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Buddha's Love and Human Love

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Summary

Kuan-yin Bodhisattva is one of the most enduring members of the Buddhist Pantheon. Across boundaries of land and ocean, he has continued to be the focus of cultic devotion among Buddhists for two millennia, and is perhaps second only to Śākyamuni Buddha in popularity. Ever since the invocation in ancient India of his name, Avalokitasvara in Sanskrit in the Samanta-mukha Section of the Lotus Sūtra,^[1] he has been known in the Mahāyāna branch of Buddhism as the embodiment of the supreme virtue of love and compassion. Traces of belief in and worship of this Bodhisattva are

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found in all regions where Mahāyāna Buddhism once spread,^[2] and are a

living practice in East Asian countries today, despite contemporary political, social and economic changes.[3] Kumārajīva (C.E. 406) and Hsüan-tsang (between 645~664) respectively rendered the Sanskrit Avalokitasvara or Avalokiteśvara in Chinese as kuan-shih-yin (or in shortened form as kuan-yin) and Kuan-tzù-tsai. While the virtue of love and compassion continued to be praised, hypostatized and depicted in human form for countless ages, the iconographic image of this Bodhisattva rapidly multiplied into varied forms in India through assimilation of Hindu deities. In China, during the latter half of the first millennium, his standard image radically changed from that of an austere male figure to that of an effeminate figure with a maiden-like smile and refined celestial womanhood. Regarding their initial encounter with Kuan-yin, some writers in the West wrote of being “profoundly affected” by the artistic representation of the figure and its enchanting spell.[4]

The popularity of the cult of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva is due primarily to the dual virtues that Mahāyāna Buddhism ascribed to the ideal of this Bodhisattva. Love and compassion constituted his practical virtue, while the insight of Śūnyatā was his theoretical virtue. The ideal of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva fared well among Mahāyāna Buddhist followers by attracting their belief and devotion, whether in high or low culture and South or East Asia. The said two virtues, interdependent like the two wheels of a cart, represent the two expedient means or criteria (upāya-kausālya) essential to any Bodhisattva’s career. What makes the Bodhisattva’s dual virtues unique among all human systems of thought is the very

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insight of Śūnyatā (emptiness), the principle that whatever is devoid of its own nature (niḥsvabhāva).

In this paper, I am concerned with the subject of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva’s virtue as invariably expressed in “the vow of self-abnegation for love and compassion toward all sentient beings, especially those in suffering and distress.” Because of his vow not to cross to Nirvāṇa, despite his full capacity to do so, Kuan-yin is said to hold mid-stream until all other beings have been successfully rescued and have crossed to the yonder shore. I think that Kuan-yin’s virtue as the embodiment of Buddhist love and compassion is the bridge that links human virtue to that of the enlightened and perfected

(Buddhas, Tathāgatas). This paper has three main points: (1) distinguishing love and compassion of Buddhas from that of humans in terms of non-duality between the agent of love and the recipient; (2) analyzing this principle in reference to the three motivational contexts of love and compassion; and (3) evaluating Buddhist love and compassion in terms of perfect communication based on the insight of Śūnyatā.

關鍵詞：1.Buddha's Love 2.Kuan-yin

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I. Love and Compassion in the Four Contemplative Disciplines[5]

In Chinese Buddhist literature, the Buddhist virtue of love and compassion is generally expressed by a compound of “tz’ù” and “pei” [6] (compassion and commiseration) rather than the singular term “ai” [7] (love). The reason for this is that the term “ai” was used to represent one of the twelve members of Buddhist causality, i.e., dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda). [8] The term तृष्णा in Sanskrit or tañhā in Pāli, which refers to this eighth term within the series of twelve, was translated as “ai” or “k’o-ai.” [9] The term denoted an innermost blind force of “craving”, like thirst, which triggers “attachment” (upadāna) first to “existence” (bhava), then to the birth (jāti) and mass of sufferings represented collectively by “old age and death” (jarā-maraṇa), namely, grief, lamentation, misery, detachment and despair (śoka-parideva-duḥkha-daurmanasya-upāyāsa). The force of “craving” is said to arise from the “feeling” (vedanā) of external contact (sparśa) through the six-fold sensory and mental faculties (ṣaḍāyatana) in the context where “name and form” (nāma-rūpa) are dualized within “consciousness” (vijñāna). This conscious moment is said to arise from a configuration of multifarious inner workings of Karmic (essentially mental) propensities (sanskāras) within the subconscious domain, triggered by ignorance (avidyā) about the foregoing process. Thus, Buddhist writers refrained from using the term “ai” to express the sublime virtue of love, but instead resorted to either a compound of “tz’ù” and “pei”, or another compound consisting of “tz’ù” and “ai.” [10] I am

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inclined to think that “love” is an effective word for the purpose of communication, because it has been commonly used by other religious traditions among English speaking peoples. In this paper, therefore, whenever I use the phrase “Buddhist virtue of love and compassion,” I refer to either a compound of “tz‘ù-pei” or “tz‘ù-ai.”

“Tz‘ù” stands for “maitrī” in Sanskrit (metta in Pāli) and means an active wishing for the welfare and happiness of others (hita-sukha-upanaya-kāmatā), whereas “pei” stands for “karuṇā” (same in Pāli) and means a passive wishing for the absence of illfare and unhappiness in others (ahita-dukkha-upanaya-kāmatā). These slightly different connotations are also found in Mahāyāna usage. For instance, in the 20th fascicle of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna explains “maitrī” and “karuṇā” as part of the four disciplines of “boundless contemplation” or “immeasurable mind” (catvāri apramāṇāni). “Tz‘ù” means “boundless contemplation of love or good will toward all beings,” a constant seeking for security and benefit that contributes to their well being. “Pei” means “a boundless thought of compassion or commiseration toward all beings”^[11] who are subjected to physical and mental sufferings in all walks of life (literally, the five cycles of life).^[12] In Chinese translations, tz‘ù and pei are almost always compounded in the translation of maitrī or karuṇā or both taken together, because, as

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pointed out by H. Nakamura, conceptually the two meanings are equally anchored in a common motivational sentiment.^[13]

In early Buddhism, the practice of maitrī and karuṇā were prescribed for lay Buddhists as well as professional monks as basic norms of human ethics. However, two other disciplines of sympathetic joy (muditā) and equanimity (upekṣā) were added gradually to these norms to form a set of four standard practices for monks under the rubric of “four immeasurable thoughts or contemplations” (catvāri apramāṇāni). Thus defined as part of the four disciplines and prescribed for those who were engaged in the path of scholastic orthodoxy (Hīnayāna), the disciplines of maitrī and karuṇā were practiced within the pacifist framework of the Buddhist monastery^[14] to

guide and regulate the minds of practitioners toward sublime spirituality. In the course of history, Mahāyāna movements began around the first century B.C. and compiled their respective scriptures in various parts of India almost simultaneously, the earliest of these scriptures being the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (henceforth Wisdom Sūtra), Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra (Lotus Sūtra), Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra (Hua-yen Sūtra), and Amitāyus-sukhāvātī-vyūha (Pureland Sūtra).[15] By the time of Nāgārjuna (ca. C.E. 50~150), the greatest Mahāyāna thinker, these textual sources became the scriptures held in common by those Mahāyāna activists who challenged the scholastic pacifist tradition of the orthodoxy.

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These Mahāyāna movements advocated a new career of spirituality, called the Bodhisattva Way (P'u-sa-tao),[16] centered on the moral and spiritual paradigm of Śākyamuni (the Sage of the Śākyas), historical founder of Buddhism. In short, the lifestyle of the Bodhisattva embodied the ideology of those reform-oriented activists opposed to the pacifist monastic tradition. It was natural then for the virtue of love and compassion to be maximally emphasized in the context of Śākyamuni's early career of spiritual pursuit as a bodhisattva. Thus, the activist virtue began to be differentiated from the pacifist vehicles of Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha on the basis of the Mahāyāna insight of Śūnyatā.

In the 27th chapter of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna sets forth thirty-three question-and-answers and differentiates the perfected virtue of love and compassion ascribed to the enlightened and perfected (Buddha and Tathāgata) on the one hand, and the imperfect human virtue of love and compassion and the imperfect virtue of the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha vehicles on the other.[17] He provides detailed arguments by defining the Buddha's perfected virtue in terms of Ta-tz'ù (mahā-maitrī) and Ta-pei (mahā-karuṇā) [ta, meaning "great" or "superior"] and the imperfect human virtue as shao-tz'u and shao-pei [shao, meaning "small" or "inferior"]. In his French translation of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Etienne Lamotte renders these terms respectively as "grande bienveillance" and "grande compassion," and "petite bienveillance" and "petite compassion." [18]

As to the distinction of these two virtues, superior and inferior, Nāgārjuna asserts that Ta-tz'ù and Ta-pei belong to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, whereas shao-tz'ù and shao-pei belong to ordinary humans as well as to those who advocate the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha vehicles.[19] The lesser virtue of love and

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compassion is a part of the four disciplines of “immeasurable thoughts,” whereas the superior virtue is a part of the eighteen epithets of Buddhahood shared by no one else (aṣṭādaśa āveṇikā buddha-dharmāḥ).[20] Nāgārjuna, however, specifies the difference between the virtue of the Buddha and that of Bodhisattva by saying that “it is an expedient definition to call Bodhisattva’s virtue superior (ta-tz'ù and ta-pei), because, though it is lesser than that of the Buddha, by comparison to that of the two vehicles, it is (much) greater.”[21] In short, he elucidates the fundamental difference between the two as follows:

The great virtue of love and compassion ascribed to the enlightened is alone true and greatest. Again, the lesser virtue of love (shao-tz'ù) means a mere wishing in thought to make people happier, without the actual ability to do so. The lesser virtue of compassion (shao-pei) means to empathize with the various physical and mental sufferings which people undergo and feel sympathy for them, without the actual ability to help the people be rid of these. In the case of the superior virtue of love, the Buddha wishes people to be awarded with security and happiness and, in actuality, helps them realize these. Likewise, with the great virtue of compassion, the Buddha empathizes with people’s misfortune and, in actuality, assists them to be rid of their suffering.[22]

Here, one of Nāgārjuna criteria to differentiate Buddha’s love and compassion from human love and compassion is clearly expressed in terms of ultimate effectuation. This distinction

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between the two qualitatively different virtues of love and compassion can further be observed in the three motivational contexts of love and compassion.

II. Three Motivational Contexts of Buddhist Love and Compassion[23]

Mahāyāna thinkers differentiated three motivational contexts of love and compassion by encompassing the entire range of material and spiritual fulfillments of human happiness and well being. In the twentieth fascicle of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna summarily gives three criteria for the Buddhist virtue of love and compassion in terms of its motivational contexts: (1) the love and compassion that is motivated by the similarity of one's self with other selves, i.e. , common humanity (sattva-ālambana); (2) the love and compassion that is motivated by the sameness of the psycho-physical elements which form the basis of human existence, i.e. , five Skandhas (dharma-ālambana); and (3) the love and compassion that is motivated by neither of these two contexts, i.e. , independent of motivational context (anālambana).[24]

First, in human science, human love is classified into five distinct categories of separate affectional systems, namely, maternal love, infant-mother love, age-mate or peer love, heterosexual love, and paternal love.[25] Taking these basic bonds of love as a foundation, human interaction evolved to create the bonds of

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family, neighborhood, community, society, and so on, and simultaneously developed ethical principles or normatives of action to regulate human interaction at all levels of human organization. Although neighborly love appears to be largely accepted as an universal phenomenon and thus as a self-evident moral principle, one must still ask: By what justification should such love become a norm in practical ethics?

In early Buddhism, the answer was rather simple. The bottom line is that one's self is dearest to every person, and that love of one's self is common to all humans. It follows that since there is nothing more important than one's self, no one would wish to be harmed by another, and neither would anyone wish to harm anyone else on account of that similarity. Accordingly, for early Buddhists, neither a metaphysical principle nor a theological being was necessary as a foundation for the principle of neighborly love. The principle simply relied on the fact that one's self and the selves of others are the same, equally giving rise to suffering and rejoicing in their very

humanness. Nāgārjuna explains the virtue of love and compassion in this initial motivational context as follows:

In reference to people of all regions and all walks of life (lit., the five cyclical courses of life),[\[26\]](#) one ought to regard them as if they were one's father and mother, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, and friends. One ought always to wish that they find happiness in whatever they desire and obtain benefit and security, in this manner extending one's mind as widely as possible over the vast numbers of peoples in all regions. This kind of thought of love and compassion ought to be based on the likeness of all people. It is in this motivational context that not only ordinary people in

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action but also professional monks who have not reached the state of sainthood (Arhat) are said to activate their love and compassion toward other peoples.[\[27\]](#)

What holds here is the age-old principle of ethics, such that “one ought not to do unto others what one does not wish others to do unto one's self” and that “one ought to do what is good for others in the same way one wishes others to do for one's self.” This is the first motivational context in terms of human similarity.

Second, the next higher motivational context is anchored in the insight of dharma-theory. The Buddhist insight of Non-self derives from the fact that an individual person is a composite entity comprising multiple phenomenal elements classified into five aggregates (pañca-skandha), and that a human person is causally manufactured out of these sensory and mental propensities without any core substance like “self.” An individual's self is nothing more than a fictitious designation imposed upon the five aggregates of psycho-physical elements (rūpa-caitasika-dharmā), namely: (1) an aggregate of physical or material facts (rūpa-skandha) arising from the contact of six faculties with their objects of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and awareness; (2) an aggregate of facts of sensation (vedanā-skandha) arising from subjective impressions of contact as either favorable (kuśala), unfavorable (akuśala), or neutral (avyākṛta) to one's disposition; (3) an aggregate of facts of perception or ideation (saṃjñā-dharma) arising from diverse cognitive assimilation involving

naming and differentiating; (4) an aggregate of facts of mental activities or forces [usually given in plural (saṃskāra-skandha)], crucial to the function of bringing together, formulating or constructing conceptual, linguistic, and volitional responses; (5) an aggregate of facts of awareness,

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cognition, or consciousness (vijñāna-skandha). This second motivational context of love and compassion is a step removed from the context of humanity in the common sense world, because an individual person is now viewed in terms of multiple building blocks organized by inner causality. The previously independent human individual is lost here in the wider and more universal landscape of physical, biological, and mental data or elements, becoming an illusory non-existent being.

