

THIỆN PHÚC

**SUMMARIES OF
THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL
IN BUDDHISM
(SƠ LƯỢC VỀ LÝ TƯỞNG BỒ TÁT
TRONG PHẬT GIÁO)**

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Preface

According to Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. For Bodhisattvas' ideal, he or she usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva's job is not easy at all. Though his appearance is not rare as that of a Buddha, but it is extremely difficult for a Bodhisattva to appear, and it is also extremely difficult for ordinary people to encounter a real Bodhisattva. Devout Buddhists should always remember that entering the state of mind of a Nirvana as the Buddha taught does not mean to renounce the world and to enter into a temple as a monk or nun, but it means to enter into practicing well-being exercises that are linked to established daily life patterns, makes our lives more peaceful. Devout Buddhists should always remember the goal of any Buddhist cultivator is to achieve self-enlightening, that is examining with one's own intelligence, and not depending upon another; enlightening or awakening of others, then achieve the final accomplishment, to go beyond the cycle of births and deaths, that is to reach the state of mind of a Nirvana right in this very life. These are the very ideal of Bodhisattvas. In other words, the ideal path of a Bodhisattva is to benefit self and benefit others, leading to Buddhahood; and above to seek bodhi, below to transform all beings. Practitioners who cultivate the Bodhisattva's Practices will always try to find ways to fearlessly break the false and make manifest the right. Practitioners must always live and cultivate forty Bodhisattvas' Minds In the Brahma-Net Sutra. Besides, practitioners also cultivate the Bodhicitta, cultivate things that lead the mind to the cutting off of all affairs. Practitioners also meditate on four kinds of mindfulness on a daily basis to lead the mind to a peaceful state where there exists no more sufferings and afflictions. On this path, contemplation of the Sunyata contributes a great deal to the perfection of the aim of the Bodhisattva Ideal of practitioners.

According to Buddhist history, after mighty and terrible struggles with himself, the Buddha had conquered in his body all those natural defects and human appetites and desires that prevent our ability of

seeing the truth. He had to overcome all the bad influences of the sinful world around Him. Like a soldier fighting desperately in battle against many enemies, He struggled like a hero who conquers, he eventually gained his objects. He also discovered supportive conditions leading practitioners who follow the Bodhisattva Ideal to bodhi and Buddhahood. Thirty-Seven Bodhisattvas' Conducts (Conditions) Leading to Bodhi or Thirty-seven limbs of enlightenment comprise of four right efforts, four sufficiencies, four foundations of mindfulness, five faculties, five powers, seven limbs of enlightenments, and the eightfold noble path. For this reason, in the Prajna-paramita-sutra, the Buddha taught: "Doers of what is hard are the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who have set out to win supreme enlightenment. They do not wish to attain their own private Nirvana. On the contrary, they have survey the highly painful world of being, but they do not tremble at birth-and-death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the peace and happiness of the world. They have resolved, and yet desirous to win supreme enlightenment, they do not tremble at birth and death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the ease of the world, out of pity for the world. They have resolved: 'We will become a shelter for the world, a refuge for all beings, the world's place of rest, the final belief of all beings, islands of the world, lights of the world, leaders of the world, the world's means of salvation.

For all Buddhists, each Buddha had been, for a long period before his enlightenment, vowed to be a Bodhisattva. But why does a Bodhisattva have such a vow? Why does he want to undertake such infinite labor? For Bodhisattvas' ideal is the good of others, for they want to become capable of pulling others out of this great flood of sufferings and afflictions. But what personal benefit does he find in the benefit of others? In Bodhisattvas' ideal, the benefit of others is his own benefit. Who could believe that? It is true that people devoid of pity and who think only of themselves, find it hard to believe in the altruism of the Bodhisattva. But compassionate people can easily do so. In short, a Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. For Bodhisattvas' ideal, he or she usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva's job is not easy at all. Though his appearance is not rare as that of a

Buddha, but it is extremely difficult for a Bodhisattva to appear, and it is also extremely difficult for ordinary people to encounter a real Bodhisattva. Devout Buddhists should always remember that entering the state of mind of a Nirvana as the Buddha taught does not mean to renounce the world and to enter into a temple as a monk or nun, but it means to enter into practicing well-being exercises that are linked to established daily life patterns, makes our lives more peaceful. Devout Buddhists should always remember the goal of any Buddhist cultivator is to achieve self-enlightening, that is examining with one's own intelligence, and not depending upon another; enlightening or awakening of others, then achieve the final accomplishment, to go beyond the cycle of births and deaths, that is to reach the state of mind of a Nirvana right in this very life. These are the very ideal of Bodhisattvas!!!

This little book titled "Summaries of the Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhism" is not a profound study of Bodhisattvas in Buddhist teachings, but a book that simply points out ideal paths in Bodhisattvas' cultivation for us, Buddhists, to follow. Devout Buddhists should always remember the goal of any Buddhist cultivator is to achieve self-enlightening, that is examining with one's own intelligence, and not depending upon another; enlightening or awakening of others, then achieve the final accomplishment, to go beyond the cycle of births and deaths, that is to reach the state of mind of a Nirvana right in this very life. The journey from man to Buddha still demands continuous efforts with right understanding and practice. Devout Buddhists should always remember that eliminating sufferings and attaining happiness in this life is not easy, but not because of these difficulties we don't want to start the journey. Devout Buddhists should also always remember that entering the state of mind of a Nirvana as the Buddha taught does not mean to renounce the world and to enter into a temple as a monk or nun, but it means to that we should start to enter right away into practicing and cultivating in order to established daily life patterns, makes our lives more peaceful, mindful, and happy. The journey from man to Buddha still demands continuous efforts with right understanding and practice. Besides, human beings in nowadays society need helping hands and wisdom from those who follow the path of Bodhisattva Ideal. The journey from man to Buddha still demands

continuous efforts with right understanding and practice. Presently even with so many books available on Buddhism, I venture to compose this booklet titled “Summaries of the Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhism” in Vietnamese and English to spread basic things in Buddhism to all Vietnamese Buddhist followers, especially Buddhist beginners, hoping this little contribution will help Buddhists in different levels to understand on how to achieve and lead a life of peace, mindfulness and happiness.

Thiện Phúc

Part One
Summaries of Bodhisattvas
In Buddhism
(Phần Một: Sơ Lược Về
Phật Giáo & Chư Bồ Tát)

Chapter One

Summaries of Buddhism

I. An Overview of Buddhism:

In the year 563 B.C. a baby was born into a royal family in northern India. He grew up in wealth and luxury but soon found that worldly comfort and security do not guarantee real happiness. He was deeply moved by the suffering he saw all around, so He resolved to find the key to human happiness. When he was 29 he left his wife and child and his Royal Palace and set off to sit at the feet of the great religious teachers of the day to learn from them. They taught him much but none really knew the cause of human sufferings and afflictions and how it could be overcome. Eventually, after six years study and meditation he had an experience in which all ignorance fell away and he suddenly understood. From that day onwards, he was called the Buddha, the Awakened One. He lived for another 45 years in which time he traveled all over northern India teaching others what he had discovered. His compassion and patience were legendary and he made hundreds of thousands of followers. In his eightieth year, old and sick, but still happy and at peace, he finally passed away into nirvana. It couldn't have been an easy thing for the Buddha to leave his family. He must have worried and hesitated for a long time before he finally left. There were two choices, dedicating himself to his family or dedicating himself to the whole world. In the end, his great compassion made him give himself to the whole world. And the whole world still benefits from his sacrifice. This was perhaps the most significant sacrifice ever made.

Even though the Buddha is dead but 2,500 years later his teachings still help and save a lot of people, his example still inspires people, his words still continue to change lives. Only a Buddha could have such power centuries after his death. The Buddha did not claim that he was a god, the child of god or even the messenger from a god. He was simply a man who perfected himself and taught that if we followed his example, we could perfect ourselves also. He never asked his followers to worship him as a god. In fact, He prohibited his followers

to praise him as a god. He told his followers that he could not give favors to those who worship him with personal expectations or calamities to those who don't worship him. He asked his followers to respect him as students respect their teacher. He also reminded his followers to worship a statue of the Buddha to remind ourselves to try to develop peace and love within ourselves. The perfume of incense reminds us of the pervading influence of virtue, the lamp reminds us of the light of knowledge and the followers which soon fade and die, remind us of impermanence. When we bow, we express our gratitude to the Buddha for what his teachings have given us. This is the core nature of Buddhist worship. A lot of people have misunderstood the meaning of "worship" in Buddhism, even sincere Buddhists. Buddhists do not believe that the Buddha is a god, so in no way they could possibly believe that a piece of wood or metal is a god. In Buddhism, the statue of the Buddha is used to symbolize human perfection. The statue of the Buddha also reminds us of the human dimension in Buddhist teaching, the fact that Buddhism is man-centered, not god-centered, that we must look within not without to find perfection and understanding. So in no way one can say that Buddhists worship god or idols. In fact, a long time ago, when primitive man found himself in a dangerous and hostile situations, the fear of wild animals, of not being able to find enough food, of diseases, and of natural calamities or phenomena such as storms, hurricanes, volcanoes, thunder, and lightning, etc. He found no security in his surroundings and he had no ability to explain those phenomena, therefore, he created the idea of gods in order to give him comfort in good times, courage in times of danger and consolation when things went wrong. They believed that god arranged everything. Generations after generations, man continues to follow his ancestors in a so-called "faith in god" without any further thinkings. Some says they in believe in god because god responds to their prayers when they feel fear or frustration. Some say they believe in god because their parents and grandparents believed in god. Some others say that they prefer to go to church than to temple because those who go to churches seem richer and more honorable than those who go to temples.

II. The Meanings of Buddhism:

To someone it can be only life of the Buddha; the example that the Buddha and his immediate disciples set, that glorious feat of a man, who stood before men as a man and declared a path of deliverance. To others, Buddhism would mean the massive doctrine as recorded in the Buddhist Tripitaka (literature), and it is described a very lofty, abstruse, complex and learned philosophy of life. The name Buddhism comes from the word “Bodhi” which means “waking up,” and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of Awakening. Therefore, the real definition of Buddhism is Noble Truth. The Buddha did not teach from theories. He always taught from a practical standpoint based on His understanding, His enlightenment, and His realization of the Truth. This philosophy has its origins in the experience of the man named Siddhartha Gotama, known as the Buddha, who was himself awakened at the age of 36. Buddhism is now older than 2,500 years old and has more than 800 million followers world wide (including Chinese followers in Mainland China). People in the West had heard of the Buddha and his teaching as early as the thirteenth century when Marco Polo (1254-1324), the Italian traveler who explored Asia, wrote accounts on Buddhism in his book, “Travels of Marco Polo”. From the eighteenth century onwards, Buddhist text were brought to Europe and translated into English, French and German. Until a hundred years ago, Buddhism was mainly an Asian philosophy but increasingly it is gaining adherents in Europe and America.

To the Buddha, man is a supreme being, thus, he taught: “Be your own torch and your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person.” This was the Buddha’s truthful word. He also said: “All realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one’s own experience. Man is the master of his destiny, since he can make his life better or worse. If he tries his best to cultivate, he can become a Buddha.” Buddhism is the only way that leads people from the evil to the virtuous, from deluded to fully enlightened sagehood. Buddhism is a philosophy, a way of life or a religion. The religion of the awakened one. One of the three great world religions. It was founded by the historical Buddha Sakyamuni over 25 centuries ago. Sakyamuni expounded the four noble truths as the core of his teaching, which he had recognized in the moment of his enlightenment. He had shown

people how to live wisely and happily and his teachings soon spread from India throughout Asia, and beyond.

Buddhism is a philosophy, a way of life or a religion. The teaching of Buddha. This is not important. Buddhism is what the Buddha taught. His teaching was based on human inner wisdom. Buddhism always values reason. Blindly believing in everything is contrary to Buddha's teaching. The Buddha taught: "Do not believe blindly in my teachings. Always test them like using fire to test gold to determine whether it is authentic or counterfeit." Buddhism is not a religion versed in worshipping and imploring favors from deities. It is different from other religions and doctrines in that it respects personal opinions, beliefs, and intellectual development. Buddhism does not prevent its disciples from learning other religious teachings. The Buddha said that if there were reasonable and rational teachings in other religions, His followers were free to respect such things. From that basic principle, the Buddha declared that there was nothing hidden in the sleeve of His saffron robe when referring to His teachings. He also added that His doctrine was consistent with how people understood the Truth. It did not depend on the favors bestowed by any deity or any other spiritual power. The Buddha emphasized the concept of free inquiry when He asked His disciples to judge even the Tathagata in order to have an utter trustfulness in Him. He asked them to study, understand, and believe latter on. Whoever has not yet understood or still has doubt but blindly believes has thus defamed the Buddha. Doubt is not a sin because Buddhism has no creed to be believed. Doubt will automatically dissipate when people fully understand or perceive the Truth. In short, whether the Buddha wanted or not, His teachings and the way of life preached by Him became a religion called "Buddhism." However, Buddhism is not a religion just for discussion, but it is a religion of deliverance for those who diligently cultivate. One needs not be a scholar or a blind devotee to become a Buddhist, all you need is your sincerity of cultivation. In Buddhism, blind faith has no ground, each one of us must know how to find and absorb what is relevant and what is not to our life and to our problems. If we pay a little attention we'll see that Buddhist doctrines are boundless and timeless, but they are the inconceivable truth for all time. Messages handed down to us by the Buddha remain eternally valuable. No one can argue against or deny

the doctrine of impermanence in Buddhism. Impermanence does not mean that things are not existing. Impermanence means that everything continues in a flux, in a process of continuing change and evolution. Thus, Buddhism is able to adjust to different civilizations in different times in the world. Even in modern world, Buddhism is always appropriate in all circumstances. In fact, if you approach any aspect of Buddhism, you will immediately find out that it is something relevant, beneficial and applicable to your daily life. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that in Buddhism there is no such so-called bonds of supernatural ties, nor Godhead, nor creation, nor sin inherited from anyone else, other than what you yourself have done.

III. Summaries of the Very Cores of Buddhism:

As mentioned in the preface, after the Buddha's Enlightenment at Buddha Gaya, he moved slowly across India until he reached the Deer Park near Benares, where he preached to five ascetics his First Sermon. The Sermon preached about the Middle Way between all extremes, the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. In the Deer Park, Benares, at first the Buddha was ignored by the five brothers of Kaundinya, but as the Buddha approached them, they felt that there was something very special about him, so they automatically stood up as He drew near. Then the five men, with great respect, invited the Buddha to teach them what He has enlightened. So, the Buddha delivered His First Teaching: Turning the Wheel of the Dharma. He began to preach: "O monk! You must know that there are Four Noble Truths. The first is the Noble Truth of Suffering. Life is filled with the miseries and afflictions of old age, sickness, unhappiness and death. People chase after pleasure but find only pain. Even when they do find something pleasant they soon grow tired of it. Nowhere is there any real satisfaction or perfect peace. The second is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering. When our mind is filled with greed and desire and wandering thoughts, sufferings of all types follow. The third is the Noble Truth of the End of Suffering. When we remove all craving, desire, and wandering thoughts from our mind, sufferings will come to an end. We shall experience undescrivable happiness. And finally, the Noble Truth of the Path. The Path that helps us reach the ultimate wisdom." The path leading to the end (extinction) of suffering,

the fourth of the four axioms, i.e. the eightfold noble path. The truth of the PATH that leads to the cessation of suffering (the way of cure). To practice the Eight-fold Noble Truths. The Buddha taught: “Whoever accepts the four dogmas, and practises the Eightfold Noble Path will put an end to births and deaths. In short, finally, the Buddha already discovered supportive conditions leading to bodhi or Buddhahood. The Noble Truth of the Right Way includes the following Noble Paths: The Eightfold Noble Truth, Seven Bodhi Shares, Four Right Efforts, Four Sufficiencies, Five Faculties, Five Powers, Four Elements of Popularity, Four Immeasurable Minds, and Four Kinds of Mindfulness.

To someone, all that the Buddha said can only be considered as life of the Buddha Himself. However, in fact, the example that the Buddha and his immediate disciples set, that glorious feat of a man, who stood before men as a man and declared a path of deliverance. To others, Buddhism would mean the massive doctrine as recorded in the Buddhist Tripitaka (literature), and it is described a very lofty, abstruse, complex and learned philosophy of life. The name Buddhism comes from the word “Bodhi” which means “waking up,” and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of Awakening. Therefore, the real definition of Buddhism is Noble Truth. The Buddha did not teach from theories. He always taught from a practical standpoint based on His understanding, His enlightenment, and His realization of the Truth. This philosophy has its origins in the experience of the man named Siddhartha Gotama, known as the Buddha, who was himself awakened at the age of 36. Buddhism is now older than 2,500 years old and has more than 800 million followers world wide, including Chinese followers in Mainland China. People in the West had heard of the Buddha and his teaching as early as the thirteenth century when Marco Polo (1254-1324), the Italian traveler who explored Asia, wrote accounts on Buddhism in his book, “Travels of Marco Polo”. From the eighteenth century onwards, Buddhist text were brought to Europe and translated into English, French and German. Until a hundred years ago, Buddhism was mainly an Asian philosophy but increasingly it is gaining adherents in Europe and America. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Alan Bennett, an Englishman, went to Burma to become a Buddhist monk. He was renamed Ananda Metteya. He returned to Britain in 1908. He was the first British person to become a Buddhist monk. He taught Dharma in

Britain. Since then, Buddhist monks and nuns from Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan, China and other Buddhist countries in Asia have come to the West, particularly over the last seventy years. Many of these teachers have kept to their original customs while others have adapted to some extent to meet the demands of living in a western society. In recent years, there has been a marked growth of interest in Buddhism in Europe. The membership of existing societies has increased and many new Buddhist centers have been established. Their members include large numbers of professionals and scholars. Today, Britain alone has over 140 Buddhist centers found in most major cities.

To the Buddha, man is a supreme being, thus, he taught: "Be your own torch and your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person." This was the Buddha's truthful word. He also said: "All realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one's own experience. Man is the master of his destiny, since he can make his life better or worse. If he tries his best to cultivate, he can become a Buddha." Buddhism is the only way that leads people from the evil to the virtuous, from deluded to fully enlightened sagehood. Buddhism is a philosophy, a way of life or a religion. The religion of the awakened one. One of the three great world religions. It was founded by the historical Buddha Sakyamuni over 25 centuries ago. Sakyamuni expounded the four noble truths as the core of his teaching, which he had recognized in the moment of his enlightenment. He had shown people how to live wisely and happily and his teachings soon spread from India throughout Asia, and beyond.

The Buddha admitted the presence of sufferings and afflictions in human life because of the ignorant attachment to all things. But it is truly wrong to believe that Buddhism a religion of pessimism. This is not true even with a slight understanding of basic Buddhism. When the Buddha said that human life was full of sufferings and afflictions, he did not mean that life was pessimistic. In this manner, the Buddha admitted the presence of sufferings and afflictions in human life, and by a method of analysis he pointed out to his disciples that attachment to things without a correct view as to their nature is the cause of sufferings and afflictions. Impermanence and change are inherent in the nature of all things. This is their true nature and this is the correct view. He concluded: "As long as we are at variance with this truth, we

are bound to run into conflicts. We cannot alter or control the nature of things. The result is 'hope deferred made the heart sick'. The only solution lies in correcting our point of view." In fact, the thirst for things begets sorrow. When we like someone or something, we wish that they belonged to us and were with us forever. We never think about their true nature, in other words, or we refuse to think about their true nature. We expect them to survive forever, but time devours everything. Eventually we must yield to old age and freshness of the morning dew disappears before the rising sun. In the Nirvana Sutra, when Ananda and other disciples were so sad and cried when the Buddha lay on his death-bed, the Buddha taught: "Ananda! Lament not. Have I not already told you that from all good things we love and cherish we would be separated, sooner or later... that they would change their nature and perish. How then can Tathagata survive? This is not possible!" This is the philosophy which underlies the doctrine of the "Three Marks" (impermanence, suffering and no-self) of existence of the Buddhist view of life and the world. All Buddhist values are based on this. The Buddha expected of his disciples, both laity and clergy, good conduct and good behavior and decent standard of living in every way. With him, a simple living did not amount to degenerate human existence or to suffer oneself. The Buddha advised his disciples to follow the "Middle Path". It is to say not to attach to things nor to abandon them. The Buddha does not deny the "beauty", however, if one does not understand the true nature of the objects of beauty, one may end up with sufferings and afflictions or grief and disappointment. In the "Theragatha", the Buddha brought up the story of the Venerable Pakka. One day, going to the village for alms, Venerable Pakka sat down beneath a tree. Then a hawk, seizing some flesh flew up into the sky. Other hawks saw that attacked it, making it drop the piece of meat. Another hawk grabbed the fallen flesh, and was flundered by other hawks. And Pakka thought: "Just like that meat are worldly desires, common to all, full of pain and woe." And reflecting hereon, and how they were impermanent and so on, he continued to contemplate and eventually won Arahanship. The Buddha advised his disciples not to avoid or deny or attach to objects of beauty. Try not to make objects of beauty our objects of like or dislike. Whatever there is in the world, pleasant or unpleasant, we all have a tendency to attach to them, and

we develop a like or dislike to them. Thus we continue to experience sufferings and afflictions. Buddhists recognize beauty where the sense can perceive it, but in beauty we should also see its own change and destruction. And Buddhist should always remember the Buddha's teaching regarding to all component things: "Things that come into being, undergo change and are eventually destroyed." Therefore, Buddhists admire beauty but have no greed for acquisition and possession.

IV. Buddhist Cosmology & Outlook On Life:

Buddhist Cosmology: According to the Buddhist view on the universe, the universe is infinite. However, if we speak about the formation of our world system, we can speak about the formation process as follows: "In terms of elements that form the universe, wind is the first one. Its basis is space. Then the wind moves, and in dependence on the moving of the wind, heat occurs; then moisture, then solidity or earth." Buddhist cosmology not only takes into account the existence of innumerable systems of worlds grouped into what we should call galaxies, but has equally vast conceptions of cosmic time. The Buddha proclaimed that on the highest level of understanding the entire cosmos is the original pure mind. However, on the ordinary level of understanding he painted a picture of a cosmos filled with countless worlds systems where countless of living beings of every sort reside. Thus, our world system is not the only unique or the only one world system in the universe. Other world systems also have their Buddhas who also teach the path of enlightenment. The most ancient Buddhist texts speak of the various phases in the evolution and devolution over enormous time-periods of these galaxies, how they gradually formed and how after a period of relative stability during which life may be found on their worlds, how, inevitably having come into existence, they must in due course decline and go to destruction. All this is the working of processes, one vent leading quite naturally to another. As you know that although the Buddha discovered the presence of numerous Gods throughout the universe, he never tried to diminish the importance of the God worshipped by the people of his time. He simply preached the truth and that truth does not affect the importance of any Gods. Similarly, the fact that there are numerous suns in the universe does

not diminish the importance of the sun of our solar system, for our sun continues to provide us with light every day. To some other religions, Gods can be very powerful compared to human beings, but to Buddhism, they are still not free from sufferings and afflictions, and they can still be very angry. The life of Gods may be very long, but not eternal as many other religions believe.

Outlook on life and universe has been discussed by a lot of famous scholars in the world. Examination of the origin or nature of life and universe is the task of the metaphysic experts. This problem has a very important position in philosophy. It was examined from the beginning of the Egyptian, Indian and Chinese civilizations. This book is designed to give you only an overview of the Buddhist cosmology. Buddhist cosmology not only takes into account the existence of innumerable systems of worlds grouped into what we should call galaxies, but has equally vast conceptions of cosmic time. According to Buddhist cosmology, the earth goes through periodic cycles. In some of the cycles it improves, in others it degenerates. The average age of a man is an index of the quality of the period in which the person lives. It may vary between 10 years and many hundreds of thousands of years. At the time of Sakyamuni Buddha, the average life-span was 100 years. After him, the world becomes more depraved, and the life of man shortens. The peak of sin and misery will be reached when the average life has fallen to 10 years. The Dharma of Sakyamuni Buddha will then be completely forgotten. But after that the upward swing begins again. When the life of man reaches 80,000 years, Maitreya Buddha from the Tusita Heaven will appear on the earth. Besides, the most ancient Buddhist texts speak of the various phases in the evolution and devolution over enormous time-periods of these galaxies, how they gradually formed and how after a period of relative stability during which life may be found on their worlds, how, inevitably having come into existence, they must in due course decline and go to destruction. All this is the working of processes, one vent leading quite naturally to another. The Buddha was the Teacher who discovered the real nature of the universal cosmic law and advised us to live in accordance with this law. The Buddha confirmed that it is impossible for anyone to escape from such cosmic laws by praying to an almighty god, because this universal law is unbiased. However, the Buddha has taught us how

to stop bad practices by increasing good deeds, and training the mind to eradicate evil thoughts. According to the Buddha, a man can even become a god if he leads a decent and righteous way of life regardless of his religious belief. It is to say a man someday can obtain peace, mindfulness, wisdom and liberation if he is willing to cultivate to perfect himself. The Buddha Sakyamuni himself realized the Noble Truths, considered all metaphysical questions are empty. He often kept silent and gave no answers to such metaphysical questions, because for Him, those questions do not realistically relate to the purpose of Buddhists, the purpose of all Buddhists is the final freedom. According to the Buddha, how can a man know what the universe really is when he cannot understand who he really is? Therefore, the Buddha taught: "The practical way for a man is turning back to himself and seeing where and who he is and what he is doing so that he can overcome the destruction of all hindrances to the truth of all things. That is to say, he has to cultivate to purify his body and mind." For the universe, the Buddha declared that the material world is formed by the Four Great Elements as many Indian thinkers before Him did. These are Earth element, Water element, Fire element and Air element. These elements are dynamic and impermanent, therefore, all existing things compounded by them must be impermanent too. The problem about the origin of the four elements becomes completely senseless to the truth of Dependent Origination which was discovered and taught by the Buddha.

Buddhist Outlook on Life: It is wrong to imagine that the Buddhist outlook on life and the world is a gloomy one, and that the Buddhist is in low spirit. Far from it, a Buddhist smiles as he walks through life. He who understands the true nature of life is the happiest individual, for he is not upset by the evanescent (extremely small) nature of things. He tries to see things as they are, and not as they seem to be. Conflicts arise in man when he is confronted with the facts of life such as aging, illness, death and so forth, but frustration and disappointment do not vex him when he is ready to face them with a brave heart. This view of life is neither pessimistic nor optimistic, but the realistic view. The man who ignores the principle of unrest in things, the intrinsic nature of suffering, is upset when confronted with the vicissitudes of life. Man's recognition of pleasures as lasting, leads to much vexation, when things

occur quite contrary to his expectations. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a detached outlook towards life and things pertaining to life. Detachment can not bring about frustration, disappointment and mental torment, because there is no clinging to one thing and another, but letting go. This indeed is not easy, but it is the sure remedy for controlling, if not eradicating, unsatisfactoriness. The Buddha sees suffering as suffering, and happiness as happiness, and explains that all cosmic pleasure, like all other conditioned attachings, is evanescent, is a passing show. He warns man against attaching too much importance to fleeting pleasures, for they sooner or later beget discontent. Equanimity is the best antidote for both pessimism and optimism. Equanimity is evenness of mind and not sullen indifference. It is the result of a calm, concentrated mind. It is hard, indeed, to be undisturbed when touched by the realities of life, but the man who cultivates truth is not upset. Absolute happiness can not be derived from things conditioned and compounded. What we hug in great glee this moment, turns into a source of dissatisfaction the next moment. Pleasures are short-lived, and never lasting. The mere gratification of the sense faculties we call pleasure and enjoyment, but in the absolute sense of the world such gratification is not happy. Joy too is suffering, unsatisfactory; for it is transient. If we with our inner eye try to see things in their proper perspective, in their true light, we will be able to realize that the world is but an illusion that leads astray the beings who cling to it. All the so-called mundane pleasures are fleeting, and only an introduction to pain. They give temporary relief from life's miserable ulcers. This is what is known as suffering produced by change. Thus, we see that suffering never ceases to work, it functions in some form or other and is always at work.

Regarding all beings in general, Buddhism considers all the living, which includes the vegetable kingdom; however, the term "sattva" limits the meaning to those endowed with reason, consciousness, and feeling. Those who are sentient, sensible, animate, and rational (sentient beings which possess magical and spiritual powers). According to Buddhism, what we call the self is simply the collection of mental facts, experiences, ideas and so forth which would normally be said to belong to self but there is no self over and above the experiences. So mentioned does not mean that people are not

important. In fact, Buddhism which preached by the Buddha is totally built on human wisdom. The Buddha taught: “Be your own torch, your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person.” The Buddha added: “I am the Buddha fully realized, sentient beings will become Buddha.” To Buddhism, all realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one’s own experience. The Buddha asked his disciples to be the master of their destiny, since they can make their lives better or worse. They can even become Buddha if they study and practice his teachings.

Regarding the point of view on Human Beings and Deva Vehicle, according to the Mahayana, rebirth among men conveyed by observing the five commandments (Panca-veramani). However, there are many differences on human destinies in the world. For example, one is inferior and another superior, one perishes in infancy and another lives much longer, one is sick and infirm and another strong and healthy, one is brought up in luxury and another in misery, one is born a millionaire and another in poverty, one is a genius and another an idiot, etc. According to the Buddhist point of view on human life, all of the above mentioned results are not the results of a “chance.” Science nowadays is indeed against the theory of “chance.” All scientists agree on the Law of Cause and Effect, so do Buddhists. Sincere and devoted Buddhists never believe that the unevenness of the world is due to a so-called Creator and/or God. Buddhists never believe that happiness or pain or neutral feeling the person experiences are due to the creation of a Supreme Creator. According to the Buddhist point of view on human life, the above mentioned unevenness that exists in the world are due to the heredity and environment, and to a greater extent, to a cause or causes which are not only present but proximate or remotely past. Man himself is responsible for his own happiness and misery. He creates his own heaven and hell. He is the master of his own destiny. He is his own child of his past and his own parents of his future. Regarding the point of view on Deva, this is only one of the five vehicles, the deva vehicle or Divine Vehicle. It transports observers of the ten good qualities (thập thiện) to one of the six deva realms of desire, and those who observe dhyana meditation to the higher heavens of form and non-form. Sentient beings are to be reborn among the deva

by observing the ten forms of good actions or Ten Commandments (Dasa-kusala).

Regarding the point of view on the Kaya and Citta, Buddhism talks about the theory of impermanence of the body and mind. Some people wonder why Buddhism always emphasizes the Theory of Impermanence? Does it want to spread in the human mind the seed of disheartenment, and discourage? In their view, if things are changeable, we do not need to do anything, because if we attain a great achievement, we cannot keep it. This type of reasoning, a first, appears partly logical, but in reality, it is not at all. When the Buddha preached about impermanence, He did not want to discourage anyone, but warning his disciples about the truth. A true Buddhist has to work hard for his own well being and also for the society's. Although he knows that he is facing the changing reality, he always keeps himself calm. He must refrain from harming others, in contrast, strive to perform good deeds for the benefit and happiness of others. All things have changed and will never cease to change. The human body is changeable, thus governed by the law of impermanence. Our body is different from the minute before to that of the minute after. Biological researches have proved that the cells in our body are in constant change, and in every seven years all the old cells have been totally renewed. These changes help us quickly grow up, age and die. The longer we want to live, the more we fear death. From childhood to aging, human life is exactly like a dream, but there are many people who do not realize; therefore, they continue to launch into the noose of desire; as a result, they suffer from greed and will suffer more if they become attached to their possessions. Sometimes at time of death they still don't want to let go anything. There are some who know that they will die soon, but they still strive desperately to keep what they cherish most. Not only our body is changeable, but also our mind. It changes more rapidly than the body, it changes every second, every minute according to the environment. We are cheerful a few minutes before and sad a few minutes later, laughing then crying, happiness then sorrow.

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Manjusri Bodhisattva obeyed the Buddha's command to call on Upasaka Vimalakirti to enquire after his health, there was a conversation about the "body". Manjusri asked

Vimalakirti: “What should a Bodhisattva say when comforting another Bodhisattva who falls ill?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should speak of the impermanence of the body but never of the abhorrence and relinquishment of the body. He should speak of the suffering body but never of the joy in nirvana. He should speak of egolessness in the body while teaching and guiding all living beings (in spite of the fact that they are fundamentally non-existent in the absolute state). He should speak of the voidness of the body but should never cling to the ultimate nirvana. He should speak of repentance of past sins but should avoid slipping into the past. Because of his own illness he should take pity on all those who are sick. Knowing that he has suffered during countless past aeons he should think of the welfare of all living beings. He should think of his past practice of good virtues to uphold (his determination for) right livelihood. Instead of worrying about troubles (klesa) he should give rise to zeal and devotion (in his practice of the Dharma). He should act like a king physician to cure others’ illnesses. Thus a Bodhisattva should comfort another sick Bodhisattva to make him happy.” Manjusri, a sick Bodhisattva should look into all things in this way. He should further meditate on his body which is impermanent, is subject to suffering and is non-existent and egoless; this is called wisdom. Although his body is sick he remains in (the realm of) birth and death for the benefit of all (living beings) without complaint; this is called expedient method (upaya). Manjusri! He should further meditate on the body which is inseparable from illness and on illness which is inherent in the body because sickness and the body are neither new nor old; this is called wisdom. The body, though ill, is not to be annihilated; this is the expedient method (for remaining in the world to work for salvation).

Regarding the point of view on the impurity of the Kaya and the Citta. Impurity is the nature of our bodies and minds. Impurity means the absence of an immaculate state of being, one that is neither holy nor beautiful. From the psychological and physiological standpoint, human beings are impure. This is not negative or pessimistic, but an objective perspective on human beings. If we examine the constituents of our bodies from the hair on our head to the blood, pus, phlegm, excrement, urine, the many bacteria dwelling in the intestines, and the many diseases present waiting for the opportunity to develop, we can

see clearly that our bodies are quite impure and subject to decay. Our bodies also create the motivation to pursue the satisfaction of our desires and passions. That is why the sutra regards the body as the place where misleads gather. Let us now consider our psychological state. Since we are unable to see the truth of impermanence, suffering, and the selfless nature of all things, our minds often become the victims of greed and hatred, and we act wrongly. So the sutra says, “The mind is the source of all confusion.”

Here is another point of view of the Buddhism on the Kaya is “It is difficult to be reborn as a human being”. Of all precious jewels, life is the greatest; if there is life, it is the priceless jewel. Thus, if you are able to maintain your livelihood, someday you will be able to rebuild your life. However, everything in life, if it has form characteristics, then, inevitably, one day it will be destroyed. A human life is the same way, if there is life, there must be death. Even though we say a hundred years, it passes by in a flash, like lightening streaking across the sky, like a flower’s blossom, like the image of the moon at the bottom of a lake, like a short breath, what is really eternal? Sincere Buddhists should always remember when a person is born, not a single dime is brought along; therefore, when death arrives, not a word will be taken either. A lifetime of work, putting the body through pain and torture in order to accumulate wealth and possessions, in the end everything is worthless and futile in the midst of birth, old age, sickness, and death. After death, all possessions are given to others in a most senseless and pitiful manner. At such time, there are not even a few good merits for the soul to rely and lean on for the next life. Therefore, such an individual will be condemned into the three evil paths immediately. Ancient sages taught: “A steel tree of a thousand years once again blossom, such a thing is still not bewildering; but once a human body has been lost, ten thousand reincarnations may not return.” Sincere Buddhists should always remember what the Buddha taught: “It is difficult to be reborn as a human being, it is difficult to encounter (meet or learn) the Buddha-dharma; now we have been reborn as a human being and encountered the Buddha-dharma, if we let the time passes by in vain we waste our scarce lifespan.”

V. The Truth and Living Philosophy of Buddhism:

The Noble Truths in Buddhism: The Four Noble Truths, A fundamental doctrine of Buddhism which clarifies the cause of suffering and the way to emancipation. Sakyamuni Buddha is said to have expounded the Four Noble Truths in the Deer Park in Sarnath during his first sermon after attaining Buddhahood. The Buddha organized these ideas into the Fourfold Truth as follows: “Life consists entirely of suffering; suffering has causes; the causes of suffering can be extinguished; and there exists a way to extinguish the cause.” The noble Eightfold Path or the eight right (correct) ways. The path leading to release from suffering, the goal of the third in the four noble truths. These are eight in the 37 bodhi ways to enlightenment. Practicing the Noble Eight-fold Path can bring about real advantages such as improvement of personal conditions. It is due to the elimination of all evil thoughts, words, and actions that we may commit in our daily life, and to the continuing practice of charitable work; improvement of living conditions. If everyone practiced this noble path, the world we are living now would be devoid of all miseries and sufferings caused by hatred, struggle, and war between men and men, countries and countries, or peoples and peoples. Peace would reign forever on earth; attainment of enlightenment or Bodhi Awareness. The Noble Eight-fold Path is the first basic condition for attaining Bodhi Consciousness that is untarnished while Alaya Consciousness is still defiled. The mind is immeasurable. It not only benefit immeasurable living beings, bringing immeasurable blessings to them, and producing immeasurable highly spiritual attainments in a world, in one life, but also spreads all over immeasurable worlds, in immeasurable future lives, shaping up immeasurable Buddha. The four immeasurables or infinite Buddha-states of mind. The four kinds of boundless mind, or four divine abodes. These states are called illimitables because they are to be radiated towards all living beings without limit or obstruction. They are also called brahmaviharas or divine abodes, or sublime states, because they are the mental dwellings of the brahma divinities in the Brahma-world.

In both forms of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana, the Buddha taught his disciples, especially lay-disciples to keep the Five Precepts. Although details are not given in the canonical texts, Buddhist teachers have offered many good interpretations about these five precepts. The

five basic commandments of Buddhism. The five basic prohibitions binding on all Buddhists, monks and laymen alike; however, these are especially for lay disciples. The observance of these five ensures rebirth in the human realm. One of the most important Truths in Buddhist Teachings is the truth of Cause and Effect. Cause is a primary force that produces an effect; effect is a result of that primary force. The law of causation governs everything in the universe without exception. Law of cause and effect or the relation between cause and effect in the sense of the Buddhist law of “Karma”. The law of causation (reality itself as cause and effect in momentary operation). Every action which is a cause will have a result or an effect. Likewise every resultant action or effect has its cause. The law of cause and effect is a fundamental concept within Buddhism governing all situations. The Moral Causation in Buddhism means that a deed, good or bad, or indifferent, brings its own result on the doer. Good people are happy and bad ones unhappy. But in most cases “happiness” is understood not in its moral or spiritual sense but in the sense of material prosperity, social position, or political influence. For instance, kingship is considered the reward of one’s having faithfully practiced the ten deeds of goodness. If one meets a tragic death, he is thought to have committed something bad in his past lives even when he might have spent a blameless life in the present one. causality is a natural law, mentioning the relationship between cause and effect. All things come into being not without cause, since if there is no cause, there is no effect and vice-versa. As so sow, so shall you reap. Cause and effect never conflict with each other. In other words, cause and effect are always consistent with each other. If we want to have beans, we must sow bean seeds. If we want to have oranges, we must sow orange seeds. If wild weeds are planted, then it’s unreasonable for one to hope to harvest edible fruits. One cause cannot have any effect. To produce an effect, it is necessary to have some specific conditions. For instance, a grain of rice cannot produce a rice plant without the presence of sunlight, soil, water, and care. In the cause there is the effect; in the effect there is the cause. From the current cause, we can see the future effect and from the present effect we discerned the past cause. The development process from cause to effect is sometimes quick, sometimes slow. Sometimes cause and effect are simultaneous like

that of beating a drum and hearing its sound. Sometimes cause and effect are three or four months away like that of the grain of rice. It takes about three to four, or five to six months from a rice seed to a young rice plant, then to a rice plant that can produce rice. Sometimes it takes about ten years for a cause to turn into an effect. For instance, from the time the schoolboy enters the elementary school to the time he graduates a four-year college, it takes him at least 14 years. Other causes may involve more time to produce effects, may be the whole life or two lives. By understanding and believing in the law of causality, Buddhists will not become superstitious, or alarmed, and rely passively on heaven authority. He knows that his life depends on his karmas. If he truly believes in such a causal mechanism, he strives to accomplish good deeds, which can reduce and alleviate the effect of his bad karmas. If he continues to live a good life, devoting his time and effort to practicing Buddhist teachings, he can eliminate all of his bad karmas. He knows that he is the only driving force of his success or failure, so he will be discouraged, put the blame on others, or rely on them. He will put more effort into performing his duties satisfactorily. Realizing the value of the law of causality, he always cares for what he thinks, tells or does in order to avoid bad karma.

The Truth of Karma or Actions is a twin of the truth of Cause and Effect. Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism. Everything that we encounter in this life, good or bad, sweet or bitter, is a result of what we did in the past or from what we have done recently in this life. Good karma produces happiness; bad karma produces pain and suffering. So, what is karma? Karma is a Sanskrit word, literally means a deed or an action and a reaction, the continuing process of cause and effect. Moral or any good or bad action (however, the word 'karma' is usually used in the sense of evil bent or mind resulting from past wrongful actions) taken while living which causes corresponding future retribution, either good or evil transmigration (action and reaction, the continuing process of cause and effect). Our present life is formed and created through our actions and thoughts in our previous lives. Our present life and circumstances are the product of our past thoughts and actions, and in the same way our deeds in this life will fashion our future mode of existence. A karma can be created by body, speech, or mind. There are good karma, evil karma, and

indifferent karma. All kinds of karma are accumulated by the Alayavijnana and Manas. Karma can be cultivated through religious practice (good), and uncultivated. For Sentient being has lived through innumerable reincarnations, each has boundless karma. Whatever kind of karma is, a result would be followed accordingly, sooner or later. No one can escape the result of his own karma. As mentioned above, karma is a product of body, speech and mind; while recompense is a product or result of karma. Karma is like a seed sown, and recompense is like a tree grown with fruits. When the body does good things, the mouth speaks good words, the mind thinks of good ideas, then the karma is a good seed. In the contrary, the karma is an evil seed. Thus the Buddha taught: “To lead a good life, you Buddhists should make every effort to control the activities of your body, speech, and mind. Do not let these activities hurt you and others.” Recompense corresponds Karma without any exception. Naturally, good seed will produce a healthy tree and delicious fruits, while bad seed gives worse tree and fruits. Therefore, unless we clearly understand and diligently cultivate the laws of cause and effect, or karma and result, we cannot control our lives and experience a life the way we wish to. According to the Buddha-Dharma, no gods, nor heavenly deities, nor demons can assert their powers on us, we are totally free to build our lives the way we wish. If we accumulate good karma, the result will surely be happy and joyous. No demons can harm us. In the contrary, if we create evil karma, no matter how much and earnestly we pray for help, the result will surely be bitter and painful, no gods can save us. When we act, either good or bad, we see our own actions, like an outsider who witnesses. The pictures of these actions will automatically imprint in our Alaya-vijnana (subconscious mind); the seed of these actions are sown there, and await for enough conditions to spring up its tree and fruits. Similarly, the effect in the alaya-vijnana (subconscious mind) of the one who has received our actions. The seed of either love or hate has been sown there, waiting for enough conditions to spring up its tree and fruits. The Buddha taught: “If someone give us something, but we refuse to accept. Naturally, that person will have to keep what they plan to give. This means our pocket is still empty.” Similarly, if we clearly understand that karmas or our own actions will be stored in the alaya-vijnana (subconscious mind) for us to carry over to the next lives,

we will surely refuse to store any more karma in the ‘subconscious mind’ pocket. When the ‘subconscious mind’ pocket is empty, there is nothing for us to carry over. That means we don’t have any result of either happiness or suffering. As a result, the cycle of birth and death comes to an end, the goal of liberation is reached.

The Living Philosophy of Buddhism: Someone says that the word religion is not appropriate to call Buddhism because Buddhism is not a religion, but a moral philosophy. For me, Buddhism is both a religion and philosophy of life based on the teachings set forth by Shakyamuni Buddha over 2500 years ago in India. Before going further we should briefly analyze the two words “Buddha” and “Philosophy”. First, the name Buddhism comes from the word “budhi” which means ‘to wake up’ and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of awakening. This philosophy has its origins in the experience of the man named Siddhartha Gotama, known as the Buddha, who was himself awakened at the age of 36. Buddhism is now older than 2,500 years old and has almost one third of the population of the world as its followers. Until a hundred years ago, Buddhism was mainly an Asian philosophy but increasingly it is gaining adherents in Europe and America. Secondly, the word philosophy comes from two words ‘philo’ which means ‘love’ and ‘sophia’ which means ‘wisdom’. So philosophy is the love of wisdom or love and wisdom, both meanings describing Buddhism perfectly. Buddhism teaches that we should try to develop our intellectual capacity to the fullest so that we can understand clearly. It also teaches us to develop loving kindness and compassion so that we can become (be like) a true friend to all beings. So Buddhism is a philosophy but not just a philosophy. It is the supreme philosophy. In the year 563 B.C. a baby was born into a royal family in northern India. He grew up in wealth and luxury but soon found that worldly comfort and security do not guarantee real happiness. He was deeply moved by the suffering he saw all around, so He resolved to find the key to human happiness. It couldn’t have been an easy thing for the Buddha to leave his family. He must have worried and hesitated for a long time before he finally left. There were two choices, dedicating himself to his family or dedicating himself to the whole world. In the end, his great compassion made him give himself to the whole world. And the whole world still benefits from his sacrifice. This was perhaps the most significant

sacrifice ever made. After careful considerations, when he was 29 he left his wife and child and his Royal Palace and set off to sit at the feet of the great religious teachers of the day to learn from them. They taught him much but none really knew the cause of human sufferings and afflictions and how it could be overcome. Eventually, after six years study and meditation he had an experience in which all ignorance fell away and he suddenly understood. From that day onwards, he was called the Buddha, the Awakened One. He lived for another 45 years in which time he travelled all over northern India teaching others what he had discovered. His compassion and patience were legendary and he made hundreds of thousands of followers. In his eightieth year, old and sick, but still happy and at peace, he finally passed away into nirvana. After the passing of Shakyamuni Buddha, his disciples recorded all of his teaching into scriptures called sutras. There is no one book that contains all the information the Buddha taught, but the total of more than 800 books that recorded a vast number of sutras, vinaya and abhidharma.

Truly speaking, Buddhism is a religion of the Truth. Even though the Buddha is dead but 2,500 years later his teachings still help and save a lot of people, his example still inspires people, his words still continue to change lives. Only a Buddha could have such power centuries after his death. The Buddha did not claim that he was a god, the child of god or even the messenger from a god. He was simply a man who perfected himself and taught that if we followed his example, we could perfect ourselves also. He never asked his followers to worship him as a god. In fact, He prohibited his followers to praise him as a god. He told his followers that he could not give favours or blessings to those who worship him with personal expectations or calamities to those who don't worship him. He asked his followers to respect him as students respect their teacher. He also reminded his followers to worship a statue of the Buddha means to remind ourselves to try to develop peace and love within ourselves. The perfume of incense reminds us of the pervading influence of virtue, the lamp reminds us of the light of knowledge and the followers which soon fade and die, remind us of impermanence. When we bow, we express our gratitude to the Buddha for what his teachings have given us. This is the core nature of Buddhist worship. A lot of people have

misunderstood the meaning of “worship” in Buddhism, even devout Buddhists. Buddhists do not believe that the Buddha is a god, so in no way they could possibly believe that a piece of wood or metal (statue) is a god. In Buddhism, the statue of the Buddha is used to symbolize human perfection. The statue of the Buddha also reminds us of the human dimension in Buddhist teaching, the fact that Buddhism is man-centered, not god-centered, that we must look inward (within) not outward (without) to find perfection and understanding. So in no way one can say that Buddhists worship god or idols. In fact, a long long time ago, when primitive man found himself in a dangerous and hostile situations, the fear of wild animals, of not being able to find enough food, of diseases, and of natural calamities or phenomena such as storms, hurricanes, volcanoes, thunder, and lightning, etc. He found no security in his surroundings and he had no ability to explain those phenomena, therefore, he created the idea of gods in order to give him comfort in good times, and courage him in times of danger and consolation when things went wrong. They believed that god arranged everything. Generations after generations, man continues to follow his ancestors in a so-called “faith in god” without any further thinkings. Some says they believe in god because god responds to their prayers when they feel fear or frustration. Some say they believe in god because their parents and grandparents believed in god. Some others say that they prefer to go to church than to temple because those who go to churches seem richer and more honorable than those who go to temples, and so on, and so on.

The Truth in Buddhist Teachings is always in accord with Life and Science at all times. The main teachings of the Buddha focus on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path. They are called “Noble” because they enoble one who understand them and they are called “Truths” because they correspond with reality. Buddhists neither believe in negative thoughts nor do they believe in pessimistic ideas. In the contrary, Buddhists believe in facts, irrefutable facts, facts that all know, that all have aimed to experience and that all are striving to reach. Those who believe in god or gods usually claim that before an individual is created, he does not exist, then he comes into being through the will of a god. He lives his life and then according to what he believes during his life, he either goes to eternal heaven or eternal

hell. Some believe that they come into being at conception due to natural causes, live and then die or cease to exist, that's it! Buddhism does not accept either of these concepts. According to the first explanation, if there exists a so-called almighty god who creates all beings with all his loving kindness and compassion, it is difficult to explain why so many people are born with the most dreadful deformities, or why so many people are born in poverty and hunger. It is nonsense and unjust for those who must fall into eternal hells because they do not believe and submit themselves to such a so-called almighty god. The second explanation is more reasonable, but it still leaves several unanswered questions. Yes, conception due to natural causes, but how can a phenomenon so amazingly complex as consciousness develop from the simple meeting of two cells, the egg and the sperm? Buddhism agrees on natural causes; however, it offers more satisfactory explanation of where man came from and where he is going after his death. When we die, the mind, with all the tendencies, preferences, abilities and characteristics that have been developed and conditioned in this life, re-establishes itself in a fertilized egg. Thus the individual grows, is reborn and develops a personality conditioned by the mental characteristics that have been carried over by the new environment. The personality will change and be modified by conscious effort and conditioning factors like education, parental influence and society and once again at death, re-establish itself in a new fertilized egg. This process of dying and being reborn will continue until the conditions that cause it, craving and ignorance, cease. When they do, instead of being reborn, the mind attains a state called Nirvana and this is the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

There is not a doubt that Buddhism was a religion of the truth and a living philosophy more than 26 centuries ago. It's still now a religion of the truth and a living philosophy in this very century (the twenty-first century). Buddhism is in accord with all the progresses of nowadays science and it will always be in accord with science at all times. Its basic teachings of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration, as well as the basic five precepts of not killing, not stealing, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying and not drinking alcohol and not doing drugs... are

always a torch that lights the darkness of the world. The message of peace and of love and happiness of Buddhism to living beings of all kinds is always the glorious truth for all human beings. Everyone can achieve the highest goal in Buddhism, no matter who is that person, clergyperson or lay person. However, the most important thing we all must remember is making an honest effort to follow the Buddha's teachings. The Buddha and his great disciples did not achieve their ultimate goal by accident. The Buddha and his disciples were once ordinary sentient beings like us. They were once afflicted by the impurities of the mind, attachment, aversion, and ignorance. They all became either Buddhas or Saints now, but for us, we are still creating and creating more and more unwholesome deeds and continuing going up and down in the cycle of birth and death? Devout Buddhists should listen to the Buddha's teachings, should purify our actions, words and mind to achieve true wisdom, the wisdom that help us understand the truth and to attain the ultimate goal of Buddhism. In other words, if we sincerely cultivate in accordance with the Buddha's teachings, one day not too far, everyone of us would be able to do good deeds, to avoid bad deeds; everyone of us would try our best to help others whenever possible and not to harm anyone, our mind would be mindful at all times. Thus there is no doubt that the Buddha's Dharma will benefit us with happiness and prosperity in this life and in the next. Eventually, it will lead us to the ultimate goal of liberation, the supreme bliss of Nirvana.

VI. Basic Faiths in Buddhism:

A basic belief in Buddhism is that the world is filled with sufferings and afflictions that are caused by the desires, angers and ignorance, pride, doubt, and wrong views. If the above mentioned troubles could be removed, then the sufferings and afflictions would naturally end. However, removing the above mentioned troubles does not mean that we chase after worldly pleasures, nor does it mean pessimism. According to the Buddha, most of daily life's troubles are caused by attachment. We get angry, we worry, we become greedy and complain bitterly. All these causes of unhappiness, tension, stubbornness and sadness are due to attachment. Thus if we want to end sufferings and afflictions, we must end attachment, no exception. However, to end

attachment is not easy for in order to end attachment we must conquest ourselves. Thus the Buddha taught in the Dharmapada Sutra: “The greatest of conquests is not the subjugation of others but of the self. Even though a man conquers thousands of men in battle, he who conquers himself is the greatest of conquerors.” In fact, the ultimate goal of a Buddhist is to look inward to find his own Buddha and not outward. Thus, the goal of a Buddhist is the development of self-dependency, the ability to set oneself free of sufferings and afflictions. Buddhism is strongly against a blind belief on other forces of salvation with no basic factors. The Buddha always reminded his disciples: “You should reject blind belief. Do not judge by hearsay, not on mere assertion, not on authority of so-called sacred scriptures. Do not hurriedly judge according to appearances, not believe anything because an ascetic or a teacher has said it.”

Buddhism never accept superstitions. With Buddhism, to believe religion without understanding it thoroughly, it's a blind faith, or it's not different from superstition. Even though understanding but understanding without finding to see if it's right or wrong, in accordance or not in accordance with truth, with reality, it's also a form of superstition or wrong belief. Believe that when you sow a seed of hot-pepper, you will have a hot-pepper tree and eventually you will reap hot-pepper fruit. However, even though you have already sown the seed of hot-pepper, but you realize that you don't like to eat fruit that is hot, you stop fertilizing and watering the hot-pepper tree, the tree will wither and die, and will not produce any fruit. Similarly, if you know an action is bad and unwholesome, you refuse to act, of course you will not receive any bad or unwholesome consequence. The Buddha refuses to believe that whatever happens to a person, either good or bad, is due to chance, fate or fortune. Everything that happens has a specific cause or causes and there must be some tight relationships between the cause and the effect. Those who want to believe in Buddhism should not rush to become a Buddhist with the wrong understanding or blind belief in Buddhism. You should take your time to do more researches, to ask questions, and to consider carefully before making your final decision. Religions that worship god have always considered reason and wisdom as the enemy of faith and dogma for them there exist only “believe” or “not believe” and nothing else.

In fact, if we accept that there exists a so-called almighty god, we cannot accept any of the findings of modern science; neither Darwin's science of biological evolution nor the theories of the nature and evolution of the universe coming from modern physics. They believe that a so-called creator god invented humankind and the universe all at once and that these three realms of god, man and universe, all are separate. However, modern science agrees with what the Buddha taught almost twenty-six centuries ago, and proves that the universe as one infinite process of change. Furthermore, the belief of salvation by god caused a serious danger to the whole world, especially from the first century to the end of the nineteenth century, for those who believe in the salvation of god believe that they must impose salvation on others. For this reason, Catholic countries sent their troops and priests all over the world to save others by force. And as a result, millions of people got killed or slaughtered and subjugated in the name of god. Buddhism is in contrast with other religions that believe in god. Buddhism teaches that one must develop wisdom. However, wisdom in Buddhism is not simply believing in what we are told or taught. True wisdom is to directly see and understand for ourselves. With this wisdom, people will have an open mind that listens to others' points of view rather than being closed-minded; people will also carefully examine facts that contradicts their belief rather than blindly believing. Sincere Buddhists never believe in the law of eternity. The Buddha accepts the law of impermanence or change and denies the existence of eternal substances. Matter and spirit are false abstractions that, in reality, are only changing factors or dharmas which are connected and which arise in functional dependence on each other. Thus, Buddhist faith means that the devotee accepts the Buddha as a Teacher and a Guide, His doctrine as way of life, and the Sangha community as the exemplars of this way of life. According to Buddhist point of view in faith, everyone is completely free to make his own choice in faith, no one has the right to interfere with other people's choice. Let's take a close look in the Buddha's teaching in the Kalama Sutra: "Nothing should be accepted merely on the ground of tradition or the authority of the teacher, or because it is the view of a large number of people, distinguished or otherwise. Everything should be weighed, examined and judged according to whether it is true or false in the light of one's

own true benefits. If considered wrong, they should not be rejected but left for further considerations.” Therefore, we see clearly that Buddhism is based on personal experience, rationalism, practice, morality, and insight. There is no need to propitiate gods or masters. There is no blind adherence to a faith, rigid dogmas, rituals, holy scriptures, or myths. The Buddha always confirmed his disciples that a salvation can only be gained by man and by man only during his life without the least help from a so-called god or gods.

Besides, Buddhism encourages us to try to recognize truth, not to blindly believe. The Buddha taught us to try to recognize truth, so we can understand our fear, to lessen our desires, to eliminate our selfishness, and to calmly and courageously accept things we cannot change. He replaced fear, not with blindly and irrational belief but with rational understanding which corresponds to the truth. Furthermore, Buddhists do not believe in god because there does not seem to be any concrete evidence to support this idea. Who can answer questions on god? Who is god? Is god masculine or feminine or neuter? Who can provide ample evidence with real, concrete, substantial or irrefutable facts to prove the existence of god? So far, no one can. Buddhists suspend judgment until such evidence is forthcoming. Besides, such belief in god is not necessary for a really meaningful and happy life. If you believe that god make your life meaningful and happy, so be it. But remember, more than two-thirds of the world do not believe in god and who can say that they don't have a meaningful and happy life? And who dare to say that those who believe in god, all have a meaningful and happy life? If you believe that god help you overcome disabilities and difficulties, so be it. But Buddhists do not accept the theological concept of salvation. In the contrary, based on the Buddha's own experience, he showed us that each human being had the capacity to purify the body and the mind, develop infinitive love and compassion and perfect understanding. He shifted the gods and heavens to the self-heart and encouraged us to find solution to our problems through self-understanding. Finally, such myths of god and creation concept has been superseded by scientific facts. Science has explained the origin of the universe completely without recourse to the god-idea.

Buddhism does not accept such practices as fortune telling, wearing magic charms for protection, fixing lucky sites for building, prophessing and fixing lucky days, and other superstitions as well, etc. All these practices are considered useless superstitions in Buddhism. However, because of greed, fear and ignorance, some Buddhists still try to stick to these superstitious practices. As soon as people understand the Buddha's teachings, they realize that a pure heart can protect them much better than empty words of fortune telling, or wearing nonsense charms, or ambiguous chanted words and they are no longer rely on such meaningless things. In the noble teachings of the Buddha, it is honesty, kindness, understanding, patience, generosity, forgiveness, loyalty and other good qualities that truly protect us and give us true happiness and prosperity. The Buddha was not concerned with such metaphysical issues which only confuse man and upset his mental equilibrium. Their solution surely will not free mankind from misery and ill. That was why the Buddha hesitated to answer such questions, and at times refrained from explaining those which were often wrongly formulated. The Buddha was a practical teacher. His sole aim was to explain in all its detail the problem of Dukkha, suffering, the universal fact of life, to make people feel its full force, and to convince them of it. He has definitely told us what he explains and what he does not explain. Even questions relating to the past and the future, the Buddha's answers were very clear: "Let be the past, let be the future, I will teach you the Dhamma." The Buddha always emphasized: "When this is, that comes to be. With the arising of this, that arises. When this is not, that does not come to be. With the cessation of this, that ceases." This in a nutshell is the Buddhist doctrine of conditionality or Dependent Arising (*paticca samuppada*). And this forms the foundation of the Four Noble Truths, the central conception of Buddhism.

