Beginners at the Buddhist Society.

A 44 years old, unmarried lady, when asked why she became a Buddhist said "Buddhism gives me more peace and insight. I became a Buddhist and a member of the Buddhist Society when I was 35 after I had read 'The Light of Asia' by Sir Edwin Arnold, and 'The Dhammapada.'" She went to Thailand in 1964-65 and became Upasika (Chee) while she was there. She spent most

of the time studying and practising Buddhism and meditation in Bangkok and Udorn. She came back to England for health reasons and now works at the Buddhist Society.

One boy whom I interviewed is 16 and became a member of the Buddhist Society in 1971. He lives in Guildford. He told me that he became interested in Buddhism when he was 14, after he studied Comparative Religion at Comprehensive School. He wanted to become a Buddhist and a member of the London Buddhist Society, but he had to wait until he was 16 according to the ruling of the Buddhist Society. He is the youngest member of the Society I have met.

I met him at the Buddhist Summer School this year (1971) where he bought 18 books on Buddhism. I asked him "Why did you buy so many books?" "I think that they will be good to read when I go back to College" he replied. I met him again at the Buddhapadipa Temple in East Sheen when he came to the Buddhist Seminar with his parents. I asked him why he became a Buddhist? "Well, I have many reasons, but firstly I began to be interested in Buddhism when I studied Comparative Religion in School 2 years ago, secondly, my grandmother has an ancient Buddha's image about 2 feet high, she told me that it will belong to me when she dies. I like that Buddha very much, and it makes me become more interested in Buddhism."

Most British Buddhists I interviewed are self-converted Buddhists, and became Buddhists after reading books or meditation practice; some became Buddhists intellectually. There are very few who became Buddhists by conversion by missionaries.

### Relationships Among the Members of the Buddhist Society

From my observation the relationships among the members of the Buddhist Society are quite friendly and helpful. I think one reason there is good rapport is because there are good leaders in their society. Why else do members of the Buddhist community have a good relationship? The answer to this in the words of Trevor Ling is "in becoming a member of the Buddhist community one gained a new kinship - a spiritual kinship with the clan of the Buddha."<sup>1</sup>

There is however some conflict within the Buddhist Society which will be discussed later.

### The Activities of the London Buddhist Society

The activities of the Buddhist Society are arranged both for members and for the general public. We can divide the activities of the Society into 2 categories:

- (1) The regular meetings for members.
- (2) The special meetings which the Society provide and arrange for their members and for the public on special occasions.

#### 1. The Regular Meetings

The Buddhist Society arranges classes, lectures, discussions, and groups etc. at the headquarters for their members: these are also open for all those who are interested in Buddhism and who wish to study Buddhism, whether they are Buddhists or not. There are 6 regular meetings as follows:

- (1) Zen Class. Zen classes are held at the Society on Mondays and Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. This class is under the direction of the President himself. On Thursdays the class practises strict Zen teaching. On Mondays about 30-40 people take part,

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1. Ling, Trevor, BUDDHISM, 1970, p.7.

but on Thursdays less people attend the class, because there is only sitting meditation and no theory. The class is evenly divided between men and women.

## (2) The Mahayana Class

This class meets on alternate Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m.; it is under the direction of an English teacher. There are about fifteen people in this group, with more men than women attending.

## (3) Basic Meditation Class

This class was led by Mrs. Ruth Walshe,\* and held in the Lecture Hall on Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. In interview, she said she teaches Basic Meditation based on the practice of mindfulness using breathing exercises called "Ānāpānasati Bhāvanā," that is, one type of Buddhist meditation. The practice of mindfulness is central to all schools of meditation in Buddhism. 30-40 people come to this class, the balance in favour of a younger age group. This class is now held by Mr. B. Taylor.

## (4) Three New Classes

There are 3 new classes which are being held on Fridays at 3.30 p.m. They are:

- (a) Advanced Meditation. A more advanced class in meditation started from Friday 22nd October, 1971. This class is conducted by a Thai meditation teacher. He is the resident teacher at the Vipassana Centre in Surrey. Attendance 20.
- (b) Basic Buddhist principles, this new series, Basic Buddhist Principles, commenced from Friday 1st October, 1971. Attendance 15.
- (c) Compassionate Thought. This new series was commenced from 24th September, meeting fortnightly under 2 English Buddhist teachers.

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\* Until her death in October, 1971.

About 20 people come to this class.

There is an even distribution of age groups at these new classes, more men than women attending.

## 2. Special Meetings for both Members and Public

### (1) Wednesday Public Lecture

There is a public lecture held on Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in the Lecture Hall. Different speakers are invited to give lectures on varying aspects of Buddhism. These are quite well attended. Average of people who attend this lecture is 50.

### (2) Saturday Afternoon Discussion

These are informative discussions dealing with many aspects of Buddhism. All interested are welcome to join in. A Saturday class and a Saturday Group meet on alternate weeks. The Saturday class is under the direction of an English Buddhist teacher. It began on the 8th September, 1971. The Saturday Group began to meet on 11th September. About 25 people attend each programme.

### (3) Introducing Buddhism

A course of weekly lectures introducing Buddhism is held on Tuesdays at 6.30 p.m., this started on Tuesday, 21st September, 1971. This class is conducted by the Librarian. This lecture covers the fundamental ground of Basic Buddhism and its practice in everyday life. Each lecture is self contained. About 30 people attend these lectures.

The Librarian of the Society in interview said that the Zen Class is attended by an equal number of men and women. In the Mahayana Class there are more men than women. In Basic Meditation Class 50/50% of men and women attended. The age groups have altered, a few years ago there used to be

more older people, but now it is predominantly young people who come.

#### (4) Vesak Festival

The Vesak Festival is a special occasion at which all Buddhists celebrate the Birth, Enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha. The Vesak Day is in the official month of the Buddhist New Year.

On this occasion, each year the London Buddhist Society celebrates Vesak at Caxton Hall, London where many Buddhists, especially the members of the society, can come together in one place. Usually about 500-1,000 people come to Vesak Festival every year. Further details of Vesak Festival will be discussed later.

#### TWELVE PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHISM\*

(These Principles, drafted by the London Buddhist Society for the use of Western Buddhists have been translated into seventeen languages. In Japan, the seventeen major sects approved them; the late Venerable Tai Hsu approved them on behalf of millions of Chinese Buddhists; the Supreme Patriarch of Siam, after consulting the Buddhist Order, approved them; responsible lay Buddhists have approved them in Burma and Ceylon. They are in process of adoption by Buddhist organisations in various European countries and in the U.S.A. They may become the common platform for a world Buddhism).

Gotama, the Buddha, was born in North India in the 6th century B.C., the son of a reigning prince. At the age of thirty, dissatisfied with luxury when life was filled with suffering he set forth as a wanderer to seek deliverance from suffering for all mankind. After years of spiritual search he attained to self-enlightenment, and was thereafter known

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\* Buddhism and the Buddhist Movement To-Day, booklet of London Buddhist Society, pp.16, 17, 18, 19.

as the Buddha, "the All-Enlightened One." For the rest of his life he taught to all who came to him the "Middle Way" which leads to the end of suffering. After his passing his teaching was carried far and wide, until today nearly one-third of humanity regards the Buddha as the Guide who, having reached Deliverance, proclaims the means of reaching it to all mankind.

Buddhism today is divided, broadly speaking, into the Southern School, the Hinayana, or Theravada, "the Teaching of the Elders," including Ceylon, Burma, Siam and parts of India (which is not, however, any longer a Buddhist country), and the Northern School, or Mahayana, which covers Tibet, South Mongolia and millions of the population of China and Japan. These Schools, completely tolerant towards each other, are the complementary aspects of one whole.

Buddhism is called the Religion of Peace because there has never been a Buddhist war, nor has any man at any time been persecuted by a Buddhist organisation for his beliefs or the expression of them. The following are some of the basic truths or principles of Buddhism:

(1) Self-salvation is for any man the immediate task. If a man lay wounded by a poisoned arrow he would not delay extraction by demanding details of the man who shot it, or the length and make of the arrow. There will be time for ever-increasing understanding of the Teaching during the treading of the Way. Meanwhile, begin now by facing life as it is, learning always by direct and personal experience.

(2) The first fact of existence is the law of change or impermanence. All that exists, from a mole to a mountain, from a thought to an empire, passes through the same cycle of existence - i.e. birth, growth, decay and death. Life alone is continuous, ever seeking self-expression in new forms.

"Life is a bridge; therefore build no house on it." Life is a process of flow, and he who clings to any form, however splendid, will suffer by resisting the flow.

(3) The law of change applies equally to the "soul." There is no principle in an individual which is immortal and unchanging. Only the "Namelessness," the ultimate Reality, is beyond change, and all forms of life, including man, are manifestations of this Reality. No one owns the life which flows in him any more than the electric light bulb owns the current which gives it light.

(4) The universe is the expression of law. All effects have causes, and man's soul or character is the sum total of his previous thoughts and acts. Karma, meaning action-reaction, governs all existence, and man is the sole creator of his circumstances and his reaction to them, his future condition, and his final destiny. By right thought and action he can gradually purify his inner nature, and so by self-realisation attain in time liberation from rebirth. The process covers great periods of time, involving life after life on earth, but ultimately every form of life will reach Enlightenment.

(5) Life is one and indivisible, though its ever-changing forms are innumerable and perishable. There is, in truth, no death, though every form must die. From an understanding of life's unity arises compassion, a sense of identity with the life in other forms. Compassion is described as "the Law of laws - eternal harmony," and he who breaks this harmony of life will suffer accordingly and delay his own Enlightenment.

(6) Life being One, the interests of the part should be those of the whole. In his ignorance man thinks he can successfully strive for his own interests, and this wrongly-directed energy

of selfishness produces suffering. He learns from his suffering to reduce and finally eliminate its cause. The Buddha taught four Noble Truths: (a) The omnipresence of suffering; (b) its cause, wrongly directed desire; (c) its cure, the removal of the cause; and (d) the Noble Eightfold Path of self-development which leads to the end of suffering.

(7) The Eightfold Path consists in Right (or perfect) Views or preliminary understanding, Right Aims or Motive, Right Speech, Right Acts, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Concentration or mind-development, and, finally, Right Samadhi, leading to full Enlightenment. As Buddhism is a way of living, not merely a theory of life, the treading of this Path is essential to self-deliverance. "Cease to do evil, learn to do good, cleanse your own heart: this is the Teaching of the Buddhas."

(8) Reality is indescribable, and a God with attributes is not the final Reality. But the Buddha, a human being, became the All-Enlightened One, and the purpose of life is the attainment of Enlightenment. This state of Consciousness, Nirvana, the extinction of the limitations of self-hood, is attainable on earth. All men and all other forms of life contain the potentiality of Enlightenment, and the process therefore consists in becoming what you are. "Look within: thou art Buddha."

(9) From potential to actual Enlightenment there lies the Middle Way, the Eightfold Path "from desire to peace," a process of self-development between the "opposites," avoiding all extremes. The Buddha trod this Way to the end, and the only faith required in Buddhism is the reasonable belief that where a Guide has trodden it is worth our while to tread. The Way must be trodden by the whole man, not merely the best of him, and heart and mind must be developed equally. The Buddha was the All-Compassionate as well as the All-Enlightened One.

(10) Buddhism lays great stress on the need of inward concentration and meditation, which leads in time to the development of the inner spiritual faculties. The subjective life is as important as the daily round, and periods of quietude for inner activity are essential for a balanced life. The Buddhist should at all times be "mindful and self-possessed," refraining from mental and emotional attachment to "the passing show." This increasingly watchful attitude to circumstance, which he knows to be his own creation, helps him to keep his reaction to it always under control.

(11) The Buddha said: "Work out your own salvation with diligence." Buddhism knows no authority for truth save the intuition of the individual, and that is authority for himself alone. Each man suffers the consequences of his own acts, and learns thereby, while helping his fellow men to the same deliverance; nor will prayer to the Buddha or to any God prevent an effect from following its cause. Buddhist monks are teachers and exemplars; and in no sense intermediaries between Reality and the individual. The utmost tolerance is practised towards all other religions and philosophies, for no man has the right to interfere in his neighbour's journey to the Goal.

(12) Buddhism is neither pessimistic nor "escapist," nor does it deny the existence of God or soul, though it places its own meaning on these terms. It is, on the contrary, a system of thought, a religion, a spiritual science and a way of life, which is reasonable, practical and all-embracing. For over two thousand years it has satisfied the spiritual needs of nearly one-third of mankind. It appeals to the West because it has no dogmas, satisfies the reason and the heart alike, insists on self-reliance coupled with tolerance for other points of view, embraces science, religion, philosophy,

psychology, ethics and art, and points to man alone as the creator of his present life and sole designer of his destiny.

## 2. THE BUDDHIST VIHARA

The LONDON BUDDHIST VIHARA is the second oldest Buddhist organization in England. The Vihara (monastery) owes its existence primarily to the untiring effort of the late Anagarika Dharmapala who came to London from Ceylon in 1925 to establish the Buddhist Mission. A property was acquired the following year in Ealing, Middlesex with the support of leading native-born Buddhists such as Francis J. Payne, B. L. Broughton and McKechnie (ex-Bhikkhu Silachara).

In 1928 the Vihara moved to Gloucester Road, Regents Park and three Bhikkhus (monks) from Ceylon took up residence. Activities continued until the outbreak of war forced the Vihara to close down.

After the war, however, the interest in Buddhism revived to a far greater degree, and with the help of the Buddhist Vihara Society in England, five Sinhalese philanthropists were persuaded to form a trust and re-establish the Vihara. It was formally opened at 10 Ovington Gardens, S.W.3. in 1954 on Vesak Day.

At the beginning of 1963, the management of the Vihara was taken by the Mahābodhi Society of Ceylon and at the expiry of the lease, a freehold property was acquired in Chiswick. (This was due entirely to the tenacity of the Ven. Dr. H. Saddhatissa, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Vihara since 1957). This was ceremonially opened on Vesak Day 1964, sacred relics of the Buddha being enshrined later in that year.

The British Mahābodhi Society, originally founded in 1926, was resuscitated in 1966 by Ven. Saddhatissa and this body, with a committee of native-born Buddhists, became

responsible for the maintenance of the Vihara with assistance from the Mahābodhi Society of Ceylon.

#### Facilities

A shrine room, situated on the top floor, may be used for private devotions and meditation. The Library, open to all known supporters of the Vihara, is in the Lecture Hall. Containing over 1,000 volumes, it comprises sets of the Buddhist canon in English and Asian languages, ola-leaf manuscripts, works on Buddhism and related subjects.

#### Activities of the London Buddhist Vihara

The main activities are on Sundays, details of which are given below.

Meditation, Pali (the language of the scriptures) and allied subjects are also taught during the week, and they open to all who would like to take advantage of such free instruction, they are asked to contact the resident Bhikkhus or Hon. Secretary. A correspondence course in Buddhism is also available in this organization.

In an interview with the Head of the Vihara and the Hon. Secretary it transpired that there are 3 meetings a week as follows:

##### (1) Sunday Lecture

The main activities are on Sundays when, at 5.00 p.m., a devotional meeting is conducted by the resident bhikkhus. This consists of reciting Pali stanzas, offering flames, incense and candles, a short sermon and meditation. After a short break, a lecture is given at 5.45 by one of the bhikkhus or an invited layman which is followed by discussion. About 20 to 30 people come to this meeting, and of these 50% are English and 50% are Ceylonese, but a few Indians attend as well.

## (2) Wednesday Meditation Class

The Vihara holds a meditation class on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. under the instruction of Mrs. I. R. Quittner, the Vihara Committee's Chairman. About 10 people come to this class.

## (3) Pali Class

A Pali Class is held at the Vihara on Fridays at 7.30 p.m. A handful of persons come to the Pali Class (Pali is the language of the Buddhist scriptures, and people who are interested in language may come to study. Pali is the language which is related to Sanskrit which is used in Mahayana Buddhist scriptures).

Apart from the activities which I have mentioned speakers are sent to give lectures to many schools, colleges and various societies in London and other parts of England.

The Vihara observes Vesak Festival, Dhammacakka Day Celebration, and other religious days as well. The big meeting of a year is the Vesak Festival which the Vihara arranges for its members and people who are interested in the Buddhist religion.

### How do people become interested in Buddhism

More men than women come to classes at the Vihara, and most of them come regularly, but some come only occasionally. At this Vihara it appeared that the people who attend classes are primarily interested in Buddhist philosophy and only later in religion, way of life, ceremony, ritual, Pali language and meditation. They are quite different from the people who come to the Buddhapadipa Temple in East Sheen, because most of these are interested in meditation first, and come to Buddhist philosophy, religion, culture and ritual afterwards.

It is a remarkable feature at the London Buddhist Vihara that there are many young Ceylonese people, with Christian parents who became interested in Buddhism and learn about Buddhism in London. This is a new development occurring in this Buddhist organization.

When asked how he became interested in Buddhism one young man who works for the Buddhist Quarterly, the journal of the Vihara said "Well firstly, my home is quite near here, and I saw the monks going in and out of the Vihara every day, when I was about 18, I became interested in what they were doing here, one day I came here to see them and asked them about Buddhism and their life in a Buddhist monastery. Then I thought I had better become a novice-monk, and I asked my parents about this, and they did not like it, so I decided to wait. I began to learn about Buddhism by listening to chanting and observing the rituals which the monks performed for the people here. I learnt Pali and meditation and then Buddhist philosophy." When asked if he planned to visit Buddhist countries he said that he would like to visit Ceylon to learn more Pali, and also his parents do not now object. He was asked "Do you still plan to become a monk", he said "I would like to do that very much, but I think I am better able to help the Vihara as a layman, because I have to work now."

#### Membership of the London Buddhist Vihara

The Membership of the London Buddhist Vihara is also membership of the British Mahabodhi Society (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

Showing membership of the London Buddhist Vihara.

	Figure	Annotation
Male membership	122	at 20.8.1971
Female membership	51	
Total	173	

This refers to British Buddhists. There are however many Ceylonese Buddhists including students, officials, and many Ceylonese who work in Great Britain. They are not members of the Vihara officially, but they support the Vihara and come to give Dana and donations to the Vihara in many ways, as is their custom in Ceylon. According to the head monk, Ceylonese people appear on the list of those who give Dana to the monks every day at London Buddhist Vihara. They help in the activities of the Vihara. These people are members of the Vihara because of their nationality and religion, and because they come to the Vihara for religious services and religious practices.

In 1954 Burton Benedict said in his thesis that:

"The Muslim association developed into sorts of national churches of Islam, and the Englishmen who joined them joined as religious followers. The Buddhist associations, as I shall show, never become national churches for Buddhists from Buddhist countries, but retained their characters as English associations. The English joined them either as religious followers or as students of Buddhism or, perhaps, as some sort of combination of two."<sup>1</sup>

This statement is incorrect. In fact the London Buddhist Vihara was established by The Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon. The British Mahabodhi Society was founded by Anagarika Dharmapala of Ceylon who came to London from Ceylon in 1926 to establish the

1. Benedict, Burton, Muslim and Buddhist Associations in London, (Ph.D. Arts Thesis) 1954, p.312.

Buddhist Mission, and it was recommended in 1966 by Ven. Dr. H. Saddhatissa, a Mahathera of Ceylon, this body, with a committee of native-born Buddhists, became responsible for the maintenance of the Vihara with assistance from The Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon and the Ceylonese Government.

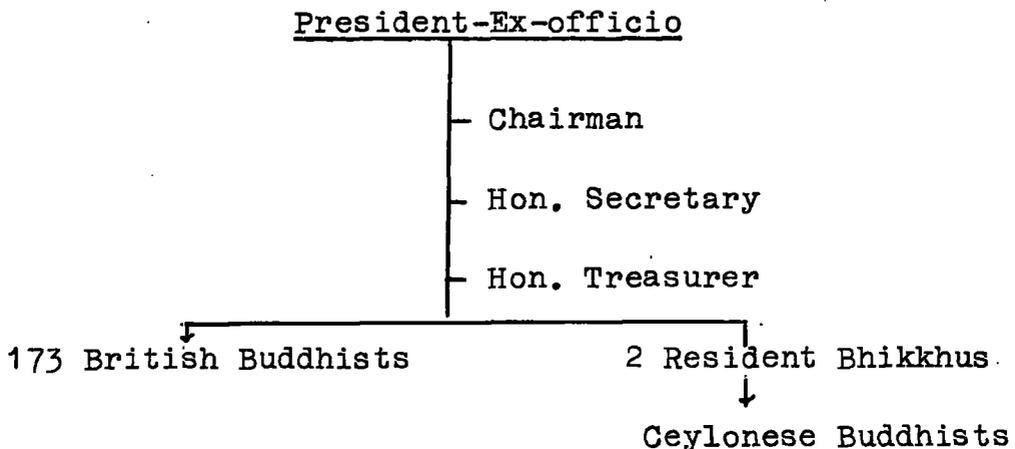
They established this Vihara for Buddhists from Buddhist countries. This also applied to the Buddhapadipa Temple, the Thai monastery in East Sheen, which was set up for Thai Buddhists and British Buddhists in this country in 1965 by the Thai Government. It was opened by His Majesty the King of Thailand officially in 1966. The Thai Temple obviously became a national church for Buddhists from all Buddhist countries.

#### The Structure of the London Buddhist Vihara

We can see the actual structure of authority in the London Buddhist Vihara from Diagram 2.

#### √ DIAGRAM 2

Showing the Structure of Authority of the Vihara  
(1971)



### The Influence of Theravada Buddhism

The London Buddhist Vihara co-operates in Buddhist activities with the London Buddhist Society, and all Buddhist organizations in this country. From my own observation the London Buddhist Vihara is a Theravada monastery and emphasises this school of Buddhism in the West. The London Buddhist Vihara has its own journal named "Buddhist Quarterly" which is published every three months.

### Contribution

The Buddhist Vihara gets support, especially financial support, to run their work in 5 ways:

1. from the Vihara's members who give Dana to Bhikkhus at the Vihara, mostly Ceylonese people
2. from the British Maha Bodhi Society.
3. from people who give donations to the Vihara.
4. from The Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, and
5. from the Government of Ceylon.

### Comparison between the London Buddhist Vihara and the London Buddhist Society

The differentiation of activities of both organizations:

- (a) The London Buddhist Vihara performs religious ceremonies, religious services and ritual for their members and Ceylonese people, but the London Buddhist Society has no such function for their members.
- (b) The Buddhist Vihara holds classes, lectures and sermons for their members at the Vihara. The Buddhist Society organizes more classes, lectures, and activities than the Buddhist Vihara.

- (c) The London Buddhist Society has more members and subscribers than the London Buddhist Vihara.
- (d) The London Buddhist Vihara places more emphasis upon Theravada Buddhism than Mahayana Buddhism, alternatively the London Buddhist Society lays stress on Zen and Mahayana Buddhism.
- (e) The London Buddhist Vihara is a national church for Ceylonese Buddhists and native-born Buddhists. The London Buddhist Society is an English Buddhist organization run by English Buddhists for Buddhists from all nations.
- (f) The London Buddhist Vihara is a monastery, The London Buddhist Society is not a residential community.

### 3. THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE

#### THE BUDDHAPADIPA TEMPLE

On 24th July, 1964 two Thai Bhikkhus (Ven. Chao Khun Phra Rajsiddhimuni and Ven. Phra Maha Vichitra Tissatatto) were invited by the English Sangha Trust of the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, London to come to stay at that Vihara and to teach Buddhism and meditation in this country. After they had helped to transmit the Buddhist doctrine there and had co-operated with other groups in Buddhist activities, many people became interested in Buddhism and meditation. There were many Thai officials, their families and also Thai students in Britain who wanted to have a Thai Temple in London where they could study and practise Buddhism and perform religious ceremonies, and religious functions in their own way.

So the two Thai Bhikkhus, the Director-General of Religious Affairs (who came to England for a religious tour), the Thai Ambassador and various Thai officials discussed this matter. They agreed to buy a place to be used as a Thai Temple in London, which would be open to non-Thais as well. They formed a sub-committee for this purpose in 1964 in London. At the same time in Thailand they formed a London Buddhist Temple Committee to help in this project; His Highness Prince Krommuennarathippongprapantha is the President of the latter Committee.

Both committees worked together to collect money to buy a suitable building. They had agreed that it would be a good idea to place this function under Royal Patronage.

When they had sufficient finances they contacted Mrs. Parish who was the owner of the house named "The Sanctuary," which she was offering for sale. The house itself has 5

bedrooms, sitting room, dining room, a big meeting room, an office, etc. It is big enough for 5 resident Bhikkhus and one attendant to the Bhikkhus who will stay there to propagate Buddhism and help Thai people in England with religious functions and ceremonies. They can also use it as the office of the Religious Representative of the Royal Thai Embassy. The grounds extend half an acre including the gardens. The Thai Government bought the house from Mrs. Parish for £17,000 in 1965.

The committee asked His Majesty the King of Thailand to name this Temple, and he gave it the name "Buddhapadipa" which means "The Light of the Buddha." Then the Thai monks transferred from the Hampstead Vihara to stay at the New Temple, working as a New Buddhist organization in Britain from the 15th November, 1965.

#### The Opening Ceremony

9 monks from Bangkok and resident monks in this country performed the opening ceremony. Their Majesties the King and Queen arrived in England from Thailand together with their Royal children. His Royal Highness Prince Vajiralongkorn was at that time studying in this country.

King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit of Thailand opened the Buddhapadipa Temple at 99 Christchurch Road, East Sheen, London on Monday 1st August, 1966.

More than 200 Thai Buddhists and Catholics living in London, a large number of them students, were at the opening. With the King and Queen were two of their children, the Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn and Princess Ubolratana. The Royal party was welcomed at the Temple by the Ambassador for Thailand in London and his wife, and by the Indian High Commissioner, and the Thai Director-General of Religious Affairs who came to

England especially for this occasion.

The ceremony, during which the King anointed a name-plate in the chapel was accompanied by the major service in the that Buddhist year, the Āsālha Pūjā Day Service, which is usually held in Bangkok, the capital of the Thai Buddhist movement.

The King came to the Temple from Ascot, Berkshire, where he was on a ten week private visit.

The Buddhapadipa Temple is the third monastery that Buddhists have established in Britain, the first being opened in Knightsbridge in 1954 (moving to Chiswick in 1964) and the other one opened in Hampstead in 1962.

In the convocation hall is a statue of the Buddha which is said to have been made about 700 years ago. It was presented to the King by a Thai family in Bangkok on June 20th, 1966 specially for further presentation to the East Sheen Temple.

#### The Condition of the Buddhist Temple.

The Buddhist Temple was established by the Thai Government and it was opened officially by Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand. This Temple is the Office of the Religious Representative of the Royal Thai Embassy in London. It is the national church from Thailand for Thai Buddhists and British Buddhists, but opens for members of all denominations who are interested in Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, and Buddhist meditation.

#### The Structure of Authority at the Temple

The structure of authority at the Buddhapadipa Temple is rather different from other Buddhist organizations in Britain, because it is part of the Thai national church and mainly supported by the Thai Government. So that the hierarchy at the Temple is closely connected with the Thai Government and

the Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand which is shown in Diagram 3.

### Membership

There are 2,500 Thais including students, officials and their families in England which can be considered as members of the Buddhapadipa Temple, but this is not official. They are members of the Temple by nationality and religion, they come to the Temple for religious services, religious ceremonies, to offer food to the monks, making donations to the Temple. They come on different occasions related to Marriage, Birth, Death, Merit transfer, Receiving Blessings for a new baby etc., and they come to celebrate the important religious days or Thai traditional days.

There are 116 British, American and other non-Thais, who are members of the Buddhapadipa Temple fellowship. They contribute and support the Temple in many ways. For Buddhapadipa Temple fellowship they have to pay £2 a year, £1 for the journal and £1 for membership, but student members pay only £1.10.

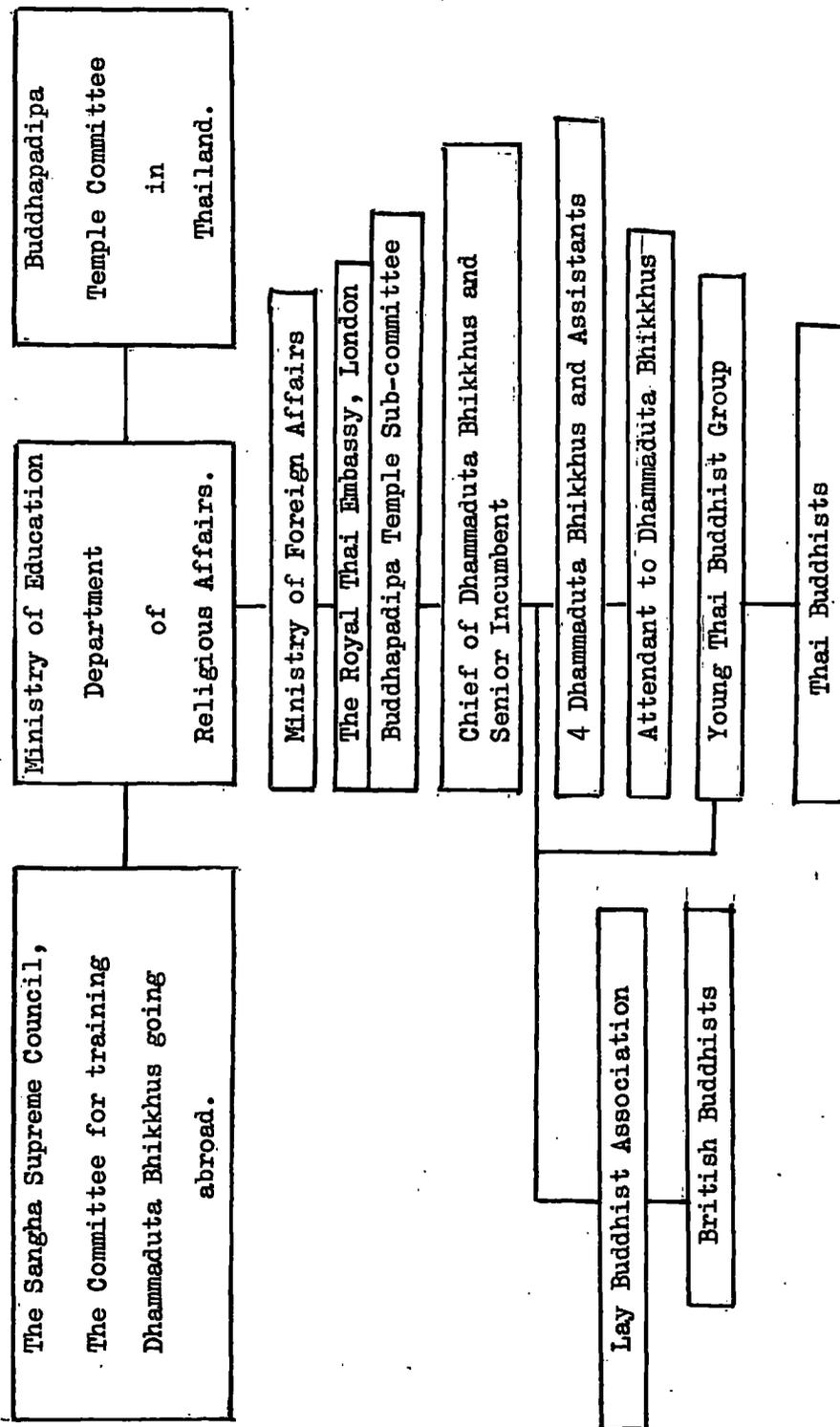
TABLE 4

Showing the membership of the Temple by nationality and attendance

Nationality	Attend meetings over 50% of the time	Attend meetings under 50% of the time	Total
United Kingdom	60	26	86
Thailand	500	2,000	2,500
America	1	3	4
Argentina		1	1
Rhodesia		1	1
Others	8	16	24
Total	569	2,047	2,616

DIAGRAM 3

Showing the Structure of Authority at the Buddhapadipa Temple



### Differences between British and Thai Buddhists

British members who come to the Temple, come to attend the classes, lectures, meditation classes, discussion groups which the Temple arranges for their members in the English language, non-members are welcome as well.

Thai Buddhists who come to the Temple, come to give Dana, offering food to the monks, to make donations to the Temple, and to receive Blessings from the monks on different occasions. They come to attend and celebrate religious days, or Thai traditional days; which are organized by the Temple or the Young Thai Buddhist Group in the U.K.

There are very few Thais who come to the English programmes which are held at the Temple weekly, likewise there are very few English Buddhists who come to the Thai programmes.

From my observation British Buddhists try to learn about Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist meditation and so on.

In contrast Thai Buddhists in the U.K. prefer to make merit, and to study Buddhist teachings. They come to see the monks and to talk with them, to receive blessings from the monks, and they like following Buddhism mainly by way of ceremony and religious services.

Many British Buddhists were not conversant with Buddhist ceremonies connected with marriage, birth, death, receiving blessings for a new baby etc. a few years ago; but now there are quite a few British Buddhists who are interested in these ceremonies, and they invite monks to perform such ceremonies for them.

### The Relationship

The relationship among members of Buddhapadipa Temple both British and Thai, is quite good. They co-operate and

help each other with Buddhist activities at the Temple. Relations within the actual authority structure becomes confused sometimes, however, for example the Buddhapadipa Temple sub-committee (The Royal Thai Embassy) had a very big crisis in 1968, concerning the Senior Incumbent of the Temple who spent £4,000 from the Buddhapadipa Temple funds to buy the house to be used as a Vipassana Centre in Surrey without the permission of the sub-committee. Eventually the Thai Government asked him to go back to Thailand, and have a rest, but he did not want to go back when his term finished in 1969, so the Thai Government dismissed him from his post that year, and now he has disrobed and stays on at the Vipassana Centre in Surrey, because his Western friends want him to stay in this country to teach meditation and Buddhism in the West.