Again, I quote a passage of Nāgārjuna from the same text to explain this second motivational context:

Acting in this motivational context of dharma-theory, those saints, like Arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, and Buddhas, have eradicated all impure, defiled propensities (āśrava), annihilated the notion of self or I-ness, liberated from thoughts of identity and difference [regarding things experienced],[28] and understood that human

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desires arise depending upon continual momentary causes and conditions. In reference to this causal structure of a human person, the enlightened Buddhas are aware that people are merely continual flows of factual elements and, hence, of the empty nature without substance of self-identity. Despite the truth that the five aggregates make up a human being, ordinary people neither see this empty nature of the human individual, nor accept the insight that an individual is a mere configuration of momentary flows of causes and conditions. Accordingly, they frantically look for happiness, each to his own fulfilment of desires at all times. Moved by a sense of pity for this state of affairs, those who are wise activate their love and compassion for people and help them realize whatever happiness they wish to realize [within the world in which they live]. This is the second

motivational context of love and compassion based on the bottom line of human existence (dharma-ālabana).[29]

Third, the highest motivational context is paradoxically the absence of motivational context. In activating the virtue of love and compassion toward people, the enlightened and perfected neither relies on the nature of common humanity, nor on the insight of dharma-theory, precisely because he holds the insight of śūnyatā. Nāgārjuna explains this, in relation to the preceding two motivational contexts, as follows:

There are three kinds of love and compassion, the first which depends on the similarity of fellow humans (sattva-ālabana), the

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second which depends on the universal basis of sensory and mental elements (dharma-ālabana), and the third which relies on neither. Ordinary humans rely on the aspect of human features. The Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha as well as Bodhisattva initially rely on the first motivational context but, later on, rely on the second motivational context, namely, the bottom line of factual psycho-physical elements. In the case of Buddhas, being thoroughly immersed in the contemplation of the insight of ultimate emptiness, they are said to depend on no motivational context.[30]

Here I am obliged to examine why the Buddhist virtue of love and compassion was initially differentiated between the first and second motivational contexts. Nāgārjuna asserts that the human virtue of love and compassion must depend on the criterion that all humans are similar, but establishes a second stage for the vehicles of Śrāvaka, Pratyeka as well as Bodhisattva, noting that they initially rely on the first criterion and then move to the second criterion later. Those who have not yet become Arhat, and hence, have not accomplished total emancipation, are still bound and entrapped by the influence of morally and spiritually defiled propensities (āsrava).[31] In activating their love and compassion, these practitioners cannot do away with the first motivational context because they are concerned with some particular humans,

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and must naturally be influenced by the ideas of the particular humans with whom they are concerned. This means that these practitioners may not transcend the various influencing factors derived from the social and cultural contexts in which the lives of those persons with whom they are concerned are intertwined.

In the second motivational context, there are those practitioners who have realized the state of Arhat, eradicated the idea of self or I-ness, and hence transcended the aspects of identity or difference in the things they experience. Being thus totally freed from the causes of moral and spiritual defilement (*anāsrava*), they see that all humans are merely aggregations of continual flows of sensory and mental elements and ultimately of the empty nature without any substance of identity. Here, Nāgārjuna obviously meant that at this stage, those saints who are totally liberated become independent from entrapment, social, cultural, and so forth, because they are confronted exclusively by the bottom line, i.e. , the five aggregates of sensory and mental operations, neither defiled nor undefiled. One might say that this is the ultimate principle of universality common to all humans, beyond all differences of religion, culture, society, and so forth. This retrospective insight is the second motivational context, within which practitioners are supposed to reassess the world and meet fellow humans with love and compassion.

For Buddhist thinkers, however, this was not enough. Thus came the third non-motivational context only attributable to Buddha's love and compassion. Nāgārjuna continues:

The virtue of love and compassion that is activated without any motivational context, [unlike the former two], belongs only to the Buddha. The reason is that the mind of Buddha ought not to abide either within the domain of ordinary consciousness (*saṃskṛta*)[[32](#)] or

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within the domain of the transcendent (*asaṃskṛta*). His mind relies not on the past, present or future world, because he knows that motivational contexts [of the human world] are unreal, up-side-down, and illusory. Hence, the mind of Buddha does not depend upon any of these unreal motivational contexts. Since ordinary people do not know how transcendentally real these

sensory and mental elements are, they stray into all walks of life (literally, the five cyclical courses of life), attach themselves to sensory and mental elements, discriminating one from another for selection, [thus unable to see things as they really are (yathābhūtam)].^[33] Hence, it is the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion to help humans acquire the same insight, [concerning the reality of elements totally freed from defilement]. This is called the independence from motivational context.^[34]

In the history of Buddhist doctrines, the negation of reality has been done twice. In the first case, as negation of the reality of empirical self on the basis of multiplicity of sensory and mental elements. Here, the psycho-physical elements are regarded as real (dharma-svabhāva), but a human person is considered unreal (anātman). A human is as unreal as a cart which, when broken down into its component parts (wheels, axle, frame, etc.), is after all only a name. This was the position of the orthodox insight

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of dharma-svabhāva.^[35] The aforementioned second motivational context represents this first negation. In the second case, the Mahāyāna insight of Śūnyatā repudiated the reality of these psycho-physical elements or dharmas (dharma-niḥsvabhāva).^[36] Then, the non-motivational context of the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion may be inferred as derived from the second negation, i.e. , unreality of psycho-physical elements (dharma-śūnyatā).

III. The Difference of Buddha and Bodhisattva Regarding Love and Compassion

In scholastic Buddhism (Hīnayāna), Bodhisattvas were stereo-typed together with Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas as “three vehicle followers” (tri-yāna or yāna-traya). It was in Mahāyāna Buddhism that the Bodhisattva ideal was reconceptualized as a threshold Buddha, one who is on the verge of Buddhahood, and was thereby clearly differentiated from the orthodox ideal of discipleship (Śrāvaka) or of the solitary practitioner (Pratyekabuddha).^[37] In this respect, Nāgārjuna was an uncompromising Mahāyāna advocate; he grouped Buddhas and Bodhisattvas together over and against the group of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. In early Buddhism, as noted before, the principles of maitrī and karuṇā were taught as the basic norms of human

ethics, but were soon combined with sympathetic joy (muditā) and equanimity (upekṣā) as part of four

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disciplines by the orthodoxy.[38] These four disciplines then became prescribed practice for professional monks cultivating mental and spiritual aptitude for religious salvation. Nāgārjuna informs us in detail about how these disciplines were put into practice.[39]

When a practitioner (1) conducts contemplation of maitrī or loving friendliness, he wishes happiness for others beginning with his close relations and then expanding his wishing outward, eventually to encompass all humans. When he (2) conducts contemplation of karuṇā or compassion, he empathizes with the suffering of some particular individuals and then expands his empathy outward to eventually encompass all humans. When he (3) conducts contemplation of muditā or sympathetic joy, he holds joy for some particular person and for his successful deliverance from suffering, then expands this outward to eventually encompass all humans. Finally, when he (4) conducts contemplation of upekṣā or equanimity, he transcends or dissociates himself from the foregoing states of mental involvement, modeling his practice after that of some person who has managed to transcend both suffering and rejoicing.

The last of these four practices was clearly established to help maintain a lifestyle of mental balance and spiritual enhancement. It was with respect to these essentially passive disciplines that I earlier characterized the monastic lifestyle of the Śrāvakas and the solitary withdrawal from life of Pratyekabuddhas as the pacifist approach to spiritual advancement.

Now, I am obliged to briefly introduce another objective

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Nāgārjuna has in mind. He points out that these four disciplines are constructive for the inner growth and cultivation of human spirituality, but that they are too contemplative in nature because they do not actually effect or bring about anything in practical terms.[40] If one really wishes happiness for others, whether a person, family or community, and wants to

do something practical about this, perhaps by helping others overcome preexistent problems and suffering, Nāgārjuna enthusiastically endorses direct involvement in the activist lifestyle of a Bodhisattva. He inculcates the activist virtue of Bodhisattva in the 27th fascicle of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, where, if we keep the paradigm of Śākyamuni in mind, the underlying intent of his message is loud and clear:

Love and compassion are the foundation of the Buddha's Way. The reason is that the Bodhisattva (e.g. , Śākyamuni as a young man) initially observes varieties of human suffering, like old age, sickness, and death, physical and psychological [problems], the present life and the life beyond, and whatever distress accompanies these sufferings. He then activates his "great love and compassion" (ta-tz'ù and ta-peì) for fellow humans and vows to rescue them from these sufferings. In order to actualize his vow, he resolves to seek the way of emancipation and eventually realizes the supreme enlightenment. Because of this activist great love and compassion, the indomitable mind of the Bodhisattva is never defeated throughout the duration of incalculably many cycles of life-circumstances (asaṃkhyā-lokā). Because of his love and compassion, he also makes a vow not to enter Parinirvāṇa [until the rest of human kind have accomplished it before him].[\[41\]](#)

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The above passage reveals the linkage between the activist Bodhisattvas and the enlightened Buddhas. Previously, the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion was called "mahā-maitrī" and "mahā-karuṇā," differentiating it thus from the lesser virtue of common humans as well as from that of the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha. But it is not quite clear how and why the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion is distinct from that of the Bodhisattva. In Mahāyāna scriptures, we often encounter those celestial Bodhisattvas like Samantabhadra (Pu-hsien or Pien-chi), Mañjuśrī (Wen-shu-shih-li) or Mañjughoṣa, and Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-yin),[\[42\]](#) and those Bodhisattvas who have reached the final ten sublime stages (daśabhūmis).[\[43\]](#) They are endowed with the merits of the ten-fold special faculties of the Buddhas.[\[44\]](#) Nonetheless, Nāgārjuna categorically asserts in the fortieth fascicle of the text that the Buddha is not challengeable, saying:

Although these Bodhisattvas are greater than the other Bodhisattvas, when they are compared with the Buddha, their faculties are still far short of the Buddha's. It is like the moon which, though great, is no match before the sun, disappearing in the sun's light.[45]

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The Bodhisattvas' virtue of love and compassion is obviously distinguished by their vow of self-abnegation with respect to the final Enlightenment and Nirvāṇa. But what is the merit of this vow of self-abnegation? What is the merit of the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion? After all, though once a Bodhisattva, he has now obviously gone beyond his vow and has accomplished Buddhahood.

In the forty-fourth fascicle of the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna addresses the subject of Bodhisattva and replies to the question: What does the word bodhisattva mean?

According to Indian grammar, a number of words are compounded to make up a phrase. "Bo" is a letter, "dhi" is another letter. Only when these two are compounded does the word "bodhi" come to be. In China,[46] this is equivalent to the meaning of "ultimate insight." "Sattva" means either a "sentient being"[47] or a "great mind." [48] For the sake of the ultimate insight, whoever resolves to seek the ultimate enlightenment is called bodhisattva. He who wishes to help fellow humans and for that purpose joins the practice of the highest way, this is called Bodhisattva.[49]

In the fortieth fascicle, Nāgārjuna gives the following summary as to how a Bodhisattva's career advances through a series of ever higher insights:

Observing with his human eyes how those who are near him undergo varieties of suffering in this world, he is motivated with love and compassion for them. The great Bodhisattva being initially resolves to pursue the path of enlightenment and

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undertakes the practice of meditation and concentration to acquire the supernormal eye (divya-cakṣu).[\[50\]](#) Thus, surveying widely how all other humans undergo varieties of physical and mental suffering by straying into the six spheres of life cycles, the Bodhisattva is all the more motivated with love and compassion for their suffering, and further pursues the way to acquire the wisdom eye so that he may rescue those sufferers. Having acquired the wisdom eye (prajñā-cakṣu),[\[51\]](#) the Bodhisattva realizes how varied and diverse the characteristics of human minds are, and thus further pursues the way to acquire the transcendent eye (dharma-cakṣu)[\[52\]](#) so that he may help sufferers realize deliverance by acquiring the same insight of their own.[\[53\]](#)

The transcendent eye means the insight of Śūnyatā by which the Bodhisattva enters into the first stage of the final ten sublime states of the Bodhisattva career. Here he is expected to be able to see the characteristic of ultimate reality (tattva-lakṣaṇam) as it really is (yathābhūtam)[\[54\]](#) through this insight. At this initial stage, the Bodhisattva should be endowed with the two-fold expedient means (upāyakauśalya).[\[55\]](#) From the very beginning of his career, he is

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prescribed to practice the six normative practices of perfection (ṣaṭ-pāramitā), namely, charity (dāna-pāramitā) morality (śīla-p.), patience (kṣānti-p.), diligence (vīrya-p.), meditation (samādhi-p.), and insight (prajñā-p.).[\[56\]](#) While engaging himself in these practices, he acquires the capacity to know the characteristics of all things as they really are and this new capacity activates the mind of great compassion (mahā-karuṇā)[\[57\]](#) for all people. Unless one knows the ultimate nature of things as they really are, one is mired in attachment to the false appearances of the ordinary world and, as a result, must undergo varieties of physical and mental suffering.

Now, the two-fold expediency of the Bodhisattva means (1) the transcendent knowledge or prajñā insight into the Śūnyatā of all things (dharma-cakṣu, fa-yen), the culmination of the foregoing practice of the six Pāramitās, and (2) the great compassion (mahā-karuṇā, ta-pei), the very source of the Bodhisattva's original resolution. On account of this two-fold expediency, the Bodhisattva shall not fall into attachment to things of a temporary nature, and neither shall he abandon people as a result of that capacity. While not

abandoning his compassionate concern for people, he is, however, fully aware of the unreal nature of all things and of the nature of emptiness (*śūnyatā*). The Bodhisattva maintains these expedient means in proper balance in order to enter into the initial stage of Bodhisattvahood.[58]

The foregoing features of the activist career of the Bodhisattva ought to have two balanced competences. To repeat, the Bodhisattva sees emptiness in all things he experiences, and hence

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he is free from attachment; however, he is still said to retain his interest in and compassion for the happiness and well being of fellow humans.

