
The Practice of Self-Power and Faith in Other-Power in Mahāyāna Buddhism

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Abstract

With the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which insists on returning to the spirit of the Buddha's original thought, the Practice of Self-Power goes much further than it does in Hīnayāna Buddhism, and develops the Bodhisattva ideal, which is that one's own practice benefits others as well. Surprisingly, a new path arose in Mahāyāna called Faith in Other-Power at the same time as the emphasizing of the altruistic aspect of the Bodhisattva ideal.

In this paper, by considering the Diamond Sūtra, the Lotus Sūtra, and especially the Avataṃsaka Sūtra, I will try to show that Self-Power and Other-Power as skillful means are neither dichotomous nor contradictory to each other at all.

I. Introduction

The fundamental reason human beings practice religion is to attain eternal bliss. The ultimate goal of Mahāyāna Buddhism is to become a Buddha. To become a Buddha is, in other words, to attain Unexcelled, Complete, Perfect Awakening (*Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*). It is thus a very important problem for Mahāyāna Buddhists to find a path to become a Buddha. Various paths to Buddhahood have thus been devised for individuals of different capacities. These paths, called skillful means (*upāya*), can be broadly divided into two classes: one is the Practice of Self-Power, in which one cultivates enlightenment by oneself, and the other is Faith in Other-Power, which depends on the beneficence of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

It is well known that *Śākyamuni Buddha* broke through the life of frustra

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tion which originates in ignorance (*avidyā*), and, after He attained enlightenment, began to teach and eliminate the suffering of sentient beings. We see that the Buddha abandoned all ascetic and meditational practices common at his time and developed His own new meditation, through which He realized the truth of Dependent Origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). He taught the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination both positively and negatively, and the Four Noble Truths.

From the Buddha's enlightenment and His own teaching, we see that Buddhism begins with the Practice of Self-Power. With the rise of Mahāyāna

Buddhism, which insists on returning to the spirit of the Buddha's original thought, the Practice of Self-Power goes much further than it does in Hīnayāna Buddhism, and develops the Bodhisattva ideal, which is that one's own practice benefits others as well.

Surprisingly, a new path arose in Mahāyāna called Faith in Other-Power at the same time as the emphasizing of the altruistic aspect of the Bodhisattva ideal. This path came to coexist in Mahāyāna alongside the Practice of Self-Power. Moreover, the convergence of Hīnayāna with Mahāyāna into the One Path (*Ekayāna*) gives further evidence to the claim that Self-Power and Other-Power are not a dichotomy. This is especially shown by the path of the Bodhisattva as presented in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*.

In this paper, by considering the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, and especially the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* (the most influential Mahāyāna scripture in Korean Buddhism), I will try to show that Self-Power and Other-Power as skillful means are neither dichotomous nor contradictory to each other at all. I am first going to touch on the Practice of Self-Power, and then comment on Faith in Other-Power, and finally show the non-dualistic relationship between Self-Power and Other-Power, or between Practice and Faith.

II. The Practice of Self-Power in Mahāyāna Buddhism

1. The Appearance of the Bodhisattva in Mahāyāna Buddhism

Although we are not quite sure of the date of the beginning of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the first appearance of the term 'Mahāyāna' is in the Chinese transliteration for this term which appears in the Chinese translation of the 'Chapter of the Practice of the Way' in the *Aśṭāhasrikā-Prajñā Sūtra* (APS, T8: 427c, Translated by *Lokakṣema*, 179 C.E.). This translation is dated around the second century C.E., so we estimate that the Sanskrit version was written well b

efore the first century C.E. We can thus be sure that the earliest Mahāyāna movements began much earlier than the first century, C.E.

The earliest Mahāyāna schools may have been formed by practitioners who identified with Bodhisattvas and advocated a return to what they took to be the original spirit of the Buddha's teachings, especially shifting from the practice of a path aimed at personal enlightenment to a path aimed at the enlightenment of oneself and of all sentient beings, as exemplified by the altruism of the Bodhisattvas.

By listening to the *Jātaka* stories told by dharma lecturers at the stūpa on which the stories were inscribed, people came to admire the Buddha's greatness and vowed to practice according to the example of the former life of the Buddha as a Bodhisattva, as described in the *Jātakas*. These people called themselves Bodhisattvas. That was the beginning of the Bodhisattva ideal in Mahāyāna.