Buddhism flatly refuses to discuss metaphysic issues. Buddhism considers human's liberation the priority. Once the Buddha was asked by a monk named Malunkyaputta, whether the world was eternal or not eternal, whether the world was finite or infinite, whether the soul was one thing and the body another, whether a Buddha existed after death or did not exist after death, and so on, and so on. The Buddha flatly refused to discuss such metaphysics, and instead gave him a parable. "It is as if a man had been wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with

poison, and yet he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know by what man I was wounded,' or 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know of what the arrow with which I was wounded was made.'" As a practical man he should of course get himself treated by the physician at once, without demanding these unnecessary details which would not help him in the least. This was the attitude of the Buddha toward the metaphysical speculation which do not in any way help improve ourselves in our cultivation. The Buddha would say, "Do not go by reasoning, nor by argument." Besides, Buddhism does not accept such practices as fortune telling, wearing magic charms for protection, fixing lucky sites for building, prophesying and fixing lucky days, etc. All these practices are considered useless superstitions in Buddhism. However, because of greed, fear and ignorance, some Buddhists still try to stick to these superstitious practices. As soon as people understand the Buddha's teachings, they realize that a pure heart can protect them much better than empty words of fortune telling, or wearing nonsense charms, or ambiguous chanted words and they are no longer rely on such meaningless things. In Buddhism, liberation is a motto which heightens (elevates) the unfettered spirit beyond the irrational wall of conventional restriction in which the faith of each individual must be chosen by that individual and by no one else. However, the Buddha always emphasized "Try to understand thoroughly before believing, even with my teachings, for acting freely and without knowing the real meaning of whatever you act sometimes you unintentionally destroy valuable traditions of yourselves. This is the same as a diamond being thrown into the dirt." The Buddha continued to advise: "When you do anything you should think of its consequence." Nowadays, more than 2,500 years after the Buddha's time, all scientists believe that every event that takes place in the world is subject to the law of cause and effect. In other words, cause is the activity and effect is the result of the activity. The Buddha described the world as an unending flux of becoming. All is changeable, continuous transformation, ceaseless mutation, and a moving stream. Everything exists from moment to moment. Everything is recurring rotation of coming into being and then passing out of existence. Everything is moving from formation to destruction, from birth to death. The matter of material forms are also a continuous

movement or change towards decay. This teaching of the impermanent nature of everything is one of the most important points of view of Buddhism. Nothing on earth partakes of the character of absolute reality. That is to say there will be no destruction of what is formed is impossible. Whatever is subject to origination is subject to destruction. Change is the very constituent of reality. In daily life, things move and change between extremes and contrasts, i.e., rise and fall, success and failure, gain and loss, honor and contempt, praise and blame, and so on. No one can be sure that a “rise” does not follow with a “fall”, a success does not follow with a failure, a gain with a loss, an honor with a contempt, and a praise with a blame. To thoroughly understand this rule of change or impermanence, Buddhists are no longer dominated by happiness, sorrow, delight, despair, disappointment, satisfaction, self-confidence and fear.

Buddhists believe that the Buddha Nature has no limit and not be confined in the East, West, South or North. In the noble teachings of the Buddha, it is honesty, kindness, understanding, patience, generosity, forgiveness, loyalty and other good qualities that truly protect us and give us true happiness and prosperity. A man who possesses the above mentioned characteristics, that man is travelling on the Path to the Buddha’s Land. It is true that Buddhahood cannot be found outside. It has no limit and not be confined in the East, West, South or North. It is in fact, in every man’s mind. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Once upon a time, there was a father who was very old and death was hovering on him. He had a little son and wanted him to be well off in the future. He hid a very valuable diamond between the hems of his son’s shirt and then gave him some advice. After his father’s passing away, the son forgot completely about the hidden diamond. He became poor, wandering here and there to beg for help, met with nothing but refusal. One day, he suddenly remembered about the hidden treasure left by his father, from thence he became a rich man and no longer depended on others for help.”

Buddhists believe that “Man is the most sacred and superior animal” who can achieve Buddhahood. Most of us are agreed to the fact that among all living beings, human beings are unique beings who can understand what we are and what we should be. Compared to other beings, man is most complete and superior not only in the mentality

and thinking, but also in the ability of organization of social life. Human beings' life cannot be substituted nor repeated nor determined by someone else. Once we are born in this world, we have to live our own life, a meaningful and worth living life. Thus the ancient said: "Man is the most sacred and superior animal." And the Buddha taught in the Upasaka Sutra: "In all beings, man is endowed with all necessary faculties, intelligence. Besides man's conditions are not too miserable as those beings in hell, not too much pleasure as those beings in heaven. And above all, man's mind is not so ignorant as that of the animals." So man has the ability to build and improve his own life to the degree of perfection.

VII. Ideal of Buddhism:

The Buddha founded Buddhism, not only to save sentient beings but also to eliminate the distinction between classes in India at that time. To the Buddha, the ideal of Buddhism would first give everyone an equal opportunity in daily life as well as in cultivation. Against the asserted superiority of the Aryan race and the appellation of "Arya" or "Non-Aryan" given to the aborigines of some earlier immigrants on the Indian continent, the Buddha often argued that the word Arya meant noble and we ought not call a race noble or ignoble for there will be some ignoble people among the so-called Arya and at the same time there will be some noble people among the so-called Anarya. When we say noble or ignoble we should be speaking of an individual and not a race as a whole. It is a question of human dignity, knowledge or wisdom, not of birth or caste. Thus the ideal of Buddhism is to create a noble personage in the sense of a noble life. The ideal set forth by the Buddha was very clear. His ideal is that as a man, he tries to teach other men, noble or ignoble, to be perfect men, i.e., men of perfect enlightenment. Even though the ideal of Buddhism is being compounded of the two contradictory forces of wisdom and compassion. The Buddha tries to teach his disciples: In the wisdom, see no persons; in the compassion resolve to save beings. Their ability to combine these contradictory attitudes is the source of their greatness, and of their ability to save themselves and others. Ideal of Buddhism in mahayana concept that one should strive to perform various acts of

merits and cultivate wisdom in order to save suffering beings and attain enlightenment.

VIII.The Concept of Buddha's Statues and Images In Buddhism:

In Buddhism, image is one of the needs to remember the Buddha. It is impossible to express the Buddha in physical form because he is nothing but the attributes of awakening, enlightening, wisdom, compassion, loving-kindness, joy, equanimity, etc. However, if we don't express Him in a perfect statue, what else can we do with these symbols? We should express these symbols in the most ideal human forms, namely in the image of the Buddha when He acquired the ultimate enlightenment. So the Buddha's image should be in the attitude of calmness and indifference to pleasure and pain. People often feel the need to remember the things they love and respect in a form that they can see. For instance, a photograph is kept in order to remember a loved one. The national flag is a reminder of the loyalty people feel towards their country. The photograph and national flag are examples of symbols in remembrance of the qualities of the people or things that are being represented. They form the focal point of one's feelings of love, respect and loyalty. In the same way, the shrine found in Buddhist homes or monasteries is a focal point of Buddhist observances. At the center of the shrine, there is usually an image of the Buddha. The image may be made of a variety of materials such as marble, gold, wood or clay. The image is a symbol that helps to remember the noble qualities of the Buddha. The shrine may also have such objects as a volume of Buddhist scripture to represent the Dharma. Some shrines may display other items such as images, pictures or photographs of Buddhist monks and masters to represent the Sangha. When Buddhists stand before a shrine, the objects they see on it help to remind them of the qualities that are found in the Buddha and the Sangha. This inspires them to work towards cultivating these qualities in themselves.

When talking about Holy statues, Buddhists want to imply the statues of the Buddha. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, none of the earlier sculptures of sanchi and Barhut represent the Buddha in human figure. It is

remarkable to us that the principle events of the Buddha's life have been fully given in sculpture without a figure of the hero. How was that possible? The Buddha at birth is represented by a full blooming lotus; the Buddha in Enlightenment by the Bodhi tree with a rail around it; the Buddha in his first preaching by a wheel, above which a tri-ratna mark is sometimes added; the Buddha in his begging round, or mendicancy, by a bowl; and the like. If suggestion be a means of true art, the early Buddhist artists understood it perfectly and utilized the idea skilfully for practical purposes. However, all this does not necessarily mean that the elders did not represent the Buddha at all during his lifetime, for there is a legend which tells of their making an image for the purpose of offering veneration during the Buddha's absence. They were formalistic and realistic, and so if the Buddha was actually before them, they had a right to depict him in painting or sculpture. Now that he had passed into Nirvana, however, it was improper to represent the one who no longer really lived. It was after a considerable development of the Gandhara art that the southern school of Buddhism began to have images of Buddha. This was believed at about the same time when the Buddha's teachings were committed to writing, i.e., 80 B.C. The elders of idealistic and free-thinking tendencies, whom we might regard as the forerunners of the Mahayana, would not hold any meetings for the rehearsal of the Buddha's sermons, nor would they enlarge upon their Vinaya rules beyond what was laid down by the Buddha himself. They would commit those sacred words to memory or to writing as they pleased. They did not hesitate in using their talents in painting or sculpture to depict the Buddha's image according to their own ideal of beauty and perfection, as they did in the Gandhara art. The trend of the free-thinking mind can also be seen in the metaphysical treatises of the Optionalists (Vaibhasikas), in which several opinions about dharmas or higher dharmas (abhidharmas) are gathered together and some optional ones have been selected and recommended for study. Though the Vaishasika School belonged to the Hinayana, it already betrayed a tendency toward the free-thinking school. Such free-thinking people would be bold in exegesis, erudition, annotation, or in forming and expressing opinion. This, however, does not mean that they departed from the original teachings of the Buddha. Besides the two great

statues of the Buddha in Afghanistan which were destroyed by the Taliban in 2002, there are still several big Buddha statues in the world, among them are the two most famous statues in Japan: 1) a huge statue of Varocana housed in the Todaiji Temple in Nara, commissioned (ủy thác) by emperor Shomu (724-748), it was consecrated (dâng cúng) in 751; and 2) an image of Amitabha Buddha, which was financed by donations gathered by Joko and constructed in 1252. It was originally housed in Kotokuin Temple, but the building was destroyed by a tidal wave in 1495. The image was left intact, but an earthquake in 1923 damaged its base. Extensive repair work was conducted on it in 1960-1961.

IX. The concept of the First Cause in Buddhism:

If one posits a first cause, one is justified in asking for the cause of that “First Cause”, for nothing can escape the law of “condition and cause” which is patent in the world to all but those who will not see. However, a man who attributes beings and events to an omnipotent Creator-God would emphatically say: “It is God’s will, it is sacrilege to question the Authority.” Does not this God-idea stifle the human liberty to investigate, to analyze, to scrutinize, to see what is beyond this naked eye, and so retards insight. It is important to understand that craving is not regarded as the First Cause; for according to Buddhism, there is not First Cause, but beginningless causes and effects and nothing else ruling the universe. Things are neither due to one single cause nor are they causeless, but according to the formula of Dependent Arising, things are multiple caused. Craving, like all other things, physical or mental, is also conditioned, interdependent and relative. It is neither a beginning nor an end in itself. Though craving is cited as the proximate cause of suffering, it is not independent, but interdependent. Dependent on feeling or sensation arises craving, feeling dependent on contact and so forth.

Externalists believe that there exists a so-called “God” who creates all creatures and has the almighty power to punish and reward them. In other words, everything in this world whether good or bad, lucky or unlucky, happy or sad, all come from the power of a supreme Creator, the only Ruler to have the power of reward and punishment. On the contrary, according to Buddhism, everything arises from conditions and

not being spontaneous and self-contained has no separate and independent nature. Also according to Buddhism, human beings and all living things are self-created or self-creating. The universe is not homocentric; it is a co-creation of all beings. Buddhism does not believe that all things came from one cause, but holds that everything is inevitably created out of more than two causes. The creations or becomings of the antecedent causes continue in time-series, past, present and future, like a chain. This chain is divided into twelve divisions and is called the Twelve Divisioned Cycle of Causation and Becomings. Since these divisions are interdependent, the process is called Dependent Production or Chain of causation. The formula of this theory is as follows: From the existence of this, that becomes; from the happening of this, that happens. From the non-existence of this, that does not become; from the non-happening of this, that does not happen.

X. The Concept of a Soul in Buddhism:

In Buddhist thought, there is no so-called “Soul”. Birth precedes death, and death also precedes birth, so that the pair follow each other in bewildering succession. There is no so-called “Soul”, “Self”, or “Fixed entity” that passes from birth to birth. Though man comprises a psycho-physical unit of mind and matter, the “psyche” or “mind” is not a soul or self, in the sense of an enduring entity, something ready-made and permanent. It is a force, a dynamic continuum capable of storing up memories not only of this life, but also of past lives. The mind or psyche is no more a fixed entity. The Buddha stressed that the so-called “being” or “individual” is nothing but a combination of physical and mental forces, or energies, a change with continuity. Someone may ask, if there is no transmigrating permanent soul or self to reincarnate, then what is it that reborn? According to Buddhism, there is no permanent substance of the nature of Self or Soul that reincarnates or transmigrates. It is impossible to conceive of anything that continues without change. All is in a state of flux. What we call life here is the functioning of the five aggregates of grasping, or the functioning of mind and body which are only energies or forces. They are never the same for two consecutive moments, and in the conflux of mind and body we do not see anything permanent. The grown-up man is neither the child nor quite a different person; there is only a relationship of

continuity. The conflux of mind and body or mental and physical energy is not lost at death, for no force or energy is ever lost. It undergoes change. It resets, reforms in new conditions.

With regard to the psychological question, Buddhism does not admit the existence of a soul that is real and immortal. Anatma or non-self refers to all things (sarva-dharma), organic and inorganic. In the case of human beings, Buddhism believes that there will accordingly to be no soul, no real self that is immortal. While in the case of things in general, there will be no noumenon, no essence which is unchangeable. Because there is no real self spatially, i.e., no substance, there will be no permanent, i.e., no duration. Therefore, no bliss, is to be found in the world. In Buddhism, the term "heart" for the mind, soul or spirit. Ancient people believed that the 'heart' is in the chest area. In Zen, it means either the mind of a person in the sense of all his powers of consciousness, mind, heart and spirit, or else absolutely reality, the mind beyond the distinction between mind and matter. It is for the sake of giving practitioners an easier understanding of Mind, Buddhist teachers usually divide the mind into aspects or layers, but to Zen, Mind is one great Whole, without parts or divisions. The manifesting, illuminating, and nonsubstantial characteristics of Mind exist simultaneously and constantly, inseparable and indivisible in their totality. "Mind" is also another name for the Alaya-vijnana. Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible. We are aware of our thoughts and feelings and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy. The mind is the root of all dharmas. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: "All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas." The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed.

XI. Education in Buddhism:

The goal of any Buddhist cultivator is to achieve self-enlightening (examine with one's own intelligence, and not depending upon another), enlightening or awakening of others, then achieve the final accomplishment, that is to become a Buddha. Devout Buddhists should always remember that the goal of Buddhist education is to help sentient

beings become Buddhas, or at least become real Buddhists, and not aiming at socializing human beings as worldly people. Because Buddhism is a religion of returning to self (looking inward), the goal of its education must be inward and not outward for appearances and matters. As mentioned above, the main causes of sufferings and afflictions are greed, anger, hatred, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and so on... and the ultimate goal of Buddhism is to help sentient beings, especially, human beings to eliminate these troubles so that if we are not able to become a Buddha, at least we can become a real Buddhist. Therefore, the goal of Buddhist education is freeing cultivators from being led by these troubles so that they could see Reality and the Truth as it is. The Buddha taught that man of this present moment is the result of millions and millions of his past thoughts and actions, and not ready-made as a cake or a piece of candy. Man's character is determined by his own thinking, thus man is not perfect by nature. In order to become perfect, man has to educate and train himself. Among other sentient beings, human beings have the ability to think and to reason, and the intelligence to educate and build their life a better one. However, in order to achieve a better or a perfect life, Buddhist or non-Buddhist has no other ways but educating himself with the five precepts (not killing, not stealing, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying and not drinking alcohol or doing drugs) and the eightfold noble path (right view, right thinking, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration)... that is to say education in morality. Besides, the core of Buddhism is the law of "Cause and Effect" so Buddhist education cannot miss this law. Devout Buddhists should always remember that "If this is, that comes to be; from the arising of this, that arises. If this is not, that does not come to be; from the ceasing of this, that ceases." Buddhist education helps point out to everybody that the law of "Cause and Effect" is for everybody, from normal people to saints. If you sow good deeds, you'll reap good results. In the contrary, if you sow bad deeds, you'll reap bad results without any exception. Therefore, according to the Buddhist education, whichever causes increases of greed, anger, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying... is bad and we should stay away from; and whichever helps decreasing

or stopping the above mentioned troubles is good and we should pursue. Whatever we say, devout Buddhists should always remember that Buddhism is not a mere system of doctrine, it is a way of life. If we educate ourselves the way the Buddha taught, we would surely have a peaceful, mindful and happy life.

Buddhists always need two ways of education. The first way is secular education and the second one is religious education. These two ways are considered as the two wings for a bird. Without two wings, no bird can fly. Similarly, without these two ways of education, Buddhists would lead to a poor and obscure life, not only in the secular world but also in the spiritual life. Secular education will help us with an appropriate profession to support our family while religious education will help us lead a true happy life. As a matter of fact, religious education is extremely necessary, for it teaches us how to think and act in order to be good and happy. Besides, it also helps us love and understand the meaning of life so that we are able to adjust ourselves to its laws in any circumstances. After experiencing six years in ascetic practices, the Buddha advised his followers to follow the middle path. He taught: “Buddhists should always make best use of their secular life while cultivating the path of true happiness in this world and hereafter.”

XII. Buddhism and Ancestor Worship:

In Buddhism, the debt to our ancestors, parents and teachers is one of the four great debts. Parents and teachers are those who give us lives and who teach us to step into the correct way. Our responsibilities are not limited in paying them respect, serve them, but we also should try to cultivate and to support them to soon liberate. According to our old customs, Buddhists worship ancestors to show our appreciations. According to Buddhism, worshiping ancestors, with the hope of relieving their karma, is not a bad custom. Buddhists diligently cultivate is the best way to show our appreciations to our ancestors. However, some Buddhists misunderstand about Buddhism and consider the worshipping the most important issue in Buddhism. Vietnamese people have long believed in the existence of the soul or consciousness after death. Ancestors are thought to watch over and to support their living descendants. Thus, living descendants always worship their

ancestors with ultimate respect. Vietnamese people celebrate death anniversary, not only for their deceased parents, but also for their grand-parents, great grand-parents, and great-great grand-parents. They can celebrate with a party or with the simplest ancestral ritual of burning incense and bowing before their ancestors' altars or before their ancestors' portraits. In some families, beside placing offerings of food and drink in front of the altar, they also have the custom to burn paper money for their ancestors. In addition, in some areas in Central Vietnam, there still exist some Clan Temples which worship ancestors of the same surnames. It is no doubt that ancestor worship has helped our people maintain unity and continuity (maintaining generations). Buddhism always promotes ancestor worship by the practice of chanting sutras for the dead, hoping to relieve their karma.

XIII. Buddhism and Beauty:

Many people, especially people from the western world, have a misconception of Buddhism. They suggest that Buddhism is a religion of pessimism. They suggest that Buddhism stresses on impermanence, suffering and egolessness so there is no so-called "Beauty" in Buddhism. In fact, the Buddha never criticized "Beauty" in any of his lectures. A Buddhist never avoids objects of beauty, nor does he run away from these things. He only refrains from making them the basis for strong and individual likes and dislikes. He always keeps in mind the Buddha's Teaching: "Whatever there is in the world, pleasant and lovable, we have a tendency to attach to them, and we develop a dislike towards their opposites." Besides, Buddhism believes in Anitya, which is the state of not being permanent, of lasting or existing only for a short time, of changing continually. Physical changes operating from the state of formation, to that of development, decay and disintegration are exact manifestations of the law of transformation. All things in the universe, from the small grain of sand, the human body, to the big one such as the earth, moon and sun are governed by the above law, and as such, must come through these four periods: birth, growth, changes and death; change from young to old, from beautiful to ugly, and so on. And this process of changes characterizes impermanence, and this change happens in every second, if we don't want to say in every ksana (an instance as a measure of a very short time compared to a second).

Keep this in mind, the Buddhist recognizes beauty where the senses can perceive it. But in beauty he also sees its own change and destruction. He always remember what the Buddha said with regard to all component things, that they come into being, undergo change and are destroyed. Therefore the wise man acquires a great depth of vision. His admiration for the beauty is not coloured by a greed for acquisition and possession. To Buddhists, the shape or color of the face doesn't matter because it's only temporary with time. A young, beautiful face of today may someday become an old ugly face with wrinkles and dots all over. To Buddhists, no matter how beautiful or ugly their face may be, they focus on cultivating love, that love will give them an inward eternal charm, a real beauty to all Buddhists.

XIV. Is Buddhism Pessimism or Optimism?:

Pessimism means to hate, to distrust mankind, or to avoid human society, or to be weary of the world. Sometimes, pessimism also means to renounce the world. "Sukha" is a main factor in Buddhist cultivation, meaning pleasant mental feeling. It is identical with "joy" or "bliss." Sukha is identical with Somanassa. However, the joy in Buddhism is not the pleasant bodily feeling that accompanies wholesome-resultant body-consciousness. On the contrary, this "Sukha" rendered as bliss, is born detachment from sensual pleasures; it is therefore explained as unworldly or spiritual happiness (niramisasukha). There are some people who regard this life as a life of suffering or pessimists may be tolerated as long as they are simply feeling dissatisfied with this life, but when they begin to give up this life as hopeless and try to escape to a better life by practicing austerities or self-mortifications, then they are to be abhorred. Some people believe that Buddhism is pessimistic because its significant viewpoint on the idea that there is nothing but hardship in this world, even pleasures end in hardship. It is totally wrong thinking that way. Buddhism believes that in this present life, there are both pleasures and hardships. He who regards life as entirely pleasure will suffer when the so-called "happiness" ceases to exist. The Buddha believes that happiness and sufferings intertwine in our daily life. If one is ignorant of the fact that pleasures can cause hardships, one will be disappointed when that fact presents itself. Thus the Buddha teaches that one should regard hardship as hardship,

accepting it as a fact and finding way to oppose it. Hence his emphasis on perserverance, fortitude, and forbearance, the latter being one of the six Perfections. In short, according to the Buddhist view, there are both pleasures and hardships in life, but one must not be discouraged when hardship comes, or lose oneself in rapture of joy when pleasure comes. Both pleasures and hardships must be taken alike with caution for we know that pleasures end in hardship. From this understanding, sincere Buddhists will be determined to cultivate diligently to turn both worldly pleasures and hardships to an eternally transcendental joy. It is to say that we are not bound to both worldly pleasures and hardships at all times. They come and go naturally. We are always live a life without worries, without afflictions because we know for sure that everything will pass. The Buddhist point of view on both optimism and pessimism is very clear: Buddhism is not optimistic nor pessimistic on human life. Two extremes of both optimism and pessimism are prevented by the moderate doctrine of Buddhism.

XV. Is Buddhism A Religion or A Philosophy?:

Is Buddhism a philosophy? The word philosophy comes from two words 'philo' which means 'love' and 'sophia' which means 'wisdom'. So philosophy is the love of wisdom or love and wisdom, both meanings describing Buddhism perfectly. Buddhism teaches that we should try to develop our intellectual capacity to the fullest so that we can understand clearly. It also teaches us to develop loving kindness and compassion so that we can become (be like) a true friend to all beings. So Buddhism is a philosophy but not just a philosophy. It is the supreme philosophy. As to whether Buddhism is a philosophy, that depends upon the definition of the word; and whether it is possible to give the definition that will cover all existing systems of philosophical thought is doubtful. Etymologically philosophy means to love (Gr. *Philein*) wisdom (*sophia*). Philosophy has been both the seeking of wisdom and the wisdom sought. In Indian thought, philosophy should be to find out the ultimate truth. Buddhism also advocates the search for truth. But it is no mere speculative reasoning, a theoretical structure, a mere acquiring and storing of knowledge. The Buddha emphasizes the practical aspect of his teaching, the application of knowledge to life, looking into life and not merely at it. For the

Buddha, the entire teaching is just the understanding of the unsatisfactory nature of all phenomenal existence and the cultivation of the path leading away from this unsatisfactoriness.

Nowadays, a majority of scholars believe that Buddhism is a living philosophy that denies superstitions. Buddhism means wisdom, therefore, Buddhism never accept superstitions (venerating the head of tiger, and buffalo, the snake and centipede deities, the Lares, consulting fortuneteller, reading the horoscope, etc.); however, superstitious beliefs and rituals are adopted to decorate a religion in order to attract the multitude. But after some time, the creeper which is planted to decorate the shrine outgrows and outshines the shrine, with the result that religious tenets are relegated to be the background and superstitious beliefs and rituals become predominant. The Buddha taught us to try to understand our fear, to lessen our desires and to calmly and courageously accept things we cannot change. He replaced fear, not with blindly and irrational belief but with rational understanding which corresponds to the truth. Furthermore, Buddhists do not believe in god because there does not seem to be any concrete evidence to support this idea. Who can answer questions on god? Who is god? Is god masculine or feminine or neuter? Who can provide ample evidence with real, concrete, substantial or irrefutable facts to prove the existence of god? So far, no one can. Buddhists suspend judgment until such evidence is forthcoming. Besides, such belief in god is not necessary for a really meaningful and happy life. If you believe that god make your life meaningful and happy, so be it. But remember, more than two-thirds of the world do not believe in god and who can say that they don't have a meaningful and happy life? And who dare to say that those who believe in god, all have a meaningful and happy life? If you believe that god help you overcome disabilities and difficulties, so be it. But Buddhists do not accept the theological concept of salvation. In the contrary, based on the Buddha's own experience, he showed us that each human being had the capacity to purify the body and the mind, develop infinitive love and compassion and perfect understanding. He shifted the gods and heavens to the self-heart and encouraged us to find solution to our problems through self-understanding. Finally, such myths of god and creation concept has been superseded by scientific facts. Science has explained the origin of

the universe completely without recourse to the god-idea. In Buddhism, faith in supernatural power is only a need to sooth the people in distressed situations. In extremely distressed situations, people have a tendency to turn to faith, or exterior power for support, consolation and blessing. Buddhism, on the contrary, is indifferent metaphysical and supernatural questions for Buddhism maintains and upholds the ability and intellectual capacity of man. In Buddhism, man must not be passive and dependent on others. In Buddhism, man has his own responsibility to free himself. Thus the Buddha taught in the Nirvana Sutra: "You must light the torch for yourselves. The Buddha is one who leads the way. The goal of liberation can be reached only by you yourselves and nobody else." Buddhists never believe in the belief which is not based on reason or fact but on association of imaginations or magics. If you can show us (Buddhists) a careful study of the existence of a god written by a scientist, we will concede that belief in god is not fabulous. But we (Buddhists) have never heard of any research on god, and scientists simply wouldn't bother to study such impossible things, so I say there is no evidence for the existence of god. A long long time ago, when people had no knowledge of science, people were unable to explain the origin of the universe, so they turned to god as a creator of the universe, but in the twenty first century, scientists have explained very clearly on the origin of the universe without recourse to the god-idea. Thus we must see that our inability to explain the origin of the universe does not prove the existence of god or gods. Thus the Buddha always reminded his disciples: "Do not rush to believe in anything without examining carefully, even my teachings." Besides, the Buddha advised his disciples not to exercise psychic power in order to convert people with blind faith. He was referring to the miraculous power to walk on water, to exercise spirits, raise the dead and perform the so-called supernatural practices. He was also referring to the miracles of prophesy such as thought-reading, sooth-saying, fortune-telling, and so on. When people with blind faith see the performance of such powers, their faith deepens; however, this belief is not true belief because it does not come from their own realization of the truth, but due to the blind faith. With the Buddha, the miracle of realization is a real miracle. When a person knows that he is greedy, angry, ignorant, pride of his own self, and full of wrong views, etc, and he is willing to end these

wrong and unwholesome actions, he really realizes a miracle for his own life. When a murderer, a thief, a terrorist, a drunkard or an adulterer is made to realize that what he had been doing is wrong and gives up his bad, immoral and harmful way of life, this change can be regarded as a real miracle. According to Buddhism, there exists a real miracle when we clearly see life is no more than a process from coming into being, to formation, changing and destruction with full of sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, in no way we can avoid both the process formation and destruction and sufferings and afflictions. The more we try to avoid our problems or the more we try not to think about our problems, the more we accumulate problems inside ourselves. When we clearly understand the true nature of sufferings and afflictions, we'll be able to deal with them more effectively. Also according to Buddhist points of view, all the causes of sufferings and afflictions are ignorance, craving and hatred. These are the "three poisons of the mind". Only by generating insight into the true nature of reality, we may be able to eliminate ignorance, able to achieve a completely purified state of mind, able to see right from wrong, good from bad, as well as other harmful anger and hatred in our daily life. Of course, each one of us wishes to be free from sufferings and afflictions, for these are the first factors for a happy life. However, as long as we still rely on someone else to save us by eliminating the problems for us, we still fear, avoid and try not to engage to confront our own problems, and therefore, problems never voluntarily leave us. According to Buddhist points of view, sufferings and afflictions may be arisen as a result of our past karma. Understand this concept, we will never try to blame our problems on others. There is no reason for us to be too strict on ourselves, as human beings, we are all imperfect. Every one of us has at least once done some thing wrong. The important thing is whether or not we recognize and admit our wrong-doings that we have done in the past. If we admit that we're mistaken, there will be room for correction.

Besides, Buddhism is also a philosophy that teaches people to live a happy life. It's also a religion that teaches people to end the cycle of birth and death. The main teachings of the Buddha focus on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path. They are called "Noble" because they enoble one who understand them and they are called

“Truths” because they correspond with reality. Buddhists neither believe in negative thoughts nor do they believe in pessimistic ideas. In the contrary, Buddhists believe in facts, irrefutable facts, facts that all know, that all have aimed to experience and that all are striving to reach. Those who believe in god or gods usually claim that before an individual is created, he does not exist, then he comes into being through the will of a god. He lives his life and then according to what he believes during his life, he either goes to eternal heaven or eternal hell. Some believe that they come into being at conception due to natural causes, live and then die or cease to exist, that’s it! Buddhism does not accept either of these concepts. According to the first explanation, if there exists a so-called almighty god who creates all beings with all his loving kindness and compassion, it is difficult to explain why so many people are born with the most dreadful deformities, or why so many people are born in poverty and hunger. It is nonsense and unjust for those who must fall into eternal hells because they do not believe and submit themselves to such a so-called almighty god. The second explanation is more reasonable, but it still leaves several unanswered questions. Yes, conception due to natural causes, but how can a phenomenon so amazingly complex as consciousness develop from the simple meeting of two cells, the egg and the sperm? Buddhism agrees on natural causes; however, it offers more satisfactory explanation of where man came from and where he is going after his death. When we die, the mind, with all the tendencies, preferences, abilities and characteristics that have been developed and conditioned in this life, re-establishes itself in a fertilized egg. Thus the individual grows, is reborn and develops a personality conditioned by the mental characteristics that have been carried over by the new environment. The personality will change and be modified by conscious effort and conditioning factors like education, parental influence and society and once again at death, re-establish itself in a new fertilized egg. This process of dying and being reborn will continue until the conditions that cause it, craving and ignorance, cease. When they do, instead of being reborn, the mind attains a state called Nirvana and this is the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

Buddhism is a “Way of Life” with complete moral, spiritual and intellectual training leading to a complete freedom of mind. According

to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha’s Ancient Path,” some prefer to call the teaching of the Buddha a religion, others call it a philosophy, still others think of it as both religion and philosophy. It may, however, be more correct to call it a “Way of Life”. But that does not mean that Buddhism is nothing more than an ethical code. Far from it, it is a way of moral, spiritual and intellectual training leading to a complete freedom of mind. The Buddha himself called his teaching “Dhamma-Vinaya”, the Doctrine and the Discipline. But Buddhism, in the strictest sense of the word, can not be called a religion, for if by religion is meant “action of conduct indicating belief in, reverence for, and desire to please, a divine ruling power; the exercise or practice of rites or observances implying this...; recognition on the part of man of some higher unseen power as having control of his destiny, and as being entitled to obedience, reverence, and worship.” Buddhism certainly is not such a religion. In Buddhist thought, there is no awareness or conviction of the existence of a Creator of any form who rewards and punishes the good and ill deeds of the creatures of his creation. A Buddhist takes refuge in the Buddha, but not in the hope that he will be saved by the Master. There is no such guarantee, the Buddha is only a teacher who points out the way and guides the followers to their individual deliverance.

In short, Buddhism includes Religion, Philosophy, Morality, and Ethics. A religion, especially an advanced religion like Buddhism, includes philosophy, morality, and ethics. Indeed, Buddhism can be said to consist almost entirely of the teaching of philosophy and morality. However, when we make a profound study of the teaching, we find there is something beyond this that touches our hearts directly. It is like a light that envelops us warmly and shines brightly, illuminating our way. It is something that enlivens us and allows us to develop fully according to our true potential. In other words, Buddhism is the teaching within the minds of all living beings. We can call all the truth, the Buddha’s teaching or it can be called no teaching at all because it’s the truth, it goes beyond human words. However, sincere Buddhists should always remember that the mind, the Buddha, and living beings are one and undifferentiated. Thus, no matter what religion you belong to, as long as you are a living being, Buddhism counts you as part of it for all living beings have the Buddha-nature. To

all Buddhists, all labels are not important for human deliverance. Though we call the teaching of the Buddha “Buddhism”, thus including it among the “isms” and “ologies”, it does not really matter what we label it. Call it religion, philosophy, Buddhism, or by any other name you like. These labels are of little significance to one who goes in search of truth and deliverance. To the Buddha, man is a supreme being, thus, he taught: “Be your own torch and your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person.” This was the Buddha’s truthful word. He also said: “All realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one’s own experience. Man is the master of his destiny, since he can make his life better or worse. If he tries his best to cultivate, he can become a Buddha”.

XVI. Buddhism and Science:

Even though Buddhism was founded more than twenty-five centuries ago, the Truth in Buddhist Teachings is always in accord With Life and Science at all times. The main teachings of the Buddha focus on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path. They are called “Noble” because they enoble one who understand them and they are called “Truths” because they correspond with reality. Buddhists neither believe in negative thoughts nor do they believe in pessimistic ideas. In the contrary, Buddhists believe in facts, irrefutable facts, facts that all know, that all have aimed to experience and that all are striving to reach. Those who believe in god or gods usually claim that before an individual is created, he does not exist, then he comes into being through the will of a god. He lives his life and then according to what he believes during his life, he either goes to eternal heaven or eternal hell. Some believe that they come into being at conception due to natural causes, live and then die or cease to exist, that’s it! Buddhism does not accept either of these concepts. According to the first explanation, if there exists a so-called almighty god who creates all beings with all his loving kindness and compassion, it is difficult to explain why so many people are born with the most dreadful deformities, or why so many people are born in poverty and hunger. It is nonsense and unjust for those who must fall into eternal hells because they do not believe and submit themselves to such a so-called almighty god. The second explanation is more reasonable, but it still

leaves several unanswered questions. Yes, conception due to natural causes, but how can a phenomenon so amazingly complex as consciousness develop from the simple meeting of two cells, the egg and the sperm? Buddhism agrees on natural causes; however, it offers more satisfactory explanation of where man came from and where he is going after his death. When we die, the mind, with all the tendencies, preferences, abilities and characteristics that have been developed and conditioned in this life, re-establishes itself in a fertilized egg. Thus the individual grows, is reborn and develops a personality conditioned by the mental characteristics that have been carried over by the new environment. The personality will change and be modified by conscious effort and conditioning factors like education, parental influence and society and once again at death, re-establish itself in a new fertilized egg. This process of dying and being reborn will continue until the conditions that cause it, craving and ignorance, cease. When they do, instead of being reborn, the mind attains a state called Nirvana and this is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Buddhism requires no revision to keep it up to date with recent scientific findings. Even though Science is not one of the main teachings in Buddhism, Buddhist theories are always in accord with science at all times. Albert Einstein confirmed: "If there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism. Buddhism requires no revision to keep it up to date with recent scientific findings. Buddhism does not need to surrender its views to science, because it embraces science as well as goes beyond science." Also according to Egerton C. Baptist: "Science can give no assurance. But Buddhism can meet the Atomic challenge, because the supermundane knowledge of Buddhism begins where science leave off. And this is clear enough to anyone who has made a study of Buddhism. For, through Buddhist meditation, the atomic constitutes making up matter have been seen and felt."

XVII. Pragmatism of Buddhism:

Truly speaking, all approaches of Buddhism are always pragmatic. In the length of history of more than twenty-five centuries, Buddhism addresses only practical problems, not in academic questions and metaphysical theories. According to the Chulamalunkya Sutra, the Buddha expressed very clearly about the pragmatic approach of

Buddhism in everything. The Buddha himself made use of the parable of a wounded man. In the story, a man wounded by an arrow wishes to know who shot the arrow, the direction from which it came, whether the arrowhead is made of bone or steel, and what kind of wood the shaft is made of before he will let the arrow be removed. The Buddha wanted to imply the man's attitude with the attitude of those who want to know about the origin of the universe, whether it is eternal or not, finite in space or not, and so on, before they will undertake to practice a religion. According to the Buddha, these people are people of idle talks and pleasure discussions. Such people will die uselessly before they ever have the answers to all their irrelevant questions, just as the man in the parable will die before he has all the answers he seeks about the origin and nature of the arrow. Thus the Buddha taught: "Mankind's most important priority is the reduction and elimination of suffering, and try not to waste the precious time on irrelevant inquiries."

As a matter of fact, the Buddha taught his disciples not to stubbornly attach to the Buddhadharma, but utilizing the dharma as a raft to go to the other shore. According to Buddhism, a Buddhist cultivator is similar to a man who was trying to escape from a group of bandits came to a vast stretch of water that was in his way. He knew that this side of the shore was dangerous and the other side was safe. However, there was no boat going to the other shore, nor was there any bridge for crossing over. So he quickly gather wood, branches and leaves to make a raft, and with the help of the raft, he crossed over safely to the other shore. The Noble Eightfold Path taught by the Buddha is like the raft. It would take us from the suffering of this shore to the other shore of no suffering. In Mahayana Buddhism, the teaching is likened a raft; when the goal, the other shore, is reached, then the raft is left behind. The form of teaching is not final dogma but an expedient method. According to the Discourse on the Water Snake's Parable, the Buddha taught: "My teaching is like a raft for crossing over, not for carrying." Buddha's teaching is like a raft, a means of crossing the river, the raft being left when the crossing has been made.

Buddha-Dharmas always content the Pragmatism. In Buddhism, dharma refers to all the methods of cultivation taught by the Buddha which lead to ultimate enlightenment. They are means that lead to an end, not an end themselves. The Buddha's teaching is likened a raft for

going the other shore. All of us depend on the raft of Dharma to cross the river of birth and death. We strive with our hands, feet, and wisdom to reach the other shore. When the goal, the other shore, is reached, then the raft is left behind. The form of teaching is not final dogma but an expedient method. According to the Discourse on the Water Snake's Parable, the Buddha taught: "My teaching is like a raft for crossing over, not for carrying." Also according to the Middle Length Saying, the Buddha taught: "The dharma that I teach is like a raft. Even Dharma should be relinquished, how much the more that which is not Dharma? The Raft of Dharma is for crossing over, not for retaining."

XVIII. Buddhist Concept on Fate:

Buddhism has no concern with either determinism or determinateness because it is a religion of self-creation. It holds the theory of free will within the sphere of human beings. Buddhism, therefore, has nothing to do with fatalism, for it does not admit the existence of anything like destiny or the decree of fate. According to Buddhism, all living beings have assumed the present life as the result of self-creation, and are, even at present, in the midst of creating themselves. Birth and death are not the predestined fate of a living being but only a corollary of action or karma. One who acts must sooner or later reap the result of such action. Nobody can determine the fate of anybody else in this universe. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts." Thus, there is no room for the idea of "Creation" in Buddhism.

According to fatalism, each of us has a fate which we cannot change and about which we can do nothing. As they say "Whatever will be will be." In this philosophy the agent that determines destiny is not, as in the theistic position, a personal God, but rather a mysterious impersonal power called "Fate" which transcends our understanding and hence our ability to persuade or manipulate. According to Buddhism, the mind is the ultimate determinant of our destiny. In Buddhism, there exists no such "destiny." In fact, Buddhism considers this as a way or a path of going. Our destiny issues from our character, our character from our habits, our habits from our acts, and our acts from our thoughts. And since thoughts issue from the mind the ultimate

determinant of our destiny. In fact, the mind is the only creator Buddhism recognizes, and the power of the mind the only significant power in the world. As Milton, an English poet in the seventeenth century, says: “The mind can make a heaven of hell, and a hell of heaven.” If we think good thoughts, our acts cannot be bad. By thinking good thoughts, we will produce better actions, develop better habits, mold better characters and inherit better destiny. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five gati (destinations, destinies).

XIX. Buddhism and Epistemology:

Concerning epistemological questions, Buddhism has much more to say than any other philosophy. As sources of cognition Buddhism recognizes the world of sensation (Pratyaksa-pramana), the world of inference (anumana) and the world of pure intuition (dhyana). Thus sense-data, reason and inner experience resulting from intuition will all provide the content of knowledge. Besides these we can appeal in every case to the Word that has been uttered from the world of perfect enlightenment (Bodhi), i.e., the Buddha (the Enlightened). Even in the epistemological questions, Buddhism always bases on the truth of “Cause and Effect” or the truth of “Karma and Retribution” to solve most the world problems, not to utilize any blind faith in the epistemological questions. According to Buddhist literature, the Buddha ridiculed all deluded rituals of the Brahmins and accused the priests of fabricating them for no better reason than to make money from the wealthy and to manipulate the power. However, this ridicule of Brahman rituals led to challenging the authority of the Vedic literature that the Brahman priests considered sacred. These Brahman priests refused to accept the theory of causation. They continued to follow perverted (wrong) views or opinions, not consistent with the dharma. This view arises from a misconception of the real characteristic of existence. There were at least sixty-two heretical views (views of the externalist or non-Buddhist views) in the Buddha’s time. On the contrary, Buddhism emphasizes on theory of causation. Understanding the theory of causation means to solve most of the question of the causes of sufferings and afflictions. Not understanding or refuse of understanding of the theory of causation means a kind of

wrong view in Buddhism. According to the Buddha, sentient beings suffer from sufferings and afflictions because of desires, aversions, and delusion, and the causes of these harmful actions are not only from ignorance, but also from wrong views. Later Dharmakirti criticized the Brahmanical doctrine of the special authority of the Veda, which the Brahmins supposed had been revealed to human beings by God, which no one can confirm. On the other hand, the Buddha taught nothing but principles that every human being could confirm. However, a full confirmation of the Buddha's teachings was said to be impossible for a person whose vision was still clouded by delusions. Concerning epistemological questions, Buddhism has much more to say than any other philosophy. As sources of cognition Buddhism recognizes the world of sensation (Pratyaksa-pramana), the world of inference (anumana) and the world of pure intuition (dhyana). Thus sense-data, reason and inner experience resulting from intuition will all provide the content of knowledge. Besides these we can appeal in every case to the Word that has been uttered from the world of perfect enlightenment (Bodhi), i.e., the Buddha (the Enlightened).

XX. Buddhism and Art:

According to extant records of the earliest Buddhist community, iconographic representation was discouraged by Sakyamuni Buddha and his followers, who wanted to prevent the development of cults that focus on the figure of the Buddha, rather than on the doctrines and practices he taught. In addition, the central focus of the monastic community was introspective meditation, rather than external symbolism. As Buddhism grew and attracted more followers, artistic representations began to appear. There was, however, an initial reluctance to represent the Buddha directly, and so he was often depicted in aniconic motifs, such as his footprints (buddha-pada) or the Bodhi Tree (Bodhi-Vrksa). The most widespread aniconic representation of the Buddha was in the form of reliquaries called "Stupas." These continue to be popular throughout the Buddhist world, and a plethora of styles has developed. In Indian Buddhism it was commonly thought that they physically represented the Buddha, and some texts indicate that it was widely believed that venerating a stupa was equivalent to venerating the Buddha himself. Iconic

representations began to appear on stupas some time after the reign of Asoka (272- 236 B.C.), and a number of figures are found on stupas at Bharhut, Sanci, and Amaravati. These monuments have carved depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha. Around the end of the first century, artists began to fashion representations of the Buddha, and the Buddha dispersed symbol in Buddhist art all over the world. The earliest known examples of the Buddha image borrowed motifs from non-Buddhist traditions, since there was at that time no accepted notion regarding how he should be represented. Artists in Mathura, present-day north central India, for example, adopted imagery from the depiction of Yakshas, and in Gandhara, present-day Afghanistan, artists appear to have been influenced by Greek art. As Buddhism spread to other parts of the world this trend continued, and the Buddha image has acquired the characteristics and artistic motifs of the local populations of every Buddhist society. Despite Buddhism's initial rejection of artistic representation, Buddhist art flourished both in India and throughout Asia. With the development of tantric Buddhism in India, art and imagery also became integrated into meditative practice. As tantric Buddhism spread to Tibet, Mongolia, China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam, elaborate use of imagery became widespread in many quarters.

XXI. World of Peace and War in Buddhist Point of View:

According to Buddhist point of view, mutual love will lead to the world peace. In order to establish a better world, a world of peace, harmony and mutual love between peoples, we must begin by cultivating ourselves. For the collective karma of the world is nothing but a reflection of the individual karma of the individuals that make up the world. To cultivate our karma we must begin with the mind. Also according to Buddhism, all kinds of action are nothing but outward expressions of what transpires in the mind. If our minds are filled with hatred, what will happen? We will make many enemies. But if our minds are filled with love, we will make many friends. What stirs in the mind reveals itself outwardly in the world. Thus everything depends upon the mind of man. Confucius expresses the same idea when he says: "If there be righteousness in the mind, there will be beauty in the character. If there be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in

the home. If there be harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.” Therefore, according to the Buddhist point of view, if we wish to have a peaceful world, we must first begin to improve ourselves; we must cultivate our persons and rectify our minds. If we improve ourselves, then we can build up a happy and harmonious family life. When a nation is made up of harmonious families, then the nation will be well-ordered. And with well-ordered nations, we can establish peace in the world. According to Buddhism, the way to peace lies through peace: we must develop peace within ourselves if we hope to establish peace in the world. The condition of the world is the product of the deeds, words, and thoughts of the people that make up the world. If everyone practices better action, better speech, and better thought, then the world will be much better. However, the Buddha teaches us not to kill, but he never teaches us not to fight against enemies to protect our country. Buddhists should always follow the teachings of the Buddha, especially the first precept of “prohibiting killing.” In more than 2,500 years of Buddhist history, there were some cases of fighting between monks, or fighting with civil authorities in Tibet and Japan. However, invasion in the name of religion is unknown in Buddhism (one country invades other countries to spread a religion never happens in any Buddhist countries). In the past, reasons for monks in Tibet fought with other monks and with civil authorities were mainly concerned with money and power, not with the propagation of Buddhism. The same reasons for the fighting among monks and civil authorities in Japan. In Sri Lanka, king Dutthagamani launched battles to fight against Damilas dynasty of the Tamils who tried to invade Ceyland at the time, king Dutthagamani never put forward any battles with the intention of invasion of the continent of India for the spreading of Buddhism. The Buddha teaches us not to kill, but he never teaches us not to fight against enemies to protect our country.

XXII. Human Beings' Roles in Buddhism:

Most of us are agreed to the fact that among all living beings, human beings are unique beings who can understand what we are and what we should be. Compared to other beings, man is most complete and superior not only in the mentality and thinking, but also in the

ability of organization of social life. Human beings' life cannot be substituted nor repeated nor determined by someone else. Once we are born in this world, we have to live our own life, a meaningful and worth living life. Thus the ancient said: "Man is the most sacred and superior animal." Even though human beings are superior sentient beings, but to Buddhism, any living being's life is precious and of the same value. That is to say no being's life is more precious than the other's. According to the Upasaka Sutra, Buddhism agrees that in all living beings, man is endowed with all necessary faculties, intelligence. Buddhism also agrees that conditions of human beings are not too miserable as those beings in the hell or the hungry ghosts. To Buddhism, human life is difficult to obtain. If we are born as human beings with many qualities, difficult to attain. We should try to make our lives meaningful ones. Besides, human beings have intelligence. This precious quality enables us to investigate the true meaning of life and to practice the path to enlightenment. Devout Buddhists should always remember that what rebirth we will take depends on our present actions and habits. Thus, our purpose in this very life is to attain liberation or enlightenment, either becoming liberated from cyclic existence (Arhats), or becoming fully enlightened Buddhas. Most of all, we should be able to take advantage of our precious human lives to live to the fullest, moment by moment. To achieve this, we must be mindful of each moment, not being in the here-and-now when we act. According to Buddhist point of view, we have precious human lives, endowed with many qualities to attain. Because of this, we can make our lives highly meaningful. We often take our lives for granted and dwell on the things that aren't going the way we would like them to. Thinking this way is unrealistic and makes us depressed. However, if we think about the qualities we do have and everything that is going well, we'll have a different and more joyful perspective on life. One of our greatest endowments is our human intelligence. This precious quality enables us to investigate the meaning of life and to practice to advance on the path to enlightenment. If all of our senses, eyes, ears, mental... are intact, we are able to hear the Dharma, read books on it, and think about its meaning. We're so lucky to be born in an historical era when the Buddha has appeared and taught the Dharma. These teachings have been transmitted in a pure from teacher to student in

lineages stemming back to the Buddha. We have the opportunity to have qualified spiritual masters who can teach us, and there are communities of ordained people and Dharma friends who share our interest and encourage us on the path. Those of us who are fortunate to live in countries that cherish religious freedom aren't restricted from learning and practicing the path. In addition, most of us don't live in desperate poverty and thus have enough food, clothing and shelter to engage in spiritual practice without worrying about basic material needs. Our minds aren't heavily obscured with wrong views and we are interested in self-development. We have the potential to do great things with our present opportunity. But to appreciate this, we must develop a long-term vision for our cultivation because our present lives are only a short one. Devout Buddhists should always remember that our mindstreams don't cease when our physical bodies die. Our minds are formless entities, but when they leave our present bodies at the time of death, they will be reborn in other bodies. What rebirth we'll take depends on our present actions. Therefore, one purpose of our lives can be to prepare for death and future lives. In that way, we can die peacefully, knowing our minds will be propelled towards good rebirths. The other way that we can utilize our lives is to attain liberation or enlightenment. We can become arhats, beings liberated from cyclic existence, or we can go on to become fully enlightened Buddhas, able to benefit others most effectively. Attaining liberation, our minds will be completely cleansed of all disturbing attitudes. Thus we'll never become angry, jealous or proud again. We no longer feel guilty, anxious or depressed, and all our bad habits will be gone. In addition, if we aspire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of everyone, we'll have spontaneous affection for all beings, and will know the most appropriate ways to help them. Also another way to take advantage of our precious human lives is to live life to the fullest, moment by moment. There are several ways to do this. One is to be mindful of each moment, being in the here-and-now as we act. When we eat, we can concentrate on eating, noting the taste and texture of the food. When we walk, we concentrate on the movements involved in walking, without letting our minds wander to any other thoughts. When we go upstairs, we can think, "may I lead all beings to fortunate rebirths, liberation and enlightenment." While washing dishes or clothes, we

think, “may I help all beings cleanse their minds of disturbing attitudes and obscurations.” When we hand something to another person, we think, “May I be able to satisfy the needs of all beings.” We can creatively transform each action by generating the wish to bring happiness to others. For these above reasons, we can say that human beings play an extremely important role in most religions. The Buddha taught in the Upasaka Sutra: “In all beings, man is endowed with all necessary faculties, intelligence. Besides man’s conditions are not too miserable as those beings in hell, not too much pleasure as those beings in heaven. And above all, man’s mind is not so ignorant as that of the animals.” So man has the ability to build and improve his own life to the degree of perfection.

XXIII. Buddhist Festivals:

Records of the early Buddhist monastic order indicate that festivals were discouraged, although there were numerous regularly held ceremonies, such as the fortnight recitation of the Vinaya rules in the Posadha ceremony. As it became a religion with significant numbers of lay followers, however, regular festivals were developed. In contemporary Buddhism, there are numerous yearly and seasonal festivals, which serve a variety of functions, such as marking important occurrences like the new year or the harvest. Others provide opportunities for merit-making, such as the robe-receivign ceremony (kathina), held annually in both Theravada and Mahayana traditions, or the Tibetan Monlam Chenmo festival. Buddhist festivals also serve the important function of promoting Buddhism to non-Buddhists, and they punctuate the year with religiously significant events. The most widely celebrated festival is the date commemorating the birth, awakening, and parinirvana of the Buddha. In Theravada countries, this is celebrated on the full-moon day in May. It is called Vesak in Sri Lanka, and Visakha Puja in Thailand. Other important Sri Lankan festivals include Poson, which commemorates the introduction of Buddhism to the island, and Esala Parahera, in which the Buddha’s tooth relic is paraded through the streets of Kandy. In Mahayana traditions, such as in China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Tibet and Vietnam, the Buddha’s Birth Day Festival is usually celebrated on April 8 or April 15, The Buddha’s Awakening Festival is celebrated on

December 8, and the Buddha's Nirvana Festival is celebrated on February 15. Another important Japanese festival is Setsubon (early February), which centers on driving away evil spirits. Other important festivals in Mahayana Buddhism include an annual "hungry ghost" (Preta) festival, in which offerings are given to placate these unhappy spirits. Some Important Buddhist Festivals such as the Birthday of Buddha Sakyamuni on the 15th of the Fourth month of Lunar calendar, the Festival of Hungry Ghosts or the Ullambana on the 15th of seventh month of Lunar calendar, and the Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment Date on the 15th of the twelfth month of lunar calendar.

Celebration Days of some important Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Festivals on the first month of lunar calendar include the Maitreya Bodhisattva's Birthday (the first day of the first month Lunar calendar), and the Samadhi Light Buddha's Birthday (the 6th of the first month Lunar calendar). Festivals on the second month of lunar calendar include the Sixth Patriarch's Birthday (the 8th day of the second month Lunar calendar), the Kuan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 19th of the second month Lunar calendar), and the Universal Worthy Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 21st day of the second month Lunar calendar). There is no festival on the third month of lunar calendar. Festival on the fourth month of lunar calendar include the Manjushri Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 4th day of the 4th month Lunar calendar), the Birthday of Buddha Sakyamuni (the 15th of the Fourth month of Lunar calendar), and the Medicine King Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 28th of the 4th month Lunar calendar). There is no festival on the fifth month of lunar calendar. There is one festival on the sixth month of lunar calendar, the celebration of Kuan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's Enlightenment (the 13th of the 6th month and the 19th of the 6th month Lunar calendar). Festivals on the seventh month of lunar calendar include the Rain Retreat, which begins around the 15th of the fourth month and ends around the 15th of the seventh month of lunar calendar, the festival of hungry ghosts or the Ullambana on the 15th of seventh month of Lunar calendar, Nagarjuna (Dragon Tree) Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 24th day of the 7th month Lunar calendar), Earth Store Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 30th day of the 7th month Lunar calendar), and Great Strength Bodhisattva's Birthday (the 13th day of the 7th month Lunar calendar).

Festivals on the eighth month of lunar calendar include the Sixth Patriarch's Entering Nirvana Day (the 3rd day of the 8th month Lunar Calendar), and (Dipankara Buddha) Burning Lamp Buddha of Antiquity's Birthday (the 22nd of the 8th month Lunar calendar). Festivals on the ninth month of lunar calendar include Festival of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara on the 19th of the ninth month of Lunar calendar, and Medicine Master Buddha's Birthday (the 30th day of the 9th month Lunar calendar). Festivals on the tenth month of lunar calendar, the celebration of Venerable First Patriarch Bodhidharma's Birthday (the 5th day of the 10th month Lunar calendar). There is one festival on the eleventh month of lunar calendar, the celebration of Amitabha Buddha's Birthday (Festival of Amitabha Buddha on 17th of the 11th month Lunar calendar). Festivals on the twelfth month of lunar calendar include Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment Date on 15th of the twelfth month of lunar calendar, and Avatamsaka Bodhisattva's Birthday (29th day of the twelfth month Lunar calendar).

Besides, there are Ten fast days. The ten "fast" days of a month based on Lunar calendar are 1, 8, 14, 15, 18, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30. Eating flesh, hunting, fishing, execution, etc. are forbidden in those days. These are also ten Buddhas or Bodhisattvas connected with the ten "fast" days. First, the day of Samadhi Buddha, which is on the 1st day. Second, the day of Medicine Master Buddha, which is on the 8th day. Third, the day of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, which is on the 14th day. Fourth, the day of Amitabha Buddha, which is on the 15th day. Fifth, the day of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, which is on the 18th day. Sixth, the day of Mahasthama-prapta Bodhisattva, which is on the 23rd day. Seventh, the day of Ksitigarbha (Earth-Store) Bodhisattva, which is on the 24th day. Eighth, the day of Vairocana Buddha, which is on the 28th day. Ninth, the day of Medicine King (Bhaisajya) Buddha, which is on the 29th day. Tenth, the day of Sakyamuni Buddha, which is on the 30th day.

XXIV. Buddhist Sangha:

The Sangha means the noble community (ariya-sangha) of Buddhist saints who have realized the teachings. Sangha also designates the community of monks and nuns who live according to the monastic code (vinaya); and in its broadest sense it includes the lay

people who sustain the monks and nuns through charity and receive their teaching. The creation of the Sangha is without question one of the Buddha's most remarkable achievements. It has survived through diversification and expansion up to the present day, offering an individual the chance to pursue the course of training leading to enlightenment, by dedicating him or herself to the holy life. Such a pursuit would not be deemed a selfish act in Buddhist eyes, because the Sangha, as an institution, maintains the Dharma in the absence of the Buddha for the welfare of all. From its earliest days the Sangha has lacked a supreme authority, because the Buddha refused to establish a functional hierarchy or name of successor. Influence is collective and precedence is allowed only by seniority. According to the Buddha, adherence to the Dharma should be based on personal reasoning and experience, not purely on instruction. The Sangha plays an extremely important role in Buddhism as the protector and maintainer of the Dharma. As early as the first century B.C., the Theravadin Sangha distinguished between monks who assumed the duty of meditating and those who were committed to preserving the scriptures. The core of "institutional" Buddhism, at least in the Theravadin tradition, has almost always been preoccupied with preserving the Dharma through the lineage of a committed community rather than through political power structures. This is one of the essential features that distinguishes Buddhism from religions that actively participate in, and indeed, govern, the passage of life through rites and rituals. It is not the norm for Buddhism to be linked to a specific place or society, which is why it has generally been able to coexist harmoniously with the indigenous beliefs and practices it has encountered in its expansion, especially those that are traditionally associated with social customs. The relationship between the Sangha and the laity varies greatly among the different traditions. In general, monks do not handle money or make a living from any profession, but rather rely completely on the laity for worldly needs. In such places as China, Japan, Korea, Tibet and Vietnam, where Mahayana Buddhism is dominant, some monasteries have been known to accumulate great wealth and political power.