Previously, it was noted that the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion is motivated neither by common humanity nor by the ultimate factual basis of human existence. How then can the Buddha's virtue of love and compassion be distinguished from that of the Bodhisattva, whose basic qualification has been explained above as balancing two expediencies? Again, previously, it was noted that the Buddha mind is not confined to ordinary consciousness (*saṃskṛta*), because whatever arises in the human world based on morally and spiritually defiled propensities is unreal, up-side-down, and illusory (the first negation), but also is not confined to the transcendent (*asaṃskṛta*), because the psycho-physical elements, though transcendent of empirical perception and conception, are ultimately non-substantial and empty (the second negation). As we have seen above, the Bodhisattva's two-fold expedient means has both of these dimensions as well. What then is the difference? Nāgārjuna finally specifies that the difference between Buddha mind and Bodhisattva mind lies in the fact that the Bodhisattva, by his own choice, does not assume enlightenment, and hence does not use the Buddha eye:

By acquiring supernormal powers, the Bodhisattva is supposed to know various expedient ways in which to assist fellow humans. But he has not realized Buddhahood, and hence does not have the Buddha eye. He views the world and people with the wisdom eye and the transcendent eye, but is unable to use the Buddha eye. He has reached the ultimate insight that nothing arises or perishes (*anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*)[59] and thereby clearly sees the causal context in which people [each respectively] realize

the ultimate

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enlightenment. Thus he applies this knowledge to rescue them in various ways, but by not realizing Buddhahood, does not use the Buddha eye.[60]

IV. The Buddhist Cult of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva and Human Cultures

Setting aside theoretical inquiry for the moment, I am obliged to investigate some historical and cultural aspects of the Buddhist cult that centered upon Kuan-yin Bodhisattva and continued for two millennia in the Asiatic continent. In the fortieth fascicle of his commentary, Nāgārjuna refers twice to the name of Kuan-shih-yin along with Sammantabhadra[61] and Mañjuśrī[62] while discussing the Buddha's sublime virtue of love and compassion. Kuan-shih-yin or "one who envisions the voices of the world" (abbreviated as "Kuan-yin" in Chinese, or 'Kannon' in Japanese), is a celestial Bodhisattva endowed not only with the ten-fold special faculties ascribed only to the Buddhas, but also with the sublime stature and

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superior physical marks characteristic of the Buddhas.[63] Moreover, by his own resolution to neither assume the supreme enlightenment nor enter the goal of Nirvāṇa till all others accomplish it, he is supposed to remain forever active in the human world.[64] The Bodhisattva inherited the activist role, in a manner of speaking, to exercise his two-fold expediency for the sake of Buddhist salvation in lieu of Śākyamuni who had passed on to Parinirvāṇa. It was in the Lotus Sūtra that the activist role of the Kuan-yin Bodhisattva was established for the first time as an important part of the scriptural scenario. His name also appears in the Pureland Sūtras in which his relationship to Amitābha Buddha (A-mi-t'o-fo)[65] is depicted like that of Maitreya (the future Buddha)[66] to Śākyamuni. Being the guide and savior for all, the Bodhisattva seems to have been fashioned after Amitābha who was once the Bodhisattva Dharmākara[67] in another legendary context aeons ago. In the Flower Garland Sūtra too, Kuan-yin's name appears as one of the fifty-five teachers to whom the youthful saint

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Sudhana-śreṣṭhi-dāraka[68] paid his pilgrimage in Southern India to seek enlightenment. It was, however, the Lotus Sūtra that made Kuan-yin by far the champion guardian and Buddhist savior of all human beings.

In Chinese, the name of this Bodhisattva was rendered as (1) Kuang-shih-yin:[69] “one who illumines the voices of the world” by Dharmarakṣa (ca. 288), (2) Kuan-shih-yin:[70] “one who surveys (envisions) the voices of the world” by Kumārajīva (406), and (3) Kuan-tzù-tsai:[71] “one who excels in [prajñā] illumination”[72] by Hsüan-tsang (between 645~664). In the Lotus Sūtra as well as the Ta-chih-tu-lun, Kumārajīva applied “kuan-shih-yin” equally to Avalokitasvara, and Nāgārjuna refers to this Bodhisattva as the major dispenser of the Buddha’s love and compassion in the human world. The original Sanskrit name is still a problem, because two terms of reference appear in the extant Sanskrit texts as Avalokitasvara and Avalokiteśvara.[73] According to Lokesh Chandra, Avalokitasvara may have been the original or an early name, whereas Avalokiteśvara was a later name influenced by the Hindu

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deity Śīva, the lord of the world (lokeśvara). Use of Avalokiteśvara was already prevalent at the time of Hsüan-tsang when he visited India in the second quarter of the seventh century (between 629~643).[74] Some scholars attempted to trace the etymological origin of avalokita to shed some light on the problem. Har Dayal argued in his book *Bodhisattva Doctrine* that the name “avalokitasvara” ought to bear a religious meaning like savior or salvation. Yet, he concluded with some scepticism that, “The compound of ‘avalokita,’ which means ‘to see,’ and ‘svara’ meaning ‘sound’ is a queer sort which would convey no clear meaning to an Indian.”[75] Following Dayal’s lead, Stael-Holstein also pursued the religious connotations of “avalokitasvara” in an article exploring the Pali verbal roots apalok and olok (avalok in Sanskrit)[76] and the causative form avalokayati, which apparently occurs twice in *Divyāvadāna*. [77] In my opinion, however, these terms do not convey any specific religious connotation intended to galvanize a successful cult movement of a major magnitude.[78]

From the Buddhist spiritual point of view, it is advisable for

research purposes to approach the Buddhist cult of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva by differentiating its Indian and Chinese developments, because the respective cultural orientations of the cult in India and in China seem to have been quite different. This difference was unmistakably manifested in the iconographic history. During the period of the Mauryan Buddhist rulers (273~183 B.C.), the Buddhist world was perpetuated through the professional monks' Saṅgha and the cult of Stūpa worship by the Buddhist laity. But after the rise of Hindu political power, and during the following dark age, the Buddhist world was gradually undermined by Hindu mythological and cultic movements for religious revitalization. The time of the Buddhist compilation of Mahāyāna scriptures and promotion of anthropomorphic Buddhist cults coincided with the rising tide of Hindu religious influence in society. According to Lokesh Chandra, Avalokitasvara Bodhisattva was a metamorphosis of Brahmā, Lord of the Earth, who was known also as the Hindu deity Lokeśvara or Lokanātha (the lord or savior of the world). The Hindu deity Śakra or Indra was the incarnation of stamina (sthāman) and represented the will-to-power and the central active figure of the ethereal world. From Buddhist legend as well as iconographic representation, we know that Śākyamuni was flanked by Indra and Brahmā before he decided to proclaim his Dharma to the world. Thus, asserts Lokesh Chandra, "with the transcendence of Śākyamuni to Amitābha, Indra and Brahmā were transformed into Mahāsthāmaprāpta and Avalokitasvara."^[79]

At some later period, the Hindu deity Śīva was assimilated into

Buddhism and gave rise to the name Avalokiteśvara (avalokita-īśvara, the lord Avalokita), thereby allowing the emergence of the thousand-armed Bodhisattvas. This Avalokiteśvara sometimes appears as a Buddha and at other times as the Hindu deity Iśvara or Maheśvara (Śīva), without clear reason.^[80] So came to being several types of Kuan-yin images that were linked to Hindu iconography. Avalokiteśvara, however, also appeared as an acolyte for Śākyamuni, of course. According to Hsüan-tsang's travel record, when he visited the site of the Bodhi tree and Mahābodhi temple at Buddhagaya, he witnessed on the eastern side of the tower both the statue of

Avalokiteśvara and that of Maitreya (the future Buddha). Both were made of white silver and were ten feet high, placed respectively in the right and left niches outside the gate of the upper chamber where Śākyamuni was enshrined.[81] This was the standard Buddhistic image of Avalokiteśvara shown always with a lotus stalk in the left hand and the right hand held up over the chest.[82] By the mid-seventh century when Hsüan-tsang was traveling in India, the images of Avalokiteśvara had already multiplied into many forms, including those endowed with one

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thousand arms, a thousand eyes, four faces, eleven faces, a horsehead, a fearless lion head, a blue neck, and so on.[83] One might say that on the Indian scene, at this time, the Buddhist cult of Avalokiteśvara was already irretrievably entangled with cults of various Hindu deities. As John Blofeld asserts, the transference of these Indian variations to the Chinese and East Asian cultural environments definitely ran into limitations.[84]

In China, the cultic worship of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva is believed to have begun shortly after Dharmarakṣa translation of the Lotus Sūtra in 286, but most certainly after the more lucid translation of the same text by Kumārajīva in 406, quickly spreading during the fifth century.[85] From the time this Sūtra became the doctrinal basis for the T'ien-t'ai School of Buddhism, and after Chih-i wrote his powerful exposition on the Lotus Sūtra and the vows of Kuan-yin near the end of the sixth century, the cult of Kuan-yin became a major source of Buddhist spirituality in Medieval China.[86] By the

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seventh century, I believe, Chinese Buddhist thought had already set in motion the subsequent development of the East Asian Kuan-yin cult in terms of the "Bodhisattva ideal." The reason is that, except for some of the Indian forms of Avalokiteśvara to which they duly paid respect, Chinese Buddhists developed their own images according to their own cultural and aesthetic taste; the best known example of Chinese aesthetic influence being the female Kuan-yin. Though often called a "goddess of mercy," this feminine form has remained the dominant image of Kuan-yin in China and, from the ninth century onwards, spread to the entire continent as well as

eastward to Korea and Japan. As Kuan-yin moved east, further new variations arose, including the white-robed Kuan-yin, Kuan-yin holding a willow leaf, Kuan-yin with a fishing basket, and the Kuan-yin of easy child-bearing. This last figure, holding a baby in her arm, was sometimes called “Maria Kannon” in Medieval Japan.

It is somewhat ironic, I think, that the Buddhist cult of Avalokiteśvara which originated in India eventually lost its Buddhist spirit under Hindu cultural influence and was quickly reclaimed as a Hindu deity by their cults. In contrast, despite the radical change in its iconographic representation and its increasingly diverse cultural environment, the cult of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva has survived well in East Asia retaining its Buddhist spiritual essence. There are a few interpretations of how and why the transformation from the male to the female Kuan-yin occurred in China. According to Palmer and Ramsay, it was a result of the cultural melting pot in northwest China during the centuries of the T’ang Dynasty (618~907), where a host of different religions rubbed shoulders. The landscape included Buddhism and Taoism, alongside shamanism and Bon, the indigenous religion of Tibet, and Christianity and Manicheism, alongside Islam and Zoroastrianism.[\[87\]](#) This hypothesis is generally accepted. John

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Blofeld also thinks that the transformation must have occurred in China from around the eighth century through the late eleventh century, since the male form of Avalokiteśvara spread independently to Tibet and Mongolia and later to Champa and Cambodia during the ninth and tenth centuries, and has remained male to this day.[\[88\]](#)

Palmer and Ramsay call particular attention to the figure of Madonna, the one who holds a child in her arm. They think that this representation was itself originally taken from Egyptian statues of the goddess Isis and her divine child Horus. They argue that it is possible to interpret the transformation of Kuan-yin from male to female in a manner consistent with the way in which the Virgin Mary became the focus of cultic worship in Christianity. Since Taoist concepts of female deities existed in China before the time of Kuan-yin, the case in question may show that the divine and feminine, once established in a culture, necessarily re-emerge and take on new forms in response to elements of cultural suppression.[\[89\]](#) Blofeld,

however, seems to disagree by asserting that the main source of influence came from the female Bodhisattva Tārā of Tibet. Blofeld may have considered the religious and cultural affinity too remote in the hypothesis of an Isis-to-Madonna-to-female-Kuan-yin evolution.[90] There is yet a third view on this matter, as proposed by Elena Schmidt in her article in *The Art of Asia*, that the main source of influence may have been the combined forms of the Iranian water goddess Anahita and the Greek fertility goddess Artemis.[91] However the course of evolution, the sudden

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appearance of a female Kuan-yin during the T'ang Dynasty in China poses as much difficulty as the initial appearance of Avalokitasvara within the ancient Indian Buddhist domain as a personification of Buddhist love and compassion.

Palmer and Ramsay enthusiastically invite more studies on this neglected subject noting that study of the feminine Kuan-yin in Chinese religion will open not only an exploration of other feminine divinity within China but also an exploration of aspects of feminine divinity which transcend diverse religions and cultures.[92] The longing for a female deity is strong within most cultures as evidenced by the goddess Isis of Egypt, the cult of Virgin Mary in Christianity, that of Sophia Wisdom in the Judaism of the Diaspora, that of the various Tārās in Tibetan Buddhism, and the role of the goddesses in Hinduism.[93] In the age of feminist movements today, the subject may very well become a new trend in religious studies for the coming new century.

Having thus surveyed the Kuan-yin cults of the first millennium, what I intend to demonstrate is that the Indian and Chinese Buddhist cults were culturally and spiritually different. Lokesh Chandra provides a very persuasive analysis of the origin of the cult of Avalokiteśvara and its iconographic history. But he seems to have missed the fact that the Indian Buddhist cult of Avalokiteśvara and the East Asian cult of Kuan-yin are not monolithic in spirituality. He is brilliant in probing Avalokitasvara as a metamorphosis of Brahmā, and in setting forth that the phenomenon of his multifarious manifestation in Indian iconography is due to the process of assimilation and interiorization by the potency of Brahmā. In this connection, Lokesh Chandra quotes Alicia Matsunaga's thesis that the Buddhist

assimilation that worked in Japan to absorb native gods and various other rites

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into Buddhism began in India, and that the Buddhist theory of assimilation had its origin in the framework of that early philosophy.[94]

Lokesh Chandra invoked in part the potency pertaining to the substratum of the metamorphosis, namely, Brahmā, and in part the philosophy of assimilation such that the transcendent noumenon descends into the temporary domain as phenomenal manifestation.[95] Here, I must pose the following question: Is Brahma's potency, which was the essential core of Avalokiteśvara, identical in spiritual basis to that which Buddhist thinkers ascribed to Kuan-yin in China? In reference to the sections of mantra, dhāraṇī, or hymns, in both the Lotus Sūtra and the Pureland Sūtra, Lokesh Chandra regards Avalokitasvara as the “master of logos” (mantra-dṛṣṭā) (in parallel to Brahmā in the Brahmanical system), the Seer (avalokitr) of the Sound (svara), who assimilated Hindu deities (lokeśvara) by pronouncement of each sacred hymn (hṛdaya or mantra) unique to each deity.