The Bodhisattva who was the former life of *Śākyamuni Buddha*, is also called the Buddha-biographical Bodhisattva, because the former-life Bodhisattva is found in the Buddha's biographical scriptures. He is also sometimes called the Prediction Bodhisattva, because he had received a prediction from *Dīpaṅkara Buddha* that he would become *Śākyamuni Buddha* in the future. On the other hand, the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva had come to be called the Bodhisattva of Vows, because he had taken a vow to become a Bodhisattva. (Akira, Hirakawa ed., 1981; Ryujou, Yamada, 1959). Therefore, the Bodhisattva is the ideal practitioner and human being for Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The Korean word '*Posal*' is often used as an abbreviation for the word '*Bodhisattva*.' '*Bodhi*' originally means 'awake' or 'awakening' (in the sense of enlightenment), while '*sattva*' means 'being.' The term '*Bodhisattva*' therefore has two meanings: 'a being who is in the process of waking up (becoming enlightened),' or 'an awakened (enlightened) being.' There thus are two kinds of Bodhisattvas in Mahāyāna Buddhism: the first is the enlightening Bodhisattva who moves upward towards attaining Buddhahood with the whole-hearted vow, "I vow to become a Buddha," or "I vow to attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*," and the second is the awakened Bodhisattva who moves downward towards sentient beings in order to help them. The first type of Bodhisattva must have played a major part in the early Mahāyāna movement.

At first, these Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas of Vows vowed to live according to the example set by *Śākyamuni Buddha*'s own life. They practiced the six or ten perfections (*pāramitās*), which were practiced by the Bodhisattva who in a later life became *Śākyamuni Buddha*, as described in the *Jātakas*. Hence they aimed upwards at awakening and, at the same time, downwards at be

nefiting others.

As a procedure of these practices, Bodhisattvas who led Mahāyāna Buddhists compiled the Mahāyāna scriptures (*sūtras*). In these scriptures, Bodhisattvas – the main exemplars in Mahāyāna Buddhism – showed a new path to the Buddha Land. Therefore, we must mainly depend on the Mahāyāna scriptures to answer the questions, “What is a Bodhisattva?” “Why are there Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas?” “What is a Bodhisattva deed?” and “What is the state of a Buddha, the ultimate state that Bodhisattvas finally reach?”

In Korea, since the time of the Chosŏn dynasty, monastic colleges (now called ‘*Sŭngga-Taehak*’) have taught a curriculum divided into four or five courses. *Sūtras* are studied starting with the third course, called the Four Teachings Course (*Sagyo-kwa*), in which students read the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Śurāṅgama Sūtra* and the *Sūtra on Perfect Enlightenment*.¹ In the fourth course, called the Great Teachings Course (*Taegyo-kwa*), students study the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*. In the optional fifth course, the Independent Course (*Su-ŭi-kwa*), the *Lotus Sūtra* is studied. Through the study of these texts, Korean *sŭnims* (Buddhist monks and nuns) have studied the Buddha's teachings and promulgated the path of the Bodhisattva by teaching Mahāyāna ideas.

Thus, by explaining texts in these curricula, I will give an overview of practices aimed at awakening and building the world of the Buddha. Among these texts, I will use the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* as the most representative and reliably authentic texts of Korean Buddhism,² since the *Śurāṅgama Sūtra* and the *Sūtra on Perfect Enlightenment* are often regarded as apocryphal. The *Diamond Sūtra* belongs to the earliest group of Mahāyāna scriptures – the *Prajñāpāramitā* group of *sūtras* – and it is the main doctrinal source for the study of *Sŏn* (*Ch'an* in China, *Zen* in Japan) in the Chogyŏ Order of Korean Buddhism. The *Lotus Sūtra* is famous for the idea of Returning to the One (*Ekayāna*, *Buddhayāna*, the One Vehicle) by encompassing the Three (*śrāvaka-yāna*, *pratyeka-buddha-yāna*, and *Bodhisattva-yāna*). The significance of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* in the history of Buddhism is so g

¹ *The Awakening of Faith* (T32; Korean Commentary by Wŏnhyo, K1) is also taught in the Four Teachings Course.

² The Chinese version of the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* that Korean traditional Buddhist monastic colleges use are, respectively, *Vajracchedikā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra* (*Ching-kang-pan-zo-po-lo-mi-to ching*), *Saddharmapundarikā Sūtra* (*Miao-fa-lien-hwas ching*), translated by Kumārajīva, and *Mahā Vaipulya Buddha Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* (*Ta-fang-kwang-fo-hua-yen ching*) in eighty fascicles, translated by Buddhahadra. The printed version of these *sūtras* are the *Taishō Shinshu Daizokyo*, which relied on the Korean Buddhist Canon, with additional notes showing textual variants from other versions.

reat that it represents the full flowering of the Bodhisattva path of *Ekayāna*, based on the idea of Returning to the One by Encompassing the Three.