#### The Relationship between the Temple and Other Buddhist Organizations

The relationship between the members of the Buddhist Temple and the members of other Buddhist groups, or those between the Temple and other Buddhist organizations in England and nearby countries are remarkably good. This is because the Temple will help any group or society by sending teachers and speakers to teach, give lectures, and lead meditation.

From its inception to the present day the Buddhist Temple actively co-operates with other Buddhist organizations in Britain and in Europe. At the moment the Buddhapadipa Temple is linked closely to 11 Buddhist organizations in England, the Netherlands and West Germany, as follows:-

1. The Temple sends monks to give lectures to the Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association and Liverpool Buddhist Group once a month.
2. The Temple sends a teacher to conduct meditation for

beginners at Buddhist Society headquarters, once a week. It also sends meditation teachers to teach and conduct meditation meetings at the East Sussex Buddhist Society, Hastings, twice a month. A meditation teacher from the Temple leads a meditation seminar at the Midland Buddhist Society, Birmingham, once a month. By so doing the Temple and these groups help each other by way of friendship and brotherhood.

3. The Temple sends a teacher to teach mediation, and to give lectures, to The Hague Buddhist Society. He also gives lectures to 'the Working Group for peace and Buddhism in Holland' in Amsterdam. These meetings are organized once a month. This group sends a return air ticket so that the monk concerned may travel to Holland once a month.
4. The Temple occasionally sends a meditation teacher to stay, teach meditation and give a series of lectures on Buddhist teachings, to the Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Scotland on their invitation.
5. The Temple has sent a permanent meditation teacher to stay and teach meditation at the Vipassana Centre in Surrey since 1968. However, this centre would like to separate from the Temple and work independently from the Buddhapadipa sub-committee, as a result of the conflict between sub-committee and the former Senior Incumbent of Buddhapadipa Temple, who is now the meditation teacher at the Centre, as previously mentioned.

Also the Temple co-operates with the Vipassana Foundation in Bangkok and sent a meditation teacher to stay and teach

meditation and propagate Buddhism in West Germany at Haus der Stille, Hamburg as resident teacher since 1970.

6. Thai monks lead meditation meetings at Durham University Buddhist Society.

Map 3 shows the links between the Buddhapadipa Temple and other Buddhist organizations in England and Europe.

The relationships between the Temple and other Buddhist organizations became very close after the Temple sent monks to teach and propagate Buddhism in these groups and societies regularly.

Apart from these, the monks from the Buddhapadipa Temple are invited to give lectures on Buddhism to various schools, colleges, and societies and especially to Buddhist societies and Buddhist groups throughout Britain.

#### The Organizations within the Temple

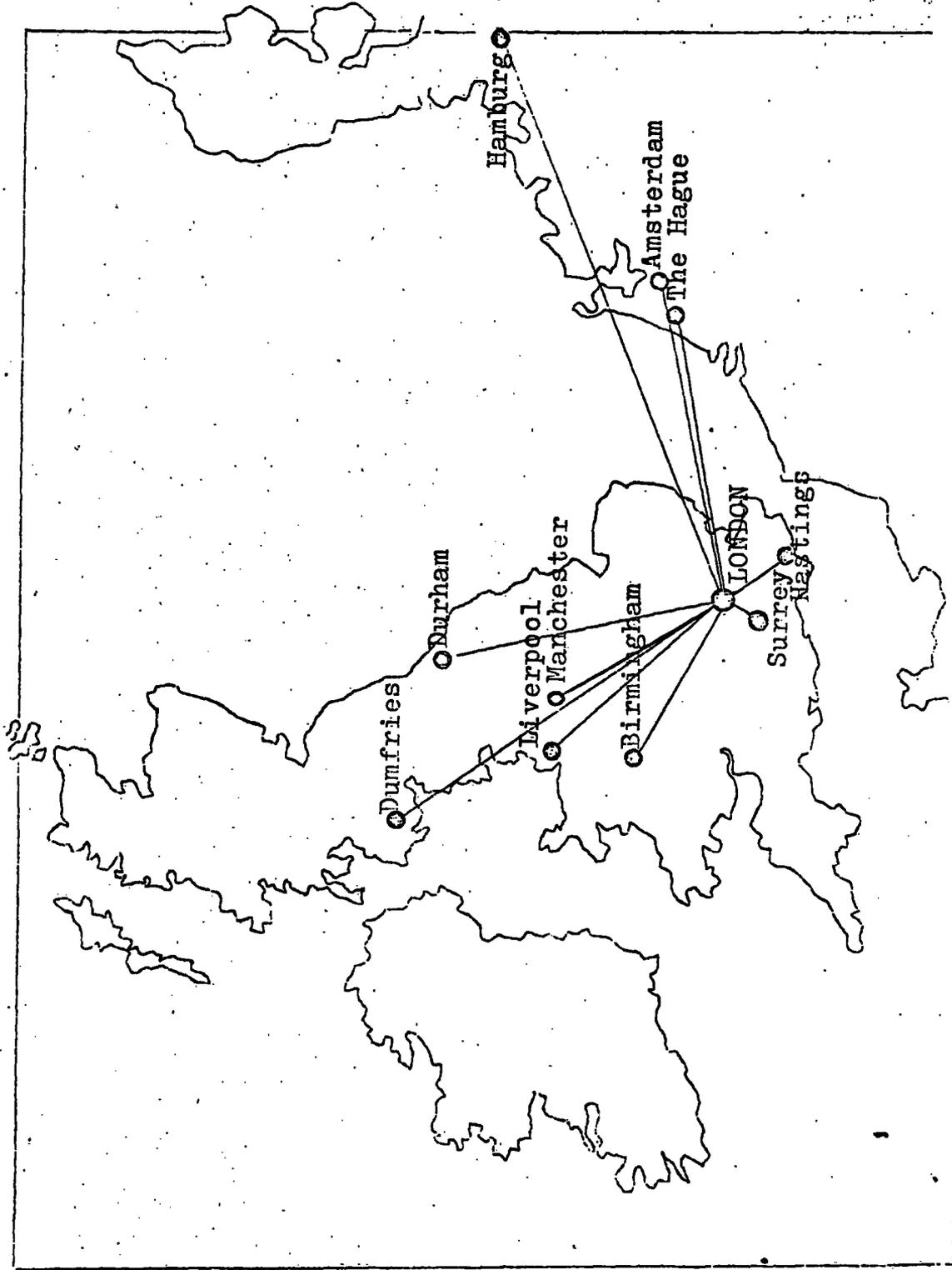
At present there are 2 Buddhist organizations within the Buddhapadipa Temple itself: one is the Lay Buddhist Association and the other is the Young Thai Buddhists' Group in the U.K. Both organizations are closely connected and they are under patronage of the Senior Incumbent of the Temple.

##### (1) The Lay Buddhist Association

This recently formed Association at the Temple is under the Patronage of the Senior Incumbent of the Temple. A Thai Upāsaka is the President. The Chairman is an English Buddhist, a manager of a factory in London. The Secretary is an English Buddhist. The aim of the Lay Buddhist Association is the study, practice and propagation of Buddha's Teaching. Initially this will be by helping the Bhikkhus, welcoming newcomers to the Temple, organising and holding discussions and meditation groups, and organising a Buddhist seminar

MAP 3

Showing the Buddhapadipa Temple links with other Buddhist Organizations in England and some countries in Europe in Buddhist activities.



at the Temple at least once a year.

(2) The Young Thai Buddhists' Group

Aims to promote the Buddhist traditions, Buddhist philosophy, and help the Temple to perform religious festivals in a programme which is normally as follows:

1. Māgha Pūjā (Full Moon Day of February)
2. Water Festival (Thai New Year)
3. Vesākha Pūjā (Vesak, Full Moon Day of May)
4. Āsālha Pūjā (Full Moon Day of July)
5. Tale of Vessantara Day
6. Festival of Floats
7. New Years Eve.

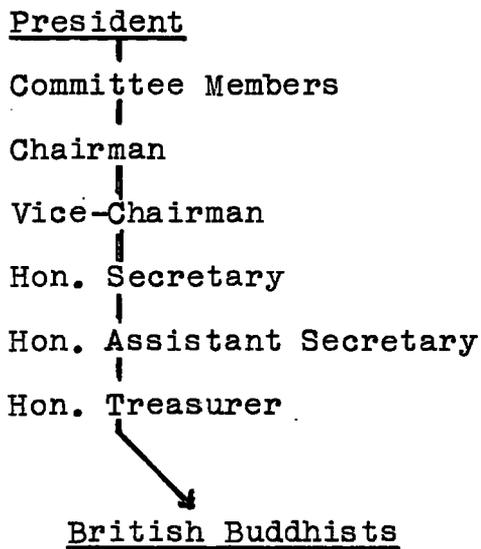
On those days, the group invites all (Thai) Buddhists in this country to come in the morning to give alms to the monks at the Temple. A sermon is given, usually about the importance of the day and its history. The Catering Department of the Group, with help from Thai officials and their families and Thai students, prepare lunch for the monks, and soon after, for the participants. In the afternoon there will be either a discussion about the sermon given in the morning or a special programme by the Research Department of the Group. The latter is in the form of a seminar. There will be an exchange of ideas about religions, traditions and philosophy. The stress is laid on evaluation of Buddhism according to various rules, ritual and traditions; whether they are true to Buddha's words or just a matter of habit of practising blindly whatever their forefathers passed on to them. Where the rules, ritual and traditions are found to be false, ways and means of correction will be proposed.

The differences in allocation of authority and the functions of both organizations are as follows:

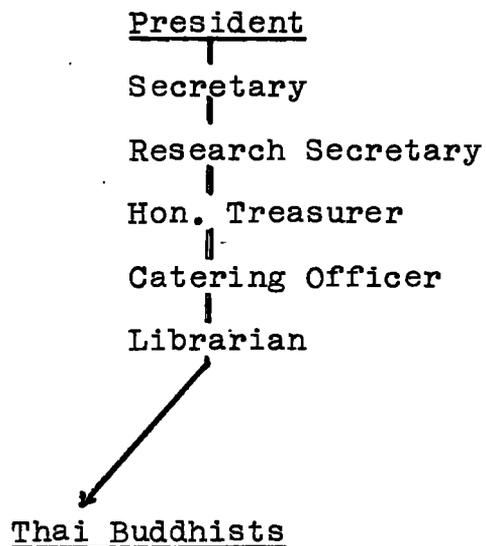
DIAGRAM 4

The allocation of authority in the Lay Buddhist Association as compared with the Young Thai Buddhists' Group in the United Kingdom.

## Lay Buddhist Association



## Young Thai Buddhists' Group

The Differences between the two Organizations within the Temple

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1. The Officers of the Lay Buddhist Association are English, only the President is Thai.</p>                       | <p>1. The Officers of the Young Thai Buddhists' Group are Thai.</p>  |
| <p>2. They deal with British Buddhists in the U.K. and elsewhere.</p>   | <p>2. The Young Thai Buddhists' Group deals with Thai Buddhists in U.K.</p>  |
| <p>3. The Lay Buddhist Association arranges classes, lectures and seminars etc. for Western Buddhists in the U.K.</p> | <p>3. The Young Thai Buddhists' Group arranges programmes, festivals, discussions, seminars for Thai Buddhists in Thai language.</p> |
| <p>4. They try to propagate Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy and practise Buddhism as it</p>                             | <p>4. The Young Thai Buddhists' Group tries to keep the Buddhist traditions in their essential</p>                                   |

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| applies to Buddhism in the West.   | meaning; for Thai people in U.K.  |
| 5. Lay Buddhists come to attend classes, lectures and meditation regularly at the Temple every week. | 5. Thai Buddhists come to attend festivals which are performed occasionally.  |
| 6. Lay Buddhists give less donations toward the Temple than the Thais.                               | 6. Thai Buddhists donate in greater amounts than the Lay Buddhists.   |
| 7. The Lay Buddhists have less funds to run their work than the Young Thai Buddhists.                | 7. The Young Thai Buddhists have greater financial support, because in 1968 Princess Elizabeth Chakrabongse donated £1,000 as a foundation for Young Thai Buddhists' Group. |

The Temple and Lay Buddhist Association work quite successfully together, but the Young Thai Buddhists' Group is not as successful in realising their aims; perhaps, they have not enough experience to organise their programme. The Lay Buddhist Association and the Temple however have had more experiences in the organization of classes, lectures and seminar etc., so nearly every programme is well organised.

#### How the Buddhapadipa Temple receives financial support

The Buddhist Temple is supported in 4 ways as follows:

1. by the Government of Thailand,
2. by people giving donations to the Temple,
3. by subscriptions of fellowships and the journal, and
4. by Kathina ceremony each year.

For example in 1970 the Temple was supported thus:-

(a) from the government of Thailand	£3,900
(b) from people's donations toward the Temple	£835
(c) from subscriptions for fellowship	£116
(d) from Kathina ceremony	£1,000
Total	= £5,851

### The Activities of the Buddhapadipa Temple

There are 3 regular meetings held at the Temple every weekend for members and non-members alike.

#### 1. Saturday: Lecture at 5.30 p.m.

The Temple invites different speakers to give lectures on various Buddhist Teachings on Saturdays at 5.30 p.m. About 10-30 people attend the lectures, and there are more men than women in this meeting.

#### 2. Sunday: Buddhism for Beginners at 4.30 p.m.

This class deals with the basic principles of Buddhism and general Buddhist philosophy for beginners who want to study Buddhism. This class is open to all, whether they are Buddhists or not. About 10-20 people attend this class. There are more men than women in this class.

#### 3. Sunday: Public Meditation at 5.30 p.m.

Public meditation and a talk on Buddhism is arranged at the Temple every Sunday at 5.30 p.m. The Temple invites meditation teachers to teach these classes. 20-60 people attend this meeting. Equal numbers of men and women attend the class. Their ages range from 16 to 60.

Percentage of the people who attended all classes at  
Buddhapadipa Temple, East Sheen by nationality

English	90%
Thai	5%
Other nationality	5%
Total	100%

N.B. This refers to weekend classes in English.

Apart from these classes the monks at the Temple chant and meditate every morning at 6 a.m. and every evening at 6 p.m., and they allow people who would like to join them in these practices to come also.

Buddhist Holy Days and Festivals

Apart from regular meetings each weekend, the Temple arranges public meetings to celebrate important days in Buddhism 3 times a year.

(1) Vesak Festival (the Full Moon Day in May)

The festival commemorating the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of the Buddha, the Founder of Buddhism is held at the Temple on the Full Moon Day of May each year. The Temple arranges 2 programmes:

A. Thai Programme is arranged by the Temple in co-operation with the Young Thai Buddhists' Group in the U.K. The Thai programme is held in the morning till afternoon.

The Group invites Buddhists to come in the morning to give alms to the monks at the Temple. A sermon will be given, usually about Vesak Day and its history. They will prepare lunch for the monks, and soon afterwards for the participants. In the afternoon they may have discussion or seminar programme, and sometimes they have an exchange of ideas about religions,

philosophy, traditions and so on.

B. English Programme is arranged by the Temple and Lay Buddhist Association, usually the programme being held from 5.30 p.m.

The meeting begins with an opening address by the Chairman followed by offering of flowers, reading from Buddhist Scriptures, a short meditation and lectures on Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist meditation or related subjects by 2-3 speakers or Buddhist scholars. It finishes about 7.30 p.m., then there is refreshment and everyone meets socially.

About 100-150 people come to each programme.

## 2. Māgha Pūjā Day (the Full Moon Day in February)

The Māgha Pūjā is the annual celebration of the Buddhist Holy Day, held in the third lunar month. In Thailand the ceremony of the Māgha Pūjā is performed to emphasise the significance of the Māgha Month. It was the period on which the Buddha constituted the main code of his instructions which is universally regarded as the Heart of the Buddhist Teachings.

For this festival the Thai Programme is arranged by Young Thai Buddhists' Group; it takes place from 10.00 in the morning until afternoon. The English programme is arranged by the Temple in co-operation with the Lay Buddhist Association. The English programme normally starts at 5.30 p.m.

The Festival is performed in the shrine room in front of the Buddha image. When everyone comes together in the Buddha Hall, the Chairman opens the meeting; then the Head monk will ask everyone to stand up, then he lights the candles and incenses and leads the offering of flowers on Māgha Pūjā Day by asking the people who attend the meeting to repeat the Pali words after him, like this:-

Ajjāyam Māghapunnami Sampatta etc.: The Pali text runs thus, in English it would be:

Today is the Full Moon Day of the Third Lunar Month on which our Lord Buddha, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One, delivered the discourse on the main principles of His Teachings which are called "Ōvādapātimokkha," to the great assembly of Bhikkhus at the Veluvana Vihara. This was a wonderful event because four unique things happened:

1. The Noble Disciples, 1,250 in number came to this meeting without any previous announcement.
2. All of them were ordained by the Lord Buddha Himself.
3. All of them were Liberated (Arahant).
4. It was the Full Moon Day of the Māgha Month.

Then the Blessed One delivered discourse on the purification known as the Vissuddhi-Uposatha.

The Day of the Great Assembly is celebrated annually. We Buddhists recall, that the Buddha our Supreme Master passed away long ago, entering into Nirvana, which is the Extinction without remainder. We have come to pay our sincere homage to Him together with His Holy Order, 1,250 in number, we pay respect and are aware of the fact that the Awakening is in us, that we have Buddha-Nature. We do this by offering these flowers, incense and candles to the image representing the Buddha.

May the Great Merit comes about by these offerings protect us, and guard us, May it bring us blessing and happiness for ever and ever.

May all beings be well, May all beings be happy in mind and live in peace."

Then everyone sits and the monks chant the suttas in Pali followed by short meditation, reading from the Buddhist scriptures and lectures by Buddhist scholars and monks.

The meeting will continue until 7.30 p.m., then the monks

give their blessings to the people by chanting. That is the end of Māgha Pūjā Festival.

About 75-100 Thai people come to the Thai meeting, and about 75-100 British Buddhists and others come to the English programme.

### (3) Āsālha Pūjā Day (Full Moon Day in July)

The programme is arranged in both Thai and English like the 2 Buddhist Holy Days before. Āsālha Pūjā Day is the anniversary of the day on which the Lord Buddha preached the first Discourse to the Five Ascetics at Isipatana in the deer sanctuary near Benares in India. This day, in Ceylon, is called "Dhammacakka Day," "the day of the Proclamation of the Noble Eightfold Path." Usually it is held on the day of the Full Moon in July every year. But during lunar leap year they postpone Āsālha Pūjā Day for a month; Buddhist countries annually celebrate this important day of the Āsālha Month.

The Thai meeting starts from the morning lasting till afternoon. Thai Buddhists come to the Temple to give alms to the monks and to listen to the sermon. They prepare lunch for the monks and later for the lay people. In the afternoon they arrange discussions and seminars.

The English programme resembles the 2 festivals above, beginning the meeting in the late afternoon there is chanting, short meditation, lectures and discussion etc.

About 50-75 Thais attend the Thai meeting, and about 50-100 British and others attend the English programme each year.

The statistics of the Thai Dhammaduta's activities in Britain and nearby countries in 1969-1970 are as follows:

STATISTICS OF ACTIVITIES OF THAI DHAMMADUTAS IN GREAT  
BRITAIN

October 1, 1969 - October 1, 1970

Translated from Official Report of the Thai Dhammaduts in  
Great Britain

No. of Dhammaduta	Activities	Statistics		
		Number	Attend- ance	Copies
5 Dhammaduta Bhikkhus  1 Attendant to the Dhammaduta Bhikkhus.	1. Lectures at the Buddhapadipa Temple	52	800	
	2. Sermons on Sun- days at the Temple medita- tion classes	50	1,750	
	3. Lectures to various schools, colleges, univer- sities and soci- eties, etc.	144	7,200	
	4. Lectures in Uni- ted States, West Germany, and Holland	34	1,500	
	5. Publishing of magazines and books			4,500
	6. Teaching medita- tion to visiting meditators at the Temple		95	
	7. Performance of ceremonies and festivals	8	560	
	8. Ordination of English Buddhists			3
Total	6	288	11,908	4,500



Pictures 1 and 2:

Show the Buddhapadipa Temple in co-operation with the Young Thai Buddhists' Group arranging Thai Programmes. Picture 1 shows a monk giving a sermon to the Thai Buddhists in the Buddha Hall on Magha Pūjā Day 1970, whilst sitting on the Dhamma-seat. Picture 2 shows Thai Buddhists attending the Māgha Pūjā Festival in the same programme.



Pictures 3 and 4:

Show the Buddhapadipa Temple in co-operation with the Lay Buddhist Association arranging English programmes. In picture 3 a Thai monk is giving a lecture to British Buddhists and others in a seminar programme which they arranged in the Buddha Hall on 26th September, 1971. Picture 4 shows the audience in the Buddhist Seminar during the same programme.

Now we can compare the similarities and differences between the Buddhapadipa Temple, the London Buddhist Vihara and the London Buddhist Society.

The similarities and differences between the Buddhapadipa Temple and the London Buddhist Society

1. The Buddhapadipa Temple is a Thai Buddhist organization combining British and Thai organizations within the Temple. The London Buddhist Society is an English Buddhist organization run by English Buddhists.
2. The Buddhapadipa Temple is founded by the Thai Government. The ceremonies are performed, and classes, lectures, discussions and seminars are arranged. Festivals for both English and Thai Buddhists are held both of a regular and occasional nature. Similarly the London Buddhist Society which was founded by English Buddhists arranges classes, lectures, discussions and seminars etc. again these are of a regular or occasional nature.
3. The Buddhapadipa Temple can perform Buddhist ceremonies connected with marriage, birth, death, having a new baby, merit-transfer, ordination etc. to their members and other people from different groups and societies who invite them to perform such ceremonies. Such ceremonies cannot take place at the Buddhist Society.
4. The London Buddhist Society has greater contact with other Buddhist organizations in Britain than the Buddhapadipa Temple, this is because the London Buddhist Society is the Headquarters of most Buddhist organizations in this country, whereas the Buddhapadipa Temple exists to aid Thai-British Buddhists particularly.
5. The Buddhapadipa Temple has a full range of religious functions, because it is a religious place and religious

institution. The functions of the London Buddhist Society vary in that as it is a religious organization, its activities are Buddhist in the wider term.

6. There is a good relationship between the Buddhapadipa Temple and the London Buddhist Society in 1970-71, who co-ordinate with each other in Buddhist activities.

A Comparison between the Buddhapadipa Temple and the  
London Buddhist Vihara

1. The Buddhapadipa Temple and the London Buddhist Vihara are both Theravada Buddhist organizations, they are both able to perform any Buddhist ceremony, because they are religious institutions.
2. Both organizations get support from their governments. The Buddhapadipa Temple is the Office of Religious Representative of the Royal Thai Embassy, the London Buddhist Vihara is not in this position however.
3. The Bhikkhus (monks) who stay at the Buddhapadipa Temple are appointed by the Thai Government to work in terms of 3 years duration, but the Bhikkhus who stay at the London Buddhist Vihara stay as long as they like to work in this country.
4. The London Buddhist Vihara places greater stress upon the Theravada doctrine than the Buddhapadipa Temple.
5. The London Buddhist Vihara deals mainly with British and Ceylonese Buddhists, and others, whereas the Buddhapadipa Temple has to do with Thai, British and all Buddhists.
6. In 1970-71 there was a good working relationship between the two organizations.

The 3 Buddhist organizations in Greater London work with each other closely, to promote Buddhism, and help other Buddhist organizations outside London.

#### 4. BUDDHIST COMMUNITY

##### SARUM HOUSE BUDDHIST COMMUNITY

This was set up in August 1968 by three Upāsakas of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (F.W.B.O.) at 3 Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey.

It is a community in which Buddhists who have taken their precepts with a teacher live together as a family, meditate regularly, study, and go about their regular work. At present (1971) they have a Japanese Zen teacher staying with them, conducting meditation. They are visited by other monks and spiritual teachers regularly.

Ven. Sangharakshita is the spiritual teacher and head of the house, and they maintain Zengo, a Japanese monk who is resident and also Brenda Furnay as the Secretary of the community and general house mother. Decisions on day to day routine, and so on, are taken in house meetings. Cleaning, cooking, decorating, gardening etc. are shared between all residents.

It is quite interesting to study this community; because it is a religious community run by people who live, meditate, and study together, sharing household duties as a family and one body.

Dr. Radhakrishnan says that "The world has found itself as one body. But physical unity and economic independence are not themselves sufficient to create a universal human community. For this we require a human consciousness of community, a sense of personal relationships among man."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Radhakrishnan, S., Dr., Eastern Religions and Western Thought, 1969, p.1.

The Membership of the Buddhist Community

In September, 1971, there were 16 resident members at the Buddhist community as shown in Table 5:

TABLE 5

Nationality	Male	Female	Number
British	9	6	15
Japanese	1	-	1
Total	10	6	16

At the present these people consist of 1 monk, 2 couples each with one child, 3 single girls, 4 single men and 2 men who are there for a period of 2 months and 4 months.

TABLE 6

Showing the resident members of the Buddhist Community  
by age and sex.

Age	Male	Female	Number
Age under 10 years	1	1	2
Age between 20-30 years	4	3	7
Age between 30-50 years	4	2	6
Age over 50 years	1	-	1
Total	10	6	16

Spiritual Teachers

From an interview with the Secretary and a Zen monk there, it was said that the residents have various spiritual teachers, as follows:-

4 people have Sangharakshita as their spiritual teacher,  
 3 people have Jiyn Kenneth Roshi, a Zen teacher,  
 1 person has Shanti Bhadra Thera, a Ceylonese,  
 1 person has Akong, a Tibetan Lama,  
 1 person has Geishe La, a Tibetan Lama,  
 1 person has an Indian meditation teacher.  
 One of the visitors is a Roman Catholic.

### The Place

The community building has 13 bedrooms, 1 shrine room, 1 library room, 1 sitting room, 1 office room and showing room, 1 kitchen, 3 toilets, and 2 bathrooms. They have a garden as well.

### The Community and F.W.B.O.

This Buddhist community connected with the Friends of Western Buddhist Order (F.W.B.O.), because most of the members of the community are members of F.W.B.O., notably the founders of the community are 3 Upāsakas from F.W.B.O.

### What is F.W.B.O.?

A few years ago, the Ven. Sangharakshita, an English monk returned from the East, where he had spent twenty years; and where he received ordination in the three main traditions of Buddhism. A group of his pupils brought together by his teaching and personality, founded the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order in April, 1967, shortly after his return to Britain.

How the F.W.B.O. differs from other Buddhist  
Groups

The relationship is between individual members and an impersonal organizational body to which they pay a subscription. In this group, emphasis is placed on the relationship between the spiritual teacher and his pupils, and also among the pupils themselves. Both are based on the common spiritual ideals symbolized by the three jewels: the Buddha, or all-enlightened one; the Dhamma, his teaching; the Sangha or brotherhood.

Secular societies, due to the rivalries and struggles for power which characterise their structure, sooner or later tend to lose sight of the objects they were set up to promote. This is avoided at Sarum House by adopting the absolute minimum of organization necessary for smooth functioning.

They base their structure on the hierarchical principle, and its corollary, the principle of spiritual brotherhood. Without being too rigid, it works out rather like a pyramid at the base of which are:

- (1) disciples and class members, then
- (2) brothers and sisters who have received Upāsaka ordination,
- (3) brothers and sisters who have received Mahā Upāsaka (lay) ordination,
- (4) part-time workers and teachers who have received Bodhisattava or Anāgārika ordination,
- (5) full-time workers and teachers with Boddhisattava, Anāgārika ordination, and at the apex,
- (6) the spiritual teacher.

They see themselves as consisting of groups, centres and communities:

A Group consists of a minimum of five people, including one ordained member, who meet regularly for the purpose of study and practise.

A Centre is the same as a group, except that it has at its disposal premises, albeit only one room, dedicated to the purpose of study and practise.

A Community consists of a group of individuals or family units, which includes at least one ordained member who live together as a spiritual community. Such a community could also be semi-monastic, and could be made up of only men or women.

They are not inclined to any particular school of Buddhism, because they believe that all expressions of Buddhism are equally valid, and will appear to different individuals according to their own inclinations and temperament.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order was founded in April, 1967 by a group of Ven. Sangharakshita's pupils. In May 1968 the first Upāsaka ordinations took place and the order numbered twenty.

There is a small group in Birmingham, one in Brighton, and a group in Hastings is also fairly closely connected with this Buddhist community.

They send out about 700 Newsletters every three months. 50 copies are sent to colleges etc., 150 copies abroad, 300 copies to people who have requested it in the provinces, and 200 to people connected with the community in London.

#### Their Activities

The Buddhist Community has held different meetings as follows:

## 1. Meditation Classes

These were held, when they had a centre at Monmouth Street, London, on three evenings a week.

The Beginners Class with 30-50 people, aged between 16-60, came to this class. Probably  $\frac{2}{3}$  men,  $\frac{1}{3}$  women attended once a week.

Regular Meditation classes. Attendance: 20-30 people came to this class. Average age about 27 years  $\frac{3}{4}$  men,  $\frac{1}{4}$  women.

Advanced Meditation Classes. Attendance 5-15. Average age 30. Mostly men attended this class.

Although they have no centre, classes are held once a week including meditation, discussion, pūjā, offering flowers etc. Attendance 40-60. About  $\frac{2}{3}$  men,  $\frac{1}{3}$  women attend this class.

## 2. Lectures

Two series of eight lectures are held once a year. Attendance 80-120 per lecture.

## 3. Retreats

(a) Two retreats per year of two weeks duration each with 50 people of all age groups.

(b) 2-4 weekend retreats per year with 20-30 people attending.

## 4. Festivals

Vesak Day, Dhammacakka Day, Māghā Pūjā Day, and also Full Moon Days (about 200-300 people attended the large festivals).

## 5. Communications courses

Held about 5 times in the year, each lasting a weekend. Attendance 50.

6. Seminar

About twice a year. About 100 people attended each time.

7. Speakers Classes

Once a month. About 10 people attended.

8. Order Meetings

Once a month. About 10 people attended.

9. Depth Psychology Groups

There are three groups, each of eight-ten people. Meetings are held once a fortnight.

Relationships at Sarum House

From my observation the relationship among members is quite friendly because their community affords personal contact. "A personal relationship is between particular individuals. A group relationship is between mutually substitutable persons, as members of a group."<sup>1</sup> Paine.

However, the relationship between this Buddhist community and the other Buddhist organizations in Britain is very poor, because this community split from the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara (now Vipassana and Research Centre) a few years ago; then they established this community in Surrey in 1968 as mentioned before. This community does not appear in the list of Buddhist organizations in the 'Middle Way' the journal of the London Buddhist Society (the headquarters) at all. Sometimes there have been conflicts between this community and the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, especially in 1967-68.

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1. Paine, Robert, In Search of Friendship: An Exploration Analysis in 'Middle Class Culture,' MAN, 1969, p.513.

How the Community is run

This community is run by a committee at the house including President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Resident teacher. They run their community independently and in a very different way from other Buddhist organizations in Britain.

The resident members of this Buddhist community give donations of £7 per week to the community, more or less depending on the persons concerned. During the day the Secretary acts as a house keeper, as the others work outside the community, at their own regular work.

5. VIPASSANA AND RESEARCH CENTRE  
(Former Hampstead Buddhist Vihara)

Since 1908 the need has been felt in England for a Buddhist Vihara in the sense of a house where Buddhist monks would live and keep the rules, and teach both doctrine and meditation to all who wished to attend. The first Vihara was that in connection with the British Mahabodhi Society, founded by Anagarika Dhanmapala in Hampstead in 1928. This was closed at the outbreak of war in 1939. In 1954 a Vihara was opened by monks from Ceylon in Knightsbridge, later moved to Chiswick, and in 1966 the King of Thailand opened the Buddhapadipa Temple at East Sheen, S.W.14.

Meanwhile, in 1954, an Englishman took the robe in Bangkok as Bhikkhu Kapilavaddho, and back in London founded, in 1956, the English Sangha Association, with headquarters at 50 Alexandra Road, St. John's Wood. He soon after left the Order, and it was not until 1962 that premises were bought by the English Sangha Trust at 129 and 131 Haverstock Hill, N.W.3.

No.131 was opened on 28th October, 1962 as the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, the house next door, divided into flats, providing a substantial income. It has so far been difficult to collect a sufficient supply of English Bhikkhus to man the Vihara, the mixture of English, Ceylonese, Tibetan and Thai members of the Sangha in residence has helped to manifest the international solidarity of this religious Order.

The original aim of this organization was to use it as a Vihara where English monks returning to Britain can stay, propagate Buddhism, teach and help people in this country. In the beginning there were 3 English monks there, and one Canadian monk who was ordained in Burma, came to stay with

them in the early days of the Vihara.

But later, the founder-monk disrobed and married, another English monk left for the East, so the Canadian monk was running the Vihara on his own and then in 1964 he and the English Sangha Trust invited 2 Thai monks to come and help them in their activities.

### The Crisis of the Vihara

In 1964 there was a meeting of all the members of the English Sangha Trust, people who attended the meeting disagreed with the way the Vihara was organized, and they did not like the meditation system which the Canadian monk taught (an idiosyncratic form of Zen). At last they asked him to resign from the Headship of the Vihara. He left the Vihara and went to Canada and set up there, the Dharma Centre, in Toronto.

Even then the crisis in the Vihara did not end. One group of the members wanted the English monk who had been in the East for twenty years to come back and be the resident teacher at the Vihara, but the other group wanted the 2 Thai monks to become resident teachers.