As I understand Chap. 25 of the Lotus Sūtra, Avalokitasvara's sole concern is that he is determined to rescue all humans who are in trouble and suffering. Avalokitasvara's virtue of love and compassion is not a self-serving manifestation or self-serving emanation of some transcendent agent or principle. As a Bodhisattva, his virtue must be balanced with the insight of Śūnyatā without which he loses his status and raison-d'être as a Buddhist personification of love and compassion. The Kuan-yin cult in China was rooted in the insight of Śūnyatā and the belief in the original enlightenment proclaimed in the Lotus Sūtra, the dual source of the vow of the Bodhisattva career.

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V. Kuan-yin Bodhisattva in the 25th Chapter of the Lotus Sūtra

In the history of Mahāyāna Buddhism, no other scripture has ever been so studied as the Lotus Sūtra. The popularity of the text lay in its twofold theoretical framework. First, it illuminated the appointed time at which the original and timeless Dharma revealed by ancient Buddha in the immemorial past would converge with the historical or contemporary Dharma currently realized by Śākyamuni through his enlightenment^[96] (Chap.11: “Beholding the Jewel-inlaid Stūpa”). This moment was symbolized by the dramatic event in which the two Buddhas, trans-historical and historical, would be seated together within the gigantic jewel-inlaid Stūpa that would spring forth from the earth to fill the sky. Second, the Lotus Sūtra foretold that at that moment, the immeasurable numbers of Bodhisattvas who had never before been seen would suddenly arise everywhere through the cracked earth from below, to middle of the sky, surrounding the Stūpa (Chap.15: “Bodhisattvas from Under-ground”). The scenario points (1) to the beginning of change from the cult of relic worship toward the cult of the anthropomorphic image, (2) to the beginning of revelation of the trans-historical Dharma of original enlightenment by way of the currently revealed Dharma of the enlightened Śākyamuni, and finally (3) to the beginning of the active propagation of the Dharma of the new age by the host of Bodhisattvas charged with the vow of activism for love and compassion. It would be in this dramatic and imaginary arena that Śākyamuni would introduce Kuan-yin Bodhisattva before the multitude of participants (Chap. 25: “Avalokitasvara Bodhisattva”).

The 25th Chap. of the Lotus Sūtra begins with the Buddha’s reply to Akṣayamati Bodhisattva regarding the meaning of the name Avalokitasvara. The reply points primarily to love and compassion as Kuan-yin’s epithet, since he is ever alert to the imploring of all

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sufferers and, should they wholeheartedly chant his name, beseeching him for deliverance, he will come to help them be free from their suffering. He is endowed with the transcendent faculty to immediately perceive all voices and, in no time, come to the rescue of all callers. I shall herewith simplify and enumerate all circumstances of suffering noted in the Sūtra.

First, the Bodhisattva can and will render assistance to anyone who suffers in the circumstances of human jeopardy as follows:

(1) When one is surrounded by a great fire, (2) when one is swept away by flood waters, (3) when one's ship has been blown away by a cyclone and stranded on the island of the Rākṣasa (cannibals), (4) when one faces assault by a robber bearing a sword or other weapon, (5) when one is disturbed by ill-minded Yakṣas (demi-gods of some power) and demons like the Rākṣasa, (6) when one is bound by fetters and chains, or (7) when one's caravan is about to be assaulted by highway men.

Further, the verse section introduces additional circumstances as shown in the subnote,[\[97\]](#) but in all cases, it is utmost emphasized that one should cry out for help in genuine faith to the

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Bodhisattva's love and compassion, so that one will be rid of the foregoing circumstances of human jeopardy.[\[98\]](#)

Second, the Bodhisattva's transcendent power will assist anyone in dealing with the three fundamental forces of human predicament (kleśa):

(1) When one is afflicted by ineradicable sensual desire, (2) when one falls into a fit of outrage, or (3) when one is entrapped in serious delusion. If one chants or recollects the name of the Bodhisattva and reminds oneself always of his power of love and compassion, one will be liberated from the predicament of these passions.

Third, the Bodhisattva's transcendent power of love and compassion will grant whatever one sincerely wishes for one's self, as for instance:

(1) When a woman wishes to bear a boy or (2) when she wishes to bear a girl.

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Blofeld informs us that the practice of this type of Kuan-yin cult is still found in some regions in contemporary China.[\[99\]](#)

Fourth, the Bodhisattva's transcendent power of love and compassion guarantees that:

(1) One who venerates him and retains his name in one's mind shall be rewarded with merit as great as that which another person creates by venerating myriads of myriads of Buddhas with alms-offerings, and (2) the merit that one creates by venerating him and being mindful of him shall be as inexhaustible as that which another person has accumulated by venerating myriads of myriads of Buddhas with all alms-offerings and being mindful of them.

Fifth, perhaps the most important aspect of this chapter is the ways of manifestation in which Kuan-yin Bodhisattva is said to fulfil his virtue of love and compassion. Altogether, thirty-three forms of manifestation or appearance are mentioned in Kumārajīva's text, through which he is said to teach the Buddha-Dharma to all sentient beings:

(1) The appearance of a Buddha for those who are familiar with the Buddhas, (2) likewise the appearance of a Pratyekabuddha for those who are familiar with the Pratyekabuddhas, (3) the appearance of a Śrāvaka for those who are familiar with the Śrāvaka, (4) the appearance of Brahmā for his believers, (5) the appearance of Śakra (Indra) for his believers, (6) the appearance of Ívara for his believers, (7) the appearance of Maheśvara (Śīva) for his believers, (8) the appearance of a commander-in-chief (cakravartin or senāpati) for his subordinates, (9) the appearance of Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) for his followers, (10) the appearance of a Brāhmaṇa for his colleagues and associates, and (11) the appearance of a Vajrapāni for his associates.

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These eleven forms of manifestation are equally found in the Sanskrit text discovered in Nepal[100] as well as in Kumārajīva's translation, but the latter comprises further additional forms, making up altogether thirty-three.[101]

The popularity of Kuan-yin cult can be inferred from a record by Guṇabhadra of the 5th century, who was engaged in the work of translation during the years of 435~468. He crossed Southern Ocean by boarding a ship

from Sinahala and arrived in Kuang-chou by 435. During the voyage, he is said to have chanted the name of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva.[102] The popularity of the cult goes further

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back to the 4th century, or even the 3rd century in India, because Kānheri and Aurāgbād cave temples began as early as the second century Saka-Pahlava period in western regions and bear various bas-reliefs describing the scenes of the Kuan-yin chapter of the Lotus Sūtra.[103]

Among those other sources, like the Pureland Sūtras,[104] etc. , in which Kuan-yin Bodhisattva's virtue of love and compassion is described, I consider the Lotus of Mercy (Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka-sūtra)[105] as a unique scripture, because it comprises the quintessential formula of his vow. The scripture inculcates that in his former life, Kuan-yin who was an eldest son and heir prince of the certain universal ruler, who became Amitābha Buddha subsequently, resolved his mind to take up a Bodhisattva career. The vow laid down by Kuan-yin upon his initial moment of resolution is as

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follows:

May I resolve my vow for the Bodhisattva career. Should anyone be subjected to suffering, fear and so forth, thereby being forced to abandon the right Dharma, thus to fall into darkness and lose all reliance and protection, yet should he uphold my name in his mind and chant my name, and then shall it be heard by my transcendent faculty of audition and vision, and should he yet remain unliberated from suffering, fear and so forth, shall I not take the supreme enlightenment unto myself.[106]

There seems to be an insurmountable chasm in communication between human wishes and Kuan-yin Bodhisattva as the dispenser of love and compassion. For, whereas the former is totally adrift amidst the five cycles of life, the latter seems to be free of these cycles? Irrespective of whether people's desire is spiritual or secular, their calling for help may likely be under the influence of their defiled mental propensities (kleśas) anchored in the three forces of craving, anger and delusion. Would Kuan-yin

Bodhisattva allow himself to step down to the level of humans since the latter cannot reach his level? If his virtue of love and compassion could actively respond to the needs of people despite their minds being under the influence of moral and spiritual defilement, should not his virtue and motivation be activated in a state of mind similar to that of his recipient human beings? Insofar as communication is required, would his actions not have taken place under the influence of defilement? As a matter of fact, Nāgārjuna poses a similar question for the sake of his readers: “Though I do not intend to be disrespectful to the Buddha, since he was motivated by love and compassion for my fellow humans and realized enlightenment

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to discover the way to overcome their suffering, his love and compassion must be in full communication with their minds which are under the influence of defilement.”[107]

VI. Kuan-yin Bodhisattva and the Prajñā Heart Sūtra

Although the Heart Sūtra is the shortest scripture on the doctrine of Śūnyatā it is the only Sūtra in which Kuan-yin Bodhisattva actively participates as the chief exponent of the insight of Śūnyatā. According to the Taishō Tripiṭaka, the Heart Sūtra was translated eight times during a period of four and a half centuries ending in 861, beginning with Kumārajīva’s version and including Hsüan-tsang’s version in 649.[108] On average, two new versions of the Heart Sūtra became available to the public every one hundred years, each with some incremental improvements. Because of its brevity and preciseness, the text was popular and most widely circulated in China. However, the state of affairs in China was quite different from the situation Buddhism was facing in India during the same period.

When Hsüan-tsang traveled to India, esoteric Buddhism was at its zenith, but signs of the impending decline of Buddhism were already quite visible. During the few centuries before and after Hsüan-tsang’s visit, Hindu iconography and cult movements gradually reclaimed their deities and institutions. In China, on the other hand, esoteric Buddhism was just being introduced during the seventh century. Its influence was constrained in part by the exoteric Buddhism that had preceded it and established the powerful traditions of the T’ien-t’ai, Hua-yen, San-lun, and Wei-shih (vijñāna-mātra)

systems of thought. Esoteric Buddhism was further constrained by the Chinese cultural environment which was radically different and alien from that of India.

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The Heart Sūtra was the pan-sectarian text accepted by all Buddhist schools in China as the essential core doctrine of Mahāyāna Buddhism, not only by the above scholastic traditions but also by the practical traditions of Ch'an and Pureland. As it is concise and short, the text was fit for memorization and chanting by an individual or community of people. Lay people as well priests and nuns frequently combined chanting of the Heart Sūtra with chanting of the Kuan-yin Sūtra,[\[109\]](#) a section of the Lotus Sūtra extracted and used as an independent text. The widespread use of these Sūtras was one of the distinctive features of Chinese Buddhist culture in the latter half of the first millennium.

In his article of 1948, Edward Conze differentiates seven sections in the Heart Sūtra and probes their parallels in the Large Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras.[\[110\]](#) He demonstrates that all the words, phrases, and lines of the short text were extracted from the larger text. Accordingly, this Heart Sūtra is meant to be, as Conze says, “a restatement of the four holy Truths for beginners on the method of bearing this teaching in mind as well as on the spiritual advantages of following it.”[\[111\]](#) Conze brilliantly dismisses Tantric influence on this text, despite the fact that the closing section comprises a few Tantric terms, as for instance in the following sentence: “The Prajñāpāramitā is the mahā-mantra, the mahā-vidyā-mantra.”[\[112\]](#) In support of his view, Conze refers to a similar usage

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in the Niddesa[\[113\]](#) and Pāli commentaries, wherein paññā (prajñā or “insight” in Sanskrit) is called mantra. Further, he points to one of the earliest Saṃyutta Nikāya texts in Pāli, “The First Turning of the Wheel of the Law” (Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana-vaggo), in which the knowledge of four holy Truths is equated to vijjā (vidyā or knowledge in Sanskrit).[\[114\]](#)

In both of these texts, the term manta (mantra in Sanskrit) or vijjā (vidyā in Sanskrit) is not intended to mean, “a secret, mysterious lore of magical potency which can be compressed into a magical formula, a spell.” Rather, the term is intended to mean, “the knowledge of the four holy Truths which is the fundamental insight (vijjā) of the Buddha.” In parallel to this “first turning of the wheel” (dharma-cakra-pravartana-sūtra), the main subject of which is the four holy Truths,[115] the Mahāyāna theorists regarded the Heart Sūtra as “the second turning of the wheel of the law.” This Mahāyāna Buddhist thought enormously appealed to the minds of Chinese and East Asian Buddhists.

The Heart Sūtra’s scenario holds that at one of the Dharma sessions held on Vulture Peak in Rājagṛha, Śākyamuni suggested that Śāriputra, who held the first seat, request Kuan-yin Bodhisattva to give a lecture on the insight of Śūnyatā. In reply to Śāriputra, the Bodhisattva, who was engaged in deep contemplation surveying the distress calls of sentient beings, expounded the meaning of the four holy Truths from the point of view of Śūnyatā the second negation of reality according to Mahāyāna insight.

My purpose in discussing the Heart Sūtra here is two-fold. First, I hold that the Kuan-yin Bodhisattva who became the center

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of the cult in China was not a metamorphosis of Brahmanical magical potency. While Lokesh Chandra argued that only Avalokiteśvara as a metamorphosis of Brahma could have enabled successful assimilation of Hindu deities, I disagree with his extension of this metamorphosis to the East Asian cultural context. Second, from the foregoing analysis of the Heart Sūtra, I hold that Avalokiteśvara or Kuan-yin Bodhisattva was meant to embody the insight or knowledge of the four holy Truths in terms of No-self as Vidyā, and the second insight or knowledge of the four holy Truths in terms of Śūnyatā as Mantra. Because of different historical and social conditions, the Kuan-yin Bodhisattva in China and East Asia should be understood in terms of the dual (not double) negations and not in terms of the Brahmanical or Hindu esoteric assertion or potency.