Early Ordinations in the Sangha: Moggallana and Sariputta were two very important early converts who became Buddha's chief disciples. Formerly they were the disciples of another religious guru

Sanjaya, but had not attained much spiritually under their teacher. They both were very wise and learned Brahmans. Sariputta was the first to learn of the Buddha and his noble path from one of the disciples of the Buddha. Therefore, he went to the Buddha seeking the refuge and was duly ordained. He was deeply impressed by the teachings and supernatural powers of the Buddha. Sariputta then went to Moggallana and told him of his conversion to Buddhism. They not only became the Buddha's disciples but also brought with them over 200 followers. Later, Sariputta came to be highly respected in the Order for his wisdom, while Moggallana became famous for his supernatural powers. Right after His Enlightenment, the Buddha went to Rajagriha, the capital of Magadha. There Bimbisara was the king. Bimbisara came to receive the Blessed One, accompanied by a number of courtiers, wise men, Brahmans and a large number of eminent citizens. The Buddha taught them the Noble Eightfold Path, and they all became his lay followers. Bimbisara was highly pleased with the teachings of the Sakyamuni and waited in person on the Buddha and his monks at alms meal. As a token of his gratitude to the Buddha, His Dharma and Sangha, he donated the famous Venuvana or the Bamboo Grove, lying on the outskirts of the city, to the community of monks. A rich merchant then erected dwelling units there and thus the first proper Buddhist monastery came into existence. The Buddha was a great walker and a wanderer. During the last forty-five years of his life, he traveled covering the whole of the north-eastern India on foot. He covered 20 to 30 kilometers of distance a day. In his wandering, he came across all sorts of people, from kings, noblemen, rich merchants to farmers, ascetics, Brahmans, low caste people, students and others and taught them the Ultimate Truth. His teachings were simple and practical which appealed both to reason and emotions. He did not believe in the superiority based on caste and social status and preached equality. Many of his chief disciples were low caste people. Upali was a barber, Sumita a scavenger, Svapaka a dog-eater, Svati a fisherman, and Nanda a cowherd. Actually, his monks and lay followers belonged to all castes in the society. He vehemently refuted the claims of caste and opposed the Brahmans, who were arrogant and ignorant and befooled the masses in the name of religion. He condemned them for their rituals and animal sacrifices for he knew and preached that "by birth

one is neither Brahman nor Sudra. Only one's words and behavior determine whether one is soldier or a craftsman or a priest.

XXV. Three Main Schools in Buddhism:

Sects arise from an individual interpretation of the general teaching of Buddhism. Sects base on a peculiar interpretation of one of the recognized sects. Nowadays, Buddhism has many different schools, among them, there are three major schools. *The first school is the Southern School or Theravada:* The Southern or Theravada (Teachings of the Elders), also known as the Hinayana, which arose in southern India, whence it spread to Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. The "Little or minor (small) Vehicle." Name of the earliest system of Buddhist doctrine, opposed to the Mahayana. This is the term which the Mahayana utilizes to refer to the those who follow Theravada for they have own liberation goal rather than that of all beings. In fact, Hinayana developed between the death of Buddha and the 1st century BC and it represented the original and pure teaching as it was taught by the Buddha. The essence of the teaching is expressed in the four noble truths, the doctrine of dependent arising, the teaching of the ego, the law of karma and the eightfold noble path.

The second school is the North School or the Mahayana (Major Vehicle or the school of Mahayana): After the Buddha's death, Buddhism was divided into many schools. The two main branches were Hinayana and Mahayana. Whoever seeks to become an arhat belongs to the Hinayana; while whoever seeks to become a Buddha belongs to the Mahayana. Right after the Buddha' death the school of Mahayana, attributed to the rise in India of the Madhyamika (the school ascribed to Nagarjuna) and the Yoga; the rest of the sects belonged to the Hinayana. The Madhyamika and Yoga were called Tsan-Luan and Dharmalaksana in China. In Japan, only Kosa and Satyasiddhi belong to the Hinayana; the rest of other schools belong to the Mahayana. The Mahayana moved from northern India to Tibet, Mongolia, China, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Unlike Southern Buddhism, which tended to remain conservative and doctrinaire, the Mahayana adapted itself to the needs of peoples of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds and varying levels of understanding. The greater vehicle, one of the two great schools of Buddhism (Hinayana and Mahayana). The Mahayana

arose in the first century BC. It is called Great Vehicle because its objective is the salvation of all beings. It opens the way of liberation to a great number of people and indeed, expresses the intention to liberate all beings. One of the most critical in Mahayana is that it stresses the value on laypersons. It emphasizes that laypersons can also attain nirvana if they strive to free themselves from worldly bondages. Major Mahayana sects include Hua-Yen, T'ien T'ai, Zen and the Pure Land. It should be noted that Mahayana spread from India to Tibet, China, Korea and Viet Nam. We must recognize that the Mahayana has contributed a great deal to Buddhist thought and culture. It has produced a wonderful Path of Bodhisattvas. Sakyamuni Buddha set an example by his own career that people could emulate. The goal of this career was Enlightenment and Buddhahood, and the way was the way of the Bodhisattva. The Third Council was held during the reign of Emperor Asoka in the third century B.C., there were already at least eighteen schools, each with its own doctrines and disciplinary rules. Among them, two schools dominated the deliberations at the Third Council, an analytical school called Vibhajyavadins, and a school of realistic pluralism known as the Sarvastivadins. The Council decided in favor of the analytical school and it was the views of this school that were carried to Sri Lanka by Asoka's missionaries, led by his son Mahendra. There it became known as the Theravada. The adherents of the Sarvastivada mostly migrated to Kashmir in the north west of India where the school became known for its popularization of the path of the perfections of the Bodhisattva. However, another Council (the Fourth Council) was held during the reign of King Kanishka in the first century A.D. in Kashmir; two more important schools emerged, the Vaibhashikas and the Sautrantikas. These two differed on the authenticity of the Abhidharma; the Vaibhashikas holding that the Abhidharma was taught by the Buddha, while the Sautrantikas held that it was not. By this time, Mahayana accounts tell us, a number of assemblies had been convened in order to compile the scriptures of the Mahayana tradition, which were already reputed to be vast in number. In the north and south west of India as well as Nalanda in Magadha, the Mahayana was studied and taught. Many of the important texts of the Mahayana were believed to have been related by Maitreya, the future Buddha and other celestial Bodhisattvas. The written texts of

Mahayana as well as those of other schools began to appear about 500 years after the Buddha's Nirvana. The earliest Mahayana sutras such as the Lotus Sutra and the Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom are usually dated before the first century A.D. The essence of the Mahayana Buddhism is the conception of compassion for all living beings. The Mahayana, with its profound philosophy, its universal compassion and its abundant use of skillful means, rapidly began to attract the majority of people, not only in India, but in the newly Buddhist lands of central Asia. The origin of Mahayana may be traced to an earlier school known as Mahasanghika and earlier literary sources known as Mahayana Sutas. By the first century A.D., the formation of the Mahayana Buddhism was virtually complete, and most of the major Mahayana sutras were in existence. Theoretically speaking, Mahayana Buddhism is divided into two systems of thought: the Madhyamika and the Yogacara.

The third school is the Mantrayana: The esoteric method. The esoteric Mantra, or Yogacara sect, developed especially in Shingon, with Vairocana as the chief object of worship, and the Mandalas of Garbhadhatu and Vajradhatu. The esoteric teaching or Tantric Buddhism, in contrast with the open schools (Hiền giáo). The Buddhist tantra consists of sutras of a so-called mystical nature which endeavor to teach the inner relationship of the external world and the world of spirit, of the identity of Mind and universe. Among the devices employed in tantric meditational practices are the following. First, the contemplation of the Mandala. Mandala means "circle," "assemblage," "picture." There are various kinds of mandala, but the most common in Esoteric Buddhism are of two types: a composite picture graphically portraying different classes of demons, deities, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, representing various powers, forces, and activities, within symbolic squares and circles, and in the center of which is a figure of the Buddha Vairocana, the Great Illuminator; and a diagrammatic representation wherein certain sacred Sanskrit letters, called "bija" or "seeds" are substituted for figures. Second, the contemplation of the Mantra. Mantras are the sacred sounds, such as OM, for example, are transmitted from the master to his disciple at the time of initiation. When the disciple's mind is properly attuned, the inner vibrations of this word symbol together with its associations in the consciousness of

the initiate are said to open his mind to higher dimension. Third, mudra. Mudras are physical gestures, especially symbolical hand movements, which are performed to help evoke certain states of mind parallel to those of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The Esoteric School is divided into two divisions. First, the Miscellaneous Mystic Sect. What we designate as “Miscellaneous Mystic” of which mantras were translated early in the fourth century A.D. Srimitra of Kucha, a Central Asian state inhabited by a white race, translated some texts into Chinese. These were charms, cures, and other sorts of sorcery, often containing some mantra prayers and praises of gods or saints of higher grades, but generally speaking they could not be regarded as expressing a high aspiration. Second, the Pure Mystic Sect. What we can designate as ‘Pure Mystic’ begins with some able Indian teachers who arrived in China during the T’ang period (713-765). First, Subhakarasiṃha (637-735), second, Vajrabodhi (663-723), third, Amoghavajra (705-774), and fourth, I-Hsing (683-727).

Chapter Two

Summaries of Bodhisattvas In Buddhist Teachings

I. An Overview of Bodhisattvas In Buddhist Teachings:

“Enlightened Being” (Bodhisattva) is a Chinese Buddhist term that means an enlightened being (bodhi-being), or a Buddha-to-be, or a being who desires to attain enlightenment, or a being who seeks enlightenment, including Buddhas, Pratyeka-buddhas, or any disciples of the Buddhas. An enlightened being who does not enter Nirvana but chosen to remain in the world to save other sentient beings. Any person who is seeking Buddhahood, or a saint who stands right on the edge of nirvana, but remains in this world to help others achieve enlightenment. One who vows to live his or her life for the benefit of all sentient beings, vowing to save all sentient beings from affliction and aspiring to attainment of the Buddha-hood. One whose being or essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. A Bodhisattva is one who adheres to or bent on the ideal of enlightenment, or knowledge of the Four Noble Truths (Bodhi), especially one who is aspirant for full enlightenment (samma sambodhi). A Bodhisattva fully cultivates ten perfections (thập thiện: Parami) which are essential qualities of extremely high standard initiated by compassion, understanding and free from craving, pride and false views. There are five Bodhisattvas who have cultivated over countless lifetimes and expand in his life for the benefit of others. Therefore, a Bodhisattva is one who is enlightened, literally he is an Enlightenment-being, a Buddha-to-be, or one who wishes to become a Buddha. It would be a mistake to assume that the conception of a Bodhisattva was a creation of the Mahayana. For all Buddhists each Buddha had been, for a long period before his enlightenment, a Bodhisattva. But why does a Bodhisattva have such a vow? Why does he want to undertake such infinite labor? For the good of others,

because they want to become capable of pulling others out of this great flood of sufferings and afflictions. But what personal benefit does he find in the benefit of others? To a Bodhisattva, the benefit of others is his own benefit, because he desires it that way. Who could believe that? It is true that people devoid of pity and who think only of themselves, find it hard to believe in the altruism of the Bodhisattva. But compassionate people do so easily.

The two words of “Cause and Effect”, not only living beings who cannot escape them (cause and effect); even the Buddhas (before becoming enlightened) and Bodhisattvas cannot avoid them either. However, because Bodhisattvas have far-ranging vision, they avoid creating bad causes and only receive joyful rewards. Living beings, on the other hand, are very short-sighted. Seeing only what is in front of them, they often plant evil causes, and so they must often suffer the bitter retribution. Because the Bodhisattvas are afraid of bad consequences in the future, not only they avoid planting evil-causes or evil karma in the present, but they also diligently cultivate to gradually diminish their karmic obstructions; at the same time to accumulate their virtues and merits, and ultimately to attain Buddhahood. However, sentient beings complete constantly to gather evil-causes; therefore, they must suffer evil effect. When ending the effect of their actions, they are not remorseful or willing to repent. Not only do they blame Heaven and other people, but they continue to create more evil karma in opposition and retaliation. Therefore, enemies and vengeance will continue to exist forever in this vicious cycle.

II. Who Are Bodhisattvas?:

Bodhisattva is a Sanskrit term for an Enlightened Being. This is the one whose essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. A Sanskrit term which means “Awakening being” or a “being of enlightenment,” or “one whose essence is wisdom,” or “a being who aspires for enlightenment.” This is the ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. The beginning of the bodhisattva’s career is marked by the dawning of the “mind of awakening” (Bodhi-citta), which is the resolve

to become a Buddha in order to benefit others. So, Bodhisattva is considered as a human being with his own karmas at his very birth as all other creatures, but he can be able to get rid of all his inner conflicts, including bad karmas and sufferings, and external crises, including environments, calamities and other dilemma, can change this unfortunate situation and can make a peaceful, prosperous and happy world for all to live in together by using his effort and determination in cultivating a realistic and practical way without depending on external powers. In Mahayana literature, this is commonly followed by a public ceremony of a vow to attain Buddhahood (Pranidhana) in order to benefit other sentient beings. That is to say: “Above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings.” This is one of the great vows of a Bodhisattva. After that point the bodhisattva pursues the goal of Buddhahood by progressively cultivating the six, sometimes ten, “perfections” (Paramita): generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration, and wisdom. The two primary qualities in which the Bodhisattva trains are compassion and wisdom, and when the perfections are fully cultivated and compassion and wisdom developed to their highest level, the Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha. The Bodhisattva path is commonly divided into ten levels (Bhumi). The term Bodhisattva is not, however, confined solely to Mahayana Buddhism: in Theravada, Sakyamuni Buddha is referred to as “Bodhisatta” (Bodhisattva) in the past lives described in the Jatakas, during which he is said to have gradually perfected the good qualities of a Buddha. In the Mahayana sense, however, the Bodhisattva concept is an explicit rejection of Nikaya Buddhism’s ideal religious paradigm, the Arhat. In Mahayana the Arhat is characterized as limited and selfish, concerned only with personal salvation, in contrast to the Bodhisattva, who works very hard for all sentient beings. So the term “Bodhisattva” in general, means a “Bodhi being”. It denotes a being who is destined to obtain fullest Enlightenment or Buddhahood. According to the Digha Nikaya, literally, a “Bodhisattva” means one who is an intellectual, or one who is resolved or maintained only to the paths that lead to enlightenment.

Several centuries after the Buddha’s parinirvana, Bodhisattva is one of the most important ideas of Mahayana Buddhists. However, the concept was not a sole creation of the Mahayana. The term

“Bodhisattva” had been mentioned in the Pali Canon and it stems from the original Pali Buddhism which is used more or less exclusively to designate Sakyamuni Buddha prior to His Enlightenment. According to Sarvastivada School, “Bodhisattva” is defined as a person who is certain to become a Buddha. He is a person who is born of wisdom and protected and served by the wise. According to the Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita, nothing real is meant by the word “Bodhisattva,” because a Bodhisattva trains himself in non-attachment to all dharmas. For the Bodhisattva, the great being awakes in non-attachment to full enlightenment in the sense that he understands all the dharmas, because he has enlightenment as his aim, an enlightened being. In short, a Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. He usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva’s job is not easy at all. Though his appearance is not rare as that of a Buddha, but it is extremely difficult for a Bodhisattva to appear, and it is also extremely difficult for ordinary people to encounter a real Bodhisattva.

A Bodhisattva is a Mahasattva as defined in Sanscrit language. ‘Maha’ means ‘great’ and ‘sattva’ means either ‘being’ or ‘courage’. Nagarjuna gives a number of reasons why Bodhisattvas are called ‘great beings’. It is because they achieve a great work, stand at the head of a great many beings, and activate great friendliness and great compassion, save a great number of beings. The Tibetans translate Mahasattvas as ‘great spiritual hero’ and their aspirations are truly on a heroic scale. They desire to discipline all beings everywhere, to serve and honor all the Buddhas everywhere. They want to retain firmly in their minds all the teachings of the Buddhas, to have a detailed knowledge of all the Buddha-fields to comprehend all the assemblies which anywhere gather around a Buddha, to plunge into the thoughts of all beings, to remove their defilements and to fathom their potentialities. In other words, Mahasattva is like Bodhisattva who will be able to eliminate all his bad karmas and sufferings and will show the emancipation way to all beings with all skills by his compassion. A Bodhisattva is the one who benefits himself to help others. A great creature, having a great or noble essence, or being. Mahasattva is a perfect bodhisattva, greater than any other being except a Buddha.

Also great being is one with great compassion and energy, who brings salvation to all living beings. In the beginning of the *Astasahasrika Prajna paramita*, the Buddha explained the meaning of 'Mahasattva' (great being) when Subhuti asked about it. The Buddha says that a Bodhisattva is called 'a great being' in the sense that he will demonstrate Dharma so that the great errors should be forsaken, such erroneous views as the assumption of a self, a being, a living soul, a person, of becoming, of not becoming, of annihilation, of eternity, of individuality, etc. According to the *Saddharmapundarika Sutra*, Mahasattvas have good qualities and method of practice paramita and under many hundred thousands of Buddhas had planted the roots of goodness.

In the Theravada Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is a person in the school of the elders who is desirous of acquiring the characteristics of a perfect being, the enlightened one. It appears as such in the Pali Nikayas. The accomplishment of such a state makes him content. But the ideal of Mahayana induces him to greater effort based on dynamic activity to help other beings attain ultimate bliss; before that he does not lay ore to save beings from the state of suffering. Not satisfied with his own mitigation of desire some actions that make him subjected to malice and all kind of craving, he strives up on helping all other beings to overcome their afflictions. While the Buddha reminded Mahamati in the *Lankavatara Sutra* as follows: "Oh Mahamati, the distinction between the Bodhisattva and the Two Vehicles is emphasized, as the latter are unable to go up further than the sixth stage where they enter into Nirvana. At the seventh stage, the Bodhisattva goes through an altogether new spiritual experience known as *anabhogacarya*, which may be rendered "a purposeless life." But, supported by the majestic power of the Buddhas, which enters into the great vows first made by the Bodhisattva as he started in his career, the latter now devises various methods of salvation for the sake of his ignorant and confused fellow-beings. But from the absolute point of view of the ultimate truth in the *Lankavatara Sutra*, attained by the Bodhisattva, there is no such graded course of spirituality in his life; for here is really no gradation (*krama*), no continuous ascension (*kramanusandhi*), but the truth (*dharma*) alone which is imageless (*nirabhasa*), and detached altogether from discrimination.

According to the Mahaprajnaparamita sastra, Bodhi means the way of all the Buddhas, and Sattva means the essence and character of the good dharma. Bodhisattvas are those who always have the mind to help every being to cross the stream of birth and death. According to old translation, Bodhisattvas are beings with mind for the truth. According to new translation, Bodhisattvas are conscious beings of or for the great intelligence, or enlightenment. The Bodhisattva seeks supreme enlightenment not for himself alone but for all sentient beings. Bodhisattva is a Mahayanist, whether monk or layman, above is to seek Buddhahood, below is to save sentient beings (he seeks enlightenment to enlighten others). Bodhisattva is one who makes the six paramitas (lục độ) their field of sacrificial saving work and of enlightenment. The objective is salvation of all beings with four infinite characteristics of a bodhisattva are kindness (từ), pity (bi), joy (hỷ), self-sacrifice (xả). A person, either a monk, a nun, a layman or a laywoman, who is in a position to attain Nirvana as a Sravaka or a Pratyekabuddha, but out of great compassion for the world, he or she renounces it and goes on suffering in samsara for the sake of others. He or she perfects himself or herself during an incalculable period of time and finally realizes and becomes a Samyaksambuddha, a fully enlightened Buddha. He or she discovers the Truth and declares it to the world. His or her capacity for service to others is unlimited. Bodhisattva has in him Bodhicitta and the inflexible resolve. There are two aspects of Bodhicitta: Transcendental wisdom (Prajna) and universal love (Karuna). The inflexible resolve means the resolve to save all sentient beings. According to the Mahayana schools, the bodhisattvas are beings who deny themselves final Nirvana until, accomplishing their vows, they have first saved all the living. An enlightened being who, deferring his own full Buddhahood, dedicates himself to helping others attain liberation. Besides, the Bodhisattva regards all beings as himself or herself ought not to eat meat. A Bodhisattva is one who has the essence or potentiality of transcendental wisdom or supreme enlightenment, who is on the way to the attainment of transcendental wisdom. He is a potential Buddha. In his self-mastery, wisdom, and compassion, a Bodhisattva represents a high stage of Buddhahood, but he is not yet a supremely enlightened, fully perfect Buddha. His career lasts for aeons of births in each of

which he prepares himself for final Buddhahood by the practice of the six perfections (paramitas) and the stages of moral and spiritual discipline (dasabhumi) and lives a life of heroic struggle and unremitting self-sacrifice for the good of all sentient beings. Bodhisattva is an enlightening being who, deferring his own full Buddhahood, dedicates himself to helping others attain liberation. In his self-mastery, wisdom, and compassion a Bodhisattva represents a high stage of Buddhahood, but he is not yet a supreme enlightened, fully perfected Buddha.

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, the Buddha told Maitreya, “You should know that there are two categories of Bodhisattvas: those who prefer proud words and a racy style, and those who are not afraid (of digging out) the profound meanings which they can penetrate. Fondness of proud words and a racy style denotes the superficiality of a newly initiated Bodhisattva; but he who, after hearing about the freedom from infection and bondage as taught in profound sutras, is not afraid of their deep meanings which he strives to master, thereby developing a pure mind to receive, keep, read, recite and practise (the Dharma) as preached is a Bodhisattva who has trained for a long time. Maitreya, there are two classes of newly initiated Bodhisattvas who cannot understand very deep Dharmas: those who have not heard about profound sutras and who, giving way to fear and suspicion, cannot keep them but indulge in slandering them, saying: ‘I have never heard about them; where do they come from?’, and those who refuse to call on, respect and make offerings to the preachers of profound sutras or who find fault with the latter; these are two classes of newly initiated Bodhisattvas who cannot control their minds when hearing the deep Dharma, thereby harming themselves. Maitreya, further, there are two categories of Bodhisattvas who harm themselves and fail to realize the patient endurance of the uncreate in spite of their belief and understanding of the deep Dharma: they are (firstly) those who belittle newly initiated Bodhisattva and do not teach and guide them; and (secondly) those who, despite their faith in the deep Dharma, still give rise to discrimination between form and formlessness.” After hearing the Buddha expound the Dharma, Maitreya said: “World Honoured One, I have not heard all this before. As you have said, I shall keep from these evils and uphold the Dharma of supreme enlightenment

which the Tathagata has collected during countless aeons. In future, if there are virtuous men and women who seek for Mahayana, I shall see to it that this sutra will be placed in their hands, and shall use transcendental power to make them remember it so that they can receive, keep, read, recite and proclaim it widely.

III. Great Bodhisattvas Look at Living Beings:

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Chapter Seven, Looking at Living Beings, Manjusri asked Vimalakirti: “How should a Bodhisattva look at living beings?” Vimalakirti replied: “A Bodhisattva should look at living beings like an illusionist does at the illusory men (he has created); and like a wise man looking at the moon’s reflection in water; at his own face in a mirror; at the flame of a burning fire; at the echo of a calling voice; at flying clouds in the sky; at foam in a liquid; at bubbles on water; at the (empty) core of a banana tree; at a flash of lightning; at the (non-existent) fifth element (beside the four that make the human body); at the sixth aggregate (beside the five that make a sentient being); at the seventh sense datum (beside the six objects of sense); at the thirteenth entrance (ayatana-beside the twelve involving the six organs and six sense data); at the nineteenth realm of sense (beside the eighteen dhatus or fields of sense); at form in the formless world; at the (non-existent) sprout of a charred grain of rice; at a body seen by a srota-apanna (who has wiped out the illusory body to enter the holy stream); at the entry of an anagamin (or a non-returning sravaka) into the womb of a woman (for rebirth); at an arhat still preserving the three poisons (of desire, anger and stupidity which he has eliminated forever); at a Bodhisattva realizing the patient endurance of the uncreated who is still greedy, resentful and breaking the prohibitions; at a Buddha still suffering from klesa (troubles); at a blind man seeing things; at an adept who still breathes air in and out while in the state of nirvanic imperturbability; at the tracks of birds flying in the air; at the progeny of a barren woman; at the suffering of an illusory man; at a sleeping man seeing he is awake in a dream; at a devout man realizing nirvana who takes a bodily form for (another) reincarnation; and at a smokeless fire. This is how a Bodhisattva should look at living beings.”

At that time, Manjusri asked Vimalakirti: “When a Bodhisattva so

meditates how should he practise kindness (maitri)? Vimalakirti replied: When a Bodhisattva has made this meditation, he should think that: a) Ought to teach living beings to meditate in the same manner; this is true kindness. b) Should practise causeless (nirvanic) kindness which prevents creativeness. c) Should practice unheated kindness which puts an end to klesa (troubles and causes of troubles). d) Should practice impartial kindness which coves all the three periods of time (which means that it is eternal involving past, future and present). e) Should practice passionless kindness which wipes out disputes. f) Should practice non-dual kindness which is beyond sense organs within and sense data without. g) Should practice indestructible kindness which eradicates all corruption. h) Should practice stable kindness which is a characteristic of the undying self-mind. i) Should practice pure and clean kindness which is spotless like Dharmata. j) Should practice boundless kindness which is all-pervasive like space. k) Should practice the kindness of the arhat stage which destroys all bondage. l) Should practice the Bodhisattva kindness which gives comfort to living beings. m) Should practice the Tathagata kindness which leads to the state of thatness. n) Should practice the Buddha kindness which enlightens all living beings. o) Should practice spontaneous kindness which is causeless. p) Should practice Bodhi kindness which is one flavour (i.e. uniform and unmixed wisdom). q) Should practice unsurpassed kindness which cuts off all desires. r) Should practice merciful kindness which leads to the Mahayana (path). s) Should practice untiring kindness because of deep insight into the void and non-existent ego. t) Should practice Dharma-bestowing (dana) kindness which is free from regret and repentance. u) Should practice precepts (sila) upholding kindness to convert those who have broken the commandments. v) Should practice patient (ksanti) kindness which protects both the self and others. w) Should practice Zealous (virya) kindness to liberate all living beings. aa) Should practice serene (dhyana) kindness which is unaffected by the five senses. bb) Should practice wise (prajna) kindness which is always timely. cc) Should practice expedient (upaya) kindness to appear at all times for converting living beings. dd) Should practice unhidden kindness because of the purity and cleanliness of the straightforward mind. ee) Should practice profound minded kindness which is free from

discrimination. ff) Should practice undeceptive kindness which is without fault. gg) Should practice joyful kindness which bestows the Buddha joy (in nirvana). “Such are the specialities of Bodhisattva kindness.”

Manjusri asked Vimalakirti: “What should be his compassion (karuna)?” Vimalakirti replied: “His compassion should include sharing with all living beings all the merits he has won.” Manjusri asked: “What should be his joy (mudita)?” Vimalakirti replied: He should be filled with joy on seeing others win the benefit of the Dharma with no regret whatsoever.” Manjusri asked “What should he relinquish (upeksa)?” Vimalakirti replied: “In his work of salvation, he should expect nothing (i.e. no gratitude or reward) in return.” Manjusri asked: “On what should he rely in his fear of birth and death?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should rely on the power of the Tathagata’s moral merits.” Manjusri asked: “What should he do to win support from the power of the Tathagata’s moral merits?” Vimalakirti replied: “ He should liberate all living beings in order to win support from the power of the Tathagata’s moral merit.” Manjusri asked: “What should he wipe out in order to liberate living beings?” Vimalakirti replied: “When liberating living beings, a Bodhisattva should first wipe out their klesa (troubles and causes of troubles)?” Manjusri asked: “What should he do to wipe out klesa?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should uphold right mindfulness.” Manjusri asked: “What should he do to uphold right mindfulness?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should advocate the unborn and the undying.” Manjusri asked: “What is the unborn and what is the undying?” Vimalakirti replied: “The unborn is evil that does not arise and the undying is good that does not end.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of good and evil?” Vimalakirti replied: “The body is the root of good and evil.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of the body?” Vimalakirti replied: “Craving is the root of the body.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of craving?” Vimalakirti replied: “Baseless discrimination is the root of craving.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of baseless discrimination?” Vimalakirti replied: “Inverted thinking is the root of discrimination.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of inverted thinking?” Vimalakirti replied: “Non-abiding is the root of inverted thinking.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of non-abiding?” Vimalakirti replied: “Non-abiding is rootless. Manjusri, from this non-

abiding root all things arise.” A goddess (devakanya) who had watched the gods (devas) listening to the Dharma in Vimalakirti’s room appeared in bodily form to shower flowers on the Bodhisattvas and the chief disciples of the Buddha (in their honour). When the flowers fell on the Bodhisattvas, they fell to the ground, but when they fell on the chief disciples, they stuck to their bodies and did not drop in spite of all their efforts to shake them off.

At that time, the goddess asked Sariputra why he tried to shake the flowers off. Sariputra replied: “I want to shake off these flowers which are not in the state of suchness.” The goddess said: “Do not say these flowers are not in the state of suchness. Why? Because they do not differentiate, and it is you (alone) who give rise to differentiation. If you (still) differentiate after leaving home in your quest of Dharma, this is not the state of suchness, but if you no longer give rise to differentiation, this will be the state of suchness. Look at the Bodhisattvas whose bodies do not retain the flowers this is because they have put an end to differentiation. This is like a man taking fright who invites trouble for himself is like a man taking right and evil (people). So if a disciple fears birth and death, then form, sound, smell, taste and touch can trouble him, but if he is fearless he is immune from all the five sense data. (in your case). It is because the force of habit still remains that these flowers cleave to your body but if you cut it off, they will not stick to it.” Sariputra asked: “How long have you been in this room?” The goddess replied: “My stay in this room is just like the Venerable Elder’s liberation.” Sariputra asked: “Do you then mean that you have stayed here for a long time?” The goddess retorted: “Does your liberation also involve time?” Sariputra kept silent and did not reply. The goddess then asked: “Why is the wise elder silent on this point?” Sariputra replied: “He who wins liberation does not express it in words; hence I do not know what to say!” The goddess said: “Spoken and written word reveal liberation. Why? For liberation is neither within nor without nor in between, and words also are neither inside nor outside nor in between. Therefore, Sariputra, liberation cannot be preached without using words. Why? Because all things point to liberation.” Sariputra asked: “Do you then mean that there is no need to keep from carnality, hatred and stupidity to win liberation?” The goddess replied: “In the presence of those who are proud (of their

superior knowledge) the Buddha said it is important to keep from carnality, hatred and stupidity in the quest of liberation; but where they are absent, He said that the underlying nature of carnality, hatred and stupidity (i.e. the self-nature) is identical with liberation. Sariputra exclaimed: “Excellent, goddess, excellent, what have you gained and experienced that gives you such an eloquence?” The goddess replied: “The fact that I neither gain nor experience anything gives me this eloquence. Why is it so? Because he who (claims to) have won and experienced (something) is arrogant in the eye of the Buddha Dharma.” Sariputra asked: “Which of the three vehicles is your aim?” The goddess replied: “When I preach the sravaka Dharma to convert people, I appear as a sravaka; when I expound the (twelve) links in the chain of existence I appear as a pratyeka-buddha; and when I teach great compassion to convert them, I appear as a (teacher of) Mahayana. Sariputra, like those entering a campa grove who smell only the fragrance of campas to the exclusion of all other odours, those entering this room smell only the fragrance of Buddha merits and no longer like the aroma of achievements by sravakas and pratyeka-buddha.” Sariputra, when Indra, Brahma, the four deva kings of the four heavens (guardians of the world), heavenly dragons, ghosts and spirits, etc. entered the room and heard this Upasaka (Vimalakirti) expound the right Dharma, they all took delight in smelling the fragrance of Buddha merits and developed the Mahayana mind before returning to their worlds. Sariputra, I have stayed here for twelve years during which I have never heard the Dharmas of sravakas and pratyeka-buddhas but only the doctrine of great kindness (maitri) and great compassion (karuna) of the Bodhisattvas and the inconceivable Buddha Dharma. Sariputra, in this room there are always eight unusual manifestations: First, this room is illuminated by a golden light, which is the same by day and by night and does not depend on either sunlight or moonlight to light it up. Second, he who enters it is immune from all troubles caused by defilements. Third, this room is visited by Indra, Brahma, the four deva kings of the four heavens and Bodhisattvas from other realms. Fourth, the never-receding Dharma of the six paramitas is always expounded in it. Fifth, the most melodious heavenly music intoning countless Dharma doors (to enlightenment) is heard in it. Sixth, this room contains the four canons (of sutras, vinaya, sastras and

miscellaneous scriptures) full of inexhaustible precious treasures for those who are (spiritually) poor. Seventh, when the Venerable Upasaka thinks of Sakyamuni Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, Aksobhya Buddha, the Buddha of Precious Virtues, the Buddha of Precious Flame, the Buddha of Precious Moonshine, the Buddha of Precious Majesty, the Invincible Buddha, the Buddha of the Lion's Roar, the Buddha of All-Perfection, and countless other Buddhas in the ten directions, they all come to expound the secrets of the esoteric Buddha Dharma, after which they return to their realms. Eighth, all majestic heavenly palaces and all pure lands of Buddhas appear in this room.

Sariputra, after witnessing these eight remarkable things in this room, who still seeks the sravaka Dharma?" Sariputra asked: "Why do not you change your female bodily form?" The goddess replied: "For the last twelve years, I have been looking in vain for a female bodily form; so what do you want me to change? This is like an illusionist who creates an illusory woman; is it correct to ask him to change this unreal woman?" Sariputra said: "No, because it is not a real body; into what then can it be changed?" The goddess said: "All phenomena (including forms) are also unreal. So why have you asked me to change my unreal female body?" At that time, she used her supernatural powers to change Sariputra into a heavenly goddess and herself into a man similar to Sariputra, and asked him: "Why do you change your female form?" Sariputra replied: "I do not know why I have turned into a goddess." The goddess said: "Sariputra, if you can change your female body, all women should also be able to turn into men. Like Sariputra who is not a woman but appears in female bodily form, all women are the same and though they appear in female form, they are fundamentally not women. Hence the Buddha said: 'All things are neither male nor female'." At that time, the goddess again used her supernatural powers to change Sariputra back to his (original) male body, and asked: "Where is your female body now?" Sariputra replied: "The form of a woman neither exists nor is non-existent." The goddess then declared: "Likewise, all things are fundamentally neither existing nor non-existent, and that which neither exists nor is non-existent is proclaimed by the Buddha." Sariputra asked: "When will you leave (die) here and where will you be reborn?" The goddess replied: "I shall be reborn like a Buddha by transformation." Sariputra interjected: "The

Buddha's transformation body implies neither birth nor death." The goddess said: Likewise all living beings (fundamentally) are subject to neither death nor birth." Sariputra asked: "When will you realize supreme enlightenment (anuttara-samyak-sambodhi)?" The goddess replied: "I shall realize supreme enlightenment when Sariputra returns to the worldly way of life." Sariputra retorted: "There is no such thing as myself (a holy man at the sravaka stage) returning to the worldly way of life." The goddess said: "There is also no such thing as myself realizing enlightenment. Why? Because bodhi (or enlightenment) is not an objective, which can be realized." Sariputra retorted: "There are Buddhas as countless as sand grains in the Ganges, who have realized and will win supreme enlightenment; what will you say of them?" The goddess said: "The three periods of time (the past, future and present) are spoken of (to the common man) as being in line with worldly thinking but this does not mean that bodhi (which is timeless or eternal) is tied to the past, future and present." She then asked Sariputra: "Sariputra, have you realized arhatship?" Sariputra replied: "I have realized it because I hold no concept of winning anything." The goddess said: "Likewise, all Buddhas and great Bodhisattvas achieved their goals because they were free from the idea of winning supreme enlightenment." At that time, Vimalakirti said to Sariputra: "This goddess has made offering to ninety-two lacs of Buddhas. She is able to play with the Bodhisattva transcendental powers, has fulfilled all her vows, has realized the patient endurance of the uncreate and has reached the never-receding Bodhisattva stage. In fulfillment of a vow, she appears at will (everywhere) to teach and convert living beings."

IV. Sentient Beings Are Subject to Illness, So Bodhisattvas Are Ill As Well:

In Buddhism, a person who is not enlightened is "ill" by definition. The healing process into the aspiration to attain enlightenment. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, at the time of the Buddha, one day Upasaka Vimalakirti was sick, the Buddha asked his great disciples, one after another, to call on Vimalakirti to enquire after his health, but no one dared to accept. Eventually, Manjusri Bodhisattva accepted the Buddha's command to call on Vimalakirti to enquire after his health. The Buddha then said to Manjusri: "You call on Vimalakirti to enquire

after his health.” Manjusri said: “World Honoured One, he is a man of superior wisdom and it is not easy to match him (in eloquence). For he has reached reality, and is a skillful expounder of the essentials of the Dharma. His power of speech is unhindered and his wisdom is boundless. He is well versed in all matters pertaining to Bodhisattva development for he has entered the mysterious treasury of all Buddhas. He has overcome all demons, has achieved all transcendental powers and has realized wisdom by ingenious devices (upaya). Nevertheless, I will obey the holy command and will call on him to enquire after his health.” The Bodhisattvas, the chief disciples of the Buddha and the rulers of the four heavens who were present, thought to themselves: “As the two Mahasattvas will be meeting, they will certainly discuss the profound Dharma.” So, eight thousand Bodhisattvas, five hundred sravakas and hundreds and thousands of devas wanted to follow Manjusri. So Manjusri, reverently surrounded by the Bodhisattvas, the Buddha’s chief disciples and the deva, made for Vaisali town. Vimalakirti, who knew in advance that Manjusri and his followers would come, used his transcendental powers to empty his house of all attendants and furniture except a sick bed. When entering the house Manjusri saw only Vimalakirti lying on sick bed, and was greeted by the upasaka, who said: “Welcome, Manjusri, you come with no idea of coming and you see with no idea of seeing.” Manjusri replied: “It is so, Venerable Upasaka, coming should not be further tied to (the idea of) coming, and going should not be further linked with (the concept of) going. Why? Because there is neither whence to come nor whither to go, and that which is visible cannot further be (an object of) seeing. Now, let us put all this aside. Venerable Upasaka, is your illness bearable? Will it get worse by wrong treatment? The World Honoured One sends me to enquire after your health, and is anxious to have good news of you. Venerable Upasaka, where does your illness come from; how long has it arisen, and how will it come to an end?” Vimalakirti replied: “Stupidity leads to love which is the origin of my illness. Because all living beings are subject to illness I am ill as well. When all living beings are no longer ill, my illness will come to an end. Why? A Bodhisattva, because of (his vow to save) living beings, enters the realm of birth and death which is subject to illness; if they are all cured the Bodhisattva will no longer be ill. For instance, when the only son of

an elder falls ill, so do his parents, and when he recovers his health, so do they. Likewise, a Bodhisattva loves all living beings as if they were his sons; so when they fall ill, the Bodhisattva is also ill, and when they recover, he is no longer ill.”

Part Two
Summaries of
Bodhisattva Ideal
(Phần Hai: Sơ Lược Về
Lý Tưởng Bồ Tát)

Chapter Three

Summaries of the Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhist Teachings

I. Summaries of the Origin of the Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhist Teachings:

Bodhisattva is a Sanskrit term for an Enlightened Being. This is the one whose essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. A Sanskrit term which means “Awakening being” or a “being of enlightenment,” or “one whose essence is wisdom,” or “a being who aspires for enlightenment.” This is the ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. The beginning of the bodhisattva’s career is marked by the dawning of the “mind of awakening” (Bodhi-citta), which is the resolve to become a Buddha in order to benefit others. So, Bodhisattva is considered as a human being with his own karmas at his very birth as all other creatures, but he can be able to get rid of all his inner conflicts, including bad karmas and sufferings, and external crises, including environments, calamities and other dilemma, can change this unfortunate situation and can make a peaceful, prosperous and happy world for all to live in together by using his effort and determination in cultivating a realistic and practical way without depending on external powers. In Mahayana literature, this is commonly followed by a public ceremony of a vow to attain Buddhahood (Pranidhana) in order to benefit other sentient beings. That is to say: “Above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings.” This is one of the great vows of a Bodhisattva. After that point the bodhisattva pursues the goal of Buddhahood by progressively cultivating the six, sometimes ten, “perfections” (Paramita): generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration, and wisdom. The two primary qualities in which the Bodhisattva trains are compassion and wisdom, and when the perfections are fully cultivated and compassion and wisdom developed

to their highest level, the Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha. The Bodhisattva path is commonly divided into ten levels (Bhumi). The term Bodhisattva is not, however, confined solely to Mahayana Buddhism: in Theravada, Sakyamuni Buddha is referred to as “Bodhisatta” (Bodhisattva) in the past lives described in the Jatakas, during which he is said to have gradually perfected the good qualities of a Buddha. In the Mahayana sense, however, the Bodhisattva concept is an explicit rejection of Nikaya Buddhism’s ideal religious paradigm, the Arhat. In Mahayana the Arhat is characterized as limited and selfish, concerned only with personal salvation, in contrast to the Bodhisattva, who works very hard for all sentient beings. So the term “Bodhisattva” in general, means a “Bodhi being”. It denotes a being who is destined to obtain fullest Enlightenment or Buddhahood. According to the Digha Nikaya, literally, a “Bodhisattva” means one who is an intellectual, or one who is resolved or maintained only to the paths that lead to enlightenment. Several centuries after the Buddha’s parinirvana, Bodhisattva is one of the most important ideas of Mahayana Buddhists. However, the concept was not a sole creation of the Mahayana. The term “Bodhisattva” had been mentioned in the Pali Canon and it stems from the original Pali Buddhism which is used more or less exclusively to designate Sakyamuni Buddha prior to His Enlightenment. According to Sarvastivada school, “Bodhisattva” is defined as a person who is certain to become a Buddha. He is a person who is born of wisdom and protected and served by the wise. According to the Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita, nothing real is meant by the word “Bodhisattva,” because a Bodhisattva trains himself in non-attachment to all dharmas. For the Bodhisattva, the great being awakes in non-attachment to full enlightenment in the sense that he understands all the dharmas, because he has enlightenment as his aim, an enlightened being. In short, a Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. He usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva’s job is not easy at all. Though his appearance is not rare as that of a Buddha, but it is extremely difficult for a Bodhisattva to appear, and it is also extremely difficult for ordinary people to encounter a real Bodhisattva. A Bodhisattva is a Mahasattva as defined in Sanscrit language. ‘Maha’

means 'great' and 'sattva' means either 'being' or 'courage'. Nagarjuna gives a number of reasons why Bodhisattvas are called 'great beings'. It is because they achieve a great work, stand at the head of a great many beings, activate great friendliness and great compassion, save a great number of beings. The Tibetans translate Mahasattvas as 'great spiritual hero' and their aspirations are truly on a heroic scale. They desire to discipline all beings everywhere, to serve and honor all the Buddhas everywhere. They want to retain firmly in their minds all the teachings of the Buddhas, to have a detailed knowledge of all the Buddha-fields to comprehend all the assemblies which anywhere gather around a Buddha, to plunge into the thoughts of all beings, to remove their defilements and to fathom their potentialities. In other words, Mahasattva is like Bodhisattva who will be able to eliminate all his bad karmas and sufferings and will show the emancipation way to all beings with all skills by his compassion. A Bodhisattva is the one who benefits himself to help others. A great creature, having a great or noble essence, or being. Mahasattva is a perfect bodhisattva, greater than any other being except a Buddha. Also great being is one with great compassion and energy, who brings salvation to all living beings. In the beginning of the Astasahasrika Prajna paramita, the Buddha explained the meaning of 'Mahasattva' (great being) when Subhuti asked about it. The Buddha says that a Bodhisattva is called 'a great being' in the sense that he will demonstrate Dharma so that the great errors should be forsaken, such erroneous views as the assumption of a self, a being, a living soul, a person, of becoming, of not becoming, of annihilation, of eternity, of individuality, etc. According to the Saddharmapundarika Sutra, Mahasattvas have good qualities and method of practice paramita and under many hundred thousands of Buddhas had planted the roots of goodness. In the Theravada Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is a person in the school of the elders who is desirous of acquiring the characteristics of a perfect being, the enlightened one. It appears as such in the Pali Nikayas. The accomplishment of such a state makes him content. But the ideal of Mahayana induces him to greater effort based on dynamic activity to help other beings attain ultimate bliss; before that he does not lay ore to save beings from the state of suffering. Not satisfied with his own mitigation of desire some actions that make him subjected to

malice and all kind of craving, he strives up on helping all other beings to overcome their afflictions. While the Buddha reminded Mahamati in the Lankavatara Sutra as follows: “Oh Mahamati, the distinction between the Bodhisattva and the Two Vehicles is emphasized, as the latter are unable to go up further than the sixth stage where they enter into Nirvana. At the seventh stage, the Bodhisattva goes through an altogether new spiritual experience known as anabhogacarya, which may be rendered “a purposeless life.” But , supported by the majestic power of the Buddhas, which enters into the great vows first made by the Bodhisattva as he started in his career, the latter now devises various methods of salvation for the sake of his ignorant and confused fellow-beings. But from the absolute point of view of the ultimate truth in the Lankavatara Sutra, attained by the Bodhisattva, there is no such graded course of spirituality in his life; for here is really no gradation (krama), no continuous ascension (kramanusandhi), but the truth (dharma) alone which is imageless (nirabhasa), and detached altogether from discrimination. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, the Buddha told Maitreya, “You should know that there are two categories of Bodhisattvas: those who prefer proud words and a racy style, and those who are not afraid (of digging out) the profound meanings which they can penetrate. Fondness of proud words and a racy style denotes the superficiality of a newly initiated Bodhisattva; but he who, after hearing about the freedom from infection and bondage as taught in profound sutras, is not afraid of their deep meanings which he strives to master, thereby developing a pure mind to receive, keep, read, recite and practise (the Dharma) as preached is a Bodhisattva who has trained for a long time. Maitreya, there are two classes of newly initiated Bodhisattvas who cannot understand very deep Dharmas: those who have not heard about profound sutras and who, giving way to fear and suspicion, cannot keep them but indulge in slandering them, saying: ‘I have never heard about them; where do they come from?’, and those who refuse to call on, respect and make offerings to the preachers of profound sutras or who find fault with the latter; these are two classes of newly initiated Bodhisattvas who cannot control their minds when hearing the deep Dharma, thereby harming themselves. Maitreya, further, there are two categories of Bodhisattvas who harm themselves and fail to realize the patient endurance of the uncreate in spite of their

belief and understanding of the deep Dharma: they are (firstly) those who belittle newly initiated Bodhisattva and do not teach and guide them; and (secondly) those who, despite their faith in the deep Dharma, still give rise to discrimination between form and formlessness.” After hearing the Buddha expound the Dharma, Maitreya said: “World Honoured One, I have not heard all this before. As you have said, I shall keep from these evils and uphold the Dharma of supreme enlightenment which the Tathagata has collected during countless aeons. In future, if there are virtuous men and women who seek for Mahayana, I shall see to it that this sutra will be placed in their hands, and shall use transcendental power to make them remember it so that they can receive, keep, read, recite and proclaim it widely.

Some 200 or 300 years after the Buddha’s death, a new variation of the Buddhist ideal began to emerge. Dissatisfied with the seemingly limited goal of the arhat, this new vision emphasized the Bodhisattva as the highest aspiration for all. A Bodhisattva is a being who resolves to become a fully enlightened Buddha and who dedicates his efforts to helping other sentient beings to attain salvation. These compassionate beings figure predominantly in the Mahayana tradition; indeed, the most distinguishing feature of Mahayana Buddhism may be its advocacy of the Bodhisattva as the vehicle to liberation. The Bodhisattva follows a long and arduous path, often described as having ten stages and spanning many lives at the end of which he attains complete Buddhahood. The Mahayana is thus able to consider a host of Bodhisattvas, at different stages along the path, as intervening in the lives of sentient beings. An advanced Bodhisattva, for example, can create “Buddha-Fields,” to which humans can aspire to be reborn by devotion and righteousness. The notion of the Bodhisattva is at times combined with the doctrine of the “Three Bodies” of the Buddha. This theory maintains that the ultimate form of Buddhahood and the true nature of things is the “Body of Dharma” itself (Dharmakaya). The Body of Dharma is revealed progressively by two other bodies: the “Enjoyment Body” (Sambhogakaya), a subtle form perceptible only to those advanced in the path, and the “Transformation Body” (Nirmanakaya), a physical form apparent to all. According to this scheme, Gautama was merely a Transformation Body, an apparition of ultimate Buddhahood. Other Bodhisattvas, who are Enjoyment Bodies,

can also teach and intervene through transformation and apparition. Important Mahayana Bodhisattvas include Avalokitesvara; Manjusri, who personifies great wisdom and is often represented holding a sword, which he uses to cut through the veil of ignorance; and Maitreya, “The Kindly One,” who will be the next Buddha and who, after attaining Buddhahood, will send the next Transformation Body to teach on earth. Other great Buddhist teachers are sometimes associated with Bodhisattvas, and are even seen as their incarnations. One of these is Nagarjuna, who was an abbot at the Buddhist university of Nalanda in the second century A.D. Nagarjuna is considered the founder of the Madhyamaka, a school of Buddhist philosophy that was active in Buddhist India. Madhyamaka greatly influenced certain forms of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, such as Zen, and still flourishes today in Tibet.

In Tibetan, Bodhisattva is translated as “Heroic Being.” The heroic quality of the Bodhisattva is brought out by the Prajnaparamita: “Suppose a hero, endowed with great accomplishments, had gone out with his mother, father, sons, and daughters. By some set of circumstances, they would get into a huge wild forest. The foolish among them would be greatly frightened. The hero would, however, fearlessly say to them ‘Do not be afraid! I will speedily take you out of this great and terrible jungle, and bring you to safety.’ Since he is fearless, vigorous, exceedingly tender, compassionate, courageous and resourceful, it does not occur to him to take himself alone out of the jungle, leaving his relatives behind. Against the Arhat, Mahayana Buddhism claimed that we must take the whole of the creation with us to enlightenment, that we cannot just abandon any beings, as all beings are as near to us as our relatives are. What a man should do is to make no discrimination between himself and others, and to wait until he had helped everybody into Nirvana before loosing himself into it. The Mahayanists thus claimed that the Arhat had not aimed high enough. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, the ideal man, the aim of the Buddhist effort, was not the rather self-centered, cold and narrow-minded Arhat, but the all compassionate Bodhisattva, who abandoned the world, but not the beings in it. Wisdom had been taught as the highest quality for an Arhat, and compassion as a subsidiary virtue; but to a Bodhisattva, compassion came to rank as equal with wisdom.

While the wisdom of an Arhat had been fruitful in setting free in himself. What there was to be set free, it was rather sterile in ways and means of helping ordinary people. The Bodhisattva would be a man who does not only set himself free, but who is also skilful in devising means for bringing out and maturing the latent seeds of enlightenment in others.

According to Buddhist history, after mighty and terrible struggles with himself, the Buddha had conquered in his body all those natural defects and human appetites and desires that prevent our ability of seeing the truth. He had to overcome all the bad influences of the sinful world around Him. Like a soldier fighting desperately in battle against many enemies, He struggled like a hero who conquers, he eventually gained his objects. He also discovered supportive conditions leading practitioners who follow the Bodhisattva Ideal to bodhi and Buddhahood. Thirty-Seven Bodhisattvas' Conducts (Conditions) Leading to Bodhi or Thirty-seven limbs of enlightenment comprise of four right efforts, four sufficiencies, four foundations of mindfulness, five faculties, five powers, seven limbs of enlightenments, and the eightfold noble path. According to the Prajna-paramita-sutra, the Buddha taught: "Doers of what is hard are the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who have set out to win supreme enlightenment. They do not wish to attain their own private Nirvana. On the contrary, they have survey the highly painful world of being, but they do not tremble at birth-and-death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the peace and happiness of the world. They have resolved, and yet desirous to win supreme enlightenment, they do not tremble at birth and death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the ease of the world, out of pity for the world. They have resolved: 'We will become a shelter for the world, a refuge for all beings, the world's place of rest, the final belief of all beings, islands of the world, lights of the world, leaders of the world, the world's means of salvation.

According to the Mahayana Buddhism, the ideal of the Bodhisattva was partly due to social pressure on the Order, but to a great extent it was inherent in the practice of the 'Unlimited,' which had trained the monks not to discriminate between themselves and others. As we saw, Buddhism has at its disposal two methods by which it reduces the sense of separateness on the part of individuals. The one is the culture of the

social emotions, or sentiments, such as loving-kindness (friendliness) and compassion. The other consists in acquiring the habit of regarding whatever one thinks, feels or does as an interplay of impersonal forces, called 'Dharmas,' weaning oneself slowly from such ideas as 'I' or 'mine' or 'self.' There is a logical contradiction between the method of wisdom, which sees no persons at all, but only Dharmas, and the method of the 'Unlimited' which cultivates relations to people as persons. The meditation on Dharmas dissolves other people, as well as oneself, into a conglomeration of impersonal and instantaneous dharmas. It reduces our manhood into 5 heaps, or pieces, plus a label. If there is nothing in the world except bundles of Dharmas, as cold and as impersonal as atoms, instantaneously perishing all the time, there is nothing which friendliness and compassion could work on. One cannot wish well to a Dharma which is gone by the time one has come to wish it well, nor can one pity a Dharma, say a 'mind-object,' or a 'sight-organ,' or a 'sound-consciousness.' In those Buddhist circles where the method of Dharmas was practiced to a greater extent than the 'Unlimited,' it led to a certain dryness of mind, to aloofness, and to lack of human warmth. The true task of the Buddhist is to carry on with both contradictory methods at the same time. As the method of Dharmas leads to boundless expansion of the self, because one identifies oneself with more and more living beings. As the method of wisdom explodes the idea that there are any persons at all in the world, so the method of the 'Unlimited' increases the awareness of the personal problems of more and more persons. How then does the Mahayana resolve this contradiction? The Buddhist philosophers differs from philosophers bred in the Aristotelean tradition in that they are not frightened but delighted by a contradiction. They deal with this, as with other contradictions, by merely stating it in an uncompromising form, and then they leave it at that. According to the Diamond Sutra: "Here, oh! Subhuti! A Bodhisattva should think thus 'As many beings as there are in the universe of beings, be they being egg-born, or from a womb, or moisture-born, or miraculously born; be they with form, or without; be they with perception, without perception, or with neither perception nor no-perception, as far as any conceivable universe of beings is conceived; all these should be led by me into Nirvana, into that realm of Nirvana which leaves nothing behind. And yet, although

innumerable beings have thus been led to Nirvana, no being at all has been led to Nirvana. And why? If in a Bodhisattva the perception of a 'being' should take place, he would not be called an 'enlightenment-being' or a Bodhisattva."

The ideal of the Bodhisattva was partly due to social pressure on the Sangha Order, but to a great extent it was inherent in the practice of the unlimited, which had trained the monks not to discriminate between themselves and others. As we saw, Buddhism has at its disposal two methods by which it reduces the sense of separateness on the part of individuals. The one is the culture of the social emotions, or sentiments, such as friendliness and compassion. The other consists in acquiring the habit of regarding whatever one thinks, feels or does as an interplay of impersonal forces, called Dharma, weaning oneself slowly from such ideas as 'I' or 'mine' or 'self'. There is a logical contradiction between the method of wisdom, which sees no person at all, but only Dharmas, and the method of the Unlimited which cultivates relations to people as persons. The meditation on Dharmas dissolves other people, as well as oneself, into a conglomeration of impersonal and instantaneous dharmas. It reduces our manhood into five heaps, or pieces, plus a label. If there is nothing in the world except bundles of Dharmas, as cold and as impersonal as atoms. Instantaneously perishing all the time, there is nothing which friendliness and compassion could work on. One cannot wish well to a Dharma which is gone by the time one has come to wish it well, nor can one pity a Dharma, say a 'mind-object,' or a 'sight-organ,' or a 'sound-consciousness.' In those Buddhist traditions where the method of Dharmas was practiced to a greater extent than the Unlimited, it led to a certain dryness of mind, to aloofness, and to lack of human warmth. The true task of a Buddhist is to carry on with both contradictory methods at the same time. As the method of Dharmas leads to boundless contraction of the self because everything is emptied out of it, so the method of Unlimited leads to a boundless expansion of the self because one identifies oneself with more and more living beings. As the method of wisdom explodes the idea that there are any persons at all in the world, so the method of the Unlimited increases the awareness of the personal problems of more and more persons.

In short, the Bodhisattva ideal originated from Mahayana Buddhism, but the term Bodhisattva is not confined solely to Mahayana Buddhism. In Theravada, Sakyamuni Buddha is referred to as “Bodhisatta” (Bodhisattva) in the past lives described in the Jatakas, during which he is said to have gradually perfected the good qualities of a Buddha. In the Mahayana sense, however, the Bodhisattva concept is an explicit rejection of Nikaya Buddhism’s ideal religious paradigm, the Arhat. In Mahayana the Arhat is characterized as limited and selfish, concerned only with personal salvation, in contrast to the Bodhisattva, who works very hard for all sentient beings. The beginning of the bodhisattva’s career is marked by the dawning of the “mind of awakening” (Bodhi-citta), which is the resolve to become a Buddha in order to benefit others. So, Bodhisattva is considered as a human being with his own karmas at his very birth as all other creatures, but he can be able to get rid of all his inner conflicts, including bad karmas and sufferings, and external crises, including environments, calamities and other dilemma, can change this unfortunate situation and can make a peaceful, prosperous and happy world for all to live in together by using his effort and determination in cultivating a realistic and practical way without depending on external powers. In Mahayana literature, this is commonly followed by a public ceremony of a vow to attain Buddhahood (Pranidhana) in order to benefit other sentient beings. That is to say: “Above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings.” This is one of the great vows of a Bodhisattva. After that point the bodhisattva pursues the goal of Buddhahood by progressively cultivating the six, sometimes ten, “perfections” (Paramita): generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration, and wisdom. The two primary qualities in which the Bodhisattva trains are compassion and wisdom, and when the perfections are fully cultivated and compassion and wisdom developed to their highest level, the Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha.

II. Characteristics Bodhisattva Ideal:

The Bodhisattva seeks supreme enlightenment not for himself alone but for all sentient beings. A Bodhisattva is a Mahayanist, whether monk or layman, above is to seek Buddhahood, below is to save sentient beings (he seeks enlightenment to enlighten others).