2. The Path of Practice: To Benefit Self and Others

A. The Bodhisattva Path in the *Diamond Sūtra*

The Bodhisattva path in the *Diamond Sūtra* is demonstrated by the Buddha's answer to *Subhūti's* question: "If good men and women (sons and daughters of a noble family) seek Unexcelled, Complete, Perfect Awakening (*Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*), on what should their minds dwell and how should they subdue their minds?" (VPPS, T8: 748c)

These good men and women are the people who aspired to the Mahāyāna ideal. They deserve to be called Bodhisattvas because they have resolved to attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* of Mahāyāna, the same as that accomplished by the Buddha. 'Good men and women' seems to be the term used for the group of people who did not receive the complete precepts from the contemporary Hīnayāna Buddhist sects. The word 'Bodhisattva' therefore applies to the laity as well as to the *śramaṇa* (Buddhist monks and nuns).

The Buddha's answer to *Subhūti's* question about the Bodhisattva path is as follows:

Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas (Great Awakening Beings) should subdue their minds in this way: All living beings of whatever kind – whether born from eggs, from wombs, from moisture, or by transformation, whether with or without form, whether with, without, or neither with nor without perception – as far as any conceivable universe of beings is conceived, all these I will lead to perfect Nirvāṇa (*aśeṣa-nirvāṇa*). Yet, although innumerable beings have thus been led to Nirvāṇa, not a single being has been led to Nirvāṇa. And why, *Subhūti*? If Bodhisattvas cling to the false notion of a self, a personality, a being, or a life, they would not be Bodhisattvas.

Furthermore, *Subhūti*, in their practice of Generosity (*dāna*), Bodhisattvas should not cling to anything. That is to say, they should practice Generosity without clinging to sights, or without clinging to sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, or ideas. *Subhūti*, thus should Bodhisattvas practice generosity without clinging to false notions of the characteristics of reality (*lakṣaṇa*). Why? Because by practicing thus, without clinging to *lakṣaṇa*, Bodhisattvas' merit will be inconceivable and immeasurable (VPPS, T8, 749a).

From this point of view, Bodhisattvas first arouse their compassionate minds to liberate all sentient beings; second, liberate them all and lead them to perfect Nirvāṇa; third, liberate all the immeasurable and uncountable beings, while at the same time, ultimately no being is ever liberated; fourth, are free from any notion of a self, a personality, a being, or a life; and fifth, practice Generosity without clinging to sights, sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, or ideas.

As seen above, the *Diamond Sūtra* emphasizes that clinging to any of these four notions (a self, a personality, a being, or a life) should be abandoned, in order to lead all beings to perfect Nirvāṇa.³ The Perfection of Generosity, one of the *pāramitā* practices, is also encouraged as a practice without clinging to *lakṣaṇa* for Bodhisattvas to benefit all beings. The *Heart Sūtra*, a distillation of a group of *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*, including the *Diamond Sūtra*, stresses the Perfection of Ultimate Realization (*Prajñāpāramitā*), consisting of full realization of the devoidness (*śūnyatā*) of intrinsic nature of all things. This Perfection of Ultimate Realization is necessary to attain Perfection of Generosity, because through the realization of *śūnyatā*, one can then practice Generosity without clinging to anything. This is the meaning in the *sūtra* of the statement that ultimately no being is saved, even though conventionally the Bodhisattva saves uncountable beings.

Then, what is Generosity without clinging to anything? The *Diamond Sūtra* stressed again that Bodhisattvas have to generate their virtuous desire without clinging (VPPS, T8: 749c). In the list of practices suggested to the Bodhisattva to avoid clinging to anything, sights, sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, and ideas are the six sense objects (*ṣaḍviśaya*) corresponding to the six sense organs of perception (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, respectively). The six perceptions arise from the conjunction of these six organs with the six objects of perception. Furthermore, the first five organs take the sixth (mind) as a meta-organ, and thus the first five perceptions arise.

Because all the six perceptions arise from the conjunction of the six organs of perception with the six objects of perception, it was suggested that one should generate his virtuous desire without clinging to any of the six objects and practice Generosity in the renunciation of these objects as well. It is because of the *śūnyatā* of all things that clinging to any kind of objects is strongly discouraged. The Perfection of Generosity is then supposed to be fulfilled t

³ The requirement that Bodhisattvas liberate all sentient beings before themselves entering into perfect Nirvāṇa is given as a definition of Bodhisattvas in 'The Chapter of the Practice of the Way' in the *Aṣṭasahasrika Prajñā Sūtra* (T8: 427c).

through Purity of the Three Wheels (donor, receiver, and things given and received). Because Bodhisattvas practicing the Perfection of Generosity and sentient beings to be liberated all lack intrinsic nature, it is clear that ultimately there is no sentient being to liberate, even though, conventionally speaking, the Bodhisattva ceaselessly liberates uncountable sentient beings. Consequently, the Bodhisattva who has no belief in the notions of self, personality, being, or life can be regarded as one who has full realization of *śūnyatā*. The teachings therefore praise practicing the Perfection of Generosity by spreading Buddhist teachings through studying, reciting, and teaching even a single verse of a *sūtra* above the practice of giving of property (VPPS, T8: 749c-750a).