How then should we view the two faces of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva, one as dispenser of love and compassion, as depicted in the 25th Chapter of the

Lotus Sūtra, and the other as expounder upon the insight of Śūnyatā as depicted in the Heart Sūtra? I think that the Heart Sūtra provides a point of reconciliation, a balance that is extensively attested to in Nāgārjuna's Ta-chi-tu-lun. The point of differentiation that requires some reconciliation lies in two human requirements. First: Life in general carries varieties of suffering, for which humans have continually sought solutions within the material environment of external nature and within the immaterial inner sphere of human nature. In this human context, Kuan-yin Bodhisattva's vow and skill-in-means is directed toward the fulfilment of the mundane needs of individuals and human-kind in the eradication of suffering and the ensurement of their well being. Second: Kuan-yin Bodhisattva's insight of the four holy Truths is two-fold: (1) the eradication of false conviction in one's self and about things believed to belong to that self (first negation), and (2) the eradication of false conviction about the reality of elements of the five aggregates (second negation).

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In his article on the Heart Sūtra, Conze calls attention to the section which immediately follows the four holy Truths, and he traces in the Larger Prajñā Sūtra, among others, two important points of discussion on the Bodhisattva insight of Śūnyatā. First, (1) that there is "no attainment" in actual fact, because "attainment" conceptually implies duality in itself, like the duality between "things to be attained" and "an agent of attaining." And second, (2) that there is "no desire for any attainment" on the part of the Bodhisattva, because of his insight of non-duality and hence non-attainment.^[116] Here, I must call attention to the fact that a dual negation of "neither nor" underlies the above two points; that is, the use of "neither attainment" and "nor desire of attainment" in the repudiation of both the subjective sphere and the objective sphere. This dual negation is extended to encompass loving and loved, knowing and known, acting and acted upon, and so on. I understand from extensive comments made by Nāgārjuna in his Ta-chih-tu-lun that it is on these grounds that we speak of the Bodhisattva's abnegation of his own enlightenment and Nirvāṇa for the sake of others.

The Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhists composed the four-fold Bodhisattva vow in verse which has been adopted without exception by all schools in East

Asia. The early original form of the four-fold vow can be traced back to the Eight Thousand Verse Wisdom Sūtra (Fasc. 8),[\[117\]](#) Lotus Sūtra (Chap. 3), and so on, but it is clearer still in the Bodhisattva Ornament Sūtra (vol.1 of two vols.).[\[118\]](#) In this

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Sūtra, the Bodhisattva's vow is formulated with reference to the goals of the four holy Truths as follows:[\[119\]](#)

May I help all those who have not overcome suffering to overcome it;

May I help all those who have not understood causal aggregation to understand it;

May I help all those who have not settled firmly in the path to settle upon it;

May I help all those who have not realized Nirvāṇa to realize it.

This original form was eventually refined into the presently practiced formula of the four-fold vow in verse as follows:[\[120\]](#)

However innumerable the sentient beings, I vow to rescue them from suffering;

However inexhaustible the inner defilements, I vow to terminate them;

However unlimited the subjects of practice, I vow to master them;

However infinite the height of the Buddha way, I vow to realize it.

In the T'ien-t'ai tradition, Chih-i has an excellent elucidation of this vow.[\[121\]](#) In the Ch'an tradition, the sixth patriarch's Platform

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Sūtra[\[122\]](#) comprises it, and the Esoteric tradition has extended it to five lines with a few minor differences in phrasing. The Pureland has it verbatim, but with two lines appended to fit their tradition.

Despite the common use of the Bodhisattva vow, I have long wondered whether it should be regarded as a vow to be taken by a single individual, or rather as a vow to be taken collectively by all mankind. It would seem that the weight and scope outlined in the verse is beyond the scope of an individual. In our human world, generations of humans are expected to come into this life and leave, with ever greater numbers of humans to come tomorrow, next year, and so on, ad infinitum. It is therefore more closely within the bounds of comprehension if we consider Kuan-yin Bodhisattva's vow not to attain Nirvāṇa himself but to continue his task for the sake of others within the collective human context.

VII. Kuan-yin's Love and Compassion Based on the Insight of Śūnyatā

There is remarkable similarity among human thought systems with respect to the relationship between thought and action. Every system teaches theoretical virtues through which humans are expected to identify appropriate goals consistent with the highest good, and practical virtues with which humans may select the best action required to meet individual goal. Ancient Greeks thought that the highest good is the human happiness or well being that comes from the fulfilment of all human potential. In the Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle dealt with two major subjects, namely, theoretical and practical virtue as the subject matter of

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human ethics. His system of thought is characterized by a boundless confidence in the faculty of reason as the ultimate criterion for theories as well as for praxis. Reason develops itself partly as rational action and partly as rational thought toward perfection. Further, correct determination of the will for action must come from rational insight rather than the desire arising from erroneous knowledge. Thus, in Aristotle's view, erroneous knowledge leads to failure to achieve human potential and thus necessarily to a failure to achieve happiness.

In a similar fashion, Buddhists consider ignorance (avidyā) the fundamental cause of suffering. Ignorance (avidyā) means the uncritical belief in or blind conviction in the existence of one's self and of things that belong to the self (kāya-dṛṣṭi). The entire Buddhist system of thought and practice is directed to the matter of how and why we should eradicate this erroneous conviction.

Śākyamuni provided the eight-fold holy path,[\[123\]](#) which the orthodoxy expanded into the more elaborate thirty-seven auxiliary practices, required to rid one of the false conviction in self.[\[124\]](#) The Mahāyāna theorists later introduced the more simplified system of the six norms of perfection (ṣad-pāramitā).

These six Pāramitās are divided into two groups pertaining to theoretical and practical virtues. In his Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna explains that the practices of charity (dāna), morality (śīla), and

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patience (kṣānti) constitute the norms of practical virtue, whereas diligence (vīrya), meditation (dhyāna), and insight (prajñā) are the norms of theoretical virtue.[\[125\]](#) Although these two groups of practices ought to be carried out simultaneously, practical virtue was often emphasized as a precondition for the advancement of theoretical virtue. What is unique with Buddhist theoretical virtue is the insight of non-duality or the absence of reality in all things.

As the Prajñā Heart Sūtra says, acquiring the insight of the four holy Truths, one comes to know that there is no object to be obtained, nor is there any agent who obtains it. In the ordinary human world, with the idea of obtainment, an agent acts upon a certain object that can be obtained. Within this fundamental context, all moral and ethical theories are developed. Again, based on Nāgārjuna's statement in the same commentary, I shall paraphrase the inner thoughts of a Bodhisattva:

Having gone through the six norms of practice, I see the true aspect of things as they really are[\[126\]](#) and must remind myself of the original vow I took when I resolved to seek the way of Enlightenment for the purpose of rescuing others from their suffering. Having arrived at the height of insight, I do not see anyone as really existent and wonder, thus, what I should do about the people for whom I originally vowed to render help. From the true aspect of things as they really are, those whom I originally thought were suffering are not. But, since they do not know the true aspect of things as they are, I must help them see and understand this. Then, they should be able to rescue themselves with their own insight.[\[127\]](#)

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In medieval India, a violent philosophical controversy occurred between the two Hindu schools of Naiyāyika and Mīmāṃsaka on the subject of Śabda or the “vocal word.” The former empiricist school held that “an uttered vocal word is impermanent” because no sooner than it comes into being, as a sound made by human enunciation, it perishes. However, the latter transcendentalist school vehemently countered with the assertion that “Śabda is permanent” because it elicits the same meaning in the mind of any listener in any place at any time. In convention, the above two assertions are contradictory and cannot be reconciled, especially because both parties have legitimate grounds for the assertion of their views. From the logical point of view, what is essential to valid communication between two interlocutors is the condition that whatever is under discussion must be identical in the minds of speaker and listener. But often, this simple criterion is hard to meet. As is evident in the above controversy, even when the subject matter is expressed with one and the same term, respective predications create different meanings, resulting in a discrepancy between their references. It is obvious that there is no reference that may simultaneously satisfy the assertions that “x is impermanent” and “x is permanent.”

Here, Buddhist logicians offered a unique approach to deal with the problem. They attempted to resolve the sectarian logical deadlock first by admitting that both assertions were true in their respective contexts, but not within one and the same context; second, they shifted the controversy to the subliminal plane of consciousness where perceptual and conceptual error or difference is likely to occur due to a variety of biases. For, even a spontaneous perception is an interpretative and unconscious version of what we do after we have perceived. It follows that whatever is asserted by naming is more than likely non-existent, because whatever is designated is of defiled mental propensities.

This Buddhist approach was important, because the shifting of

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the problem of contradiction to the subliminal plane provided a logical and

psychological middle ground for both parties. This Buddhist approach is dialectical because it involves negation of both assertions on the basis of their mutual contradiction. The Buddhist thinkers thought that reconciliation or communication is only possible at a different level of reality where both assertions are negated in regard to their claimed reality. The virtue of love and compassion ought to be considered in a similar manner, because the Buddhist ultimate love and compassion is based on the principle of non-duality between the loving and the loved.

It is in a similar context, I presume, that Nāgārjuna notes some sceptical views. Although the great love and compassion are the foundation of the Buddha-Dharma, some think that these must be of the defiled nature, like a blooming lotus flower rooted in impure mud. Surely the flower is pure, but the mud itself cannot be said to be pure. Hence, the Buddha's love and compassion, as far as its origin is concerned, must be of the defiled nature.[\[128\]](#) Again, since the Buddha comes to being because of his love and compassion for fellow humans, his love and compassion must be of the defiled nature.[\[129\]](#) The underlying thought here is that communication, in general, ought only to be possible between minds which share the same convention. Hindu philosophical controversy of medieval India demonstrates well how and why convention implies contradiction in itself, and shows how the ultimate reconciliation or communication may have to be made through the negation of the reality of the two adversarial assertions. The sublime virtue of love and compassion ascribed to Kuan-yin Bodhisattva may have to be evaluated in similar terms.

Kuan-yin's virtue of love and compassion as described in the

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Lotus Sūtra is sublime in light of his transcendent power to survey the world and detect cries of distress. I have long wondered about his vow and its parallel with that of Amitābha, who was once Dharmākara Bodhisattva. According to the Pureland Sūtras, Avalokiteśvara is a deputy dispenser of love and compassion in lieu of Amitābha Buddha, and bears a miniature image of Amitābha in his crown. In the Pureland tradition, Amitābha is singularly concerned with and absolutely promises ultimate salvation to all sentient beings to be received in his transcendent domain. Although the locus of Kuan-yin's promise is in the human world, his love and compassion

seems to be consistent with the transcendent love and compassion expressed by Amitābha Buddha.

In Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle speaks of the outcome of the perfection of the two virtues. By perfecting practical virtue, we humans are capable of enjoying ideal friendly association with other humans, while by perfecting theoretical virtue, we attain an ideal contemplative life immersed in matters of heavenly and natural law. Representing the Buddhist point of view, Nāgārjuna says that the Buddha revealed three levels of human happiness and well being, namely, (1) happiness of a human level, (2) happiness of a heavenly level, and (3) happiness of an emancipated level.[130] The Bodhisattva should be able to help other humans in their conversion to humanly and heavenly attainment as well as to emancipation. Nāgārjuna then sums up the general difference between the Buddha and the Bodhisattva in relation to common humans, with the following words:

The Bodhisattva has not attained the state of Buddhahood, nor has he attained the Buddha eye. Hence, he is himself afforded three kinds of happiness and well being, wherefrom he shall help other humans in their conversion, whereas the Buddha helps all humans

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attain the same conversion while remaining in the state of emancipation.[131]

We understand that a Bodhisattva comes into being when he has been awakened to the fact of human suffering in life and death, and motivates himself to feel love and compassion toward all living beings. Upon learning the Buddha's insight, he acquires equivalent insight of sameness (sama-citta) toward sentient beings in terms of Non-Self, understanding that every individual self is merely a designation with no everlasting reality. In understanding the dependently arising elements of the five aggregates, he further acquires the insight of Śūnyatā that all elements of the Skandhas have no reality of their own (niḥsvabhāva or śūnyatā). Thus, his insight into all things comprises awareness of the sameness of all humans and the sameness of all elements.[132] Now, he approaches the state of non-duality by transcending the duality of the ordinary world and human convention. By transcending various discriminations like long and short, white and black,

male and female, and so on, he thus envisions the non-dual aspect or rather no-aspect (wu-hsiang) of all things; in this non-dual context, reconciliation or communication is perfected. Ultimately, this insight is what he wishes all fellow humans to attain.[133] Nāgārjuna explains this dialectical process by referring to the relationship between this world and the other world:

What is the way to transcend this world (or convention)? Knowing what this world really is the way to transcend it. For, the wise

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know that even if they seek to grasp this world and the other world, they cannot obtain either one. Since the two worlds cannot be obtained, the said two worlds ought to be known for the sake of practicality as this world or as the other world. It is simply for the sake of repudiating this world that the other world is referred to. The aspect of this world is in itself the other world, and there is no place other than this world. The reason is that the aspect of this world cannot be obtained, nor can the aspect of this world and the other world be obtained. Because both are always empty, no fixed aspect of this world of things is obtainable. Thus, the practitioners who practice with this insight do not obtain this world, nor do they attach themselves to the other world.[134]

This world is called the five aggregates. Even if all the Buddhas of ten regions look for this aspect of the five aggregates, they cannot grasp where it comes from, where it stays, and where it goes away. When one does not see the aspects of where it originates, where it stays, and where it goes away, this is the other world. [At that moment,] when a practitioner contemplates this world and the other world, he does not see either world, nor does he see this world converging with the other world, nor does he see the other world converging with this world, nor does he see the other world as other than this world, nor does he see this world as other than the other world. In this manner, he has no cognition either of this or of that as “This is this world,” and “that is the other world.” If one forsakes this world and yet does not take the other world, this is

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called the other world.[135]

This is how Nāgārjuna explained the Buddhist goal of the middle.

VIII. Conclusion

Despite the age of industrialization and instant communication tools, we seem to have developed the problem of human alienation by eroding the fabrics of bonds in all spheres of human life and activity. Besides the problem of domestic affairs, we have also been experiencing a period of the fragmentation of international community due to different religions and cultures, races and nationalities. In no other time than today in history, do we need some means of effective antidote to deal with these problems and establish human unity. In this respect, it is a worthy cause to re-investigate into the Buddhist virtue of love and compassion.