Bodhisattva is the person who makes the six paramitas (lục độ) their field of sacrificial saving work and of enlightenment. The main objective of Bodhisattva Ideal is salvation of all beings. Four infinite characteristics of a bodhisattva are kindness (từ), pity (bi), joy (hỷ), self-sacrifice (xả). Bodhisattva is a person, either a monk, a nun, a layman or a laywoman, who is in a position to attain Nirvana as a Sravaka or a Pratyekabuddha, but out of great compassion for the world, he or she renounces it and goes on suffering in samsara for the sake of others. He or she perfects himself or herself during an incalculable period of time and finally realizes and becomes a Samyaksambuddha, a fully enlightened Buddha. He or she discovers the Truth and declares it to the world. His or her capacity for service to others is unlimited. Bodhisattva has in him Bodhicitta and the inflexible resolve. There are two aspects of Bodhicitta: Transcendental wisdom (Prajna) and universal love (Karuna). The inflexible resolve means the resolve to save all sentient beings, Bodhisattva Ideal always have three main characteristics: *First*, Bodhisattvas who hope to be reborn to help sentient beings must retain the seed of existence. According to the Vijnaptimatratasiddhi Sastra, a Bodhisttva retains the obstacle of defilement to sustain his vow to be reborn into the samsara world. However, he is reborn, fully mindful and conscious of whatever place where he chooses to be reborn. In fact, he is not contaminated by the defilements owing to the fact that he has stayed with the view of pratyasanutpada for a long time, there is the “guarding of defilements”. *Second*, a Bodhisattva always has the “Four Immeasurable Minds” known as maitri, karuna, mudita and upeksha, which are not to be viewed in discreteness or in isolation. Maitri is the center of the others, and the remaining three are its corelation. Maitri is the basis of Karuna. It stands for love, respect and care for all lives. It is concreteness of loving kindness based on the feeling that just as our life is precious to us, so also is the life of others. Mudita is altruistic sympathetic joy. It is happiness in the happiness of all. It is a consequence of Karuna. Upeksha is the prerequisite of Karuna. It stands for compassion to all beings. It also means equanimity of mind apart from partiality. *Third*, on the Bodhisattva’s Path, with the development of Bodhicitta, Bodhisattvas always practice the paramitas. In other words, the Path from sentient beings to Bodhisattvas and the realization

of complete fulfillment of Enlightenment, Bodhisattvas must always try to practice all the paramitas.

Chapter Four

Actions & Deportment of Practitioners Who Cultivate In Accordance With the Bodhisattva Ideal

I. An Overview of Great Bodhisattvas' Actions & Deportments In Buddhist Teachings:

As mentioned above, Bodhisattva is one whose beings or essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. For example, Bodhisattva of Universal Worthy or Bodhisattva of Great Conduct or Samantabhadra Bodhisattva foremost in practice, a Bodhisattva who personifies the transcendental practices and vows of the Buddhas, usually depicted seated on a six-tusked elephant (six paramitas). He is best known for his ten great vows which we recite every day in Daily reciting Sutra. Persisting in all practices of Enlightening Beings, freely exercising spiritual powers and attaining mastery of them all, is a palace of enlightening beings because they autonomously and skillfully exercise the knowledge of meditations, liberations, and concentrations. Bodhisattva practice (Bodhisattva's practising) according to the tradition of Northern Buddhism. In the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the ten necessary activities, or practices of a Bodhisattva: the conduct of happiness, the conduct of benefitting, the conduct of non-opposition, the conduct of endlessness, the conduct of freedom from deluded confusion, the conduct of wholesome manifestation, the conduct of non-attachment, the conduct of veneration, the conduct of wholesome Dharma, and the conduct of true actuality. *According to the Buddha in The Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, Great Enlightening Beings have ten kinds of practice which help them attain the practice of the unexcelled knowledge and wisdom of Buddhas: First, practice dealing with all sentient beings, to develop them all to maturity. Second, practice seeking all truths, to learn them all. Third, practice of all roots of goodness, to cause them all to grow.*

Fourth, practice of all concentration, to be single-minded, without distraction. *Fifth*, practice of all knowledge, to know everything. *Sixth*, practice of all cultivations, to be able to cultivate them all. *Seventh*, practice dealing with all Buddha-lands, to adorn them all. *Eighth*, practice dealing with all good companions, respecting and supporting them. *Ninth*, practice dealing with all Buddhas, honoring and serving them. *Tenth*, practice all supernatural powers, to be able to transform anywhere, anytime to help sentient beings. *In Bodhisattvas' actions and deportments, there are ten vows of conduct of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva: First*, worship and respect all Buddhas. *Second*, praise the Thus Come Ones. *Third*, make abundant offerings. *Fourth*, repent misdeeds and hindrances. *Fifth*, rejoice at others' merits and virtues. *Sixth*, request the Buddha to turn the Dharma Wheel. *Seventh*, request the Buddha to remain in the world. *Eighth*, follow the teachings of the Buddha at all times. *Ninth*, accommodate and benefit all sentient beings. *Tenth*, transfer merits and virtues universally. Also according to *The Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten other kinds of action of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can achieve the action of Buddhas that has no coming or going: First*, hearing the Teaching, out of fondness for truth. *Second*, expounding the Teaching to benefit sentient beings. *Third*, getting rid of covetousness, anger, delusion, and fear, by taming their own minds. *Fourth*, action in the realm of desire, to teach beings in that realm. *Fifth*, concentration in the realm of form and formlessness, to foster quick return to noncontamination. *Sixth*, aiming for the meaning of the Teaching, to quickly attain wisdom. *Seventh*, action in the realm of life, to freely edify sentient beings. *Eighth*, action in all Buddha-lands, honoring all Buddhas. *Ninth*, Nirvanic action, not cutting off the continuity of birth and death. *Tenth*, fulfilling all qualities of Buddhahood without giving up application of the principles of Enlightening Beings.

II. Actions & Deportment of Practitioners Who Cultivate In Accordance With the Bodhisattva Ideal:

A Bodhisattva Always Vow to Devote the Mind to Bodhi (Bodhicita): In Buddhism, the supreme state of enlightenment is called "Bodhi". Bodhi is the highest state of Samadhi in which the mind is

awakened and illuminated. The term “Bodhi” is derived from the Sanskrit root “Budh,” meaning “knowledge,” “Understanding,” or “Perfect wisdom” and the practice of the four noble truths to eliminate sufferings. Bodhi is derived from the Sanskrit root “Budh,” meaning “knowledge,” “Understanding,” or “Perfect wisdom.” A term that is often translated as “enlightenment” by Western translators, but which literally means “Awakening.” Like the term BUDDHA, it is derived from the Sanskrit root buddh, “to wake up,” and in Buddhism it indicates that a person has “awakened” from the sleep of ignorance in which most beings spend their lives. According to Buddhist legend, the Buddha attained bodhi in the town of BODHGAYA while sitting in meditation under the Bodhi Tree or Bodhi-Vrksa. The word ‘Bodhi’ means ‘Perfect Wisdom’ or ‘Transcendental Wisdom,’ or ‘Supreme Enlightenment.’ Bodhi is the state of truth or the spiritual condition of a Buddha or Bodhisattva. The cause of Bodhi is Prajna (wisdom) and Karuna (compassion). The highest state of Samadhi in which the mind is awakened and illuminated. According to the Hinayana, bodhi is equated with the perfection of insight into and realization of the four noble truths, which means the cessation of suffering. According to the Mahayana, bodhi is mainly understood as enlightened wisdom. ***There are three kinds of bodhi:*** *First*, the enlightenment of sravakas. *Second*, the enlightenment of Pratyeka-buddhas. *Third*, the enlightenment of Buddhas. ***To talk about Bodhi-mind, there are three kinds of Bodhi-mind:*** *First*, to start out for bodhi-mind to act out one’s vows to save all living beings. *Second*, Bodhi-mind which is beyond description, and which surpasses mere earthly ideas. And *third*, Samadhi-bodhi mind. ***Besides, there are five bodhi or stages of enlightenment:*** *First*, resolve on supreme bodhi. *Second*, mind control the passions and observance of the paramitas. *Third*, mental enlightenment, study and increase in knowledge and in the prajnaparamitas. *Fourth*, mental expansion, freedom from the limitations of reincarnation and attainment of complete knowledge. *Fifth*, attainment of a passionless condition and of supreme perfect enlightenment.

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Bodhicitta, or the ‘Thought of Enlightenment’ is an important concept in both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. Though not directly mentioned, the idea is explicit in the Theravada Buddhism. It was in Mahayana, however, that the Bodhicitta concept developed along both ethical and metaphysical lines and this development is found in Vajrayana too, wherein it also came to be regarded as a state of ‘great bliss’. In Mahayana it developed along with pantheistic lines, for it was held that Bodhicitta is latent in all beings and that it is merely a manifestation of the Dharmakaya, or Bhutatathata in the human heart. Though the term Bodhicitta does not occur in Pali, this concept is found in Pali canonical literature where, for example, we are told how Gautama after renouncing household life resolved to strive to put an end to all the sufferings. It is this comprehension that came to be known as the Enlightenment, and Gautama came to be known as the Enlightened One, the Buddha. Bodhi Mind, or the altruistic mind of enlightenment is a mind which wishes to achieve attainment of enlightenment for self, spontaneously achieve enlightenment for all other sentient beings. The spirit of Enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it, the Mind set on Enlightenment. Bodhicitta is defined as the altruistic intention to become fully enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings. The attainment of enlightenment is necessary for not

only in order to be capable of benefitting others, but also for the perfection of our own nature. Bodhi mind is the gateway to Enlightenment and attainment of Buddha. An intrinsic wisdom or the inherently enlightened heart-mind, or the aspiration toward perfect enlightenment. The Buddha taught: “All sentient beings are perfectly equal in that they all possess the Buddha nature. This means that we all have the Bodhi seed or the seed of kindness of a Buddha, and the compassion of a Buddha towards all living beings, and therefore the potential for enlightenment and for perfection lies in each one of us. “Bodhicitta” is a Sanskrit term means “Mind of Awakening.” In Mahayan Buddhism, this refers to Bodhisattva’s aspiration to attain Buddhahood in order to benefit other sentient beings (the aspiration of a bodhisattva for supreme enlightenment for the welfare of all). Therefore, the mind for or of Bodhi (the Mind of Enlightenment, the awakened or enlightened mind) is the mind that perceives the real behind the seeming, believes in moral consequences, and that all have the Buddha-nature, and aims at Buddhahood.

The spirit of enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it, the mind set on Enlightenment. It involves two parallel aspects. First, the determination to achieve Buddhahood (above is to seek Bodhi). Second, the aspiration to rescue all sentient beings (below is to save or transform all beings). Mind of enlightenment, mind of love, mind of deepest request to realize oneself and work for the well-being of all. The mind of enlightenment or the aspiration of a Bodhisattva for supreme enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. It is often divided into two aspects: 1) the intention to become awakened; and 2) acting on the intention by pursuing the path to awakening (Bodhi). According to Zen Master Suzuki in the Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhicitta is the most important characteristic of Bodhisattva, thus on the basis of Nagarjuna’s Discourse on the Transcendentality of the Bodhicitta, he gives a detailed description of Bodhicitta. First, the Bodhicitta is free from all determinations, the five skandhas, the twelve ayatanas, and the eighteen dhatus. It is not particular, but universal. Second, love is the essence of the Bodhicitta, therefore, all Bodhisattvas find their reason of being in this. Third, the Bodhicitta abides in the heart of sameness (samata) creates individual means of salvation (upaya). Fourth, evidently Maitreya exhausted his

power of speech in order to extol the importance of the Bodhicitta in the career of a Bodhisattva, for without this being dully impressed on the mind of the young Buddhist pilgrim Sudhana, he could not have been led into the interior of the Tower of Vairocana. The Tower harbors all the secrets that belong to the spiritual life of the highest Buddhist. If the novice were not quite fully prepared for the initiation, the secrets would have no signification whatever. They may even be grossly misunderstood, and the result will be calamitous indeed. For this reason, Maitreya left not a stone unturned to show Sudhana what the Bodhicitta really meant.

According to the Avatamsaka Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Good Buddhists! In Bodhisattvas arise the Bodhi-mind, the mind of great compassion, for the salvation of all beings; the mind of great kindness, for the unity with all beings; the mind of happiness, to stop the mass misery of all beings; the altruistic mind, to repulse all that is not good; the mind of mercy, to protect from all fears; the unobstructed mind, to get rid of all obstacles; the broad mind, to pervade all universes; the infinite mind, to pervade all spaces; the undefiled mind, to manifest the vision of all Buddhas; the purified mind, to penetrate all knowledge of past, present and future; the mind of knowledge, to remove all obstructive knowledge and enter the ocean of all-knowing knowledge. Just as someone in water is in no danger from fire, the Bodhisattva who is soaked in the virtue of the aspiration for enlightenment or Bodhi mind, is in no danger from the fire of knowledge of individual liberation. Just as a diamond, even if cracked, relieves poverty, in the same way the diamond of the Bodhi mind, even if split, relieves the poverty of the mundane whirl. Just as a person who takes the elixir of life lives for a long time and does not grow weak, the Bodhisattva who uses the elixir of the Bodhi mind goes around the mundane whirl for countless eons without becoming exhausted and without being stained by the ills of the mundane whirl. The Avatamsaka Sutra also says: “To neglect the Bodhi Mind when practicing good deeds is the action of demons.” This teaching is very true indeed. For example, if someone begins walking without knowing the destination or goal of his journey, isn’t his trip bound to be circuitous, tiring and useless? It is the same for the cultivator. If he expends a great deal of effort but forgets the goal of attaining Buddhahood to benefit himself and others, all his efforts

will merely bring merits in the human and celestial realms. In the end he will still be deluded and revolved in the cycle of Birth and Death, undergoing immense suffering. If this is not the action of demons, what, then, is it? For this reason, developing the Supreme Bodhi Mind to benefit oneself and others should be recognized as a crucial step.

A Bodhisattva's Bodhi mind vows not only to destroy the lust of himself, but also to destroy the lust for all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva who makes the Bodhi mind always vows to be the rain of food and drink to clear away the pain of thirst and hunger during the aeon of famine (to change himself into food and drink to clear away human beings' famine). That person always vows to be a good doctor, good medicine, or a good nurse for all sick people until everyone in the world is healed. That person always vows to become an inexhaustible treasure for those who are poor and destitute. For the benefiting of all sentient beings, the person with Bodhi mind is willing to give up his virtue, materials, enjoyments, and even his body without any sense of fatigue, regret, or withdrawal. That person always believes that Nirvana is nothing else but a total giving up of everything (giving up does not mean throwing away or discarding, but it means to give out for the benefit of all sentient beings). In daily life, that person always stays calm even though he may get killed, abused or beaten by others. That person always vows to be a protector for those who need protection, a guide for all travellers on the way, a bridge or a boat for those who wish to cross a river, a lamp for those who need light in a dark night.

Devout Buddhists should always have the Bodhi-mind that acts out the vows to save all living beings means to start out for bodhi-mind to act out one's vows to save all living beings (all beings possess Tathagata-garbha nature and can become a Buddha; therefore, vow to save them all). The Mahavairocana Sutra says: "The Bodhi Mind is the cause - Great Compassion is the root - Skillful means are the ultimate." For example, if a person is to travel far, he should first determine the goal of the trip, then understand its purpose, and lastly, choose such expedient means of locomotion as automobiles, ships, or planes to set out on his journey. It is the same for the cultivator. He should first take Supreme Enlightenment as his ultimate goal, and the compassionate mind which benefits himself and others as the purpose of his

cultivation, and then, depending on his references and capacities, choose a method, Zen, Pure Land or Esoterism, as an expedient for practice. Expedients, or skillful means, refer, in a broader sense, to flexible wisdom adapted to circumstances, the application of all actions and practices, whether favorable or unfavorable, to the practice of the Bodhisattva Way. For this reason, the Bodhi Mind is the goal that the cultivator should clearly understand before he sets out to practice.

A Bodhisattva Always Practises the Four Immeasurable Minds: In Buddhism, an immeasurable mind is a mind of greatness, a mind that cannot be measurable. It not only benefit immeasurable living beings, bringing immeasurable blessings to them, and producing immeasurable highly spiritual attainments in a world, in one life, but also spreads all over immeasurable worlds, in immeasurable future lives, shaping up immeasurable Buddha. The four immeasurables or infinite Buddha-states of mind (Four Immeasurable Minds or the four virtues of infinite greatness). The four kinds of boundless mind, or four divine abodes. These states are called illimitables because they are to be radiated towards all living beings without limit or obstruction. They are also called brahmaviharas or divine abodes, or sublime states, because they are the mental dwellings of the brahma divinities in the Brahma-world. Immeasurable Minds are subjects of meditation that bring great benefits to practitioners. Buddhist practitioners should always observe these four immeasurable minds, for they are four excellent virtues conducive to noble living. They banish selfishness and disharmony and promote altruism with other beings, unity in the family, and good brotherhood in communities. In meditation practice, they are four minds of deliverance, for through them we can recognize the good of others. Therefore, the four immeasurable minds can also be considered as excellent subjects of meditation, through them practitioners can develop more sublime states. By cultivating these noble virtues, practitioners can maintain a calm and pure mind.

In the history of Buddhism, it was the spirit of love and compassion taught by the Buddha that touched the heart of King Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor of India in the third century B.C. Before he became a Buddhist he was a warlike monarch like his father, King Bimbisara, and his grandfather, King Candragupta. Wishing to extend his territories he invaded and conquered Kalinga. In this war thousands were slain, while many more were wounded and taken captive. Later, however, when he followed the Buddha's creed of compassion he realized the folly of killing. He felt very sad when he thought of the great slaughter, and gave up warfare. He is the only military monarch

on record who after victory gave up conquest by war and inaugurated conquest by righteousness. As his Rock Edict XIII says, 'he sheathed the sword never to unsheath it, and wish no harm to living beings.' The spread of the Buddha's creed of compassion throughout the Eastern world was largely due to the enterprise and tireless efforts of Asoka the Great. The Buddha-law made Asia mild and non-aggressive. However, modern civilization is pressing hard on Asian lands. It is known that with the rise and development of the so-called civilization, man's culture deteriorates and he changes for the worse. With the match of modern science very many changes have taken place, and all these changes and improvements, being material and external, tend to make modern man more and more worldly minded and sensuous with the result that he neglects the qualities of the mind, and becomes self-interested and heartless. The waves of materialism seem to influence mankind and affect their way of thinking and living. People are so bound by their senses, they live so exclusively in the material world that they fail to contact the good within. Only the love and compassion taught by the Buddha can establish complete mental harmony and well-being.

A Bodhisattva Always Practises the Four Immeasurable Minds: The immeasurable is a mind that is inconceivably vast. It not only benefit immeasurable living beings, bringing immeasurable blessings to them, and producing immeasurable highly spiritual attainments in a world, in one life, but also spreads all over immeasurable worlds, in immeasurable future lives, shaping up immeasurable Buddha. The four immeasurables or infinite Buddha-states of mind. Four Immeasurable Minds. The four virtues of infinite greatness. The four kinds of boundless mind, or four divine abodes. These states are called illimitables because they are to be radiated towards all living beings without limit or obstruction. They are also called brahmaviharas or divine abodes, or sublime states, because they are the mental dwellings of the brahma divinities in the Brahma-world. In fact, there are a lot of small virtues that Buddhist practitioners need to prepare before and during practicing meditation. Buddhist practitioners should cultivate to a point that they would be happy with other's success and sympathy with other's miseries. They would keep themselves modest when achieving success. However, the Buddha pointed out four immeasurable minds. These four immeasurable minds are not only benefit immeasurable living beings, bringing immeasurable blessings to them, and producing immeasurable highly spiritual attainments in a world, in one life, but also spreads all over immeasurable worlds, in immeasurable future lives, shaping up immeasurable Buddha.

Mind of Immeasurable Loving Kindness: Kindness, benevolence, one of the principal Buddhist virtues. Maitri is a benevolence toward all beings that is free from attachment. Maitri can be developed gradually through meditation,

first toward persons who are close to us, then to others, and at last to those who are indifferent and ill-disposed to us, for the mind of loving-kindness is the wish for the welfare and happiness of all beings. *Mind of Immeasurable Compassion*: Immeasurable Compassion means sympathy, or pity (compassion) for another in distress and desire to help him or to deliver others from suffering out of pity. The compassion is selfless, non-egoistic and based on the principle of universal equality. 'Karuna' means pity or compassion. In Pali and Sanskrit, 'Karuna' is defined as 'the quality which makes the heart of the good man tremble and quiver at the distress of others.' The quality that rouses tender feelings in the good man at the sight of others' suffering. *Mind of Immeasurable Inner Joy*: Immeasurable Joy, a mind of great joy, or infinite joy. Boundless joy (gladness), on seeing others rescued from suffering. Here a cultivator, with a heart filled with sympathetic joy. Thus he stays, spreading the thought of sympathetic joy above, below, across, everywhere, always with a heart filled with sympathetic joy, abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will. Appreciative joy is the quality of rejoicing at the success and prosperity of others. It is the congratulatory attitude, and helps to eliminate envy and discontent over the success of others. Immeasurable inner joy also means to rejoice in all good, to rejoice in the welfare of others, or to do that which one enjoys, or to follow one's inclination. *Mind of Perfect Equanimity*: One of the chief Buddhist virtues, that of renunciation, leading to a state of indifference without pleasure or pain, or independence of both. It is defined as the mind in equilibrium, i.e. above the distinction of things or persons, of self or others; indifferent, having abandoned the world and all things, and having no affections or desires.

Buddhist practitioners should always observe these four immeasurable minds, for they are four excellent virtues conducive to noble living. They banish selfishness and disharmony and promote altruism with other beings, unity in the family, and good brotherhood in communities. In meditation practice, they are four minds of deliverance, for through them we can recognize the good of others. Therefore, the four immeasurable minds can also be considered as excellent subjects of meditation, through them practitioners can develop more sublime states. By cultivating these noble virtues, practitioners can maintain a calm and pure mind. The Zen method of self-analysis, self-reflection, and self-discovery should never be taken to imply that we are to shut ourselves off from communion with our fellow men. To follow the way of Zen is not to become isolated in a cage or cell, but to become free and open in our relations with our fellow beings. The search for self-realization always has its counterpart the development of a new way of relating to others, a way imbued with compassion, love and sympathy with all that live.

A Bodhisattva Always Practises the Six Paramitas: Paramitas means perfected, traversed, perfection, or crossed over, or gone to the opposite shore (reaching the other shore). According to the Sanskrit language, Paramitas mean crossing-over. Paramitas also mean the things that ferry beings beyond the sea of mortality to nirvana. Paramitas mean stages of spiritual perfection followed by the Bodhisattva in his progress to Buddhahood. Paramitas, the virtues of perfection are not only characteristic of Mahayana Buddhism in many ways, they also contain virtues commonly held up as cardinal by all religious systems. They consist of the practice and highest possible development. Thus, practicing the paramitas will lead the practitioner to cross over from the shore of the unenlightened to the dock of enlightenment. The term “Paramita” has been interpreted differently. T. Rhys Davids and William Stede give the meanings: completeness, perfection, highest state. H.C. Warren translates it as perfection. And some other Buddhist scholars translate “Paramita” as transcendental virtue or perfect virtue. The Sanskrit term “Paramita” is transliterated into Chinese as “Po-luo-mi.” “Po-luo” is Chinese for “pineapple”, and “mi” means “honey.” In Buddhism, “Paramita” means to arrive at the other shore, to ferry across, or save, without limit. Paramita also means perfection, or crossed over, or gone to the opposite shore (reaching the other shore). Crossing from Samsara to Nirvana or crossing over from this shore of births and deaths to the other shore. Practice which leads to Nirvana. Paramita also means to achieve, finish, or accomplish completely whatever we do. For instance, if we decide to cultivate to become a Buddha, then the realization of Buddhahood is “Paramita.” The (six) practices of the Bodhisattva who has attained the enlightened mind. The term “Paramita” is popular for both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism. According to the Sanskrit language, Paramita means crossing-over. There are six Paramitas or six things that ferry one beyond the sea of mortality to nirvana. Six stages of spiritual perfection followed by the Bodhisattva in his progress to Buddhahood. The six virtues of perfection are not only characteristic of Mahayana Buddhism in many ways, they also contain virtues commonly held up as cardinal by all religious systems. They consist of the practice and highest possible development. Thus, practicing the six paramitas will lead the practitioner to cross over from the shore of the unenlightened to the dock of enlightenment. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha gave three kinds of Paramitas: Super-worldly paramita in the highest sense for Bodhisattvas, Super-worldly paramita for Sravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, Worldly paramita. However, according to the Avatamsaka Sutra, there is only one Paramita, that is the Prajna-Paramita Emancipation.

After the Buddha’s Great Enlightenment, He discovered that all life is linked together by causes and conditions, and He also saw all the sufferings

and afflictions of the world. He saw every sentient beings, from the smallest insect to the greatest king, ran after pleasure, only to end up with sufferings and afflictions. Out of great compassion for all sentient beings, the Buddha renounced the world to become a monk to cultivate to find ways to save beings. After six years of ascetic practices, He finally discovered the Way to cross over from this shore, which is also called “Paramita”. According to Buddhism, “Paramita” means to cross over from this shore of births and deaths to the other shore, or nirvana. If we try to cultivate and can see the truth clearly as the Buddha Himself had seen, eventually, we would be able to end all sufferings and afflictions. According to most Mahayana Sutras, the six things that ferry one beyond the sea of birth and death. In addition, the Six Paramitas are also the doctrine of saving all living beings. The six paramitas are also sometimes called the cardinal virtues of a Bodhisattva. Besides, Bodhisattvas use the Six Paramitas as their method of cultivation. Giving that takes stinginess across; moral precepts that takes across transgressions; patience that takes across anger and hatred; vigor that takes across laxness and laziness; meditation that takes across scatterness; and wisdom that takes across stupidity. When these six paramitas have been cultivated to perfection, one can become enlightened.

A Bodhisattva Always Practise the Four All-Embracing Virtues: Four all-embracing virtues are four ways of leading human beings to emancipation or four bases of popularity: giving, pleasant speech, beneficial conduct, and engaging in the same work. *First, Dana or Charity:* Giving, generosity, or giving unsparingly what others need in order to lead them to love and receive the truth. *Second, Priyavacana or Kindly Talk:* Kind speech, or pleasant words, or affectionate speech, or kind communication, or kind words which help beings love and receive the truth. *Third, Artha-carya or Useful Deeds:* Beneficial action, useful conduct, or beneficial action, conduct profitable to others, beneficial conduct which helps others love and receive the truth. *Fourth, Samana-arthata or Engaging in the Same Work:* Cooperation, comradeship and accommodation, like work, sharing a common aim, or cooperation with and adaptation of oneself to others, to lead them into the truth. The four elements of sociability is a gate of Dharma illumination; for with them we accept all living beings and after we have attained the truth of bodhi, we bestow upon all living beings the Dharma. Four ways of leading human beings to emancipation. Also called four means of integration, four integrative methods, four means of integration, four attractions, four Dharmas of attraction, or four all-embracing virtues.

Chapter Five

The Spirit of Fearlessness in the Bodhisattva Ideal

I. An Overview of the Spirit of Fearlessness In Buddhist Teachings:

Fearlessness is one of the eight characteristics of a Buddha's speaking. The gesture (Abhaya-mudra) of Fearlessness of Sakyamuni Buddha right after he attained enlightenment (the right hand is raised to shoulder level with fingers extended and palm turned outward). For Great Bodhisattvas, power of fearlessness which can explain all truths is one of the ten kinds of power possessed by Great Enlightening Beings. Meanwhile, Fearless Bhumi is the position where one feels no fear to greed, anger, ignorance, birth, old age, illness, death. According to The Surangama Sutra, book Six, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva reported to the Buddha about fourteen fearlessnesses as follows: "World Honored One! Using this vajra samadhi of becoming permeated with hearing and cultivating hearing, and use the miraculous strength of effortlessness, because I have a kind regard equally for all living beings in the six paths, I go throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time cause all living beings who encounter bodies of mine to receive the meritorious virtue of fourteen kinds of fearlessness." Great Enlightening Beings are always the bestowers of fearlessness to all beings. When someone encounters disasters or calamities which terrify him, at that moment the Bodhisattva removes his anxieties and sufferings through one's own efforts. Dispelling fear means to give the gift of fearlessness. The giving of fearlessness is the best way that can give a genuine peaceful and happy environment for everyone, because a real state of fearlessness is considered as synonymous with the freedom and bliss without war, dislike, fighting, killing, etc.

II. Some Bodhisattvas' Typical Fearlessnesses:

Great Enlightening Beings have many kinds of fearlessness. The followings are some typical ones: *Great Bodhisattvas' Four Kinds of Fearlessness*: *First*, Bodhisattva-fearlessness arises from powers of memory and ability to preach without fear. *Second*, Bodhisattva-fearlessness arises from powers of moral diagnosis and application of the remedy. *Third*, Bodhisattva-fearlessness arises from powers of ratiocination. *Fourth*, Bodhisattva-fearlessness arises from powers of solving doubts.

III. Cultivation With the Bodhisattva Ideal By Living & Cultivating In Accordance With Fearlessnesses in Buddhist Scriptures:

Cultivation In Accordance With the Bodhisattva Ideal With Fourteen Fearlessnesses in the Flower Adornment Sutra: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of fearlessness of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can attain the supreme great fearlessness of Buddhas without giving up the fearlessness of Enlightening Beings. *The first fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings can remember all verbal explanations. Even if Infinite (hundreds of thousands of) people should come from all over and ask them about hundred thousand great principles. They would see nothing difficult to answer about those questions. Their minds become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness, able to answer any questions and resolve doubts, without any timidity. *The second fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings attain the unimpeded intellectual powers bestowed by Buddha and arrive at the furthest reaches of revelation of the secrets intimated by all speech and writing. They think that even if infinite people should come from ten directions and ask them about infinite doctrines, they would not see anything difficult to answer about those questions. Their minds become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness. They are able to answer any question and resolve doubts, without timidity. *The third fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings know all things are empty and are without self, nothing pertaining self, without creation or creator, without knower, without life, without soul, without personality,

detached from mind, detached from body, detached from sense, detached sense experience; forever leave all views, and their minds are like space. They reflect that they do not see sentient beings in any way harmful to them in term of physical, verbal, or mental action. Enlightening Beings do not see anything as having any essence at all. Therefore their minds become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of fearlessness. They are firm, stable, and brave, impossible to discourage or break down. *The fourth fearlessness* states that Enlightening beings are protected and sustained by the power of Buddha. They live according to the conduct of Buddhas. Their action is truthful and never degenerates. They reflect that they do not see any conduct in themselves that would provoke the criticism of others. Therefore their minds become fearless and they teach calmly among the masses. *The fifth fearlessness* states that the physical, verbal, and mental actions of Great Enlightening Beings are immaculate, pure, harmonious, and free from all evils. They reflect that they do not see any physical, verbal, or mental action in them that is blameworthy. Therefore their minds become fearless, and they are able to cause sentient beings to live by the teachings of Buddha. *The sixth fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings are always accompanied and guarded by Powerful thunderbolt-bearers, Celestial rain spirits, Demigods, Celestial musicians, Titans, Indra, Brahma, and the world-guardian gods. All Buddhas watch over them heedfully. They reflect that they do not see that there are any demons, false teachers, or people with set views that can hinder their practice of the path of Enlightening Beings in any way. Therefore their minds become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness. They become very joyful and carry out the deeds of Enlightening Beings. *The seventh fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings have developed the faculty of recollection and are free from forgetfulness, as approved by Buddhas. They reflect that they do not see any sign of forgetfulness of the ways of expressing the path of attainment of enlightenment as explained by the Buddhas. Therefore their minds become fearless, absorb and hold all Buddhas' true teachings, and carry out the practices of Enlightening Beings. *The eighth fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings have already attained knowledge and skill in means and have consummated the

powers of enlightening beings. They always strive to edify all sentient beings. Their aspiration is always focused on perfect enlightenment, yet because of compassion for sentient beings, to perfect sentient beings. They appear to be born in the polluted world of afflictions, noble, with a full retinue, able to satisfy all their desires at will, leading a pleasant happy life. They reflect that although they are together with their family and associates, they do not see anything to be attached to the extent that they give up their cultivation of the ways of Enlightening Beings, such as meditation, liberations, concentrations, dharani spells, and analytic and expository powers, because Great Enlightening Beings are already free in the midst of all things and have reached the Other Shore. They cultivate the practices of Enlightening Beings and vow never to stop. They do not see any object in the world that can disturb the path of the Enlightening Being. Their minds become fearless, and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness, and by the power of great vows they manifest in all worlds. *The ninth fearlessness* states that by the power of the great determination for omniscience, Great Enlightening Beings never forget the determination for omniscience. They carry on the practices of enlightening beings, riding the Great Vehicle, demonstrate the tranquil comportment of all saints and Individual Illuminates. They reflect that they do not see in themselves any sign of needing to gain emancipation by means of the lesser vehicles of individual salvation. Therefore their mind become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness, while able to demonstrate to all the paths of all vehicles of liberation, they ultimately fulfill the impartial Great Vehicle. *The tenth fearlessness* states that Great Enlightening Beings always perfect all good and pure qualities, be imbued with virtues, fully develop spiritual powers, ultimately abide in the enlightenment of all Buddhas, fulfill all practices of Enlightening Beings, receive from the Buddhas the prediction of coronation with omniscience, and always teach sentient beings to carry on the path of Enlightening Beings. They reflect that they do not see any sign of even a single sentient being who can be developed to maturity to whom they cannot show the masteries of Buddhas in order to develop them. Therefore their minds become fearless and they ultimately reach the Other Shore of great fearlessness. They do not stop the practices of enlightening beings, do

not give up the vows of Enlightening Beings, and show the sphere of Buddhahood to any sentient beings who can learn, in order to teach and liberate them.

Cultivation In Accordance With the Bodhisattva Ideal With Fourteen Fearlessnesses in the Surangama Sutra: According to The Surangama Sutra, book Six, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva reported to the Buddha about fourteen fearlessnesses as follows: “World Honored One! Using this vajra samadhi of becoming permeated with hearing and cultivating hearing, and use the miraculous strength of effortlessness, because I have a kind regard equally for all living beings in the six paths, I go throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time cause all living beings who encounter bodies of mine to receive the meritorious virtue of fourteen kinds of fearlessness.” *First*, because I do not contemplate sounds for my own sake, but rather listen to the sounds of those whom I contemplate, I can enable living beings throughout the ten directions who are suffering and in distress to attain liberation by contemplating their sounds. *Second*, since my knowledge and views have turned around and come back, I can make it so that if living beings are caught in a raging fire, the fire will not burn them. *Third*, since contemplation and listening have turned around and come back, I can make it so that if living beings are floundering in deep water, the water cannot drown them. *Fourth*, since false thinking is cut off, and my mind is without thoughts of killing or harming, I can make it so that if living beings enter the territory of ghosts, the ghosts cannot harm them. *Fifth*, since I am permeated with hearing and have brought hearing to accomplishment, so that the six sense-organs have dissolved and returned to become identical with hearing, I can make it so that if living beings are about to be wounded, the knives will break into pieces. I can cause swords of war to have no more effect than if they were to slice into water, or if one were to blow upon light. *Sixth*, when the hearing permeates and the essence is bright, light pervades the Dharma realm, so that absolutely no darkness remains. I am then able to make it so that, though Yakshas, Rakshasas, Kumbhandas, Pischachas, and Putanas may draw near to living beings, the ghosts will not be able to see them. *Seventh*, when the nature of sound completely melts away and contemplation and hearing return and enter, so that I am separate from false and defiling sense-objects, I am able to make it so that if living beings are confined by cangues and fetters, the locks will not hold them. *Eight*, when sound is gone and the hearing is perfected, an

all-pervasive power of compassion arises, and I can make it so that if living beings are travelling a dangerous road, thieves will not rob them. *Ninth*, when one is permeated with hearing, one separates from worldly objects, and forms cannot rob one. Then I can make it so that living beings with a great deal of desire can leave greed and desire far behind. *Tenth*, when sound is so pure that there is no defiling object, the sense-organ and the external state are perfectly fused, without any complement and without anything complemented. Then I can make it so that living beings who are full of rage and hate will leave all hatred. *Eleventh*, when the dust has gone and has turned to light, the dharma realm and the body and mind are like crystal, transparent and unobstructed. Then I can make it so that all dark and dull-witted beings whose natures are obstructed, all Atyantikas, are forever free from stupidity and darkness. *Twelfth*, when matter dissipates and return to the hearing, then unmoving in the Bodhimanda I can travel through worlds without destroying the appearance of those worlds. I can make offerings to as many Buddhas, Thus Come Ones, as there are fine motes of dust throughout the ten directions. At the side of each Buddha I become a dharma prince, and I can make it so that childless living beings throughout the dharma realm who wish to have sons, are blessed with meritorious, virtuous, and wise sons. *Thirteenth*, with perfect penetration of the six sense-organs, the light and what is illumined are not two. Encompassing the ten directions, a great perfect mirror stands in the empty treasury of the Thus Come One. I inherit the secret dharma doors of as many Thus Come Ones as there are fine motes of dust throughout the ten directions. Receiving them without loss, I am able to make it so that childless living beings throughout the dharma realm who seek daughters are blessed with lovely daughters who are upright, virtuous, and compliant and whom everyone cherishes and respects. *Fourteenth*, in this three-thousand-great-thousand world system with its billions of suns and moons, as many dharma princes as there are grains of sand in sixty-two Ganges rivers appear in the world and cultivate the dharma. They act as models in order to teach and transform living beings. They comply with living beings by means of expedients and wisdom, in different ways for each. However, because I have obtained the perfect penetration of the sense-organ and have discovered the wonder of the ear-entrance, after which my body and mind subtly and miraculously included all of the dharma realm, I am able to make it so that living beings who uphold my name obtain as much merit and virtue as would be obtained by a person who upheld the names of all those Dharma Princes who are as many as the grains of sand in sixty-two Ganges rivers. World Honored One! There is no difference between the merit of my name and the merit of those other names, because from my cultivation I obtained true and perfect penetration.

Chapter Six

The Bodhisattva Ideal: Neither Exhausting the Mundane State Nor Staying in the Supramundane State

According to the Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita, nothing real is meant by the word “Bodhisattva,” because a Bodhisattva trains himself in non-attachment to all dharmas. And the Bodhisattva Ideal is neither exhausting the mundane state nor staying in the supramundane state. In short, a Bodhisattva is a great being awakes in non-attachment to full enlightenment in the sense that he understands all the dharmas, because he has enlightenment as his aim, an enlightened being. A Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. He usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. In Buddhism, all phenomena which are influenced by the production or birth, duration or existence, change, and annihilation. Anything which serves to divert beings away from inherent Buddha-nature. Outflows are so called because they are turning of energy and attention outward rather than inward. Functioning dharmas are things that are related to something else. All things of our everyday world are functioning dharmas in two ways: each one is dependent on a multiplicity of other events which surround it, and all of them are linked to suffering and ignorance through the twelve links of the chain of causation. The Buddha concludes with the famous verse in the Vajrachhedika-Prajna-Paramita Sutra: “All phenomena are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble and a shadow, like dew and lightning. Thus should you meditate upon them.” Meanwhile, “unconditioned” means “Not being produced or non-causative.” Whatever dharmas lack production, cessation, abiding, and change are “unconditioned.” In other words, “unconditioned, unproduced,” refers to everything that is completely beyond conditioned existence, beyond arising, dwelling and passing away. In original teaching only Nirvana was regarded as Unconditioned. According to other traditions, Unconditioned dharmas are those which are not produced to causes and conditions. In Sarvastivada school, there are three types of unconditioned dharmas: 1)

space (akasa); 2) analytical cessations (pratisamkhyā-nirodha); and 3) non-analytical cessations (apratisamkhyā-nirodha). The Theravada tradition, however, only recognizes one unconditioned dharma, Nirvana, which is a non-analytical cessation. According to the Vimalakīrti Sūtra, chapter eleven, the Bodhisattva Conduct, the Buddha told Bodhisattvas in the assembly: “In order to attain enlightenment, in cultivation, Bodhisattvas should neither be exhausting the mundane state; nor should they be staying in the supramundane state.” Then the Buddha preached the Bodhisattvas as follows: “There are the exhaustible and the inexhaustible Dharmas which you should study. What is the exhaustible? It is the active (yu wei or mundane) Dharma. What is the inexhaustible? It is the non-active (wu wei or supramundane) Dharma. As Bodhisattvas, you should not exhaust (or put an end to) the mundane (state); nor should you stay in the supramundane (state). Further, to win merits, a Bodhisattva does not stay in the supramundane, and to realize wisdom he does not exhaust the mundane. Because of his great kindness and compassion, he does not remain in the supramundane, and in order to fulfill all his vows, he does not exhaust the mundane. To gather the Dharma medicines he does not stay in the supramundane, and to administer remedies he does not exhaust the mundane. Since he knows the illnesses of all living beings he does not stay in the supramundane, and since he wants to cure their illnesses, he does not exhaust the mundane. Virtuous Ones, a Bodhisattva practicing this Dharma neither exhausts the mundane nor stays in the supramundane. This is called the exhaustible and inexhaustible Dharma doors to liberation which you should study. What is meant by not exhausting the mundane (state)? It means not discarding great benevolence; not abandoning great compassion; developing a profound mind set on the quest of all-knowledge (sarvajña) or Buddha knowledge) without relaxing for even an instant; indefatigable teaching and converting living beings; constant practice of the four Bodhisattva winning methods; upholding the right Dharma even at the risk of one’s body and life; unwearied planting of all excellent roots; unceasing application of expedient devices (upāya) and dedication (pariṇāmana); never-ending quest of the Dharma; unsparing preaching of it; diligent worship of all Buddhas; hence fearlessness when entering the stream of birth and death; absence of

joy in honour and of sadness in disgrace; refraining from slighting non-practisers of the Dharma; respecting practisers of Dharma as if they were Buddhas; helping those suffering from klesa to develop the right thought; keeping away from (desire and) pleasure with no idea of prizing such a high conduct; no preference for one's happiness but joy at that of others; regarding one's experience in the state of samadhi as similar to that in a hell; considering one's stay in samsara (i.e. state of birth and death) as similar to a stroll in a park; giving rise to the thought of being a good teacher of Dharma when meeting those seeking it; giving away all possessions to realize all-knowledge (sarvajna); giving rise to the thought of salvation when seeing those breaking the precepts; thinking of the (six) perfections (paramitas) as dear as one's parents; thinking of the (thirty-seven) conditions contributory to enlightenment as if they were one's helpful relatives; planting all excellent roots without any restrictions; gathering the glorious adornments of all pure lands to set up one's own Buddha land; unrestricted bestowal of Dharma to win all the excellent physical marks (of the Buddha); wiping out all evils to purify one's body, mouth and mind; developing undiminished bravery while transmigrating through samsara in countless aeons; untiring determination to listen to (an account of) the Buddha's countless merits; using the sword of wisdom to destroy the bandit of klesa (temptation) to take living beings out of (the realm of the five) aggregates (skandhas) and (twelve) entrances (ayatana) so as to liberate them for ever; using firm devotion to destroy the army of demons; unceasing search for the thought-free wisdom of reality; content with few desires while not running away from the world in order to continue the Bodhisattva work of salvation; not infringing the rules of respect-inspiring deportment while entering the world)to deliver living beings); use of the transcendental power derived from wisdom to guide and lead all living beings; controlling (dharani) the thinking process in order never to forget the Dharma; being aware of the roots of all living beings in order to cut off their doubts and suspicions (about their underlying nature); use of the power of speech to preach the Dharma without impediment; perfecting the ten good (deeds) to win the blessings of men and devas (in order to be reborn among them to spread the Dharma); practicing the four infinite minds (kindness, pity, joy and indifference) to teach the Brahma

heavens; rejoicing at being invited to expound and extol the Dharma in order to win the Buddha's (skillful) method of preaching; realizing excellence of body, mouth and mind to win the Buddha's respect-inspiring deportment; profound practice of good Dharma to make one's deeds unsurpassed; practicing Mahayana to become a Bodhisattva monk; and developing a never-receding mind in order not to miss all excellent merits. This is the Bodhisattva not exhausting the mundane state. What is the bodhisattva not staying in the supra-mundane state (nirvana)? It means studying and practicing the immaterial but without abiding in voidness; studying and practicing formlessness and inaction but without abiding in them; studying and practicing that which is beyond causes but without discarding the roots of good causation; looking into suffering in the world without hating birth and death (i.e. samsara); looking into the absence of the ego while continuing to teach all living beings indefatigably; looking into nirvana with no intention of dwelling in it permanently; looking into the relinquishment (of nirvana) while one's body and mind are set on the practice of all good deeds; looking into the (non-existing) destinations of all things while the mind is set on practicing excellent actions (as true destinations); looking into the unborn (i.e. the uncreate) while abiding in (the illusion of) life to shoulder responsibility (to save others); looking into passionlessness without cutting off the passion-stream (in order to stay in the world to liberate others); looking into the state of non-action while carrying out the Dharma to teach and convert living beings; looking into nothingness without forgetting about great compassion; looking into the right position (of nirvana) without following the Hinayana habit (of staying in it); looking into the unreality of all phenomena which are neither firm nor have an independent nature, and are egoless and formless, but since one's own fundamental vows are not entirely fulfilled, one should not regard merits, serenity and wisdom as unreal and so cease practicing them. This is the Bodhisattva not staying in the non-active (wu wei) state. Further, to win merits, a Bodhisattva does not stay in the supramundane, and to realize wisdom he does not exhaust the mundane. Because of his great kindness and compassion, he does not remain in the supramundane, and in order to fulfill all his vows, he does not exhaust the mundane. To gather the Dharma medicines he does not stay in the supramundane, and to administer remedies he does not exhaust the mundane. Since he knows the illnesses of all living beings he does not stay in the supramundane, and since he wants to cure their illnesses, he does not exhaust the mundane."

Chapter Seven

Characteristics That Bodhisattvas Need to Have On the Path to Achieve the Bodhisattva Ideal

According to the Prajna-paramita-sutra, the Buddha taught: “Doers of what is hard are the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who have set out to win supreme enlightenment. They do not wish to attain their own private Nirvana. On the contrary, they have survey the highly painful world of being, but they do not tremble at birth-and-death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the peace and happiness of the world. They have resolved, and yet desirous to win supreme enlightenment, they do not tremble at birth and death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the ease of the world, out of pity for the world. They have resolved: ‘We will become a shelter for the world, a refuge for all beings, the world’s place of rest, the final belief of all beings, islands of the world, lights of the world, leaders of the world, the world’s means of salvation.’” For these reasons, on the path to achieve the Bodhisattva Ideal, Bodhisattvas always need to have the following characteristics:

First, Bodhisattvas Always Have Ten Characteristics: *First*, Bodhisattvas’ keeping the seed of existence as a course for Bodhisattva’s future compassionate activities. They must retain the seed of existence all hope to be reborn in the samsara to help people in this world. According to the Vijnaptimatrasiddhi-sastra, Nagarjuna emphasized: “A Bodhisattva retains the obstacle of defilement to sustain his vow to be reborn into Samsara.” Therefore, a Bodhisattva is reborn, fully mindful and conscious of whatever place where he chooses to be reborn. Because he is not contaminated by the defilements owing to the fact that he has stayed with the view of causation (Pratityasamutpada) for a long time, there is a ‘guarding of defilement.’ *Second*, a Bodhisattva always has the “Four Immeasurable Minds” known as maitri, karuna, mudita and upeksha, which are not to be viewed in discreteness or in isolation. Maitri is the center of the others, and the remaining three are its corelation. Maitri is the basis of Karuna. It stands for love, respect and care for all lives. It is

concreteness of loving kindness based on the feeling that just as our life is precious to us, so also is the life of others. Mudita is altruistic sympathetic joy. It is happiness in the happiness of all. It is a consequence of Karuna. Upeksha is the prerequisite of Karuna. It stands for compassion to all beings. It also means equanimity of mind apart from partiality. *Third*, Bodhisattvas have irreversible qualities. A Bodhisattva seeks after the Enlightenment in Mahayana way and no other. For with the Great Vehicle, practitioners need a heart full of faith because the Buddha-dharma is as vast as the sea and can be entered only by means of faith. Faith is the mother of all merit and virtue of a Bodhisattva's cultivation. Therefore, belief in the Great Dharma is one of the characteristics of Mahasattvas. Great Bodhisattvas believe in all the great dharma. *Fourth*, Bodhisattvas have irreversibility of thought. Bodhisattvas are ever mindful in their practice of the Bodhisattva way, in the practice of the six perfections and thousands of conducts. *Fifth*, Bodhisattvas always have irreversibility of Practice. Bodhisattvas only go forward, they do not retreat. They also should be known by the attributes, tokens and signs of a Bodhisattva who is irreversible from Full Enlightenment. *Sixth*, Bodhisattvas always have irreversibility of Dharma Wheel. Bodhisattvas turn the wheel of dharma to teach and convert living beings. Therefore, once there exist Bodhisattvas, the Dharma Wheel forever turns in the Samsara. *Seventh*, Bodhisattvas always nurture deep and great roots of goodness. For many lives and throughout many kalpas, they have set down and nurtured roots of goodness which are extremely deep. Good roots are called "roots of virtue" and they are the basis of the way of virtue. They have sent down the roots of the virtuous nature. The roots which are limitless and boundless. *Eighth*, Bodhisattvas always possess great wisdom. The wisdom came as a result of having brought forth the great bodhi-heart. Bringing forth the great bodhi-heart, the resolve to take across all living beings and they are not attached to the mark of having made them crossed over. *Ninth*, Bodhisattvas always understand the great principle of Buddha-nature in all living beings. All living beings basically have Buddha-nature and can become Buddha. This is the great principle of the identity of all beings in principle with the Buddha. In principle, every one of us is a Buddha. The conducts of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging is one typical

example. His particular merit is that he respects every one. He spends his life wandering round the earth, approaching all kinds of people, whether he knew them or not to bow to them, he always says: "I would never dare disparage you, because you are all certain to attain Buddhahood." He never feels bad when people abuse or insult him because of his statement. But he continues unperturbed because he considers that all these people observe the course of duty of Bodhisattvas and are to become Buddhas. *Tenth*, Bodhisattvas always cultivate great conducts. Besides practicing the six or ten paramitas, Bodhisattvas also cultivate the four all-embracing virtues of Bodhisattvas.

Second, Bodhisattvas Also Have Ten Other Basic Characteristics:

First, a Bodhisattva does not detest anything in whatever world he may enter, for he knows (prajna) that all things are like reflected images. *Second*, a Bodhisattva are not defiled in whatever path he may walk, for he knows that all is a transformation. *Third*, he feels no fatigue whatever in his endeavor to mature all beings, for he knows that there is nothing to be designated as an ego-soul. *Fourth*, he is never tired of receiving all beings, for he is essentially love and compassion. *Fifth*, he has not fear in going through all kalpas, for he understands (adhimukta) that birth-and-death and all the skandhas are like a vision. *Sixth*, he does not destroy any path of existence, for he knows that all the Dhatus and Ayatanas are the Dharmadhatu. *Seventh*, he has no perverted view of the paths, for he knows that all thoughts are like a mirage. *Eighth*, he is not defiled even when he is in the realm of evil beings, for he knows that all bodies are mere appearances. *Ninth*, he is never enticed by any of the evil passions, for he has become a perfect master over things revealed. *Tenth*, he goes anywhere with perfect freedom, for he had full control over all appearances.

Third, Bodhisattvas Are Said to Have Issued From the Life and Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, and Have Ten Outstanding Qualifications: *First*, they are unattached in their conduct because they are able to expand themselves in all the Buddha-lands. *Second*, they manifest innumerable bodies because they can go over wherever there are Buddhas. *Third*, they are in possession of an unimpeded and unspoiled eyesight because they can perceive the miraculous transformations of all the Buddhas. *Fourth*, they are able to visit

anywhere without being bound to any one locality because they never neglect appearing in all places where the Buddhas attain to their enlightenment. *Fifth*, they are in possession of a limitless light because they can illumine the ocean of all the Buddha-truths with the light of their knowledge. *Sixth*, they have an inexhaustible power of eloquence through eternity because their speech has no taint. *Seventh*, they abide in the highest wisdom which knows no limits like space because their conduct is pure and free from taints. *Eighth*, they have no fixed abode because they reveal themselves personally in accordance with the thoughts and desires of all beings. *Ninth*, they are free from obscurities because they know that there are really no beings, no soul-substances in the world of being. *Tenth*, they are in possession of transcendental knowledge which is as vast as space because they illumine all the Dharmadhatus with their nets of light.

Fourth, Ten Bodhisattvas' Excellent Deeds in the Saha World:

According to the Vimalakirti, Chapter Tenth, Vimalakirti said: "As you have said, the Bodhisattvas of this world have strong compassion and their lifelong works of salvation for all living beings surpass those done in other pure lands during hundreds and thousands of aeons. Why? Because they achieved ten excellent deeds which are not required in other pure lands: *First*, charity (dana) to succour the poor. *Second*, precept-keeping (sila) to help those who have broken the commandments. *Third*, patient endurance (ksanti) to subdue their anger. *Fourth*, zeal and devotion (virya) to cure their remissness. *Fifth*, serenity (dhyana) to stop their confused thoughts. *Sixth*, wisdom (prajna) to wipe out ignorance. *Seventh*, putting an end to the eight distressful conditions for those suffering from them. *Eighth*, teaching Mahayana to those who cling to Hinayana. *Ninth*, cultivation of good roots for those in want of merits. *Tenth*, the four Bodhisattva winning devices for the purpose of leading all living beings to their goals (in Bodhisattva development)."

Fifth, Ten Bodhisattvas' Non-Seeking Practices: *First*, we should not wish (yearn) that our bodies be always free of diseases, because a disease-free body is prone to desire and lust (because with a disease-free body, one tends to be tempted with desire and lust). This will lead to precept-breaking and retrogression. *Second*, we should not wish that our lives be free of all misfortune, adversity, or accident because

without them, we will be easily prone to pride and arrogance. This will lead us to be disdainful and overbearing towards everyone else. If people's lives are perfect, everything is just as they always dreamed, without encountering heartaches, worries, afflictions, or any pains and sufferings, then this can easily give way to conceit, arrogance, etc.; thus, becoming the breeding ground for countless transgressions and offenses. Sincere Buddhists should always use misfortunes as the opportunity to awaken from being mesmerized by success, fame, fortune, wealth, etc. and realize the Buddha's teachings are true and accurate, and then use this realization to develop a cultivated mind seeking enlightenment. *Third*, we should not wish that our mind cultivation be free of all obstacles because without obstacles, we would not have opportunities to excell our mind. This will lead to the transgression of thinking that we have awakened, when in fact we have not. *Fourth*, we should not wish that our cultivation be free of demonic obstacles, because our vows would not be then firm and enduring. This leads to the transgression of thinking that we have attained, when in fact we have not. *Fifth*, we should not wish that our plans and activities meet with easy success, for we will then be inclined to thoughts of contempt and disrespect. This leads to the transgression of pride and conceit, thinking ourselves to be filled with virtues and talent. *Sixth*, we should not wish for gain in our social relations. This will lead us to violate moral principles and see only mistakes of others. *Seventh*, we should not wish that everyone, at all times, be on good terms and in harmony with us. This leads to pride and conceit and seeing only our own side of every issue. *Eighth*, we should not wish to be repaid for our good deeds, lest we develop a calculating mind. This leads to greed for fame and fortune. *Ninth*, we should not wish to share in opportunities for profit, lest the mind of illusion arise. This leads us to lose our good name and reputation for the sake of unwholesome gain. *Tenth*, when subject to injustice and wrong, we should not necessarily seek the ability to refute and rebut, as doing so indicates that the mind of self-and-others has not been severed. This will certainly lead to more resentment and hatred. Thus, the Buddha advised all of us to consider: Turn suffering and disease into good medicine (consider diseases and sufferings as miraculous medicine). Turn misfortune and calamity into liberation (take misfortune and adversity as means of liberation). Turn

obstacles or high stakes into freedom and ease (take obstacles as enjoyable ways to cultivate ourselves). Turn demons or haunting spirits into Dharma friends (take demonic obstacles as our good spiritual advisors). Turn trying events into peace and joy (consider difficulties as our joy of gaining experiences or life enjoyments). Turn bad friends into helpful associates (treat ungrateful people as our helpful aids). Turn opponents into “fields of flowers” (consider opponents as our good relationships). Treat ingratitude as worn-out shoes to be discarded (consider merits or services to others as ragged slippers). Turn frugality into power and wealth (take frugality as our honor). Turn injustice and wrong into conditions for progress along the Way (consider injustice or false accusations as our virtuous gate to enlightenment).

Sixth, Bodhisattvas' Ten Real Native Countries: According to Zen Master D.T. Suzuki in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Bodhisattvas have ten real native countries: *First*, wherever there is awakening of the Bodhicitta there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it belongs to the Bodhisattva-family. *Second*, wherever there is deep-heartedness, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where the family of good friends rises. *Third*, wherever there is the experience of the Bhumis, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where all the Paramitas grow. *Fourth*, wherever the great vows are made, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where deeds of devotion are carried on. *Fifth*, wherever there is a great all-embracing love, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where the four ways of acceptance developed. *Sixth*, wherever there is the right way of viewing things, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where transcendental knowledge takes its rise. *Seventh*, wherever the Mahayana thrives well, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where all the skilful means unfold. *Eighth*, wherever there is the training of all beings, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where the Buddhas are born. *Ninth*, wherever there are means born of transcendental knowledge, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where the recognition obtains that all things are unborn. *Tenth*, wherever there is the practicing of all the Buddha-teachings, there is the Bodhisattva's native land, because it is where all the Buddhas of past, present, and future are born.

Chapter Eight

The Bodhisattva Ideal of Breaking the False and Making Manifest the Right

According to the Prajna-paramita-sutra, the Buddha taught: “Doers of what is hard are the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who have set out to win supreme enlightenment. They do not wish to attain their own private Nirvana. On the contrary, they have survey the highly painful world of being, but they do not tremble at birth-and-death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the peace and happiness of the world. For the sake of the ideal of breaking the false and manifesting the right, they have resolved, and yet desirous to win supreme enlightenment, they do not tremble at birth and death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the ease of the world, out of pity for the world. They have resolved: ‘We will become a shelter for the world, a refuge for all beings, the world’s place of rest, the final belief of all beings, islands of the world, lights of the world, leaders of the world, the world’s means of salvation. As a matter of fact, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas save all sentient beings by “Breaking (disproving) the false and making manifest the right.” According to the Madhyamika School, the doctrine of the school has three main aspects, the first aspect is the “refutation itself of a wrong view, at the same time, the elucidation of a right view.” Refutation is necessary to save all sentient beings who are drowned in the sea of attachment while elucidation is also important in order to propagate the teaching of the Buddha. **First, Refutation of All Wrong Views:** Refutation means to refute all views based on attachment. Also views such as the ‘self’ or atman, the theory of Brahmanic philosophers. The pluralistic doctrines of the Buddhist Abhidharma schools (Vaibhasika, Kosa, etc) and the dogmatic principles of Mahayana teachers are never passed without a detailed refutation. The Realistic or all exists, and the Nihilistic or nothing exists are equally condemned. **Second, Elucidation of a Right View:** According to Prof. Takakusu in The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, the Madhyamika School strongly believed that the truth can be attained only by negation or refutation of wrong views within and without

Buddhism, and of errors of both the Great and Small Vehicles. When retaining wrong views or error, one will be blind to reason. How can a blind man get a right view without which the two extremes can never be avoided? The end of verbal refutation is the dawn of the Middle Path. Refutation and refutation only, can lead to the ultimate truth. The Middle Path, which is devoid of name and character is really the way of elucidation of a right view.