In the end they brought the English monk from India to live at the Vihara and run the Vihara which he did till 1968. A big crisis arose again when another group of members of the Vihara alleged that the English monk had homosexual relations which is against the rules of the Buddhist community of monks. Then they had a meeting of all members of the English Sangha Trust, and the majority of the meeting agreed to ask him to leave the Vihara. He left the Vihara, and his pupils set up the new group called the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order and established the Buddhist Community in Surrey in 1968 as I mentioned previously.

Also in 1965 the Thai Government bought a separate house in East Sheen to be used as the Thai Temple in London for Thai and British Buddhists who wish to study and practice Buddhism. The Thai monks moved from the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara to the East Sheen Temple on 15th November, 1965.

To stop the crisis the committee of the English Sangha Trust invited Richard Randall (former Bhikkhu Kapilavaddo) to be the general administrator and teacher at the Vihara and run Buddhist activities. Later he became a Buddhist monk again for the second time by receiving full ordination from the Thai Sangha at the Buddhapadipa Temple in London. After his ordination 3 English Buddhists followed him and took the robe at the same Temple. They tried to set up an English Sangha in England, but a few years later all of them left the Order.

#### Changing the Name of the Vihara

When there were 4 English monks at the Vihara in 1968 they changed the name of the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara to Wat Dhammapadipa (The Light of the Doctrine) following the example of the Buddhapadipa Temple. But when all 4 English monks at the Vihara disrobed, and no monks remained, the name was changed from Wat Dhammapadipa to Vipassana and Research Centre.

So the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara is no longer a Vihara. This Buddhist organization is continually changing.

#### How the Centre is now run

The Vipassana and Research Centre is run by 6 Directors including the teacher and general administrator, and 5 English Buddhists. The centre has no members officially at the moment; people who come to classes, lectures and meditation retreat give support and help the centre according to the advice of the teacher of the centre. The centre is run in the form of

a Charity Trust which is called "The English Sangha Trust Ltd."

### The English Sangha Lay Fellowship

There is a lay fellowship at this centre, which has the following structure and aims:-

Objective. To study the teaching of the Buddha and to apply its methods sincerely in daily life and to offer to all who wish the opportunity for so doing. To provide all such facilities as may be necessary or desirable for this purpose.

Membership. All persons subscribing to the above objectives and instruction in Vipassana, and who undertake to assist in the support of the English Sangha of Bhikkhus, are eligible.

Associates. Associate membership is open to those who, at present, do not wish to be fully committed, but who agreed with the objectives and will undertake to support the English Sangha.

Subscription. There is no annual subscription. The only charge is for the magazine "Sangha" at £1.70 per year.

### The Activities of the Centre

#### 1. Weekly Programme

Mondays at 7.00 p.m. Advanced Vipassana and Abbidhamma Class,

Tuesdays at 7.00 p.m. Intermediate Vipassana Class,

Thursdays at 7.00 p.m. Introduction Vipassana Class,

Saturdays at 5.30 p.m. Intermediate Vipassana Class,

Sundays at 5.30 p.m. Public lecture by Ācariya (Teacher).

About 20-30 people come to classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, about  $\frac{2}{3}$  who come are men and  $\frac{1}{3}$  women. About 30-60 people come to Sunday lectures. There is an even division between old and young.

This differs from the London Buddhist Vihara in that the people who come to classes and lectures here are younger and 98% are British Buddhists.

## 2. Residential Vipassana Retreat

There are 3 meditation rooms for visiting meditators at the centre, those wishing to take periods of meditational instruction can apply, in writing, to the Secretary of the Vipassana Section of the centre. The visiting meditators can stay and practise meditation at the centre for 1 or 2 weeks or longer. 2 visiting meditators said that they were satisfied to stay for a meditation retreat there.

A booking fee of £1 is required and the charge, per week, for accommodation is £9.45.

### Membership

The centre has no members officially now, because they are afraid that trouble may arise as before, but there is a membership by attendance. These are the people who attend the classes and lectures etc. regularly and occasionally as we can see in Table 7 as follows:

TABLE 7

Attendance	Male	Female	Number
Frequent attendance	49	26	75
Occasional attendance	26	19	45
Rare attendance	15	15	30
Total	90	60	150

Note: Frequent attendance = Over 50% of the time.

Occasional attendance = Between 20-50% of the time.

Rare attendance = Under 20% of the time.

After the crisis had died down and the new Trust Committee was formed, the membership system was changed and the situation in this centre became better. People who come to classes and lectures are more friendly towards each other. But the relationship between this centre and the Headquarters and other Buddhist organizations in Britain is still unchanged. They do not get on well with the Headquarters or the Buddhist Community in Surrey which split from them a few years ago. Often they criticised and attacked each other through their magazines and Newsletters.

The condition of this centre now is the same as the Buddhist Community in Surrey. It is run independently since the name was changed to the Vipassana and Research Centre in 1969. There are no monks there now; and it is not listed in the 'Middle Way.'

"However, we are still running our centre quite well," said the teacher and administrator of the centre. They are in contact with the London Buddhist Vihara and the Buddhapadipa Temple and other Buddhist groups in Britain.

#### Conclusion

1. The five Buddhist organizations in Greater London have differing structures and systems of organization.
2. Three of them are English Buddhist organizations and run by English Buddhists. Two of them are national Buddhist organizations run by Ceylonese and Thai Buddhists in conjunction with British Buddhists.
3. The three English Buddhist organizations are religious organizations; but the two national Buddhist organizations are also religious monasteries and religious institutions.

4. The three English Buddhist organizations hold classes, lectures, discussions, seminars and festivals etc. for their members and the general public.

The Ceylonese and Thai Buddhist monasteries hold classes, lectures, discussions, seminars, festivals etc. for their members and the general public. Also they can perform Buddhist ceremonies for Buddhists from all countries.

5. The relationship between the three English Buddhist organizations and two national Buddhist institutions are quite friendly and open. The relationship within the three English Buddhist organizations are not so friendly, on occasion there has been mutual criticism through magazines and Newsletters. However, the five Buddhist organizations in Greater London still operate and co-ordinate their activities to propagate Buddhism in Britain.

## CHAPTER II

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS

From examination it was found that all five Buddhist organizations in Greater London act in similar ways to perform the same functions; and have similar inter-relationships, the only difference is to be found in the form of their structure.

Amongst members of the five Buddhist organizations there are personal and impersonal relationships. In a small community such as Sarum House the members know each other personally, but in a larger association, like the London Buddhist Society the relationships tend to be less personal.

The members of the London Buddhist Society, Sarum House Buddhist Community, and the official members of the London Buddhist Vihara and Buddhapadipa Temple have to pay a membership subscription. \* Non-official members of the London Buddhist Vihara, the Buddhapadipa Temple and the Vipassana and Research Centre do not necessarily have to pay a subscription for membership, but they pay for the journals of each group if they are willing to do so.

Now let us examine in greater detail the membership of the 5 Buddhist organizations in Greater London, Table 8.

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\* Note: Most of the Ceylonese and Thai people in Britain and also the members of Vipassana and Research Centre are not members of their groups officially, but support and give donations to their group more or less casually.

TABLE 8

Society	National members	British members and others
London Buddhist Society	-	2,650
London Buddhist Vihara	5,000	173
Buddhapadipa Temple	2,500	116
Sarum House Buddhist Community	-	16
Vipassana and Research Centre	-	150
Total	7,500	3,105

N.B. Some members belong to several groups simultaneously.

During 1969-1971 I interviewed 101 people in Britain who are members of different Buddhist organizations in London and outside London too, and also some who are not Buddhist, but are interested in Buddhism and Buddhist meditation etc. Of these 75 are members of Buddhist organizations in Greater London and outside London, but 26 are interested in Buddhism and Buddhist meditation.

Now we examine in greater detail the 75 persons who are members of the Buddhist organizations as follows:

56 people are members of the Buddhapadipa Temple,

13 people are members of the London Buddhist Society,

3 people are members of the London Buddhist Vihara,

2 people are members of the Vipassana and Research Centre,

1 person is a member of Sarum House Buddhist Community.

The Result of Examination

1. Among 56 members of the Buddhapadipa Temple interviewed, 40 are members of the Buddhapadipa Temple only, but 16 are both members of the Temple and other Buddhist groups as follows:-
  - 8 are members of the Temple and the London Buddhist Society as well.
  - 2 are members of the Temple, the Buddhist Society, and the Vipassana and Research Centre
  - 2 are members of the Temple and of the Reading University Buddhist Society
  - 1 is a member of the Temple, a member of the Buddhist Society, and of the London Buddhist Vihara.
  - 1 is a member of the Temple and a member of the London Buddhist Vihara.
  - 1 is a member of the Temple and of the Cambridge University Buddhist Society
  - 1 is a member of the Temple and of the London Buddhist Society and The Hague Buddhist Society.
2. Of 13 members of the London Buddhist Society interviewed, 2 persons are members of the London Buddhist Society only, 11 people are also members of other groups as follows:-
  - 8 people are both members of the London Buddhist Society and of the Buddhapadipa Temple.
  - 2 are members of the London Buddhist Society, the Buddhapadipa Temple and the Vipassana and Research Centre.
  - 1 is a member of the London Buddhist Vihara as well as the Society.

3. Of the 3 members of the London Buddhist Vihara interviewed, 2 are members of other Buddhist groups as follows:

1 is a member of the Buddhist Society and the  
Buddhapadipa Temple.

Another is a member of the Buddhapadipa Temple.

4. 2 members of the Vipassana and Research Centre are also members of the Buddhist Society and of the Buddhapadipa Temple.

5. The 1 member of the Sarum House Buddhist Community interviewed is also a member of the East Sussex Buddhist Society, Hastings.

From this examination we can see the interrelation between members of the groups in London. Also we can see that members move from one group to another.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS

Turning to study the social structures of the five Buddhist organizations in Greater London in particular, the allocation of authority within their organizations, much is revealed about the nature of these groups.

It is possible to study the structures of the Buddhist Society, the London Buddhist Vihara, the Buddhapadipa Temple, Sarum House Buddhist Community and the Vipassana and Research Centre from Diagrams 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 as follows:

##### 1. The Structure of the London Buddhist Society

The structure of the London Buddhist Society is different from the other Buddhist organizations in London.

The structure of this society in order of influence is as follows: The President, 4 Vice-Presidents, Editor of the

Middle Way (their journal), Meeting Secretary, General Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Registrar (see Diagram 1, page 8).

Because there are 2,650 members of the Buddhist Society the hierarchy has a role to perform. The President is not only the leader of the society, but he is also a religious teacher and leader too. He plays the part of a leader within the society. Generally the members of the Society have an adequate standard of living so few feel inferior socially. As a result of its status as a religious organization the Buddhist Society adopts certain norms for its members. It is recommended that everyone observes the Panca Sila (5 Precepts) i.e. the Buddhist morality as their way of life. This affects the behaviour patterns within the society advantageously, through a process of example, sustaining a warm feeling of brotherhood.

## 2. The Structure of the London Buddhist Vihara

This organization is led by the President who is a Buddhist monk, who has reached the high rank of Mahathera of Ceylon. He is followed by the Chairman, a learned English lady, the Hon. Secretary also an Englishman, the Hon. Treasurer, a British Buddhist and 2 resident monks, followed by 122 men and 51 women who are members of the British Maha Bodhi Society (see page 26).

This structure also accommodates all Ceylonese Buddhists in Britain. Although there are about 5,000 Ceylonese Buddhists in Britain, most of them are students and workers. Only about 3,000 come to the Vihara to attend religious services or ceremonies on religious days or to give Dana (offering food) to the monks etc.

The members of this organization appear to be sincere and respectful towards one another. The head of this Vihara is the Mahathera and President of the Sangha Council in Great Britain. He is a vegetarian and keeps very strict rules of the Theravada school of Buddhism, as a result of his influence his followers are also rather strict in their adherence to this school.

The five precepts constitute the rules and morality observed and practised as the norm in this organization.

### 3. The Structure of the Buddhapadipa Temple

The structure of the Buddhapadipa Temple is very different from other Buddhist organizations in this country. It is firm and stable, because this organization is the Office of Religious Representative of the Royal Thai Embassy in London.

The distribution of authority within this group comes directly from the Thai Government, via the Ministry of Education (Department of Religious Affairs), the Sangha Supreme Council, the London Buddhist Temple Committee in Thailand, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Royal Thai Embassy for London, the Buddhapadipa Temple sub-committee, the Chief of Dhammaduta Bhikkhus and Senior Incumbent, 4 Dhammaduta Bhikkhus and 1 Attendant to Dhammaduta Bhikkhus, Lay Buddhist Association and British and Buddhists of other nationality, the Young Thai Buddhists' Group and Thai Buddhists resident in Britain (see Diagram 3, page 33).

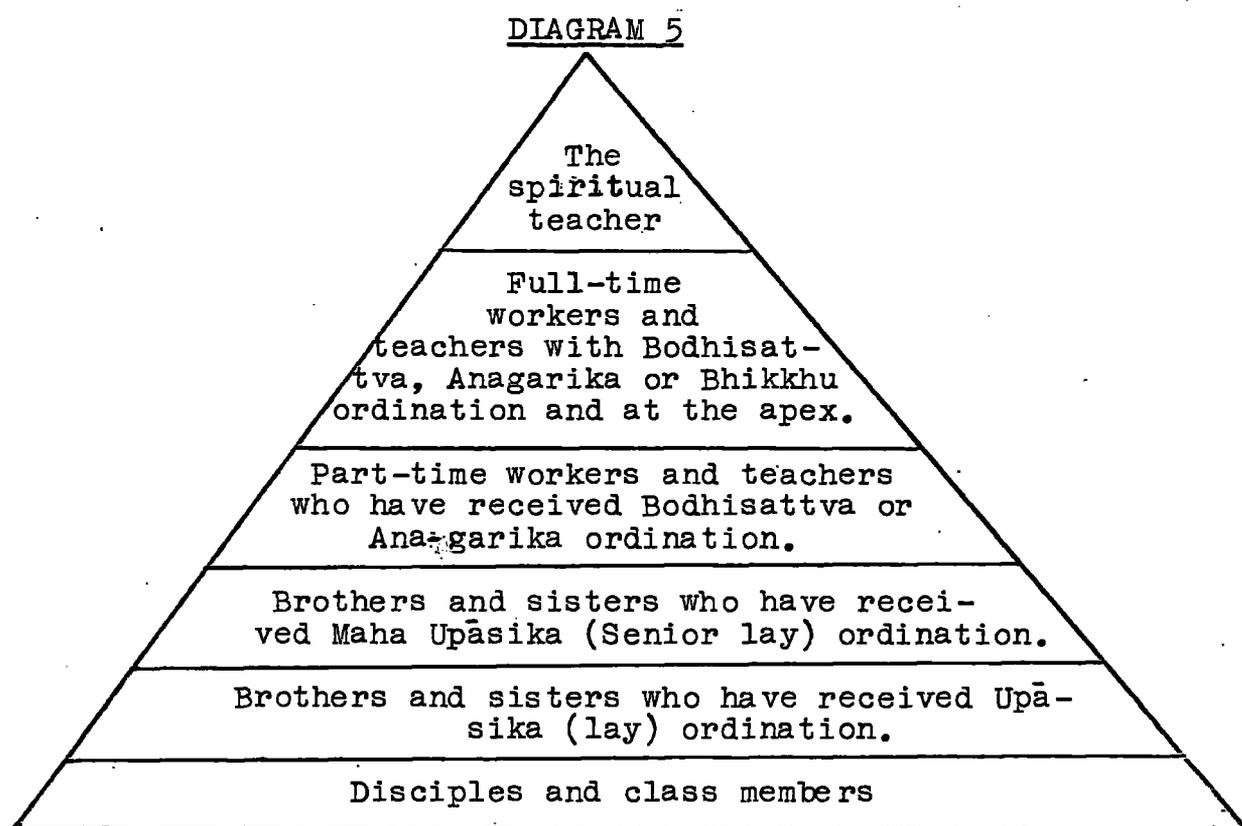
There are 116 British and Buddhists of other nationalities and 2,500 Thai Buddhists in Britain who belong to this organization; the social contact is good and mutually rewarding.

However, conflicts remain amongst the hierarchy. There was a crisis between the former Senior Incumbent and the Buddhapadipa Temple sub-committee in 1969. The result was that

the former Senior Incumbent was dismissed from his post in 1969, and disrobed in 1971. The conflict continues because the Committee wants the return of £4,000 which the former Senior Incumbent used to buy the Vipassana Centre in Surrey (where he now lives and works).

#### 4. The Structure of Sarum House Buddhist Community

In this community the structure is based on hierarchical principles and its corollary, the principles of spiritual brotherhood without being too rigid, it works out rather like a pyramid (see Diagram 5).



This community is small having 16 residents and connections with 200-300 Buddhists and non-Buddhists in Britain, and also connected with the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (F.W.B.O.).

The leader is at the apex of the pyramid, he is a spiritual teacher for the members and works in conjunction with full-time workers and teachers, part-time workers and

teachers, Senior lay brothers and sisters, Upāsika lay brothers and sisters, Disciples and class members who form the mass of the community. There are connections with small groups in Clapham, London, Birmingham, Brighton, and Hastings.

A member of the Buddhist community in Clapham gave the following information. There are 7 resident members, 4 are single men and 3 single girls. He is unmarried aged 28. The community was primarily linked with Sarum House as a branch of that Buddhist community. Later, however, they tried to work independently, still keeping in contact with Sarum House.

Asked the reason for the separation from the parent community, he said that the members of the Clapham community live far away from Sarum House in Surrey, and it is physically very difficult to join in the activities there. Consequently members of the community go to other Buddhist organizations in London which are geographically preferable. Secondly they have only 7 members, so they can meditate and practise or study together as a coherent unit.

##### 5. The Structure of the Vipassana and Research Centre

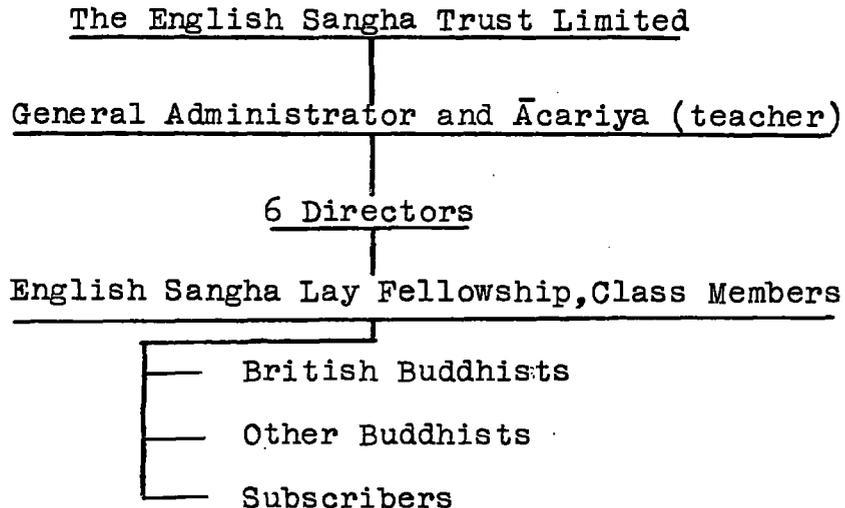
The structure of this Buddhist organization is based on a Charity Trust called "The English Sangha Trust Limited." This specifies a general administrator and religious teacher, as the most important person, the 6 Directors, who form the committee, then the English Sangha Lay Fellowship and class members. It puts the British Buddhists and others and subscribers in the lowest position.

This organization is not well organized structurally. Conflicts have often occurred in this organization in relation to the changing leadership and principles which are constantly being changed. The change of principles arises out of the change in leadership. This hindered the relationships within

the group, causing some members to break away.

### DIAGRAM 6

Showing the structure of the Vipassana and  
Research Centre



If we look closely at the 5 Buddhist organizations in Greater London with particular reference to their structures and social activities, or to their function, it is possible to see them in different ways.

### INTER-RELATIONS

The next section deals with two types of social relationship, firstly the interplay between the members within the limits of their own group; and secondly liaison of any particular group with other groups.

This relates to the 5 Buddhist organizations in Greater London as follows:-

#### 1. The London Buddhist Society

The interactions and sentimental links of the members of the London Buddhist Society within their group, are remarkably good, but often those who are members of two or more groups simultaneously, bring conflict to those groups.

For example, in 1967, a member of the Buddhist Society

also a member of the Buddhapadipa Temple and the Vipassana and Research Centre; an English lady, aged 55, came to practise meditation under the guidance of the former Senior Incumbent of the Temple for a while. She is a divorced person. She was asked to be a member of the Committee for Advancement of Buddhism at the Temple. After joining the committee she knew the rules and constitution of this committee, and she thought that this committee would become bigger and more famous than the headquarters.

She brought the rules to show the President of the Buddhist Society and explained her ideas to him. This initiated conflict that year. Later she withdrew from both the London Buddhist Society and the Buddhapadipa Temple. Consequently the liaison between the groups improved and they now co-operate normally.

As an individual is part of society, his personal conflict will affect the group of which he is a part by direct influence or implication.

Relationships between the London Buddhist Society, the Vipassana and Research Centre, and Sarum House Buddhist Community deteriorated due to the actions of their leaders. They criticised each other on personal level which subsequently brought conflict to the members of each group by influence. Even in 1971 these three English Buddhist organizations in London are not in full co-operation. Both 'Sarum House Buddhist Community' and 'Vipassana and Research Centre' do not appear in the list of Buddhist organizations in Great Britain, in the journal of the headquarters, "The Middle Way."

## 2. The London Buddhist Vihara

The interaction between the members of this group and other groups are friendly and sincere, because this organization

emphasises the traditional and scholastic aims of Buddhism in preference to activities; consequently little conflict has occurred relative to this group.

### 3. The Buddhapadipa Temple

Among the members of this group there is good rapport, but the structure of authority at the Temple was sometimes at variance.

There are two organizations within this group, relating to British Buddhists and Thai Buddhists in Britain, and elsewhere. The linkage between these organizations is well aspected. There is an extremely good alliance between the two organizations.

This organization works in wider sphere to co-operate and aid the activities of all Buddhist organizations in Britain and nearby countries.

### 4. Sarum House Buddhist Community

This group broke away from the Vipassana and Research Centre in 1968 and set up their group in Surrey. There has been much reciprocal criticism between them expressed in their journal and Newsletters. There is good kinship within the members of this group.

The leader of this group is a self styled Buddhist monk, but he wears a different type of robe and keeps his hair long like ordinary people; in consequence he is criticised by many Buddhists in Britain.

## 5. The Vipassana and Research Centre

Crises continued from 1964 to 1968 dividing the members of this group into two sides; one side clings to strict Theravada Buddhism, while the other side adheres to Mahayana Buddhism which they consider more tolerant. The crisis was arrested when the second group broke away and set up independently. Occasional criticism continues in their publications.

Within this group the inter-relations are improving. No conflict and interaction could happen in a group in which there are no official members, only class members. This is however an academic discrimination.

### Two Investigations of the Inter-relationship of the Five Buddhist Organizations in London

Summarising, the five Buddhist organizations in Greater London have both conflicts and affinities within their groups which leads to an investigation of their inter-relationship in two ways. Firstly, Why do good relationships exist within a group as a separate unit? and, secondly, why is there conflict between one group and another?

#### (1) Why do good relationships exist within a group as a separate unit?

To examine this process we can consider the certain things, norms, ceremonies etc. and how they affect the interaction within the group.

Within each organization there are certain generally agreed upon standards or rules of behaviour of the members. They comprise what members say they and others should do or ought to do under given circumstances.

For example each member of the London Buddhist Society has to accept the object of the society "To publish and make

known the principles of Buddhism, and encourage the study and practise these principles."

In the London Buddhist Vihara, the Buddhapadipa Temple and Vipassana and Research Centre, the members of these organizations have to observe Panca Sila (Five Precepts) the basic of Buddhist morality. They form the standard of behaviour in their organizations.

In 'Sarum House' Buddhist Community each member of the community has his personal spiritual teacher who gives five precepts to him, and they live under the principles of spiritual brotherhood, that is living as good members of this Buddhist community.

Service and ceremony. Both religious service and ceremony may bring members together. For example in the London Buddhist Vihara and the Buddhapadipa Temple many of their members wish to have varying religious services and ceremonies concerning birth, death, marriage, receiving blessing from the monks etc., these rituals will bring warmth and spiritual security, feelings of enjoyment to himself, his family, his friends and relative who attend such ceremonies and services, and aiding good relationships within a group.

Feelings or sentiments. Feelings or sentiments of warmth and brotherhood which members in Buddhist organizations are encouraged to show for each other, generate feelings of warmth and hospitality in their groups.

(2) Why do conflicts arise between one group and another?

There are three causes of conflicts in the Buddhist

organizations in London as follows:-

A. Personal conflict bringing conflict to the group

Most of the conflicts which occurred came from personal conflicts or leadership antipathy on a personal level, between groups.

For example, in 1966, there was a crisis involving the Sangha Council of Great Britain. The Head Monk of the London Buddhist Vihara, the Senior Incumbent of the Buddhapadipa Temple and the Chief Monk of Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, tried to form a Sangha Council in this country, and they invited all monks in Britain to be members of this council including Ceylonese, English, Tibetan and Thai monks. They had two meetings in that year. They chose the Head Monk of the London Buddhist Vihara to be President, and the former Senior Monk of the Buddhapadipa Temple as Secretary of the Council. The crisis arose when they set up the rules of the council and sent them out to all the monks in Britain.

An English monk disagreed with the rules of the council and used the Newsletters of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order as media to criticise and attack this council. This led to contention between members of Buddhist groups in London, especially the Secretary of the council and an English monk, and their followers. This controversy was halted when many members of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order wrote letters to the Thai Ambassador asking him to solve the problem. The Thai Ambassador contacted all Thai monks instructing them not to be involved with this council in 1967. This meant that the Secretary had to step down.

B. Crossing Members

Some are members of several groups simultaneously, nominated "Crossing Members." For example some members of the

London Buddhist Society are also members of other groups in London, who introduce matters of conflict to the groups.

C. Conflict caused by differing concepts

Many times conflicts between members of a group broke out because of the concepts behind rules. Some members of Buddhist organizations hold the idea that Buddhist monks must keep very strict rules like the monks in the East, so when they see something different, there is criticism.

For example, an English monk who had lived in India for 20 years came back to England in 1966. When he was in India he shaved his hair like all Buddhist monks, but when he came back to England to stay at the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara, he did not shave his hair, he kept his hair as long as laymen and sometimes wears regular clothing. He was much criticised by the groups. His pupils supported their teacher. This led to the crisis in 1967-68 when they broke away from the parent group and set up a new group in 1968.

### CHAPTER III

#### BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE LONDON

After the Second World War the number of Buddhist organizations in Great Britain seemed to be increasing. "As the fortieth anniversary of the Society drew near there was a sudden increase in the number of Buddhist Groups in the provinces."<sup>1</sup> (Humphreys, 1968, p.64).

In February, 1964 there were twelve Buddhist Groups in Britain. By 1966 the number had risen to twenty-five, and in 1972 the number of Buddhist organizations had risen to 36 Groups throughout Britain.

Some of these Buddhist organizations are big groups, and some are small. I was sent to the United Kingdom in December 1965 by the Thai Government as a Thai Buddhist missionary. Since then I have tried to observe the Buddhist movements in Britain closely. I have paid visits or given lectures and talks to most Buddhist organizations in the U.K. Each time I tried to interview the Buddhists or non-Buddhists who were involved in and worked in each Buddhist group.

In this chapter I am going to discuss the Buddhist organizations outside London. We can divide Buddhist groups outside London into 2 types:

- (1) Provincial Buddhist organizations.
- (2) University Buddhist organizations.

The first type might be known as the Buddhist group, Buddhist society, Buddhist association or Buddhist centre, and

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1. Christmas Humphreys, SIXTY YEARS OF BUDDHISM IN ENGLAND, 1968, p.64.

they could be organised in towns or cities, or in the countryside in provinces. The second type is organised in colleges or in universities.

There are 23 Buddhist organisations in the Provinces. I shall discuss the 17 Provincial Buddhist organizations in the provinces with which I have been personally involved over the past 5 years (1966-1970).

- (1) Aberdeen Buddhist Society
- (2) Belfast Buddhist Society
- (3) Bromley Buddhist Centre
- (4) Doncaster Buddhist Society
- (5) Dover Buddhist Group
- (6) East Sussex Buddhist Society
- (7) Edinburgh Buddhist Group
- (8) Hampshire Buddhist Society
- (9) Harlow Buddhist Group
- (10) Isolated Buddhist Group (Tape Recording)
- (11) Liverpool Buddhist Group
- (12) Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association
- (13) Midland Buddhist Society
- (14) Mousehole Buddhist Group
- (15) Nottingham Buddhist Society
- (16) Salop Buddhist Group
- (17) Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre.

I think it would be best to study each group by discussing the following five points:-

1. The brief history of each group;
2. The number of members belonging to each group;
3. The number of meetings held;
4. Attendance at meetings;
5. Where each group meets.

## PROVINCIAL BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS

### 1. Aberdeen Buddhist Society

The Aberdeen Buddhist Society is a small Buddhist group in Scotland. I obtained information from 2 leaders of this group, and they told me that "Six years ago John Quarterman, a member of the group, wrote to the other 5 members of the Society who lived in or near Aberdeen, and they formed a group, meeting once every two weeks ever since."

There are 9 members of this group, 3 men and 6 women. They have meetings every 2 weeks, and the average number of persons attending the meetings is 5. The name and address of the contacts are George Wilson, 22 Contilaw Place, Milltimber, Aberdeenshire or John Quarterman, 15 Kepple Stone Avenue, Aberdeen.

They began and continue the activities in a small way, when nine persons got together as a result of the "Isolated Buddhists" appeal run in the 'Middle Way' journal of the London Buddhist Society (the Headquarters) some two years ago by Bill Halford. Some of them had other interests. Only two of them were fully committed Buddhists, but all are new to the Buddhist way. "Various domestic and employment problems prevent regular full attendance, but we do our best to supplement our private efforts in this way" said a leader of this group.

### 2. Belfast Buddhist Society

The Belfast Buddhist Society in Northern Ireland started in early 1969. This society was founded by the Chairman (Paul Hackney) and two other friends in 1969, followed shortly by affiliation with the Buddhist Society in London.

At the present time there is a membership of ten, nine men and one woman. Meetings are held every Wednesday evening,

and also on one Saturday per month. The Wednesday meetings normally take the form of meditation, reading from Buddhist scriptures, and discussion. At the Saturday meetings there is a lecture on Buddhist Teachings by different speakers. Sometimes speakers are invited from London and elsewhere.

The average attendance is 5 persons at Wednesday meetings, but for the Saturday lectures more people from outside attend.

Contact could be made through the Chairman, Paul Hackney, Belfast Buddhist Society, 105-D Fitzroy Avenue, Belfast (Tel. 35438) or to the Secretary, Mr. R. Beattie, 14 Tenth Street, Belfast 13.

### 3. Bromley Buddhist Centre

In August 1968 the Buddhist Summer School held a meeting of the Group leaders; Miss Con Bolton was also present. In the meeting the London Buddhist Society (the Headquarters) promised support with books, leaflets, etc. This meeting led to the setting up of a new Buddhist group in Bromley which is called the 'Bromley Buddhist Centre' in September, 1968.

There are about 20 members of this group; of these 8 are men and 12 are women.

Meetings have been held on the 3rd Sunday in the month since 1968. The meetings are devoted to the study of all the schools of Buddhism. Tape recordings of Chanting in Pali and Tibetan are used, and records of talks by Ven. Chao Khun Sobhana Dhammasudhi, Ven. Paññavādho and Lama Govinda are provided for the members and outsiders. Highlights of last year were talks and guided meditation given by Venerable Bhikkhus of the Buddhapadipa Temple. This arrangement continues, now starting at 6.30 p.m. with a class on Dhammapada.

The average number of persons attending these meetings is 14.

The leader of the group is Miss Con Bolton (01-460-9437), 78 Alexandra Crescent, Bromley, Kent. She was born in 1929. Her family background is unorthodox due to her parents' and grandparents' interest in Theosophy. First attracted to Buddhism by reading Bernard Leach's "A Potter's Book" while at art school in 1948, very struck by mention in it of Zen and Japanese "religious" attitude to art. She is a former student of Bromley College of Art - as it was then known - and holder of a London University Diploma in the History of European Art and Architecture.

She began to consider Buddhism seriously as a means to solving personal problems and joined the Buddhist Society in 1956, and attended Ven. Kapilavaddho's lectures and Christmas Humphreys's Zen classes.

In 1957 she commenced collecting items of Buddhist art, and people began to visit her and discuss Buddhism at her home. In 1960 she contacted Tibetan refugees in India and started to sell their crafts, and joined the Tibet Society.

Miss C. Bolton and her mother, Mrs. G. Bolton, left for India on Tuesday, 10th August, 1971 to help Tibetan refugees in India. Now her house and studio are looked after by Mrs. Joy Keggin and her husband, and the Buddhist activities are going on as normal.

Many members of this group come to attend the classes and lectures at the Buddhapadipa Temple and the Buddhist Society in London too.

As far as I know a great deal of help is given through this group to the Tibetan refugees.

#### 4. Doncaster Buddhist Society

This small society was founded on October 18th, 1966, in response to stimulation to found a provincial society by Mr. Christmas Humphreys, who assisted in a practical way, financially, with books and advice.

In this society there are 5 men and 1 woman who are regular members, with as many peripheral members.

There are meetings every month for a lecture and discussion. Between these monthly meetings at least one other is arranged for meditation and visits to other lectures etc.

Their aim has always been to make known the principles of Buddhist philosophy and to encourage the practise of them. "I have been invited five times to give services at local Unitarian Churches and have done so" said one leader of this group. It shows that Buddhists in this group are in contact with other religious groups as well.

About 5 persons attend the meetings on an average. The person to contact in this group is Mrs. Ruth Rawlinson, the Chairman, or Mr. Phil Purser, 30 Sandringham Road, Doncaster.