Every individual builds his own history and culture from cradle to death through a series of unique experiences not shared by any other person. Hence, human love is always based on partial communication due to each individual's Karmic propensities. Because of such a partial communication between loving and loved, Buddhist thinkers theorized the Buddha's love in terms of ultimate effectuation over and against human love. What makes communication imperfect in one case and makes it perfect in another case? I have pursued the point of difference in the two-fold expediency of the Bodhisattva: (1) the great compassion (mahā-karuṇā, ta-pei), the very source of the Bodhisattva's original resolution; and (2) the transcendent knowledge or prajñā insight

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into the Śūnyatā of all things. The representative Mahāyāna thinker like Nāgārjuna conceived these features as respective foundations of Buddhist practical and theoretical virtues to be perfected by the practice of the six-fold Prajñāpāramitā norms. What is trustworthy with the Bodhisattva ideal is first that his entire concern is concrete and factual, as anyone's or like ours, regarding human suffering, like old age, sickness, and death, and so on; and second, that his insight of Śūnyatā is another factor for the trustworthiness of the ideal, because it is based upon non-duality of all things.

I have probed the insight of Śūnyatā as the theoretical basis of Buddhist love and compassion by contrasting the Kuan-yin cult in China whose quintessence is the insight of Śūnyatā over and against Lokesh Chandra's theory that Hindu Brahmā's potency was the essential core of Avalokiteśvara. In this connection, I have a hunch that the feminine form of Kuan-yin likely evolved along with the notion that the Prajñāpāramitā scripture was respected and worshipped in ancient India and later in Tibet as mother of the insight and of the enlightened one.

Although the locus of Kuan-yin's promises is in the human world, his love and compassion seems to be consistent with the transcendent love and compassion of the Buddhas, for whom the abode is non-duality based on the dual negation of this world and the other world. The ultimate purpose of Buddhist love and compassion is to help others to reach an understanding of the four holy Truths in terms of Non-self and Śūnyatā, so that each individual helps one's self rid of ignorance and realize emancipation.

The matter of communication necessarily becomes an issue when any kind of interaction is undertaken between two humans or groups of humans. Capable of moving between the three motivational contexts of love and compassion, the Kuan-yin Bodhisattva attends anyone's mental action without either discrepancy or discordance but with perfect communication in

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terms of non-duality. What is essential to the Buddhist love and compassion is the balanced activism imbued with the insight of Śūnyatā.

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佛陀之愛與人類之愛

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提要

觀音菩薩是佛教諸聖裡最重要的人物之一。祂超越海陸限制，兩千年來一直是佛教徒崇拜供養的焦點，普及的程度也許僅次於釋迦牟尼佛。從古老印度以來，祂在《法華經·觀世音菩薩普門品》的名字「阿婆盧吉低舍婆羅」（**Avalokitasvara**）就一直被稱頌著，在大乘佛教裡祂一直被視作是大慈與大悲的化身。只要有大乘佛教的地方，就有信仰與崇拜祂的蹤跡，一直到現在，雖然歷經宗教、社會與經濟的變遷，祂仍然是東亞地方實修的對象。鳩摩羅什（約西元 406 年）與玄奘（645~664）分別將 **Avalokitasvara** 或 **Avalokiteśvara** 譯成「觀世音」（簡稱「觀音」）與「觀自在」。長期以來，慈悲的德行就一直持續被讚頌與具象化，終而被描繪成人形，觀音菩薩的圖像隨著模倣印度神祇而迅速產生許多變化。在中國，西元六世紀以後，祂的標準形相從威嚴的男性特徵，徹底轉變為溫柔的模樣：有著淑女一樣的笑容以及優雅的天女形相。有些西方的作者回顧他們第一次接觸觀音圖像時，均被那藝術形相的特徵與迷人的魅力「深深感動」。

觀音菩薩信仰的普及性主要是奠基在大乘菩薩的兩種德行上：慈悲是它的實修面，空的洞見則是它的理論面。觀音的理想在大乘信徒間廣泛流傳，不管他們的文化層面是高或低，他們的地域是南亞或東亞，都能在信仰與奉獻這兩方面深深吸引他們。這兩種德行如車之兩輪相互依賴，是菩薩生涯中兩種不可或缺的善巧方便（**upāya-kauśalya**）。而無自性

（**niḥsvabhāva**）空之洞見則令這兩種德行突出於一切人類的思惟體系之上。本文對於觀音「誓願犧牲自我，以慈悲精神救度一切苦難有情」的德行甚為關注。祂雖然有能力入涅槃但卻堅持不入，除非其他眾生都到達彼岸為止。這種慈悲精神正是從人類善德過渡到解脫成佛的橋樑。

本文的三項主要論點是：(1)佛陀的慈悲之所以不同於一般人，關鍵在於愛的施者與受者是不二的。(2)從龍樹依動機所區分的三種慈悲說，深入分析上項原則。(3)從空之洞見所產生的完美溝通，去評估佛教的慈與悲。

關鍵詞： 1.佛陀之愛 2.觀音

[1] Fa-hua-ching (《法華經》 shortened from 《妙法蓮華經》): the Sanskrit text: Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra in Sanskrit: edited by Kern and Nanjo, 1912, Bibliotheca Buddhica 10. Three Chinese versions: (1) Cheng-fa-hua-ching (《正法華經》 in 10 fascicles), Taishō. 9 (No. 263), translated by Dharmarakṣa in AD 286; (2) Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching (《妙法蓮華經》 in 7 or 8 fascicles), Taishō. 9 (No. 262), translated by Kumārajīva in 406; (3) T'ien-p'in-miao-fa-lien-hua-ching (《添品妙法蓮華經》 in 7 or 8 fascicles), Taishō. 9 (No. 264), by Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta in 601. In this paper, the second text translated by Kumārajīva is the main source of reference. The chapter 'Sammanta-mukha' is the 25th in Kumārajīva's text with its full title as "The Chap, Kuan-yin's Manifestation in All Gates" (《觀世音菩薩普門品第二十五》); in Dharmarakṣa's translation, it is the 23rd with its title as "Kuang-shih-yin's manifestation in all gates" (光世音普門), and in the last translation of 601 it is the 24th with the same title as Kumārajīva's. The extant Sanskrit text has all chapters closely parallel with the last Chinese version, but the chapter in question is the 24th.

[2] Cf. Tay, C. N. "Kuan-yin: the cult of half asia." History of Religions, No. 162 (now 1976) 147-177.

[3] Blofelt, John: Compassion Yoga; the mystical cult of Kuan Yin. London (1977). Alternative title, Bodhisattva of compassion; the mystical tradition of Kuan yin. Boulder, Colo (1978) 158 p; Esp. p.19.

[4] Ibid, p.14.

[5] Four immeasurable thoughts or contemplations (catvāri apramāṇāni, 四

無量心): Maitrī, Karuṇā, Muditā, and Upekṣā.

[6] 慈悲。

[7] 愛。

[8] 十二緣起。

[9] 渴愛。

[10] 慈愛。

[11] Étienne Lamotte's French translation: of the Ta-chih-tu-lun (the 20th fascicle), Taishō. 25, (No. 1509p. 208c): Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna Tome III, Institute Orientaliste, Louvain, 1970, p.1242. "La maitrī, c'est penser avec amour aux êtres et toujours rechercher la sécurité (yogakṣema) et des choses heureuses (sukhavastu) pour leurx faire due bien; La karuṇā, c'est penser avec pitié aux êtres qui subissent dans les cinq destinées (gati) toutes sortes de doullleurs corporelles (kāyikaduḥkha) et due douleurs mentales (caitasikaduḥkha)."

[12] 五道。Five realms of existence or life styles or courses of life cycle through which all sentient beings were classified in ancient India. Usually six realms as for gods (deva), human (jana), animal (tiryak), hungry ghost (preta), perpetual fighter (asura), and hell-ground (naraka). Here the asura is included in naraka.

[13] Nakamura, Hajime: Jihi (《慈悲》、Buddhist Love and Compassion). Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten (11th ed), 1994. pp.22-23.

[14] The tradition, to which the monastic system refers here, is the Sarvāstivāda which spearheaded the Buddhist orthodoxy from the second century B.C. to the third century Aḍ. in northern India.

[15] Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, (The Perfection of Prajñā Insight, 《般若經》), Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra (The Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma, 《妙

法蓮華經》), Buddāvataṃsaka-sūtra (The Buddha's Flower Garland 《華嚴經》), and Amitāyus-sukhāvātī-vyūha (The Manifestation of Pureland 《淨土經》).

[16] 菩薩道。

[17] Śrāvaka-yāna and Pratyekabuddha-yāna which constitute two vehicles.

[18] “la Grande Bienveillance and la Grande Compassion.” op. cit., p.1705.

[19] 凡夫二乘。

[20] Aṣṭādaśa āveṇikā buddha-dharmāḥ (十八不共法): Daśa-balāni (十力), Catvāri Vaisāradyāni (四無畏), Trīṇi Smṛty-upasthānāni (三念住), and Mahākaruṇā (大悲).

[21] Taishō. 25, fasc. 27, p.256b : 菩薩大悲者於佛爲小，於二乘爲大。此是假名爲大。

[22] Ibid., p.256b-c : 佛大慈大悲真實最大。復次小慈但心念與眾生樂實無樂事，小悲名觀眾生種種身苦心苦，憐愍而已不能令脫。大慈者念令眾生得樂亦與樂事，大悲憐愍眾生苦亦能令脫苦。

[23] 三種之慈悲。

[24] Taishō. 25, p.209a : 無盡意菩薩問中說，慈有三種：一者眾生緣，二者法緣，三者無緣。As given in parenthesis, Lamotte correctly gives the respective Sanskrit terms sattva-ālambana, dharma-ālambana, and anālambana. Ālambana is an epistemic term to signify cognitive object to be seen, heard, etc. by sense faculties. I introduced the above three criteria by adding the “motivational context” to each of them, because human love and compassion is generally activated in observing, hearing, or knowing some form of imbalance in a given context of some other persons.

[25] International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry, London: Roughish Co., 1972. p.445.

[26] 五道, from bottom: the life of hell, hungry ghost, animal, human, and heavenly being. These states of existence may be conceived as different life styles or states of life resulted from varieties of causes and conditions in the human world.

[27] Ta-chih-tu-lun (20th fascicle), Taishō. 25, p.209b.十方五道眾生中，以一慈心視之，如父如母如兄弟姊妹子姪知識，常求好事，欲令得利益安隱。如是心遍滿十方眾生中，如是慈心名眾生緣，多在凡夫人行處或有學人未漏盡者。

[28] In the earlier part of the 20th fascicle, [ibid., Ta-chih-tu-lun Ibid., p.206b], Nāgārjuna explains the practice of transcending the dual features of identity and difference as to any phenomenon [Animita-samādhi (無相三昧)] as follows: “The practitioner ought to contemplate like this: ‘Since every dharmas arises by depending on causes and conditions, it cannot be really an existent; but it is merely an unreal aspect [without its substance]. Moreover, grasping this aspect alone as real, people insist on their view that one’s self and things belonging to it really exist. Now I ought to investigate whether or not I can really take hold of this particular aspect as belonging to a real substance.’ No matter however in detail one investigates into it, one realizes that nothing can be grasped as a real thing. Nor is it possible to really probe whether there is a substance for the aspect of maleness or that of femaleness, that of identity or that of difference, etc. The reason is that all those [sensory and mental] dharmas (facts) are without a substance or without anything belonging to it, hence the said aspects are unreal and non-existent. Because of their nature of emptiness, there is neither a man nor a woman. Identity or difference is only a name referring to non-existent substance, and hence, [it does not matter whether] it is asserted as identical or different. Because of this, it is not possible to grasp a substance called as ‘man’ or ‘woman,’ ‘identical’ or ‘different.’” 行者思惟作是念：諸法從因緣生無有實法，但有相，而諸眾生取是相著我我所。我今當觀是相有實可得，審諦觀之都不可得，若男相女相一異相等，是相實皆不可得。何以故？諸法無我我所故空，空故無男無女。一異等法我我所中名字，是一是異，以是故男女一異法實不可得。

[29] Ibid., fasc. 20, p.209b-c：行法緣者，諸漏盡阿羅漢、辟支佛、諸佛，是諸聖人破吾我相，滅一異相故，但觀從因緣相續生諸欲。以慈念眾生時，從和合因緣相續生但空。五眾即是眾生，念是五眾以慈念。眾生不

知是法空而常一心欲得樂，聖人愍之令隨意得樂。為世俗法故，名為法緣。

[30] 慈悲心有三種：眾生緣、法緣、無緣。凡夫人眾生緣；聲聞、辟支佛及菩薩初眾生緣後法緣；諸佛善修行畢竟空故，名為無緣。

[31] 有漏(yu-lou), Sāsrava in Sanskrit, āsava in Pāli, means the state of being affected or influenced by passion, defilements, in which the process of life is in full swing; verbal and mental defilement which cause obstruction to enlightenment. Here it is given as “morally and spiritually defiled propensities.” 漏盡(lou-chin) or 無漏(wu-lou), opposite of yu-lou., the state of being unaffected or uninfluenced by passion, defilement, in total transcendence from the process of life. Āsrava means “flowing,” “running,” “discharge” and is applied in analogy to the discharge or outflow of passions and their faith, impure flux from sense faculties and the mind. It is synonymous to kleśa or defilement. Āsrava denotes the state of Sāsrava.

[32] Saṃskṛta (有爲): phenomenal, affected, composite existence is an interplay of multiple subtle, ultimate, not further analysable, elements of nāma-rūpa (mind and matter) and forces derived from the given causal concatenation of multiple elements. Whatever is phenomenal is therefore subject to the causality of dependent origination. Asaṃskṛta (無爲):

Unaffected, non-composite, absolute, unconditioned, and unlimited, and hence transcendent. Only three dharmas were accepted by the Abhidharmists, such as Sarvāstivāda.