Chapter Nine

The Bodhisattva Ideal of Teaching and Saving Sentient Beings

In Buddhist teachings, salvation may be understood as the deliverance of someone from destruction, sufferings, afflictions, and so on, and to bring that person to the state of being safe from destructive forces, natural or supernatural. To other religions, salvation means deliverance from sin and death, and admission to a so-called “Eternal Paradise”. These are religions of deliverance because they give promise of some form of deliverance. They believe that a person’s will is important, but grace is more necessary and important to salvation. Those who wish to be saved must believe that they see a supernatural salvation of an almighty creator in their lives. In Buddhism, the concept of salvation is strange to all sincere Buddhists. One time, the Buddha told His disciples: “The only reason I have come into the world is to teach others. However, one very important thing is that you should never accept what I say as true simply because I have said it. Rather, you should test the teachings yourselves to see if they are true or not. If you find that they are true and helpful, then practice them. But do not do so merely out of respect for me. You are your own savior and no one else can do that for you.” One other time, the Buddha gently patted the crazy elephant and turned to tell Ananda: “The only way to destroy hatred is with love. Hatred cannot be defeated with more hatred. This is a very important lesson to learn.” Before Nirvana, the Buddha himself advised his disciples: “When I am gone, let my teachings be your guide. If you have understood them in your heart, you have no more need of me. Remember what I have taught you. Craving and desire are the cause of all sufferings and afflictions. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourselves to clearing your minds and finding true and lasting happiness.” These are the Buddha’s golden speeches on some of the concepts of salvation.

In salvation, Mahayana Buddhism has temporary manifestation for saving, converting and transporting beings. It is difficult for ordinary

people like us to understand the teaching with infinite compassion of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Sometimes, they use their speech to preach the dharma, but a lot of times they use their way of life such as retreating in peace, strictly following the precepts to show and inspire others to cultivate the way. “Temporary manifestation for saving beings” means temporarily appear to save sentient beings. The power of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to transform themselves into any kind of temporal body in order to aid beings. Salvation includes converting and Transporting (to teach and save, to rescue and teach). To transform other beings. The region, condition, or environment of Buddha instruction or conversion. Salvation also means any land which a Buddha is converting, or one in which the transformed body of a Buddha. These lands are of two kinds: pure like Tusita heaven and vile or unclean like this world. T’ien-T’ai defines the transformation realm of Amitabha as the Pure Land of the West. Other schools speak of the transformation realm as the realm on which depends the nirmanakaya. According to Tao-Ch’o (562-645), one of the foremost devotees of the Pure Land school, in his *Book of Peace and Happiness*, one of the principal sources of the Pure Land doctrine. All the Buddhas save sentient beings in four ways. First, by oral teachings such recorded in the twelve divisions of Buddhist literature. Second, by their physical features of supernatural beauty. Third, by their wonderful powers and virtues and transformations. Fourth, by recitating of their names, which when uttered by beings, will remove obstacles and result their rebirth in the presence of the Buddha.

According to the *Vimalakirti Sutra*, when Manjusri Bodhisattva called to enquire after Vimalakirti’s health, Vimalakirti told Manjusri about “saving sentient beings”. Manjusri asked: “What should a Bodhisattva wipe out in order to liberate living beings?” Vimalakirti replied: “When liberating living beings, a Bodhisattva should first wipe out their klesa (troubles and causes of troubles)?” Manjusri asked: “What should he do to wipe out klesa?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should uphold right mindfulness.” Manjusri asked: “What should he do to uphold right mindfulness?” Vimalakirti replied: “He should advocate the unborn and the undying.” “Manjusri asked: “What is the unborn and what is the undying?” Vimalakirti replied: “The unborn is evil that does not arise and the undying is good that does not end.” Manjusri asked:

“What is the root of good and evil?” Vimalakirti replied: “The body is the root of good and evil.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of the body?” Vimalakirti replied: “Craving is the root of the body.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of craving?” Vimalakirti replied: “Baseless discrimination is the root of craving.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of baseless discrimination?” Vimalakirti replied: “Inverted thinking is the root of discrimination.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of inverted thinking?” Vimalakirti replied: “Non-abiding is the root of inverted thinking.” Manjusri asked: “What is the root of non-abiding?” Vimalakirti replied: “Non-abiding is rootless. Manjusri, from this non-abiding root all things arise.”

Chapter Ten

Bodhisattva Ideal of Saving All Living Beings

The heroic quality of the Bodhisattva is brought out by the Prajnaparamita: “Suppose a hero, endowed with great accomplishments, had gone out with his mother, father, sons, and daughters. By some set of circumstances, they would get into a huge wild forest. The foolish among them would be greatly frightened. The hero would, however, fearlessly say to them ‘Do not be afraid! I will speedily take you out of this great and terrible jungle, and bring you to safety.’ Since he is fearless, vigorous, exceedingly tender, compassionate, courageous and resourceful, it does not occur to him to take himself alone out of the jungle, leaving his relatives behind. According to the Buddha in The Flower Adornment Sutra, chapter 25 (Ten Dedications), Enlightening Beings save other sentient beings without any mental image of sentient beings: *First*, Enlightening Beings think that, they may use these roots of goodness universally to benefit all sentient beings, causing them to be purified, to reach the ultimate shore, and to forever leave the innumerable pains and afflictions of the realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals and asuras (titans). *Second*, when the great Enlightening Beings plant these roots of goodness, they dedicate their won roots of goodness thus. I should be a hostel for all sentient beings, to let them escape from all painful things. I should be a protector for all sentient beings, to let them all be liberated from all afflictions. I should be a refuge for all sentient beings, to free them from all fears. I should be a goal for all sentient beings, to cause them to reach universal knowledge. I should make a resting place for all sentient beings, to enable them to find a place of peace and security. I should be a light for all sentient beings, to enable them to attain the light of knowledge to annihilate the darkness of ignorance. I should be a torch for all sentient beings, to destroy all darkness of nescience. I should be a lamp for all sentient beings, to cause them to abide in the realm of ultimate purity. I should be a guide for all sentient beings, to lead them into the truth. I should be a great leader for all sentient beings, to give them great knowledge. *Third*,

Great Enlightening Beings dedicate all foundations of goodness in this way, to equally benefit all sentient beings and ultimately cause them all to attain universal knowledge. Enlightening Beings' protection of and dedication to those who are not their relatives or friends are equal to those for their relatives and friends. Enlightening Beings enter the equal nature of all things, they do not conceive a single thought of not being relatives or friends. Even if there be sentient beings, who have malicious or hostile intentions toward the Enlightening Beings, still the Enlightening Beings also regard them with the eye of compassion and are never angered. *Fourth*, Enlightened Beings are good friends to all sentient beings. They always explain the right teaching for sentient beings, so that they may learn and practice it. *Fifth*, Enlightening beings dedicate because they are just as the ocean which cannot be changed or destroyed by all poisons. The various oppressive afflictions of all the ignorant, the unwise, the ungrateful, the wrathful, those poisoned by covetousness, the arrogant and conceited, the mentally blind and deaf, those who do not know what is good, and other such evil sentient beings, cannot disturb the Enlightening Beings; they are just as the sun, appearing in the world not concealed because those who are born blind do not see it, not hidden by the obstruction of such things as mirages, eclipses, trees, high mountains, deep ravines, dust, mist, smoke, or clouds, not concealed by the change of seasons. Enlightening Beings dedicate with great virtues, with deep and broad minds. They dedicate because they want ultimate virtue and knowledge, their minds aspire to the supreme truth; the light of truth illumines everywhere and they perceive the meanings of everything. Their knowledge freely commands all avenues of teaching, and in order to benefit all sentient beings they always practice virtuous ways, never mistakenly conceiving the idea of abandoning sentient beings. *Sixth*, Enlightening Beings do not reject sentient beings and fail to cultivate dedication because of the meanness of character of sentient beings, or because their erroneous will, ill-will and confusion are hard to quell. *Seventh*, Enlightening Beings just array themselves with the armor of great vows of Enlightening Beings, saving sentient beings without ever retreating. *Eighth*, Enlightening Beings do not withdraw from enlightening activity and abandon the path of enlightenment just because sentient beings are ungrateful. *Ninth*, Enlightening Beings do

not get sick of sentient beings just because ignoramuses altogether give up all the foundations of goodness which accord with reality. *Tenth*, Enlightening Beings do not retreat because sentient beings repeatedly commit excesses and evils which are hard to bear. *Eleventh*, Great Enlightening Beings do not cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to complete perfect enlightenment just for the sake of one sentient being; it is in order to save and safeguard all sentient beings everywhere that they cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twelfth*, it is not purify just one Buddha-land, not because of belief in just one Buddha, not just to see one Buddha, not just to comprehend one doctrine that they initiate the determination for great knowledge and dedicate it to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. It is to purify all Buddha-lands, out of faith in all Buddhas, to serve all Buddhas, to understand all Buddha-teachings, that they initiate great vows, cultivate the foundations of goodness, and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Thirteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow that: "By my roots of goodness, may all creatures, all sentient beings, be purified! May they be filled with virtues which cannot be ruined and are inexhaustible! May they always gain respect! May they have right mindfulness and unfailing recollection! May they attain sure discernment! May they be replete with an immeasurable knowledge. May all virtues of physical, verbal and mental action fully adorn them!" *Fourteenth*, Bodhisattvas use these roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to serve all Buddhas, to their unfailing benefit, to cause all sentient beings' pure faith to be indestructible, to cause all sentient beings to hear the true teaching, cut off all doubt and confusion, remember the teaching without forgetting it, to cause all sentient beings to cultivate in accord with the teaching, to cause sentient beings to develop respect for the enlightened, to cause sentient beings to act with purity, to rest securely on innumerable great foundations of goodness, to cause all sentient beings to be forever free from poverty, to cause all sentient beings to be fully equipped with the seven kinds of wealth (faith, vigor, shame, learning, generosity, concentration and wisdom), to cause all sentient beings to always learn from the Buddha, to perfect innumerable roots of goodness, to cause sentient beings to attain impartial understanding, to abide in omniscience, to look upon all sentient beings equally with unobstructed eyes, to adorn their bodies with all marks of greatness, without any flaws, beautiful voices, replete with all fine qualities, to have control over their senses, to accomplish the ten powers, to be filled with good will, to dwell or depend on nothing, to cause all sentient beings to attain the enjoyments of Buddhahood and abide in the abode of Buddhas. *Fifteenth*, seeing sentient beings doing all sorts of bad things and suffering all sorts of misery and pain, and being hindered by this from seeing the Buddha, hearing the teaching and

recognizing the community, the enlightening beings vow to enter those states of woe, take on the various miseries in place of the sentient beings, to cause them to be free. *Sixteenth*, Enlightening Beings suffer pain in this way, but they are not discouraged. In the contrary, they vigorously cultivate without ceasing because they are determined to carry all sentient beings to liberation. They are determined to save all sentient beings and to enable them to attain emancipation, so that they can be free from the realm of pain and troubles of birth, old age, sickness, and death. They are determined to save all sentient beings from revolving in erroneous views, bereft of qualities of goodness. They are determined to save all sentient beings who are wrapped up in the web of attachments, covered by the shroud of ignorance, clinging to all existents, pursuing them unceasingly, entering the cage of suffering, acting like maniacs, totally void of virtue or knowledge, always doubtful and confused, do not perceive the place of peace, do not know the path of emancipation, revolve in birth and death without rest, and always submerged in the mire of suffering. *Seventeenth*, Enlightening Beings are not seeking liberation for themselves, but they want to use what they practice to cause all sentient beings become supreme sovereign of knowledge, attain the omniscient mind, cross over the flow of birth and death, and be free from all suffering. *Eighteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings, and enable them to escape from the abyss of immeasurable woes of birth and death. *Nineteenth*, Enlightening Beings always vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings in all worlds, in all states of misery forever, but still always cultivate foundations of goodness for the sake of all beings. *Twentieth*, Enlightening Beings vow that they would rather take all this sufferings on themselves than allow sentient beings to fall into hell, animal, hungry ghost, and asura realms. *Twenty-first*, Enlightening Beings vow to protect all sentient beings and never abandon them. This is a sincere vow because they set their mind on enlightenment in order to liberate all sentient beings, not seeking the unexcelled way for their own sake. *Twenty-second*, Enlightening Beings do not cultivate enlightening practice in search of pleasure or enjoyment. Why? Because mundane pleasures are all sufferings and mundane pleasures are the realms of maniacs. Only craved by ignorant people, but scorned by Buddhas because all misery arises from them. The anger, fighting, mutual defamation and such evils of the realms of hells, ghosts, animals and asuras are all caused by greedy attachment to objects of desire. By addiction to desires, one become estranged from the Buddhas and hindered from birth in heaven, to say nothing of unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twenty-third*, Enlightening Beings vow to dedicate roots of goodness to enable all sentient beings to attain ultimate bliss, beneficial bliss, the bliss of nonreception, the bliss of dispassionate tranquility, the bliss of

imperturbability, immeasurable bliss, the bliss of not rejecting birth and death yet not regressing from nirvana, undying bliss, and the bliss of universal knowledge. *Twenty-fourth*, for all sentient beings, Enlightening Beings vow to be a charioteer, to be a leader, to be holding the torch of great knowledge and showing the way to safety and peace, freeing them from danger, to use appropriate means to inform sentient beings of the truth. In the ocean of birth and death, they are skillful captains of the ship, who know how to deliver sentient beings to the other shore. *Twenty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings dedicate all their roots of goodness and save sentient beings by employing means appropriate to the situation to cause them to emerge from birth and death, to serve and provide for all the Buddhas, to attain unhindered, omniscient knowledge, to abandon all maniacs and bad associates, to approach all Enlightening Beings and good associates, to annihilate all error and wrongdoing, to perfect pure behavior, and to fulfill the great practical vows and innumerable virtues of Enlightening Beings. *Twenty-sixth*, sentient beings cannot save themselves, how can they save others? Only Enlightening Beings have this unique determination of cultivating amass roots of goodness and dedicate them in this way to liberate all sentient beings, to illumine all sentient beings, to guide all sentient beings, to enlighten all sentient beings, to watch over and attend to all sentient beings, to take care of all sentient beings, to perfect all sentient beings, to gladden all sentient beings, to bring happiness to all sentient beings, and to cause all sentient beings to become freed from doubt. *Twenty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings' dedications should be like the sun shining universally on all without seeking thanks or reward; not abandoning all sentient beings because one sentient being is evil, just diligently practicing the dedications of roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to attain peace and ease. Enlightening Beings are able to take care of all sentient beings even if they are bad, never giving up their vows on this account. Even if their roots of goodness be few, but because they want to embrace all sentient beings, so they always make a great dedication with a joyful heart. If one has roots of goodness but does not desire to benefit all sentient beings that is not called dedication. When every single root of goodness is directed toward all sentient beings that is called dedication. *Twenty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to place sentient beings in the true nature of things where there is no attachment. *Twenty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to see that the intrinsic nature of sentient beings doesn't move or change. *Thirtieth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without depending on or grasping dedication. *Thirty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to the appearances of roots of goodness. *Thirty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without false ideas about essential nature of consequences of actions. *Thirty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate

dedication without attachment to the characteristics of the five clusters of material and mental existence. *Thirty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without destroying the characteristics of the five clusters. *Thirty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without grasping action. *Thirty-sixth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without seeking reward. *Thirty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to causality. *Thirty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without imagining what is producing by causality. *Thirty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to reputation. *Fortieth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication without attachment to location. *Forty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to unreal things. *Forty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to images of sentient beings, the world, or mind. *Forty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without creating delusions of mind, delusions of concepts, or delusions of views. *Forty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to verbal expression. *Forty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing the true nature of all things. *Forty-sixth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication observing the aspects in which all sentient beings are equal. *Forty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication stamping all roots of goodness with the seal of the realm of truth. *Forty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing all things dispassionately; they understand that all things have no propagation and that roots of goodness are also thus. *Forty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing that things are nondual, unborn, and unperishing. *Fiftieth*, Enlightening Beings use such roots of goodness to cultivate and practice pure methods of curing spiritual ills. *Fifty-first*, all of their roots of goodness are in accord with transcendental principles, but they do not conceive of them dualistically. *Fifty-second*, it is not in their deeds that they cultivate omniscience. *Fifty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate omniscience, but it is not apart from deeds that they cultivate omniscience. Omniscience is not identical to action, but omniscience is not attained apart from action either. Because their action is pure as light, the consequences are also pure as light; because the consequences are pure as light, omniscience is also pure as light. They detach from all confusions and thoughts of self and possession, Enlightening Beings skillfully cultivate dedication of all roots of goodness. *Fifty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication in this way to liberate sentient beings ceaselessly; they do not dwell on appearances. Though they know that in all things there is no action and no consequences, yet they can skillfully produce all deeds and consequences without opposition or contention. Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication, free from all faults and are praised by all Buddhas.

Chapter Eleven

In Bodhisattvas' Ideal, Sentient Beings Are Subject to Illness, So Bodhisattvas Are Ill As Well

In Buddhism, a person who is not enlightened is “ill” by definition. The healing process into the aspiration to attain enlightenment. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, at the time of the Buddha, one day Upasaka Vimalakirti was sick, the Buddha asked his great disciples, one after another, to call on Vimalakirti to enquire after his health, but no one dared to accept. Eventually, Manjusri Bodhisattva accepted the Buddha’s command to call on Vimalakirti to enquire after his health. The Buddha then said to Manjusri: “You call on Vimalakirti to enquire after his health.” Manjusri said: “World Honoured One, he is a man of superior wisdom and it is not easy to match him (in eloquence). For he has reached reality, and is a skillful expounder of the essentials of the Dharma. His power of speech is unhindered and his wisdom is boundless. He is well versed in all matters pertaining to Bodhisattva development for he has entered the mysterious treasury of all Buddhas. He has overcome all demons, has achieved all transcendental powers and has realized wisdom by ingenious devices (upaya). Nevertheless, I will obey the holy command and will call on him to enquire after his health.” The Bodhisattvas, the chief disciples of the Buddha and the rulers of the four heavens who were present, thought to themselves: “As the two Mahasattvas will be meeting, they will certainly discuss the profound Dharma.” So, eight thousand Bodhisattvas, five hundred sravakas and hundreds and thousands of devas wanted to follow Manjusri. So Manjusri, reverently surrounded by the Bodhisattvas, the Buddha’s chief disciples and the deva, made for Vaisali town. Vimalakirti, who knew in advance that Manjusri and his followers would come, used his transcendental powers to empty his house of all attendants and furniture except a sick bed. When entering the house Manjusri saw only Vimalakirti lying on sick bed, and was greeted by the upasaka, who said: “Welcome, Manjusri, you come with no idea of coming and you see with no idea of seeing.” Manjusri replied: “It is so, Venerable Upasaka, coming should not be further tied to (the idea of)

coming, and going should not be further linked with (the concept of) going. Why? Because there is neither whence to come nor whither to go, and that which is visible cannot further be (an object of) seeing. Now, let us put all this aside. Venerable Upasaka, is your illness bearable? Will it get worse by wrong treatment? The World Honoured One sends me to enquire after your health, and is anxious to have good news of you. Venerable Upasaka, where does your illness come from; how long has it arisen, and how will it come to an end?" Vimalakirti replied: "Stupidity leads to love which is the origin of my illness. Because all living beings are subject to illness I am ill as well. When all living beings are no longer ill, my illness will come to an end. Why? A Bodhisattva, because of (his vow to save) living beings, enters the realm of birth and death which is subject to illness; if they are all cured the Bodhisattva will no longer be ill. For instance, when the only son of an elder falls ill, so do his parents, and when he recovers his health, so do they. Likewise, a Bodhisattva loves all living beings as if they were his sons; so when they fall ill, the Bodhisattva is also ill, and when they recover, he is no longer ill."

Chapter Twelve

For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, They Appear-Renounce of the World-Save Beings

I. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, They Appear to Save and Support All Sentient Beings:

There are many reasons for the appearance of Enlightening Beings in order to save other sentient beings from the cycle of births and deaths. They take the roots of goodness universally benefit all sentient beings. They sentient beings to be purified and to reach the ultimate shore. They help sentient beings forever leave the innumerable pains and afflictions in the paths of sufferings of the realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals and asuras (titans), etc. Furthermore, salvation may be understood as the deliverance of someone from destruction, sufferings, afflictions, and so on, and to bring that person to the state of being safe from destructive forces, natural or supernatural. To other religions, salvation means deliverance from sin and death, and admission to a so-called “Eternal Paradise”. These are religions of deliverance because they give promise of some form of deliverance. They believe that a person’s will is important, but grace is more necessary and important to salvation. Those who wish to be saved must believe that they see a supernatural salvation of an almighty creator in their lives. In Buddhism, the concept of salvation is strange to all sincere Buddhists. One time, the Buddha told His disciples: “The only reason I have come into the world is to teach others. However, one very important thing is that you should never accept what I say as true simply because I have said it. Rather, you should test the teachings yourselves to see if they are true or not. If you find that they are true and helpful, then practice them. But do not do so merely out of respect for me. You are your own savior and no one else can do that for you.” One other time, the Buddha gently patted the crazy elephant and turned to tell Ananda: “The only way to destroy hatred is with love. Hatred cannot be defeated with more hatred. This is a very important lesson to learn.” Before Nirvana, the Buddha himself advised his disciples: “When I am

gone, let my teachings be your guide. If you have understood them in your heart, you have no more need of me. Remember what I have taught you. Craving and desire are the cause of all sufferings and afflictions. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourselves to clearing your minds and finding true and lasting happiness.” These are the Buddha’s golden speeches on some of the concepts of salvation.

II. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Show the Act of Walking Seven Steps:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, there are ten reasons Great Enlightening Beings show the act of walking seven steps. For these ten reasons they show the act of walking seven steps after birth; they manifest this to pacify sentient beings. *First*, to manifest the power of enlightening beings. *Second*, to manifest the giving of the seven kinds of wealth. *Third*, to satisfy the wishes of the spirits of the earth. *Fourth*, to manifest the appearance of transcending the three worlds. *Fifth*, to manifest the supreme walk of the enlightening being, beyond the walk of the elephant, the bull, or the lion. *Sixth*, to manifest the characteristics of adamant ground. *Seventh*, to manifest the desire to give sentient beings courageous strength. *Eighth*, to manifest the practice of the seven jewels of awakening. *Ninth*, to show that the truth they have realized does not come from the instruction of another. *Tenth*, to manifest supreme peerless in the world.

III. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Practice Austerities:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Great Enlightening Beings practice austerities. Enlightening Beings use these expedient means of austerities to pacify all sentient beings. *First*, to develop sentient beings with low understanding. *Second*, to remove false views from sentient beings. *Third*, to show the consequences of action to sentient beings who do not believe in consequences of action. *Fourth*, to do so in accord with the adulterated and polluted world. *Fifth*, to show the ability to endure toil and diligently work on the way. *Sixth*, to cause sentient beings to want to seek the truth. *Seventh*, for

the sake of sentient beings who are attached to sensual pleasures and selfish pleasure. *Eighth*, in order to show that enlightening beings' effort is supreme, continuing to the very last life. *Ninth*, to induce sentient beings to enjoy the state of calm and tranquility and increase roots of goodness. *Tenth*, to wait until the time is ripe to develop people's immature faculties.

IV. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Enlightening Beings Appear As Children:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Enlightening Beings appear as children: *First*, to manifest the learning of all worldly arts and sciences. *Second*, to manifest the learning of riding military arts and various worldly occupations. *Third*, to manifest the learning of all kinds of worldly things such as literature, conversation, games, and amusements. *Fourth*, to manifest the shedding of errors and faults of word, thought, and deed. *Fifth*, to manifest entering concentration, staying in the door of nirvana, and pervading infinite worlds in the ten directions. *Sixth*, to show that their power goes beyond all creatures, celestials, human, and nonhuman. *Seventh*, to show that the appearance and majesty of enlightening beings goes beyond all deities. *Eighth*, to cause sentient beings addicted to sensual pleasures to joyfully take pleasure in truth. *Ninth*, to show the reception of truth and respectfully make offerings to all Buddhas. *Tenth*, to show empowerment of Buddhas and being bathed in the light of truth.

V. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Enlightening Beings Appear to Live in a Royal Palace:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Enlightening Beings appear to live in a royal palace: *First*, to cause roots of goodness of their colleagues of the past to develop to maturity. *Second*, to show the power of roots of goodness of Enlightening Beings. *Third*, to show the comforts of great spiritual power of enlightening beings to humans and celestials who are obsessed with comforts. *Fourth*, to adapt to the minds of sentient beings in the polluted world. *Fifth*, to manifest the spiritual power of Enlightening Beings, able to enter concentration in the heart of the palace. *Sixth*, to enable those who had the same aspiration in the past to fulfill their aims. *Seventh*, to enable their parents, family and relatives to fulfill their wishes. *Eighth*, to use music to produce the sounds to the sublime teaching to offer to all Buddhas. *Ninth*, to dwell in the subtle concentration while in the

palace and show everything from the attainment of Buddhahood to final extinction. *Tenth*, to accord with and preserve the teaching of the Buddhas.

VI. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Smile and Make a Promise to Tame and Pacify Sentient Beings:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons why Great Enlightening Beings smile and make a promise in their hearts to tame and pacify sentient beings. *First*, Great Enlightening Beings think that all worldlings are sunk in the mire of craving, and no one but Enlightening Beings can rescue them. *Second*, all worldlings are blinded by passion and afflictions, and only Enlightening Beings have wisdom. *Third*, based on this so-called body, Enlightening Beings will attain the supreme reality-body of Buddhas, which fills all times. *Fourth*, then the Enlightening Beings, with unobstructed eyes, look over all the Brahma heavens and all the controlling heavens, and think: These sentient beings all think they have the power of knowledge. *Fifth*, the Enlightening Beings observe sentient beings who have long planted roots of goodness and who now are regressing and sinking. *Sixth*, the Enlightening Beings observe that though the seeds sown in the world be few, the fruits reaped are many. *Seventh*, the Enlightening Beings see that all sentient beings who receive the teaching of Buddha will surely gain benefit. *Eighth*, the Enlightening Beings see that Enlightening Beings who were their colleagues in past ages have become obsessed with other things and cannot attain the great virtues of the Buddha teaching. *Ninth*, the Enlightening Beings see that the celestials and humans who were in the same communities with them in the past still are in mundane states, unable to detach from them, and not tiring of them either. *Tenth*, then Enlightening Beings are bathed in the lights of all Buddhas and are even more joyful.

VII. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Renounce the World:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons great enlightening beings renounce the world: *First*, to reject living at home. *Second*, to cause sentient beings attached to their homes give up their attachment. *Third*, to follow and appreciate the path of Saints. *Fourth*, to publicize and praise the virtues of leaving home. *Fifth*, to demonstrate external detachment from extreme views. *Sixth*, to cause sentient beings to detach from sensual and selfish pleasures. *Seventh*, to show the appearance of transcending the world. *Eighth*, to show independence, not being subject to

another. *Ninth*, to show that they are going to attain the ten powers and fearlessnesses of Buddhas. *Tenth*, it is natural that Enlightening Beings in their final life should do so.

VIII. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Ten Purposes of Conquering of Demons of Great Bodhisattvas:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten purposes of conquering of demons. First, because sentient beings in times of confusion are bellicose, enlightening beings want to show their spiritual power. *Second*, to cut off the doubts of people in celestial and mundane states who have doubts. *Third*, to civilize and tame the armies of demons. *Fourth*, to cause people who like the military to come and observe demon quelling, so their minds will be subdued. Fifth, to show that no one in the world can oppose the powers of enlightening beings. *Sixth*, to arouse the courage and strength of all sentient beings. *Seventh*, out of pity for sentient beings of degenerate times. *Eighth*, to show that even up to the site of enlightenment there are still hordes of demons who come to create disturbance, and only this does one finally manage to get beyond the reach of demons. *Ninth*, to show that the force of afflictions is weak and inferior compared with the mighty power of great compassion and virtue. *Tenth*, to do what must be done in a polluted, evil world.

IX. For The Sake of Great Bodhisattvas' Ideal, There Are Fifty-Four Reasons and/or Vows That Cause Great Enlightening Beings to Appear:

According to the Buddha in The Flower Adornment Sutra, chapter 25, Ten Dedications Chapter, Enlightening Beings save other sentient beings without any mental image of sentient beings, Enlightening Beings think that: *First*, they may use these roots of goodness universally to benefit all sentient beings, causing them to be purified, to reach the ultimate shore, and to forever leave the innumerable pains and afflictions of the realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals and asuras (titans). *Second*, when the great Enlightening Beings plant these roots of goodness, they dedicate their won roots of goodness thus. I should be a hostel for all sentient beings, to let them escape from all painful things. I should be a protector for all sentient beings, to let them all be liberated from all afflictions. I should be a refuge for all sentient beings, to free them from all fears. I should be a goal for all sentient beings, to cause them to reach universal knowledge. I should make a resting place for all sentient beings, to enable them to find a place of peace and security. I should

be a light for all sentient beings, to enable them to attain the light of knowledge to annihilate the darkness of ignorance. I should be a torch for all sentient beings, to destroy all darkness of nescience. I should be a lamp for all sentient beings, to cause them to abide in the realm of ultimate purity. I should be a guide for all sentient beings, to lead them into the truth. I should be a great leader for all sentient beings, to give them great knowledge. *Third*, Great Enlightening Beings dedicate all foundations of goodness in this way, to equally benefit all sentient beings and ultimately cause them all to attain universal knowledge. Enlightening Beings' protection of and dedication to those who are not their relatives or friends are equal to those for their relatives and friends. Enlightening Beings enter the equal nature of all things, they do not conceive a single thought of not being relatives or friends. Even if there be sentient beings, who have malicious or hostile intentions toward the Enlightening Beings, still the Enlightening Beings also regard them with the eye of compassion and are never angered. *Fourth*, Enlightened Beings are good friends to all sentient beings. They always explain the right teaching for sentient beings, so that they may learn and practice it. *Fifth*, Enlightening beings dedicate because they are just as the ocean which cannot be changed or destroyed by all poisons. The various oppressive afflictions of all the ignorant, the unwise, the ungrateful, the wrathful, those poisoned by covetousness, the arrogant and conceited, the mentally blind and deaf, those who do not know what is good, and other such evil sentient beings, cannot disturb the Enlightening Beings; they are just as the sun, appearing in the world not concealed because those who are born blind do not see it, not hidden by the obstruction of such things as mirages, eclipses, trees, high mountains, deep ravines, dust, mist, smoke, or clouds, not concealed by the change of seasons. Enlightening Beings dedicate with great virtues, with deep and broad minds. They dedicate because they want ultimate virtue and knowledge, their minds aspire to the supreme truth; the light of truth illumines everywhere and they perceive the meanings of everything. Their knowledge freely commands all avenues of teaching, and in order to benefit all sentient beings they always practice virtuous ways, never mistakenly conceiving the idea of abandoning sentient beings. *Sixth*, Enlightening Beings do not reject sentient beings and fail to cultivate dedication because of the meanness of character of sentient beings, or because their erroneous will, ill-will and confusion are hard to quell. *Seventh*, Enlightening Beings just array themselves with the armor of great vows of Enlightening Beings, saving sentient beings without ever retreating. *Eighth*, Enlightening Beings do not withdraw from enlightening activity and abandon the path of enlightenment just because sentient beings are ungrateful. *Ninth*, Enlightening Beings do not get sick of sentient beings just because ignoramuses altogether give up all the

foundations of goodness which accord with reality. *Tenth*, Enlightening Beings do not retreat because sentient beings repeatedly commit excesses and evils which are hard to bear. *Eleventh*, Great Enlightening Beings do not cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to complete perfect enlightenment just for the sake of one sentient being; it is in order to save and safeguard all sentient beings everywhere that they cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twelfth*, it is not purify just one Buddha-land, not because of belief in just one Buddha, not just to see one Buddha, not just to comprehend one doctrine that they initiate the determination for great knowledge and dedicate it to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. It is to purify all Buddha-lands, out of faith in all Buddhas, to serve all Buddhas, to understand all Buddha-teachings, that they initiate great vows, cultivate the foundations of goodness, and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Thirteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow that: "By my roots of goodness, may all creatures, all sentient beings, be purified, may they be filled with virtues which cannot be ruined and are inexhaustible. May they always gain respect. May they have right mindfulness and unfailing recollection. May they attain sure discernment. May they be replete with immeasurable knowledge. May all virtues of physical, verbal and mental action fully adorn them." *Fourteenth*, Bodhisattvas use these roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to serve all Buddhas, to their unfailing benefit, to cause all sentient beings' pure faith to be indestructible, to cause all sentient beings to hear the true teaching, cut off all doubt and confusion, remember the teaching without forgetting it, to cause all sentient beings to cultivate in accord with the teaching, to cause sentient beings to develop respect for the enlightened, to cause sentient beings to act with purity, to rest securely on innumerable great foundations of goodness, to cause all sentient beings to be forever free from poverty, to cause all sentient beings to be fully equipped with the seven kinds of wealth (faith, vigor, shame, learning, generosity, concentration and wisdom), to cause all sentient beings to always learn from the Buddha, to perfect innumerable roots of goodness, to cause sentient beings to attain impartial understanding, to abide in omniscience, to look upon all sentient beings equally with unobstructed eyes, to adorn their bodies with all marks of greatness, without any flaws, beautiful voices, replete with all fine qualities, to have control over their senses, to accomplish the ten powers, to be filled with good will, to dwell or depend on nothing, to cause all sentient beings to attain the enjoyments of Buddhahood and abide in the abode of Buddhas. *Fifteenth*, seeing sentient beings doing all sorts of bad things and suffering all sorts of misery and pain, and being hindered by this from seeing the Buddha, hearing the teaching and recognizing the community, the enlightening beings vow to enter those states

of woe, take on the various miseries in place of the sentient beings, to cause them to be free. *Sixteenth*, Enlightening Beings suffer pain in this way, but they are not discouraged. In the contrary, they vigorously cultivate without ceasing because they are determined to carry all sentient beings to liberation. They are determined to save all sentient beings and to enable them to attain emancipation, so that they can be free from the realm of pain and troubles of birth, old age, sickness, and death. They are determined to save all sentient beings from revolving in erroneous views, bereft of qualities of goodness. They are determined to save all sentient beings who are wrapped up in the web of attachments, covered by the shroud of ignorance, clinging to all existents, pursuing them unceasingly, entering the cage of suffering, acting like maniacs, totally void of virtue or knowledge, always doubtful and confused, do not perceive the place of peace, do not know the path of emancipation, revolve in birth and death without rest, and always submerged in the mire of suffering. *Seventeenth*, Enlightening Beings are not seeking liberation for themselves, but they want to use what they practice to cause all sentient beings become supreme sovereign of knowledge, attain the omniscient mind, cross over the flow of birth and death, and be free from all suffering. *Eighteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings, and enable them to escape from the abyss of immeasurable woes of birth and death. *Nineteenth*, Enlightening Beings always vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings in all worlds, in all states of misery forever, but still always cultivate foundations of goodness for the sake of all beings. *Twentieth*, Enlightening Beings vow that they would rather take all this sufferings on themselves than allow sentient beings to fall into hell, animal, hungry ghost, and asura realms. *Twenty-first*, Enlightening Beings vow to protect all sentient beings and never abandon them. This is a sincere vow because they set their mind on enlightenment in order to liberate all sentient beings, not seeking the unexcelled way for their own sake. *Twenty-second*, Enlightening Beings do not cultivate enlightening practice in search of pleasure or enjoyment. Why? Because mundane pleasures are all sufferings and mundane pleasures are the realms of maniacs. Only craved by ignorant people, but scorned by Buddhas because all misery arises from them. The anger, fighting, mutual defamation and such evils of the realms of hells, ghosts, animals and asuras are all caused by greedy attachment to objects of desire. By addiction to desires, one become estranged from the Buddhas and hindered from birth in heaven, to say nothing of unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twenty-third*, Enlightening Beings vow to dedicate roots of goodness to enable all sentient beings to attain ultimate bliss, beneficial bliss, the bliss of nonreception, the bliss of dispassionate tranquility, the bliss of imperturbability, immeasurable bliss, the bliss of not rejecting birth and death

yet not regressing from nirvana, undying bliss, and the bliss of universal knowledge. *Twenty-fourth*, for all sentient beings, Enlightening Beings vow to be a charioteer, to be a leader, to be holding the torch of great knowledge and showing the way to safety and peace, freeing them from danger, to use appropriate means to inform sentient beings of the truth. In the ocean of birth and death, they are skillful captains of the ship, who know how to deliver sentient beings to the other shore. *Twenty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings dedicate all their roots of goodness and save sentient beings by employing means appropriate to the situation to cause them to emerge from birth and death, to serve and provide for all the Buddhas, to attain unhindered, omniscient knowledge, to abandon all maniacs and bad associates, to approach all Enlightening Beings and good associates, to annihilate all error and wrongdoing, to perfect pure behavior, and to fulfill the great practical vows and innumerable virtues of Enlightening Beings. *Twenty-sixth*, sentient beings cannot save themselves, how can they save others? Only Enlightening Beings have this unique determination of cultivating amass roots of goodness and dedicate them in this way to liberate all sentient beings, to illumine all sentient beings, to guide all sentient beings, to enlighten all sentient beings, to watch over and attend to all sentient beings, to take care of all sentient beings, to perfect all sentient beings, to gladden all sentient beings, to bring happiness to all sentient beings, and to cause all sentient beings to become freed from doubt. *Twenty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings' dedications should be like the sun shining universally on all without seeking thanks or reward; not abandoning all sentient beings because one sentient being is evil, just diligently practicing the dedications of roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to attain peace and ease. Enlightening Beings are able to take care of all sentient beings even if they are bad, never giving up their vows on this account. Even if their roots of goodness be few, but because they want to embrace all sentient beings, so they always make a great dedication with a joyful heart. If one has roots of goodness but does not desire to benefit all sentient beings that is not called dedication. When every single root of goodness is directed toward all sentient beings that is called dedication. *Twenty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to place sentient beings in the true nature of things where there is no attachment. *Twenty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to see that the intrinsic nature of sentient beings doesn't move or change. *Thirtieth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without depending on or grasping dedication. *Thirty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to the appearances of roots of goodness. *Thirty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without false ideas about essential nature of consequences of actions. *Thirty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate

dedication without attachment to the characteristics of the five clusters of material and mental existence. *Thirty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without destroying the characteristics of the five clusters. *Thirty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without grasping action. *Thirty-sixth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without seeking reward. *Thirty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to causality. *Thirty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without imagining what is producing by causality. *Thirty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to reputation. *Fortieth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication without attachment to location. *Forty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to unreal things. *Forty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to images of sentient beings, the world, or mind. *Forty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without creating delusions of mind, delusions of concepts, or delusions of views. *Forty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to verbal expression. *Forty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing the true nature of all things. *Forty-sixth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication observing the aspects in which all sentient beings are equal. *Forty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication stamping all roots of goodness with the seal of the realm of truth. *Forty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing all things dispassionately; they understand that all things have no propagation and that roots of goodness are also thus. *Forty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing that things are nondual, unborn, and unperishing. *Fiftieth*, Enlightening Beings use such roots of goodness to cultivate and practice pure methods of curing spiritual ills. *Fifty-first*, all of their roots of goodness are in accord with transcendental principles, but they do not conceive of them dualistically. *Fifty-second*, it is not in their deeds that they cultivate omniscience. *Fifty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate omniscience, but it is not apart from deeds that they cultivate omniscience. Omniscience is not identical to action, but omniscience is not attained apart from action either. Because their action is pure as light, the consequences are also pure as light; because the consequences are pure as light, omniscience is also pure as light. They detach from all confusions and thoughts of self and possession, Enlightening Beings skillfully cultivate dedication of all roots of goodness. *Fifty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication in this way to liberate sentient beings ceaselessly; they do not dwell on appearances. Though they know that in all things there is no action and no consequences, yet they can skillfully produce all deeds and consequences without opposition or contention. Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication, free from all faults and are praised by all Buddhas.

Chapter Thirteen

Bodhicitta: A Very High Ideal of Bodhisattvas

I. Summaries of Bodhicitta In Buddhist Teachings:

In Buddhism, Bodhicitta, or the ‘Thought of Enlightenment’ is an important concept in both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. Though not directly mentioned, the idea is explicit in the Theravada Buddhism. It was in Mahayana, however, that the Bodhicitta concept developed along both ethical and metaphysical lines and this development is found in Vajrayana too, wherein it also came to be regarded as a state of ‘great bliss’. In Mahayana it developed along with pantheistic lines, for it was held that Bodhicitta is latent in all beings and that it is merely a manifestation of the Dharmakaya, or Bhutatathata in the human heart. Though the term Bodhicitta does not occur in Pali, this concept is found in Pali canonical literature where, for example, we are told how Gautama after renouncing household life resolved to strive to put an end to all the sufferings. It is this comprehension that came to be known as the Enlightenment, and Gautama came to be known as the Enlightened One, the Buddha. Bodhi Mind, or the altruistic mind of enlightenment is a mind which wishes to achieve attainment of enlightenment for self, spontaneously achieve enlightenment for all other sentient beings. The spirit of Enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it, the Mind set on Enlightenment. Bodhicitta is defined as the altruistic intention to become fully enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings. The attainment of enlightenment is necessary for not only in order to be capable of benefitting others, but also for the perfection of our own nature. Bodhi mind is the gateway to Enlightenment and attainment of Buddha. An intrinsic wisdom or the inherently enlightened heart-mind, or the aspiration toward perfect enlightenment. The Buddha taught: “All sentient beings are perfectly equal in that they all possess the Buddha nature. This means that we all have the Bodhi seed or the seed of kindness of a Buddha, and the compassion of a Buddha towards all living beings, and therefore the potential for enlightenment and for perfection lies in each one of us. “Bodhicitta” is a Sanskrit term means

“Mind of Awakening.” In Mahayan Buddhism, this refers to Bodhisattva’s aspiration to attain Buddhahood in order to benefit other sentient beings (the aspiration of a bodhisattva for supreme enlightenment for the welfare of all). Therefore, the mind for or of Bodhi (the Mind of Enlightenment, the awakened or enlightened mind) is the mind that perceives the real behind the seeming, believes in moral consequences, and that all have the Buddha-nature, and aims at Buddhahood. The spirit of enlightenment, the aspiration to achieve it, the mind set on Enlightenment. It involves two parallel aspects. First, the determination to achieve Buddhahood (above is to seek Bodhi). Second, the aspiration to rescue all sentient beings (below is to save or transform all beings). Mind of enlightenment, mind of love, mind of deepest request to realize oneself and work for the well-being of all. The mind of enlightenment or the aspiration of a Bodhisattva for supreme enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. It is often divided into two aspects: 1) the intention to become awakened; and 2) acting on the intention by pursuing the path to awakening (Bodhi). According to Zen Master Suzuki in the *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, Bodhicitta is the most important characteristic of Bodhisattva, thus on the basis of Nagarjuna’s *Discourse on the Transcendentality of the Bodhicitta*, he gives a detailed description of Bodhicitta. First, the Bodhicitta is free from all determinations, the five skandhas, the twelve ayatanas, and the eighteen dhatus. It is not particular, but universal. Second, love is the essence of the Bodhicitta, therefore, all Bodhisattvas find their reason of being in this. Third, the Bodhicitta abides in the heart of sameness (samata) creates individual means of salvation (upaya). Fourth, evidently Maitreya exhausted his power of speech in order to extol the importance of the Bodhicitta in the career of a Bodhisattva, for without this being fully impressed on the mind of the young Buddhist pilgrim Sudhana, he could not have been led into the interior of the Tower of Vairocana. The Tower harbors all the secrets that belong to the spiritual life of the highest Buddhist. If the novice were not quite fully prepared for the initiation, the secrets would have no signification whatever. They may even be grossly misunderstood, and the result will be calamitous indeed. For this reason, Maitreya left not a stone unturned to show Sudhana what the Bodhicitta really meant. There are two kinds of Bodhi-mind. The

first kind of Bodhi-mind is the mind that vows to take the four universal vows of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva to be one's own original vows to save all sentient beings. The second kind of Bodhi-mind is the mind that has a perfect understanding of the ultimate reality; therefore, start out a vow "Above to seek bodhi, below to save beings." This is also the supreme bodhi-mind. There are three kinds of Bodhi-mind. According to Most Venerable Thích Thiên Tâm in *The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and Practice*, exchanging the virtues of Buddha Recitation for the petty merits and blessings of this world is certainly not consonant with the intentions of the Buddhas. Therefore, practitioners should recite the name of Amitabha Buddha for the purpose of escaping the cycle of Birth and Death. However, if we were to practice Buddha Recitation for the sake of our own salvation alone, we would only fulfill a small part of the Buddhas' intentions. What, then, is the ultimate intention of the Buddhas? The ultimate intention of the Buddhas is for all sentient beings to escape the cycle of Birth and Death and to become enlightened, as they are. Thus, those who recite Amitabha Buddha's name should develop the Bodhi-Mind or the Aspiration for Supreme Enlightenment. The word "Bodhi" means "enlightened." There are three main stages of Enlightenment. First, the enlightenment of sravakas or Hearers. Second, the enlightenment of Pratyeka-buddhas or the Self-Awakened. Third, the enlightenment of Buddhas. What Pure Land practitioners who develop the Bodhi Mind are seeking is precisely the Enlightenment of the Buddhas. This stage of Buddhahood is the highest, transcending those of the Sravakas and Pratyeka Buddhas, and is therefore called Supreme Enlightenment or Supreme Bodhi. This Supreme Bodhi Mind contains two principal seeds, compassion and wisdom, from which emanates the great undertaking of rescuing oneself and all other sentient beings. There are also three other kinds of Bodhi-mind. The first kind of Bodhi-mind is the mind to act out one's vows to save all living beings. To start out for bodhi-mind to act out one's vows to save all living beings (all beings possess Tathagata-garbha nature and can become a Buddha; therefore, vow to save them all). The second kind of Bodhi-mind is the Bodhi-mind which is beyond description, and which surpasses mere earthly ideas. The third kind of Bodhi-mind is the Samadhi-bodhi mind. A state of enlightenment in which the mind is free from distraction, free from

unclean hindrances, absorbed in intense, purposeless concentration, thereby entering a state of inner serenity. Bodhi is the highest state of Samadhi in which the mind is awakened and illuminated. The term “Bodhi” is derived from the Sanskrit root “Budh,” meaning “knowledge,” “Understanding,” or “Perfect wisdom.” A term that is often translated as “enlightenment” by Western translators, but which literally means “Awakening.” Like the term BUDDHA, it is derived from the Sanskrit root buddh, “to wake up,” and in Buddhism it indicates that a person has “awakened” from the sleep of ignorance in which most beings spend their lives. According to Buddhist legend, the Buddha attained bodhi in the town of BODHGAYA while sitting in meditation under the Bodhi Tree or Bodhi-Vrksa. According to the Avatamsaka Sutra, Bodhi (enlightenment) belongs to living beings. Without living beings, no Bodhisattva could achieve Supreme, Perfect Enlightenment. The word ‘Bodhi’ also means ‘Perfect Wisdom’ or ‘Transcendental Wisdom,’ or ‘Supreme Enlightenment.’ Bodhi is the state of truth or the spiritual condition of a Buddha or Bodhisattva. The cause of Bodhi is Prajna (wisdom) and Karuna (compassion). According to the Hinayana, bodhi is equated with the perfection of insight into and realization of the four noble truths, which means the cessation of suffering. According to the Mahayana, bodhi is mainly understood as enlightened wisdom. According to the Avatamsaka Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Good Buddhists! In Bodhisattvas arise the Bodhi-mind, the mind of great compassion, for the salvation of all beings; the mind of great kindness, for the unity with all beings; the mind of happiness, to stop the mass misery of all beings; the altruistic mind, to repulse all that is not good; the mind of mercy, to protect from all fears; the unobstructed mind, to get rid of all obstacles; the broad mind, to pervade all universes; the infinite mind, to pervade all spaces; the undefiled mind, to manifest the vision of all Buddhas; the purified mind, to penetrate all knowledge of past, present and future; the mind of knowledge, to remove all obstructive knowledge and enter the ocean of all-knowing knowledge. Just as someone in water is in no danger from fire, the Bodhisattva who is soaked in the virtue of the aspiration for enlightenment or Bodhi mind, is in no danger from the fire of knowledge of individual liberation. Just as a diamond, even if cracked, relieves poverty, in the same way the diamond of the Bodhi

mind, even if split, relieves the poverty of the mundane whirl. Just as a person who takes the elixir of life lives for a long time and does not grow weak, the Bodhisattva who uses the elixir of the Bodhi mind goes around the mundane whirl for countless eons without becoming exhausted and without being stained by the ills of the mundane whirl. The Avatamsaka Sutra also says: “To neglect the Bodhi Mind when practicing good deeds is the action of demons.” This teaching is very true indeed. For example, if someone begins walking without knowing the destination or goal of his journey, isn’t his trip bound to be circuitous, tiring and useless? It is the same for the cultivator. If he expends a great deal of effort but forgets the goal of attaining Buddhahood to benefit himself and others, all his efforts will merely bring merits in the human and celestial realms. In the end he will still be deluded and revolved in the cycle of Birth and Death, undergoing immense suffering. If this is not the action of demons, what, then, is it? For this reason, developing the Supreme Bodhi Mind to benefit oneself and others should be recognized as a crucial step. A Bodhisattva’s Bodhi mind vows not only to destroy the lust of himself, but also to destroy the lust for all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva who makes the Bodhi mind always vows to be the rain of food and drink to clear away the pain of thirst and hunger during the aeon of famine (to change himself into food and drink to clear away human beings’ famine). That person always vows to be a good doctor, good medicine, or a good nurse for all sick people until everyone in the world is healed. That person always vows to become an inexhaustible treasure for those who are poor and destitute. For the benefiting of all sentient beings, the person with Bodhi mind is willing to give up his virtue, materials, enjoyments, and even his body without any sense of fatigue, regret, or withdrawal. That person always believes that Nirvana is nothing else but a total giving up of everything (giving up does not mean throwing away or discarding, but it means to give out for the benefit of all sentient beings). In daily life, that person always stays calm even though he may get killed, abused or beaten by others. That person always vows to be a protector for those who need protection, a guide for all travellers on the way, a bridge or a boat for those who wish to cross a river, a lamp for those who need light in a dark night. The Mahavairocana Sutra says: “The Bodhi Mind is the cause - Great

Compassion is the root - Skillful means are the ultimate.” For example, if a person is to travel far, he should first determine the goal of the trip, then understand its purpose, and lastly, choose such expedient means of locomotion as automobiles, ships, or planes to set out on his journey. It is the same for the cultivator. He should first take Supreme Enlightenment as his ultimate goal, and the compassionate mind which benefits himself and others as the purpose of his cultivation, and then, depending on his references and capacities, choose a method, Zen, Pure Land or Esoterism, as an expedient for practice. Expedients, or skillful means, refer, in a broader sense, to flexible wisdom adapted to circumstances, the application of all actions and practices, whether favorable or unfavorable, to the practice of the Bodhisattva Way. For this reason, the Bodhi Mind is the goal that the cultivator should clearly understand before he sets out to practice.

II. Ten Characters of Bodhicitta:

The Mahavairocana Sutra says: “The Bodhi Mind is the cause - Great Compassion is the root - Skillful means are the ultimate.” For example, if a person is to travel far, he should first determine the goal of the trip, then understand its purpose, and lastly, choose such expedient means of locomotion as automobiles, ships, or planes to set out on his journey. It is the same for the cultivator. He should first take Supreme Enlightenment as his ultimate goal, and the compassionate mind which benefits himself and others as the purpose of his cultivation, and then, depending on his references and capacities, choose a method, Zen, Pure Land or Esoterism, as an expedient for practice. Expedients, or skillful means, refer, in a broader sense, to flexible wisdom adapted to circumstances, the application of all actions and practices, whether favorable or unfavorable, to the practice of the Bodhisattva Way. For this reason, the Bodhi Mind is the goal that the cultivator should clearly understand before he sets out to practice. Evidently Maitreya exhausted his power of speech in order to extol the importance of the Bodhicitta in the career of a Bodhisattva, for without this being dully impressed on the mind of the young Buddhist pilgrim Sudhana, he could not have been led into the interior of the Tower of Vairocana. The Tower harbors all the secrets that belong to the spiritual life of the highest Buddhist. If the novice were not quite fully

prepared for the initiation, the secrets would have no signification whatever. They may even be grossly misunderstood, and the result will be calamitous indeed. For this reason, Maitreya left not a stone unturned to show Sudhana what the Bodhicitta really meant. There are ten characteristics of the Bodhicitta: First, Bodhicitta rises from a great compassionate heart. Without the compassionate heart there will be no Buddhism. This emphasis on Mahakaruna is characteristic of the Mahayana. We can say that the whole panorama of its teachings revolves on this pivot. The philosophy of Interpenetration so pictorially depicted in the Avatamsaka Sutra is in fact no more than the outburst of this life-energy. As long as we tarry on the plane of intellection, such Buddhist doctrines as Emptiness (sunyata), Egolessness (anatmya), etc., may sound so abstract and devoid of spiritual force as not to excite anyone to fanatic enthusiasm. Thus main point is to remember that all the Buddhist teachings are the outcome of a warm heart cherished towards all sentient beings and not of a cold intellect which tries to unveil the secrets of existence by logic. That is to say, Buddhism is personal experience and not impersonal philosophy. Second, raising of the Bodhicitta is not an event of one day. The raising of the Bodhicitta requires a long preparation, not of one life but of many lives. The Citta will remain dormant in those souls where there is no stock of merit ever accumulated. Moral merit must be stored up in order to germinate later into the great overshadowing tree of the Bodhicitta. The doctrine of karma may not be a very scientific statement of facts, but all Buddhists, Mahayana and Hinayana, believe in its working in the moral realm of our lives. Broadly stated, as long as we are all historical beings we cannot escape the karma that preceded us, whatever this may mean. Whenever there is the notion of time, there is a continuity of karma. When this is admitted, the Bodhicitta could not grow from the soil where no nourishing stock of goodness had ever been secured. Third, Bodhicitta comes out of a stock of good merit. If the Bodhicitta comes out of a stock of merit, it cannot fail to be productive of all the good things that belong to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and other great beings. At the same time it must also be the great crusher of evils, for nothing can withstand the terrible blow inflicted by the thunderbolt of the Citta-Indra. Fourth, the awakening of the Bodhicitta which takes place in the depths of one's being, is a great religious

event. The intrinsic nobility of the Bodhicitta can never be defamed even when it is found among defilements of every description, whether they belong to knowledge or deeds or passions. The great ocean of transmigration drowns every body that goes into it. Especially the philosophers, who are satisfied with interpretations and not with facts themselves, are utterly unable to extricate themselves from the bondage of birth and death, because they never cut asunder (riêng ra) the invisible tie of karma and knowledge that securely keeps them down to the earth of dualities because of their intellectualism. Fifth, Bodhicitta is beyond the assault of Mara the Evil One. In Buddhism, Mara represents the principle of dualism. It is he who is always looking for his chance to throw himself against the solid stronghold of Prajna and Karuna. Before the awakening of the Bodhicitta the soul is inclined towards the dualism of being and non-being, and is thus necessarily outside the pale of the sustaining power of all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and good friends. The awakening, however, marks a decisive turning-away from the old line of thought. The Bodhisattva has now an open highway before him, which is well guarded by the moral influence of all his good protectors. He walks on straightway, his footsteps are firm, and the Evil One has no chance to tempt him away from his steady progress towards perfect enlightenment. Sixth, when the Bodhicitta is aroused, the Bodhisattva's hold on all-knowledge is definite and firm. The Bodhicitta means the awakening of the desire for supreme enlightenment which was attained by the Buddha, enabling him to become the leader of the religious movement known as Buddhism. Supreme enlightenment is no other than all-knowledge, sarvajnata, to which reference is constantly made in all the Mahayana texts. All-knowledge is what constitutes the essence of Buddhahood. It does not mean that the Buddha knows every individual thing, but that he has grasped the fundamental principle of existence and that he has penetrated deep down into the center of his own being. Seventh, the rise of Bodhicitta marks the beginning of the career of a Bodhisattva. Before the rise of the Bodhicitta, the idea of a Bodhisattva was no more than an abstraction. We are perhaps all Bodhisattvas, but the notion has not been brought home to our consciousness, the image has not been vivid enough to make us feel and live the fact. The Citta is aroused and the fact becomes a personal event. The Bodhicitta is now

quivering with life. The Bodhisattva and the Bodhicitta are inseparable; where the one is there the other is. The Citta indeed is the key that opens all the secret doors of Buddhism. Eighth, the Bodhicitta is the first stage of the Bodhisattva's life of devotion and vow. In the Avatamsaka Sutra, the chief object of Sudhana's quest consists in finding out what is the Bodhisattva's life of devotion and vow. It was through Maitreya that the young Buddhist pilgrim came to realize within himself all that he had been searching for among the various teachers, philosophers, gods, etc. The final confirmation comes from Samantabhadra, but without Maitreya's instruction in the Bodhicitta and is admission into the Tower of Vairocana, Sudhana could not expect to start really on his career of Bodhisattvahood. The life of devotion and vows which stamps a Buddhist as Mahayanist and not as Hinayanist is impossible without first arousing the Bodhicitta. Ninth, the characteristic of Bodhisattvahood born of the Bodhicitta is that He never know what exhaustion means. The Avatamsaka Sutra describes the Bodhisattva as one who never becomes tired of living a life of devotion in order to benefit all beings spiritually as well as materially. His life lasts till the end of the world spatially and temporarily. If he cannot finish his work in one life or in many lives, he is ready to be reborn a countless number of times when time itself comes to an end. Nor is his field of action confined to this world of ours. As there are innumerable worlds filling up an infinite expanse of space, he will manifest himself there, until he can reach every being that has any value at all to be delivered from ignorance and egotism. Tenth, the notion of Bodhicitta is one of the most important marks which label the Mahayana as distinct from the Hinayana. The exclusiveness of the monastic organization is a death to Buddhism. As long as this system rules, Buddhism limits its usefulness to a specific group of ascetics. Nor is this the last word one can say about the Hinayana; the weightiest objection is that it stops the growth of the spiritual germ nursed in the depths of every sentient being, which consists in the arousing of the Bodhicitta. The Citta has its desire never to be nipped by the cold frost of intellectual enlightenment. This desire is too deep-seated, and the enlightenment itself must yield to its dictates. The Bodhisattva's untiring activities are the outcome of this desire, and this is what keeps the spirit of the Mahayana very much alive.