#### 5. Dover Buddhist Group

This is a little group in Dover, and it was formed in February, 1971.

Miss Agnes Irons, the leader of the group, told me how

she came to start it. In 1950 she found a book called Zen Buddhism, and she became very interested in the subject; she read more books on Buddhism and in 1958 she joined the Zen classes at the Buddhist Society, London, and still continues to go there. At the beginning of last year (1971) she asked the Dover Library if they would put up a notice of weekly meetings, which they did. She was asked by the private Broadcasting Station that broadcasts to the local hospitals if she would give a fifteen minutes talk on Buddhism. She agreed, and they took a recording of it.

#### Members, meetings and attendance

During the year 10 people have come to the meetings, though two of them were staying for only a few days near Dover. Five others were quite interested. Two others miss about two weeks out of every four, due to shift work.

Out of the ten that have attended, seven have been young men in their twenties. There are 3 women, 2 had been out of the district but rejoined the group in September. The third was training as a nurse in Dover, but still keeps in touch with the group.

Meetings are every Wednesday from 6.30-7.30 p.m., but they frequently stay on until after 9 p.m. The notice also says: Tuesdays 6.30-7.30 p.m. for new-comers.

The average attendance at the meetings is about 4.

The person to contact is Miss A. Irons, 3 Maison Dieu Road, Dover.

#### 6. East Sussex Buddhist Society

The foundation meeting of the East Sussex Buddhist Society was held in Hastings at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walker on Sunday, 5th June, 1960. This meeting took place in response to an advertisement in the local paper by Mr. Walker. During

the early years meetings were generally well attended. Buddhism was new hereabouts and many came to hear what it was all about; also there was good co-operation between the members of the society.

The trouble over the dismissal of the Ven. Sangharakshita from the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara in 1968 had a disastrous effect on this small society, sides were taken, and unity destroyed. Many members of the society just drifted away; the society has never recovered from this, and there are now rather more Buddhist activities going on outside the group than in it.

The present membership of this society is 6 men and 6 women. There was at one time a membership of 28.

2 meditation meetings and one public lecture are held each month on Saturday afternoons.

Average attendance at meditation meetings is about 8 persons, at public lectures about 20.

I have been invited by this society to teach meditation in meditation meetings there for 2 years (1968-1969). It seems to me that this society has a greater proportion of older people as members and it is rather difficult for them to keep in good contact with each other. I have led the Vesak Festival there twice (to celebrate the Buddha's birthday), Over 100 people attended each time, in particular people from London who were specially informed.

I noticed that the President of the society follows Theravada Buddhism, and the Secretary Mahayana Buddhism; they still work together however. After I came up to Durham, I was informed by the Secretary of this group that the President had resigned.

The Secretary of this society told me that "The trouble"

over the Ven. Sangharakshita brought us nearly to disaster owing to divided loyalties, and it is still just below the surface, both sides have tried to use both the group and myself."

He put forward the view that "Looking at the presentation of Buddhism generally in this country, over the last twenty or so years since I have been involved, I think there is an imbalance, it has all been too intellectual, too abstract, there are too many clever people juggling with concepts, splitting hairs. To me the Lord Buddha was a radiant shining figure, who taught the way to peace of mind."

#### 7. Edinburgh Buddhist Group

"I believe that a group of people came together in Edinburgh to study Buddhism before the London Buddhist Society was founded" said one of the leaders of this group, but no one knows the details of this group. The present group was founded in 1964 and is still very active.

The number of people who attend the meetings in this group is very variable. There is no formal membership list, although many have contacted the society and are interested in Buddhism.

Meditation meetings are held every Wednesday. The average number of persons who attend these meetings is 10; 4 of these are men and 6 are women.

When monks or speakers are invited to give lectures to the group, the number in attendance was between 50-100.

This is only 2 or 3 times a year. H.S.H. Princess Poon Pismai Disgul, the President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists paid a visit to this group in 1968.

The person to contact is Mr. M. E. Bryce, 7 Bruntsfield Gardens, Edinburgh or W. F. Anderson, the Secretary to the Edinburgh Buddhist Group, Wester Howe, Charlestown, Fife.

One observation is that a lot of young people are interested in Buddhism in Edinburgh, but there is no suitable teacher who can lead them to Buddhism properly at the moment. And most of the members of this group are interested in the meditation side of the Dhamma, and because of the strong interest in meditation they have to make this the central part of their weekly meetings. Also they need to bring together those interested in Theravada, Mahayana and Zen Buddhism.

#### 8. Hampshire Buddhist Society

This society was founded in February, 1965 at Crabwood Farmhouse, Winchester. The Secretary was then Mrs. Patty Elwood and she had written to a list of people subscribing to the Middle Way and resident in Hampshire supplied by the Buddhist Society. About 12 people turned up in spite of frosty roads and difficulties of finding the house at night. All meetings were held at Crabwood Farmhouse, in the Garden Shrine Room which was used as the meeting room for 2 years. Since then a room in Southampton has been used because it is more central.

Originally, there were about 8 members but gradually

the number rose to about 12 who came fairly regularly, with occasional visitors. They now have about 30 people on their mailing list who receive regular programmes. So the members of this group are increasing, not like East Sussex Buddhist Society in which the numbers are going down.

There are weekly meetings on Fridays which follow a certain pattern. Starting with Panca Sila (Five Precepts) and recitation of the Metta Sutta (Discourse on Loving-Kindness) followed by a period of meditation practice and reading from the Buddhist Scriptures, ending with coffee and a general discussion. There are public meetings 3 times a year.

The average attendance for weekly meetings is 6, but for public meetings it is about 30-50 people.

The President of this Society is Mrs. Jane Brown, Crabwood Farmhouse, Winchester, the Secretary is Mrs. Sue Tucker, Hamble River Boatyard, Swanwick, Southampton. But the address of the society is The Hampshire Buddhist Society, Headquarters, 149a Paynes Road, Southampton.

I paid visits to the group in 1967 when meetings were held at Crabwood Farmhouse. The President of this society gave her own view about Buddhism in Great Britain. "As regards my own personal views about Buddhism in this country, I think the movement will only get under way when there is a proper English Sangha formed. We are of course immensely grateful to all help we get from the countries where Buddhism is established, but I feel everything much depends on us now, to

produce young men who will take the robe and by their example show the laity the way." She herself had visited Thailand and practised meditation there for 6 months at a meditation centre, so "I was very keen that the group should be a working party, rather than a social gathering."

#### 9. Isolated Buddhist Group (Tape Recording)

This group began in 1964. A member of the Buddhist Society, Bill Halford, felt that there must be a number of British Buddhists who were isolated from other groups by reason of geographical or health considerations and wrote an open letter in the 'Middle Way' (journal of the headquarters) asking them to get in touch with him with a view to attaching them by correspondence to existing groups.

The response was far beyond his expectations and he took up a suggestion of Derek Write (he was then residing near Stirling) that members who could not be so attached but who possessed tape recorders might like to form a separate group who would meet and discuss Buddhism by means of exchanged tapes.

This group was duly set up with an opening membership of a dozen and has continued ever since, though members come and go, with the total membership remaining around 12.

Their present membership is down to 8, and all are men. "But we have been lower and no doubt will rise again in numbers" said the President of this group.

Meetings. As we know from above they do not meet as such. Their meetings consist of a complete round of tapes through the members. They probably make about ten such complete rounds each year.

I was informed by the President of the group about their activities as follows:

- (1) First member puts his message on side one of tape and sends it to:
- (2) Second member who places his message on second track and sends it to:
- (3) Third member who listens to other two then places his contribution on the first track overwriting the first member. He then returns it to the first member and so on.

Working this way only one small message tape is required which can be used over and over again so that costs are restricted to postage only.

Members are not restricted to their own sub groups and inter sub group exchanges are encouraged. Of great importance is the exchange of tapes between the Chairmen of sub groups. None of the members are Bhikkhus but the Chairman of sub groups are drawn from older members who have some knowledge of the Dhamma.

The group and its sub groups are not restricted to one school of Buddhism; indeed it is found that if members are attracted by differing schools of Buddhism, discussion is facilitated. The Secretary is in touch with other Buddhist organizations in the U.K., Thailand, Ceylon, Malaysia, and Japan and expert advice can be obtained if required.

The group like all other organizations is continually changing but five of the "founding fathers" are still very active members and each year new members join as others leave. One of the opening members is now in Singapore and there is some hope that one of their other members may take up the yellow robe.

Requests have been received from overseas for membership and they are prepared to consider these on an "affiliated"

basis as the postal delay factor makes full membership a little difficult. A fair number of general requests for information on the Dhamma are received, but these requests are normally dealt with by introducing the enquirers to other organizations more able to give expert advice.

The group has a collection of tapes of chantings and lectures by both monks and lay speakers. These are available for purchase or hire for which a charge is made to offset the costs of the group which, as no other charge for membership is made, otherwise falls on the existing members.

This group is the only one in the United Kingdom with this type of organization.

Derek Write is the person to contact at 18 Greenlees Road, Cambuslang, Glasgow.

#### 10. Harlow Buddhist Group

Originally started by the present President of the group in 1960, but the closing down of two large companies caused many members to find jobs in other towns and he reformed the society again by himself in 1967, after a series of lectures on meditation which he gave at Harlow Technical College.

The number of members of this group is approximately 50, 32 men and 18 women.

There are two meetings a week:-

(a) Every Monday evening except during the month of August.

(b) Beginners meditation class on Saturday afternoons.

The number of persons attending the meetings varies from 10 to 30.

Apart from regular meetings, they also held an exhibition in Harlow. On the 28th and 29th of August, 1971, the Harlow Buddhist Group put on an exhibition of Buddhist culture at

local Town Show. It was an attempt to create more interest in Buddhism in and around Harlow and disperse possible prejudice. They were loaned exhibition material by the Embassies of Ceylon, Japan, Korea and Thailand and by the Buddhist Society, London; also photographs of Temples and Shrines in Thailand and Malaysia were shown. The venture was a resounding success. Not only were there a great number of enquiries but the exhibition also won 1st prize in the judging of the stands. The prize money very nearly covered their costs.

"Their next and most important project is to establish a Temple and Meditation Centre in Harlow."<sup>1</sup>

The people to contact are the President of the Group, Harry Knight (Harlow 25432), 262 Halling Hill, Harlow, Essex or with the Secretary, Mrs. G. Ring, 77 Rushes Head, Harlow, Essex.

#### 11. Liverpool Buddhist Group

Liverpool used to have a Buddhist group a long time ago. Humphreys said in his book that "The largest and longest lived of provincial branches of the Society was that formed in Liverpool by Mrs. Avery." - (Humphreys, 1968, p.8). It began from 1909 and it managed to meet regularly until 1914.

In 1933, a collection of Buddhists in or near Liverpool, under the leadership of George Yoxon, revived the branch which had ceased to function during the War, and called it the "Liverpool and District Buddhist Lodge," a name changed in 1934 to the "Liverpool Buddhist Mission." Members of the London Buddhist Society and the British Maha Bodhi Society alike paid visits to the group from time to time, and this Mission, with a Croydon group, represented the two existing Buddhists associations outside London at that time.

In later years it ceased to function again. Until 1968

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1. Buddhist News, The Middle Way, Vol.XLVI, No.3, November, 1971, p.122.

when 2 young Buddhists from Liverpool attended the Buddhist Summer School in High Leigh, attending the conference of the leaders in the Summer School as well. Afterwards they came back to Liverpool and tried to set up the Buddhist Group again. They invited me to open the first meeting in October, 1968 at No.9 Summerset Place, Liverpool 6. They have held meetings ever since.

The numbers belonging to this group are about 20, 12 men and 8 women, and 14 of them are English and 6 are Thai.

There are 2 types of meetings. Firstly, meditation meetings every Thursday, and secondly, monthly meetings every first Friday in each month. I paid visits to this group many times to give lectures in monthly meetings.

The average number of persons who attended the meditation meetings is 8, and at the monthly meetings it is 15.

Contact could be made with D. W. Cheetham, the Chairman, Liverpool Buddhist Group, 16 Judges Drive, Liverpool 6, Lancashire.

The Buddhist movement in Liverpool rose and ceased many times and the present group is a mixture of English and Thai Buddhists.

## 12. Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association

This association was formerly a breakaway from Manchester Buddhist Society, Cheshire which is a much older established group, "but not as active as far as I know" said the Secretary of the new group. There are 3 Buddhist organizations in Manchester itself. The older is the Manchester Buddhist Society. Another the Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association, and the latest one is Manchester University Buddhist Society.

The first and the third are connected with the Buddhist Society, London, (the headquarters), but the second is not

related to the headquarters at all as I have said earlier in this thesis.

The Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association was established in 1967 by the members of the old society. Mr. and Mrs. Ghent were members of the old society and formed the Association and held meetings in a house in Whalley Range, Manchester after becoming active members of the new group for several months. They gave up the house and handed over all activities of the new group to Mrs. R. Moran, the present Secretary of the new group, and Mr. R. Davidson offered his house to be the meeting place of the Association from 1967 at 106 Park Road, Prestwich, Manchester.

The number of members of this group is 60; 36 are men and 24 are women.

Public meetings are once a month (with monks visiting), also there are occasional discussion meetings and a weekly meditation class for beginners as well. Other classes for non-members are being run by the Secretary. I paid visits to this group to give lectures many times.

The average number of persons who attend the monthly meetings is 20, and for the beginners' meditation meeting 2.

There is no committee, and there are no members paying fees in the group. The group use Mr. Davidson's house as their meeting place, but he is not President or Chairman of the association at all. He has a Catholic wife with 4 children. His wife is very helpful to the group, even though she is a Catholic. She always helps the group at meetings.

This group is connected with the Buddhapadipa Temple and the London Buddhist Vihara and has monks to come and give lectures monthly.

Contact with this group could be made through Mrs.

Rosalie M. Moran, 34 Milton Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 5PT.

The older Manchester Buddhist Society has weekly and monthly meetings, but unfortunately I do not know the details of their society. I shall discuss Manchester University Buddhist Society under University Buddhist Societies.

### 13. Midland Buddhist Society

There were several very small groups in the Midlands, studying Buddhism, in the early 1960's. In 1962, these joined into the "Midland Buddhist Group" having its meeting place near the centre of Birmingham. In 1965, the Group became affiliated to the Buddhist Society of London, and re-styled itself "The Midland Buddhist Society."

In any one year there are about 30 subscription-paying members, 18 are men and 12 are women.

I was informed by a leader of this society that "the number of men who make preliminary enquiries far outnumber women. I have gained the impression over several years that very often men come to a few meetings, get themselves a reading list, and then go away for years 'getting on with it.' If women decide to join the society, then they usually soon start to play an active part. I don't think in general that women go in for much theory with regard to the Dhamma, but are very practical in their approach. I give quite a lot of talks to ladies' organizations, and unless it can be shown that Buddhism is a practical way of going on, they won't be interested. This may very well reflect the British tradition of women being very involved with practical and welfare work."

The society has a meeting place for study, together with a Shrine Room. This is at a private house, 139 Barclay Road, Warley, Smethwick. Monthly meetings, open to the general

public, are held at the Martineau Teachers' Centre, Birmingham. A regular meeting for meditation practice is held at 41 Barclay Road, Smethwick, Birmingham.

Note: The Midland Buddhist Society now has two branch groups working in close association with the parent body.

1. The Sutton Coldfield and North Warwick Buddhist Group.

This has been established for nearly 2 years; there is a weekly meeting at 38 Orton Avenue, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, Warwick. The programme consists of basic Dhamma study, meditation practice, and Puja and Sutta reading on full-moon days. As this is a group gathering for new enquirers into Buddhism, the bias is towards the Theravada School of Buddhism. The leader of this group told me that "I plan to work, study etc., for this group and it is my personal view that beginners should have a firm foundation in Theravada Buddhism before trying to understand Mahayana Buddhism."

2. An Isolated Buddhist Group exists in the Worcester/Cheltenham area.

The average attendance for ordinary meetings is 12; a public meeting can vary between 18 to 50, according to the programme.

Contact with the Midland Buddhist Society could be made with Mr. K. Pardoe, 139 Barclay Road, Warley, Smethwick, the Chairman of the Society or for the Sutton Coldfield Group with Mrs. Rosina Eaton, the Chairman and Secretary.

In April, 1971 I was twice invited to conduct the Meditation Seminar and give lectures to this society. The first seminar was held for a week, and the second meeting for a weekend. Since then, they have invited monks from the Buddhapadipa Temple, London to lead meditation seminars in

their society on the first weekend of every month. I found that both groups worked closely together which is different from the two Buddhist groups in Manchester, because there the parent group and the one which broke away work independently.

#### 14. Mousehole Buddhist Group

This is a small group in the South of England. It started in 1954; a small group of young people interested in Buddhism would gather in each others' houses, usually once a week to discuss Buddhist Teachings. Later they grew in numbers and gave public lectures and held open meetings. Then with the death or departure of founding members their group became smaller.

At present they have 6 regular members, 4 men and 2 women. A few other people, students who are interested in Buddhism, will join them now and then. Due to their situation in the far West of Cornwall, not everyone can reach them as often as they wish.

During the Winter they hold meetings every week for group meditation, but in Summer they usually manage to meet only once a month.

The average number of persons attending the meetings is 4 for regular meetings, and more at special meetings and public lectures.

Contact could be made with the Secretary of the group, W. B. Picard (Mousehole 449) The Mousehole Pottery, Mousehole, Cornwall.

#### 15. Nottingham Buddhist Society

The first meeting of this group was held in Nottingham on February 27th, 1961 with 8 members being present. Of those 8 none now attend meetings unless a very special speaker is present. It began as an effort of the Theosophical Society starting with a meditation period and readings from the

Dhammapada, the meetings being held once a month.

Since then the meetings changed to three times a month and membership is being increased. Public meetings were held in various buildings in Nottingham which were addressed by different speakers.

They still have 8 regular members who belong to this group. All are men, there are no women members in this group.

Since January 1970 there has been a Shrine Room available at the Secretary's house, and meetings are held weekly starting with meditation for  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour and followed by discussion on various subjects. "We hold meetings once a week, but we are prepared to hold more if requested" the leader said.

#### 16. Salop Buddhist Group

This group was established in the mid 1920s by the Venerable Dr. Saddhatissa Maha Thera when Buddha Rupas were installed in the Shrewsbury Shrine Room under the care of, and in the house of, the President, Thos. D. Wright and his wife, at 6 King Street, Cherry Orchard, Shrewsbury.

In the 40 years between the mid 1920s and the mid 1960s this group fluctuated up to approximately 30 members in its most flourishing moments and the Shrine Room at 6 King Street has been intact and cherished throughout. Of the several large images of the Buddha some are loaned from the London Buddhist Society, others were given by Shropshire members long ago, and some are owned by the President and his wife.

A great deal of literature is there, both paperbacks and bound books, with many periodicals also accumulated. This has mostly been given away to various enquirers over the years, and the small residue was passed to the New Group's Secretary in the late 60s, Ebbana Grace Blanchard, 3 Market Street, Shrewsbury. The Shrine Room remained untouched at

6 King Street.

In 1964 Miss Blanchard, the Secretary of the new group and her friend attended the Buddhist Summer School at High Leigh as delegates from the Salop Group.

In 1967 their President, Thos. D. Wrights, severed his connection with the Buddhist Society and withdrew his name from membership according to his old age when he reached the age of 80. Instead of cancelling out of hand, the President of the London Buddhist Society wrote to Miss Blanchard asking if that was the end of the long Shropshire tradition - the oldest group outside London. She offered to take over as a focal point for correspondence and enquires; thus the more modest "Salop Buddhist Group" replaced the older "Shropshire Buddhist Society" gradually during 1967.

There are only 2 members of this group at present; the Secretary herself and one male student only. There was at one time a membership of 30. Public meetings are still held occasionally.

I was informed by the Secretary of the group that "At 72 I have no intention of holding public meetings, but the group is registered at Local Library list and activities and any serious interest is encouraged." But she still lectures, lends books, and gives individual information as required.

This group is not as well organised as it was when it began.

#### 17. Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre

The Tibetan Centre (Samye-Ling) formerly Johnstone House is situated in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. Samye-Ling consists of a large, comfortable house with 25 rooms, and outbuildings, and stands in 19 acres of wooded grounds with the river Esk

forming one of the boundaries of the property. It lies in a quiet valley some fifteen miles from the nearest town, and surrounding hills and woods provide a perfect environment for study and meditation.

This Centre was started in 1965 by Ven. Ananadabodhi, a Canadian Bhikkhu, and I was invited to be a resident teacher there in 1966 when he went to Canada and started the Dharma Centre in Toronto. In the beginning of 1967 we offered the Centre to the Tibetan Sangha, and the Centre was re-organised again in 1967 by Ven. Chogyam Trungpa and Ven. Akong Tarap, both are Tibetans. It is administered by the Johnstone House Trust, a registered Charity.

Under the present administration the Centre has 3 general functions:

Firstly, as a meditation centre where Tibetan lamas in this country may teach and study, the emphasis being on the instruction in the practice of meditation, and where those desirous of entering the Tibetan Sangha, or Buddhist Order of monks, may receive training.

Secondly, it provides a place of quiet and retreat where lay people of all religious beliefs and backgrounds may come for periods of regeneration, instruction and practice of meditation or retreat.

Thirdly, it is a centre where Tibetans in the West may receive religious instruction and where Tibetan art and culture may be preserved.

In addition to these generalities the Centre is specifically a living, changing community where East and West are learning to unite in a spiritual and practical way.

The Trust of the Centre is run by five trustees, four Tibetans and one Englishman.

There is a large Shrine Room which is open day and night for meditation. It contains many religious objects and Thankas painted by Sherapalden Beru, a Tibetan artist there.

A charge will be made to visitors to help towards the cost of food and running expenses of the house, normally visitors will be charged £8.75 per week, and will be requested to share in light household duties, and they can take part in craft activities which include pottery, wood-block printing, candle-making, weaving and dressmaking.

There is no set form of membership but of those visiting the number of men and women appear to be about equal.

They have no meetings in the usual sense, but they have a daily programme as follows:

5.45 a.m.	Rising Bell
6.00 a.m.	Puja
7.00 a.m.	Breakfast
8.00 a.m.	Group Meditation
9.00 a.m.	Interview, Private Meditation
11.00 a.m.	Private Meditation
12.30 p.m.	Lunch
1.30 p.m.	Work
5.00 p.m.	Group Meditation, Hatha Yoga
6.30 p.m.	Soup
7.00 p.m.	Private Meditation
8.00 p.m.	Group Meditation
11.00 p.m.	Bedtime

People stay at the Centre and the numbers vary from about 30 in Winter to about 60 in Summer.

The Centre works and co-operates with the Buddhist Society, London, and the Buddhapadipa Temple, London. Buddhist monks who work in this country are invited to visit and teach there.

In the Christmas holidays 1970 I was invited to teach meditation and give a series of lectures on Buddhism at the Centre once again. I met 35 people who stayed there at that time, and most of them were visitors who had been to the Centre previously and had come again, but some of them were newcomers.

TABLE 9

Showing the nationality and sex of 35 people who stayed in the Tibetan Centre at Christmas time 1970

Nationality	Male	Female	Total
English	13	11	24
American	3	1	4
German	1	2	3
Tibetan	3	1	4
Total	20	15	35

Apart from the 35 people who lived in the Centre there was an American husband and English wife with 1 son who bought land just 1,000 yards from the Centre and built their house there. Both are Buddhists. When I asked them why they built their house near the Centre, they told me that they can help the Centre at any time. There are 5 bedrooms in their house and when the Centre is crowded they can transfer 4 people there. Any money they charge is donated to the Centre.

I was told by the Administrator and the Secretary of the Centre that there are 7 residents including the Trustees, Secretary, and 2 cooks. The Secretary is an English girl from Oxfordshire. Apart from her secretarial work she opened a small shop to sell candles and crafts which were made in the Centre. She told me that with the profit from selling these

she bought cows to give milk in the New Year.

I found that most of the people who came to the Centre were young people which we can see from Table 10.

TABLE 10

Age	Number of persons
Age between 18-30	29
Age between 30-50	4
Age over 50	2
Total	35

In this Table I have not counted one boy who is the son of a couple of an American husband and an English wife, and one girl who is the daughter of the Administrator and his wife who are Tibetans. Both of them were under one year of age when I was there last time.

27 of these people were Buddhist, 3 were Hindus, 2 were Christians, and 3 were non-religions.

The people at this Centre come and go a great deal. Some people just come for a short visit, so it is very difficult to know who is coming and going.

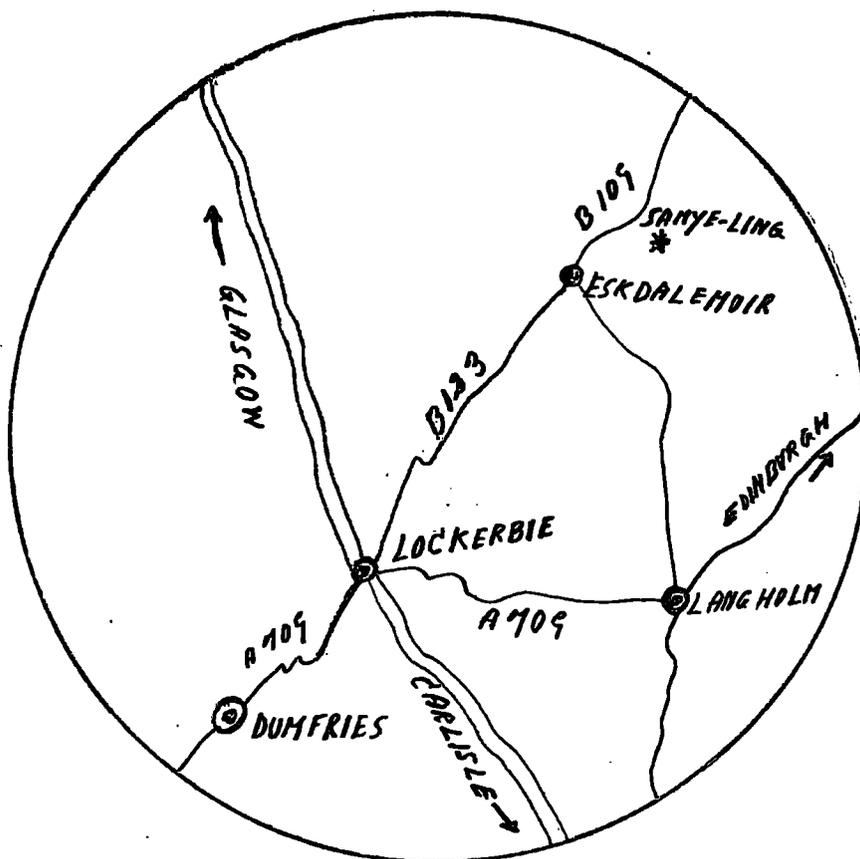
Many times after I have been at the Centre and have returned to London, I have been asked "Where have you been?" I have answered "I have been in Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre." Then some Buddhists in London have smiled and said "Trungpa and Akong made the Centre into a place for young people to play music" or "There are many hippies there, someone told us, that's true?" and so on. That is the opinion which many British Buddhists in London have towards the Centre.

At present a new building is under construction which is expected to be ready in 1972. This building has 5 bedrooms,

so that a further 5 visitors can be received.

MAP 4

Map of the location of Samye-ling



The person to contact is Shetrup Akong Tarap, Administrator, Samye-Ling, Tibetan Centre, Eskdalemuir, Nr. Langholm, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, U.K.

I was informed by Professor I. Sunderland that there is another Tibetan Group in Wales, but it is not a religious group. The Tibetan Group in Wales aims to teach young Tibetans to be good subsistence farmers and to enable them to maintain their culture, identity and corporate dignity.

The Pestalozzi Children's Village in Battle, Hastings cares for 24 Tibetan children. A Tibetan lama and two Tibetan ladies look after the children under the auspices of the

'Pestalozzi Children's Village Committee' (a Charity Trust).  
They are taught how to use farm implements in preparation  
for their return to their settlements.

## UNIVERSITY BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS

There are 8 Buddhist organizations in universities and colleges in England in 1972, but in this thesis I shall discuss only six of them which I know from personal experience.

### 1. Cambridge University Buddhist Society

The Cambridge University Buddhist Society is the strongest among the University Buddhist Societies. It was founded in 1959, working actively ever since.

I paid visits to this society twice to give lectures, and I was informed that for the year 1971-1972 there are 53 members of which 18 are women (although N.B. the exceptionally high male to female ratio in Cambridge) and 35 are male. The number has slowly declined from about 100 in 1967/68; in that year the high membership was perhaps due, among other factors, to the impace made by Trungpa Rimpoche. Before 1967 membership varied between 25 and 50. Membership is open to all for £1 per year.

There are 2 main meetings in this society as follows:-

(1) Weekly Meetings, that is public lectures which take place at 8.30 p.m. in the Eden Room, Trinity Hall. Both monks and laymen who have knowledge of Buddhist Teachings have been invited as speakers. There are public lectures every Friday during term time in the above place.

### (2) Sunday Meditation Class

Instruction in Samatha (Calm) meditation is given by the Thai teacher, Nai Boonman, every Sunday at 4.p.m. in the Right Cloister 7, Magdalene College. This class has continued for nearly 5 years now.



The society is relatively small, comprised of 40 members, the membership appeared to be very steady for the last few years.

The society has an Executive Committee which is elected annually from ordinary members. The policies tended to be very diversified with different committees who exercised their own initiative and the wish of the members.

The society has laid some emphasis on meditation. Films, tea parties, visits to various Viharas, and loan of books. Many speakers have been invited monthly to give lectures and answer questions in their society.

The programme of the society is evidently organised according to the London University Calendar.

The number of members attending is on average about 20. The present committee (May 1969-May 1970) consists of President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Publicity Officer.

The society has its permanent postal address as the Buddhist Culture Society, Imperial College Union, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. It will take as an ordinary member any member of the Imperial College Union who joins, and an outsider may ask to subscribe as an associated member.

Miss Kalaya Pongpoonsuksri, is the President of the Society at the above address, and is the person to contact there.

### 3. Reading University Buddhist Society

This society was founded in May 1965 by Mr. Michael Rogers of London, who was a graduate of the university in that year and Miss Uthaviana Viravaidya of Thailand.

Membership is open to university members and "associate membership" to non-university people. Public talks and certain other activities are subsidised by the Students' Union. The

condition that full membership be restricted to university members is an academic one. In fact there is no practical distinction.

For the first year membership was about six and the society organised about three lectures every term. Amongst the speakers at these open meetings were Ven. Sangharakshita, Ven. Chao Khun Sobhana Dhammasudhi, Ven. Sayadaw U Thittila, Rev. Jack Austin.

I was informed that it was their main aim at that time to make Buddhism known to people who knew nothing at all about it and who were generally suspicious of a Buddhist Society. People were especially reluctant to commit themselves by becoming members. Attendance at talks ranged between 15 and 80.

In Autumn 1967 in addition to public lectures the society began to meet regularly every Sunday for meditation sessions, under the guidance of Ven. Sangharakshita. There were about 30 members, and 15 of these met regularly for meditation.

There are regular meetings every Sunday for meditation, tape recordings of talks, and discussion.

As most students rarely stay at the university for more than 3 years, membership is constantly changing.

Also, to quote actual figures is difficult as many are still reluctant to formally join, while others join many societies when they first come to university, but often fail to attend a single meeting.

Several members regularly attend the various retreats and meditation centres such as the Vipassana Centre at Hind-head, Surrey, Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre, Scotland and Ven. Sangharakshita's retreat at Haslemere, and the Buddhist Summer School.

For the session 1971-1972 there are 27 members, 15 are men and 12 are women.

Meditation classes are held every Sunday at 3 p.m., and 6 public lectures take place every year.

The average number attending is 10 for meditation meetings, and about 30 for public lectures.

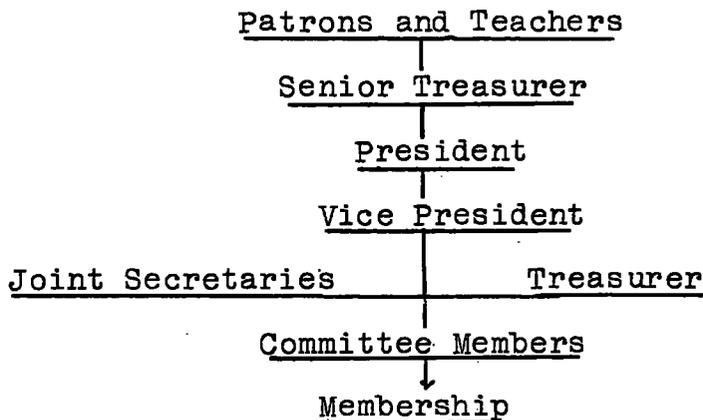
The person to contact here is Mr. George Akill, 46 Falstaff Avenue, Reading.

I was informed that 14 Thai students from the university joined the society but, although they have paid subscriptions and attend public lectures, they rarely come to meetings.

#### 4. Durham University Buddhist Society

This new Buddhist group is formed by a small group of students who came to practise meditation with myself when I came to Durham in 1970. In May 1971 Vesak Festival was performed in Dunelm House, the Students headquarters in Durham. There were many students who wanted the group to become a university society so it could get grants from the Students' Union. So on the 8th October, 1971 on the Society Day of D.S.U. a full committee was officially formed and received new members for the session 1971-72.

The structure of the Durham University Buddhist Society is as follows:-



This society has 42 members on the list in 1971-72, 29 are men and 13 are women; but, in addition, there are outsiders who just attend meetings. 39 members of this society are students and another 3 are outsiders who are "associate members." The society exists to explain, promote and give practical lessons in Buddhism to any denomination or creed. So the members of this society are not all Buddhists, only 11 members are Buddhists, the others being interested to study Buddhism and Buddhist meditation.