[33] 諸法實相。

[34] Ibid., fasc. 20, p.209c. 無緣者，是慈但諸佛有。何以故？諸佛心不住有為無為性中，不依止過去世未來現在世，知諸緣不實顛倒虛誑故，心無所緣。佛以眾生不知是諸法實相，往來五道，心著諸法分別取捨，以是諸法實相智慧，令眾生得之，是名無緣。

[35] 人空法有。

[36] 法空。

[37] Śrāvaka (Sāvaka in Pāli, 聲聞), originally both lay and monk who listened to Śākyamuni's teaching and instructions. The goal was to realize the ideal of Saint as Arhat through rigorous regulation of one's moral and spiritual life toward the insight of Four-fold holy Truths. The type of practice and style of life centered to the self-improvement and advancement, and this was criticized by the Mahāyāna followers as self-centered. Pratyekabuddha (Pacceka-buddha in Pāli, 辟支佛、獨覺、緣覺) one enlightened by himself through the insight of "Dependent Origination," but dies without proclaiming the truth to the world. This reclusive nature was criticized by Mahāyāna followers.

[38] Four immeasurable contemplation (四無量心): p.758, fasc. 20. "喜" embodies the third discipline and "捨" the fourth discipline.

[39] In the Ta-chih-tu-lun, fasc. 20, Nāgārjuna as commentator deals with the threefold samādhi (三三昧), four-fold dhyāna (四禪), four-fold catvāri apramāṇāni (四無量心), and four higher ārūptya-samādhi (四無色定). The disciplines of Four Immeasurables is found in Fasc. 20 (Chap. 33), Ibid., pp.208c through 211c.

[40] Ibid., 210b. 此但憶想未有實事。

[41] Ibid., p.256c: 慈悲是佛道之根本。所以者何？菩薩見眾生老病死苦、身苦、心苦、今世後世苦等諸苦所惱，生大慈悲救如是苦，然後發心求阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。亦以大慈悲力故，於無量阿僧祇世生死中心不壓沒以大慈悲力故，久應得涅槃而不取證，以是故，一切諸佛法中慈悲為大，若無大慈大悲、便早入涅槃。

[42] Samantabhadra (Pu-hsien 普賢, or Pien-chi 遍吉), Mañjuśrī or Mañjughoṣa (Wên-shu-shih-li, 文殊師利), and Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-yin, 觀音).

[43] daśabhūmis (十地): Ten stages or grounds of Bodhisattva career, each of which embodies his realization of the respective practice or virtue assigned to it. Historically the idea of ten stations evolved gradually from the initial appearance in the Mahāvastu (ca. 150 B.C.). The final forms of the ten Bhūmis were completed in the Buddhāvataṅga-sūtra. In the

Ta-chih-tu-lun, Nāgārjuna often times refers to the third ground of Non-Sliding-Back (avaivarthya-bhūmi) which was the older form.

[44] Ten faculties or daśa-balas: (十力的功德) (1) sthāna-asthāna-jñāna-bala, (2) karma-vipāka-jñāna-bala, (3) dhyānavimokṣasamādhi-samāpatti-jñāna-bala, (4) indriya-parāpara-jñāna-bala, (5) nānādhimukti-jñāna-bala, (6) nānādhātu-jñāna-bala, (7) sarvatra-gāmini-pratipaj-jñāna-bala, (8) pūrva-nivāsa-anusmṛti-jñāna-bala, (9) cyuty-upapatti-jñāna-bala and (10) āsraya-kṣaya-jñāna-bala.

[45] Ibid., 是諸菩薩於餘菩薩爲大，比於佛不能遍知，如月光雖明於日則不現。

[46] It is obvious that the translator Kumārajīva's commenting is implicated here.

[47] 眾生。

[48] 大心。

[49] Taishō. 25, p.380b-c: 天竺語法眾字和合成語，眾語和合成句。如菩爲一字，提爲一字，是二不合則無語，若和合名爲菩提，秦言無上智慧。薩埵或名眾生，或是大心，爲無上智慧故出大心名爲菩提薩埵，願欲令眾生行無上道，是名菩提薩埵。

[50] 天眼(divya-cakṣu) consisted of five kinds of supernormal power.

[51] 慧眼(prajñā-cakṣu).

[52] 法眼(dharma-cakṣu).

[53] Ibid., fasc. 40, p.349a-b: 菩薩初發心時，以肉眼見世界眾生受諸苦患，心慈愍，學諸禪定，修得五通。以天眼遍見六道中眾生，受種種身心苦，益加憐愍故，求慧眼以救濟之。得是慧眼已，見眾生心相種種不同，云何令眾生得是實法？故求法眼引導眾生令入法界中，故名法眼。

[54] 諸法實相(chu-fa-shih-hsiang): Both compounds tattva-lakṣaṇam and yathābhūtam are often come up with verbal terms to see, view, understand, etc. meaning: to intuit the characteristic of ultimate reality as it really is without superimposing one's prejudice or preconception, etc. which necessarily distorts truth to create error.

[55] 方便(upāyakaūśalya): skill-in-means, appropriate and excellent expediency, based on the true insight and leading to the goal of religious truth; expedient method to help fellow beings toward the goal of enlightenment.

[56] ṣaṭ-pāramitā (六度), namely, charity (dāna, 布施) morality (śīla, 持戒), perseverance (kṣānti, 忍辱), endeavor (vīrya, 精進), meditation (samādhi, 禪定), and insight (prajñā, 智慧).

[57] 大悲心。

[58] Ibid., fasc. 27. cf. p.246 : 具足般若波羅蜜多故，知諸法空；大悲心故憐愍眾生。於是二法以方便力不生染著。雖知諸法空，方便力故亦不捨眾生；雖不捨眾生亦知諸法實空，若於是二事等即得入菩薩位。

[59] 無生法忍(anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti).

[60] Ibid., fasc. 40. p.351a : 得菩薩神通知種種度眾生道，未得成佛故無佛眼。慧眼法眼見，佛眼不見。菩薩得無生法忍，得無生法忍已，能觀一切眾生得道因緣，以種種道而度脫之，未成佛故無佛眼。

[61] Sammantabhadra (普賢菩薩): this Bodhisattva seems to have held no historical bearing, but was regarded a figure of personification of his epithet as commanding all vows and his omnipresence as guardian wherever Buddhist Vihāras were located.

[62] Mañjuśrī (Wên-shu-shih-li, 文殊師利) or Mañjughoṣa, 妙音): This bodhisattva seems to have been an actual person who advocated the Mahāyāna teaching. In ancient Mahāyāna scriptures, he invariably appears

as the head monk of all assemblies, and seems to be especially linked with the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures. After 450 years from the time of Śākyamuni's Parinirvāṇa, this Bodhisattva appeared in the Himalaya region and taught the twelve classes of Buddhist scriptures (十二分教) to the five hundred sages. Then he returned to Kauśala, his birth place, and entered Parinirvāṇa. The Lotus Sūtra (Fasc. 4), the Flower Garland sūtra (Fasc. 45), as well as the 8000 śloka Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras or Tao-hsing-pan-jo-ching (《道行般若經》 Fasc. 4) tell that the Bodhisattva assembled the scripture in Southern India.

[63] For instance, the mark of a wheel consisted of a thousand spokes like the vehicle of legendary Cakravartin (千輻輪相) is generally drawn under the foot on the pedestal.

[64] Taishō., p.350a : 如遍吉菩薩、觀世音菩薩、文殊師利菩薩等，見是菩薩如諸佛相，知當成佛。Ibid., 350b : 十住菩薩與佛，無有差別。如遍吉、文殊師利、觀世音等，具足十力功德等，而不作佛為廣度眾生故。

[65] 阿彌陀佛 or Amitābha Buddha. According to Staël-Hostein's argument, the earliest occurrence of Chinese name kuan-shih-yin (觀世音) is equivalent to 'avalokita-īśvara' in the larger Sukhāvātī-vyūha-sūtra. Cf. "Avalokita and Apalokita," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol.1 (1936), [350-362] cf. p.351.

[66] Maitreya (Mi-lê, 彌勒): According to the Hsien-yu-ching [《賢愚經》 13 fasc., Taishō. 4, (No.202)] or Avadāna Collection called Damamūka-nidāna-sūtra, No.57, Fasc. Po-p'o-li-p'in (波婆離品) comprises a story of Maitreya who was a disciple of Śākyamuni. Born as a son of a minister of the king of Vāraṇasī and became a student of a Braḥman scholar, but one day attended Śākyamuni's lecture at the Gṛdrakūṭa in Rājagṛha, he became a disciple. Cf. Ta-chi-tu-lun (the 29th fasc.).

[67] Fa-tsang P'u-sa (法藏菩薩).

[68] Shan-ts'ai-t'ung-tzù (善財童子).

[69] 光世音(菩薩)。

[70] 觀世音(菩薩)。

[71] 觀自在(菩薩)。

[72] Hsüan-tsang explains his translation of Kuan-tzù -tsai for Avalokiteśvara as correct, saying: “Avalokiteśvara is called in T’ang language as Kuan-tzù -tsai. Avalokita is kuan (觀), īśvara is tzù-t sai (自在). In the olden translation, it was Kuang-shih-yin (光世音) or Kuan-shi-yin (觀世音) or Kuan-shih-tzù-t sai (觀世自在) are wrong.” In his commentary on the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra by his disciple (窺基, 632~682). [《般若心經幽贊》卷上, Taishō. 33 (No.1710)], “kuan” means illumining (照), namely, an insight that clarifies non-existence and existence (了空有) and “tzù-t sai” means the proficiency of doing things at one’s will (從任).

[73] The Lotus Sūtra has the former name in the Nepalese manuscript, while the latter name appears in the manuscript of the Pureland Sūtra. Despite the fact that both scriptures were most likely compiled during the first century B.C., since it is difficult to determine exactly to what period each of the manuscripts belonged, we cannot decide which term was original.

[74] Lokesh Chandra: Cf. Chap. 2 in the Thousand Armed Avalokiteśvara. Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Center for Arts, 1988. Esp. p.20. According to this author, when these two names were being used in confusion, “Avalokita” alone began to be used in later medieval India like the case of the Bodhicaryāvatāra by Śāntideva (c. 650~750).

[75] Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature, originally published from Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London 1932. pp.47-48.

[76] Staël-Holstein, A. von. The etymological origin to two Pāli verbal roots apalok and olok, Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 1 (1936) 350-362. Esp. p.357.

[77] Staël-Holstein: loc. cit, pp.360-361; apalok or olok means “to grant freedom, take leave of or get leave to go,” and the causative form avalokayati means “asking somebody for permission or freedom to do something” in the textual context.

[78] The Sanskrit manuscript of the Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra comprises a similar verb like vyavalokayati which is practically identical in meaning as avalokayati, namely, to look upon or look at, view, behold, notice, observe.

Cf. Edward Conze: “Text, Sources, and Bibliography of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya,” JRAS, April 1948; p.34.

[79] Chandra, op. cit., p.11. In the Pureland iconography, Avalokitasvara (觀世音) and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (大勢至) are the members of the triad as Amitābha’s acolytes. The two figures are depicted as sublime as Amitābha and are in possession of a similar set of superior marks only ascribed to the Buddhas. Avalokitasvara is always on the right of Amitābha while Mahāsthāmaprāpta, a little smaller figure, on Amitābha’s left side.

[80] Chandra. Ibid., pp.15-16; Hsüan-tsang’s travel record reveals that he encountered this kind of indiscriminate enshrinement of Kuan-yin in various sites. cf. op. cit., p.114, Note.

[81] Hsi-yu-chi, Buddhist Records of the Western World. Trans. by Samuel Beal, originally published 1884 London; Two volumes bound in one, Motilal Banarssidass, Delhi: 1981. Vol 2, p.119. The monumental tower of Śākyamuni’s enlightenment was originally a Sasanian architectural structure of Persia (ca. 2nd to 4th cent.) but at the time of its modern restoration, it was changed to the present structure as we have today. Unlike the square entrance of the building in Indian architectural form, the upper layer entrance was in the dome shape like Iranian mosques we observe today, and Śākyamuni’s statue was enshrined in that inner compartment. Hsüan-tsang then observed the two statues outside niches set on both sides of the entrance. See Ichimura: “Buddhagaya Temple in Indian Buddhism” (1-10), World Buddhism (Sri Lanka) XXIV, 4-12, 1975 and XXV, 1 (1976).

[82] 正觀音。

[83] For variations of Avalokiteśvara in India, see Gōosta Liebert: Iconographic Dictionary of the Indian Religions, Hinduism-Buddhism-Jainism. Asian Arts & Archaeology Series No.5. Delhi: Indian Books Centre, 1976; pp.29-30.

[84] John Blofeld: op. cit., p.41.

[85] The bibliographical records suggest that there were six translations of the same text, but only three translations ascribed to Dharmarakṣa (《正法華經》 286), Kumārajīva (《妙法蓮華經》 406), and jñānagupta and

Dharmagupta (《添品妙法蓮華經》 601) are remained as extant. Nāgārjuna quotes this sūtra, more often than any other scriptures, in his commentary Upadeśaśāstra (《大智度論》) of Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra [《大品般若經》 (translated by Kumārajīva, Aḍ. 402-412)].

[86] Chih-i (538~597) systematized the T'ien-t'ai Classification of Buddhist Doctrines known as "Fivefold Periods and Eight Teachings" (天台五時八教教判) on the basis of the Lotus Sūtra and Nirvāṇa Sūtra (Nieh-p'an-ching, 《涅槃經》). His authorship covers many writings, but the Profound Meaning of Lotus Sūtra (Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching-hsuan-I 《妙法蓮華經玄義》) in 593 [Taishō. 33 (No.1916)] and The Profound Meaning of Kuan-yin (Kuan-shih-yin-hsuan-i 《觀音玄義》), its commentary (Kuan-yin-I-shu, 《觀音義疏》), and the Short Commentary on the Chap.of Samanta-mukha (P'u-mên-p'in-shu, 《普門品疏》, Taishō. 34, No.1728) are regarded to have contributed to the Kuan-yin cult movement.

[87] Martin Palmer and Jay Ramsay with Man-ho Kwok: Kuan Yin: Myths of the Chinese Goddess of Compassion. London: Thorsons, an Imprint of Harper-Collins Publishers, 1995; p.19.

[88] John Blofeld: op. cit., p.49.

[89] Palmer and Ramsay: op. cit., p.21. The authors suggest that among other reasons, popular Buddhism needed a female image to compete with the Taoists and their successful goddesses, such as the Queen Mother of the West.

[90] Ibid., p.40.