III. Bodhi Resolve In the Bodhisattva Ideal:

An Overview of Bodhi Resolve: To vow to devote the mind to bodhi, or to awake the thought of enlightenment, or to bring forth the Bodhi resolve means to generate a true intention in our mind to become enlightened. This is the starting point of the Path to enlightenment. This intention is a seed that can grow into a Buddha. Develop Bodhicitta means develop a supreme motivation to cultivation to achieve full enlightenment or Buddhahood in order to be of the most benefit to others. Only owing to the Bodhicitta we are able to dedicate ourselves to working for the happiness of all beings. The dedicated attitude of Bodhicitta is the powerful energy capable of transforming our mind fully and completely. Ten reasons to cause sentient beings to develop Bodhi Mind. According to Great Master Sua-Sen, the eleventh Patriarch of the Thirteen Patriarchs of Pureland Buddhism, there are ten reasons that cause sentient beings to develop Bodhi Mind. Buddhas from their initial aspiration to their attainment of Buddhahood, never lose the determination for perfect enlightenment. Great Enlightened Beings take the determination for enlightenment as a reliance, as they never forget it. This is one of the ten kinds of reliance of Great Enlightening Beings. According to The Flower Adornment Sutra, chapter 38 (Detachment from the World), the Great Enlightening Being Universally Good told Universal Wisdom that Offsprings of Buddha, Great Enlightening Beings have ten kinds of reliance which help them be able to obtain abodes of the unexcelled great knowledge of Buddhas. Sincere and devoted Buddhists should make up their minds to cultivate themselves and to vow “above to seek Bodhi, below to save sentient beings.” There are ten qualities that should be cultivated by an aspirant to awaken the Bodhicitta: gather friends, worship the Buddha, acquire roots of merit, search the good laws, remain ever compassionate, bear all suffering that befall him, remain kind, compassionate and honest, remain even-minded, rejoice in Mahayana with faith, search the Buddha-wisdom. According to the Bodhicittotapadasutra-Sastra, there are four qualities that should be cultivated by an aspirant to awaken the Bodhicitta: reflecting on the Buddha, reflecting on the impurity of the body, being compassionate towards beings, searching after the highest fruit. According to the Sutra

In Forty-Two Sections, Chapter 36, the Buddha said: “It is difficult for one to leave the evil paths and become a human being. It is difficult to become a male human being. It is difficult to have the six organs complete and perfect. It is difficult for one to be born in the central country. It is difficult to be born at the time of a Buddha. It is still difficult to encounter the Way. It is difficult to bring forth faith. It is difficult to resolve one’s mind on Bodhi. It is difficult to be without cultivation and without attainment.” The Buddha and Bodhisattvas broadly explained the virtue of Bodhi Mind in The Avatamsaka Sutra: “The principal door to the Way is development of the Bodhi Mind. The principal criterion of practice is the making of vows.” If we do not develop the broad and lofty Bodhi Mind and do not make firm and strong vows, we will remain as we are now, in the wasteland of Birth and Death for countless eons to come. Even if we were to cultivate during that period, we would find it difficult to persevere and would only waste our efforts. Therefore, we should realize that in following Buddhism, we should definitely develop the Bodhi Mind without delay. According to Most Venerable Thích Thiên Tâm in the Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and Practice, it is not enough simply to say “I have developed the Bodhis Mind,” or to recite the above verses every day. To really develop the Bodhi Mind, the practitioner should, in his cultivation, meditate on and act in accordance with the essence of the vows. There are cultivators, clergy and lay people alike, who, each day, after reciting the sutras and the Buddha’s name, kneel down to read the transference verses: “I wish to rid myself of the three obstructions and sever afflictions...” However, their actual behavior is different, today they are greedy, tomorrow they become angry and bear grudges, the day after tomorrow it is delusion and laziness, the day after that it is belittling, criticizing and slandering others. The next day they are involved in arguments and disputes, leading to sadness and resentment on both sides. Under these circumstances, how can they rid themselves of the three obstructions and sever afflictions? In general, most of us merely engage in external forms of cultivation, while paying lip service to “opening the mind.” Thus, the fires of greed, anger and delusion continue to flare up, preventing us from tasting the pure and cool flavor of emancipation as taught by the Buddhas. Therefore, we have to pose the question, “How can we awaken the Bodhi Mind?” Sincere and

devoted Buddhists should make up their minds to cultivate themselves and to vow “above to seek Bodhi, below to save sentient beings.” A Bodhisattva’s Bodhi mind vows not only to destroy the lust of himself, but also to destroy the lust for all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva who makes the Bodhi mind always vows to be the rain of food and drink to clear away the pain of thirst and hunger during the aeon of famine (to change himself into food and drink to clear away human beings’ famine). That person always vows to be a good doctor, good medicine, or a good nurse for all sick people until everyone in the world is healed. That person always vows to become an inexhaustible treasure for those who are poor and destitute. For the benefiting of all sentient beings, the person with Bodhi mind is willing to give up his virtue, materials, enjoyments, and even his body without any sense of fatigue, regret, or withdrawal. That person always believes that Nirvana is nothing else but a total giving up of everything (giving up does not mean throwing away or discarding, but it means to give out for the benefit of all sentient beings). In daily life, that person always stays calm even though he may get killed, abused or beaten by others. That person always vows to be a protector for those who need protection, a guide for all travellers on the way, a bridge or a boat for those who wish to cross a river, a lamp for those who need light in a dark night.

Eight Ways to Develop Bodhi Resolve: To vow to devote the mind to bodhi, or to awake the thought of enlightenment, or to bring forth the Bodhi resolve means to generate a true intention in our mind to become enlightened. This is the starting point of the Path to enlightenment. This intention is a seed that can grow into a Buddha. Develop Bodhicitta means develop a supreme motivation to cultivation to achieve full enlightenment or Buddhahood in order to be of the most benefit to others. Only owing to the Bodhicitta we are able to dedicate ourselves to working for the happiness of all beings. The dedicated attitude of Bodhicitta is the powerful energy capable of transforming our mind fully and completely. Great Master Hsing An composed the essay titled “Developing the Bodhi Mind” to encourage the fourfold assembly to follow when practicing Buddhism. In it, the Master described eight approaches to developing the Bodhi Mind, depending on sentient beings’ vows: “erroneous, correct, true, false, great, small, imperfect, perfect.” Among the eight ways of developing the Bodhi Mind, we should not follow the “erroneous, false, imperfect, and small” ways. We should instead follow the “true, correct, perfect, and great” ways. Such cultivation is called developing the Bodhi Mind in a proper way. The first Bodhi Resolve with an Erroneous Mind. Some individuals cultivate without meditating on the Self-Nature. They just chase after externals or seek fame and profit, clinging to the fortunate circumstances of the present time, or they seek the fruits of future merits and blessings. In

life there are cultivators who cultivate only according to the “Practice form characteristics,” refusing to reflect internally to “Examine the True Nature.” Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “Erroneous,” or “False.” The above is truly the way the majority of cultivators, lay and clergy, develop their minds in the present day Dharma Ending Age. They are everywhere similar to the abundance of sands of the Ganges. The second Bodhi Resolve with a Correct Mind. Not seeking fame, profit, happiness, merit or blessings, but seeking only Buddhahood, to escape Birth and Death for the benefit of oneself and others. These are cultivators who, above do not pray for luxury, below do not yearn for fame, not allured by the pleasures of the present, do not think of the merits in the future. In contrast, they are only concerned with the matter of life and death, praying to attain the Bodhi Enlightenment fruit. Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “Correct,” or “Proper.” The above is the way of developing the mind according to true cultivators praying for enlightenment and liberation. With this way of developing the mind and cultivation, it is difficult to find nowadays. In hundreds and thousands of cultivators, it would be fortunate to find just one or two such cultivators. The third Bodhi Resolve with a True Mind. Aiming with each thought to seek Buddhahood “above” and save sentient beings “below,” without fearing the long, arduous Bodhi path or being discouraged by sentient beings who are difficult to save, with a mind as firm as the resolve to ascend a mountain to its peak. These cultivators who, thought after thought, above pray for Buddhahood; mind after mind, below rescue sentient beings; hearing to become Buddha will take forever, do not become fearful and wish to regress. Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “true.” The fourth Bodhi Resolve with a False Mind. Not repenting or renouncing our transgressions, appearing pure on the outside while remaining filthy on the inside, formerly full of vigor but now lazy and lax, having good intentions intermingled with the desire for fame and profit, practicing good deeds tainted by defilements. Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “false.” This is the way the majority of cultivators develop the mind in the Dharma Ending Age. The fifth Bodhi Resolve with a Great Mind. Only when the realm of sentient beings has ceased to exist, would one’s vows come to an end; only when Buddhahood has been realized, would one’s vows be achieved. Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “great.” Above is the way of developing the mind of those in the rank of Mahayana Great Strength Dharma Body Maha-Bodhisattvas, or Bodhisattva Saintly Masters, who have already attained the “Non-Birth Dharma Tolerance” and have turned the non-retrogressing Dharma Wheel in the ten directions of infinite universes. The sixth Bodhi Resolve with a Small Mind. Viewing the Triple World as a prison and Birth and death as enemies, hoping only for swift self-salvation and being reluctant to help others. Such

development of the Bodhi Mind is called “small.” The above is the way of developing the mind for those cultivators who practice Hinayana Buddhism or Lesser Vehicle, Sravaka-Yana and Pratyeka-Buddha-Yana. With this method of developing mind, even though liberation from the cycle of rebirths will be attained, escape from the three worlds, and attain Nirvana. However, the Buddha criticized them as traveling outside the path of conducts and vows of rescuing sentient beings of the Bodhisattvas and Buddhas of Mahayana or Greater Vehicle. The seventh Bodhi Resolve with an Imperfect Mind. Viewing sentient beings and Buddhahood as outside the Self-Nature while vowing to save sentient beings and achieve Buddhahood; engaging in cultivation while the mind is always discriminating. Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “imperfected” or “biased.” The above way of developing the mind is false, belonging to those who cultivated achievements still leave them trapped in the three worlds of the cycle of rebirths, and they will not find true liberation and enlightenment. These people only cultivate to ascend to higher Heavens of Form and Formlessness because they have not penetrated fully the theory of “outside the mind there is no dharma, outside the dharma there is no mind.” The eighth Bodhi Resolve with a Perfect Mind. Knowing that sentient beings and Buddhahood are the Self-Nature while vowing to save sentient beings and achieve Buddhahood; cultivating virtues without seeing oneself cultivating, saving sentient beings without seeing anyone being saved. These people use that mind of emptiness similar to space to make vows as great as space, to cultivate conducts as vast as space, and finally to attain and achieve similar to space, yet do not see the characteristics of “emptiness.” Such development of the Bodhi Mind is called “perfect.” The above is the way of developing the mind of those in the rank of those at the Ten Grounds Maha-Bodhisattvas, those who complete Enlightenment Maha-Bodhisattva, and One-Birth Maha-Bodhisattva. And finally, they attain the Ultimate Enlightenment of Buddhahood with ten designations.

IV. For the Sake of A Very High Ideal of Bodhisattvas, They Develop the Bodhicitta:

According to Buddhist teachings, for the sake of a very high ideal of Bodhisattvas, they develop the Bodhicitta. As a matter of fact, develop Bodhicitta means resolve on supreme bodhi and develop a supreme motivation to cultivation to achieve full enlightenment or Buddhahood in order to be of the most benefit to others. Only owing to the Bodhicitta we are able to dedicate ourselves to working for the happiness of all beings. The dedicated attitude of Bodhicitta is the powerful energy capable of transforming our mind fully and completely. In Zen, “arousing the mind of enlightenment” means to

resolve to reach supreme enlightenment through actualization of the Bodhisattva path. An inner attitude made up of great faith and great doubt. Ten Causes of Great Bodhisattvas' Development of the Will for Enlightenment: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, there are ten kinds of causes of great enlightening beings's development of the will for enlightenment. *First*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to educate and civilize all sentient beings. *Second*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to remove the mass of suffering of all sentient beings. *Third*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to bring complete peace and happiness to all sentient beings. *Fourth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to eliminate the delusion of all sentient beings. *Fifth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to bestow enlightened knowledge on all sentient beings. *Sixth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to honor and respect all Buddhas. *Seventh*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to follow the guidance of the Buddhas and please them. *Eighth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to see the marks and embellishments of the physical embodiments of all Buddhas. *Ninth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to comprehend the vast knowledge and wisdom of all Buddhas. *Tenth*, Bodhisattvas become determined to reach enlightenment to manifest the powers and fearlessnesses of the Buddhas. According to the Vimalakirti, Chapter Tenth, Vimalakirti said: "As you have said, the Bodhisattvas of this world have strong compassion and their lifelong works of salvation for all living beings surpass those done in other pure lands during hundreds and thousands of aeons. Why? Because they achieved ten excellent deeds which are not required in other pure lands. First, using charity (dana) to succour the poor. Second, using precept-keeping (sila) to help those who have broken the commandments. Third, using patient endurance (ksanti) to subdue their anger. Fourth, using zeal and devotion (viryā) to cure their remissness. Fifth, using serenity (dhyana) to stop their confused thoughts. Sixth, using wisdom (prajna) to wipe out ignorance. Seventh, putting an end to the eight distressful conditions for those suffering from them. Eighth, teaching Mahayana to those who cling to Hinayana. Ninth, using cultivation of good roots for those in want of merits. Tenth, using the four Bodhisattva winning devices for the purpose of leading all living beings to their goals (in Bodhisattva development).

Also for the sake of a very high ideal of Bodhisattvas, there are Ten Causes of Great Bodhisattvas' Development of the Bodhi Resolve: According to The Flower Adornment Sutra, chapter 38 (Detachment from the World), the Great Enlightening Being Universally Good told Universal Wisdom that Offsprings of Buddha, Great Enlightening Beings have ten kinds of reliance

which help them be able to obtain abodes of the unexcelled great knowledge of Buddhas. Sincere and devoted Buddhists should make up their minds to cultivate themselves and to vow “above to seek Bodhi, below to save sentient beings.” There are ten qualities that should be cultivated by an aspirant to awaken the Bodhicitta: gather friends, worship the Buddha, acquire roots of merit, search the good laws, remain ever compassionate, bear all suffering that befall him, remain kind, compassionate and honest, remain even-minded, rejoice in Mahayana with faith, search the Buddha-wisdom. The Buddha and Bodhisattvas broadly explained the virtue of Bodhi Mind in The Avatamsaka Sutra: “The principal door to the Way is development of the Bodhi Mind. The principal criterion of practice is the making of vows.” If we do not develop the broad and lofty Bodhi Mind and do not make firm and strong vows, we will remain as we are now, in the wasteland of Birth and Death for countless eons to come. Even if we were to cultivate during that period, we would find it difficult to persevere and would only waste our efforts. Therefore, we should realize that in following Buddhism, we should definitely develop the Bodhi Mind without delay. Also in the Avatamsaka Sutra, evidently Maitreya exhausted his power of speech in order to extol the importance of the Bodhicitta in the career of a Bodhisattva, for without this being dully impressed on the mind of the young Buddhist pilgrim Sudhana, he could not have been led into the interior of the Tower of Vairocana. The Tower harbors all the secrets that belong to the spiritual life of the highest Buddhist. If the novice were not quite fully prepared for the initiation, the secrets would have no signification whatever. They may even be grossly misunderstood, and the result will be calamitous indeed. For this reason, Maitreya left not a stone unturned to show Sudhana what the Bodhicitta really meant and the ten characteristics of the Bodhicitta (Essays in Zen Buddhism, vol. III). *First*, the Bodhicitta rises from a great compassionate heart. Without the compassionate heart there will be no Buddhism. This emphasis on Mahakaruna is characteristic of the Mahayana. We can say that the whole panorama of its teachings revolves on this pivot. The philosophy of Interpenetration so pictorially depicted in the Avatamsaka Sutra is in fact no more than the outburst of this life-energy. As long as we tarry on the plane of intellection, such Buddhist doctrines as Emptiness (sunyata), Egolessness (anatmya), etc., may sound so abstract and devoid of spiritual force as not to excite anyone to fanatic enthusiasm. Thus main point is to remember that all the Buddhist teachings are the outcome of a warm heart cherished towards all sentient beings and not of a cold intellect which tries to unveil the secrets of existence by logic. That is to say, Buddhism is personal experience and not impersonal philosophy. *Second*, the raising of the Bodhicitta is not an event of one day. The raising of the Bodhicitta requires a long preparation, not of one

life but of many lives. The Citta will remain dormant in those souls where there is no stock of merit ever accumulated. Moral merit must be stored up in order to germinate later into the great overshadowing tree of the Bodhicitta. The doctrine of karma may not be a very scientific statement of facts, but all Buddhists, Mahayana and Hinayana, believe in its working in the moral realm of our lives. Broadly stated, as long as we are all historical beings we cannot escape the karma that preceded us, whatever this may mean. Whenever there is the notion of time, there is a continuity of karma. When this is admitted, the Bodhicitta could not grow from the soil where no nourishing stock of goodness had ever been secured. *Third*, Bodhicitta comes out of a stock of good merit. If the Bodhicitta comes out of a stock of merit, it cannot fail to be productive of all the good things that belong to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and other great beings. At the same time it must also be the great crusher of evils, for nothing can withstand the terrible blow inflicted by the thunderbolt of the Citta-Indra. *Fourth*, the awakening of the Bodhicitta which takes place in the depths of one's being, is a great religious event. The intrinsic nobility of the Bodhicitta can never be defamed even when it is found among defilements of every description, whether they belong to knowledge or deeds or passions. The great ocean of transmigration drowns every body that goes into it. Especially the philosophers, who are satisfied with interpretations and not with facts themselves, are utterly unable to extricate themselves from the bondage of birth and death, because they never cut asunder the invisible tie of karma and knowledge that securely keeps them down to the earth of dualities because of their intellectualism. *Fifth*, Bodhicitta is beyond the assault of Mara the Evil One. In Buddhism, Mara represents the principle of dualism. It is he who is always looking for his chance to throw himself against the solid stronghold of Prajna and Karuna. Before the awakening of the Bodhicitta the soul is inclined towards the dualism of being and non-being, and is thus necessarily outside the pale of the sustaining power of all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and good friends. The awakening, however, marks a decisive turning-away from the old line of thought. The Bodhisattva has now an open highway before him, which is well guarded by the moral influence of all his good protectors. He walks on straightway, his footsteps are firm, and the Evil One has no chance to tempt him away from his steady progress towards perfect enlightenment. *Sixth*, when the Bodhicitta is aroused, the Bodhisattva's hold on all-knowledge is definite and firm. The Bodhicitta means the awakening of the desire for supreme enlightenment which was attained by the Buddha, enabling him to become the leader of the religious movement known as Buddhism. Supreme enlightenment is no other than all-knowledge, sarvajnata, to which reference is constantly made in all the Mahayana texts. All-knowledge is what constitutes the essence of Buddhahood. It does not

mean that the Buddha knows every individual thing, but that he has grasped the fundamental principle of existence and that he has penetrated deep down into the center of his own being. *Seventh*, the rise of Bodhicitta marks the beginning of the career of a Bodhisattva. Before the rise of the Bodhicitta, the idea of a Bodhisattva was no more than an abstraction. We are perhaps all Bodhisattvas, but the notion has not been brought home to our consciousness, the image has not been vivid enough to make us feel and live the fact. The Citta is aroused and the fact becomes a personal event. The Bodhicitta is now quivering with life. The Bodhisattva and the Bodhicitta are inseparable; where the one is there the other is. The Citta indeed is the key that opens all the secret doors of Buddhism. *Eighth*, the Bodhicitta is the first stage of the Bodhisattva's life of devotion and vow. In the Avatamsaka Sutra, the chief object of Sudhana's quest consists in finding out what is the Bodhisattva's life of devotion and vow. It was through Maitreya that the young Buddhist pilgrim came to realize within himself all that he had been searching for among the various teachers, philosophers, gods, etc. The final confirmation comes from Samantabhadra, but without Maitreya's instruction in the Bodhicitta and is admission into the Tower of Vairocana, Sudhana could not expect to start really on his career of Bodhisattvahood. The life of devotion and vows which stamps a Buddhist as Mahayanist and not as Hinayanist is impossible without first arousing the Bodhicitta. *Ninth*, the characteristic of Bodhisattvahood born of the Bodhicitta is that He never know what exhaustion means. The Avatamsaka Sutra describes the Bodhisattva as one who never becomes tired of living a life of devotion in order to benefit all beings spiritually as well as materially. His life lasts till the end of the world spatially and temporarily. If he cannot finish his work in one life or in many lives, he is ready to be reborn a countless number of times when time itself comes to an end. Nor is his field of action confined to this world of ours. As there are innumerable worlds filling up an infinite expanse of space, he will manifest himself there, until he can reach every being that has any value at all to be delivered from ignorance and egotism. *Tenth*, the notion of Bodhicitta is one of the most important marks which label the Mahayana as distinct from the Hinayana. The exclusiveness of the monastic organization is a death to Buddhism. As long as this system rules, Buddhism limits its usefulness to a specific group of ascetics. Nor is this the last word one can say about the Hinayana; the weightiest objection is that it stops the growth of the spiritual germ nursed in the depths of every sentient being, which consists in the arousing of the Bodhicitta. The Citta has its desire never to be nipped by the cold frost of intellectual enlightenment. This desire is too deep-seated, and the enlightenment itself must yield to its dictates. The Bodhisattva's untiring activities are the outcome of this desire, and this is what keeps the spirit of the Mahayana very much alive.

Chapter Fourteen

The Ideal of Spreading Kindness and Compassion to All Sentient Beings

I. An Overview of Loving in Buddhist Teachings:

The heroic quality of the Bodhisattva is brought out by the Prajnaparamita: “Suppose a hero, endowed with great accomplishments, had gone out with his mother, father, sons, and daughters. By some set of circumstances, they would get into a huge wild forest. The foolish among them would be greatly frightened. The hero would, however, fearlessly say to them ‘Do not be afraid! I will speedily take you out of this great and terrible jungle, and bring you to safety.’ Since he is fearless, vigorous, exceedingly tender, compassionate, courageous and resourceful, it does not occur to him to take himself alone out of the jungle, leaving his relatives behind.

In Buddhism, there are many different meanings of “Love”. Love as craving or sexual desire is one of the major causes of sufferings and rebirth. According to Buddhism, love is understanding, love does not judge or condemn, love listens and understands, love cares and sympathizes, love accepts and forgives, and so on and so on. Thus, in Buddhism, love has the meaning of “selfless love” which accompanies with loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Love goes hand-in-hand with compassion. When we have a loving heart, compassion arises easily in us. Whenever we see somebody suffering, we feel an urge to reach out to help the person ease his or her suffering. To remove or ease another’s suffering is the main characteristic of love. Thus, those who is compassionate, loving and forgiving, they really understand the meanings of the word “Love” in Buddhism. In fact, emancipation in Buddhism is not unrealistic, if we know how to focus from “Selfish” to “Altruistic”, and think more about others’ well-being and welfare, we have already liberated ourselves.

Love in Buddhism: In Buddhist teachings, there are two kinds of love. *First, Ordinary human love springing from desire:* This is the love in the passion realm, or passion-love. Ordinary human love springing from desire, in contrast with religious love (Pháp ái). Love inspired by

desire through any of the five senses. Ordinary human love springing from desire, in contrast with religious love (Pháp ái). Love inspired by desire through any of the five senses. *Second, Religious love:* Bodhisattva or religious love springing from the vow to save all creatures. Bodhisattva love with desire to save all creatures, in contrast with ordinary love (Dục ái). Religious love has Hinayana and Mahayana Dharma-love. Hinayana religious love: Hinayana Dharma-love as desire for nirvana. Mahayana religious love: Mahayana Dharma-love or Bodhisattva attachment to illusory things. Buddhist practitioners should always remember that both of these two religious loves must be eradicated and must be replaced by Tathagata-love, which goes out to all beings for salvation.

Kindness and Compassion: What is the ‘compassionate mind?’ To be compassionate is to pity and to be empathetic, wishing to help and rescue others without having discriminations or attachment to various characteristics. This means ‘altruism’ or to have mercy and compassion, wishing to help others but not to have any intention of taking advantages. For instance, seeing someone rich, beautiful, etc, one pretends to be compassionate by helping, but having ulterior motives of self-gain. This is called “Desirous Views,” or developing love and lust when seeing wealth and beauty according to binding ways of sentient beings; thus, to act in this way cannot be called being ‘compassionate.’ It was the spirit of loving-kindness and compassion taught by the Buddha that touched the heart of King Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor of India in the third century B.C. Before he became a Buddhist he was a warlike monarch like his father, King Bimbisara, and his grandfather, King Candragupta. Wishing to extend his territories he invaded and conquered Kalinga. In this war thousands were slain, while many more were wounded and taken captive. Later, however, when he followed the Buddha’s creed of compassion he realized the folly of killing. He felt very sad when he thought of the great slaughter, and gave up warfare. He is the only military monarch on record who after victory gave up conquest by war and inaugurated conquest by righteousness. As his Rock Edict XIII says, ‘he sheathed the sword never to unsheath it, and wish no harm to living beings.’ The spread of the Buddha’s creed of compassion throughout the Eastern world was largely due to the enterprise and tireless efforts of Asoka the

Great. The Buddha-law made Asia mild and non-aggressive. However, modern civilization is pressing hard on Asian lands. It is known that with the rise and development of the so-called civilization, man's culture deteriorates and he changes for the worse. With the match of modern science very many changes have taken place, and all these changes and improvements, being material and external, tend to make modern man more and more worldly minded and sensuous with the result that he neglects the qualities of the mind, and becomes self-interested and heartless. The waves of materialism seem to influence mankind and affect their way of thinking and living. People are so bound by their senses, they live so exclusively in the material world that they fail to contact the good within. Only the love and compassion taught by the Buddha can establish complete mental harmony and well-being.

A Contradictory of Wisdom and Compassion: According to Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is a being compounded of the two contradictory forces of wisdom and compassion. In his wisdom, he sees no persons; in his compassion he is resolved to save them. His ability to combine these contradictory attitudes is the source of his greatness, and of his ability to save himself and others. What a man should do is to make no discrimination between himself and others, and to wait until he had helped everybody into Nirvana before losing himself into it. The Mahayanists thus claimed that the Arhat had not aimed high enough. The ideal man, the aim of the Buddhist effort, was, according to them, not the rather self-centered, cold and narrow-minded Arhat, but the all-compassionate Bodhisattva, who abandoned the world, but not the beings in it. Whereas in Theravada tradition, wisdom had been taught as the highest, and compassion as a subsidiary virtue; in Mahayana, compassion now came to rank as equal with wisdom. While the wisdom of the Arhat had been fruitful in setting free in himself what there was to be set free, it was rather sterile in ways and means of helping ordinary people. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Bodhisattva would be a man who does not only set himself free, but who is also skilful in devising means for bringing out and maturing the latent seeds of enlightenment in others. According to the Prajnaparamita Sutra, "Doers of what is hard are the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who have set out to win supreme enlightenment, but they do not wish to attain

their own private Nirvana. On the contrary, they have surveyed the highly painful world of being, and yet, desirous to win supreme enlightenment, they do not tremble at birth-and-death. They have set out for the benefit of the world, for the ease of the world, out of pity for the world. They have resolved: ‘We will become a shelter for the world, a refuge for the world, the world’s place of rest, the final relief of the world, islands of the world, leaders of the world, the world’s means of salvation.’”

Love and Desire: Love and desire means loves that attach to desires or love of family. Love and desire are the stumbling blocks in cultivation. Besides, the sea of emotional love of birth and death is fundamental obstacle to the Way. If cultivators feel love and desire, whether for people or objects, it will hinder them from making progress in cultivation. In one word, love and desire are just birth and death, and birth and death are just love and desire. Thus love and desire are the root of birth and death. If we don’t break through the ignorance of love and desire, there is no way we can escape the cycle of birth and death. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that before thinking of the Buddhahood, we should first cut off desire and get rid of love. More than twenty-five hundred years ago, Prince Siddhartha Gautama did just that before he became a wandering ascetic monk. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that we all are human beings, and human beings surely have emotions, but we Buddhists should not cling to such emotions of love and desire. We should treat everyone equally, showing loving-kindness and compassion to all, but we must be careful not to get trapped in the trap of love and desire. Buddhists have no other way to transcend but cutting off desire and getting rid of love, for whatever we are fond of, we love, and whatever we dislike, we hate. So if we don’t cut desire and get rid of love, we will continue to go round and round in the cycle of love and hate forever.

The Buddha’s Teachings on “Love and Desire” in the Dharmapada Sutra: It is difficult to renounce the world. It is difficult to be a householder. It is painful to associate with those who are not friends. It is painful to be wandering in the samsara forever. Reaching the enlightenment and let wander no more! Let’s suffer no more! (Dharmapada 302). Whoever binds to craving, his sorrows flourish like well-watered birana grass (Dharmapada 335). Whoever in this world

overcomes this unruly craving, his sorrows fall away just like water-drops from a lotus leaf (Dharmapada 336). This is my advice to you: “Root out craving; root it out, just like birana grass is rooted out. Let not Mara crush you again and again as a flood crushes a reed! (Dharmapada 337). Latent craving is not conquered, suffering recovers and grows again and again, just like a tree hewn down grows up again as long as its roots is unrooted (Dharmapada 338). If in any man, the thirty-six streams of craving are still flowing, such deluded person is still looking for pleasure and passion, and torrential thoughts of lust sweep him away (Dharmapada 339). Streams of pleasure and passion flow in all directions, just like the creeper sprouts and stands. Seeing the creeper that has sprung up in your mind, cut it off with wisdom (Dharmapada 340). Common people are subject to attachment and thirst; they are always happy with pleasure; they run after passion. They look for happiness, but such men caught in the cycle of birth and decay again and again (Dharmapada 341). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified like hunted hares. The more they hold fast by fetters, bonds, and afflictions, the longer they suffer (Dharmapada 342). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified just like hunted hares. Therefore, a monk who wishes his own passionlessness, should first banish craving (Dharmapada 343). He who is free from desire for the household, finds pleasure (of asceticism or monastic life) in the forest, yet run back to that very home. Look at that man! He runs right back into that very bondage again! (Dharmapada 344). To a wise man, the bondage that is made of hemp, wood or iron, is not a strong bond, the longing for wives, children, jewels, and ornaments is a greater and far stronger attachment (Dharmapada 345). The wise people say that that bond is very strong. Such fetters seem supple, but hard to break. Break them! Cut off desire and renounce the world! (Dharmapada 346). A man infatuated with lust falls back into the stream as a spider into the web spun by itself. He who cuts off this bond, retire from the world, with no clinging, will leave all sorrow behind (Dharmapada 347). He who has reached the goal, without fear, without craving and without desire, has cut off the thorns of life. This is his final mortal body (Dharmapada 351). He who is without craving, without attachment; who understands subtleties of words and meanings; they are truly a great wise who bear the final mortal body (Dharmapada 352). Strive

hard to cut off the stream of desires. Oh! Brahman! Knowing that all conditioned things will perish. Oh! Brahman! You are a knower of the Unmade Nirvana! (Dharmapada 383).

II. The Bodhisattva Ideal Is Spreading Kindness and Compassion With Wisdom:

A Summary on Compassion: Compassion means sympathy, or pity (compassion) for another in distress and desire to help him or to deliver others from suffering out of pity. The compassion is selfless, non-egoistic and based on the principle of universal equality. A compassionate mind is a mind with wholesome thoughts which always wishes others to be released from their sufferings and afflictions. 'Karuna' means pity or compassion. In Pali and Sanskrit, 'Karuna' is defined as 'the quality which makes the heart of the good man tremble and quiver at the distress of others.' The quality that rouses tender feelings in the good man at the sight of others' suffering. Cruelty, violence is the direct enemy of 'karuna'. Though the latter may appear in the guise of a friend, it is not true 'karuna', but falsely sympathy; such sympathy is deceitful and one must try to distinguish true from false compassion. The compassionate man who refrains from harming and oppressing others and endeavors to relieve them of their distress, gives the gift of security to one and all, making no distinction whatsoever. A compassionate mind does not only bring forth happiness and tranquility for others, but also to ourselves. The compassionate mind also helps us dispel our negative thoughts such as anger, envy and jealousy, etc. Compassion extends itself without distinction to all sentient beings. However, compassion must be accompanied by wisdom in order to have right effect.

The Buddhist conception of "Karuna" has no compromising limitations. All beings include even the tiniest creature that crawls at our feet. The Buddhist view of life is such that no living being is considered as outside the circle of "Metta and Karuna" which make no distinction between man, animal and insect, or between man and man, as, high and low, rich and poor, strong and weak, wise and unwise, dark and fair, Brahmin and Candala, and so forth; for "Metta and Karuna" are boundless and no sooner do we try to keep men apart on the false basis mentioned above, than the feeling of separateness creeps in and

these boundless qualities become limited which is contrary to the teaching of the Buddha. We must be careful not to confuse compassion with morbid manifestations of sadness, with feelings of mental pain and with sentimentality. At the loss of a dear one, man weeps, but that is not compassion. If we analyze such feelings carefully we will conclude that they are outward manifestations of our inner thoughts of self affection. Why do we feel sad? Because our loved one has passed away. He who was our kin is now no more. We feel that we have lost the happiness and all else that we derived from him and so we are sad. Do we not see that all these feelings revolve round the 'I' and 'Mine'? Whether we like it or not, self interest was responsible for it all. Can we call this 'karuna', pity or compassion? Why do we not feel equally sad when others who are not our kin pass away before our eyes? Because we were not familiar with them, they were not ours, we have not lost anything and are not denied the pleasures and comforts we already enjoy.

A Summary on Wisdom: Wisdom is the knowledge of things and realization of truth. Wisdom is arosen from perception or knowing. Wisdom is based on right understanding and right thought. Decision or judgment as to phenomena or affairs and their principles, of things and their fundamental laws. Prajna is often interchanged with wisdom. Wisdom means knowledge, the science of the phenomenal, while prajna more generally to principles or morals. The difference between Buddhi and Jnana is sometimes difficult to point out definitively, for they both signify worldly relative knowledge as well as transcendental knowledge. While Prajna is distinctly pointing out the transcendental wisdom. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes "prajna" as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. Wisdom or real wisdom. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend disire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in "samsara" or transmigration.

Knowing reveals itself in many ways. Knowing can be active whenever there is hearing, seeing, feeling, comparing, remembering, imagining, reflecting, worrying, hoping and so forth. In the Vijñānavādin school of Buddhism, which specialized in the study of “consciousnesses,” many more fields of activity were attributed to knowing. For instance, in *ālayavijñāna*, or “storehouse of consciousness,” the fields of activity of knowing are maintaining, conserving, and manifesting.” Also according to the Vijñānavādins, all sensation, perception, thought, and knowledge arise from this basic store-house consciousness. *Manāna* is one of the ways of knowing based on this consciousness and its function is to grasp onto the object and take it as a “self.” *Manovijñāna* serves as the headquarters for all sensations, perceptions, and thoughts, and makes creation, imagination, as well as dissection of reality possible. *Amala* is the consciousness that shines like a pure white light on the store-house consciousness. In any phenomena, whether psychological, physiological, or physical, there is dynamic movement, life. We can say that this movement, this life, is the universal manifestation, the most commonly recognized action of knowing. We must not regard “knowing” as something from the outside which comes to breathe life into the universe. It is the life of the universe itself.

According to Buddhism, understanding is not an accumulation of knowledge. To the contrary, it is the result of the struggle to become free of knowledge. Understanding shatters old knowledge to make room for the new that accords better with reality. When Copernicus discovered that the Earth goes around the sun, most of the astronomical knowledge of the time had to be discarded, including the ideas of above and below. Today, physics is struggling valiantly to free itself from the ideas of identity and cause effect that underlie classical science. Science, like the Way, urges us to get rid of all preconceived notions. Understanding, in human, is translated into concepts, thoughts, and words. Understanding is not an aggregate of bits of knowledge. It is a direct and immediate penetration. In the realm of sentiment, it is feeling. In the realm of intellect, it is perception. It is an intuition rather than the culmination of reasoning. Every now and again it is fully present in us, and we find we cannot express it in words, thoughts, or concepts. “Unable to describe it,” that is our situation at such moments.

Insights like this are spoken of in Buddhism as “impossible to reason about, to discuss, or to incorporate into doctrines or systems of thought.” Besides, understanding also means a shield to protect cultivator from the attack of greed, hatred and ignorance. A man often does wrong because of his ignorance or misunderstanding about himself, his desire of gaining happiness, and the way to obtain happiness. Understanding will also help cultivators with the ability to remove all defilements and strengthen their virtues.

Higher intellect or spiritual wisdom; knowledge of the ultimate truth (reality). Jnana is the essential clarity and unerring sensibility of a mind that no longer clings to concepts of any kind. It is direct and sustained awareness of the truth, for a Bodhisattva, that meaning and existence are found only in the interface between the components of an unstable and constantly shifting web of relationships, which is everyday life, while prajna is the strength of intellectual discrimination elevated to the status of a liberating power, a precision tool capable of slicing through obstructions that take the form of afflictions and attachments to deeply engrained hereditary patterns of thought and action. Jnana is a very flexible term, as it means sometimes ordinary worldly knowledge, knowledge of relativity, which does not penetrate into the truth of existence, but also sometimes transcendental knowledge, in which case being synonymous with Prajna or Arya-jnana.

Wisdom is described as the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, the understanding of interdependent origination, and the like. The attainment of wisdom is the ability of transformation of these doctrinal items from mere objects of intellectual knowledge into real, personal experience. In other words, according to Buddhism, wisdom is the ability to change our knowledge of the four Noble Truths and the like from mere sutra learning into actual, living truth. To attain wisdom, we must first cultivate good conduct, then cultivate mental development. It should be noted that reading and understanding the meaning of a sutra doesn't mean attaining wisdom. Wisdom means reading, understanding, and transforming doctrinal items from sutras into real, personal experience. Wisdom gives us the ability of “seeing the truth” or “seeing things as they really are” because the attainment

of wisdom is not an intellectual or academic exercise, it is understanding or seeing these truths directly.

In Buddhism, wisdom is the highest virtue of all. It is usual to translate the Sanskrit term “Prajna” (pali-Panna) by “wisdom,” and that is not positively inaccurate. When we are dealing with the Buddhist tradition, however, we must always bear in mind that there Wisdom is taken in a special sense that is truly unique in the history of human thought. “Wisdom” is understood by Buddhists as the methodical contemplation of ‘Dharmas.’ This is clearly shown by Buddhaghosa’s formal and academic definition of the term: “Wisdom has the characteristic of penetrating into dharmas as they are themselves. It has the function of destroying the darkness of delusion which covers the own-being of dharmas. It has the manifestation of not being deluded. Because of the statement: ‘He who is concentrated knows, sees what really is,’ concentration is its direct and proximate cause.”

Wisdom understanding that emptiness of inherent existence is the ultimate nature of all phenomena. This specific type of wisdom is the sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing states. It is also the most powerful tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. In addition, it enables us to benefit others effectively, for we can then teach them how to gain this wisdom themselves. This is also the first key to liberation and enlightenment. In order to be able to obtain this type of wisdom, we must invest all our efforts in cultivating Buddhist laws and practicing Buddhist meditation. Conventional intelligence knowing, logic, science, arts, and so forth. This type of wisdom is from birth; however, the person who possesses this type of wisdom is believed that in previous lives, he or she had already cultivated or practiced so many good deeds.

Fundamental wisdom which is inherent in every man and which can manifest itself only after the veil of ignorance, which screens it, has been transformed by means of self-cultivation as taught by the Buddha. According to the Buddha, wisdom is extremely important for it can be commensurate with enlightenment itself. It is wisdom that finally opens the door to freedom, and wisdom that removes ignorance, the fundamental cause of suffering. It is said that while one may sever the branches of a tree and even cut down its trunk, but if the root is not removed, the tree will grow again. Similarly, although one may

remove attachment by means of renunciation, and aversion by means of love and compassion, as long as ignorance is not removed by means of wisdom, attachment and aversion will sooner or later arise again. As for the Buddha, immediately after witnessing the unhappy incident involving the worm and the bird at the plowing ceremony, the prince sat under a nearby rose-apple tree and began to contemplate. This is a very early experience of meditation of the Buddha. Later, when he renounced the world and went forth to seek the ultimate truth, one of the first disciplines he developed was that of meditation. Thus, the Buddha himself always stressed that meditation is the only way to help us to achieve wisdom.

The resulting wisdom, or training in wisdom. Even though wisdom involves cause and effect. Those who cultivated and planted good roots in their past lives would have a better wisdom. However, in this very life, if you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom is one of the three studies in Buddhism. The other two are precepts and meditation. According to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or panna-sikkha. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing.

In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Long is the night to the wakeful; long is the road to him who is tired; long is samsara to the foolish who do not know true Law (Dharmapada 60). If a traveler does not meet a companion who is better or at least equal, let him firmly pursue his solitary career, rather than being in fellowship with the foolish (Dharmapada 61). These are my sons; this is my wealth; with such thought a fool is tormented. Verily, he is not even the owner of himself. Whence sons? Whence wealth? (Dharmapada 62). A foolish man who knows that he is a fool, for that very reason a wise man; the fool who think himself wise, he is indeed a real fool (Dharmapada 63). If a fool associates with a wise man even all his life, he will

understand the Dharma as little as a spoon tastes the flavour of soup (Dharmapada 64). An intelligent person associates with a wise man, even for a moment, he will quickly understand the Dharma, as the tongue tastes the flavour of soup (Dharmapada 65). The knowledge and fame that the fool gains, so far from benefiting; they destroy his bright lot and cleave his head (Dharmapada 72). Swans can only fly in the sky, man who has supernatural powers can only go through air by their psychic powers. The wise rise beyond the world when they have conquered all kinds of Mara (Dharmapada 175).”

In summary, in Buddhism, wisdom is of the highest importance; for purification comes through wisdom, through understanding; and wisdom in Buddhism is the key to enlightenment and final liberation. But the Buddha never praised mere intellect. According to him, knowledge should go hand in hand with purity of heart, with moral excellence (*viñña-caranasampanna*—p). Wisdom gained by understanding and development of the qualities of mind and heart is wisdom par excellence (*bhavanamaya panna*—p). It is saving knowledge, and not mere speculation, logic or specious reasoning. Thus, it is clear that Buddhism is neither mere love of, nor inducing the search after wisdom, nor devotion, though they have their significance and bearing on mankind, but an encouragement of a practical application of the teaching that leads the follower to dispassion, enlightenment and final deliverance. Wisdom in Buddhism is also a sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing attitudes. It is also a tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. Many people say that wisdom is gained from information or knowledge. The Buddha told us the opposite! He taught us that wisdom is already within our self-nature; it does not come from the outside. In the world, there are some very intelligent and wise people, such as scientists and philosophers, etc. However, the Buddha would not recognize their knowledge as the proper Buddhist enlightenment, because they have not severed their afflictions. They still dwell on the rights and wrongs of others, on greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance. They still harbor wandering discriminatory thoughts and attachments. In other words, their minds are not pure. Without the pure mind, no matter how high the level of realization one reaches, it is still not the proper Buddhist enlightenment. Thus, our first hindrance to enlightenment and

liberation is ego, our self-attachment, our own wandering thoughts. Only the wisdom that is based on concentration has the ability to eliminate attachments and ignorance. That is to say the wisdom that arises from a pure mind, not the wisdom that is attained from reading and studying books, for this wisdom is only worldly knowledge, not true wisdom. Thus, the Buddha said: “He who is concentrated knows and sees what really is.” According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, all sentient beings possess the same wisdom and virtuous capabilities as the Buddha, but these qualities are unattainable due to wandering thoughts and attachments. Practicing Buddhism will help us rid of wandering, discriminating thoughts and attachments. Thus, we uncover our pure mind, in turn giving rise to true wisdom. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that our innate wisdom and abilities are temporarily lost due to the cloud of ignorance, attachments and wandering discriminatory thoughts, but are not truly or permanently lost. Our goal in Practicing Buddhism is to break through this cloud and achieve enlightenment.

Bodhisattvas' Two Prongs of Saving Beings: Spreading Kindness and Compassion With Wisdom: Pity and wisdom, the two characteristics of a bodhisattva seeking to attain perfect enlightenment and the salvation of all beings. Karuna or compassion means below is to save sentient beings. Jnana or wisdom means above is to seek Bodhi. Compassion is surely not a flabby state of mind. It is a strong enduring thing. When a person is in distress, it is truly compassionate man's heart that trembles. This, however, is not sadness; it is this quacking of the heart that spurs him to action and incites him to rescue the distressed. And this needs strength of mind, much tolerance and equanimity. So, it is totally wrong to come to a hurry conclusion that compassion to be an expression of feebleness, because it has the quality of tenderness. In Mahayana Buddhism, Pity is typified by Avalokitesvara and wisdom by Mahasthamaprapta. In the esoteric sects, pity is represented by the garbhadhatu or the womb treasury, while wisdom is represented by the vajradhatu or the diamond treasury. Two doors of Karuna and Jnana help practitioners with two aims: above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings. This is also one of the great vow of a Bodhisattva. *The first door is the door of Compassion:* Buddha-pity, or Bodhisattva-pity, the way of pity directed

to others. *The second door is the door of Wisdom:* Wisdom gate or Buddha-wisdom, or the way of enlightenment. In Buddhism, wisdom and compassion are the natural characteristics or qualities of the enlightened mind. However, if we want to develop it, we have to cultivate and practice hard. It is similar to a seed that we all know its potential to grow into a plant with the conditions that we grow it in the right soil, water, fertilize and maintain it under a temperate temparture.

Chapter Fifteen

In the Bodhisattva Ideal, Flowers of Insight and Compassion Always Bloom Silmutaneously

According to Buddhism, in the Bodhisattva Ideal, flowers of insight and compassion always bloom silmutaneously.

For Buddhist practitioners, as you continue practicing, the flower of insight will blossom in you, along with the flowers of compassion, tolerance, happiness, and letting go. You can let go, because you do not need to keep anything for yourself. You are no longer a fragile and small “self” that needs to be preserved by all possible means. Since the happiness of others is also your happiness, you are now filled with joy, and you have no jealousy or selfishness. Free from attachment to wrong views and prejudices, you are filled with tolerance. The door of your compassion is wide open, and you also suffer the sufferings of all living beings. As a result, you do whatever you can to relieve these sufferings. To practice meditation is to train ourselves to eliminate hatred, anger, and selfishness and to develop loving-kindness towards all. We have our physical bodies and our own lives, but still we can live in harmony with each other and help each other to the best of our ability.

All the Buddha’s teachings recorded in the sutras are aimed at liberating human beings’ sufferings and afflictions in this life. They have a function of helping human beings see the way to make arise the skilful thought, to release the opposite evil thought controlling their mind. For example, the five meditative mental factors releasing the five hindrances; compassion releasing ill-will; detachment or greedlessness releasing greediness; wisdom releasing illusion; perception of selflessness, impermanence and suffering releasing perception of selfishness, permanence and pleasure, and so on. The Pure Land Sect believes that during this Dharma-Ending Age, it is difficult to attain enlightenment and emancipation in this very life if one practices other methods without following Pure Land at the same time. If emancipation is not achieved in this lifetime, one’s crucial vows will become empty thoughts as one continues to be deluded on

the path of Birth and Death. Devoted Buddhists should always be very cautious, not to praise one's school and downplay other schools. Devoted Buddhists should always remember that we all are Buddhists and we all practice the teachings of the Buddha, though with different means, we have the same teachings, the Buddha's Teachings; and the same goal, emancipation and becoming Buddha. To understand Buddhism properly we must begin at the end of the Buddha's career. The year 486 B.C. or thereabouts saw the conclusion of the Buddha's activity as a teacher in India. The death of the Buddha is called, as is well known, 'Nirvana,' or 'the state of the fire blown out.' When a fire is blown out, nothing remain to be seen. So the Buddha was considered to have entered into an invisible state which can in no way be depicted in word or in form. Just prior to his attaining Nirvana, in the Sala grove of Kusinagara, the Buddha spoke to His disciples to the following effect: "Do not wail saying 'Our Teacher has passed away, and we have no one to follow.' What I have taught, the Dharma (ideal) with the disciplinary (Vinaya) rules, will be your teacher after my departure. If you adhere to them and practice them uninterruptedly, is it not the same as if my Dharma-body (Dharmakaya) remained here forever?" In spite of these thoughtful instructions some of his disciples were expressing a dissenting idea even before his funeral. It was natural, therefore, for the mindful elders to think of calling a council of elders in order to preserve the orthodox teaching of the Buddha. They consulted King Ajatasatru who at once ordered the eighteen monasteries around his capital to be repaired for housing the members of the coming Council of Rajagriha. When the time arrived five hundred selected elders met together. Ananda rehearsed the Dharmas (sutras) while Upali explained the origin of each of the Vinaya rules. There was no necessity of rehearsing the Vinaya rules themselves since they had been compiled during the Buddha's lifetime for weekly convocation for confessions. At the council a fine collection of the Dharma and the Vinaya was made, the number of Sutras was decided, and the history of the disciplinary rules was compiled. The result of the elders' activity was acknowledged as an authority by those who had a formalistic and realistic tendency. There were, however, some who differed from them in their opinion. Purana, for instance, was skilled in preaching. Purana was in a bamboo grove near Rajagriha during the

council, and, being asked by some layman, is said to have answered: “The council may produce a fine collection. But I will keep to what I heard from my teacher myself. So we may presume that there were some who had idealistic and free-thinking tendencies.

In the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, the Buddha said: “Those who follow the Way are like floating pieces of woods in the water flowing above the current, not touching either shore and that are not picked up by people, not intercepted by ghosts or spirits, not caught in whirlpools, and that which do not rot. I guarantee that these pieces of wood will certainly reach the sea. I guarantee that students of the Way who are not deluded by emotional desire nor bothered by myriad of devious things but who are vigorous in their cultivation or development of the unconditioned will certainly attain the way.” For left-home people, basically speaking, all teachings of the Buddha are aimed at releasing human beings’ troubles in this very life. They have a function of helping an individual see the way to make arise the wholesome thoughts to release the opposite evil thoughts. For example, meditation helps releasing hindrances; fixed mind releasing scattered minds that have controlled human minds since the beginninglessness; compassion releasing ill-will; detachment or greedlessness releasing greediness; the perceptions of selflessness and impermanence releasing the concepts of “self” and “permanence”; wisdom or non-illusion releasing illusion, and so on. However, the cultivation must be done by the individual himself and by his effort itself in the present. As for laypeople, the Buddha expounded very clearly in the Sigalaka Sutta: not to waste his materials, not to wander on the street at unfitting times, not to keep bad company, and not to have habitual idleness, not to act what is caused by attachment, ill-will, folly or fear. In the Five Basic Precepts, the Buddha also explained very clearly: not taking life, not taking what is not given, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying, and not drinking intoxicants. Besides, laypeople should have good relationships of his family and society: between parents and children, between husband and wife, between teacher and student, among relatives and neighbors, between monks, nuns, and laypeople, between employer and employee. These relationships should be based on human love, loyalty, gratitude, sincerity, mutual acceptance, mutual understanding, and mutual respect. To be able to practice these rules,

the flower of insight will blossom in you, along with the flowers of compassion. At that time, both left-home people and laypeople are freed from sufferings and afflictions in this very life.

Chapter Sixteen

Mind of Rejoice: One of the Great Minds in the Bodhisattva Ideal

Minds of Rejoice or Accepting Mind at others' Joy. Accepting means to feel happy for others' joy and happiness. Accepting mind has the special characteristics that can eliminate various karmic obstructions including jealousy, stinginess, pettiness, etc. The word "Rejoice" means appreciation of something or rejoicing at others' joy without the slightest thought of jealousy or competitiveness. Without these negative thoughts, we must rejoice over positive deeds performed even by people we consider enemies. In Buddhist teachings, mind of rejoice is one of the great minds in the Bodhisattva Ideal. We have two objects of rejoicing: Rejoicing over others' root virtues and rejoicing over our own. Buddhist practitioners should try to develop the mind of rejoicing at others' joy for rejoice at others' merits and virtues means from the time of our initial resolve for all wisdom, we should diligently cultivate accumulation of blessings without regard for their bodies and lives, cultivate all the difficult ascetic practices and perfect the gates of various paramitas, enter bodhisattva grounds of wisdom and accomplish the unsurpassed Bodhi of all Buddhas. We should completely follow along with and rejoice in all of their good roots (big as well as small merits). It should be repeated that Mind of Immeasurable Joy is a mind of great joy, or infinite joy. Boundless joy (gladness), on seeing others rescued from suffering. Here a monk, with a heart filled with sympathetic joy. Thus he stays, spreading the thought of sympathetic joy above, below, across, everywhere, always with a heart filled with sympathetic joy, abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will. Appreciative joy is the quality of rejoicing at the success and prosperity of others. It is the congratulatory attitude, and helps to eliminate envy and discontent over the success of others. Immeasurable inner joy also means to rejoice in all good, to rejoice in the welfare of others, or to do that which one enjoys, or to follow one's inclination. This is the fifth of the ten conducts and vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Rejoice at others' merits and virtues means from

the time of our initial resolve for all wisdom, we should diligently cultivate accumulation of blessings without regard for their bodies and lives, cultivate all the difficult ascetic practices and perfect the gates of various paramitas, enter bodhisattva grounds of wisdom and accomplish the unsurpassed Bodhi of all Buddhas. We should completely follow along with and rejoice in all of their good roots (big as well as small merits).

Mind of rejoice in others' joy can be rejoicing in other's merit is productive of joy wherever one is born. Besides, rejoicing in other's merit is also getting praise to oneself. Mind of rejoice in others' joy can also mean rejoicing over other people's positive deeds. The word "Rejoice" means appreciation of something. Rejoicing without the slightest thought of jealousy or competitiveness. Without these negative thoughts, we must rejoice over positive deeds performed even by people we consider enemies. We have two objects of rejoicing: Rejoicing over others' root virtues and rejoicing over our own. When rejoicing over our own virtue, we can rejoice over virtue done in our past lives that we can measure through inferential valid cognition and rejoice over our root virtue of this present life that we can measure by means of direct valid cognition. It is not difficult to apply inferential valid cognition to rejoice over our past lives. The fact that we have not only taken rebirth in this present human form but have inherited favorable conditions necessary for Dharma practices confirm that we must have practiced generosity, patience, and the other perfections in our past lives. So we should rejoice. Rejoice over our virtues of this present life means to think over virtuous deeds we personally have performed. For example, recitation of the holy scriptures, contemplation of their meanings, listening to the teachings of Dharma or any act of generosity and so forth. Then rejoicing at these without arrogance because if we feel proud, our root virtues will lessen instead of increasing. Rejoicing over others' virtues means rejoicing over the virtue of others without prejudice. One's act of rejoicing must not be contaminated by negative thoughts like jealousy. Regardless of what our relationship with the other person is, we should acknowledge sincerely their virtuous deeds and rejoice. This is the most effective mental technique to build a huge accumulation of merits. This is also the fifth of the ten conducts and vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Rejoice at others' merits and virtues means from the time of our initial resolve for all wisdom, we should diligently cultivate accumulation of blessings without regard for their bodies and lives, cultivate all the difficult ascetic practices and perfect the gates of various paramitas, enter Bodhisattva grounds of wisdom and accomplish the unsurpassed Bodhi of all Buddhas. We should completely follow along with and rejoice in all of their good roots (big as well as small merits).

Chapter Seventeen

The Bodhisattva Ideal Is the Very Path of A Bodhisattva's Cultivation

I. An Overview of Cultivation in Buddhism:

In Buddhist cultivation, it is traditional for Buddhists to honour the Buddha, to respect the Sangha and to pay homage the religious objects of veneration such as the relics of the Buddha, Buddha images, monastery, pagoda, and personal articles used by the Buddha. However, Buddhists should try to cultivate and attain a self-realization, and never pray to idols. To lead a religious life or cultivation in Buddhism is to put the Buddha's teachings into practice on a continued and regular basis. Cultivation in Buddhism also means to nourish the seeds of Bodhi by practicing and developing precepts, dhyana, and wisdom. Thus, cultivation in Buddhism is not only practicing Buddha recitation or sitting meditation, it also includes cultivation of six paramitas, ten paramitas, thirty-seven aids to Enlightenment, etc. For Buddhists, to cultivate earnestly we cannot look down on ourselves and not to exert enough efforts. According to the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Treasure, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, taught: Good Knowing Advisors, one who cultivates non-movement does not notice whether other people are right or wrong, good or bad, or whether they have other faults. That is the non-movement of the self-nature. Good Knowing Advisors, although the body of the confused person may not move, as soon as he opens his mouth he speaks of what is right and wrong about others, of their good points and shortcomings and so, he turns his back on the way. Attachment to the mind and attachment to purity are obstructions to the Way." According to Buddhism, our fate depends entirely on our deeds; in other words, we are the architects of our karma. Cultivating in accordance with the Buddha's Teachings means we change the karma of ourselves; changing our karmas by not only giving up our bad actions or misdeeds, but also forgiving offences directed against us by others. We cannot blame anyone else for our miseries and misfortunes. We have to face life as it is and not run away from it, because there is no place

on earth to hide from karma. Performing good deeds is indispensable for our own happiness; there is no need of imploring favors from deities or simply showing repentance. Changing karma also means remembrance of karma and using wisdom to distinguish virtue from evil and freedom from constraint so that we are able to avoid evil deeds, to do meritorious deeds, or not to create any deeds at all. Changing karma also means to purify our minds rather than praying, performing rites, or torturing our bodies. Changing karma also means to change your narrow-minded heart into a heart full of love and compassion and accomplish the four boundless hearts, especially the hearts of loving-kindness and compassion. True Buddhists should always remember that sooner or later everyone has to die once. After death, what can we bring with us? We cannot bring with us any worldly possessions; only our bad or good karma will follow us like a shadow of our own.

II. The Bodhisattva Ideal Is the Very Path of A Bodhisattva's Cultivation:

The beginning of the bodhisattva's career is marked by the dawning of the "mind of awakening" (Bodhi-citta), which is the resolve to become a Buddha in order to benefit others. So, Bodhisattva is considered as a human being with his own karmas at his very birth as all other creatures, but he can be able to get rid of all his inner conflicts, including bad karmas and sufferings, and external crises, including environments, calamities and other dilemma, can change this unfortunate situation and can make a peaceful, prosperous and happy world for all to live in together by using his effort and determination in cultivating a realistic and practical way without depending on external powers. In Mahayana literature, this is commonly followed by a public ceremony of a vow to attain Buddhahood (Pranidhana) in order to benefit other sentient beings. That is to say: "Above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings." This is one of the great vows of a Bodhisattva. However, before starting one of these great vows, any practitioners who have a wish to cultivate in accordance with the Bodhisattva Ideal should first to begin their own journey of cultivation that is in accordance with Bodhisattvas' Spirit.

If we, Buddhist practitioners, want to cultivate in accordance with the Bodhisattva Ideal, we must first know and thoroughly understand who are parents and relatives of this Bodhisattva, and then rightly follow their guidance. According to Zen Master D.T. Suzuki in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Book III, Bodhisattvas have twenty parents and relatives: *First*, prajna (wisdom) is his mother. *Second*, upaya (skilful means) is his father. *Third*, dana (charity) is his wet nurse. *Fourth*, sila (morality) is his supporter. *Fifth*, ksanti (patience) is his decoration. *Sixth*, virya (strenuousness or energy) is his nurse. *Seventh*, dhyana (meditation) is his cleaner. *Eighth*, good friends are his instructors. *Ninth*, all factors of enlightenment are his companions. *Tenth*, all Bodhisattvas are his brothers. *Eleventh*, the Bodhicitta is his home. *Twelfth*, to conduct himself in accordance with the truth is his family manners. *Thirteenth*, the Bhumis are his residence. *Fourteenth*, the Kshantis are his family members. *Fifteenth*, the vows are his family motto. *Sixteenth*, to promote deeds of devotion is his family legacy. *Seventeenth*, to make others accept Mahayana is his family business. *Eighteenth*, to be anointed after being bound for one more birth is his destiny as crown prince in the kingdom of Dharma. *Nineteenth*, paramitas are the Prajna Boat which conveys him to another shore of Enlightenment. *Twentieth*, to arrive at the full knowledge of Tathagatahood forms the foundation of his pure family relationship.