The Treasurer of the society is a Catholic, and one member of the society is a former Catholic and became a Buddhist recently. One member is a Methodist minister.

There are two types of meeting:

Firstly, weekly meetings, that is Meditation Lessons with Buddhist monks every Wednesday at 8.15 p.m. in J.C.R. St. Mary's College. This meeting begins with meditation instruction, a period of meditation, talks on meditation or basic Buddhism, discussion and ends with tea. Also every Monday a group of members who wish to practise meditation more than once a week come to a meditation group with a teacher at Room 21 K, Van Mildert College at 8.00p.m.

Secondly, there are 3 public lectures per term. As a rule speakers are invited to lecture on various subjects in Elvet Riverside.

There was trouble getting a place for meetings in the beginning, because they wanted to use the Chapel of Van Mildert College for meditation meetings. They contacted the Chaplain and Master of the College and asked for permission. The Chaplain and Master told them that they could not decide by themselves but had to ask the Christian students who are members of the College Chapel at their meeting. The result

of that meeting was that most Christian students decided not to allow the Buddhist Society to use the Chapel; the reason given was that the Chapel belongs to Christianity and it is reserved for Christian use only. Although it was suggested that the Chapel belongs to the College, so members of the College can use it as a religious place, and Buddhists have the right to use it as well, the majority of the people at the meeting decided not to allow the Buddhist Society to use Van Mildert College Chapel.

However, there are some members of the Buddhist Society who live in St. Mary's College, especially the joint Secretaries of the Society. They asked that College if they could use the J.C.R. (Junior Common Room) of that College for meditation meetings on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m. during term time, and the College agreed to this. So the problem of the meeting place was solved, but for public lectures there is no problem because the society belongs to the university so Elvet Riverside can be used for public meetings just as any society which belongs to the University may.

The number of persons who attend meditation meetings can be as high as 30 and as low as 10, and the number of persons who attend public lectures is about 15 to 40. At the Vesak Festivals in 1971 and 1972 over 100 people attended. This festival takes place once a year.

The society gets a grant of £25 per year from the Students' Union. The London Buddhist Society (the headquarters) gives £10 a year. Subscription for membership is 30 pence each.

Contact could be made through the President of the Society, Harry Cook, University College, Durham, or to joint-Secretaries: W. Y. Chung, or S. Cadge, St. Mary's College,

Durham.

Some outsiders who have attended the meditation meetings (students from Newcastle University) invited the monks from this group to set up a new group and open meditation meetings in Newcastle once a week. There are about 20 persons who are ready to join the new group in Newcastle.

#### 5. Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society

The Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society was founded to replace the old 'Hull Buddhist Centre' which worked actively since it was formed on July 16th 1965 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Max W. Craven Jackson, closing in July, 1971.

The factors against the continuance of the old society are as follows:

- A. Deteriorating health of the old Chairman, Mr. Max Craven Jackson.
- B. The fact that they had no source of income to cover advertising, room-booking and other costs.
- C. The mass of work, lecture demands, unexpected visitors at all hours, heavy correspondence etc. with which the Chairman and his wife could not cope alone.

I was told by the old Chairman that "We 'died' not of failure but of over success, lack of staff and inability to meet heavy costs. Perhaps the best thing we did was to lecture to hundreds of school children on "Buddhism" every year. When health permits, I shall resume this school work, and possibly revive the 'Centre' at some future date. I continue to have a small private Buddhist Group here, and my wife's services and mine continue to be at the disposal of local press and radio."

The new society was founded after the Group's conference at the Buddhist Summer School in August last year (1971). I met the new Chairman of the new Society there. He said that he would like to form the 'University Buddhist and Vedanta Society' in Hull, to replace the old one which closed down last July, to help the members of the old society and receive new members in Hull University. Many people who were interested in Vedanta in Hinduism would also like to join the society. So the new society would like to use the name 'The Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society.' This then caters for both those who are Buddhists or interested in the study of Buddhism, and also those who are Hindus or who are interested in Vedanta Hindu philosophy.

Now we can compare the number of members of the old and new societies in Hull.

- (1) The Hull Buddhist Centre had no members officially, but there was an attendance in their regular weekly meetings of 30 who came regularly, and 50 was not uncommon. About 55% of each audience was male, 45% female. I was told by the old Chairman that "With increasing health difficulty, and since I was the main speaker, these meetings were discarded, and weekly meetings of a more selective nature held at my house. About 16 of both sexes attended, for talks, a meditation period, and discussion."
- (2) "The Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society has 30 members, 15 are men and 15 are women." But the new society has official members, because it belongs to the Hull University.

The Hull Buddhist Centre held regular weekly public meetings, and the Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society hold weekly discussion meetings and public lectures occasionally.

The number of persons attending the meetings is about 20 to 30.

Contact with the new society could be made through the Chairman, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society, Students' Union, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.

#### 6. Manchester University Buddhist Society

It was formed in February, 1971 by Lance Cousins, a lecturer in the Department of Comparative Religion, Manchester University, a former President of Cambridge University Buddhist Society for the past few years. When he came up to Manchester to teach in this university he tried to set up a new group in the university in co-operation with two other Buddhist groups in Manchester. These are the Manchester Buddhist Society and Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association.

The new society works rather more actively than the old two groups, because they work among students and young people.

I paid a visit to the new group last on the 8th October, 1971 to give a lecture, and I was informed by the Chairman of the group that his aim is to unite the two old groups in Manchester, and try to set up a Buddhist Vihara in this big city in the near future. He tries to give as much information as possible about Buddhism to young people.

The society gets support in 2 ways:

- a. from the members' subscription 25 p. each per year,
- b. from grants from the university £20 a year.

The Manchester University Buddhist Society has 57 members at present, 40 members are men and 17 members are women. It has been in existence for almost one year, but it seemed to be growing quickly according to the leader of this group. He

told me that he had previous experience of organization from Cambridge, where he used to be the President of a group for a few years before he came up to Manchester.

There are 2 types of meetings:

1. Public meetings weekly, during term time to which different speakers are invited to give lectures.
2. Meditation classes every Sunday during term time.

Meetings are held in Room S.G.1, The Art Building, University of Manchester.

The attendance at public lectures is about 30-60, and for meditation meetings about 10-30.

The society is run by a Committee including Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and 6 other Committee members.

Correspondence should be sent to A. Dolan, Esq., Manchester University Buddhist Society, 26 Green Walk, Manchester 16, Tel.881-4649.

The Chairman told me that "We plan to perform Vesak Festival this year in Manchester in co-operation with the two other Buddhist groups here."

ConclusionTABLE 11

Showing the number and sex of members of each Buddhist organization in the provinces and at universities.

Name of Organization	Membership		Total
	Male	Female	
1. Aberdeen Buddhist Society	3	6	9
2. Belfast Buddhist Society	9	1	10
3. Bromley Buddhist Centre	8	12	20
4. Doncaster Buddhist Society	5	1	6
5. Dover Buddhist Group	14	3	17
6. East Sussex Buddhist Society	6	6	12
7. Edinburgh Buddhist Group	4	6	10
8. Hampshire Buddhist Society	*	*	30
9. Isolated Buddhist Groups (Tape Recording)	8	-	8
10. Harlow Buddhist Group	32	18	50
11. Liverpool Buddhist Group	12	8	20
12. Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association	36	24	60
13. Midland Buddhist Society	18	12	30
14. Mousehole Buddhist Group	4	2	6
15. Nottingham Buddhist Society	8	-	8
16. Salop Buddhist Group	1	1	2
17. Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre	*	*	** 30-60
18. Tibetan Group in Wales	8	2	10
19. Cambridge University Buddhist Society	35	18	53
20. The Buddhist Culture Society, Imperial College	*	*	40
21. Reading University Buddhist Society	15	12	27
22. Durham University Buddhist Society	29	13	42
23. Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society	15	15	30
24. Manchester University Buddhist Society	40	17	57
Total	300	177	587-617

Note: \* is unknown number of sexes

\*\* is minimum and maximum number of visiting members of Tibetan Centre, Scotland.

1. From Table 11 we notice that: Of these groups two Buddhist organizations have only male members: they are the Isolated Buddhist Group in Glasgow and the Nottingham Buddhist Society.

There are 3 groups with more female than male members: the Aberdeen Buddhist Society, the Bromley Buddhist Centre, and the Edinburgh Buddhist Group.

Three groups have an equal sex ratio. They are the East Sussex Buddhist Society, the Salop Buddhist Group, and the Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society.

There are 13 organizations with more male than female members.

2. In two groups the numbers are decreasing: the East Sussex Buddhist Society and the Salop Buddhist Group.

3. Overall there are fewer female than male members in provincial and university Buddhist groups.

#### BUDDHIST GROUP CONFERENCE

Normally the Buddhist Society, London, will arrange Group Conferences nearly every year. The Group Conferences are usually held at the headquarters, and there might be a Group Conference at the Buddhist Summer School each year, for the leaders of the provincial groups who attend the Summer School and for those who are interested to form new groups in this country, linked with the London Buddhist Society.

In June 1966 a conference of the Buddhist Groups in England, lasting for 2 days, was held, at which eleven of the twenty-one then working outside London were represented. A

long agenda was patiently considered, covering all aspects of the work of such Groups, in which the experience of the oldest Society as well as more material aid might be of value. The parent Society, to which the Groups agreed to be affiliated, distributed books for lending libraries and sale, and warned the groups of the trials and tribulations, divisions and dissensions which all but a few would face.

The idea of Mr. W. G. Halford of Newcastle-on-Tyne to organise help for 'Isolated Buddhists' living far from an active group was welcomed. Future conferences have consolidated this mutual assistance between Groups and individuals, and the first regional Conference has already been held.

"Last year's Group Conference, held on the 17th of April, was historic in that, for the first time, there were members of the Sangha from Thailand, Ceylon and Tibet sitting with delegates representing their various organizations,"<sup>1</sup> said Christmas Humphreys in his report.

Far fewer groups are dying out, and more, such as the Harlow Buddhist Group which recently won the first prize at the Town Exhibition with its 'Buddhist Stall,' are becoming well established. The Harlow Buddhist Group, the Devon Buddhist Group and the Hampshire Buddhist Society all illustrate the trend toward a great involvement in social welfare work. The Conference was useful enough for the delegates to ask that another be held on the Summer School 28th August and on 30th-31st October, 1971.

On 28th August, 1971 the Groups Conference was held at the Summer School in Hertfordshire, and I was invited to attend the Conference as a representative of the Buddhapadipa Temple, London. The Conference accepted the two new groups which have

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1. Christmas Humphreys, The President's Report, The Middle Way, Vol. XLVI, NO. 3, November, 1971, p. 126.

been formed recently; these were the Durham University Buddhist Society and the Hull University Buddhist and Vedanta Society. The Headquarters agreed to give grants of £10 to each new group and to supply books for lending libraries and sale. The delegates from various groups exchanged their experiences.

On 30th and 31st October, 1971, a Groups Conference was again held at the Headquarters in London. Delegates from most of the 36 Buddhist organizations in Great Britain were represented for the 2 day Conference.

#### THEIR RELATIONS

From my observation the relationships amongst provincial groups and university groups are good, because the groups are not large like those in Greater London. Members of one group may visit other groups. For example some members of the Liverpool Buddhist Group came to Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association when I went to give lectures there, and I saw some members of the Manchester Groups at the Liverpool Buddhist Group when, similarly, I went to give lectures there. I met many members of London groups, the Cambridge Group, the Brighton Group, the Edinburgh Group, and the Oxford Group and so on when I went to teach meditation at the Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Scotland. Many members of the provincial Groups come to visit, join classes, lectures and meditation meetings at the Buddhapadipa Temple in London. These included members of the Hampshire Buddhist Society, the Brighton Buddhist Society, the Harlow Buddhist Group, the Midland Buddhist Society, the Liverpool Buddhist Group, the Bromley Buddhist Centre, the Reading University Buddhist Society and so on.

The members of Buddhist organizations in the United Kingdom moved around to visit and co-operate with each other freely.

However, conflicts between provincial groups still occur, for example:

The Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association and the Manchester Buddhist Society (the older one) do not usually co-operate at all.

I was told that the big difference of opinion is that the members of the Manchester Buddhist Society held the opinion that "monks are not necessary to teach or to lead their society." The members of the Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association hold the view that "monks are needed to teach Buddhism and lead activities in their group." Due to this disagreement the Manchester Buddhist Society has never invited monks to teach there, since the new group broke away. The new group (the Manchester Buddha-Dhamma Association) has invited monks to teach in their group regularly, as a rule once a month, apart from their regular meetings; this group does not link up with the Headquarters, but they have connections with the Buddhapadipa Temple and the London Buddhist Vihara in London.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BUDDHIST MOVEMENT

In the last century there has been a widespread revival of Buddhism in the East, and this spiritual awakening has reached the West in many forms. The efforts of the Pali Text Society, and of early translators of Mahayana Buddhist Scriptures, prepared the way before the first world war for the propagation of Buddhism in Great Britain as a living faith.

In 1924 a group of practising Buddhists collected old members of the Buddhist Society which, with its organ The Buddhist Review, had ceased to function, and formed the Buddhist Lodge, London. In 1926 they founded their monthly magazine, Buddhism in England, and thereafter published a steady supply of literature on Buddhism from the Western point of view.

In 1943 the Lodge became the Buddhist Society, London, and its magazine 'The Middle Way.' It has now acquired fine premises at 58 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1.

"The interest of the West in Buddhism is steadily increasing"<sup>1</sup> said Christmas Humphreys, as the sale of Buddhist literature and the interest shown by the Press are proving day by day, and it may be that from the fusion of the diverse Schools of Buddhism a Western Buddhism is being slowly born.

After the second world war there has been considerable renewed interest among British people and some twenty-five local Buddhist societies exist in a number of towns and universities up and down Britain. At present (1972) there are 36 Buddhist organizations in Great Britain.

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1. Christmas Humphreys, Buddhism and the Buddhist Movement Today, leaflet of The Buddhist Society, p.16.

So we can see the Buddhist movement in Britain is active. The monks and the Buddhist leaders are busy spreading the knowledge of their faith, translating the Scriptures and lecturing all around the country.

#### BUDDHIST SUMMER SCHOOL

Every year between August and September the headquarters of the Buddhist Society arranges the Buddhist Summer School for its members and people from different Buddhist societies. Even people who are not Buddhists may come and study Buddhism at the Summer School.

I was invited to teach meditation and Theravada Buddhism in the Summer School for four years consecutively (1968-1971). From my observation the Summer School Committee seemed to be successful in organizing this project, because each year more people attend.

The following numbers attended the Summer School in 1970 and 1971:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Total</u>
1970	86	96	182
1971	103	108	211

I was told by the Chairman and the Secretary of the Summer School that each year the numbers are increasing, and people who come to the Summer School come from different parts of the United Kingdom, from continental countries such as France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Italy and some also from America.

Figure I shows how many people from different countries came to the Summer School in 1971.

FIGURE I

Attendance at the Summer School 20-29th August, 1971

Distribution by country of residence.

Name of country	Mén	Women	Total
Great Britain	90	103	193
Sweden	2	1	3
Germany	1	1	2
France	1	-	1
Holland	1	1	2
Denmark	1	-	1
Italy	1	-	1
Thailand	1	-	1
Ceylon	1	-	1
Indonesia	1	-	1
America	1	1	2
Ireland	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>211</b>

The aim of the Summer School is to bring together people who are interested in Buddhist teachings to practise Buddhism in the holiday time. They can attend many classes, discussions, seminars, lectures or even meditation for the whole 10 days, and they are free to join whichever school of Buddhism they prefer, in order to study and practise by themselves.

The Location of the Summer School

The Buddhist Summer School has been held in the Conference Hall, High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Herts. for 20 years. The last Summer School was the 20th Annual Buddhist Summer School which was held between 20-29th August, 1971.

This place has accommodation for 200 people. Many religious groups or groups of scientists, educationalists etc.

also use it for conferences.

There are three big buildings which can be used as temporary residences for people who come to the conference, with the conference hall in the main building with seating accommodation for 200-250 people.

People who would like to join the Summer School have to book in advance through the Buddhist Society.

The cost of attendance for 10 days including room and meals etc. is about £18, but people who come for the weekend only may have a reduction in fees.

On the first day of the Summer School the Buddhist Society will arrange a special coach for people who come to the Summer School.

Now let us look at the Time Table of the Buddhist Summer School which is as follows:

Time Table

(Attendance at all occasions is, of course,  
voluntary)

8.30 a.m.	Breakfast
9.30 a.m.	Meditation
10.15-11.0 a.m.	Discussion on the Lecture of the previous evening.
11.0-11.20 a.m.	Coffee break
11.20-12.15 p.m.	Study class: Basic teaching in various Buddhist Schools
12.30-1.0 p.m.	Lunch
1.30-4.0 p.m.	Free
4.00-p.m.	Tea
4.30-6.30 p.m.	Available for classes to be arranged by members
7.00-8.00 p.m.	Dinner
8.10 p.m.	Evening lecture.

I found that the evening lecture is most crowded, because everybody come to the hall. Some evenings even people who stay outside High Leigh come to listen to the lecture. This makes the hall more crowded than normal. For the rest of the programme during the day many different classes are arranged and people can go individually to whichever one they like; such classes are arranged as Mahayana class, Theravada class, Zen class, Tibetan class, Meditation class, and Japanese flower arrangement etc.

The number of the people attending each class is between 50-70. The Zen class which was taken by Mr. Christmas Humphreys and the Theravada class which was taken by myself were quite well attended; there were about 50 people on average in each.

However, it appeared that some people who came to the Summer School did not attend classes at all. One lady told me that she knew a few ladies who came to the Summer School who told her that during the 10 days they attended 4 evening lectures only. During the day they just stayed in their own rooms or walked to the wood nearby or just talked to friends.

From this point of view the Summer School looks like a social meeting place, or holiday place for people who come to see each other once a year. I do not know whether this story is true or not, because I found many people, who told me that there are so many classes during a day, that they cannot attend them all. Some people complained that in the Summer School there is too much food to eat and too many classes to attend. Most of them were satisfied, however, by the programme which was arranged by the committee.

### What Kind of People come to the Summer School

Most of the people come to the Summer School year after year. About 80% are Buddhists and about 20% are non-Buddhists and newcomers. Last Summer School was a crowded one and there was not enough room for all the people to stay at High Leigh. Some had to stay at hotels in Hoddesdon, a nearby town, and came out to classes and lectures during the day.

Apart from British people I met some young people from Sweden - 2 boys and 1 girl. All are students, but the girl had just finished a B.A. in History. Three of them said they were Buddhists, they told me that they studied Buddhism in Sweden, and that there are 2 Buddhist Groups in Sweden. I met one Danish Buddhist and one Italian Buddhist, one French Buddhist and two Dutch Buddhists last year at the School.

Apart from Buddhists whom I met, I met one English girl who had just come to the Buddhist Summer School for the first time. "I am not a Buddhist" she told me. She came to the Summer School with her mother to ask someone to help her solve a problem, because she could not sleep properly - she slept very little every night. Her mother brought her to see me for advice. So I advised her as best I could. The day after that she told me that she had slept better, and sometimes she attended my classes afterwards.

### Food and Drink

Most Western Buddhists believe that "to be a good Buddhist one must be a vegetarian too." That means they observe the first precept properly. So many Western Buddhists are vegetarians.

In Buddhist Summer Schools arrangements are made for both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. I noticed that vegetarian

food was arranged on 5 tables with similar arrangements for non-vegetarian food, and people could choose whichever they liked; there were 20 people to a table. So we can see that half the Buddhists who come to the Summer School are vegetarian and half are non-vegetarian.

But in fact to be a Buddhist it is not necessary to be a vegetarian, and also to be a vegetarian it is not necessary to be a Buddhist.

Of 101 people in the U.K. frequenting Buddhist institutions, whom I interviewed, I found that only one-third were vegetarians. The numbers are shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

Showing sex distribution and food habits of 101 people in U.K. in 1971

Food	Sex	
	Male	Female
(1) Vegetarian	9	23
(2) Non-vegetarian	31	38
total	40	61

The percentage of vegetarian people in Buddhist Summer School is higher than the figure which I got from the result of my interview. And also the percentage of women who come to the Summer School is higher than that of men which is shown on page 128 already.

#### Some Observations

High Leigh is often used for religious conferences. There are many religious groups who come for seminars there. I was told by a young lady who came to Summer School that one day some people asked the manager of this place to compare the

difference between Buddhists and other religious groups who come there.

He replied that there were two differences between Buddhists and other religious groups who come here:

1. During meal times in the Dining Room Buddhists are more quiet than the other religious groups and they are very helpful to our staff, because Buddhists do not drink, but the others drink a lot.
2. Buddhists are more sexy than the other religious groups. This applies to the way they dress as well as their behaviour.

### BUDDHIST MISSION

#### The First Buddhist Mission to England

One of the first Englishmen to adopt Buddhism as his religion was Charles Henry Allan Bennett who journeyed to Ceylon in 1898 as "a self-converted Buddhist."<sup>1</sup> After his studying in both Ceylon and Burma, he was admitted to the Burmese branch of the Buddhist Sangha on the Full Moon of May, 1902.

At his ordination he was given the name Ananda Metteyya, and shortly after his ordination Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya, as Bennett was now styled, founded the International Buddhist Society or Buddhhasasana Samagama in Rangoon.

The Burmese preparations continued apace. At a meeting in December, Ananda Metteyya announced the formation of the English Branch, transferring the work of the Society to England, during the period of the mission's work, which was limited to the months of May to October 1908. Mrs. Hla Oung, then Hon. Treasurer of the Society, who with her son, Mr. Ba Hla Oung, decided to accompany the Mission to England,

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1. Humphreys, C., Sixty Years of Buddhism in England, 1968, p.2.

generously agreed to defray its considerable expenses, and passages were booked.

Ananda Metteyya with his Burmese supporters planned a mission to England for the purpose of spreading Buddhism. To receive this mission a number of English devotees of Buddhism founded the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 1907.

These plans were sent ahead, and Dr. E. R. Rost, as the London agent of the Rangoon Society, took two small houses at Barnes to house the Mission. All being ready, a deputation of the members of the Buddhist Society, accompanied by interested Press, went down to the London Docks, where, on April 23rd 1908, they received the first Buddhist Mission to England.

#### Second Buddhist Mission

The Anagarika Dharmapala was born in Ceylon in 1865. In 1880 he came under the influence of H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott, the founders of the Theosophical Society, and four years later joined that Society. Upon the express advice of Mme. Blavatsky he took up the study of Pali and, renouncing the householder's life, spent the remainder of his days in the revival and spread of Buddhism in East and West. In 1886 he assisted Colonel Olcott in his campaign for the founding of Buddhist schools, and with him travelled far and wide under the name of the Anagarika Dharmapala, the 'homeless Protector of the Dhamma.' In 1891, the year of Mme. Blavatsky's death, he visited Buddha Gaya, the famous site of Buddhist pilgrimage, and straight away resolved to agitate for its return to purely Buddhist hands. To this end he formed in Calcutta the Maha Bodhi Society which, founded on May 31st 1891, is "the oldest existing Buddhist Society" (Humphreys, 1968, p.22).

In 1925 the Anagarika Dharmapala came to London to establish the Buddhist Mission. A property was acquired the following year in Ealing, Middlesex, which boasted the support of leading native-born Buddhists. In 1928 the Vihara moved to Gloucester Road, Regents Park, and three Bhikkhus from Ceylon took up residence.

On July 8th, 1928, a meeting was held at 41 Gloucester Road, to welcome the three Bhikkhus from Ceylon Pandits Parawahera Vajiranana, Hegoda Nandasara and Dehigaspe Pannasara were all eager to make Buddhist history, but were totally unversed in Western ways of thought and but little versed in the English tongue. All learnt English rapidly but the Ven. Vajiranana alone stayed long enough and travelled widely enough to understand to some extent the needs of Western psychology. The three Bhikkhus were brought to England under the care of Depapriya Walisinha, the late General Secretary to The Maha Bodhi Society, who helped them to form classes for the study of Buddhism and Meditation.

#### The Third Buddhist Mission

Ven. Tai Hsu, Abbot of Nan Pu To Monastery, Amay, President of the Buddhist Education Association of Nanking, and described by someone who knew of his work as the greatest single factor in the revival of Buddhism in China, had come to Europe to study Western Buddhism, as part of his far-reaching scheme for organizing an 'International Institute of Buddhist Studies in Europe' with a committee in each capital representative of all Buddhist associations of whatever school. He told the meeting through an interpreter, that he had been active in the revival of Chinese Buddhism since the age of twenty. Having founded the Chinese Buddhist Association of Nanking, he went into retirement for four years, for medita-

tion and the study of European and Chinese philosophy. He then began to write and lecture, founded the Hai Cha'o Yin (Voice of the Tide) as the printed medium of the national revival which he contemplated, and began to train a large body of students to spread the Teaching of the Buddha throughout the land.

He was later invited to Germany, and returned home convinced of the need of making Buddhism known in Europe generally.

In 1928, at the age of forty, he once more came to Europe, and having delivered a series of lectures in Paris arrived in London, the third Buddhist missionary to reach England. On 4th November, he was welcomed at the British Mahā-Bodhi Society and on the following evening at the Buddhist Society. On the latter occasion he asked Mr. Humphreys, the President of the Buddhist Society to form the London Committee of his International Buddhist Union. "And I agreed. Considering that he spent but a few hours with each European organization it is amazing what enthusiasm he generated" said Humphreys (Humphreys, 1968, p.33). He left next day for Germany, but he returned from there to Paris and so inspired his audiences that a group was formed by Miss Constant Lounsbury and called, at the Venerable Abbot's wish, Les Amis du Bouddhisme. Mr. and Mrs. Humphreys were actually present at the founding meeting on their way back from their holidays in Switzerland, and were thus able to form a link between the new group and the Buddhist Society, London.

#### English Bhikkhus

In 1926 there was a surprise visitor to the Buddhist Society, he was the Venerable Dorje Prajnananda, who was born in London in 1877 as Frederick Fletcher. While a student at Oxford, he read The Light of Asia, and later went on a holiday

to Ceylon. There he was introduced to the High Priest Suman-gala and the Anagarika Dharmapala, and studied the Dhamma under their care. From Ceylon he went on a lecture tour in America and then returned to England, where he entered the Army.

During the War he rose to the rank of Major, but the suffering and death he witnessed made him resolve to leave the world and enter the Sangha as soon as the war was over.

In 1922-23 he went with McGovern, Ellam and G.E.O. Knight on a long expedition into Tibet where he stayed for a year at Shigadze, and had audience with Panchen Lama. He entered the Yellow Cap Order as a samanera - the first Englishman to do so - but returned to Ceylon in 1924 for ordination into the Sangha of the Southern School of Buddhism. As a Bhikkhu he travelled on foot the length and breadth of India, following from point to point the holy places of Buddhism. Then, hearing of the beauty of Burma, he made Rangoon his headquarters, and save for periodical pilgrimages in India and the Himalayas and this trip to London, has worked there ever since.

It has long been the dream of Western Buddhists to found a Western 'Chapter' of Bhikkhus of the Order, who would in turn be empowered to train and ordain a new generation without the necessity of the Eastern training for which the Western body is not adapted, and which breaks the health of so many who attempt it. Meanwhile, the list of English Bhikkhus grows.

In November, 1950, an English member, Mr. David Lingwood, received ordination at Sarnath, India, and became Bhikkhu Sangharakshita. Later Mr. Fran Allen of the Buddhist Vihara Society in England was ordained in Ceylon as the Bhikkhu Siri Nyana, and in 1952 Mr. Cyril Moore, after a period of study in Ceylon, took the Robe in Rangoon as the Bhikkhu Kevalananda. His early death in September, 1954, has robbed the Sangha and

the Society of a valuable exponent of the Dhamma.

All these, however, always intended to work in the East, and the first English Bhikkhu to take the Robe in modern times for the sole purpose of working in the West is Mr. W. A. Purfurst, who was accepted as the Samanera Dhammananda in London by the Ven. Sayadaw U. Thittila, and became the Bhikkhu Kapilavaddho at Wesak, 1954, in Bangkok.

Most of the English Bhikkhus came back to spread Buddhism in Britain, but some of them prefer to live in the East. Bhikkhu Kapilavaddho came back from Bangkok in 1956, and Bhikkhu Sangharashita came back to England from India in 1965, and then they began to work for Buddhism and spread Buddhist Teachings in Britain.

#### The Buddhist Vihara Society in Britain

On April 18th, 1948, certain members of the Buddhist Society and others founded the Buddhist Vihara Society in England with the object of expediting the founding of a Vihara in London where Bhikkhus might live, teach and form a nucleus of the Theravada Sangha. The founder was Mrs. A. Rant; the Ven. Narada, a Maha Thera of the Vajirarama Monastery in Ceylon, was nominated as President, with Miss Constant Lounsbery of Les Amis du Bouddhisme in Paris, and Miss I. B. Horner, the noted Pali scholar, as Vice-Presidents. The idea of a Vihara for London had been mooted ever since the Anagarika Dharmapala arrived in London in 1925.

The new Society merely added to the vocal demand for such an institution, but has served the needs of London by lectures and study classes held at 29 Belgrave Road, S.W.1, premises leased by the Burmese in London and run by the Kappiya Group, a number of Burmese dedicated to assist in such work. The most useful work of the new group, however, was to sponsor a

visit to London by the Venerable Narada in Summer 1949, when he lectured far and wide.

From Figure 3 we can see the number of Buddhist missionaries and religious teachers in Great Britain today. The missionaries are mostly monks and a nun, but the religious teachers are laymen, and mostly they are Englishmen.

FIGURE 3

Showing the number of Buddhist missionaries in Great Britain in 1971

The Sangha		Lay teachers	
1. English monks	1	1. Men teachers	21
2. Thai monks	7	2. Women teachers	12
3. Ceylonese monks	2		
4. Tibetan monks	4		
5. Japanese monk	1		
6. British nun	1		
Total	16		33

THE WESTERN CONVERT TO BUDDHISM

The convert to Buddhism can be considered from several points of view.

In my interviews and investigation of many members of Buddhist organizations in Great Britain I found that British Buddhists had been converted to Buddhism in different ways, and many of them are self-converted Buddhists.

This is shown in Table 12 which is based on a sample of 101 British Buddhists.

TABLE 12

Showing the approach to Buddhism for 101 people  
in the U.K.

How they are introduced to Buddhism	
1. They learned about Buddhism by reading books or studied comparative religion.	50
2. They heard about Buddhism from friends.	51
3. They attended a meditation retreat or meditation courses.	53

Note: This Table shows that some people may approach Buddhism by only one of these ways, others by two ways or all three ways.

And in Table 13 let us see 75 Buddhists in the U.K. whom I interviewed. They belong to different schools of Buddhism and they visit Buddhist and non-Buddhist organizations.

TABLE 13

Showing 75 Buddhists who belong to three different schools, and the frequency of their visits to Buddhist or non-Buddhist organizations.

75 Buddhists belong to different schools			Visit to other Buddhist organizations		Visit to non-Buddhist organizations	
Theravada	Zen	Tibetan				
48	22	5	1. Once a week or more often	5	1. Once a week or more often	-
			2. Less often than once a week	62	2. Less often than once a week	8
48	22	5		67		8

Now we can look closely at 101 people in the U.K. who became Buddhists and remain in their old religions in Table 14.

TABLE 14  
Showing Religion at birth, Present religion, Religion of parents,  
wife or husband, of 101 people in U.K. in 1971

Religion at birth		Present religion		Religion of parents		Types of religion of husbands and wives	
Christianity: Catholic Protestant as follows: Church of England Methodist Congregational Baptist Buddhism Hinduism	20	Buddhism	75	Christian parents	62	Buddhists had Christian husbands	12
		Christianity:		Buddhist parents	3	Buddhists had Christian wives	3
		Protestant	17	Christian and Buddhist parents	1	Buddhists had Muslim husbands	2
		Catholic	3	No religion of parents	1	Buddhist had a Catholic husband	1
		Hinduism	2			Hindu had a Catholic husband	1
		No religion	4			Hindu had a Christian husband	1
						Buddhists had Buddhist husbands	11
						Protestants had Christian husbands	2
						Catholic had a Buddhist husband	1
Total	101		101		67		34

Western Buddhists

Just as the number of people who are interested in Buddhism is increasing throughout the world, the number in the West is also rising.

It is very difficult to say how many Buddhists there are in Great Britain or in Europe. We can get information in many ways. According to Kōshō Yamamoto, "If we are to have a rough number of new Buddhists, England and Germany will head the list."<sup>1</sup> and he cites AMA's estimate of some 20,000 as a rough number of German Buddhists.

Also, if we think about Buddhists in Great Britain, we may get some information from the contributions of Mrs. I. R. Quittner and Mr. Russell Webb to the "Subject for Sunday," first broadcast on B.B.C. Radio 4 on 8th November, 1970. Interviewed by George Scott, he answered to the question "How many Buddhists would you say there were in this country?"

"Well, the figure ranges from 10,000 up to 30,000 although I think that these figures are perhaps a little exaggerated."

Int: "Are most of these English people?"

R.W.: "I would think so, Yes. I would think that especially since the war an increasing number of young people have come to Buddhism because they feel dissatisfied with Christianity or with the "Establishment" in general and feel that somehow Buddhism can offer them a new way of life."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Kōshō Yamamoto, Buddhism in Europe, the Kasinbunko, 1967, pp.29,30.
  2. I. R. Quittner and Russell Webb, Buddhists in Britain, Buddhist Quarterly, Vol.3, No.3 Winter 1970-71 of London Buddhist Vihara, pp.6,7.