[91] Elena Schmidt: "The Little Known Binglingsi, Buddhist Caves," The Art of Asia, Vol.27, No.4, July-August 1997; pp.132-137.

[92] Palmer and Ramsay: op. cit.; Cf. The introductory statement.

[93] Ibid., p.17.

[94] Chandra: op. cit., p.42. Cf. Alicia Matsunaga: Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation of the Honji-Suijaku Theory (The Historical Development). Tokyo: Sophia University, C. E. Tuttle, 1969.

[95] 本地垂跡。

[96] 本門 and 迹門。

[97] Continued from the above: (8) When one is thrown into a fiery pit, (9) when one floats on the waves by a shipwreck, (10) when one is pushed over a precipice, (11) when one is chased and falling from a hilltop, (12) when one is surrounded by the swords of enemies, (13) when one is about to be executed due to a king's ill will, (14) when one is imprisoned with fetters and chains, (15) when one is poisoned or cursed unto injury or death, (16) when one encounters evil Rākṣasa, poisonous Nāgas, ghostly demons, etc., (17) when one is attacked by a horde of wild animals, (18) when one has stepped into a pile of venomous insects, snakes, or scorpions, (19) when one encounters a fearful storm with thunder, lightning, hail and rain, (20) when one is totally exhausted by pain and fatigue, (21) when one is suffering the evil cycles of life, such as hell, ghost, and animal, undergoing birth, old age, sickness, and death, (22) when one faces legal suit at the government office and is threatened by the military court, and (23) when one meets all kinds of suffering and dangers with threat of death.

[98] Takakusu gives some of the iconographic records of the Kuan-yin cult derived from the Samantamukha chapter of the Lotus Sūtra. "In the so-called Buddhist litany represented in some sculptured reliefs of Ajanta (No.4), Ellora (No.3): Dangers from an elephant, a lion, an enemy with a sword, and a young man against a woman, on one row, and those from a fire, a snake, a flood, and a female against a male, while a standing figure of Kuan-yin is represented at the center. Aurangābād (No.7): the eight scenes are specified by a fire, a sword, a thief, and a shipwreck on the right, and a lion, a snake, an elephant, and a man with a woman on the left, Kuan-yin is flying towards the center to their rescue. Kānheri (No.4), one of the 108: the scenes are ten instead of eight, a girl with a man; a man in a striking attitude before a snake-king; a man brandishing a sword against a female with a child, a man with a stick before another who is prostrating himself, an elephant, a lion, a serpent, a man visible, probably drowned; a man with his hands raised probably in a pushing attitude." ["Kuan-yin," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, p.764]. Although Takakusu estimated the time of these records to have been in the 7th or 8th centuries, I think that some of them go back much earlier periods, possibly into the third century, so-called

Śaka-Palhava Era created by the new arrivals of Scythians and Parthians in western India and coastal regions.

[99] Blofeld: op. cit., p.19.

[100] The Nepalese Sanskrit text generally agrees with the prose section, but additionally comprises a verse section; however, neither the translation by Dharmarakṣa (C.E. 286) nor that by Kumārajīva (406) included the section. The verse section was later added according to the third translation ascribed to Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta and accomplished in 601.

[101] Here, No.17 and No.33 are included in the above enumeration, but in order to show the order given in the Chinese text, these are repeated as part of additional series: (10) the appearance of a ruler for his associates or governors (rājā), (11) the appearance of a merchant or (12) a female merchant for his or her colleagues and associates, (13) the appearance of a retired man or (14) a retired woman for his or her friends, (15) the appearance of a minister or (16) a minister's wife for his or her government officials and colleagues, (17) the appearance of a Brāhmaṇa or (18) a Brāhmaṇa's wife for his or her colleagues, (19) the appearance of a mendicant or (20) a female mendicant for his or her associates, (21) the appearance of an Upāsakā (a layman) or (22) an Upāsakā (a laywoman) for his or her associates, (23) the appearance of a boy, (24) the appearance of a girl, (25) the appearance of a Deva (god) for his associates, (26) the appearance of a Nāga (tribe) for his associates, (27) the appearance of a Yakṣa (demon), (28) the appearance of a Gandharva (heavenly musician), (29) the appearance of an Asura, (30) the appearance of a Garuda, (31) the appearance of a Kiṛnara, (32) the appearance of a Mahoraga (great serpent), (33) the appearance of a Vajrapāni for his associates. The thirty-three forms of Kuan-yin were created and often represented in art. In Japan there are thirty-three sacred places of pilgrimage where various images of Kannon (觀音) is enshrined and worshiped.

[102] Cf. A brief biography attached to the Kuo-ch'ü -hsien-tsai-yin-kuo-ching (《過去現在因果經》), Taishō. (《大正新修大藏經》) Vol.3, (No.189), p.620. Kuan-yin Bodhisattva is called the grantor of fearlessness and safety (abhayaṃdada) to any and all sentient beings.

[103] Cf. Note 98. During the Śāka-Palhava period, ca. From the 2nd C.E. through 3rd, the bearers of history were those new immigrated peoples of Scythians (Saka) and Parthians (Palhava) who were engaged in sea-faring and caravan land traders in Indian Oceans. The Kānheri complex, located on the Salsette Island 16 miles north of Bombay and 6.25 miles northwest of Thānā consists of structures which belonged to the local Saṅgha and the universal Saṅgha of the four quarters (catudīśasaṅgha), belonging to the Orthodox schools, supported by the local people of Nāsika, Kalyāna, and the people of Kārṇāta and Dhānyakaṭaka of South-eastern India, and included a good number of epigraphic records of that period (165~194). The cult of Avalokitasvara in the religion seems to have been supported mainly by sea-faring communities.

[104] Practice of Contemplation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Longevity (Amitāyurbuddhadhīna-sūtra) After the teaching how to envision the Buddha of immeasurable longevity, Śākyamuni begins to teach on the characteristic of Kuan-shih-yin Bodhisattva in the latter chapter. The description of this Bodhisattva is no different from any of the sublime Buddhas, and then Śākyamuni goes on to Mahāsthāmaprāpta, whose feature is also no different from the sublime Buddhas. These two together with Amitābha are called the Pureland Triad Buddhas (淨土三尊). 《觀無量壽佛經》 Taishō. 12 (365).

[105] Pei-hua-ching (《悲華經》 or 《大乘悲分陀利經》 or 《悲蓮華經》) 10 fasc., translated by Dharmarakṣa 414-426. Taishō. 3, (No.157), Section 3: the Records of the Original Certification of Bodhisattvas for Buddhahood.

[106] Ibid. (fasc.3): Taishō. 3, p.185c: 願我行菩薩道時，若有眾生受諸苦惱恐怖等事、退失正法墮大暗處、憂愁孤窮無有救護無依無舍，若其為我天耳所聞天眼所見，是眾生等若不得免斯苦惱者，我不成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。

[107] Ibid., p.257, fasc. 27, 我不敢不敬，佛以慈悲心為眾生故生，應有漏。

[108] Cf. Bukkyō Kaisetsu Daijiten (Dictionary of Buddhist Books with Expositions) vol.9, Tokyo: Daito Shuppan, p.82 and vol.10, p.274.

[109] 《觀音經》 or 《妙法蓮華經觀音普門品》。

[110] Ta-p'in-pan-jo-ching (《大品般若經》 or 《摩訶般若波羅蜜經》), Pañcaviṃśatisā-hasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (《二萬五千頌般若經》) translated by Kumārajīva, pp.402-412. Taishō. 8, (No, 223).

[111] Edward Conze: “Text, Sources, and Bibliography of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya,” Journal of Royal Asiatic Society. 1948, p.47.

[112] Ibid., p.37: mahā-mantro mahāvīdyā-mantro anuttara-mantro asamāsama-mantraḥ sarva-duḥkha-prāśamaṇaḥ satyam amithyatvāt prajñāpāramitāyām ukto mantraḥ, Tadyathā, gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā.

[113] Of the two extant commentaries of the Sutta-Nipāta, the Niddesa is the earlier one, ascribed to Sāriputta, a direct disciple of śākyamuni, and the Paramatthajotikā is the later one ascribed to Buddhaghoṣa of the 5th century. Unlike the latter, the Niddesa is confined to some parts of the Sutta Nipāta.

[114] Ibid., p.46. Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana-vaggo: The Initial Turning of the Wheel of Dharma (《初轉法輪經》).

[115] Ibid., p.48.

[116] Ibid., p.45. “無智亦無得，以無所得故” in Hsüan-tsang’s translation.

[117] Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (Tao-hsing-pan-jo-ching. (《道行般若經》 10 fasc.) or Eight Thousand Verse Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (《八千頌般若經》), translated by Chih-lou-chia-ch'en in Aḍ.179, [Taishō. 8, (No.224)]. Cf. Fasc 8.

[118] P'u-sa-ing-lo-pên-yeh-ching (《菩薩瓔珞本業經》) or the Sūtra on the Original Action of the Garland of the Bodhisattva (2 fasc.) translated by Chu-fo-nien in 376~378. Taishō.24 (No.1485), 1010 ff. “Garland” (mālā) mentioned in the title is the jewel-ornament consisting of crown, necklet, and bracelets of the Bodhisattvas. This Sūtra was composed to manifest the Original Action (Pên-yeh) of the Bodhisattvas.

[119] Cf. The Mochizuki Bukkyō Daijiten, vol.2, p.1755b. “Ssū-hung-shih-yüan” or “Shigu-seigan” (四弘誓願).

[120] “眾生無邊誓願度，煩惱無盡誓願斷，法門無量誓願學，佛道無上誓願成。” This is in Ch’an tradition.

[121] “The five Skandhas, from which a nihilistic view arises, is the suffering (duḥkha), the ten kinds of defiled propensities (anuśaya) operate in the causal aggregation (samudaya), the quiet contemplation of mindfulness (smṛty-upasthāna) belongs to the path (mārga), and the annihilation of four upside-down views (catur-viparyāsa) leads to the cessation (nirodha). The vow ought to be raised in regard to these four. For instance, first, a nihilistic view ought to be repudiated at each and every moment when the five-defiled-skandha continues to be configured for hundred thousand of myriad times within a day and night. Each skandha configuration is a single moment of an individual person. So should there be incalculable numbers of persons occurring and perishing during a day and night. How much more should there be such occurrences if it is for an entire life time, and how much more so if it is for the incalculable cycles of life!” Cf. Chih-i: Mo-ho-chih-kuan (《摩訶止觀》), Fasc.10, No.2 of two vols: [Cited from the Mochizuki Bukkyō Daijiten, vol.2, p.1755c].

[122] 《六祖法寶壇經》。

[123] 八聖道。

[124] Saptatriṃśikabodhipakṣika-dharmā (三十七菩提分法: An arrangement of the seven sets of practices comprising thirty-seven items. (1) catvāri smṛtyupasthānāni (四念住) or four kinds of mindfulness concerned with breathing, posture, etc., (2) catvāripradhānāni (四精勤) or four kinds of diligence toward moral perfection, (3) catvarardhipadaḥ (四神足) or four kinds of supernormal powers acquired through samādhi, (3) pañcaśraddhā-indriya (五根) or five kinds of faculty of enlightenment, (5) Pañcabala (五力) or five kinds of superior power to realization of Nirvāṇa, (6) saptabodhyaṅgāni (七覺支) or seven disciplines for acquisition of

equanimity of the mind toward enlightenment, and (7)

aṣṭāṅgika-ārya-mārga (八正道) or eight holy paths of the Buddhas.

[125] Ta-chih-tu-lun, op. cit., fasc. 27, p.262c-p.263a：初發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提意，欲度一切眾生老病死等身心諸苦，作大誓莊嚴功德慧明二事，因緣故所願皆滿。是二事有六分修行，名六波羅蜜，布施持戒忍辱是功德分，精進禪定智慧是慧明。

[126] 諸法實相。

[127] Ibid., fasc. 27 p.263a：菩薩以般若波羅蜜，知諸法相念其本願，欲度眾生作是思惟：諸法實相中眾生不可得當云何度？復作是念：諸法實相中眾生雖不可得，而眾生不知是諸法相故，欲令知是實相。

[128] Ibid., fasc. 27, p.257b：大慈悲雖是佛法根本，故是有漏，如淤泥中生蓮華，不得言泥亦應妙，大慈大悲亦如是。

[129] Ibid., fasc. 27, p.257b：佛以慈悲心爲眾生故生，應是有漏。

[130] Ibid., fasc. 40, p.355b-c；人樂、天樂、涅槃樂。

[131] Ibid., fasc. 40, p.355c：是菩薩未成就佛道，未得佛眼故，以三種樂故，教化可度眾生；諸佛但以解脫樂教化眾生。

[132] Ibid., fasc. 40, p.353a：所謂大慈悲故，初發度一切眾生心故，學諸佛等心觀眾生故，一切法自性空故，如是等因緣故，於一切眾生中生等心，得是等心已，得一切眾諸法等，一切法等者，如先說眾生等法等義。

[133] Ibid., fasc. 40, p.353b：復次，眾生中行忍辱慈悲等福功德無量，功德無量故心柔軟，心柔軟故疾得禪定，修禪定故心如意調柔，心如意調柔故，破世間長短男女白黑等，入一相法所謂無相，得是法等已，令一切眾生得是法等。

[134] Ibid., fasc. 27, p.258c 何等是出世間道？如實知世間，即是出世間道。所以者何？智者求世間出世間，二事不可得，若不可得，當知假名爲世間出世間，但爲破世間故，說出世間，世間相即是出世間，更無所復有。所以者何？世間相不可得，是出世間，是世間相常空，世間法定相不可得故。如是行者不得世間，亦不著出世間。若不得世間，亦不著出世間。

[135] Ibid. 世間名五眾，五眾相假令十方諸佛求之，亦不可得。無來處無住處，亦無去處。若不得五眾來住去相，即是出世間。行者爾時觀是世間出世間，實不可見，不見世間與出世間合，亦不見出世間與世間合。離世間亦不見出世間，離出世間亦不見世間，如是則不生二識所謂世間出世間，若捨世間不受出世間，是名出世間。〔若菩薩能如是知，則能為眾生分別世間出世間道，有漏無漏一切諸道，亦如是入一相是名道種慧。〕