According to Buddhism, it is not only ordinary people cannot escape cause and effect, even the Bodhisattvas cannot avoid them. However, Bodhisattvas are enlightening beings who have far-ranging vision. In cultivation, they always know bad causes will surely end up in bad results. Thus, Bodhisattvas are afraid of bad consequences in the future, not only they avoid planting evil-causes or evil karma in the present, but they also diligently cultivate to gradually diminish their karmic obstructions; at the same time to accumulate their virtues and merits, and ultimately to attain Buddhahood. However, sentient beings complete constantly to gather evil-causes; therefore, they must suffer evil effect. When ending the effect of their actions, they are not remorseful or willing to repent. Not only do they blame Heaven and other people, but they continue to create more evil karma in opposition and retaliation. Therefore, enemies and vengeance will continue to exist forever in this vicious cycle. Sincere Buddhists should always

remember that by planting more good causes, we will surely reap good consequences in the future. In the contrary, if we only see the present, and engage in immoral practices by not planting good roots and accumulating merits and virtues, we will surely bear bad consequences, without any exception. Practitioners should always remember that in any undertaking, the most difficult part is right at the start, but a thousand-mile journey begins with just one first step. So, we should start our cultivation right at this very time, this very moment, and not wait for any time in the future because the time is not waiting for anyone! Great Enlightening Beings have many ways of cultivation; however, in the limitation of this little book, we can only mention some typical ones. *According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, there are ten kinds of cultivation of Great Enlightening Beings:* Enlightening beings who abide by these can achieve the supreme cultivation and practice all truths. These ten methods of cultivation include cultivation of the ways of transcendence, learning, wisdom, purpose, righteousness, emancipation, manifestation, diligence, accomplishment of true awakening, and operation of right teaching. Besides, according to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 21, *there are ten kinds of practices, which are expounded by the Buddhas of past, present and future:* They are the practice of giving joy, beneficial practice, practice of nonopposition, practice of indomitability, practice of nonconfusion, practice of good manifestation, practice of nonattachment, practice of that which is difficult to attain, practice of good teachings, and practice of truth. According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten ways of getting rid of demons' actions of Great Enlightening Beings. *Enlightening Beings who abide by these can escape all demonic ways:* *First*, associating with the wise and honoring and serving them. *Second*, not elevating themselves or praising themselves. *Third*, believing in the profound teaching of Buddha without repudiating it. *Fourth*, never ever forgetting the determination for omniscience. *Fifth*, diligently cultivating refined practices, never being lax. *Sixth*, always seeking all the teachings for enlightening beings. *Seventh*, always expounding the truth tirelessly. *The eighth way of getting rid of demons' actions* includes taking refuge with all the Buddhas in the ten directions and thinking of them as saviors and protectors. *Ninth*, faithfully accepting and remembering the support of the spiritual power of the

Buddhas. *Tenth*, equally planting the same roots of goodness with all enlightening beings. Furthermore, according to the Buddha in The Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, Great Enlightening Beings have *ten kinds of practice which help them attain the practice of the unexcelled knowledge and wisdom of Buddhas*: *First*, the practice dealing with all sentient beings, to develop them all to maturity. *Second*, the practice seeking all truths, to learn them all. *Third*, the practice of all roots of goodness, to cause them all to grow. *Fourth*, the practice of all concentration, to be single-minded, without distraction. *Fifth*, the practice of all knowledge, to know everything. *Sixth*, the practice of all cultivations, to be able to cultivate them all. *Seventh*, the practice dealing with all Buddha-lands, to adorn them all. *Eighth*, the practice dealing with all good companions, respecting and supporting them. *Ninth*, the practice dealing with all Buddhas, honoring and serving them. *Tenth*, the practice all supernatural powers, to be able to transform anywhere, anytime to help sentient beings. *Also according to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of rules of behavior of great enlightening beings*: Enlightening beings who abide by these can attain the supreme discipline of great knowledge. *First*, Bodhisattvas should not slander any enlightening teachings. *Second*, Bodhisattvas' faith in the Buddhas should be indestructible. *Third*, Bodhisattvas should honor and respect all enlightening beings. *Fourth*, Bodhisattvas should never give up their friendship with wise people. *Fifth*, Bodhisattvas should not think of those who seek individual salvation. *Sixth*, Bodhisattvas should avoid all regression on the path of enlightening beings. *Seventh*, Bodhisattvas should not give rise to any malice toward sentient beings. *Eighth*, Bodhisattvas should cultivate all roots of goodness to perfection. *Ninth*, Bodhisattvas should be able to conquer all demons. *Tenth*, Bodhisattvas should fulfill all the ways of transcendence. Also according to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten norms of practice of Great Enlightening Beings. ***Enlightening Beings who abide by these can attain the Buddhas' supreme method of practice***: *First*, honoring the wise. *Second*, always being alerted by the celestial spirits. *Third*, always having shame and conscience before the Buddhas. *The fourth norm of practice* includes having pity for sentient beings and not abandoning birth and death. *Fifth*, carrying tasks through consummation without change of mind.

The sixth norm of practice includes single-mindedly following the enlightening beings, aspiring to universal enlightenment, and diligently learning. *The seventh norm of practice* includes getting rid of wrong views and earnestly seeking the right Path. *Eighth*, destroying demons and the actions of afflictions. *The ninth norm of practice* includes knowing the different faculties and temperaments of sentient beings and teaching them and enable them to live in the state of Buddhahood. *The tenth norm of practice* includes abiding in the infinitely vast cosmos of reality and removing the afflictions and purifying the body.

Chapter Eighteen

The Bodhisattva Ideal Is the Cultivation In Accordance With the Middle Path

The middle path means the path in the middle, but according to Buddhism, it means the “mean” between two extremes (between realism and nihilism, or eternal substantial existence and annihilation or between), the idea of a realm of mind or spirit beyond the terminology of substance (hũu) or nothing (vô); however, it includes both existence and non-existence. Middle path is the path that Sakyamuni Buddha discovered, which advises people to give up extremes, to keep away from bad deeds, to do good and to purify the mind. The Eightfold Noble Path. The Buddha taught: “When discrimination is done away with, the middle way is reached, for the Truth does not lie in the extreme alternatives but in the middle position.” The “Middle Way.” was translated from “Madhyama”, a Sanskrit term, which means between two extremes (between realism and nihilism, or eternal substantial existence and annihilation or between), the idea of a realm of mind or spirit beyond the terminology of substance (hũu) or nothing (vô); however, it includes both existence and non-existence. This doctrine attributed to Sakyamuni Buddha rejects the extremes of hedonistic self-indulgence on the one hand and extreme asceticism on the other. Sakyamuni Buddha discovered the Middle Path which advises people to give up extremes, to keep away from bad deeds, to do good and to purify the mind. The Eightfold Noble Path. The Buddha taught: “When discrimination is done away with, the middle way is reached, for the Truth does not lie in the extreme alternatives but in the middle position.” The doctrine of the Middle Path means in the first instance the middle path between the two extremes of optimism and pessimism. Such a middle position is a third extreme, tending neither one way nor the other is what the Buddha wanted to say. The Buddha certainly began with this middle as only one step higher than the ordinary extremes. A gradual ascent of the dialectical ladder, however, will bring us higher and higher until a stage is attained wherein the antithetic onesidedness of ens and non-

ens is denied and transcended by an idealistic synthesis. In this case the Middle Path has a similar purport as the Highest Truth.

For Buddhists, doing things just moderately is the Middle Path. Sincere Buddhists should not lean to one side. Do not go too far, nor fail to go far enough. If you go too far, or not far enough, it is not the Middle Way. In cultivation, sincere Buddhists should not fall into the two extremes of emptiness and existence. Do not be attached to true emptiness, nor be obstructed by wonderful existence, for true emptiness and wonderful existence cannot be grasped or renounced. The notion of a Middle Way is fundamental to all Buddhist teachings. The Middle Way was clearly explained by the Madhyamika. It is not the property of the Madhyamika; however, it was given priority by Nagarjuna and his followers, who applied it in a singularly relentless fashion to all problems of ontology, epistemology, and soteriology.

In the Katyanavavade sutra, the Buddha told Maha-Kasyapa: “Kasyapa! ‘It is one extreme alternative, not is’ is another extreme alternative. That which is the madhyama position is intangible, incomparable, without any position, non-appearing, incomprehensible. That is what is meant by madhyama position. Kasyapa! It is perception of Reality.” Extremes become the dead ends of eternalism and annihilationism. There are those who cling exclusively to nonbeing and there are others who cling exclusively to being. By his doctrine of Middle Way (madhyama pratipat), the Buddha meant to show the truth that things are neither absolute being nor absolute nonbeing, but are arising and perishing, forming continuous becoming, and that Reality is transcendent to thought and cannot be caught up in the dichotomies of the mind. Therefore, the the way to liberation first taught by the Buddha was the Middle Path lying between the extremes of indulgence in desire and self-mortification. In other words, for Buddhist practitioners, the Middle Path is the path that helps practitioners advance to the Buddhahood. Our mind must be open to all experience without losing its balance and falling into these extremes. This will help us see things without reacting and grabbing or pushing away. When we understand this balance, then the path of liberation becomes clearer. When pleasant things arise, we will realize that they will not last, that they offer us no security, and that they are empty. When unpleasant and disappointed things arise, we will see that they will not

last, that they offer us no security, and that they are empty. We will see that there is nothing in the world has any essential value; there is nothing for us to hold on to. When saying this, we do not mean that we don't need anything. We still have our minimum needs for our living, but we know how to be content with few desires, and we will not hold on to any unnecessary things.

According to the interpretation of Nagarjuna Bodhisattva in the Madhyamika Sastra, right is the middle. The middle versus two extremes is antithetic middle or relative middle. The middle after the two extremes have been totally refuted, is the middle devoid of extremes. When the ideas of two extremes is removed altogether, it is the absolute middle. Thus the absolute right is the absolute middle. When the absolute middle condescends to lead people at large, it becomes a temporary middle or truth. Also according to Nagarjuna Bodhisattva, we have thus the fourfold Middle Path. *First*, when the theory of being is opposed to the theory of non-being, the former is regarded as the worldly truth and the latter the higher truth. *Second*, when the theory of being and non-being are opposed to those of neither being nor non-being, the former are regarded as the worldly truth and the latter the higher truth. *Third*, if the four opposed theories just mentioned together become the worldly truth, the yet higher views denying them all will be regarded as the higher truth. *Fourth*, if the expressed in the last stage become the worldly truth, the denial of them all will be the higher truth. Besides, Nagarjuna also wrote the "Eight Negation". In the Eight Negations, all specific features of becoming are denied. The fact that there are just eight negations has no specific purport; this is meant to be a whole negation. It may be taken as a crosswise sweeping away of all eight errors attached to the world of becoming, or a reciprocal rejection of the four pairs of one-sided views, or a lengthwise general thrusting aside of the errors one after the other. In this way, all discriminations of oneself and another or this and that are done away with. Neither birth nor death; there nothing appears, nothing disappears, meaning there is neither origination nor cessation; refuting the idea of appearing or birth by the idea of disappearance. Neither end nor permanence; there nothing has an end, nothing is eternal, meaning neither permanence nor impermanence; refuting the idea of 'permanence' by the idea of 'destruction.' Neither

identity nor difference; nothing is identical with itself, nor is there anything differentiated, meaning neither unity nor diversity; refuting the idea of ‘unity’ by the idea of ‘diversity.’ Neither coming nor going; nothing comes, nothing goes, refuting the idea of ‘disappearance’ by the idea of ‘come,’ meaning neither coming-in nor going-out; refuting the idea of ‘come’ by the idea of ‘go.’

When we hear about the non-self-existence and the illusory nature of all phenomena including the “I”, we might conclude that ourselves, others, the world and enlightenment are totally non-existent. Such a conclusion is nihilistic and too extreme. Devout Buddhists should always follow the “Middle Path”. According to the Buddha all phenomena do exist. It is their apparently concrete and independent manner of existence that is mistaken and must be rejected. We should always remember that all existent phenomena are mere appearances and lacking concrete self-existence they come into being from the interplay of various causes and conditions. They arise, abide, change and disappear. All of them are constantly subject to change. This is true of ourselves as well. No matter what our innate sense of ego-grasping may believe, there is no solid inherent “I” to be found anywhere inside or outside our everchanging body and mind (mental and physical components). We and all other phenomena without exception are empty of even the smallest atom of self-existence, and it is this emptiness that is the ultimate nature of everything that exists. The Buddha was a deep thinker. He was not satisfied with the ideas of his contemporary thinkers. Those who regard this earthly life as pleasant or optimists are ignorant of the disappointment and despair which are to come. Those who regard this life as a life of suffering or pessimists may be tolerated as long as they are simply feeling dissatisfied with this life, but when they begin to give up this life as hopeless and try to escape to a better life by practicing austerities or self-mortifications, then they are to be abhorred. The Buddha taught that the extremes of both hedonism and asceticism are to be avoided and that the middle course should be followed as the ideal. This does not mean that one should simply avoid both extremes and take the middle course as the only remaining course of escape. Rather, one should transcend, not merely escape from such extremes.

According to Buddhist teachings, the Bodhisattva Ideal is also the cultivation which is in accordance with the Middle Path. In this kind of cultivation, an enlightened practitioner is the person who has really attained enlightenment, or one who attains a way of life that is in accord with the truth. His thought and conduct are naturally fit for the purpose. He can also choose a way of life that is always in harmony with everything in the world. Thus according to the definition of “enlightenment,” it is impossible for us to find the “right” or “middle” path simply by choosing the midpoint between two extremes. Each extreme represents a fundamental difference. If we conduct ourselves based on the truth of causation, without adhering to fixed ideas, we can always lead a life that is perfectly fit for its purpose, and one that is in harmony with the truth. This is the teaching of the Middle Path. How can we attain such a mental state? The teaching in which the Buddha shows us concretely how to attain this in our daily life is none other than the doctrine of the Eightfold Noble Path. An enlightened one is the one who looks at things rightly (right view), thinks about things rightly (right thinking), speaks the right words (right speech), performs right conduct (right action), leads a right human life (right living), endeavors to live rightly (right endeavor), constantly aims the mind in the right direction (right memory), and constantly keeps the right mind and never be agitated by anything (right meditation). An Enlightened One always renders service to others in all spheres, spiritual, material, and physical, is donation. To remove illusion from one’s own mind in accordance the precepts taught by the Buddha, leading a right life and gaining the power to save others by endeavoring to perfect oneself, enduring any difficulty and maintaining a tranquil mind without arrogance even at the height of prosperity, is perseverance. To proceed straight toward an important goal without being sidetracked by trivial things is assiduity. To maintain a cool and un-agitated mind under all circumstances is meditation. And eventually to have the power of discerning the real aspect of all things is wisdom.

Chapter Nineteen

The True Compassion Within Ourselves Is One of the Main Elements of Bodhisattva Ideal

The two primary qualities in the Bodhisattva Ideal are practices of compassion and wisdom, and when the perfections are fully cultivated and compassion and wisdom developed to their highest level, the Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha. Therefore, a journey to find the Bodhisattva Within also means a journey to the compassion within ourselves in daily living and cultivating. According to Buddhism, the thought of compassion is the thought that broadly spreads out for the happiness of beings. The Buddha died at 80 instead of 100. He left 20 years of his own happiness to his disciples, and also the Tripitaka for universal salvation. Here a Buddhist, with a heart filled with compassion. Thus he stays, spreading the thought of compassion, above, below, across, everywhere, always with a heart filled with compassion, abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will. Compassion also makes the heart quiver when others are subject to suffering. It is the wish to remove the suffering of others, and it is opposed to cruelty. Karuna means sympathy, or pity (compassion) for another in distress and desire to help him or to deliver others from suffering out of pity. The compassion is selfless, non-egoistic and based on the principle of universal equality. A compassionate mind is a mind with wholesome thoughts which always wishes others to be released from their sufferings and afflictions. A compassionate mind does not only bring forth happiness and tranquility for others, but also to ourselves. The compassionate mind also helps us dispel our negative thoughts such as anger, envy and jealousy, etc. Compassion extends itself without distinction to all sentient beings. However, compassion must be accompanied by wisdom in order to have right effect. Karuna or compassion is one of the most important entrances to the great enlightenment; for with it, we do not kill or harm living beings.

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Chapter Seventh, Contemplating on Living Beings, when Manjusri Bodhisattava called on to enquire after Vimalakirti's health, he asked Vimalakirti about

“Karuna” as follows: Manjusri asked Vimalakirti: “What should be compassion (karuna) of a Bodhisattva?” Vimalakirti replied: “A Bodhisattva’s compassion should include sharing with all living beings all the merits he has won.” Bodhisattvas’ compassion is inconceivable. Bodhisattvas are enlightenment-beings, Buddhas-to-be, however, they vow to continue stay in this world for a long period of time. Why? For the good of others, because they want to become capable of pulling others out of this great flood of sufferings and afflictions. But what personal benefit do they find in the benefit of others? To Bodhisattvas, the benefit of others is their own benefit, because they desire it that way. However, in saying so, who could believe that? It is true that some people devoid of pity and think only of themselves, find it hard to believe in the altruism of the Bodhisattvas. But compassionate people do so easily. Do we not see that certain people, confirmed in the absence of pity, find pleasure in the suffering of others, even when it is not useful to them? And we must admit that the Bodhisattvas, confirmed in pity, find pleasure in doing good to others without any egoistic preoccupation. Do we not see that certain, ignorant of the true nature of the conditioned Dharmas which constitute their so-called “Self”, attach themselves to these dharmas, as a result, they suffer pains and afflictions because of this attachment. While we must admit that the Bodhisattvas, detach themselves from the conditioned Dharmas, no longer consider these Dharmas as “I” or “Mine”, growing in pitying solicitude for others, and are ready to suffer pains for this solitude?

In short, Bodhisattvas are enlightening beings who, deferring their own full Buddhahood, dedicate themselves to helping others attain liberation, and vow to forego complete enlightenment until they help all other beings attain enlightenment. In their self-mastery, wisdom, and compassion Bodhisattvas represent a high stage of Buddhahood, but they are not yet the supreme enlightened, or fully perfected Buddha. Bodhisattvas have numerous different ways that they manifest to help beings, but here, we only mention some typical ways of compassion that Bodhisattvas have practiced. If practitioners want to follow in the footsteps of Bodhisattvas, we should try to cultivate some typical methods of Bodhisattvas’ ways of cultivation. It should be reminded that the mind of compassion is an infinite pity for all, one of

the four immeasurable minds (catvari-apramanani). Boundless pity, to save from suffering. Here a monk, with a heart filled with compassion. Thus he stays, spreading the thought of compassion, above, below, across, everywhere, always with a heart filled with compassion, abundant, magnified, unbounded, without hatred or ill-will. Compassion also makes the heart quiver when other are subject to suffering. It is the wish to remove the suffering of others, and it is opposed to cruelty. However, a Bodhisattva always has two characteristics that go simultaneously in cultivation: pity and wisdom, for these two characteristics of a bodhisattva seeking to attain perfect enlightenment and the salvation of all beings. Karuna or compassion means below is to save sentient beings. Jnana or wisdom means above is to seek Bodhi. In Mahayana Buddhism, Pity is typified by Avalokitesvara and wisdom by Mahasthamaprapta. In the esoteric sects, pity is represented by the garbhadhatu or the womb treasury, while wisdom is represented by the vajradhatu or the diamond treasury. Besides, compassion and wisdom are also two doors (of Karuna and Jnana) that help practitioners with two aims: above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings. This is also one of the great vow of a Bodhisattva. First, Buddha-pity, or Bodhisattva-pity, the way of pity directed to others. Second, Wisdom gate or Buddha-wisdom, or the way of enlightenment.

Part Three
Appendices
(Phần Ba: Phụ Lục)

Appendix A

Bodhisattvas' Quest For Truth

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of quest for truth of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can attain great knowledge of all elements of Buddhahood without being instructed by another. First, quest for truth with a straightforward mind, being free from dishonesty. Second, diligent quest for truth, being free from laziness. Third, wholly devoted quest for truth, not begrudging their lives. Fourth, quest for truth to destroy all sentient beings' afflictions, not doing it for fame, profit, or respect. Fifth, quest for truth to benefit self and others, all sentient beings, not just helping themselves. Sixth, quest for truth to enter knowledge of wisdom, not taking pleasure in literature. Seventh, quest for truth to leave birth and death, not craving worldly pleasures. Eighth, quest for truth to liberate sentient beings, engendering the determination for enlightenment. Ninth, quest for truth to resolve the doubts of all sentient beings, to free them from vacillation. Tenth, quest for truth to fulfill Buddhahood, not being inclined to lesser aims.

Appendix B

Bodhisattvas' Ten Appellations

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, after accomplishing cultivating ten ways of generating the qualities of Buddhahood, Enlightening Beings will attain these ten appellations of greatness (See ten ways of generating the qualities of Buddhahood). First, they are called Beings of Enlightenment because they are born of knowledge of enlightenment. Second, they are called Great Beings because they dwell in the Great Vehicle. Third, they are called Foremost Beings because they realize the foremost truth. Fourth, they are called Superior Beings because they are aware of high laws. Fifth, they are called Supreme Beings because their knowledge is supreme. Sixth, they are called Exalted Beings because they reveal the unexcelled teaching. Seventh, they are called Beings of Power because they have extensive knowledge of the ten powers. Eighth, they are called Incomparable Beings because they have no peer in the world. Ninth, they are called Inconceivable Beings because they become Buddhas in an instant. Tenth, Enlightening beings win these appellations accomplish the Paths of Enlightening Beings.

Appendix C

The Journey to Find the Bodhisattva Within

Bodhisattva is a Sanskrit term for an Enlightened Being. This is the one whose essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. A Sanskrit term which means “Awakening being” or a “being of enlightenment,” or “one whose essence is wisdom,” or “a being who aspires for enlightenment.” This is the ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. The beginning of the bodhisattva’s career is marked by the dawning of the “mind of awakening” (Bodhi-citta), which is the resolve to become a Buddha in order to benefit others. So, **Bodhisattva is considered as a human being with his own karmas at his very birth as all other creatures, but he can be able to get rid of all his inner conflicts, including bad karmas and sufferings, and external crises, including environments, calamities and other dilemma, can change this unfortunate situation and can make a peaceful, prosperous and happy world for all to live in together by using his effort and determination in cultivating a realistic and practical way without depending on external powers.** In Mahayana literature, this is commonly followed by a public ceremony of a vow to attain Buddhahood (Pranidhana) in order to benefit other sentient beings. That is to say: “Above to seek bodhi, below to save (transform) beings.” This is one of the great vows of a Bodhisattva. After that point the bodhisattva pursues the goal of Buddhahood by progressively cultivating the six, sometimes ten, “perfections” (Paramita): generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration, and wisdom. The two primary qualities in which the Bodhisattva trains are compassion and wisdom, and when the perfections are fully cultivated and compassion and wisdom developed to their highest level, the Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha. The Bodhisattva path is commonly divided into ten levels

(Bhumi). The term Bodhisattva is not, however, confined solely to Mahayana Buddhism: in Theravada, Sakyamuni Buddha is referred to as “Bodhisatta” (Bodhisattva) in the past lives described in the Jatakas, during which he is said to have gradually perfected the good qualities of a Buddha. In the Mahayana sense, however, the Bodhisattva concept is an explicit rejection of Nikaya Buddhism’s ideal religious paradigm, the Arhat. In Mahayana the Arhat is characterized as limited and selfish, concerned only with personal salvation, in contrast to the Bodhisattva, who works very hard for all sentient beings. So the term “Bodhisattva” in general, means a “Bodhi being”. It denotes a being who is destined to obtain fullest Enlightenment or Buddhahood. According to the Digha Nikaya, literally, a “Bodhisattva” means one who is an intellectual, or one who is resolved or maintained only to the paths that lead to enlightenment. Several centuries after the Buddha’s parinirvana, Bodhisattva is one of the most important ideas of Mahayana Buddhists. However, the concept was not a sole creation of the Mahayana. The term “Bodhisattva” had been mentioned in the Pali Canon and it stems from the original Pali Buddhism which is used more or less exclusively to designate Sakyamuni Buddha prior to His Enlightenment. According to Sarvastivada School, “Bodhisattva” is defined as a person who is certain to become a Buddha. He is a person who is born of wisdom and protected and served by the wise. According to the Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita, nothing real is meant by the word “Bodhisattva,” because a Bodhisattva trains himself in non-attachment to all dharmas. For the Bodhisattva, the great being awakes in non-attachment to full enlightenment in the sense that he understands all the dharmas, because he has enlightenment as his aim, an enlightened being. In short, a Bodhisattva is an enlightener of sentient beings. He usually vows to take the enlightenment that he has been certified as having attained and the wisdom that he has uncovered to enlighten all other sentient beings. A Bodhisattva’s job is not easy at all. Though his appearance is not rare as that of a Buddha, but it is extremely difficult for a Bodhisattva to appear, and it is also extremely difficult for ordinary people to encounter a real Bodhisattva.

If practitioners want to follow in the footsteps of Bodhisattvas, we should try to cultivate some typical methods of Bodhisattvas' ways of cultivation. We, devoted Buddhists, must examine ourselves so that we

are able to know who we are. Know our body and mind by simply watching. In sitting, in sleeping, in eating, know our limits. Use wisdom. The practice is not to try to achieve anything. Just be mindful of what is. Our whole meditation is to look directly at the mind. We will be able to see suffering, its cause, and its end. According to Zen Master Daikaku in *Zen and the Way*: "Zen practice is not clarifying conceptual distinctions, but throwing away one's preconceived views and notions and the sacred texts and all the rest, and piercing through the layers of coverings over the spring of self behind them. All the holy ones have turned within and sought in the self, and by this went beyond all doubt. To turn within means all the twenty-four hours and in every situation, to pierce one by one through the layers covering the self, deeper and deeper, to place that cannot be described. It is when thinking comes to an end and making distinctions ceases, when wrong views and ideas disappear of themselves without having to be driven forth, when without being sought the true action and true impulse appear of themselves. It is when one can know what is the truth of the heart."

Shoju Rojin was the name of a Japanese Zen master in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. Zen master Shoju Rojin, also called Dokyo Etan, belonged to the Japanese Lin-Chi school, a disciple and the only dharma successor of Bu'n'an Shido; and the master of Hakuin Zenji. He wandered through Japan and trained under masters of various Zen schools. He is the author of the *Collection of Sand and Stone*, a popular anthology of frequently humorous Buddhist stories and legends, which Zen masters are fond of quoting in their teaching. As a young man, Dokyo Etan had been a retainer in the household of Lord Matsudaira of Nagano. His interest in Zen was roused when a number of older samurai asked an itinerant monk to write down the name of the Bodhisattva of Compassion as talismans for their safety. Etan asked for one as well, but the monk recognized something deeper in the young man than he had sensed in the other soldiers. He told Etan, "The Bodhisattva isn't to be sought without. These trifles are of no value. Seek the Bodhisattva within." The monk's words stayed with Etan for a very long time, and he became preoccupied with seeking to understand what they meant. The matter of the Bodhisattva Within became his mass of Great Doubt, and he

focused on it for many months with such intensity that it often distracted him while he was carrying out his assigned duties. One day, he fell from a ladder and was knocked unconscious. When he came to, the question was resolved. He felt certain he now knew what the Bodhisattva Within was, but he wanted to have his understanding confirmed by a Zen master.

Appendix D

Bodhisattvas and Ordinary People

The key word which occurs on almost each page of the Mahayana writings is the word “Bodhisattva”. What then is the first of all a Bodhisattva? A Buddha is one who is enlightened. A Bodhisattva is literally an Enlightening being. He is a Buddha-to-be, one who wishes to become a Buddha, that is to say, an Enlightened One. So far for the literal meaning. It would be a mistake to assume that the conception of a Bodhisattva was a creation of the Mahayana. For all Buddhists each Buddha had been, for a long period before his enlightenment, a Bodhisattva. The Sarvastivadins, in particular, had given much thought to the career of a Bodhisattva. The Abhidharmakosa gives a fine description of the mentality of a Bodhisattva: “But why do the Bodhisattvas, once they had taken the vow to obtain the supreme enlightenment, take such a long time to obtain it? Because the supreme enlightenment is very difficult to obtain: one needs a vast accumulation of knowledge and merit, innumerable heroic deeds in the course of three immeasurable kalpas. One could understand that the Bodhisattva seeks for this enlightenment, which is so difficult to obtain, if this enlightenment were his only means of arriving at deliverance. But this is not the case. Why then do they undertake such infinite labor? For the good of others, because they want to become capable of pulling others out of this great flood of suffering. But what personal benefit do they find in the benefit of others? The benefit of others is their own benefit, because they desire it. Who could believe that? It is true that men devoid of pity and who think only of themselves, find it hard to believe in the altruism of the Bodhisattva. But compassionate men do so easily. Do we not see that certain people, confirmed in the absence of pity, find pleasure in the suffering of others, even when it is not useful to them? As well one must admit that the Bodhisattvas, confirmed in pity, find pleasure in doing good things to others without any egoistic preoccupation. Do we not see that certain people, ignorant of the true nature of the conditioned Dharmas which constitute their so-called ‘Self,’ attach themselves to these Dharmas by force of habit, however,

completely these Dharmas may be devoid of personality, and suffer a thousand pains because of this attachment? Likewise, one must admit that the Bodhisattvas, by the force of habit, detach themselves from the Dharmas which constitute their so-called 'Self,' do no longer consider these Dharmas as 'I' or 'mine,' growing in pitying solicitude for others, and are ready to suffer a thousand pains for this solicitude."

Meanwhile, ordinary people are common people or people of lower caste of character or profession. An ordinary person is an unenlightened person by Buddhism, an unbeliever, sinner; childish, ignorant, foolish; the lower orders. In Mahayana, ordinary people are all of those who have not reached the path of seeing (*darsana-marga*), and so have not directly perceived emptiness (*sunyata*). Due to this, they assent (*tán thành*) to the false appearances of things and do not perceive them in terms of their true nature, i.e., emptiness. In Theravada, this refers to beings who have worldly aspirations (*loka-dharma*). They are contrasted with noble people, which includes those who have attained one of the supramundane paths, from stream-enterers up to Arhats and Bodhisattvas. In short, an ordinary man is a common man with fleshy eyes, i.e., one with no spiritual awakening. The seed-nature of common people is in the foolish and ignorant nature. There are four pairs of inverted (upside-down, or false) beliefs which common people usually have: The first pair, permanent: Buddhist doctrine emphasizes that all is impermanent, only Nirvana is permanent; mistaking the impermanent for the permanent. The second pair, joy: All is suffering, only Nirvana is joy; mistaking what is not bliss for bliss. The third pair, self or personal: All is non-self or without a soul; mistaking what is not self for self. The fourth pair, purity: All is impure, only Nirvana is pure; mistaking what is impure for pure. For these reasons, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas appear to save ordinary beings. According to Buddhism, this world is the world where saints and sinners dwell together. The Land of Common Residence of Beings and Saints, or the land where all beings, saints and Ordinary Beings of the six lower worlds, dwell together (hells, hungry ghosts, animals, asuras, men, devas, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas).

Regarding the basic knowledge, according to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, Enlightening beings have ten kinds of certain understanding of the realm of sentient beings. Enlightening

beings who abide by these can attain the supremely powerful certain understanding of Buddhas. *First*, know that all realms of sentient beings essentially have no reality. *Second*, know that all realms of sentient beings enter the body of one sentient being. *Third*, know that all realms of sentient beings enter the body of an Enlightening Being. *Fourth*, know that all realms of sentient beings enter the matrix of enlightenment. *Fifth*, know that the body of one sentient being enters all realms of sentient beings. *Sixth*, know that all realms of sentient beings can be vessels of the Buddhas' teaching. *Seventh*, know all realms of sentient beings and manifest the bodies of celestial beings for them according to their desires. *Eighth*, know all realms of sentient beings and manifest the tranquil, composed behavior of saints and individual illuminates for them, according to their inclinations. *Ninth*, know all realms of sentient beings and manifest to them the bodies of Enlightening Beings adorned with virtues. *Tenth*, know all realms of sentient beings and show them the marks and embellishments and the tranquil comportment of Buddhas, and enlighten sentient beings.

Regarding the law of cause and effect, there is no difference between Bodhisattvas and ordinary people. It is not only ordinary people cannot escape cause and effect, even the Bodhisattvas cannot avoid them. However, Bodhisattvas are enlightening beings who have far-ranging vision. They know bad causes will surely end up in bad results. Thus, Bodhisattvas are afraid of bad consequences in the future, not only they avoid planting evil-causes or evil karma in the present, but they also diligently cultivate to gradually diminish their karmic obstructions; at the same time to accumulate their virtues and merits, and ultimately to attain Buddhahood. However, sentient beings complete constantly to gather evil-causes; therefore, they must suffer evil effect. When ending the effect of their actions, they are not remorseful or willing to repent. Not only do they blame Heaven and other people, but they continue to create more evil karma in opposition and retaliation. Therefore, enemies and vengeance will continue to exist forever in this vicious cycle. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that by planting more good causes, we will surely reap good consequences in the future. In the contrary, if we only see the present, and engage in immoral practices by not planting good roots and

accumulating merits and virtues, we will surely bear bad consequences, without any exception.

Appendix E

From Ordinary People to Bodhisattvas With the Tolerance of Non-Birth

Great Compassion is the life calling of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Thus, those who have developed the Bodhi Mind, wishing to rescue and ferry other sentient beings across, should simply vow to be reborn in the Triple Realm, among the five turbidities and the three evil paths. If we abandon sentient beings to lead a selfish life of tranquility, we lack compassion. A preoccupation with egoistic needs contrary to the path of enlightenment. **According to Masters Chih-I and T'ien-Ju in The Pure Land Buddhism, Cultivation on the Bodhisattvas' Path means going from ordinary people to Bodhisattvas with the Tolerance of Non-Birth.** *First, those who have not realized the Dharma of non-appearance:* Bodhisattvas who have not attained the Tolerance of Non-Birth, as well as ordinary people who have just developed the Bodhi Mind. If these Bodhisattvas aspire to perfect that Tolerance and enter the evil life of the Triple Realm to save sentient beings, they should always remain close to the Buddhas and Good Advisors. The Perfection of Wisdom Treatise states: “It is unwise for human beings who are still bound by all kinds of afflictions, even if they possess a great compassionate Mind, to seek a premature rebirth in this evil realm to rescue sentient beings. Why is this so? It is because this evil, defiled world, afflictions are powerful and widespread. Those who lack the power of Tolerance of Non-Birth are bound to be swayed by external circumstances. They then become slaves to form and sound, fame and fortune, with the resulting karma of greed, anger and delusion. Once this occurs, they cannot even save themselves, how can they save others?” If, for example, they are born in the human realm, in this evil environment full of non-believers and externalists, it is difficult to encounter genuine sages. Therefore, it is not easy to hear the Buddha Dharma nor achieve the goals of the sages. Of those who planted the seeds of generosity, morality and blessings in previous lives and are thus now enjoying power and fame, how many are not

infatuated with a life of wealth and honor, allowing in endless greed and lust? Therefore, even when they are counselled by enlightened teachers, they do not believe them nor act accordingly. Moreover, to satisfy their passions, they take advantage of their existing power and influence, creating a great deal of bad karma. Thus, when their present life comes to an end, they descend upon the three evil paths for countless eons. After that, they are reborn as humans of low social and economic status. If they do not then meet good spiritual advisors, they will continue to be deluded, creating more bad karma and descending once again into the lower more realms. From time immemorial, sentient beings caught in the cycles of Birth and Death have been in this predicament. The Vimalakirti Sutra also states: “If you cannot even cure your own illness, how can you cure the illnesses of others?” The Perfection of Wisdom Treatise further states: “Take the case of two persons, each of whom watches a relative drowning in the river. The first person, acting on impulse, hastily jumps into the water. However, because he lacks capabilities and the necessary means, in the end, both of them drown.” Thus newly aspiring Bodhisattvas are like the first individual, who still lacks the power of Tolerance of Non-Birth and cannot save sentient beings. The Perfection of Wisdom Treatise further teaches: “This is not unlike a young child he should not leave his mother, lest he fall into a well, drown in the river or die of starvation; or a young bird whose wings are not fully developed. It must bide its time, hopping from branch to branch, until it can fly afar, leisurely and unimpeded. In the same manner, ordinary people who lack the Tolerance of Non-Birth should limit themselves to Buddha Recitation, to achieve one-pointedness of Mind. Once that goal is reached, at the time of death, they will certainly be reborn in the Pure Land. Having seen Amitabha Buddha and reached the Tolerance of Non-Birth, they can steer the boat of that Tolerance into the sea of Birth and Death, to ferry sentient beings across and accomplish countless Buddha deeds at will.”

Second, those who have realized the Dharma of non-appearance: Those who have followed the Bodhisattva path for a long time and attained the Tolerance of Non-Birth or insight into the non-origination of phenomena. These Bodhisattvas can vow to be reborn in this evil realm to rescue sentient beings without fear of being drown in the sea of Birth and Death with sentient beings. The Perfection of Wisdom Treatise states: “Take the case of the person who watches a relative drowning in the river, a person, more intelligent and resourceful, hurries off to fetch a boat and sails to rescue his relative. Thus both persons escape drowning. This is similar to the case of a Bodhisattva who has attained Tolerance of Non-Birth, has adequate skills and means to save sentient beings.”

Appendix F

Dharmakara Bodhisattva Became Amitabha Buddha In the Western Land of Bliss

Sakyamuni Buddha Himself Who Describes Dharmakara Bodhisattva: Jewel Treasury (Dharmakara), name of Amitabha Buddha when he still was a Bhikkhu. We've already seen that the Amitabha or Amutayus (Infinite Light or Infinite Life) is a Buddha idealized from the historical Buddha Sakyamuni. If the Buddha is purely idealized he will be simply the Infinite in principle. The Infinite will then be identical with Thusness. The Infinite if depicted in reference to space, will be the Infinite Light, and if depicted in reference to time, the Infinite Life. This is Dharmakaya or the Ideal. This Dharmakaya is the Sambhoga-kaya (the Reward-body or body of enjoyment), if the Buddha is viewed as a Buddha "coming down to the world." If he is viewed as a Bodhisattva going up to the Buddhahood, he is a would-be Buddha like the toiling Bodhisattva Sakyamuni. It is Sakyamuni Buddha himself who describes in the Sukhavati-vyuha the activities of the would-be Buddha, Dharmakara as it had been his former existence. The vow, original to the would-be Buddha or even Sakyamuni Buddha himself, is fully expressed in forty-eight items in Amitabha Sutra. Vows 12 and 13 refer to the Infinite Light and Infinite Life. "If he cannot get such aspects of Infinite Light and Infinite Life he will not be a Buddha." If he becomes a Buddha he can constitute a Buddha Land as he likes. A Buddha, of course, lives in the Nirvana of No Abode, and hence he can live anywhere and everywhere. His vow is to establish the Land of Bliss for the sake of all beings. An ideal land with adornments, ideal plants, ideal lakes or what not is all for receiving pious aspirants. The eighteenth vow which is regarded as most important, promises a birth in his Land of Bliss to those who have a perfect reliance on the Buddha, believing with serene heart and repeating the Buddha's name. The nineteenth vow promises a welcome by the Buddha himself on the eve of death to those who perform meritorious deeds. The twentieth vow further indicates that anyone who repeats his name with the goal of winning a birth in his Land will

also be received. Pure Land practitioners should always remember though the eighteenth vow expects sole reliance on the Buddha, but the nineteenth and twentieth vows depend on practitioners' own actions, the former on meritorious deeds and the later on repetition of the Buddha's name without complete reliance on the Buddha's power.

Amitabha Buddha is a transhistorical Buddha venerated by all Mahayana schools (T'ien T'ai, Esoteric, Zen, Pure Land, etc). Amitabha Buddha is the most commonly used name for the Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. A transhistorical Buddha venerated by all Mahayana schools. He presides over the Western Pure Land where anyone can be reborn through utterly sincere recitation of His name, particularly at the time of death. Amitabha Buddha who is the main object of devotion in the the Pure Land School of Buddhism in China, Japan, Vietnam and Korea. While all other schools of Mahayana insist on self-enlightenment, these schools teach sole reliance on the Buddha's power. This tradition holds that people who recite his name with a sincere faith are reborn in Sukhavati. In Japan, the most important practice for achieving this is recitation of the "Nembutsu" or "Namo Amida Butsu." In China, "Namo A-mi-to-fo." And in Vietnam, "Nam Mô A Di Đà Phật." These all have the same meaning: "Praise to Amitabha Buddha." According to Amitabha's eighteenth vow, anyone who invokes Amitabha's name ten times, or desires rebirth in Sukhavati ten times, will surely be reborn there. This is often referred to as an "easy practice," because it is based on faith and repetition of recitation of the formula "Namo Amitabha Buddha," rather than on difficult meditational practices. The cult of Amitabha shows strong Iranian influence, and began about the first years of Christain Era. Amitabha is the Buddha of Infinite (Amita) Light (abha) and his kingdom is in the West. He is known as Amitayus, because his life-span (ayuh) is infinite (amita). A great number of texts are devoted to Amitabha. The best known among them is the Sukhavati-vyuha, the Array of the Happy Land, which describes his Paradise, its origin and structure. The Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life, name of a mythical Buddha, the presiding Buddha of the Western Paradise worshipped in Pure Land Buddhism. Most often he is seated in the middle of a lotus blossom, symbol of purity. He often appears together

with Avalokitesvara on his left hand and Mahasthamaprapta on his right hand (Amitabha is seated and the two Bodhisattvas stand).

According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Amita-peitism in Japan, as represented by the Pure Land School of Fa-Ran, the Shingon of Shin-Ran, and Shih-Tsung of I-Bien shows a unique aspect of Buddhism. While all other schools of Mahayana insist on self-enlightenment, these schools teach sole reliance on the Buddha's power. The Buddha of all other exoteric schools is Sakyamuni, while the Buddha of these schools is Amita, or Amitabha, or Amitayus. The critical division of the Buddha's teaching adopted by Fa-Ran was into the two doctrines of the Holy Path and the Pure Land, originally proposed by T'ao-Ch'o of China in 645 A.D. The former is the difficult way to traverse while the latter is the easy way to travel defined by Nagarjuna. There is another division which was proposed by Vasubandhu and elucidated by T'ao-Ch'o, that is, the ways of self-power and another's power. Another's power here means the power of Amitabha Buddha, not any other's power. Those who pursue the Holy Path can attain Buddhahood in this world, if they are qualified, while other just want to seek rebirth in the Pure Land and attain the Buddhahood there.

Different Titles of Amitabha Buddha: Amitabha Buddha has a lot of titles, among them include: *First*, Amitabha Tathagata. *Second*, Measureless Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Boundless Light or Buddha of Unlimited Light). Amitabha is a Sanskrit term for "Limitless Light." A Buddha who is said to preside over the western paradise of Sukhavati, a realm in which beings born there are assured of attaining Buddhahood in that lifetime. The conditions of the paradise are optimal for practice of Buddhism, in accordance with Amitabha's former vows. *Third*, Limitless Brightness of Tathagata. Amitabha Buddha of light that is immeasurable, boundless, irresistible, pure, joy, wisdom, unceasing, surpassing thought, ineffable, Surpassing sun and moon. *Fourth*, No Fear Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Irresistible Light). The all pervasive light or glory of Amitabha Buddha. *Fifth*, No Objection Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Incomparable Light). Amitabha Buddha of light that is incomparable. *Sixth*, Volcano King Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Flame-King Light or Yama), the fifth of the twelve shining Buddhas. *Seventh*, Purification Brightness of

Tathagata (Buddha of Pure Light), the pure, shining body or appearance of the Amitabha Buddha. *Eighth*, Joyful and Detached Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Joyous Light). *Ninth*, Brightness of Knowledge and Favour of Tathagata (Buddha of Wisdom Light). *Tenth*, Brightness of Difficult Privacy of Tathagata (Buddha of Unconceivable Light). *Eleventh*, Perpetual Brightness of Tathagata (Buddha of Unending Light). *Twelfth*, Brightness of Non-Proclamation of Tathagata (Buddha of Indescribable Light). *Thirteenth*, Brightness of Super Sun and Moon of Tathagata (Buddha of Light Surpassing that of Sun and Moon). *Fourteenth*, Buddha of Boundless Age (Life), an alternative manifestation of Amitabha Buddha, who is particularly associated with longevity. He is usually depicted with red skin and holding a begging-bowl containing the elixir of immortality. This Buddha, in a lifetime during which he was a monk named Dharmakara, had his vows to create a realm that would be the ideal training ground for beings aspiring to Buddhahood. Amitabha Buddha is usually depicted as sitting with a vessel of nectar of immortality in his hands. *Fifteenth*, Buddha of Infinite King of Sweet-Dew: Sweet-Dew King. In its implication of immortality is a name of Amitabha (connected with him are the Mantra of Ambrosia, the Mantra of Ambrosial Dharani, Ten Mantras of Ambrosia, Sutra of Ambrosia).

The Unlimited Light and Boundless Life Buddha Vowed to Radiate Treasure of His Wisdom-Virtue-Enlightenment to All Lands: Amitabha vowed to become the source of unlimited Light and Boundless Life, freeing and radiating the treasure of his wisdom and virtue, enlightening all lands and emancipating all suffering people. These are ten of the most important vows in the Amitabha's forty-eight vows. As we have seen that the Amitabha or Amitayus, or Infinite Light and Infinite Life, is a Buddha realized from the historical Buddha Sakyamuni. If the Buddha is purely idealized he will be simply the Infinite in principle. The Infinite will then be identical with Thusness. The Infinite, if depicted in reference to space, will be the Infinite Light, and if depicted in reference to time, the Ithenite Life. He always vows in the Pure Land, there will be no inferior modes or evil path of existence; in the Pure Land, there will be no women, as all women who are reborn there will transform at the moment of death into men; there will be no differences in appearance there, every being is to have 32

marks of perfection; every being in the Pure Land possesses perfect knowledge of all past existences; every being possesses a Divine eye; every being possesses a Divine Ear; every being possesses the ability to move about by supernatural means; every being possesses the ability to know the thoughts of others; all beings of the worlds in all ten directions, upon hearing the name of Amitabha, will arouse Bodhicitta and vow to be reborn in the Western Pure Land after death. Amitabha and all saints will appear at the moment of their death to all beings who have aroused Bodhicitta through hearing his name (this is the most important vow). All beings who through hearing his name have directed their minds toward rebirth in his Pure Land and have accumulated wholesome karmic merits will be reborn in the Western Paradise. After rebirth in the Pure Land, only one further rebirth will be necessary before entry into Nirvana, no more falling back into lower paths. The vows which Amitabha Buddha made while still engaged in Bodhisattva practice as Bodhisattva Dharmakara. According to Longer Amitabha Sutra, Bodhisattva Dharmakara wished to create a splendid Buddha land in which he would live when he attained Buddhahood. Because according to the Longer Amitabha Sutra or the Infinite Life Sutra, in his previous lifetimes, Amitabha Buddha has made forty-eight profound, all-encompassing vows. The general tenor of these vows is best exemplified in the eighteenth and eleventh vows. Sentient beings in the Saha World recite Amitabha Buddha's name with a wish to be reborn in the Pure Land because Amitabha Buddha has adorned the Western Pure Land with forty-eight lofty Vows. These vows (particularly the eighteenth Vow of "welcoming and escorting") embrace all sentient beings, from Bodhisattvas to common beings full of evil transgressions.

The Western Land of Bliss: Sukhavati means the Western Land of Amitabha Buddha, the highest joy, name of the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha in the west. The Western Paradise which is outside the triple realm and beyond samsara and retrogression. The Western Paradise is one of the most important of the Buddha-fields to appear in the Mahayana. Amitabha Buddha created the Pure Land by his karmic merit. The cult of Amitabha shows strong Iranian influences, and began about the same time. Amitabha is the Buddha of Infinite (Amita) Light (abha) and his kingdom is in the West. He is also known as Amitayus,

because his lifespan (ayuh) is infinite amita). The Pure Land sect believes that through faithful devotion to Amitabha and through recitation of his name, one can be reborn there and lead a blissful life until entering Nirvana. Amitabha Buddha with Pratyaveksana-jnana, the wisdom derived from wisdom of profound insight (ý thức), or discrimination, for exposition and doubt-destruction; corresponds to water, and is associated with Amitabha and the west. According to the T'ien-T'ai and Shingon, Amita is superior over the five Wisdom Buddhas (Dhyani-Buddhas), even though he governs the Western Quarter, not the center. Of the five Wisdom Buddhas, Amitabha of the West may be identical with the central Mahavairocana, the Buddha of homo-cosmic identity. Amitabha's original vows, his attainment of Buddhahood of Infinite Light and Life, and his establishment of the Land of Bliss are all fully described in the Sukhavati text. The Western Pure Land is also called the Happy Land. Name of the Land of Ultimate Bliss, or the Pure Land of Amitabha in the West. A Sanskrit term for "Joyous Land." The paradise of Amitabha Buddha. This is the Pure Land in the west of Amitabha Buddha, said to be located in the west, one of the most important Buddha fields to appear in the Mahayana. By his karmic merit, Buddha Amitabha created and reigned in this Pure Land. The Pure Land sect believes that through faithful devotion to Amitabha and through reciting his name, after death, one can be reborn in the Western Paradise to continue a blissful life until entering nirvana. It is the central focus of the religious practice of the "Pure Land" schools in East Asia, which believe that it is a place in which the conditions are optimal for the attainment of Buddhahood. This idea is connected with the prevalent notion that this is the final of the degeneration of the dharma, in which the capacities of humans have degenerated to such an extent that it is no longer possible to gain salvation (liberation) through one's own efforts. Thus, the wiser course of action is to cultivate toward rebirth in Sukhavati, so that one may attain Buddhahood in one's next lifetime. The wondrous qualities of this paradise are described in several texts, most popularly the Sukhavati-Vyuha-Sutra, Smaller and Larger. Sukhavati means the Western Land of Amitabha Buddha, the highest joy, name of the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha in the west. The Western Paradise which is outside the triple realm and beyond samsara and retrogression. The

Western Paradise is one of the most important of the Buddha-fields to appear in the Mahayana. Amitabha Buddha created the Pure Land by his karmic merit. The Pure Land sect believes that through faithful devotion to Amitabha and through recitation of his name, one can be reborn there and lead a blissful life until entering Nirvana. Pure Land, Paradise of the West, presided over by Amitabha. The environment and conditions of the Western Pure Land are most exalted. That realm provides sentient beings with many more advantageous circumstances than other Pure Lands, which ordinary beings in the Triple World cannot fully understand. The environment of the Western Pure Land is exalted, and can awaken the yearning and serve as a focus for sentient beings. The conditions of the Western Pure Land are unfathomable and wonderful and can help those who are reborn to progress easily and swiftly along the path of enlightenment. For these reasons, although there are many common residence Pure Lands in the ten directions, only the Western Pure Land possesses all auspicious conditions in full. This is why sutras and commentaries point toward rebirth in the Western Pure Land. The Western Paradise to which Amitabha is the guide and welcomer. In China, Japan, and Vietnam, Amitabha Buddha has been much more popular than any other Buddha. In India he seems never to have occupied such an overtowering position, although Hui-Je, a Chinese pilgrim, who visited India between 702 and 719, reports that everyone spoke to him about Amitabha Buddha and his Paradise.

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ratnarsi Bodhisattva about Bodhisattvas' Pure Lands as follows: The straightforward mind is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he realizes Buddhahood, beings who do not flatter will be reborn in his land. The profound mind is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he realizes Buddhahood living beings who have accumulated all merits will be reborn there. The Mahayana (Bodhi) mind is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood all living beings seeking Mahayana will be reborn there. Charity (dana) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who can give away (to charity) will be reborn there. Discipline (sila) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he realizes Buddhahood living beings who have kept the ten prohibitions will be reborn there. Patience (ksanti) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains

Buddhahood living beings endowed with the thirty-two excellent physical marks will be reborn there. Devotion (virya) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who are diligent in their performance of meritorious deeds will be reborn there. Serenity (dhyana) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings whose minds are disciplined and unstirred will be reborn there. Wisdom (prajna) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who have realized samadhi will be reborn there. The four boundless minds (catvari apramanani) are the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who have practiced and perfected the four infinites: kindness, compassion, joy and indifference, will be reborn there. The four persuasive actions (catuh-samgraha-vastu) are the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who have benefited from his helpful persuasion will be reborn there. The expedient methods (upaya) of teaching the absolute truth are the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings conversant with upaya will be reborn there. The thirty-seven contributory states to enlightenment (bodhipaksika-dharma) are the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood living beings who have successfully practiced the four states of mindfulness (smrtyu-pasthana), the four proper lines of exertion (samyakpra-hana), the four steps towards supramundane powers (rddhipada), the five spiritual faculties (panca indriyani), the five transcendental powers (panca balani), the seven degrees of enlightenment (sapta bodhyanga) and the eightfold noble path (asta-marga) will be reborn in his land. Dedication (of one's merits to the salvation of others) is the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood his land will be adorned with all kinds of meritorious virtues. Preaching the ending of the eight sad conditions is the Buddhahood his land will be free from these evil states. To keep the precepts while refraining from criticizing those who do not in the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood his country will be free from people who break the commandments. The ten good deeds are the Bodhisattva's pure land, for when he attains Buddhahood he will not die young, he will be wealthy, he will live purely, his words are true, his speech is gentle, his encourage will not desert him because of his conciliatoriness, his talk is profitable to

others, and living beings free from envy and anger and holding right views will be reborn in his land. So, Ratna-rasi, because of his straightforward mind, a Bodhisattva can act straightforwardly; because of his straightforward deeds, he realizes the profound mind; because of his profound mind his thoughts are kept under control; because of his controlled thoughts, his acts accord with the Dharma (he has heard); because of his deeds in accord with the Dharma, he can dedicate his merits to the benefit of others; because of this dedication, he can make use of expedient methods (upaya); because of his expedient methods, he can bring living beings to perfection; because he can bring them to perfection, his Buddha land is pure; because of his pure Buddha land, his preaching of the Dharma is pure; because of his pure preaching, his wisdom is pure; because of his pure wisdom, his mind is pure, and because of his pure mind, all his merits are pure. Therefore, Ratna-rasi, if a Bodhisattva wants to win the pure land, he should purify his mind and because of his pure mind, the Buddha land is pure.”