### Buddhists

Buddhists are generally rather cheerful people. It is a mistake to think that the Buddhist view of life is one of pessimism or despair. If you were to meet a Buddhist monk, a man with a shaven head wearing an orange coloured robe and perhaps sandals, he might at first appear rather solemn; but as you talked to him you would find that he was in fact a very good humoured and friendly person. As Trevor Ling said in his book that "The same is true of the ordinary Buddhist lay people of Ceylon, Burma, Japan, China, Thailand and Vietnam, whether farmers or teachers or government officials or even statesmen like U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations; basically they are among the happiest and pleasantest people you would meet."<sup>1</sup>

### The Reasons for becoming Buddhist

Many British Buddhists are most often asked "Why have you become a Buddhist." A typical answer can be quoted from Dorothy C. Donath:

"I became a Buddhist because Buddhism (The Buddha-Dharma) is a religion of reason; it is pragmatic but at the same time preeminently of the Spirit - and so a deeply satisfying way of life; because it imposes no creeds or dogmas and demands no submission to or blind faith in any separate deity, person, or thing, and thus is devoid of every dualistic belief and concept; because it teaches unity with all life everywhere, and compassion for every living being, man and animal alike; because it accords to man the beauty and dignity of original perfection, not original sin, and shows him the way by means of his own efforts, intuitive insights, and growing realization to uncover this perfection - his real and intrinsic Buddha-nature which is Enlightenment itself; and finally, I became a Buddhist because Buddhism affirms that the Cosmos, with all its evolving worlds in all their relative reality, is not a "creation" in specific time by any personal God or Being, however transcendent, but is a manifestation, an outpouring, of universal Infinite Intelligence, Mind - the only Ultimate Reality, of

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1. Trevor Ling, BUDDHISM, Ward Lock Educational, London, 1970, p.16.

which every sentient being is a part and in which all life everywhere shares - never static, but forever folding and unfolding in the Way of Ultimate Truth, without beginning and without end.

People are attracted to different aspects of Buddhism. I enquired about this in interviews with 101 people in the U.K., both Buddhists and non-Buddhists (see Table 15).

TABLE 15

Preference for a particular aspect of Buddhism

Based on a sample of 101 persons interviewed in Britain

Aspect of Buddhism liked	
Art	15
Ceremony or Chanting	25
Meditation	86
Philosophy	46
Way of life	38
All aspects	38
No idea	1

The Relationships between Buddhists and Others

Buddhists are normally friendly people. We found many Buddhists in Britain have close friends who follow other religions without any resulting friction. There are very few families which are disturbed through having within them differing religious persuasions.

Table 16 shows different religions among friends, and opinions resulting from this.

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1. Dorothy C. Donath, BUDDHISM FOR THE WEST, The Julian Press, Inc., New York, 1971, pp.Vii, Viii.

TABLE 16

Showing different religions among Friends and opinions resulting from this. (From interviews with 101 people in the U.K.)

Close friends of Buddhists and Christians		Opinions on Buddhism and Christianity	
(1) A. Buddhists who have Buddhists as close friends	37	(1) A. Buddhism is suitable for me	68
B. Buddhists who have Christians as close friends	-	B. No-idea	-
C. Buddhists who have both as close friends	38	(2) A. Christianity is suitable for me	26
(2) A. Christians who have Christians as close friends	1	B. No-idea	-
B. Christians who have Buddhists as close friends	6	(3) A. Buddhism is suitable for the East, and Christianity is suitable for the West	-
C. Christians and others who have both as close friends	19	B. Don't think (the above) this is correct	6
		C. No-idea	5
		D. Depends on the persons and circumstances	90
		N.B. This information represents a Buddhist biased section of people in the U.K. and might differ from the opinion held by British people as a whole.	

I investigated 101 people in the United Kingdom in 1970-1971 who follow various religions, and noted how families were affected by differing religious persuasions within them (see Table 17).

TABLE 17

Type of Religion		Relationship	
1. Do all members of your family follow the same religions?		2. If people in your family are of different religions, do they have good relationships with one another?	
A. Yes	39	A. It is good, there is no problem.	56
B. No	60	B. It is not good, there is some problem	9
C. Don't know	2	C. No idea	35

From this Table we observe that the people in 9 families are of different religions and have problems in their families as follows:-

One English Buddhist, aged 27, a married lady with two children: 1 son and 1 daughter, is married to a Pakistani Muslim, and they have lived together for over 10 years. She told me that for the first five years of marriage all was well, they visited Pakistan many times. Later they found they could not agree on the question of faith. In 1970 they decided upon divorce. The husband took his daughter to West Pakistan; the son stays in London with his mother.

An English couple with two children became divorced after domestic and religious conflicts.

After an English woman from Birmingham became a Hindu, her husband was surprised and intolerant. They often have

arguments but remain together. They have no children.

There is an English lady in Birmingham aged 47 who is a Hindu and teaches yoga. Four years ago she learnt yoga from an Indian teacher and now teaches every Tuesday and Friday evening. She works for the Birmingham Taxation Department. Due to disagreements over 'belief' she became divorced twenty years ago. She now lives with her mother in her own house.

Another couple of mixed faiths, the husband being a Christian (he works as a police officer) and the wife Buddhist (32) had some difficulty in their home life because the wife's interests centred around her religion, and she was often away from home visiting the two Buddhist monasteries in London. She expressed the wish to become a Buddhist nun when her children had grown up. The husband wrote me a letter explaining that his wife did not look after her children properly and had lost all interest in him sexually, asking me to help him solve the problem. When I met her later we discussed the problem; the couple still remain together.

The Methodist parents of a girl aged 22 could not understand why their daughter should vacillate from one religion to another. She became a Muslim and then influenced by her boy friend changed to Druidism. When she was a Muslim she was not permitted to enter the parental home; when she became a Druid she was again accepted but relationships are still uneasy.

Three other young people who have recently completed their studies at Universities, 2 men and 1 woman have a similar problem. When they first became Buddhist their parents disapproved and relationships deteriorated. The father of one is a Christian minister and he was very surprised when his son became a Buddhist.

Another young man went to Thailand in 1971 to become a Buddhist monk. When he was in Bangkok he received a letter from his mother saying she was very depressed about his aim and that she was seriously ill. She said she did not mind him being a Buddhist and asked him to return to England.

Another girl came from a Catholic family who were all very upset when she became a Buddhist.

This shows us some of the problems that may develop when there are different religions within a family.

Problems need not necessarily arise though as may be seen from the following two examples. In Manchester there is a family who are very happy despite the fact that the husband is Buddhist and the wife Catholic. "There is no problem at all" she told me. They have four children. There is another couple in London with one daughter, again there are no problems at all as a result of mixed faiths, the husband is Catholic and the wife Buddhist in this instance.

Now let us examine the nationality, education and occupations of the 101 people in the U.K. who are either Buddhists or interested in Buddhism. (Table 19).

It can be seen that there is no congruence in the circumstances of Western people who are converted to Buddhism.

TABLE 18

Showing nationality, education and occupation of 101  
people whom I interviewed in U.K. in 1970-1971

Nationality	Education			Occupation
	G.C.E.	Further Education	Higher and Specialist Education	
English	82	11	44	Students
German	3			Housewife
Dutch	2	Cert. of Secretary	Dip. Ed. B.A.,	Teacher & Lecturer
Irish	2	" of Nursing	B.Sc., etc.	Staff-Officer
Austrian	2	" of Commerce		Secretary-Typist
Thai	2			Engineer
French	1			Businessman
Indian	1			Technician
Chinese	1			Writer
Canadian	1			Journalist
American	1			Worker
Scottish	1			Printer
Yugoslav	1			Actor
Swedish	1			Director
				Hair Dressing
				Nursing
				Cook
				Painter
				Craftswoman
				Signwriter
				Singer

CHAPTER V

BUDDHIST BELIEF AND RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

Buddhists believe that Man's position is supreme. Man is his own master, and there is no higher being or power that sits in judgement over his destiny. "Oneself is one's own protector (refuge); what other protector (refuge) can there be? With oneself fully controlled, one obtains a protection (refuge) which is hard to gain."<sup>1</sup> said the Buddha (Dhammapada 160).

Buddhists believe that all living beings and material things are impermanent, subject to suffering, and non-self; because everything is subject to change, unsatisfactoriness, and cannot be possessed.

In his first sermon (the Dhammacakkappavattana-Sutta) the Buddha said that the five aggregates of attachment are the substance of suffering. These take the form of birth, ageing, sickness and death; and in emotional terms sorrow, pain, grief and despair, and come from association with unpleasant things or separation from that which is pleasant. The desire for that which one considers pleasant (craving) produces re-becoming and re-existence. It moves from one point of attention to another, normally through a desire for some pleasure, a desire for existence and its inextricably linked aspect the desire for non-existence (self-annihilation) and is the origin of suffering. The cessation of suffering is simply the complete cessation of desire. Leading to the cessation of suffering is the Noble Eightfold

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1. Walpola Rahula, Dr., WHAT THE BUDDHA TAUGHT, 1967, p.130.

Path, namely right view; right thought; right speech; right action; right livelihood; right effort; right mindfulness, and right concentration.

### Wheel of Life

I would like to discuss briefly the Twelve Nidānas or Wheel of Dependent Origination enunciated by the Buddha in Samyutta-Nikāya, as they play a vital part in all Buddhist Schools and Sects.

The Nidānas fall into three main divisions: those arising from Karmic conditions in a previous existence, those arising in the present life and those immediate causes and conditions which bring about future suffering. They may be outlined as follows:

In a previous existence:

Spiritual ignorance, non-awareness, delusion,  
resulting in Misperceptions  
(misdirected thoughts and will, belief in a  
separate "self" which create Karma, or  
actions affecting future existence)

In the present life:

Consciousness  
(the first subliminal consciousness in a new  
life at conception)

Next:

Name and form, or mind and body  
(in the embryo before the sense organs begin to  
function)

Then:

Awakening of the sense organs; and by means of  
them, contact (with things outside of oneself -  
objects, sights, sounds)

Co-operation of these organs and consciousness, resulting  
in sensations

(emotions or feelings, including the sexual instinct,  
creating new Karma) because of

Craving, or thirst for life, which in turn leads to  
attachment

(clinging to things, possessions, persons, and the  
activities of life) resulting in

Coming to be

(various consciously motivated acts and the desire  
to remain in the round of earthly existence) leading  
to

In the future:

Rebirth, or re-existence, and a new life  
(followed by old age, suffering, decay, and death  
all over again).

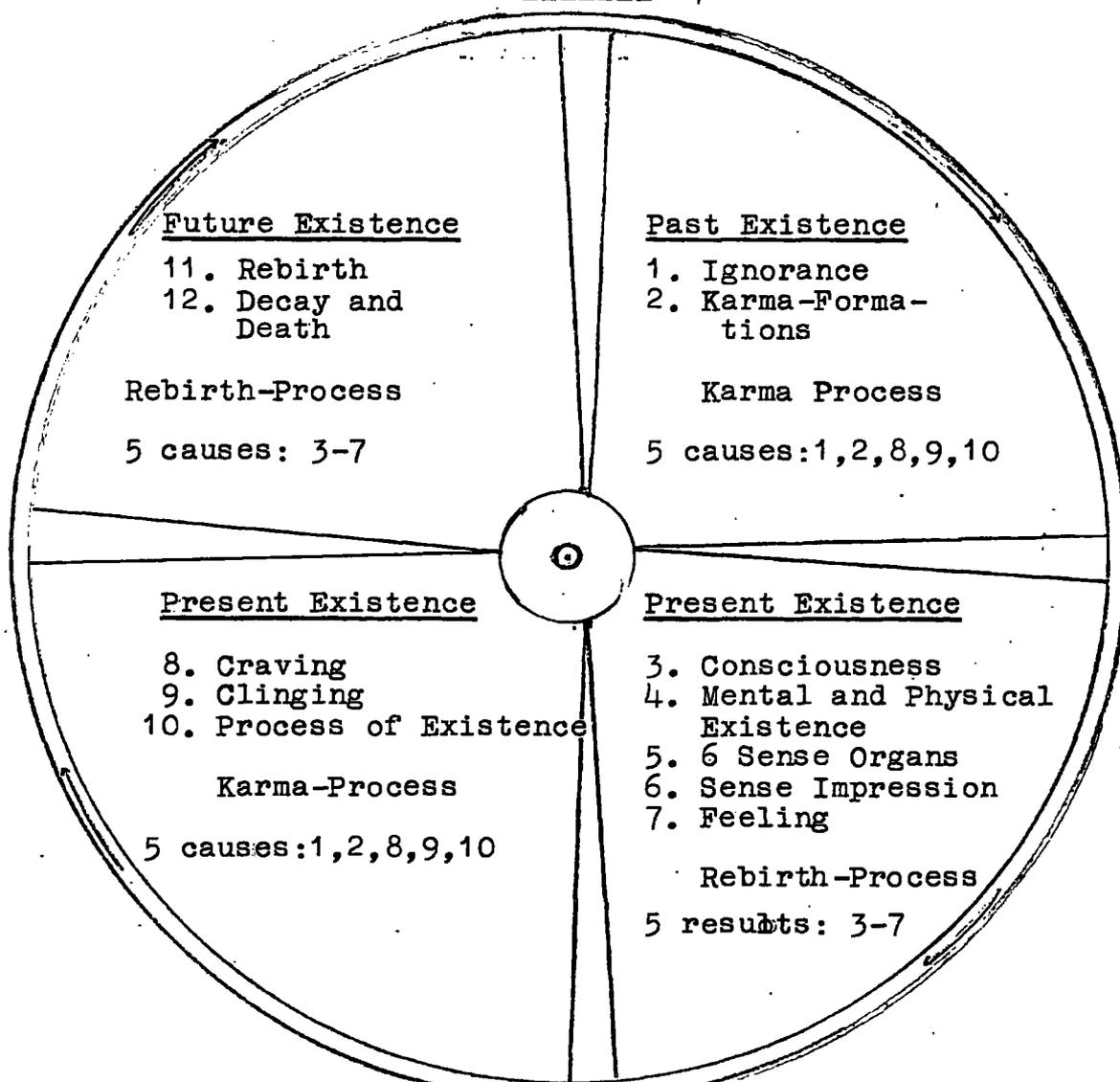
Thus in Buddhism generally, conditioned life (Samsara) is  
seen as a continual flux, impermanent, based on ignorance, and  
real only in a relative sense.

These are the spokes of the Wheel of the Nidānas, whatever  
the order in which they are considered. Other arrangements  
are possible, as this is a continuous process, but Ignorance  
is at the root of all. From Ignorance rises the thought of  
"I" - of enduring, personal self - whereas all we know or  
can perceive - even our ego - is transitory; there exists but  
a becoming, a succession of instants of consciousness. There  
are processes (and our ego forms part of the "process"), but  
there are no static and eternally existing "things." From  
thought of "Me" and "Mine" arise the "Three Fires" of hatred,  
lust, and illusion - inseparable from sorrow. The cure, as  
the Buddha taught, is the removal of the conditions which

maintain the three fires. This constitutes Enlightenment - the destruction of Ignorance - acquisition of a different attitude towards life, which cannot be described - only experienced. It is Enlightenment alone which can free us from the Wheel of Birth - and Death.

The following diagram shows at a glance how the twelve links of the formula extend to over three consecutive existences, past, present, and future:

DIAGRAM 7



The links 1-2, together with 8-10, represent the Karma Process, containing the five karmic causes of rebirth. The links 3-7, together with 11-12, represent the Rebirth-Process, containing the five Karma-Results.

Accordingly it is said in the Patisambhida-Magga:

'Five causes were there in past,  
Five fruits we find in present life.  
Five causes do we now produce,  
Five fruits we reap in future life.'

(Quoted in Vis. Magga XVII translated by  
Bhikkhu Nanamoli).

### Buddhist Festivals

The many religious festivals associated with Buddhism in the East are carried over into Britain. There are three in particular which are universally celebrated. Vesākha Pūjā, the full moon day of the sixth lunar month, which celebrates the birth, enlightenment and Parinibbāna of the Lord Buddha. In the West Vesak serves as the first month of the Buddhist year. The actual day may be at any time within the month of May in Britain to compensate for the rarity of good speakers. In the East it is always on the full moon day of May. The second major festival is the Māgha Pūjā festival held in the third lunar month. This commemorates the time when the Lord Buddha delivered his discourse containing the main code of his teaching to one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples who had spontaneously gathered. This is celebrated only in the Buddhapaḍīpa Temple in Britain. Āsālha Pūjā day celebrates the preaching of the first discourse to the five Ascetics at Isipatana in the deer sanctuary near Beṇares. Called by the Ceylonese 'Dhammacakka day' it is usually held on the full moon day in July every year. This day is celebrated both at the Ceylonese and Thai monasteries. At the latter this festival was celebrated in conjunction with the opening of the Temple by the King and Queen of Thailand in 1966.

## RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

In the 2 Buddhist monasteries in London many differing ceremonies are performed. There are those concerning birth, death, marriage, having a baby, merit transfer, Kathin ceremony and ordination. Both organizations can perform full religious functions in the same way as in the East.

Here I shall discuss only the ceremonies which are performed at the Buddhapadipa Temple (Thai monastery) which I have attended and observed many times. The main ceremonies which I am going to discuss are: the Wedding ceremony, Ordination ceremony, and the Kathin ceremony.

### Wedding ceremony

It is possible for the Wedding ceremony to be performed at the Temple for both English and Thai people. There have been many such ceremonies held at the Temple.

The Bhikkhus perform this ceremony in Thai for a Thai couple, and in English for English couples or in a combination of both languages.

The ceremony starts with the bride and groom and their party coming to the Shrine Room. There, with their hands joined, they light candles and incense and offer flowers to the Triple Gem, then they will prostrate 3 times in front of the Buddha image. The head monk will explain the ceremony in brief; then he will recite the five precepts, and the bride and groom repeat these after him in the Pali language. The monks will chant the Suttas concerning the Buddha's teachings and blessings. During this time everyone just listens to the chanting. On completion of the chanting which lasts for 20 minutes the monk who conducts the ceremony on behalf of the Sangha, will give a short talk on the Buddha's teaching about the relationship between husband and wife. After that the

monks will chant again to give the blessings for peace and happiness in their family life to the couple and their party by sprinkling Holy Water firstly on the bride and bridegroom and the friends and relatives as a whole afterwards.

For Thai couples at the end of the ceremony, lunch will be offered to the monks, and later lunch will be prepared for themselves. English couples, however, usually come to the ceremony in the afternoon. After the ceremony there is normally a tea party with wedding cake and general merriment after which they go to the Registry Office for a civil service.



Picture 5 shows a wedding ceremony. The monks are chanting the Suttas, the candles and incenses are burning in the centre; the bowl of Holy Water and Holy Grass used for sprinkling are in the far centre, and the fan which the head monk uses when he gives five Precepts to the far right. The bride and bridegroom are sitting in front of them.

### The Ceremony of Ordination

The Ordination ceremony can be performed at the Buddha-padipa Temple when there are at least 5 monks present at the ceremony. At both the Buddhapadipa Temple the Ceylonese and Thai Sanghas, this ceremony has been performed for 4 English and 1 American Buddhist who have applied to be ordained as monks and novices in the past 5 years. The important factors of full ordination (ordination as a monk) are as follows:

1. There must be at least 5 monks to perform the ceremony.
2. There is a preceptor (who is appointed by His Holiness Supreme Patriarch of Buddhist countries) or a high representative of the Sangha to lead the ceremony.
3. The applicant must be at least 20 years of age and a Buddhist. It is also necessary for him to obtain parental permission.

The applicant must be able to chant sufficient Pali, to ask for ordination and to answer questions during the ceremony. Before the ceremony his head is shaved, and he wears white garments preparatory to the presentation of the robes.

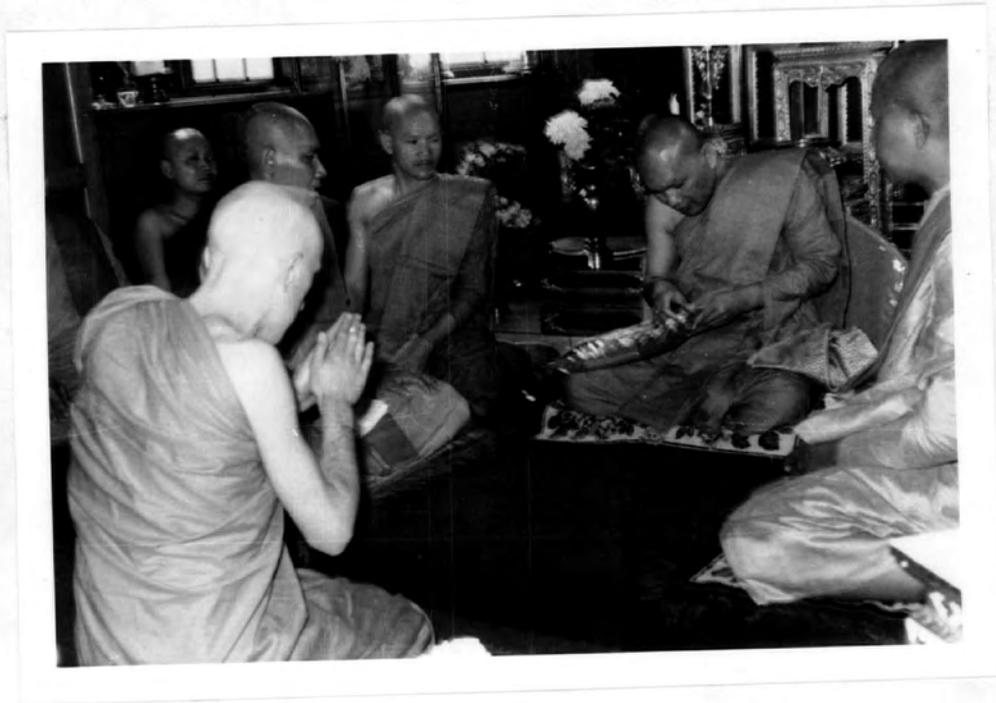
As a general rule the ceremony takes place in the Hall of the Buddha. It is performed by the monks, and visitors are welcome.

When everything is ready, the applicant approaches the Sangha carrying the robes. He then prostrates himself three times before the preceptor, and begins to ask for ordination.

The preceptor who sits in the middle of the Sangha gives the applicant his robes and a bowl and requests one of the other monks to take the applicant outside to put on his robes. The applicant returns and again asks to be ordained as a novice

and a monk. Two monks from the Sangha ask him questions about his (social) condition and readiness to become a monk. They perform this duty by chanting in Pali on behalf of the Sangha. The applicant answers in the same language. This part of the ceremony takes place outside the Sangha in the first instance and is then repeated inside. On return to the Sangha the two monks will ask the Sangha to accept the applicant (or not as the case may be). If any member of the Sangha is not in agreement with the acceptance of the applicant then he will inform the assembly and the ceremony will not continue. With general agreement the ceremony is duly completed.

Afterwards those visitors who have attended the ceremony offer suitable gifts to the monks. Then all the monks will chant the Suttas and give blessings for peace and happiness to the new monk and all who came to the ceremony.



Picture 6 shows the preceptor giving the robes to the applicant at the beginning of the Ordination Ceremony at the Buddhapadipa Temple, London.

### The Kathin Ceremony

Every year since the Buddhapadipa Temple was established in 1966, various groups of Thai people have come to perform the Kathin ceremony. This is offering new robes to those monks who have spent three months in retreat at the Temple during the rainy season (between July and September in England).

About 20-100 people who have toured Europe come to England for merit making at this ceremony every year; usually they come from Thailand between October and November. They bring with them from Thailand robes and other things to be offered to the monks for this ceremony. Apart from these offerings, they also make donations of money to support the Temple. The amount depends on the size of the group.

### The meaning of the term "Kathin"

For explanation of this term (which has come to signify a Buddhist ceremony) it is necessary to trace its history to over 2,500 years ago, to the time when the Buddha was alive. At this time the idea of going into retreat for the rainy season (Vassavāsa) had become established. A group of Bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) who usually lived in the forest at Pāvā were unable to reach Savatthi, where the Buddha was staying, before the rains began. They therefore had to stay where they were about 60 miles (6 yojanas) away from Savatthi for the retreat. It was natural that as soon as the retreat was over and the Admonition (pavāranā) received, they should set out in haste, regardless of the weather, for Savatthi. We are told that this was "while the god was raining, while waters were gathering, while swamps were foaming" so that their journey cannot have been easy and it is not surprising that they arrived at their destination "with drenched robes and in a state of weariness."

When the Buddha perceived the troubles that they had encountered, he addressed the assembled Bhikkhus thus: "O Bhikkhus, I allow you to make up the Kathin-cloth (given by the lay people) into robes," that is, in order to replace their damaged or worn-out robes. Later it was permitted for Bhikkhus to accept robes already made up by lay people. Kathin-robes were presented to Bhikkhus already dyed, stitched and ready for use.

To this day, however, the Kathin-robes are presented in some temples, as white cloth and the Bhikkhus must then cut, stitch and dye it. The Sangha must nominate a recipient within 24 hours of its acceptance. The little Kathin (Culakathin) is seldom given, since then only the raw cotton is presented. This has then to be spun and so forth, to be made up and presented within the allowed 24 hours.

The word "Kathin" means "the wooden frame for sewing cloth" which is a guide for making up the robes. They are fairly intricately constructed. This name has come to denote the whole ceremony which in Buddhist countries like Ceylon and Thailand etc. is celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the country, and in the very great majority of the kingdom's thousands of Temples.

The layman who wishes to be in charge of the Kathin ceremony at any particular temple has to approach the head Bhikkhu and request whether he can offer Kathin, this request being made during the retreat for the rainy season.

People are particularly generous and open-hearted at this time. Ordinary merits can be made at any time of the year, but the Kathin ceremony is only performed once a year in each temple. As a result of its uniqueness it has come to be known as a Maha-Punna, an opportunity for making a Great Merit. It

is believed that this is not only so for the person in charge, but also for everyone who contributes. Thus everyone can participate in the offering of Kathin.

The Pali passage to be recited by all lay people on this occasion has the following English equivalent:

We beg to offer this Kathin-robe together with other offerings to the Sangha.

For the second time, we beg to offer this Kathin-robe together with other offerings to the Sangha.

For the third time, we beg to offer this Kathin-robe together with other offerings to the Sangha.

May all beings be happy.

Then the monks will chant in Pali in order to give the Kathin-robe to the chief monk, whereupon those people who attended the ceremony will be blessed by the monks. The head monk gives a sermon on a subject appropriate to the occasion. In conclusion the people lunch together.

#### RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Each religion has its own code of behaviour according to its doctrine. There are the following characteristics of the main world religions:

1. There is a founder.
2. There is a universal code of morality.
3. There are disciples (ministers) who communicate and live their religion.
4. There are religious institutions such as churches, temples, monasteries, etc. where followers can go for religious practice.
5. Over 100,000,000 follow each religion.

Breaking down the attitude to religious practice, of the 100 interviews I held in Great Britain in 1970-71, the following pattern emerged. There were 19 Christians, 75 Buddhists and 1 Hindu. 3 of the Christians go to church every Sunday. One is a Protestant and the other two are Catholics. The others attend church less frequently. The method of religious practice varies; three attend church services, four take Communion and twelve pray privately.

Of the seventy-five Buddhists, twenty-six visit Buddhist organizations at least once a week, forty-nine attend less often. Twenty-nine informed me that they observe the five precepts. 45 practise meditation daily and another 37 occasionally meditate. 20 attend classes on a weekly basis or more often and 16 sometimes attend classes or ceremonies. Note: Some Buddhists practise their religion in 2 or 3 ways, for example by the observation of the five precepts, practising meditation daily and attending classes.

The lone Hindu meditates, practises Yoga daily and is a vegetarian. See Table 19.

TABLE 19

The attendance at services and practice of religion of a sample of Christians and Buddhists

Frequency of attendance of religious services	Method of religious practice	
CHRISTIANITY		
1. Christians who go to church every Sunday.	1. Attend service in church.	3
2. Christians who go to church less frequently.	2. Take communion.	4
	3. Pray.	12
BUDDHISM		
3. Buddhists who visit Buddhist organisations at least once a week.	4. Observe 5 Precepts.	23
4. Buddhists who visit Buddhist organisations less frequently.	5. Practise meditation daily.	45
	6. Practise meditation sometimes.	37
	7. Attend classes once a week or more often.	20
	8. Attend classes or ceremonies occasionally.	16

It is evident from this thesis that the Buddhist movements are emphasised, therefore it is logical to discuss the precepts of Buddhism.

To be a Buddhist one must take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha for guidance. All those who are already Buddhists are encouraged to recite the acceptance of their Holy Triple Gem in their daily life.

Buddhists believe that the Buddha was the holiest, most virtuous and wise person who ever lived. His Dhamma (doctrine) is the ultimate truth explaining the real nature of the world and of living. The Sangha is the Holy Order of the Buddha, whose members lead a religious life as taught by the Buddha, and who are also responsible for preserving his original teaching.

When one declares that one accepts the guidance of the 'Holy Triple Gem' this does not imply slavishly following anyone, or an absolving of responsibility. However, it is necessary to have some guidance as an aid to spiritual development.

Every religion has certain objects of veneration in which its followers are expected to have confidence. It is the fervent belief in these sacred tenets which awakens the religious impulse in man and which in turn inspires him to lead a religious life. They give concrete shape as it were to abstract principles. The refuges in Buddhism constitute these sacred objects of veneration. They are called 'Ti-Sarana'.

Panca-Sila - the Five Precepts

The following five precepts are recited and observed in Buddhist houses first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. These precepts are also recited before the commencement of any meeting or festival. Buddhists are reminded not to go against these principles and at the same time to purify themselves in order to perform the succeeding tasks or religious activities better. These precepts are not commandments hence Buddhists observe them voluntarily. Every Buddhist remembers these precepts in their daily life and tries to live up to the principles inherent in them. If they adjust their lives according to these five principles, they could on the one hand live happily and peacefully in this world, and on the other hand help others also to live happily and peacefully. To observe these precepts is like putting up a fence to protect one's house against robbers.

These precepts indicate the five arterial directions, in which a Buddhist has to exercise his self-control. Thus the first rule calls upon him to control the passion of anger, the second to curb his desire for material possessions, the third controls the lusts of the flesh, the fourth cowardice and malevolence (the causes of untruthfulness) and the fifth the craving for unwholesome excitement.

Every Buddhist observes these five precepts in order to elevate himself morally and to be in conformity with the results of his right thinking.

These are the Panca-Sila - Five Precepts:

I take the precept to abstain from the destruction of living beings.

I take the precept to abstain from taking things that are not given.

I take the precept to abstain from sexual misconduct.

I take the precept to abstain from lying.

I take the precept to abstain from distilled and fermented liquors that cause intoxication and heedlessness.

In many Buddhist countries devout Buddhists observe eight precepts on full moon and new moon days by going to the temple early in the morning and spending a period of 24 hours there, as a recluse. The meaning of this observance is to be cut off from their busy daily life in this material and sensual world and to cultivate spiritual development, self control and relaxation.

The ten Precepts are observed by novices (samanera).

Buddhist monks, however, observe 227 rules for monastic life.

There are three branches of discipline in Buddhism. By observance of the precepts morality is developed. Concentration constitutes the second discipline, and this is amplified by meditation. Training in wisdom is a development from concentration and is the third branch of discipline. Buddhists believe that through the practice of these three disciplines they can attain Nirvana, the final timeless goal.

## CHAPTER VI

### MEDITATION CENTRES

There are 3 Buddhist meditation centres in the United Kingdom at present. These are the Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, the Vipassana Centre in Hindhead, Surrey, and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and research centre in Hampstead, London.

Buddhists or non-Buddhists alike can go to the three meditation centres for meditation retreat under the guidance of meditation teachers. Each centre has its own meditation masters, however sometimes visiting teachers are invited to teach and lead meditation seminars. I have often been invited to teach meditation at Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre and the Vipassana Centre.

Now I shall discuss the 3 meditation centres in the U.K. separately.

#### Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre

This centre was opened in 1965. Its primary function is to be a meditation centre where Tibetan lamas in this country may teach and study, the emphasis being on instruction in the practice of meditation. Secondly, the centre provides a quiet place for retreat where lay people of all religious beliefs and backgrounds may come for periods of isolation, instruction in and the practise of meditation.

The resident teachers in this meditation centre are Tibetan lamas who live there permanently. In 1970-1971 a monk, and a lay teacher, taught meditation there. I was informed by the Secretary and Administrator that the attend-

ance varies seasonally. In winter there are about thirty visiting meditators and in summer about sixty. The visitors may remain for an extended length of time or for a brief stay. There is a large shrine room which is open night and day for meditation.

#### Rules for Visiting Meditators

There are no strict rules for meditators in the centre, but there is a timetable which enables visitors to follow the daily programme if they wish. In December, 1970, when I was there, I was told by many visitors that they did not go to group meditation but practised privately. Some only attended at meal times and did not consult the meditation teachers or join group meditation. Others preferred to walk in the nearby hills. There were others who practised meditation seriously.

Meditators came from all over the United Kingdom, Europe, America and Canada. They were predominantly young people.

From this information we can see that there is no strict discipline at the centre. It costs £8.75 per week to stay at the centre but it is possible for students to stay at a reduced rate.

#### The nature of meditation at this centre

Many meditation teachers of differing persuasions are invited to teach at this centre. The meditation instruction and practise varies accordingly. The instruction may be in Zen Meditation, Calmness Meditation, Insight Meditation or Tibetan Meditation. The emphasis is naturally on Tibetan Meditation.

Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food is provided; there is no strict ruling on this.

### The Vipassana Centre

This Meditation Centre was established in 1968 by Ven. Chao Khun Sobhona Dhammasudhi, the former senior incumbent of the Buddhapadipa Temple, London. It is run by the Vipassana Foundation Committee.

The purpose of this centre is to provide facilities for the intensive practise of insight meditation. The house has a large garden and is situated in a very quiet residential area in Linkside West, Beacon Hill, Hindhead, Surrey. There are five single rooms for meditators.

The resident meditation teacher in this centre is Mr. Vicitra R. Dhiravamsa (Ex. Ven. Chao Khun Sobhona Dhammassudhi) from Thailand, and sometimes teachers from the Buddhapadipa Temple are invited to teach meditation there as well.

Meditators receive personal instruction each day from the meditation master. The day, which begins at 5.30 a.m. and ends at 11 p.m., is divided into sessions of group and private meditation, and sitting and walking meditation. Talking is restricted to the absolute essentials, reading and writing are not allowed unless special permission is given by the Master. Meditators are requested to move about the centre as quietly as possible, and to be mindfully aware of their actions at all times.

The majority of meditators come for one or two weeks, but visits of several months can be arranged in the quiet winter period. There is a booking fee of £2 and the charge is £11 per week. Students and Senior Citizens are accepted at the reduced weekly rate of £9. Should there be any case of hardship, a separate application may be made stating the circumstances, when special consideration will be given.

Rules of this centre for meditators

1. Students of meditation are requested to abstain from smoking in bedrooms and in the Meditation Hall. Smoking will be permitted outside the house.
2. Unnecessary talking must be avoided.
3. Walking up and down in the house should be performed as quietly and as mindfully as possible.
4. When making reports, state precisely what has happened and what was observed in the course of meditation.
5. The Meditation Master will be available whenever required.

Daily General Programme

5.30 a.m.            Rising

6.00-07.30 a.m.    Group Meditation in Meditation Hall.

7.30-08.00 a.m.    Short mindful walking exercise.

8.00-08.30 a.m.    Breakfast.

8.30-10.00 a.m.    Meditation reports.

                    01.00 p.m.    Dinner

An hour rest after dinner.

3.00- 5.30 p.m.    Private meditation.

5.30- 6.30 p.m.    Light tea.

6.00- 6.30 p.m.    Mindful walking exercise.

6.30- 8.00 p.m.    Group meditation in Meditation Hall.

Thereafter, resume private meditation until bedtime.

11.00 p.m.            Lights out.

Three vegetarian meals are provided each day.

The only meditation method taught at this centre is Insight Meditation (Vipassana Bhavana).

The Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre

The main part of this centre was founded in 1956 (see page 61) but in 1971 cells were provided for those wishing to undertake periods of meditation. The centre is run by the English Sangha Trust Ltd. At the time that the meditation cells were opened to the public Ācariya Kapilavaddho was the Administrator and Meditation Master. After his death on 19th December, 1971 it was recognised by those who had to make the decision that the task of finding a suitable successor was a difficult one. One thing, however, was uppermost in their minds and that was that the line of teaching Kapilavaddho had laid down - strict application to Satipathana (the setting up of mindfulness) with no ritual and no pūjā plus continual reference to the Pali Canon - should be carried on into the future.

With all these factors in mind, it was decided that the most suitable man to take over the position was Alan James. In December, 1967 at the age of 28 and after a mainly scientific career, Mr. James came to the Dhammapadipa where he studied and practiced under the guidance of Kapilavaddho Bhikkhu.

Within two months of arriving he had adopted the yellow robe and become known as Dipadhamma Samanera. On the full moon day of May (Vesak) 1968, Samanera Dipadhamma was ordained as Bhikkhu Dipadhamma at the Buddhapadipa Temple, East Sheen. From then on his days were devoted to the practise of Samatha and Vipassana Meditation. Dipadhamma Bhikkhu became recognised as 'Kapilavaddho's Assistant and right hand man,' and he began to instruct others and regularly took meditation classes, gave the occasional lecture, produced articles for 'Sangha,' and spent three months as an instructor at Biddulph Meditation Centre in Staffordshire.

After 2 years as a Buddhist monk, he disrobed - thus preceding his teacher by a few months in adopting the status of layman. He remained closely associated with Dhammapadipa during the whole of the latter period and, during Kapilavaddha's final illness, once again took classes and helped with various administration details and now he is Administrator and Meditation Teacher in this centre.

The meditation cells were specially designed and built for those people wishing to undertake a course of residential meditation and are situated at the rear of 131 Haverstock Hill, N.W.3. Each cell contains a bed, table, chair and cupboard and is centrally heated. There are the necessary toilet facilities, including a shower, in the same building.

For people who have never taken such a course before, the following advice will clarify both the purpose and the approach. The whole aim of an intensive meditation course is to provide the optimum circumstances for developing vipassana (insight) through the practise of satipatthana (the setting up of mindfulness).

Meditators who come to this centre are advised to try to come without any preconceived ideas or concepts whether on the question of religion or religious theory, food or instruction. These can only lead to confusion and will stand in the way of gaining the full benefit from the course. During their time in this centre they will be expected to observe the traditional Eight Rules of Training.

#### Rules of this centre

The rules of training are to refrain from:-

1. Killing or harming living creatures.
2. Taking that which is not given.
3. Sexual pleasures.

4. Lying, slander and gossip.
5. Spirits, liquors and drugs.
6. Solid food after the midday meal.
7. All forms of entertainment.
8. The use of make-up, perfume, jewellery, flowers, etc.

Whilst they are in residence, the reception of or the writing of letters will not be allowed, nor will the receiving or making of telephone calls. Reading will not be allowed so do not trouble to bring any reading material or such things as transistor radio sets. Conversation will be kept to the minimum.

The time of rising will be 6.00 a.m.

Breakfast 7.30 a.m.

Dinner 12.30 p.m.

It should be understood that, having asked for a course of instruction, they will be expected to accept and comply with the discipline and instruction of the Meditation Teacher. Any failure to do so will end in their being asked to leave. If at any time they feel that they cannot continue the course, ask to see the meditation teacher and leave with as little disturbance as possible.

The charge for the course is £1 booking fee and £9.50 per week. Shorter terms may be arranged at £1.50 per day.

#### Type of meditation

Vipassana (Insight Meditation) is taught because the centre is connected with the Vipassana Centre in Surrey. The meditation teacher in Surrey was the preceptor and teacher of the meditation teachers in the Dhammapadipa meditation cells in Hampstead.

Both vegetarian or non-vegetarian food is provided in this centre.

By comparing the topics discussed: the teaching methods and the teachers, characteristics of the meditators, and details of diet and rules it is possible to see the differences and similarities between the three centres.

In conclusion, Tibetan lamas run Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre; the Vipassana Centre in Surrey is run by Thai Meditation teachers and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre is run by English Meditation teachers. The Vipassana Centre and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centres have tighter disciplinary control than the Tibetan Centre in Scotland; the Tibetan Centre is larger however and can take 30-60 people at a time. The Vipassana Centre has provision for a maximum of six visiting meditators and the Dhammapadipa and Vipassana Centre can take only three at a time.

From my interviews with 101 people in the U.K. in 1970-71 60 people had attended meditation retreats in various places.

TABLE 20

Places visited for meditation retreat in 1970-71

Place	Number
1. Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre, Scotland	9
2. Vipassana Centre, Surrey	8
3. The Buddhapadipa Temple, London	31
4. Biddulph Old Hall, Stafford.	4
5. Sarum House, Surrey	1
6. The Buddhist Countries	7
Total	60

This table includes three places not previously discussed in this context - The Buddhapadipa Temple, Biddulph Old Hall, and Sarum House. When the Chao Khun Sabhana Dhammasudhi was

the Senior Incumbent, the Buddhapadipa Temple used to be a Meditation Centre, and many people used to attend for meditation courses. Now meditation classes are held at the weekends only.

Biddulph Old Hall also used to be a Meditation Centre but this has since been sold, and the meditation cells at Hampstead took over this function. This used to be a very popular meditation centre.

Sarum House is a Buddhist community in Surrey where Buddhists of different schools may live and meditate together (see page 53). Sometimes people stay there for meditation retreat.

Another seven people have visited Buddhist Centres in Japan and Thailand.

## TYPE OF MEDITATION

Meditation as viewed here is not a negative deliverance from life but a positive, dynamic force that raises a man from his ordinary position to that of the divine; it is the means by which he emerges from the darkness of ignorance and develops wisdom to the point of perfect enlightenment, the ultimate aim and pursuit of man. In all times and at all places it is the only means to the attainment of final deliverance; the eternal happiness taught by the Buddha as Nirvana.

As Paravahera Vajiranana Mahathera said in his book "Meditation or Bhāvanā, is an integral part of Buddhist religious doctrine and practice, and does not form a separate study as do some Yogic systems in Hindu tradition. The references to theory and practice of Bhāvanā are scattered throughout the Buddhist canonical texts and commentaries, which form a vast corpus of literature in Pali and Sanskrit."<sup>1</sup>

Buddhist meditation is divided into two categories:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Samatha   | - the development of calm and concentration; and |
| Vipassana | - the development of insight.                    |

### Samatha

Samatha meditation encompasses all that which, in the Christian Church goes under the heading of miracles and visions, its subjects being fixed objects, either internal or external. At the beginning, especially if one is working without a teacher, external subjects are perhaps more suitable.

"Possibly the best-known and most frequently practised of the external samatha meditation, subjects takes the form of colour kasinas."<sup>2</sup>

as described by Ven. Dr. Saddhatissa in his book.

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1. Paravahera Vajiranana Mahathera, Ph.D. Cantab., BUDDHIST MEDITATION, M.D. Gunasena & Co. Ltd., Colombo, 1962, Introduction.
  2. H. Saddhatissa, THE BUDDHA'S WAY, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1971, p.74.

The practice of Kasina meditation requires us first to construct a kasina, or disc, of the chosen colour - red, white, yellow or blue. The ancient meditation manuals explain the exact quality and tone of the stipulated colours; they explain too how the would-be meditator should fashion his kasina: as with much later development of Zen flower arrangements and tea ceremonies, the preparation of the kasina should be an integral part of the meditation; every action should be carried out with quiet awareness and relaxed precision. The size of the disc may vary; some say the diameter should measure the same as the hand span of the meditator plus the width of our fingers; others say that the size of the kasina should be modified according to the degree of concentration: those of dull concentration using larger discs, and those of sharp concentration smaller ones.

The disc should be set up at a reasonable distance from the meditator. Here again the sources differ in the distances they recommend. Probably about ten to fifteen feet will be found to be satisfactory. The centre of the disc should be slightly lower than the horizontal eye level of the meditator when he is seated in front of the kasina.

Having constructed the kasina, placed it in a suitable spot and seated himself before it, the meditator can begin to practise properly. The gaze should be allowed to focus on the disc, without staring or in any way straining the vision. After a few seconds, the eyes are closed but the concentration remains focused on the memory of the disc. If a disc appears while the eyes are closed - as, for example, when we look for a second at the moon and then close our eyes - the meditator should concentrate on that until it fades. The process is then repeated until the allotted time for the meditation

session is over. The meditator will probably find that sometimes he is able to hold the image of the disc much longer than at other times. All these things should be noted; with experience it will become possible to relate the various states and sequences of one's meditation session to one's habits and character traits.

A more elaborate form of kasina meditation is the mandala. A mandala consists of a symmetrical pattern which is used as an aid to concentration in much the same way as the kasina. Mandalas are usually many-coloured, and frequently depict symbolic or mythological figures arranged in an intricate and stylized pattern. Many of the Indian and Tibetan works of art now on display in the West were originally fashioned as mandalas and used by monks in their meditation practises.

The meditation practice most respected by Buddhists - it was the practice used by the Buddha on the night of his enlightenment - is that of ānāpānasati. Ānāpānasati - the recollection of in-breathing and out-breathing - is, as it were, a universal meditation subject. It is recommended as a character-correcting practice; it is one of the foremost samatha (calming) subjects and it is perhaps the most natural - if not the most spectacular - of vipassana (insight) meditation subjects.

We shall here consider the use of ānāpānasati as a samatha subject. The meditator is asked to focus his attention at the tip of the nostrils. A word of warning may be given: it is not necessary to squint and focus the closed eyes on the nostrils; the gaze of the closed eyes can be directed in a relaxed manner straight ahead; it is the mind or consciousness which is 'focused' on the tip of the nostrils. Then we quietly watch the breath flowing in and out past the tip of the nostrils.

It is sometimes found useful to count the breaths, as this may help to anchor the concentration. Various methods of counting may be employed. Usually it is not recommended to count beyond ten, and if the concentration is broken, the meditator should begin again at one. It is essential to remember that it is not the counting that matters, but the continuity of the concentration on the breath.

As with the kasina practice, the meditator practising ānāpānasati should carefully observe everything that happens during the meditation session: whether the breathing in or the breathing out is clearer; whether this remains constant throughout the session, or whether there is a change in the pattern; whether the concentration is keener at the beginning or at the end of the practice, and so on.

Ven. Saddhatissa said in his book "Finally, in this brief survey of samatha meditation subjects, we should mention the practice of repeating a word or sequences of words. This type of practice will be familiar to those who have some knowledge of the meditation systems of the Greek Orthodox Church. The 'Jesus prayer' or the 'prayer of the heart,' is much used by monks of the Greek Orthodox faith."<sup>1</sup>

In the Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa Thera, the forty subjects of samatha meditation known as Mammathana, (exercises of meditation), appear in seven divisions as below:

I. Ten Objects called Kasina:-

(1) Earth, (2) Water, (3) Fire, (4) Air, (5) Blue-Green, (6) Yellow, (7) Red, (8) White, (9) Light, (10) Space;

II. Ten Asubhas, or Objects of Impurity:-

(11) A Swollen Corpse, (12) A Discoloured Corpse, (13) A Festering Corpse, (14) A Fissured Corpse, (15) A Mangled Corpse, (16) A Dismembered Corpse, (17) A Cut and Dismembered Corpse, (18) A Bleeding Corpse, (19) A Worm-infested Corpse,

(20) A Skeleton;

III. Ten Recollections or Anussatis:-

(21) The Recollection on the Virtue of the Buddha,  
 (22) of the Doctrine, (23) of the Order, (24) of Morality,  
 (25) of Liberality, (26) of the Devas, (27) the recollection  
 of Death, (28) of the Body, (29) of the Breath, (30) of  
 Peace;

IV. Four Brahmaviharas or Excellent Qualities:-

(31) Friendliness, (32) Compassion, (33) Sympathy,  
 (34) Equanimity;

V. Four Formless Spheres:-

(35) The Sphere of Infinite Space, (36) the Sphere of  
 Infinite consciousness, (37) the Sphere of Nothingness,  
 (38) the Sphere of neither perception nor non-perception;

VI. (39) The Perception of the loathsomeness of Nutriment;

VII. (40) The Analysis of the Four Elements.

The detailed exposition of the subjects of Kammatthana  
 will be found in the Visuddhimagga (11. 110-117).

### Vipassana Meditation

Vipassana is Insight meditation, and the practice of Vipassana is based on the principle of sati or mindfulness. The subjects of Vipassana meditation are all moving objects, internal or external. The most effective subject of Vipassana is ānāpānasati; the recollecting of breathing in and out, or meditating on the rising and falling of the abdomen.

Vipassana requires the four foundations of mindfulness: mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of the feelings, mindfulness of subjectivity, and mindfulness of the mental objects.

The practice of Vipassana is begun in the same way as for samatha meditation which has been mentioned previously. The attention is focused at the movements of the abdomen or on the tip of the nostrils, and the practitioner observes the rise and fall of the abdomen, or the flow of air when breathing in and breathing out.

Vipassana meditation demands a more analytical approach. The mind does not cling to any particular object, but it just observes bodily movements and mental movements closely while samatha meditation holds the image of the object in the mind as mental image (nimitta). Simple awareness is all that is required without any mental fixation. One notes which part of rise and fall of the abdomen is subject to the clearest awareness; the beginning, the middle or the end.

The practice of samatha aims to produce calmness of mind, but the practice of Vipassana, looks at things more carefully with resultant insights. During the period of Vipassana practice many feelings such as joy or fear etc. may arise, but they should not be clung to, nor rejected, but noticed as they come and go. So the mind gains more freedom from the idea of 'ego.'

According to Theravada Buddhism the practice of Vipassana leads to the attainment of Enlightenment.

Note: In Britain at the Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre Samatha meditation is normally taught. In both the Vipassana Centre in Surrey and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre, Vipassana meditation is taught.

MEDITATION CENTRES AND THE DRUG TAKING  
PROBLEM

Many people were under the mistaken impression that meditation was connected with drug taking, and so connected Meditation Centres with drug taking too. In fact, meditation is not involved with drug taking at all. They are very different. Some centres which do not have strict control over their visitors, have had a problem because visitors may bring drugs with them unbeknown to the staff of the centre.

In December, 1970, I went to the Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Scotland. On 14th December I was walking along the road with a young man aged 23, a Cambridge graduate. Suddenly a car stopped in front of us. The window of the car was opened and one of the occupants spoke to the young man. He introduced himself as a Police Inspector from Lockerbie, who had come to look around the centre, because on the previous night a young man had taken an overdose of drugs, run away from the centre and was found lying unconscious on the road. A car nearly killed him, but, fortunately, the driver saw him in time, stopped and took him to hospital. After examination the doctor diagnosed an overdose of drugs. When he regained consciousness, the young man was asked where he lived. He explained that he was a visitor at the Tibetan Centre, and this information was passed on to the police.

The policemen in the car questioned my companion in this connection. He denied all knowledge but the police, as was obvious from their comments, did not believe him. "You must be joking, you know more about it than we do."

The young man then told the police that a few days previously an American who works as a cook at the centre had brought some LSD, but he did not know where from, and had sold

it secretly at the centre. The Administrator at the Centre did not know anything about this. The police then demanded that Akong (the administrator) should be informed. They admitted that Akong was a good man and that he tried to prevent this sort of thing happening. The police left a warning to my companion that he should be aware of what was happening and suggested that he should leave.

I was surprised at what was happening and asked him what was going on. He told me again what had happened. I asked him "Do you take drugs yourself?" "Yes, I used to take drugs, but I have given it up now," the young man said.

When I got back to the Centre I met Akong and told him about what I had heard, and I asked Akong to keep the Centre free from drugs and to ban drug-taking there. Akong had met the inspectors too. He told me that "the Centre rules that visitors are not allowed to bring any kind of drugs into the premises, but we still have this problem."

In this connection, when I interviewed a 22 year old German girl, she told me that she used to take drugs and became interested in meditation, because of her drug taking experiences, but she had since given up drug taking. During this interview another German girl came into the room and asked about the benefits of meditation. I gave her a brief explanation. She then said that she did not need to sit in meditation for a 'nice trip' but would take LSD instead. When she had left I asked the first girl if her friend often took drugs and she replied, "Yes, she always takes them; I told her to give it up but she doesn't want to do so."

This is a continuing problem at Samye-Ling because there are so many people there. Akong told me that it is very difficult to tell who takes drugs and who does not because

there are no obvious signs when visitors arrive at the Centre. He asked me whether there was a similar problem at the Buddha-padipa Temple. I told him that as only meditation classes were held there so the situation could not arise. When there were meditation huts before, there were strict controls over meditators.

In 2 other Buddhist meditation centres (the Vipassana Centre in Surrey and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre in Hampstead) I was informed that there is no problem about drug taking, because the number of visitors is restricted, and it is possible to look after visitors closely.

#### People's Opinions

When interviewing 101 people in the U.K. in 1970-71 the following question was asked "What do you think about drug-taking?" The following points emerged:

14 people approved of drug-taking.

15 people disapproved.

72 people did not have an opinion.

When asked if they every took drugs?

21 people answered positively, and

the remaining 80 said they had not taken them.

Of the 21 people who had taken drugs 6 were male and 15 female. 12 of them had given it up after they had practised meditation in meditation centres. Two, one boy and one girl continued as before, but 7 tried to reduce after their meditation practice.

Of the 21 when asked "What kind of drugs did you take?" I found the following answers: 15 persons took both LSD and marijuana, 4 persons took only marijuana.

I asked them in what form they took them, and two ways emerged, either by smoking or by taking a pill.

Asked why they took drugs, 18 replied that they were looking for certain experiences and had later grown to rely on their experiences (had become addicted) and another three took drugs for social reasons.

The girl who still takes drugs has sometimes been involved with police on drug cases. The boy who is a student in Liverpool takes drugs secretly.

One of the twelve who has given up drugs completely is a man of 26. He had been addicted four years ago and lived as a hippy. When he became interested in and practised meditation, his need for artificial stimulus reduced naturally. 2 years ago he decided to go to India and Thailand; he became a novice and later received full ordination as a monk in Bangkok. He then went to practise meditation in North Eastern Thailand. I met him in London recently and he told me that he is very happy to be rid of this evil thing from his life.

#### Differences of Meditation and Drug-Taking

From my interview with the 21 people who took drugs and practised meditation in 1970-71 I found that 19 persons told me the experiences which they had in meditation and drug-taking differed. 2 persons had no opinion on the subject.

1 male English student aged 21 told me that when he took LSD he felt that his heart pounded and he was very aware of the colours of the spectrum. He wanted to escape from his room. When he practised meditation, however, his mind remained calm and quiet. One Thai student aged 22 was curious about drug experiences. He told me that he took only half a tablet of LSD with some English friends, and he felt that he wanted to escape. "This feeling continued for nearly 8 hours" he said. He went to see the doctor afterwards and asked for a cure. The doctor gave him 2 tablets to take, saying that LSD

is very dangerous and can destroy the brain and memory and he was never to take it again.

An English girl aged 24 who previously used to take drugs, told me that she saw many colours, which were a useful stimulus when she was painting and the awareness of music was heightened, but it made her restless. When she meditated she felt more calm and peaceful in her mind. She abandoned drug taking. Now she practises meditation and yoga, and feels more satisfied.

The differences between meditation and drug-taking are as follows:

1. Meditation is a practical way to purify the mind, as Dhammasudhi said in his book, "Buddhist meditation is directed both in general and in particular towards cleaning the heart and mind of all disturbing influences known as 'impurities,' a disciplined process which is brought forth by cultivating such positive qualities as Friendliness or Loving-kindness, Compassion or fellow-feeling, Sympathetic joy over the success of others, and Equanimity towards the vicissitudes of life so as to maintain equilibrium and tranquility or peace of mind. In this way the practice develops concentration within mental calmness but with insight which realises truth and enlightens the Way to Perfect Emancipation."<sup>1</sup>

Drug-taking is considered a short cut to gaining certain experiences. Bergel and Davies explained in their book "The word 'drug' is popularly associated with two meanings: first, with medicines applied in the treatment of illnesses; secondly, with preparations which, because of the mental states they produce, are

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1. Sobhana Dhammasudhi, INSIGHT MEDITATION, 1968, p.16.

consumed occasionally or regularly by numbers of people. These individuals can, after a while, become drug habitués, addicts or dependants. They do not need the drugs for medical reasons, but because they have come to depend on the 'lift' they get from taking them or because the drug has become necessary to stave off withdrawal symptoms."<sup>1</sup>

In this paper I refer to the second meaning.

2. Meditation is free, but it is necessary to buy drugs.
3. People who take drugs cannot control themselves.

Meditation is the way to gain full awareness and self-control, you can control yourself when you meditate, and you never lose self-control. If you are not in control, it means you are not meditating.

4. From my observation I found that those who take drugs are likely to have health problems. People who practise meditation are very healthy.

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1. Franz Bergel and D.R.A. Davies, ALL ABOUT DRUGS, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1970, p.5.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE BUDDHIST MAGAZINES IN BRITAIN

The publication of journals is one of many ways to make Buddhism known in Britain. As Benedict wrote in his thesis "Both Buddhism and Islam received religious impetus in England by arrival of missionaries. In each case this resulted in the establishment of an association and publication of a journal." (Benedict 1954, p.314). In this Chapter I would like to discuss the role of Buddhist magazines in England.

In 1972 there are 4 Buddhist magazines in England as follows: 'The Middle Way,' 'The Friendly Way,' 'Buddhist Quarterly,' and 'Sangha'. There is a yearly journal of the Cambridge University Buddhist Society named 'Kalpa,' and Newsletters of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (F.W.B.O.) which are printed every 3 months. However, in this paper I will restrict discussion to the 4 magazines mentioned above.

#### The Middle Way

The Middle Way is the journal of the London Buddhist Society. Four issues of this magazine are published each year. I was informed by the Editor that articles dealing exclusively with Buddhism are given preference, but articles on other philosophies and religions are considered if they are treated in relationship to Buddhism. Articles mainly deal with the basic principles of Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, Zen Buddhism, Buddhist psychology etc. No payment is made for any article published in this magazine, and such

articles may be reprinted by the author or any other person, without fee, provided that due acknowledgement is made of its source and notification is sent to the Editor.

6-7 articles are generally published in each issue. About 30 pages are devoted to articles, 8 pages to book reviews, 4 pages to advertisement, 4 pages to correspondence, 4 pages to Buddhist news, and 2 pages to pictures, making a total of about 52 pages in every issue.

### Financial Support

This magazine is financed by subscriptions from members of and subscribers to the London Buddhist Society. The subscription fee is £1.12 p. a year for four issues, single copies 28p. post free. U.S.A. and Canada \$3.00 a year, post free. There is a separate subscription fee to the magazine for members of the London Buddhist Society, quite apart from the fee for membership of the Society.

Apart from subscriptions advertisements help to cover the costs. Typical advertisers are the Ceylon Tea Centre, The Theosophical Publishing House Ltd., George Allen & Unwin Ltd., The Buddhist Publication Society, Ceylon and Mantra London etc. Advertisement rates are £15 for full page, half page £8, and a quarter page £4.50p.

1,950 members of the Buddhist Society are also subscribers to this magazine. There are another 700 subscribers in the U.K. Each issue consists of 3,000 copies. 2,650 are sent to the subscribers, 350 are on sale at the Society.

### The Friendly Way

The Friendly Way is the journal of the Buddhapadipa Temple (Thai monastery in London). I was informed that the Editor would welcome articles on any aspect of Buddhism for

possible publication. The Friendly Way covers the basic principles of Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist meditation and also publishes news and notes relating to the Thai Dhammaduta's activities and Buddhist movements in the West.

There are as a rule 28 pages per issue, consisting of articles, translation of Buddhist Texts, News and Notes etc. 3-4 articles were published in the journal, 18 pages being devoted to this, 3 pages to translations of texts and 7 pages to news and notes etc. There are no advertisements in this journal.

#### Financial Support

Financial support comes in 2 ways as follows:

1. 50% of the Temple Association membership fees pay for this journal i.e. £116 a year. There are 116 British members of the Temple paying £2 per year; members receive free copies of "The Friendly Way" and a membership card setting out the rules of the Association.
2. There is support from the Thai Government. I was told that the money from subscriptions is not sufficient to pay for printing, so the Thai Embassy subsidises the cost of printing this journal, from Buddhapadipa Temple funds.

The journal is published every 3 months. There are 400 copies in each issue; 116 are sent to members and subscribers, and 284 are on sale at the Temple or given to supporters of the Temple.

#### Buddhist Quarterly

The Buddhist Quarterly is the journal of the London Buddhist Vihara (Ceylonese monastery). From my observation the Buddhist Quarterly is concerned with translations of Buddhist Texts (at least one Sutta is translated in each

issue), plus wide ranging articles about Buddhist Teaching, Buddhist activities in and outside the Vihara, and book reviews.

Each issue of the journal is between 20-30 pages long, 2-3 articles are published in each issue. Eleven pages are devoted to articles, 4 pages to translations of different Suttas, 4 pages to activities of the Vihara, 4 pages to book reviews, 2 pages to other news, and 3 pages to Final Comment and 1 page is reserved for advertisements, but some issues have no advertisements at all.

#### Financial Support

I was informed that funds are obtained in 3 ways:

1. From the subscriptions of the 173 members of the Vihara,
2. From Ceylonese people who give dana to the monks at the Vihara, and
3. From the Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon.

50% of each membership fee pays for this journal, the £2 annual membership fee includes 4 copies per year.

This journal is published quarterly; 500 copies are printed in each issue. 173 copies are sent to subscribers and members and 327 copies are on sale at the Vihara and sent to various Buddhist organizations throughout the world.

#### Sangha

Sangha is the journal of the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre, Hampstead. From my observation this journal publishes lectures and essays on Buddhist philosophy, basic teaching of Buddhism, news and notes etc. There are no advertisements in this journal, as is the case with 'The Friendly Way.'

Normally about 2-3 lectures or essays are published in

each issue. The 'Sangha' has 11 pages of lectures and essays, 2 pages of rules and activities at the centre, 2 pages of Editorial, and 2 pages of news and notes.

#### Financial Support

Income for this journal is received from subscriptions from 150 people and from the English Sangha Trust Ltd. The subscriptions alone are not sufficient to print this journal, so the English Sangha Trust Ltd. has to subsidise the printing of this journal.

Subscription to this journal is £1.70 per 12 monthly issues; single copies are 15p. post free. 300 copies are printed each issue, 150 being sent to subscribers, and 150 copies are on sale at the centre or sent to Buddhist organizations abroad.

#### A Comparison of the 4 Buddhist Journals

1. All four journals are dedicated to promulgation of Buddhist religion.
2. Each journal emphasises differeneing aspects of Buddhism. From my observation 'The Middle Way' accentuates radical interpretations of Buddhist concepts (especially Zen) relevant to present day circumstances. Meditation takes a prominent place in 'The Friendly Way.' The 'Buddhist Quarterly' emphasises original reports of the Buddhist scene particularly in the West together with articles, and 'Sangha' stresses Buddhist philosophy.
3. Three Buddhist journals are published in Britain, 'The Middle Way' printed by R. H. John Ltd., Newport, Mon.; 'The Friendly Way' and 'Sangha' printed by John Peaty & Sons Ltd., London. The 'Buddhist Quarterly' is printed in Ceylon by the Maha Bodhi Society, Colombo.

John Peaty has a personal interest in the spread of Buddhist teaching, and his Buddhist background helps him to edit and publish the two Journals wisely. The Buddhapadipa Temple and the Dhammapadipa Vipassana and Research Centre are closely associated and thus use the same printer; this has economical advantages.

The 'Buddhist Quarterly' is printed in Ceylon. In 1963 the management of the London Buddhist Vihara was taken over by the Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, so it is better economically to publish their journal in Ceylon.

4. 'The Middle Way' has had more copies printed per issue than the other 3 Buddhist journals in England, and compares as follows:

'The Middle Way'	3,000 copies for each issue
'The Buddhist Quarterly'	500 copies for each issue
'The Friendly Way'	400 copies for each issue
and 'Sangha'	300 copies for each issue.

5. The Editor of 'The Middle Way' is an Englishman, the Editors of 'The Friendly Way' and 'Sangha' are also Englishmen, but 'Buddhist Quarterly' has joint Editors, one is Ceylonese and the other an Englishman. All are Buddhists.
6. In my own opinion 'The Middle Way' is the best because it gives more information on Buddhism to readers.

In interviews with 101 people in the U.K. in 1971-72 I found the following statistics:-

TABLE 21

Description	Number
(a) Those who subscribe to only 1 Buddhist magazine.	22
(b) Those who subscribe to more than 1 Buddhist magazine.	49
(c) Those who do not subscribe to any Buddhist magazine.	30
Total	101

For example, 8 members of the Buddhapadipa Temple interviewed are subscribers of both 'The Friendly Way' and 'The Middle Way.' 8 members of the London Buddhist Society interviewed are subscribers of 'The Middle Way' and 'The Friendly Way' too. 2 members of the London Buddhist Vihara are subscribers of 'Buddhist Quarterly,' 'The Middle Way,' and 'The Friendly Way.' Most Buddhists I interviewed are subscribers to more than one Buddhist magazine.

#### BUDDHIST PUBLICATIONS

There are many thousands of books and texts on Buddhism published in England.

The following are publishers of books on Buddhism in the United Kingdom:

1. Luzac and Company Ltd., London
2. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London
3. Penguin Books Ltd., Middlesex
4. Rider & Company, London
5. The Gordon Fraser Gallery Limited, Bedford
6. Stuart & Watkins, London
7. The Vipassana Centre, Hindhead, Surrey.

Luzac and Company Ltd. mostly publish Buddhist Texts

and many Buddhist Scriptures translated by The Pali Text Society.

George Allen & Unwin have published many books on Buddhism by different authors, such as 'The Way of Power' by John Blofeld, 'The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra' by Edward Conze, 'The Buddhist Way of Life' by Christmas Humphreys, 'The Buddha's Way' by H. Saddhatissa etc. I was informed that up to now (1972) 26 books on Buddhism have been published by this company.

Penguin Books Ltd. have published many books on Buddhism e.g. 'The Way of Zen' by Alan W. Watts, 'Buddhist Scriptures' by Cor  
'The Heart of Buddhist Meditation' by Nyanaponika Thera, 'Mind Unshaken' by John Walters, 'Essays in Zen Buddhism' by Daisetsu T. Suzuki etc. are examples of books published by Rider and Company.

Gordon Fraser published 'What the Buddha Taught' by Walpola Rahula; Stuart & Watkins are responsible for 'Meditation in Action' by Chogyam Trungpa; Cassell & Company Ltd. have published 'Buddhism' by Christmas Humphreys; Stephen Austin & Sons Ltd. have published 'The Real Way to Awakening' by Sobhana Dhammasudhi, and the Vipassana Centre published 'Insight Meditation' and 'The Beneficial Factors for Meditation Practice' by Sobhana Dhammasudhi etc.