Forty-Eight Vows of Amitabha Buddha: The forty-eight vows of Amitabha that he would not enter into his final nirvana or heaven, unless all beings share it. The vows which Amitabha Buddha made while still engaged in Bodhisattva practice as Bodhisattva Dharmakara. According to Longer Amitabha Sutra, Bodhisattva Dharmakara wished to create a splendid Buddha land in which he would live when he attained Buddhahood. Also according to Amitabha Sutra (The Sutra of Infinite Life), Amitabha Buddha is foremost. This is because of the power of his vows. This power is so great that when you singlemindedly recite “Nam Mo Amitabha Buddha,” after death you can be reborn in the Western Pure Land, and become a Buddha from there. All you need to do is recite the Buddha’s name. These are original vows of Dharmakara, the would-be Buddha, or even to Sakyamuni Buddha himself, is fully expressed in the forty-eight vows in the text. Vows numbered 12 and 13 refer to the Infinite Light and the Infinite Life. “If he cannot get such aspects of Infinite Light and Life, he will not be a Buddha.” If he becomes a Buddha he can constitute a Buddha Land as he likes. A Buddha, of course, lives in the ‘Nirvana of No Abode,’ and hence he can live anywhere and everywhere. His vow is to establish the Land of Bliss for the sake of all beings. An ideal land with adornments, ideal plants, ideal lakes for

receiving all pious aspirants. The eighteenth vow which is regarded as most important, promises a birth in His Land of Bliss to those who have a perfect reliance on the Buddha, believing with serene heart and repeating the Buddha's name. The nineteenth vow promises a welcome by the Buddha himself on the eve of death to those who perform meritorious deeds. The twentieth vow further indicates that anyone who repeats his name with the object of winning a rebirth in His Land will also be received. *First*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if there would still be the planes (realms) of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, and animals in my land (When I become a Buddha, if, in my land, there are still the planes of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, or animals, I will not ultimately take up supreme enlightenment). *Second*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings, especially the devas and humans from my land would fall to the three miserable planes (realms) of existence in other lands. *Third*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if the sentient beings, especially the devas and humans in my land would not be endowed with a complexion of genuine gold. *Fourth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if there would be such distinctions as good and ugly appearances among the sentient beings in my land, especially among the deva and humans. *Fifth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would fail to achieve the power to remember the past lives of himself and others, even events that happened hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of kalpas ago. *Sixth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would not be endowed with the deva-eye, enabling him to see hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of Buddha-lands. *Seventh*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would fail to obtain the deva-ear, enabling him to hear the Dharma expounded by another Buddha hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of leagues away. *Eighth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would not be endowed with the power of knowing others' minds, so that he would not know the mentalities of the sentient beings in hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of

myriads of other Buddha-lands. *Ninth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would fail to achieve the perfect mastery of the power to appear anywhere at will, so that he would not be able to traverse hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of Buddha-lands in a flash of thought. *Tenth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would entertain even a single the notion of “I” and “mine.” *Eleventh*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land, especially the devas and humans, would not certainly achieve supreme enlightenment and realize great nirvana. *Twelfth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if my light would be so limited as to be unable to illuminate hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads (or any number) of Buddha-lands. *Thirteenth*, I shall not attain enlightenment if my life span would be limited to even hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of kalpas, or any countable number of kalpas. *Fourteenth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if anyone would be able to know number of Sravakas in my land. Even if all sentient beings and Pratyekabuddhas in a billion-world universe exercised their utmost counting power to count together for hundreds of thousands of years, they would not be able to know it. *Fifteenth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land would have a limited life span, except those who are born due to their vows. *Sixteenth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my lands, especially the devas and humans, would have a bad reputation. *Seventeenth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if my land would not be praised and acclaimed by innumerable Buddhas in countless Buddha-lands. *Eighteenth*, when I realize supreme enlightenment, there will be sentient beings in the Buddha-lands who, after hearing my name, dictate their good roots to be born in my land in thought after thought. Even if they had only ten such thoughts, they will be born in my land, except for those who have performed karmas leading to Uninterrupted Hell and those who speak ill of the true Dharma or saints. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain enlightenment. *Nineteenth*, when I become a Buddha, I shall appear with an assembly of monks at the deathbeds of sentient beings of other Buddha-lands

who have brought forth bodhicitta, who think of my land with a pure mind, and who dedicate their good roots to birth in the Land of Utmost Bliss. I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if I would fail to do so. *Twentieth*, when I become a Buddha, all the sentient beings in countless Buddha-lands, who, having heard my name and dedicated their good roots to be born in the Land of Utmost Bliss, will be born there. Otherwise, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Twenty-first*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any bodhisattva in my land would fail to achieve the thirty-two auspicious signs. *Twenty-second*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any Bodhisattvas in my land on their way to great bodhi would fail to reach the stage of being only one lifetime away from Buddhahood. This excludes those Bodhisattvas with great vows who wear the armor of vigor for the sake of sentient beings; who strive to do beneficial deeds and cultivate great nirvana; who perform the deeds of a Bodhisattva throughout all Buddha-lands and make offerings to all Buddhas, the Tathagatas; and who establish as many sentient beings as the sands of the Ganges in supreme enlightenment. This also excludes those who seek liberation by following the path of Samantabhadra, devoting themselves to Bodhisattvas' practices even more than those who have attained the stage of being only one lifetime away from Buddhahood. *Twenty-third*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if the Bodhisattvas in my land would not, by the awesome power of the Buddha, be able to make offerings to countless hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of Buddhas in other Buddha-lands every morning return to their own land before mealtime. *Twenty-fourth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if the Bodhisattvas in my land would not possess every variety of offering they need to plant good roots in various Buddha-lands. *Twenty-fifth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if the Bodhisattvas in my land would not be skilled in expounding the essence of the Dharma in harmony with all-knowing wisdom. *Twenty-sixth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if the Bodhisattvas in my land would not have enormous strength of a Narayana. *Twenty-seventh*, when I become a Buddha, no one will be able to describe completely the articles of adornment in my land; even one with the deva-eye will not be able to know all their varieties of shape, color, and brilliance. If anyone could know and describe them

all, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Twenty-eighth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if in my land there would be Bodhisattvas with inferior roots of virtue who could not know the numerous kinds of trees, four hundred thousand leagues high, which will abound in my land. *Twenty-ninth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if those sentient beings in my land who read and recite sutras and explain them to others would not acquire superb eloquence. *Thirtieth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any Bodhisattva in my land would be unable to achieve limitless eloquence. *Thirty-first*, when I become a Buddha, my land will be unequaled in brightness and purity; it will clearly illuminate countless, numberless Buddha-lands, inconceivable in number, just as a clear mirror reveals one's features. If this would not be so, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Thirty-second*, when I become a Buddha, there will be innumerable kinds of incense on land and in air within the borders of my land, and there will be hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of myriads of precious censers, from which will rise the fragrance of the incense, permeating all of space. The incense will be superior to the most cherished incense of humans and gods, and will be used as an offering to Tathagatas and Bodhisattvas. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Thirty-third*, when I become a Buddha, sentient beings in countless realms, inconceivable and unequaled in number, throughout the ten directions who are touched by the awesome light of the Buddha will feel more secure and joyful in body and mind than other humans or gods. Otherwise, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Thirty-fourth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if Bodhisattvas in countless Buddha-lands, inconceivable and unequaled in number, would not realize the truth of non-arising and acquire dharanis after they hear my name. *Thirty-fifth*, when I become a Buddha, all the women in numberless Buddha-lands, inconceivable and unequaled in number, who, after hearing my name, acquire pure faith, bring forth bodhicitta, and are tired of the female body, will rid themselves of the female body in their future lives. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment (I refuse to enter into final nirvana or final joy until every woman who calls on my name rejoices in enlightenment and who, hating her woman's body, has ceased to be reborn as a woman). *Thirty-sixth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if Bodhisattvas in countless Buddha-lands, inconceivable and unequaled in number, who attain doctrine of non-arising after hearing my name would fail to cultivate superb, pure conduct until they attain great bodhi. *Thirty-seventh*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if, when I become a Buddha, humans and gods would not pay homage to all the Bodhisattvas of numberless Buddha-lands who, after hearing my name, prostrate themselves in obeisance to me and cultivate the deeds of Bodhisattva with a pure mind. *Thirty-eighth*, when I become a Buddha,

sentient beings in my land will obtain the clothing they need as soon as they think of it, just as a man will be spontaneously clad in a monastic robe when the Buddha says, “Welcome, monk!” If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Thirty-ninth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in my land would not at birth obtain the necessities of life and become secure, pure, and blissful in mind, like a monk who has ended all defilements. *Fortieth*, when I become a Buddha, if sentient beings in my land wish to see other superbly adorned, pure Buddha-lands, these lands will immediately appear to them among the precious trees, just as one’s face appears in a clear mirror. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Forty-first*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if any sentient beings in any other Buddha-lands, after hearing my name and before attaining bodhi, would be born with incomplete organs or organs restricted in function. *Forty-second*, when I become a Buddha, any Bodhisattva in any other Buddha-lands, after hearing my name, will be able to know distinctly the name of superb samadhis. While in remaining in samadhi, they will be able to make offerings to countless, numberless Buddhas, inconceivable and unequaled in number, in a moment, and will be able to realize great samadhis instantly. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Forty-third*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if, when I become Buddha, any Bodhisattva in any other Buddha-lands who has heard my name would not be born in a noble family after death. *Forty-fourth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if when become a Buddha, any Bodhisattva in any other Buddha-lands would not immediately cultivate the Bodhisattva practices, become purified and joyful, abide in equality, and possess all good roots after he hears my name. *Forty-fifth*, when I become a Buddha, Bodhisattvas in other Buddha-lands will achieve the Samadhi of Equality after hearing my name and will, without regression, abide in this samadhi and make constant offerings to an innumerable, unequaled number of Buddhas until those Bodhisattvas attain bodhi. If this would not be the case, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment. *Forty-sixth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if Bodhisattvas in my land would not hear at will the Dharma they wish to hear. *Forty-seventh*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if, when I become a Buddha, any Bodhisattva in any other Buddha-lands would regress from the path to supreme enlightenment after he hears my name. *Forty-eighth*, I shall not attain supreme enlightenment if, when I become a Buddha, any Bodhisattva in any other Buddha-lands would not acquire the first, the second or the third realization as soon as he heard my name, or would not instantly attain nonregression with regard to Buddha-Dharmas.

Appendix G

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva

The term Ksitigarbha or Earth Store Bodhisattva is named after the earth, which not only give birth to things and makes them grow, but it can store all things within itself. Because this Bodhisattva has these characters so he is named “Earth Store.” In Mahayana Buddhism, Ksitigarbha is also known as the Bodhisattva of great filiality and also as the Bodhisattva of great vows. According to Ksitigarbha Sutra, He vowed: “Until the hells are empty I will never become a Buddha.” In other words, he doesn’t want to attain Buddhahood until every single living being is taken across. In general, it can be said of Ksitigarbha as a Bodhisattva who has great vows, great conduct, great wisdom, great compassion, etc. Ksitigarbha is one of the four great Bodhisattvas in Chinese Buddhism, who according to folk belief, liberates those who dwell in the various hells. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, Earth-Store Bodhisattva is a Bodhisattva who saves suffering beings in the hells, usually represented standing, holding in his right hand a pilgrim’s staff, and in his left hand a pearl. An important figure in Mahayana Buddhism, a Bodhisattva who is venerated in folk belief as one who had already transcended; however, out of his compassion, he vowed to come back as a savior from the torments of hell until there is no more being in there. According to Buddhist legends, a long long time ago, Ksitigarbha was a Brahmin, who took a vow before the Buddha of that time also himself to become a Buddha, but not before he had liberated all beings from the cycle of the samsara. In one of his countless lives in the past, he was a girl whose mother killed sentient beings for food. After the mother’s death, the daughter meditated for a long time, until she heard a voice asking her to recite the name of Buddha. She entered an ecstasy and reached the gates of hell, where she learned that she had saved her mother from the torments of hell through her meditation. In contemporary Japanese society, he is seen as the protector of children who have met untimely deaths, including aborted fetuses, that’s why in cemeteries in Japan there is generally a statue of Ksitigarbha statue, who is depicted as a monk with a staff in

his right hand and a jewel in his left, and wearing a bib under his neck. According to Buddhist legends, this Bodhisattva is said to have been entrusted by Sakyamuni Buddha with the task of helping all sentient beings in the six destinies until the birth of the next Buddha. Through his supernatural powers, Ksitigarbha can take on six different forms in order to help beings of the six modes of existence. Earth-Store Bodhisattva, one of the groups of eight Dhyani Bodhisattvas, who saves suffering beings in the hells, usually represented standing, holding in his right hand a pilgrim's staff, and in his left hand a pearl. One of the four Great Bodhisattvas in Chinese Buddhism. In a long long time ago, Ti-ts'ang was from a Brahmin family, converted to Buddhism and took a vow before the Buddha that, "He would never become a Buddha if there's still even one being in the hell." He also wanted to become a Buddha, but not before he had liberated all beings from the cycle of life and death. He is usually represented standing, holding in his right hand a pilgrim's staff, and in left a pearl. Ksitigarbha or "Earth-Womb" Bodhisattva is more popular in the Far East than he ever was in India. In East Asia, he is popular only after Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. Like all other Bodhisattvas, he aspires to deliver sentient beings wandering astray in the three realms and six paths of mundane existence, but he specializes in delivering beings from hell. In Japan, this Bodhisattva is popular as the saviour of the souls of dead children, particularly aborted ones.

Earth Store Sutra mentioned about Ksitigarbha, a Bodhisattva in the Buddhaless period, the period from the time the nirvana of the historical Buddha until the time the coming Buddha Maitreya descends. In this period, there is no Buddha; however, the Saha world still has Earth-Store Bodhisattva who vows to save all beings in hells. The sutra was translated into Chinese by Siksanda. According to the Earth-Store Bodhisattva's Original Vows Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Sentient beings in the Jambudvīpa make hundreds of thousands of differing retributions resulting from the habitual evil deeds of body, mouth and mind committed by the living beings of Jambudvīpa. Since the living beings of Jambudvīpa have such differing karmic responses, Earth Store Bodhisattva uses hundreds of thousands of expedient means to teach and transform them. The living beings who commit offenses must first undergo retributions such as these and, then, fall into the hells,

where they pass through kalpas with no moment of escape. You should therefore protect people and protect their countries. Do not allow living beings to be confused by these manifold deeds.” Thus Earth-Store Bodhisattva vows: If Earth Store Bodhisattva meets those who take life, he speaks of a retribution of a short lifespan. If he meets robbers and petty thieves, he speaks of a retribution of poverty and acute suffering. If he meets those who commit sexual misconduct, he speaks of the retribution of being born as pigeons and as mandarin ducks and drakes. If he meets those of harsh speech, he speaks of the retribution of a quarreling family. If he meets slanderers, he speaks of the retribution of a tongueless and cankerous mouth. If he meets those with anger and hatred, he speaks of being ugly and crippled. If he meets those who are stingy, he speaks of frustrated desires. If he meets gluttons, he speaks of the retribution of hunger, thirst and sicknesses (illnesses) of the throat. If he meets those who enjoy hunting, he speaks of a frightening insanity and disastrous fate. If he meets those who rebel against their parents, he speaks of the retribution of being killed in natural disasters. If he meets those who set fire to mountains or forests, he speaks of the retribution of seeking to commit suicide in the confusion of insanity. If he meets malicious parents or step-parents, he speaks of the retribution of being flogged in future lives. If he meets those who net and trap young animals, he speaks of the retribution of being separated from their own children. If he meets those who slander the Triple Jewel, he speaks of the retribution of being blind, deaf or mute. If he meets those who slight the Dharma and regard the teachings with arrogance, he speaks of the retribution of dwelling in the evil paths forever. If he meets those who destroy or misuse possessions of the permanently dwelling, he speaks of the retribution of revolving in the hells for millions of kalpas. If he meets those who defile the pure conduct of others and falsely accuse the Sangha, he speaks of the retribution of an eternity in the animal realm. If he meets those who scald, burn, behead, chop up or otherwise harm living beings, he speaks of the retribution of repayment in kind. If he meets those who violate precepts and the regulations of pure eating, he speaks of the retribution of being born as birds and beasts suffering from hunger and thirst. If he meets those who are arrogant and haughty, he speaks of the retribution of being servile and of low classes. If he meets those

whose double-tongued behavior causes dissension and discord, he speaks of retribution of tonguelessness (being mute) and speech impediments. If he meets those of deviant view, he speaks of the retribution of rebirth in the frontier regions.

Also according to the Earth Store Bodhisattva Sutra, the Buddha taught told the Bodhisattva Universally Expansive: “If, in the future, good men or good women hear Earth Store Bodhisattva Mahasattva’s name, if they place their palms together in respect, praise, bow to, or fix their gaze on him, they will overcome the offenses of thirty kalpas. If good men or good women either paint; or draw; or use clay, stone, lacquerware, gold, silver, brass or iron to make this Bodhisattva’s image, gaze at it and bow but once, they will be reborn one hundred times in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and will eternally avoid falling into the evil paths. If their heavenly blessings become exhausted and they are born below in the human realm, they will be kings of countries and not lose their great benefits. If there are women who detest the body of a woman, and who wholeheartedly make offerings to Earth Store Bodhisattva’s image, whether the image be a painting or made of clay, stone, lacquerware, brass, iron, or some other material, and if they do so day after day without fail, continually using flowers, incense, food, drink, clothing, colored silks, banners, money, jewels, and other items as offerings, when the female bodies received and retribution in that particular life by those good women come to an end, for hundreds of thousands of ten thousands of aeons, they will never again be born in worlds where there are women, much less be reborn as one, unless it be through the strength of their compassionate vows to take on a woman body voluntarily in order to liberate living beings. By receiving the powers resulting from these offering to Earth Store and the power of meritorious virtue, they will not undergo retribution in the bodies of women throughout hundreds of thousands of ten thousands of aeons. If a woman who dislikes being ugly and prone to illness, simply gazes at and bows to an image of Earth Store Bodhisattva with sincere resolve for even the space of a single meal, throughout thousands of ten thousands of aeons, she will always receive a body with perfect features. If that ugly woman does not dislike the body of a woman, during hundreds of thousands of ten thousands of millions of lives, she will always be the daughter or wife or a member of a royal family, of a

prime minister, of a great family or the daughter of an elder and be born with well-formed features. Because of her sincere resolve, she will obtain such blessings from gazing at and bowing to Earth Store Bodhisattva. If a good man or good woman is able to play music, sing or chant praises and make offerings of incense and flowers before that Bodhisattva's image, and is able to exhort another person or many others to do the same, both now and in the future, such a person will be surrounded day and night by hundreds of thousands of ghosts and spirits who will even prevent bad news from reaching his ears, much less allow him or her personally to have any accidents. In the future evil men, evil spirits, or evil ghosts, may see good men or good women taking refuge with, respectfully making offerings to, praising, beholding and bowing to Earth Store Bodhisattva's image. Those evil beings may wrongly ridicule and malign the acts or worship as profitless (non-beneficial or without benefit) and devoid of meritorious qualities. They may laugh so their teeth show, or condemn them behind their backs, or exhort others to do likewise, whether one person or many; or they may even produce just one single thought of slanders. In the Avichi Hell, such beings will undergo the utmost in severe punishment as retribution for their ridicule and they will remain there even after the thousand Buddhas of the Worthy Aeons have passed into extinction. Only after the aeons will they be reborn among the hungry ghosts, where they will pass a thousand more aeons before being reborn as animals. Only after another thousand aeons will they obtain a human body. Yet even though they receive a human body, their faculties will be deficient, they will be poor and of low classes, and their minds will be considerably bound by their evil karma. Before long, they will fall into the evil paths again. Therefore, Universally Expansive, since those who ridicule and malign offerings made by others undergo these retributions, how much worse will it be if they particularly give rise to evil views, and malign and destroy them. In the future, men or women may long be bedridden and in spite of their wishes be unable either to get well or to die. At night, they may dream of evil ghosts, of family and relatives or of wandering on dangerous paths. In numerous nightmares, they may roam with ghosts and spirits. As these dreams continue over a period of days, months, and years, such persons may weaken and waste away, cry out in pain in their

sleep and become depressed and melancholic. All of this is due to the degree of severity of their evil karmic paths being unresolved, so they both have difficulty dying and cannot be cruel. The ordinary eyes of men and women cannot recognize such things. Then, one should simply recite this Sutra once in a loud voice before images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas or one should offer possessions which the sick one cherishes, such as clothing, jewels, gardens, or houses, chanting in a loud voice before the sick person. “I, so and so, before this Sutra and image, give all these items on behalf of this sick person, as offerings to the sutra and images; or to make images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, or to construct temples and monasteries, or to light oil lamps, or as a donation to the permanently dwelling.” In such a manner one should tell the sick person three times of the offerings being made, informing him so that he both hears and understand them. If all his consciousnesses have been scattered and his breath has stopped, then for one, two, three, four, and on through seven days, one should simply read this sutra in a loud voice. When that person’s life has ended, he will achieve eternal liberation from all the heavy and disastrous offenses committed in his former lives, even offenses that receive Five-Ways Uninterrupted retribution. He will be born in a place where he will always know his past lives. How much greater will the karmic reward be if a good man or good woman writes this sutra out himself, or tells others to do so. If he carves or paints images himself, or tells others to do so! They will definitely be greatly benefited. When dreaming or droway, living beings in the future may see ghosts, spirits, and other forms that are either sad, weeping, or worried, fearful or terrified. Those are all fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives and relatives from one, ten, a hundred, or a thousand lives past who have not yet been able to leave the evil paths. They have no place from which to hope for the power of blessings to rescue them, and so they tell their flesh-and-blood descendants to establish expedient devices for them so that they might leave the evil paths. Universally Expansive, using your spiritual power, you should cause all these descendants to recite this sutra with sincere resolve before the images of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, or to request others to recite it, either three or seven times. When the Sutra has been sounded the proper number of times, relatives in the evil paths will obtain

liberation and never again be seen by those who are dreaming or drowsy. In the future, lowly people, bondsmen, serving maids, and others who are not free, may be aware of their past deeds and wish to repent of them and to reform. If while gazing at and worshiping Earth Store Bodhisattva's image with sincere resolve for seven days, they are able to recite his name a full ten thousand times, then when their current retribution ends, those people will always be born into wealth and honor, for thousands of ten thousands of lives; how much the less pass through any of the sufferings of the Three Evil Paths. If in the future in Jamubvipa there are Kshatriyas, Brahmans, Elders, Upasakas, and others of various names and clans who have newborn sons or daughters, they should recite this inconceivable Sutra and recite the Bodhisattva's name a full ten thousand times during the seven days before the child's birth. If that newly born child, whether male or female, was to have undergone a disastrous retribution for past lives, it will be liberated from that retribution and be peaceful, happy, easily raised and long-lived. If it was to have received a life of blessings, its peace and happiness will be increased as will its lifespan.

In the Earth Store Bodhisattva's Original Vows Sutra, the Buddha told Empty Space Treasure Bodhisattva: "Listen attentively! Listen attentively! I shall enumerate them and describe them to you. If there are good men or women in the future who see Earth Store Bodhisattva's image, or who hear this sutra or read or recite it; who use incense, flowers, food and drink, clothing, or gems as offerings; or if they praise, gaze upon, and worship him, they will benefit in twenty-eight ways: Gods and dragons will be mindful of them and protect them. The fruits of their goodness will increase daily. They will accumulate superior causes of Sagehood. They will not retreat from Bodhi. Their food and drink will be abundant. Epidemics will not touch them. They will not encounter disasters of fire and water. They will not have any difficulties with thieves or armed robbers. They will be respected by all who see them. They will be aided by ghosts and spirits. Women will be reborn as men. If born as women, they will be daughters of kings and ministers. They will have handsome features. They will often be born in the heavens. They may be emperors or kings. They will know their past lives. They will attain whatever they seek. Their families will be happy. All disasters will be eradicated.

They will eternally be apart from bad karmic paths. They will always arrive at their destination. At night their dreams will be peaceful and happy. Their deceased ancestors will leave suffering behind. And they will receive the blessings from their past lives to aid their rebirth. They will be praised by the sages. They will be intelligent and they will have sharp faculties. They will have magnanimous, kind and sympathetic (compassionate) hearts. They will ultimately realize Buddhahood. According to Buddhism, there are six Bodhisattvas in the Ti-Tsang group of the Garbhadhatu, each controlling one of the six ways of sentient existence: First, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with rebirth in the hells. Second, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with rebirth in the realm of hungry ghosts. Third, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with rebirth in the realm of animals. Fourth, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with rebirth in the realm of Asuras. Fifth, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with rebirth in the realm of human beings. Sixth, the Transformation Body of Ti-Tsang Bodhisattva who deals with the realm of devas.

Appendix H

Bodhisattva Maitreya

Maitreya Buddha is very popular in Buddhist art. He is well known East Asia as a laughing figure with a fat belly. The Unconquerable, or one who is free from the three poisons of greed, hatred, and ignorance. This is the future Buddha, who presently resides in the Tusita in preparation for his last rebirth, in which he will be born as the last Buddha of the present age. Today people found the tradition of Maitreya (Bodhisatta Metteya) throughout the Buddhist world, where Buddhists practice and pray to be reborn on this earth at the time of his appearance, believed to be about 30,000 years in the future. Bodhisatta Metteya is an enigmatic figure in the Yogacara tradition, who probably lived during the fourth or fifth centuries and who is credited with the authorship of five important treatises, this author is actually the future Buddha Maitreya, with whom Asanga is said to have met on a number of occasions. According to Buddhist legendary, Bodhisatta Metteya is the Buddha-to-come, also called the next Buddha, or a Bodhisattva predicted to succeed Sakyamuni as a future Buddha. The Bodhisattva who will be the next holder of the supreme office of Buddha. Sakyamuni Buddha confirmed that Bodhisatta Metteya was the name of a Bodhisattva and future Buddha. He is said to have been reborn in the Tusita Heaven, where he is now expounding the Dharma to the heavenly beings in the inner palace. He is to come 5,000 years after the nirvana of Sakyamuni, or according to the other reckoning after 4,000 heavenly years, i.e. 5,670,000,000 human years. According to tradition he was born in Southern India of a Brahman family. Bodhisatta Metteya has two epithets: 1) Benevolent Bodhisattva. His image is usually in the hall of the four guardians facing outward, where he is represented as the fat laughing Buddha. 2) Ajita, Bodhisattva or Invincible Bodhisattva.

In the Vimalakirti Sutra, there was a chapter mentioned Maitreya and Vimalakirti regarding Maitreya Bodhisattva is not qualified to call on Vimalakirti and enquire after his health: At the time of the Buddha, once Upasaka Vimalakirti was sick, the Buddha then said to Maitreya Bodhisattva: “You go to Vimalakirti to enquire after his health on my

behalf.” Maitrey replied: “World Honoured One, I am not qualified to call on him and enquire after his health. The reason is that once when I was expounding to the deva-king and his retinue in the Tusita heaven the never-receding stage (of Bodhisattva development into Buddhahood) Vimalakirti came and said to me: ‘Maitreya, when the World Honoured One predicted your future attainment of supreme enlightenment (anuttara-sayak-sambodhi) in one lifetime, tell me in which life, whether in the past, future or present, did or will you receive His prophecy? If it was in your past life, that has gone; if it will be in your future life, that has not yet come; and if it is in your present life, that does not stay. As the Buddha once said: ‘O bhiksus, you are born, are ageing and are dying simultaneously at this very moment’; if you received His prophecy in a lifeless (state), the latter is prediction (of your future Buddhahood) nor realization of supreme enlightenment. How then did you receive the prediction of your attainment of Buddhahood in one lifetime? Or did you receive it in the absolute state (thatness or tathata) of either birth or death? If you receive it in the absolute state of birth, this absolute state is uncreated. If you receive it in the absolute state of death, this absolute state does not die. For (the underlying nature of) all living beings and of all things is absolute; all saints and sages are in this absolute state, and so also are you, Maitreya. So, if you, Maitreya, received the Buddhahood, all living beings (who are absolute by nature) should also receive it. Why? Because that which is absolute is non-dual and is beyond differentiation. If you, Maitreya, realize supreme enlightenment, so should all living beings. Why? Because they are the manifestation of bodhi (enlightenment). If you, Maitreya, win nirvana, they should also realize it. Why? Because all Buddhas know that every living being is basically in the condition of extinction of existence and suffering which is nirvana, in which there can be no further extinction of existence. Therefore, Maitreya, do not mislead the devas because there is neither development of supreme bodhi-mind nor its backsliding. Maitreya, you should instead urge them to keep from discriminating views about bodhi (enlightenment). Why? Because bodhi can be won by neither body nor mind. For bodhi is the state of calmness and extinction of passion (i.e. nirvana) because it wipes out all forms. Bodhi is unseeing, for it keeps from all causes. Bodhi is non-discrimination, for it stops memorizing and thinking. Bodhi

cuts off ideation, for it is free from all views. Bodhi forsakes inversion, for it prevents perverse thoughts. Bodhi puts an end to desire, for it keeps from longing. Bodhi is unresponsive, for it wipes out all clinging. Bodhi complies (with self-nature), for it is in line with the state of suchness. Bodhi dwells (in this suchness), for it abides in (changeless) Dharma-nature (or Dharmata, the underlying nature of all things.) Bodhi reaches this suchness, for it attains the region of reality. Bodhi is non-dual, for it keeps from (both) intellect and its objects. Bodhi is impartial, for it is equal to boundless space. Bodhi is the non-active (we wei) state, for it is above the conditions of birth, existence and death. Bodhi is true knowledge, for it discerns the mental activities of all living beings. Bodhi does not unite, for it is free from all confrontation. Bodhi disentangles, for it breaks contact with habitual troubles (klesa). Bodhi is that of which the position cannot be determined, for it is beyond form and shape, and is that which cannot be called by name for all names (have no independent nature and so) are void. Bodhi is like the mindlessness of an illusory man, for it neither accepts nor rejects anything. Bodhi is beyond disturbance, for it is always serene by itself. Bodhi is real stillness, because of its pure and clean nature. Bodhi is non-acceptance, for it keeps from causal attachments. Bodhi is non-differentiating, because of its impartiality towards all. Bodhi is without compare, for it is indescribable. Bodhi is profound and subtle, for although unknowing, it knows all.' Maitreya said to the Buddha: "World Honoured One, when Vimalakirti so expounded the Dharma, two hundred sons of devas realized the patient endurance of the uncreate (anutpattika-dharma-ksanti). This is why I am not qualified to call on him and enquire after his health."

In both Mahayana and Theravada traditions, Maitreya, predicted by Sakyamuni Buddha as the one destined to become the next human Buddha, enjoys the unique distinction of being the only Bodhisattva recognized throughout the entire Buddhist world, especially in Theravada as well as in Mahayana Buddhism. A story about the Bodhisattva Maitreya illustrates the Buddhist concept of "letting go" as follow: In a long long time ago, Maitreya was in his incarnation as a laughing, big-bellied monk with a sack perpetually on his back . He used to travel about the countryside seeking alms and sharing them with whomever happened to be nearby. He would customarily sit under a

tree, surrounded by urchins, to whom he would tell stories to illustrate Buddhist teachings. Seeing this, an elder monk of the time became annoyed at what he perceived as untoward conduct on the part of Maitreya. One day he stopped Maitreya at the corner of a street and tried to test him with the following question: ‘Old monk, please tell me, just what do you think is the essence of the Buddha’s teaching?’ Maitreya stopped for a moment, looked at him in the eye, and just let his sack fall to the ground. As the puzzled monk wondered what to make of this singular action, Maitreya bent down, picked up his sack and walked away. Dropping the sack, “letting go,” forgive and forget, that is the teaching of Maitreya, the future Buddha. The Maitreyavyakarana Sutra mentioned that after the historical Buddha sakyamuni’s Nirvana, the whole Saha world entered a period without any Buddha (a Buddhaless period). At this time, the Buddha-to-be is still preaching in the Tushita. He will descend and become the Buddha in the “Long Hoa” assembly. The sutra was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva. In short, Maitreya Bodhisattva is the future Buddha of this saha world (the Bodhisattva who will become a full Buddha in the next world cycle to lead men to liberation from self-bondage). Day dedicated to His manifestation (to a Buddha’s vital spirit) is the fifth day of the month.

Appendix I

Three Holy Buddhist Bodhisattvas

In Buddhism, there are three holy Bodhisattvas whom people usually called Three Venerables. *The first holy Bodhisattva is Mahasthamaprapta:* Mahasthama-prapta Bodhisattva whose wisdom and power reach everywhere, a bodhisattva representing the Buddha-wisdom of Amitabha; he is Amitabha's right, with Avalokitesvara on the left. He is considered as the guardian of Buddha-wisdom. One who has gain great power, an important Bodhisattva in the Mahayana Buddhism, who bring men the knowledge of liberation. He always appears on the right side of Amitabha, whereas Avalokitesvara on the left. *The second holy Bodhisattva is Manjusri:* Manjusri, name of one of the most celebrated Bodhisattvas among the northern Buddhism (Mahayana). The attendant to the left of Sakyamuni Buddha, the personification of the wisdom of the Buddha or the Buddha's Wisdom. The Bodhisattva of wisdom in the Mahayana Buddhism, who dispels the darkness of ignorance. Sometimes he is mentioned as a Bodhisattva with "soft voice." He is closely associated with the "Perfection of Wisdom" (Prajna-paramita) sutras and is often a main interlocutor in them, generally asking the Buddha about the perfection of wisdom. He is often depicted holding in one hand a flaming "sword of wisdom" that cut through false views and a Perfection of Wisdom text in the other. Manjusri Bodhisattva is also as popular as Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. A number of sutras were composed in his honor. Manjusri is a symbol of Buddhist wisdom or an idealization of a particular quality. The Lotus Sutra describes him as springing out from the great ocean. Manju is beautiful, Sri is good fortune, virtue, majesty or lord. Manjusri means the beautiful virtue (fortune or lord). The Greatly Wise Manjusri Bodhisattva with his delusion-cutting vajra sword in one hand, sits on the back of a lion on the Buddha's left. He is considered as a guardian of wisdom and is often placed on Sakyamuni's left, with Samantabhadra on the right side as guardian of Law. He became a Buddha long ago and was called the Race of Honored Dragon Kings. However, after becoming a Buddha he had been continuing to manifest

in the form of a Bodhisattva to teach and transform living beings, and help Sakyamuni Buddha propagate the Correct Dharma. Manjusri also represents awakening, that is, the sudden realization of the Oneness of all existence and the power rising therefrom, of which the lion's vigor is symbolic. A number of Tibetan masters are regarded as physical manifestations of Manjusri, for example, Tsong-kha-Pa. A symbol of Buddhist wisdom or an idealization of a particular quality. The Lotus Sutra describes him as springing out from the great ocean. Manju is beautiful, Sri is good fortune, virtue, majesty or lord. Manjusri means the beautiful virtue (fortune or lord). Manjusri with his delusion-cutting vajra sword in one hand, sits on the back of a lion on the Buddha's left. He is considered as a guardian of wisdom and is often placed on Sakyamuni's left, with Samantabhadra on the right side as guardian of Law. Manjusri also represents awakening, that is, the sudden realization of the Oneness of all existence and the power rising therefrom, of which the lion's vigor is symbolic. There are six different definitions: Wonderful or beautiful head, Universal head, Glossy head, Revered head, and Wonderful auspicious. In Buddhism, there exists the Manjusriparyprccha Sutra. The sutra mentioned all moral rules for a Bodhisattva's daily practice. It is also called "Manjusri's Questions Sutra" because Bodhisattva Manjusri, a Bodhisattva of wisdom, asked the Buddha about moral rules for a bodhisattva to practice to attain Buddhahood. The sutra was translated into Chinese by Sanghabhara.

The third holy Bodhisattva is Universal Virtue Bodhisattva: The Universal Virtue Bodhisattva, one of the five Dhyani-Bodhisattvas or the All-Compassionate One of perfect Activity. "He Who Is All-Pervadingly Good" or "He whose Beneficence Is Everywhere." One of the most important Bodhisattvas of Mahayana Buddhism. He also embodies calm action, compassion, and deep-seated wisdom. He is venerated as the protector of all those who teach the dharma and is regarded as an embodiment of the wisdom of essential sameness and difference. He often appears riding a white six-tusked elephant (the elephant being noted for its tranquility and wisdom) with Manjusri on the (right) side of Sakyamuni. He is also called Universal sagacity, or lord of the fundamental law, the dhyana, and the practice of all Buddhas. He represents the fundamental law, and is the patron of the Lotus Sutra and its devotees, and has close connection with the Hua-

Yen Sutra. His region is in the east. According to the Lotus Sutra, Chapter Universal Door, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra's ten vows: *First is to worship and respect all Buddhas*: By the vow to pay reverence to all the Buddhas is meant that a Bodhisattva will pay reverence to an inconceivable number of Buddhas in the past, present and future with his pure body, speech and mind. He will salute every one of them without feeling fatigue until the end of the universe. *Second is to make praise to The Thus Come Ones*: By the vow to praise all the Tathagatas is meant that a Bodhisattva will always praise an innumerable number of Tathagatas in the past, present and future. A Bodhisattva will present himself before each one of these Buddhas with a deep understanding and a clear perception. The ocean of merits of the Tathagata will then be praised with an exquisite and eloquent tongue, each tongue expressing a sea of inexhaustible voices, and each voice articulating a sea of words in every form possible. A Bodhisattva will go on to praise the Buddhas without feeling fatigue and without cessation until the end of the world. *Third is to practice profoundly (vastly) the giving offerings*: To cultivate the giving of offerings by the vow to make all kinds of offerings to the Buddhas is meant that a Bodhisattva will always make offerings to an inconceivable number of Buddhas in the past, present, and future. The offering consists of flowers, wreaths, music, umbrellas, garments, and all kinds of incense and ointment, and many other things, and all these offerings in such a large quantity as is equal to clouds or to a mountain. A Bodhisattva will also burn before every one of the innumerable Buddhas all sorts of oil in such a measure as compares to an ocean. But of all the offerings one could thus make to a Buddha the best is that of the Dharma, which is to say, disciplining oneself according to the teaching, benefiting all beings, accepting all beings, suffering pains for all beings, maturing every root of goodness, carrying out all the works of a Bodhisattva, and at the same time not keeping himself away from the thought of enlightenment. The material offerings, no matter how big, are not equal even to an infinitesimal fraction of the moral offerings (dharma puja), because all Buddhas are born of moral offerings, because these are the true offerings, because the practicing of the Dharma means the perfection of an offering one could make to a Buddha. A Bodhisattva will continuously make offerings to every one

of the innumerable Buddhas without feeling fatigue. *Fourth is to repent and reform all karmic hindrances (faults):* The vow to repent all one's own sins (committed by oneself) and thereby to get rid of one's karma-hindrance is necessary because whatever sins committed by us are due to our greed, anger, and ignorance done by the body, speech, and mind. Now we make full confession and repent. According to the Buddha, all these sins, if they were really substantial, are thought to have filled the universe to its utmost ends and even over-flowing. Now a Bodhisattva vows to repent without reserve from the depth of his heart, vowing that such sins will never be committed again by him, for from now on, he will always abide in the pure precepts amass every sort of merit. And of this he will never get tired even to the end of the world. *Fifth is to rejoice and follow in merit and virtue:* To compliantly rejoice in merit and virtue by the vow to rejoice and follow the merit and virtue is meant that a Bodhisattva should always be in sympathy with all beings for whatever good things they think, or feel, or do. All the Buddhas had gone through untold hardships before they attained full enlightenment. Since their first awakening of the thought of enlightenment, they never hesitated to accumulate all the merit that tended towards the attainment of the goal of their life, they never raised a thought of egotism even when they had to sacrifice their life and all that belonged to them. Now a Bodhisattva vows to feel a sympathetic joy for all these doings of the Buddhas. He does this not only with the Buddhas, but for every possible deed of merit, however significant, executed by any being in the path of existence, of any class of truth-seekers. A Bodhisattva with this vow will never be tired of putting it into practice till the end of the world. *Sixth is to request that the Dharma wheel be turned:* To request the turning of the Dharma Wheel by the vow that a Bodhisattva will ask every one of the inconceivable number of Buddhas to revolve the Wheel of the Dharma, without feeling tired and without cease until the end of the world. *Seventh is to request that the Buddha remain in the world:* Request the Buddhas dwell in the world, a Bodhisattva vows to ask every one of the inconceivable number of Buddhas not to enter into Nirvana if any is so disposed. He will ask this even of any Bodhisattvas, Arhats, Sravakas, or Pratyekabuddhas; for he wishes these superior beings to continue to live in the world and keep on benefitting all beings. He will keep requesting this until the end of

the world. *Eighth is to follow the Buddha's teaching always:* To follow the Buddhas in study, a Bodhisattva vows to learn from the life of a Buddha who in this Saha World ever since his awakening of the thought of enlightenment have never ceased from exercising himself ungrudgingly, not even sparing his own life, for the sake of universal salvation. His reverential attitude towards the Dharma had been such as to make paper of his skin, a brush of his bones, and ink of his blood wherewith he copied the Buddhist sutras to the amount of Mount Sumeru. He cared not even for his life, how much less much less for the throne, for the palaces, gardens, villages, and other external things! By practicing every form of mortification he finally attained supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree. After this, he manifested all kinds of psychical powers, all kinds of transformations, all aspects of the Buddha-body, and placed himself sometimes among Bodhisattvas, sometimes among Sravakas, and Pratyekabuddhas, sometimes among Kshatriyas, among Brahmans, householders, lay-disciples, and sometimes among Devas, Nagas, human beings, and non-human-beings. Whenever he has found, he preached with perfect eloquence, with a voice like thunder, in order to bring all beings into maturity according to their aspirations. Finally, he showed himself as entering into Nirvana. All these phases of the life of a Buddha, the Bodhisattva is determined to learn as models for his own life. A Bodhisattva should always follow the Buddha's teaching without feeling tired, until the end of the world. *Ninth is to constantly accord with all living beings:* To vow to forever accord with living beings. In this universe, life manifests itself in innumerable forms, each one differing from another in the way of its birth, in form, in the duration of life, in name, in mental disposition, in intelligence, in aspiration, in inclination, in demeanor, in garment, in food, in social life, in the mode of dwelling, etc. However, no matter different they are, the Bodhisattva vows to live in accordance with the laws that govern everyone of these beings in order to serve them, to minister to their needs, to revere them as his parents, as his teachers, or Arahts, or as Tathagatas, making no distinction among them in this respect. If they are sick, he will be a good physician for them; if they go astray, he will show them the right path; if they are sunk in poverty, he will supply them with a treasure; thus uniformly giving benefits to all beings according to their needs, because a

Bodhisattva is convinced that by serving all beings, he is serving all the Buddhas, that by revering all beings, by making them glad, he is revering and gladdening all the Buddhas. A great compassion heart is the substance of Tathagatahood and it is because of all beings that this compassionate heart is awakened, and because of this compassionate heart the thought of enlightenment is awakened, and because of this awakening supreme enlightenment is attained. A Bodhisattva vows to forever accord with all beings without feeling tired until the end of the world. *Tenth is to transfer all merit and virtue universally:* To universally transfer all merit and virtue. Whatever merits the Bodhisattva acquires by paying sincere respect to all the Buddhas and also by practicing all kinds of meritorious deeds as above mentioned, they will all be turned over to the benefits of all beings in the entire universe. He will thus turn all his merits towards making beings feel at ease, free from diseases, turn away from evil doings, practice all deeds of goodness, so that every possible evil may be suppressed and the right road to Nirvana be opened for the gods and men. If there be any beings who are suffering the results of their evil karma committed in the past, the Bodhisattva will be ready to sacrifice himself and bear the pains for the miserable creatures in order to release them from karma and finally make them realize supreme enlightenment. A Bodhisattva vows to transfer all merit and virtue universally without feeling tired until the end of the world. Bodhisattva Samantabhadra is an important figure of the Mahayana Buddhism. As a Bodhisattva in early Mahayana texts, he is said to be the protector of those who propagate the Dharma, and he often portrayed with Vairocana. Iconographically, he is often shown riding on a white elephant with six tusks, and he commonly holds a lotus, a wish-fulfilling jewel, or a scroll. In Vajrayana he is often said to be the “primordial buddha” (Adi-Buddha) and the embodiment of the “truth body” (Dharma-kaya). In tantric depictions, he has dark blue skin (symbolic of emptiness) and is commonly shown in sexual embrace with his consort Samantabhadri. In Buddhism, Samantabhadra embodies calm action, compassion, and deep-seated wisdom. He is usually depicted astride a white elephant (the elephant is being noted for its tranquility and wisdom), sitting in attendance on the right of the Buddha; while Manjusri Bodhisattva, with his delusion-cutting vajra sword in one hand, sits on the back of a lion on the Buddha’s left side. Manjusri represents awakening, that is, the sudden realization of the lion’s vigor is symbolic. When the knowledge acquired through ‘awakening’ is employed for the benefit of mankind, Samantabhadra’s compassion is manifesting itself. Accordingly, each of the Bodhisattvas is an arm of the Buddha, representing respectively, Oneness or Equality and manyness.

Appendix J

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva

Avalokitesvara is one who contemplates the sound of the world. He is one of the four great bodhisattvas of Mahayana Buddhism. Three other bodhisattvas are Samantabhadra, Kshitigarbha and Manjushri. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva can manifest herself in any conceivable form to bring help wherever it is needed. Bodhisattva of compassion and deep listening. Also called Kuan Shi Yin, the Bodhisattva of compassion. In more recent presentations, Kuan-Shi Yin is often depicted with feminine features. In China and Vietnam, Kuan Yin is sometimes considered as a thousand-armed, and thousand-eyed Bodhisattva. Somewhere in Vietnam, Kuan Yin is painted as a mother with a child in her one arm. Nevertheless, we often see pictures of Quan Yin standing on clouds, riding on a dragon, or standing on a cliff in high seas, waiting to save (rescue) shipwrecked victims. There are still a great number of legends of Kuan Yin for each locality has its own legend. Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra devoted to Kuan-Yin, and is the principal scriptures of the cult. Kuan-Yin is sometimes confounded (bị lầm lẫn) with Amitabha and Maitreya. Avalokitesvara is a Sanskrit term for “Lord who looks down.” A Bodhisattva who stands on the left side of Amitabha Buddha. This is the most important Bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism. He is the embodiment of compassion (karuna), which along with wisdom (prajna) is one of the two main characteristics of the awakened mind of a Buddha. His name literally means “the Lord who Look Down,” implying that he views the sufferings and afflictions of sentient beings with compassion. He figures prominently in many Mahayana sutras, e.g., several Perfection of Wisdom sutras, the Sukhavati-Vyuha, in which he is said to be one of the Bodhisattvas in the Pure Land of Amitabha, and the Saddharma-Pundarika, which has an entire chapter in which he is the main figure. In this sutra, he is described as the savior of beings in trouble. It is said that by merely remembering his name with devotion one can be saved in times of distress. In early East Asian Buddhist depictions, up to the early Sung Dynasty, he is portrayed as a male, but since at least the

tenth century the image of a female in a white robe (Pai-I-Kuan-Yin) has predominated in East Asia. In Tibet Avalokitesvara Sgyan ras gzigs dbang phyug is viewed as the country's patron deity, one of physical emanations is the Dalai Lamas incarnational line. Furthermore, he is one of the eight great Bodhisattvas in Mahayana traditional Buddhism, and one whose activities involve the active practice of compassion in saving sentient beings. The mantra of "Om Mani Pad mi Hum" is directly associated with Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. In Tibetan Buddhism, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is considered to be the main patron Bodhisattva, and the Dalai Lama is viewed as his incarnate manifestation.

According to Eitel in *The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms*, Avalokitesvara is one who contemplates the world's sounds, originally represented as a male, the images are now generally those of a female figure. The meaning of the term is in doubt. Kuan-Yin is one of the triad of Amitabha, is represented on his left, and is also represented as crowned with Amida; but there are as many as thirty-three different forms of Kuan-Yin, sometimes with a bird, a vase, a willow wand, a pearl, a thousand eyes and hands, etc. and when as bestower of children, carrying a child. The island of P'u-T'o (Potala) is the chief center of Kuan-Yin worship, where she is the protector of all in distress, especially of those who go to sea. Avalokitesvara is the Bodhisattva of Universal Compassion whom Vietnamese and Chinese call Kuan Shi Yin. He is the Great Compassionate One or the Bodhisattva of all embracing love and benevolence. He is one of the most important bodhisattva of the Mahayana. He who hears the sound of suffers to save them. Avalokitesvara represents "Great Compassion" and limitless understanding, saving those who seek for help by calling his name or turning to him at times of extreme danger or when encountering calamities. In folk belief, Avalokitesvara also protects from natural catastrophe and grants blessings to children. He plays a central role in the devotional practices of all Buddhist sects. Although originally male, Kuan-Yin has become a feminine figure in the popular imagination in Asia.

According to Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is often depicted with one thousand hands, each hand containing its own eye, to indicate the vows and powers of the

Bodhisattva to see all those suffering in the world and reach into the world and pull them out of their suffering. According to other Buddhist sources, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is one of the four greatest important Bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism. He is a Bodhisattva of Great Compassion and Observer of the Sounds of the World. He is also known as the Contemplator of Self-Mastery. He is the disciple and future successor of Amitabha Buddha in the Western Pure Land. According to other Buddhist sources, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is one of the four greatest important Bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism. He is also known as the Contemplator of Self-Mastery. He is the disciple and future successor of Amitabha Buddha in the Western Pure Land. In the Surangama Sutra, book Six, the Buddha asked Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva about perfect penetration, and Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva reported to the Buddha as follows: “World Honored One! From the gateway of ear, I obtained perfect and illumining samadhi. The conditioned mind was at ease, and therefore I entered the appearance of the flow, and obtaining samadhi, I accomplished Bodhi. World Honored One! That Buddha, the Thus Come One, praised me as having obtained well the Dharma-door of perfect penetration. In the great assembly he bestowed a prediction upon me and the name, Kuan-Shih-Yin. There are various titles of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva: Regarder or Observer of the world’s sounds or cries (sounds that enlighten the world), Kuan-Yin Bodhisattva, the Sovereign Beholder, not associated with sounds or cries, the Sovereign Beholder, not associated with sounds or cries, Tara or the sakti or female energy of the masculine Avalokitesvara, One Thousand Hands and Eyes Bodhisattva, Kuan Yin with efficacious responses, Kuan-Yin Gandharaja, Kuan-Yin gazing at the moon in the water (the unreality of all phenomena), and Kuan-Yin with the willow-branch (one of the thirty-three Kuan-Yins).

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva has twelve vows as follows: *The first vow*: Namó, the Greatly Enlightened, well known for great spiritual freedom, the Avalokitesvara Tathagata’s vow of immense propagation. *The second vow*: Namó, single-minded in liberation, Avalokitesvara Tathagata’s vow to often dwell in Southern Ocean. *The third vow*: Namó, the dweller of Saha World, the Underworld, Avalokitesvara Tathagata’s vow to follow the prayer sounds of sentient beings to alleviate pains and sufferings. *The fourth vow*: Namó, the destroyer of

evil spirits and demons, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to eliminate dangers. *The fifth vow:* Namo, the holy water bottle and willow branch, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to provide comfort and purification of sentient beings' minds with sweet holy water. *The sixth vow:* Namo, the greatly compassionate and forgiving Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow often to carry out conducts with complete fairness and equality. *The seventh vow:* Namo, in all times without abandonment, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to try to eliminate the three realm. *The eighth vow:* Namo, Potala Mountain, essential to worship, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to break from the bondage of shackles and chains to find liberation. *The ninth vow:* Namo, the creator of the dharma-vessel traveling the ocean of sufferings, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to rescue and aid all sentient beings. *The tenth vow:* Namo, the holder of flags and parasols, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to protect and deliver sentient beings to the Western Pure Land. *The eleventh vow:* Namo, the world of the Infinite Life Buddha, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to have Amitabha Buddha give the prophecy of Buddhahood. *The twelfth vow:* Namo, the incomparable adorning body in the three worlds, Avalokitesvara Tathagata's vow to complete the twelve vows to rescue sentient beings.

Avalokitesvara, the "Bodhisattva who Looks Down" on us with compassion, is one of the most popular Mahayana Bodhisattvas. Revered as the embodiment of compassion, he is frequently depicted with eleven heads and 1,000 arms, all of which are used in his dispensation of aid. Avalokitesvara is an attendant of the Buddha Amitabha, who rules over Sukhavati, the Pure Land of the West. Amitabha is one of the most important of the many Buddhas who resides in the different Buddha fields of Mahayana Buddhism. Avalokitesvara finds many ways to help, not least by assuming a variety of forms, including those of a disciple, a monk, a god or a Tara. According to Tibetan Buddhism, Tara, an important female bodhisattva in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, was born from a teardrop of his compassion, and the Dalai Lamas are sometimes said to be successive reincarnations of Avalokitesvara. The cult of Avalokitesvara has inspired some of the most beautiful works of religious art in Asian Buddhism. In the 10th century, Chinese Buddhists started painting images of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva with ten arms. Four of these ten

arms hold the sun, moon, a mace and a trident; and the remaining six are in the distinctive gesture (mudra) of giving, banishing fear and offering. According to Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is often depicted with one thousand hands, each hand containing its own eye, to indicate the vows and powers of the Bodhisattva to see all those suffering in the world and reach into the world and pull them out of their suffering.

Nowadays, Avalokitesvara is worshipped in different countries around the world. World Voice-Seeing Bodhisattva, one of the great bodhisattvas of the Mahayana Buddhism. Avalokitesvara contemplates the sound of the world. She can manifest herself in any conceivable form to bring help wherever it is needed. Bodhisattva of compassion and deep listening. Also called Kuan Shi Yin, the Bodhisattva of compassion. One of the three Pure Land Sages (Buddhas and Bodhisattvas). The others being Buddha Amitabha and Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta (Đại Thế Chí Bồ Tát). Among Buddhist mythological works, works on Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva are the most outstanding. By the power of his magic, and by his infinite care and skill he affords safety to those who are anxious. The word Avalokitesvara is a compound of the word “ishvara” means “Lord or Sovereign,” and of “avalokita” which means he who looks down with compassion, i.e., on beings suffering in this world. According to Edward Conze in *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, Avalokitesvara personifies compassion. The texts and images suggest that in India one may distinguish three stages in his development. At first, he is a member of a trinity, consisting of Amitayus, Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta. This Trinity has many counterparts in Iranian religion, i.e., in the Mithras cult and Zervanism, a Persian religion which recognized Infinite Time (Zervan Akarana=Amita-ayus) as the fundamental principle. Assimilated by Buddhism, Avalokitesvara becomes a great Bodhisattva, so great that he is nearly as perfect as a Buddha. He possesses a great miraculous power to help in all kinds of dangers and difficulties. At first, he is a member of a trinity, consisting of Amitayus, Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta. This Trinity has many counterparts in Iranian religion, i.e., in the Mithras cult and Zervanism, a Persian religion which recognized Infinite Time (Zervan Akarana=Amita-ayus) as the fundamental principle. Assimilated by

Buddhism, Avalokitesvara becomes a great Bodhisattva, so great that he is nearly as perfect as a Buddha. He possesses a great miraculous power to help in all kinds of dangers and difficulties. In the second stage, Avalokitesvara acquires a number of cosmic functions and features. He holds the world in his hand, he is immensely big, 800,000 myriads of miles, each of the pores of his skin conceals a world system. He is the Lord and Sovereign of the world. From his eyes come the sun and the moon, from his mouth the winds, from his feet the earth. In all these respects, Avalokitesvara resembles the Hindu God, Brahma. Finally, in the third stage, at a time when the magical elements of Buddhism come to the fore, he becomes a great magician who owes his power to his mantras, and he adopts many of the characteristics of Siva. This is the Tantric Avalokitesvara.

Appendix K

Other Bodhisattvas in Buddhism

As mentioned above, Bodhisattva is one whose beings or essence is bodhi whose wisdom is resulting from direct perception of Truth with the compassion awakened thereby. Enlightened being who is on the path to awakening, who vows to forego complete enlightenment until he or she helps other beings attain enlightenment. There are many, many Bodhisattvas in Buddhist Legend; however, in the limitation of this little book, besides some major Bodhisattvas, we can only mention some more popular Bodhisattvas in Buddhism. **First, Cundi Bodhisattva:** In Brahmanic mythology a vindictive form of Durga, or Parvati, wife of Siva. In Mahayana traditions, Cunde is a form of Kuan-Yin, or Kuan-Yin's retinue: According to Buddhists legends, Cundi is a transformation body of the Avalokitesvara Maha-Bodhisattva. This Maha Bodhisattva has 18 arms which symbolizes 6 faculties (sight, hear, smell, taste, touch, mind), 6 elements (form, sound, scent, flavor, bodily sensation, and all other elements in general) , and 6 consciousnesses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and mind). In China identified with Marici, Queen of Heaven. She is represented with three eyes and eighteen arms. **Second, Bhaisajyaraja-Samudgata:** Bodhisattva of healing, he whose office together with his brother, is to heal the sick. He is described as the younger of the two brothers, the elder of whom is the Bhaisajyaraja (the elder of the two brothers, who was the first to decide on his career as Bodhisattva of healing and led his younger brother to adopt the same course). They are also styled Pure-eyed and Pure-treasury, which may indicate diagnose and treatment. He is referred to the Lotus sutra as offering his arms as a burnt sacrifice to his Buddha. Day dedicated to His manifestation (to a Buddha's vital spirit) is the twenty-ninth day of the month. **Third, Never-Despite Bodhisattva:** Never Slighting Bodhisattva (Sadaparibhuta (skt), a Bodhisattva who constant greeted all beings he met and praised that they were destined for Buddhahood. According to the Lotus Sutra, Chapter 20, Never Despite (Never Slighted) Bodhisattva was the previous incarnation of the Buddha. Never

Slighting Bodhisattva cultivated the ascetic practice of patient endurance. He constant greeted all beings he met and praised that they were destined for Buddhahood. Never Slighting Bodhisattva used the spirit of “having no sense of self” to cultivate blessing and wisdom. In order to get rid of the self, he always bowed to whomever he met. In order to accomplish the practice of patient endurance, although it brought him curses and beatings, he never felt anger or hatred in return. This is the real Dharma Door of the Perfection of Patience under Insult. **Fourth, Amoghadarsin Bodhisattva:** The unerring seeing bodhisattva, shown in the second place of Ti-Tsang’s court in the Garbhadhatu. **Ghosa Bodhisattva:** According to Eitel in The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms, an arhat, famous for exegesis, who restored the eyesight of Dharmavivardhana by washing his eyes with the tears of people who were moved by his eloquence. **Sixth, Bodhisattva of Great Potentiality:** A Bodhisattva, a protector of monasteries, depicted as shading his eyes with his hand and looking afar, said to have been a Warden of the Coast under the emperor Asoka. **Seventh, Akasagarbha Bodhisattva:** Empty Store Bodhisattva or Space-garbha Bodhisattva or Bodhisattva of the empyrean. Divine son of the bright stars. This is one of the eight diamond-kings, or bodhisattvas as guardians of Vairocana. **Eighth, Gandhahasti Bodhisattva:** Fragrant Elephant Bodhisattva, one of the sixteen honoured ones of the Bhadra-kalpa. According to The Flower Ornament Sutra (Chapter Bodhisattva Abodes), Gandhahasti Bodhisattva in the north, who lives on the Gandhamadana mountain, together with his three thousand retinues preached the Buddha Teaching. **Ninth, Bodhisattva-beautiful:** An incarnation of Bhaisajjaraja-samudgata. **Tenth, Karma-Paramita Bodhisattva:** One of the four female attendants on Vairocana in the Vajradhatu, evolved from him, each of them a mother of one of the four Buddhas of the four quarters. **Eleventh, Bhadrakala Bodhisattva:** Bhadrakala was name of Bhadrakala Bodhisattva. A Bodhisattva who with 500 others slighted Sakyamuni in a previous existence, was converted and became a Buddha. One of the great lay disciples of the Buddha, who kept the faith at home at the time of the Buddha. An image of Bhadrakala is kept in the monastic bathroom.

Besides, there are still some other Bodhisattva mentioned in different Buddhist schools. **Five Vajra rajas:** *First*, Vajrasattva-mahasattva, the lord of the other four. *Second*, Kama-vajra: Diamond-Passion Bodhisattva. *Third*, Vajra-Mana: Diamond-Pride Bodhisattva. *Fourth*, Vajrakamar: Diamond-Love Bodhisattva. *Fifth*, Vajra-Sparsa: Diamond Touch Bodhisattva. **Five Crowned Bodhisattvas:** Five Bodhisattvas sometimes placed on the left of Sakyamuni, indicative of five forms of wisdom: one with white parasol, symbol of pure mercy, one of the titles of Avalokitesvara; one with sword, symbol of wisdom or discretion; one with golden wheel symbol of unexcelled power of preaching; one who collected brilliance with insignia authority or a flame; and one who is scattering and destroying all distressing delusion, with a hook as symbol. **Five Bodhisattvas in an angry form against evils:** Bodhisattvas who represent the Buddha's dharmakaya, or spiritual body; wisdom in graciousness and a pierce or angry form against evil: *First*, Vairocana (Đại Nhật Như Lai) appears in the three forms: Vajra-paramita Bodhisattva, Universally Shining Vajrasattva, and Arya-Acalanatha Raja. *Second*, Aksobhya appears in the three forms: Akashagarbha, Complete Power, and Kundali-Raja. *Third*, Ratnasambhava's three forms: Samantabhadra, Sattva-vajra, and Trailokyavijaya-raja. *Fourth*, Amitabha Buddha appears in three forms: Avalokitesvara, Dharmaraja, and the horse-head Dharmapala. *Fifth*, Amoghasiddhi Buddha appears in three forms: Maitreya, Karmavajra, and Vajrayaksa. **Twenty five Bodhisattvas who protect all who call Amitabha:** *First*, Avalokitesvara or Kuan Shi Yin. *Second*, Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva. *Third*, Bhaisajyaraja Bodhisattva. *Fourth*, Bhaisajyaraja Samudgata Bodhisattva. *Fifth*, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. *Sixth*, Dharma-Isvara Bodhisattva, a Bodhisattva's complete dialectical freedom and power, so that he can expound all things unimpeded. *Seventh*, Simhanada Bodhisattva. *Eighth*, Dharani Bodhisattva. *Ninth*, Akasagarbha Bodhisattva or Space-Garbha Bodhisattva. *Tenth*, Buddha-Garbha Bodhisattva. *Eleventh*, Bodhisattva-Garbha Bodhisattva. *Twelfth*, Vajra-garbha Bodhisattva. *Thirteenth*, Mountain-Ocean Wisdom Bodhisattva. *Fourteenth*, Shining Heart Bodhisattva. *Fifteenth*, Adorned Flower Bodhisattva. *Sixteenth*, Treasure Assembly Bodhisattva. *Seventeenth*, Candraprabha Bodhisattva. *Eighteenth*, Sun-Illuminating Bodhisattva. *Nineteenth*,

Samadhi-King Bodhisattva. *Twentieth*, Samadhi-Isvara Bodhisattva. *Twenty-first*, Mahesvara Bodhisattva. *Twenty-second*, White-Elephant Bodhisattva. *Twenty-third*, Mahatejas Bodhisattva. *Twenty-fourth*, Infinite-Body Bodhisattva. *Twenty-fifth*, Great Ocean Assembly of Peaceful Bodhisattva.

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