#### Books that have influenced English Buddhists

It is possible to discover which books have had the greatest influence over British Buddhists. One of the most influential has been 'Buddhism' by Christmas Humphreys; this gives information about all schools of Buddhism and Buddhist teachings briefly and clearly. 'What the Buddha Taught' by Walpola Rahula is recommended to beginners at the Buddhapadipa

Temple and therefore sells well, having a particular impact on Theravada Buddhists. It explains what the Buddha taught in simple modern language. Among Mahayana Buddhists 'Essays in Zen Buddhism' by Dr. D. T. Suzuki, which gives the ideas from Buddhist philosophy which can easily be applied to the Western way of thinking, and 'The Diamond Sūtra and the Heart Sutra' by Edward Conze, have greatest appeal.

Among those books which deal specifically with meditation the order of preference is 'The Heart of Buddhist Meditation' by Nyanaponika Thera (a direct explanation of meditation and the practice of mindfulness within all schools), 'The Real Way to Awakening' by Sobhana Dhammasudhi (shows the way of spiritual development by practice of meditation), and thirdly Chogyam Trungpa's book 'Meditation in Action' which shows a new way to apply meditation to everyday life. At the London Buddhist Society 'Meditation in Action' sells best with 'The Heart of Buddhist Meditation' in second place. The Order differs at the Buddhapadipa Temple where, of those books concerned with meditation, Sobhana Dhammasudhi's 'The Real Way to Awakening' is the top seller. This bears a direct relationship to the fact that Sobhana Dhammasudhi was previously the Chao Khun there.

As a handbook which can be read and re-read and put into daily practice the 'Dhammapada' is the most widely studied Buddhist text. There are many translations of this.

'The Light of Asia' by Sir Edwin Arnold has had much influence on British Buddhists. It is a fine poem based on the life of the Buddha and his teachings.

In general bookshops 'The Way of Zen' by Alan Watts sells best, because many young people in Britain are interested in Zen as a fashion. The sale of books on Zen at the London

Buddhist Society shows a similar trend.

There are some books dealing with Buddhism from an anthropological point of view but these are not generally bought or read by Buddhists, e.g. 'Buddhism and Spirit Cults' by Tambiah, 'Anthropological Studies in Theravada Buddhism' by Nash, 'Precept and Practice' by Gombrich, 'Burmese Supernaturalism' by Spiro, 'Buddhism and Society' by Spiro, 'Monks, Priests and Peasants' by Evers, etc.

### THE PALI TEXT SOCIETY

The Pali Text Society is not a Buddhist organization, but a society of scholars who consult together to translate Buddhists Texts and commentaries from the Pali language into English. It was founded in 1881 by Professor Rhys Davids, and is supported by Buddhists and many scholars in various universities.

The Pali Text Society is run by a Management Committee. The Committee is led by a President, then follow the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Librarian and Archivist, the Hon. Secretaries and treasurers for Ceylon, the Hon. Secretary and treasurer for Burma, the Hon. Secretary and treasurer for Thailand, the representative for Malaysia, and 12 Pali scholars as Committee members. The present President is Miss I. B. Horner, M.A., D.Litt. The office of the Pali Text Society is 62 South Lodge, Circus Road, London, N.W.8 9ET.

#### The Work of the Society

The Buddhist Scriptures and their commentaries have been translated by scholars of the Pali Text Society such as Max Müller, Professor Rhys Davids, Mrs. Rhys Davides, Fauboll, Pe Maung Tin, Woodward, Bhikkhu Nanamoli, Lord Chalmers, Miss Horner etc.

The work of the Pali Text Society can be divided into 7 categories as follows:

1. Texts. 175 volumes of Buddhist Texts and commentaries have been edited in Roman characters.
2. Journals. 23 journals were published between 1882 and 1927; but now all are out of print.

3. Dictionary. To help students who are interested in studying the Pali language the Society has published 3 types of dictionary:
- (1) Pali-English Dictionary edited by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede.
  - (2) English-Pali Dictionary compiled by Ven. A. P. Buddhadatta Mahathera.
  - (3) A Dictionary of Pali Proper Names of which there are two volumes compiled by G. P. Malalasekera.
4. The society has published 'An Introduction to Pali' (A Primer and Reader) by A. K. Warder and 'Pali Metre' by the same scholar which help students to learn the Pali language.
5. The Pali Tipitakam Concordance. Being a concordance in Pali to the Three Baskets of Buddhist Scriptures in the Indian order of letters, listed by F. L. Woodward and others, and arranged and edited by Hare, Norman and Warder. There are 3 volumes of the concordance at present.
6. Translation Series. This work helps to make Buddhism known throughout the world. Since 1909 to 1971 the Pali Text Society has translated Buddhist Texts and commentaries and published 40 volumes of translations.
7. Separate Series. Sacred Books of the Buddhists series such as the 'Dialogues of the Buddha' (Digha-Nikaya) Vols. I, II, III and 'Further Dialogues of the Buddha' (Majjhima-Nikaya) Vols, I and II have been translated by many scholars and altogether 28 volumes have been published up till 1971.

Also published are the 'Jataka Stories' variously translated under the Editorship of E. B. Cowell and the 'Buddhist Legends' (Dhammapada Commentary) translated by E. W. Burlingame.

These are on sale at the Society and Luzac and Company Ltd.

The Society continues translating.

From my observation, I found that some translations used old fashioned language which is not suitable to the present time, but most of the translations are good.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A COMPARISON OF BRITISH BUDDHISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THAI BUDDHISTS IN THAILAND

In the previous chapters Buddhist organizations and various Buddhist activities have been discussed. In this chapter British and Thai Buddhists will be compared.

People in Great Britain and in Thailand are essentially free to follow and practise any religion they like. This is specially so in Thailand since the Revolution of 1932. Every Constitution of Thailand has recognised religious freedom. Thus "Every person enjoys full liberty to profess any religion, any religious sect or religious creed, and to exercise a form of worship in accordance with his belief, provided that it is not contrary to his civic duties to public order or good morals."<sup>1</sup> The people in Great Britain also have the freedom to profess any religion, denomination or doctrine.

#### Comparison of British and Thai Buddhists

It is possible to compare Thai and British Buddhists in the following ways: the schools and sections of Buddhism followed, social habits, and the aspects of the religion and the extent of their popularity etc.

#### Comparing the Schools and Sections of Buddhism in Britain and Thailand

There are many factors influencing the following figures. Buddhism has long been the state religion in Thailand whereas

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND, Section 26, B.E. 2511, Translated by The Judicial Council, The Government Gazette, Vol.85, Special Issue, 20th June, B.E. 2511, p.10.

it has only been followed in Britain for a mere 60 years, and only certain schools are accessible there. Sample sections, although of similar numbers, will be different in many ways. For instance it takes a certain unconventionality of mind to follow a religion which is not a state religion and some teaching to make continued contact with a Buddhist group in Britain because these remain a rarity and may not be readily accessible. On the other hand, Thai people are surrounded by facilities to practise their religion from birth and social factors orientate them towards Buddhism constantly.

In 1971, 75 Buddhists in Britain and 108 in Thailand were interviewed. Of the British Buddhists, 48 belonged to the Theravāda School, 22 to the Zen School and 5 to the Tibetan. In Thailand there were two main sections: Mahanikaya (claiming 96) and Dhammayuttika Nikaya with the remaining six. Six people belonged to both sections.

It is possible to compare how often visits are made to Buddhist organizations in both countries in the following Table.

TABLE 22

	Thailand	Britain
Every day	5	0
More than once a week	12	0
Every Buddha day (once a week)	32	26
Once a month or more	23	0
Occasionally	26	49
Resident in the Wat	3	0
Attend to Dhamma programme on the radio or television	7	0

Showing visits to other Buddhist organizations in both countries

Britain

13 visit other Buddhist organizations at least once a week.

62 visit other Buddhist organizations occasionally.

N.B. 8 visit non-Buddhist religious organizations occasionally.

Thailand

80 occasionally visit other Wats and Societies.

Social Habits

There are no strict rules regulating the eating habits of Buddhists. There is no commandment forbidding the eating of meat but many prefer to be vegetarian. The percentage of British Buddhists who are vegetarian is higher than that of Thai Buddhists. This may be because in Britain Buddhism and vegetarianism have been mistaken to be synonymous. At the Buddhist Summer School last year some people were very surprised to see myself and a Tibetan monk eating non-vegetarian food. Of 75 Buddhists interviewed in 1971, 32 were vegetarian, 23 of 108 Thai Buddhists were vegetarian.

There is a slight difference between the concept of vegetarianism in the two countries; in Thailand it is believed that to eat an egg is also to take a life, whereas in Britain many eat the infertile eggs that can be bought from the market believing there is no life in this kind of egg.

The smoking and drinking habits differ considerably in the two countries. There is a much higher proportion of British people who smoke and drink. The figures refer to a small sample of the total population of each country and may well be different from the national average. Again there are social and doctrinal factors at work. One of the five basic precepts of a Buddhists is not to drink intoxicants whereas the ten commandments do not contain a comparable instruction. It is

interesting to note that although Thai people drink less than British they get drunk more often.

Most of the British people interviewed smoke cigarettes, cigars or a pipe, with as many women smoking as men. In Thailand less women smoke than men, because there public opinion is against women who smoke. As far as drinking goes there is no such distinction and women in Thailand drink for the same social reasons as men.

TABLE 23

Questions and answers	British	Thai
1. Do you smoke?		
Yes.	70	26
No.	31	84
2. Do you drink?		
Yes.	80	19
No.	21	91

The fifth precept which precludes the use of intoxicants and that which causes heedlessness also covers the taking of drugs which helps to explain why so few Thai people do so. Only 4 of the 110 had ever done so. One smoked marijuana and opium and another just marijuana as an experiment, giving it up later. 2 others are addicted to heroin which they took either for social reasons or for the experience. A boy student of 19 said that when he took drugs he felt marvellous and could seemingly solve his life's problems and stop his worries. A girl student of 18 said that the drug made her feel very happy and she continues to take it for this reason, but she also needs meditation because this makes her more calm and peaceful. She stated that the experiences which she obtained from drug taking and those from meditation practice were

different. The 19 British people who had also experienced drugs agreed with her in this. The three other Thai people had never practised meditation so they were unable to compare meditation and drug-taking experiences.

#### Aspects of the Religion and the Extent of their Popularity

British people have a preference for meditation whereas Thai people prefer the traditional aspect of Buddhism. There is only a small percentage of Thai Buddhists who understand meditation well. Many Thai officials and students who come to Britain are asked questions about meditation which they are unable to answer. Both, however, concur in their second choice, that is the philosophy which has grown from Buddhism as it shows in Table 24.

TABLE 24

Aspect	British	Thai
1. Meditation	86	11
2. Philosophy	46	21
3. Tradition	38	37
4. Ceremony and chanting	25	4
5. Way of life	38	14
6. Art	15	17

#### Thai and British Buddhist organizations

We can also compare British and Thai Buddhists through their organizations. There are 36 Buddhist organizations in Great Britain. Only 2 of them are Buddhist monasteries run by monks. The other 34 Buddhist organizations in the U.K. are run by laymen. In Thailand, however, there were 24,267 Buddhist organizations in 1970 which can be divided into the following two categories:

1. 24,157 Wats or Buddhist monasteries in Thailand which fall into 4 types:

(a) Thai Buddhist monasteries (Theravada Buddhism)	24,105
(b) Chinese monasteries (Mahayana Buddhism)	24
(c) Vietnamese Buddhist monasteries (Mahayana Buddhism)	10
(d) Burmese Buddhist monasteries (Theravada Buddhism)	18
Total	<u>24,157</u>

These monasteries have 263,135 Bhikkhus (monks) and Samaneras (novice-monks).

2. 110 Buddhist organizations managed by voluntary Buddhist laymen.

Thus we can see that there are more Buddhist organizations in Britain run by laymen, and more Buddhist organizations in Thailand run by monks.

#### Other Interests of Buddhists

We can now compare the eight major interests of British and Thai Buddhists in 1971 (see Table 25).

TABLE 25

Other interests of 101 British people		Other interests of 110 Thai people	
1. Interest in travel	77	1. Interest in studies	34
2. Interest in music	50	2. Interest in merit-making	25
3. Interest in art	38	3. Interest in current affairs	13
4. Interest in the theatre	26	4. Interest in nature	10
5. Interest in languages	13	5. Interest in politics	6
6. Interest in dancing	12	6. Interest in travel	4
7. Interest in sport	11	7. Interest in business	3
8. Interest in philately	2	8. Interest in music	2

From the 101 British people and 110 Thai people whom we interviewed in 1971 we found that, apart from their interest in religion, people in Britain were primarily interested in travel, music and art. Thai people are primarily interested in studying, merit-making and current affairs. Though the great majority of people we interviewed in the two countries were students, the interests are still widely different.

### Buddhist Populations in Britain and Thailand

We can compare the Buddhist populations of each country by referring to Tables 1 and 2.

#### 1. Britain

	<u>School</u>	<u>Number</u>
Monks	Thai	7 members
"	Ceylonese	2 "
"	Tibetan	4 "
"	English	1 "
"	Japanese	1 "
Nun	British	1 "
Lay-followers		

The figure for British Buddhists ranges from 10,000 to 30,000.

#### 2. Thailand

Monks	Thai	175,266 members
"	Chinese	75 "
"	Vietnamese	75 "
Novices	Thai	87,661 "
"	Chinese	46 "
"	Vietnamese	12 "
Homeless Lay-Followers		
	Male white robed	
	Homeless lay-followers (Taa Pa Koas)	40 members

Female white robed  
 Homeless lay followers (Chees) and  
 female laities who during Buddhist  
 lent live with Chees. 77,759 members

Lay-Followers

Followers of various nationalities  
 31,054,571 members

From the latest records in Thailand we can see that the majority (93.6%) of people are Buddhists, whereas in England, from information accrued by myself, only 0.05% of the population are Buddhists.

For economic reasons there are no white clad homeless lay followers. In Thailand such people do not need money because they are given everything they need wherever they go so that they can practise their religion unhindered.

### BUDDHIST STUDY SYSTEM

Buddhism is propagated in Thailand in the following 3 ways:

- (1) Teaching through the education system (i.e. schools)
- (2) Teaching outside of the education system (i.e. lectures by monks and lay people, by radio, television, etc. Informal instruction from friends and relatives.
- (3) Through the social services.

However, in England, Buddhism is not taught at all at the lower levels of the educational system (i.e. primary and secondary schools), and therefore can only be propagated by teaching outside of the school system and by the working of the Buddhist social service. However, in recent years other lecturers in Buddhism and I have been asked to talk on Buddhism in some British schools.

#### 1. (A) The System of Religious Education

In Thailand the Buddhist Order attaches great importance to religious instruction for both the monkhood and lay people. A number of religious schools have been set up by the Order to improve and maintain the standard of Buddhist scholarships among Bhikkhus, Samaneras and lay followers, while other courses are designed purely for religious instruction.

The Sangha and the Government jointly help to arrange the courses for religious instructors i.e.

Course	Period of study	Type of students
1. Nak Dhamma	3 years	Bhikkhus and Samaneras
2. Dhamma Suksa	3 years	Lay followers
3. Pali	9 years	Bhikkhus and Samaneras only
4. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalai	8 years	Bhikkhus and Samaneras only
5. Sabha Karn Suksa Mahamakutrajaavidyalai	7 years	Bhikkhus and Samaneras only
6. Dhammaduta	1½ years	Bhikkhus only

Note: (1) Courses 4 and 5 are at university level. In 1965, there were 7,249 schools for Pariyatti Dhamma (Nos.1, 2, 3 in the Table) with 18,824 instructors.

(2) The course of Dhammaduta is designed to train Bhikkhus after graduation from the Buddhist universities for missionary work in foreign countries; Bhikkhus who have this course have been sent to 4 countries so far. 5 Dhammaduta Bhikkhus were sent to Britain, 4 were sent to India, 4 were sent to Indonesia, and 4 were sent to Malaysia.

There is a type of religious education which has just been set up in recent years; this is the Buddhist Sunday School. In this school both monks and laymen teach Buddhism to pupils and students from elementary level up to university level. This takes place every Sunday during term time in centrally placed monasteries where pupils and students can attend the courses easily.

All these religious educational systems are arranged by the Buddhist Sangha and the State in Thailand, but this cannot be done in Britain at the moment. However, at the Buddhapadipa

Temple (Thai monastery) in London, Dhammaduta Bhikkhus tried to set up a Buddhist Sunday School 2 years ago to teach Buddhism to both British and Thai children in London. However, there are still very few pupils attending the classes.

#### 1. (B) Public Education

One of the important roles of the Buddhist Order in Thailand is its substantial contribution toward public education. For many centuries, Buddhist monasteries in Thailand have been centres of study with the Bhikkhus as teachers. When the modern system of education was introduced in Thailand at the end of the nineteenth<sup>century</sup>, Bhikkhus still played an important role as teachers, and great numbers of Government schools, both primary and secondary, were conducted in monasteries. At present there are fewer Bhikkhus who teach in schools, and the number of Temple schools has fallen, though the majority of schools are still attached to monasteries, especially primary schools. In 1965, a general survey was made by the Department of Religious Affairs and it was found that there were 9,035 schools, both primary and secondary, attached to monasteries.

This type of education does not take place in Buddhist monasteries in Britain because Buddhist organizations have no strong incentive to build schools or hospitals just for the propagation of Buddhism, as Christian missionaries did in Thailand and other countries in Asia.

Table 26 shows the number and type of religious certificates and degrees obtained by Thai Buddhists.

TABLE 26

Religious certificates obtained	Number
1. Certificate of Nak Dhamma (obtained as monks)	14
2. Certificate of Pali (obtained as monks)	5
3. Certificate of Buddhism from Buddhist Sunday Schools	3
4. Certificate of Dhamma Suksa.	2
5. Certificate of Navakabhumi (obtained as temporary monks)	2
6. Certificate of religion in Army School.	1
7. Certificate of Buddhism from Buddha Samagama.	1
8. Certificate of Islam religion	1
Degree obtained:	
1. B.A. Degree from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalai	1

None of these examinations exist in Britain, but there are some British Buddhists who have obtained a certificate of Dhamma from Ceylon. I met 1 British lady and 1 English man who obtained this certificate through their passing a Dhamma Examination in the London Buddhist Vihara in 1969. At this Vihara they have a basic course on Buddhism for people outside London; it is a correspondence course consisting of ten lessons. The student receives a folder with the lessons, reading matter and questions, which he attempts to answer by post, and he then receives back corrections of his answers. The course costs £1.50. Also they teach at the Vihara Dhamma, Abhidhamma, Meditation, Pali and Sinhalese.

Also at university level there are courses on comparative religion. A working men's college in central London introduced a one-year course on Buddhism (one hour per week). Goldsmiths College, which is part of the University of London, is introducing a course lasting two terms.

## 2. Methods of Teaching Buddhism

In Thailand sermons are delivered at every monastery on Wan Phra or Uposatha Day, the day on which Buddhists observe the precepts and listen to the Dhamma preached by Bhikkhus. There are four Uposatha Days in a month according to the lunar cycle, namely, the 8th, and 14th or 15th day of the waxing and waning moon.

In addition a good number of lectures on the Dhamma and various programmes on Buddhism are organised through the mass media by religious bodies and other institutions. Buddhist sermons, talks and discussions are broadcast through radio and television on Wan Phra and also on Sundays in Thailand.

In England sermons and lectures on Buddhism are delivered by Buddhist organizations on Saturdays and Sundays, and, occasionally, on weekdays. There are some radio programmes on Buddhism on the B.B.C. There have also been some discussions on Buddhism in religious programmes televised by A.T.V. and B.B.C. However, there are very few such programmes in England.

Now we can compare how British and Thai Buddhists practise their religion.

(1) In Britain it was found that 75 British Buddhists interviewed in 1970-71, practised their religion in 5 ways:

- (a) 23 people observe 5 precepts.
- (b) 45 people practise meditation daily.
- (c) 20 people attend classes once a week or more.
- (d) 37 people practise meditation occasionally.
- (e) 16 people attend classes only occasionally.

Two or more aspects may be practised synchronously.

(2) 108 Thai Buddhists interviewed in 1971 practised their religion in the following ways:

- (a) 30 people observe 5 precepts, do merit-making and listen to sermons.
- (b) 27 people observe 5 precepts and do chanting before they go to sleep.
- (c) 24 people practise the basic teaching of Buddhism.
- (d) 8 people do merit-making and practise meditation daily.
- (e) 6 people observe 5 precepts and practise meditation daily.
- (f) 4 people do merit-making.
- (g) 2 people practise meditation and study Abhidhamma.
- (h) 5 people practise meditation, observe precepts and do merit-making.
- (i) 2 persons became monks for a short period in the Thai tradition.

From this comparison it is found that Thai Buddhists practise their religion in many more ways than British Buddhists.

### 3. Social Services

The Buddhist Order in Thailand has a high reputation for voluntary services and for the welfare of the community in general. Bhikkhus provide schools, hospitals, resting places and wells for the public and encourage others to do the same. In the provinces, Bhikkhus give advice and assistance in cases of family problems and misfortunes among members of the community; for example, they visit the sick in hospitals and mediate in personal disputes. They also render other voluntary social services, both material and spiritual, for the development of the country. In addition, a good number of Bhikkhus take care of young students from the countryside when they are studying in schools and universities. \* According to the General Survey of 1965, there were more than 50,000 students benefiting

\* BUDDHISM IN THAILAND, Information of Thailand, London, August, 1971. p.52.

from this service.

In Britain both Buddhist monks and lay teachers perform social services to the best of their ability. They give advice and assistance in cases of family and personal problems to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists; for example, they visit the sick in hospitals and visit people in prisons.

When we compare the Buddhist study system in Britain and in Thailand, we find that some systems are the same, but some are different, because in Thailand the Sangha and the State jointly help to arrange religious education whilst in Britain the Christian Church and the State jointly help to arrange Christian religious education.

### BUDDHIST TRADITION

There are no Buddhist traditions as such in Britain because there is a very short history of Buddhism in this country and, until recently, it was very isolated. Isolated both by reason of social class and education, and by rarity. Such traditions as are practised by British Buddhists are 'borrowed' from the East.

The involvement of a whole community with the support of a religious institution is almost unthinkable in Britain where monasteries have been closed orders almost entirely cut off from the general populace. In medieval times the function of the clergy as directors of morality, teachers and leaders was comparable to the situation still existing in the East. Given this different attitude many of the Eastern traditions have no direct counterpart in the West. For instance, the concept of merit-making is an alien one to the Protestant culture based on self reliance. It was found from interviews that there is a greater interest in merit-making in Thailand than in England. British Buddhists are influenced to a certain extent by the example of Eastern Buddhists and some give *dāna* (food) to the Buddhist monks in the two Buddhist monasteries in London.

Merit-making is the Thai way of expressing ethical convictions in this life and assuming a better life in the future. It bears little resemblance to the Christian idea of charity. A Thai gives food to the monks not to help them but to gain merit for himself. Perhaps as much as 25 per cent of the average family's cash outlay goes to merit-making. As Blanchard said in his book, "The main practical consequence of Buddhism in Thailand is emphasis upon serene, humble and virtuous behaviour; merit-making is an institutionalised expression of virtue."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Blanchard, Wendell, THAILAND, Haraf Press, New York, 1958, p.12.

Ways of making merit are legion. One gains merit each time one feeds a monk or goes to the Temple. To serve the monkhood brings much more merit. Releasing caged birds and animals, plastering gold leaf on a statue of the Buddha, contributing to the construction of a new temple - all earn merit. Although the monk receiving an offering is not the one intended to benefit, it becomes obvious from the values attached to certain practises that greater weight is given to those merit making practises which relate to the support of the Sangha, which must encourage Thais to perform those actions in preference to others; which must certainly be beneficial to the general condition of the Sangha.

From the information gained in interviews it is seen that of the 110 Thai People, 31 people support Wat Mahadhatu in Bangkok, 30 support their local Wat and 49 do not support any Wat. Thus nearly 55% of Thai people support the Wat, giving donations and otherwise helping in various ways. This tradition does not exist in Britain, though a small percentage of British Buddhists support Buddhist monasteries monetarily, although they do contribute to Buddhist organizations in their own areas, by buying magazines and paying subscriptions etc.

In Thailand, young Buddhist men enter the Sangha when they are twenty; even the King has done this. There is no fixed period for which a person should remain in the order. Most young men join the order for three months during the Buddhist lent. Some stay longer, and a few devote the remainder of their lives to the Sangha. According to an unofficial source, approximately ninety-seven per cent of all Buddhist men over sixty have for some time in their lives been Bhikkhus. This lends a coherence to the whole community and brings each family into personal contact with the Sangha and the Wat.

Therefore it is a living reality to the Thai people, an integral part of their lives. Thus it helps to explain why so many wish to support their local monasteries and to help the monks. The Bhikkhu in the saffron robe may well be a cousin and his contribution to the community is seen to be real; he teaches the children and acts as adviser and friend.

No such tradition exists in Britain yet. Many British young men would like to be ordained but the monasteries in this country are too small, without sufficient accommodation to receive them. Since 1969, 5 British young men have gone to Thailand to receive full ordination. Three remain monks but two have disrobed. As it is necessary for Westerners to go to the East to join the Sangha so certain Eastern greetings have been adopted by British Buddhists as being a fitting way to greet monks and other Buddhists. "Wai" is the Thai word for greeting; it is a word of welcome. When Buddhists meet they bow slightly to each other with palms joined in a polite and gentle gesture. People in Asia do this even if they are not Buddhists, because this is the traditional form of greeting in the East.



Picture 7: This shows a British Buddhist greeting a Zen master in London in 1968.



Picture 8: In this picture the Buddhist leaders in Britain greet each other at a Buddhist Seminar which was organised by the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order in 1968.

The position of men and women is theoretically the same with an equal chance for either sex to follow Buddhism, but in practice the hierarchy is always headed by men. The reasons for this are cultural and historical. Women were not encouraged to be educated in the past or to show qualities of leadership. There are more Buddhist monks than nuns; the opposite is found in Christianity where there are more Christian nuns than monks.

In Thailand His Majesty the King appoints a selected 'Thera' or 'Elder' who is highly qualified to be the Supreme Patriarch, Head of the Buddhist Order. He is responsible for all ecclesiastical affairs of the Order.

Under the Sangha Act of 1962 the Sangha Supreme Council, the Mahathera Samagama, serves as a Consultative Council to the Supreme Patriarch who, according to the law, possesses absolute power. The council consists of Somdej Sanghrajā, the Supreme Patriarch, as its President, all Somdej Phra Raja Ganas as ex officio members, and four to eight monks nominated by the Supreme Patriarch from Phra Raja Ganas to hold office as members to act as advisers to the Supreme Patriarch in the council. This is the Central Administration of the Order. The administration of the Sangha in provinces is divided into regions, provinces, districts, and precincts, corresponding to the divisions of the country by the State for administrative purposes.

According to the Sangha Act of 1962, the Director-General of the Department of Religious Affairs is the ex officio Secretary-General to the Mahathera Samagama.

The Buddhapadipa Temple, London is connected with Mahathera Samagama through the Department of Religious Affairs.

In Britain, of the leaders of 36 Buddhist organizations throughout the country, 25 are men, and only 11 are women.

So most of the Buddhist leaders in Britain are men. However, <sup>e. i. B. Horner</sup> the President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists is a woman. The lay Buddhist leaders are chosen by election within each Buddhist organization in both countries.

There are great differences between the ways in which Buddhism is practised in Britain and Thailand. In the East Buddhism is integral to the community as a whole, and can hardly be separated from it. It is a coherent way to live. In the West Buddhism comes as a philosophy and attitude into a culture which is quite different from that of the East. Westerners modify the traditions of the East according to the pre-existing culture.

## CONCLUSION

Originally, the impetus came from the West; Western people travelled to the East to find out about Eastern religion. These informed Westerners returned and by their efforts interest was aroused primarily through the setting up of a society in London in 1907. The need for instruction was recognised on both sides of the world and in 1908 the first missionary came from Burma. Much written information was put into circulation by the London Buddhist Society. This took the form of a journal, books, pamphlets and articles in other magazines. Working with the Pali Text Society, who had already set up libraries and translated and published Buddhist Scriptures and books, to facilitate the study of Eastern cultures and languages etc., ideas related to Buddhism, in all its forms were introduced to the West. The contact was mainly indirect, by way of the written word, and on a much smaller scale by personal contact with the founder members of the Society. Gradually these ideas and attitudes filtered into Western consciousness; there began to be a greater familiarity with Eastern Art and Symbolism and this influenced the design of many Western artifacts. This reciprocal process goes on today. Many Western artists are using the Mandala form in their work. Clothing and furniture design have all been influenced by Eastern forms.

The written word by virtue of its accessibility has always been the dominant vehicle of Buddhism in the West. Most British Buddhists whom I interviewed are self-converted, becoming Buddhist by pure intellectual reasoning or via meditation practice, usually the practice of meditation

followed a written instruction. There are very few who became Buddhist by conversion by missionaries. The other path of influence is on a personal level; Buddhism is very much a way of life and its influence is effective by example. Quite apart from organised societies which seek to teach morality directly, there is the interest and curiosity that arises naturally out of a day to day relationship with someone who is following the middle way. For example, those who have gained peace of mind or serenity will show these qualities in their very being and others will seek for these attitudes through them.

There is an increasing number of Buddhist organizations in Britain. In 1907 there was 1 group; this rose to twelve in 1964, twenty-five in 1966 and again to thirty-six in 1972. Originally there were 25 persons on record as being interested in Buddhism; in 1972 the figure is 10,000. It is possible to look at the way in which these people have been affected by Buddhism.

A new way of life is offered and the matrix that connects all the disparate changes is the attitude. This attitude is basically one of tolerance and understanding. Buddhism encourages a tolerant attitude towards all things showing a way of peaceful co-operation with others of different backgrounds and religious upbringing. The Buddhist way of thought is based on reason and does not in any way rely on blind faith. Attention is directed to the present moment, on the 'Here and Now', rather than to the future. More obviously the attitude towards God is affected when one changes to become a Buddhist. Since the last war an increasing number of young people have come to Buddhism because they feel dissatisfied with Christianity. The recent situation in Northern

Ireland has aggravated this latest dissatisfaction. They think that Buddhism can give them greater peace and happiness. Sometimes this is a real search and sometimes it is just a fashion, a novel interest such as Zen tends to be at the moment. Nearly every Buddhist organization in the U.K. has noticed that many come to meditation classes and lectures a few times and then disappear.

For others, Buddhism provides a deeply satisfying way to live. In general British Buddhists are cheerful people because they have learned the way of love, unity and friendliness. I think that the Buddhist way of life is applicable to Britain because there is no dogma, it has its own freedom and is based on reason and a scientific observation. Buddhism is applicable even in Western Urban life, although it is not possible for Buddhists in the West to follow all aspects of Buddhism exactly as it is practised in the East, because of the pre-existing differences between the two cultures.

The West is orientated towards Christianity. Buddhists in Britain form a very small minority group, under 1% of the total population, and Buddhist activities have to be organised in a predominantly Christian environment, adapting and applying Buddhism to the Western way of life and yet keeping it pure. Also Buddhist Organizations in Britain emphasise meditation and philosophy in preference to tradition whereas in the East it is the other way round.

The Christian background in Britain affects the way Buddhism is practised there. The extent of this modification is dependent upon the people and the general circumstances. For example, many Christian sects and organizations often criticise each other and this characteristic is carried through into British Buddhist organizations.

In its turn the Christian Church has been affected by Buddhism. As the Archbishop of Canterbury said "We have concentrated so much on practical activity that the Christian religion is being bypassed and young people are turning to other things because we have not practised our religion in sufficient depth."<sup>1</sup>

The Christian church realised the need to improve their system of teaching, one result of this was to ask Christian teachers to get people to consider what the words of their faith really meant to them. Unless the Church can solve their problem it will loose more and more of its followers.

Because the number of Buddhist Organizations and their members is increasing, more teachers from the East are needed to help to promote their religion in the West. Ever since Buddhism was first established in Britain the need has been felt for a place where Buddhist monks could live in their particular way, and teach both doctrine and meditation to all who wished to follow the path. This wish was realised when the first Vihara was opened for the monks from Sri Lanka in 1954; in 1962 the Hampstead Vihara was opened and in 1966 the King of Thailand opened the Thai monastery in East Sheen. In the same year the Tibetan monastery was opened in Dumfries-shire.

There has long been a wish to establish a Western Sangha which has not as yet materialised. Many British Buddhists have been ordained in the East but generally they do not return to teach in Britain; this is for personal reasons or because they think that Britain is not ready for them. A few British Buddhists were ordained in London at the Thai Sangha, but they left the order after a while. There is a need for native born teachers because Eastern teachers cannot reside

1. THE TIMES, Wednesday 16 Sept., 1970, p.12.

in Britain permanently.

In my opinion Britain was ready for the Buddhist point of view for the following reasons. Britain is a free country in which one has a right to follow any faith one chooses.

Britain is a Protestant country and British people have open minds and are more able to compare religions and ways of life than other countries in Europe, since most of them are Catholic. There is also a background of social change; since the two world wars there is less interest in the religious life, the dominant interests being in politics and economics.

Social anthropologists began to study religion in the middle of the last century, so a great deal of academic interest was generated. A similarly scholarly influence was the Pali Text Society which has made translations of Pali and Sanskrit available since the end of the nineteenth century. Many universities in Britain such as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, London, Lancaster and Sussex have opened courses in Comparative Religion. In 1970 Departments of Comparative Religion were opened in secondary schools. Also the Theosophical Society helped to spread ideas connected with Buddhism at the beginning of this century. All these factors helped to make Britain ready for the Buddhist point of view. Six years ago when I first came to England I found very few people would talk about Buddhism but in 1972 there is a much higher level of information and interest.

All the Buddhist leaders in Britain must work together more than they do at present, co-operating more closely so that they can provide for those people who are searching for a new way of life and new beliefs. In this way their organizations will be more accessible and meet the needs of the younger generation which will help to spread Buddhism in Britain.

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