The *Diamond Sūtra* also states that the Perfection of Forbearance (*kṣānti-pāramitā*), like the Perfection of Generosity, involves nothing to forbear, because all things lack intrinsic nature. It is said that the Perfection of Forbearance does not truly involve any forbearing, because there is no difference between you and me. The *sūtra* goes on to say that if the *Tathāgata* had a self, personality, being, or life when the king of Kalinga cut away His flesh piece by piece, He would also have had ill-will towards the king, but He didn't get angry since He had none of these four notions, and He had a total of five hundred births as a sage devoted to forbearance (VPPS, T8: 750b).

Then, is aspiring to Unexcelled, Complete, Perfect Awakening not a kind of attachment? And is the vow to attain Buddhahood through the practice of Generosity not also an attachment? What is the Buddha's state that can be reached by the practice of the Perfections of Generosity and Forbearance?

Whatever has material characteristics
is impermanent and illusory,
but whoever perceives that all characteristics are ultimately no-characteristics
perceives the *Tathāgata* (VPPS, T8: 749a).

Who takes my form for Me,
Who seeks Me in sound,
Perverted is his path,
For he cannot perceive the *Tathāgata* (VPPS, T8: 752a).

Even the thirty-two marks of the *Tathāgata* are illusory, because everything that can be seen is illusory (VPPS, T8: 750a). By practicing the Perfection of Generosity without characteristics, we see the *Tathāgata* in the Body of Reality, which is formless, not the *Tathāgata* in the Body of Form which has the t

thirty-two marks.

If one can't discover the *Tathāgata* in the Body of Form, what is the nature of this *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* that Bodhisattvas try to attain? The *sūtra* asks the question, "Has the *Tathāgata* attained *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*?"

Has the *Tathāgata* any dharma to teach?" The answer of *Subhūti* is as follows:

As I understand the Buddha's meaning, there is no such definite, particular thing as *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. Moreover, the *Tathāgata* has no definite, particular doctrine to teach. Wherefore? Because the *Tathāgata* has said that the Buddha-doctrine is ungraspable and inexpressible. It is neither doctrine nor non-doctrine (*VPPS*, T8: 749b).

Thus the teaching of the *Tathāgata* is without characteristics and is not any definite, particular doctrine. Furthermore, it is said in the *sūtra* that the *Śākya-Tathāgata* had met *Dipaṅkara Buddha* in the remote past and heard the teachings. *Śākya-Tathāgata* received a prediction from *Dipaṅkara Buddha* that He would become enlightened, but in truth He never received anything at all from *Dipaṅkara Buddha* (*VPPS*, T8: 751a). The teaching of the Buddhas, or *bodhi*, is not a relativistic, partial doctrine but the universal one, and the teaching of *bodhi* and Nirvāṇa is not conventional, but is ultimate truth. All this conventional world is fleeting like a dream, an illusion, bubbles in a stream, a shadow under a lamp, a dew drop, or a lightning flash (*VPPS*, T8: 752b). Therefore, the Bodhisattva should generate *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* without clinging to any characteristics of things.

If this is so, would not ornamenting majestic Buddha-lands by Bodhisattvas be attaining something? Would not the Bodhisattvas' non-clinging practice ornament the majestic Buddha-lands and thereby be an attainment? The *sūtra* answers this question thusly:

"Subhūti, what do you think? Does a Bodhisattva set forth any majestic Buddha-lands?"

"No, World-honored One. Wherefore? Because 'setting forth majestic Buddha-lands' is not a majestic setting forth; this is merely words." (*VPPS*, T8: 749c)

The true setting forth of majestic Buddha-lands is setting forth majestic Buddha-lands with no idea of setting forth. Thus, Bodhisattvas have to generate their *bodhi* minds with no attachment to ideas, because they are not true Bodhisattvas if they have any notion of a self, personality, being, or life.

If there is no idea of a subject, then who is dwelling, practicing, or subduing their minds? According to the *sūtra*, the subject should have no attachment or clinging to these four notions. It is thus said that Bodhisattvas have no sentient beings to liberate, because there is no object for which Bodhisattvas cultivate *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. The *Tathāgata's* attainment of *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*, it is said, is neither a real thing nor an unreal thing; therefore, all real and unreal things are encompassed in the realm of the Buddha (VPPS, T8: 51a-b).

As we have seen, Bodhisattvas work through the practice of the Perfection of Generosity without clinging to any ideas to liberate all sentient beings until they enter perfect *Nirvāṇa*, and at the same time they attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* and ornament majestic Buddha-lands. Because the Bodhisattva is free of the four notions of self and is aware of the lack of intrinsic nature of all things, for him there is no difference between you and me, and the practice which is of benefit to himself is also for all others. Thus, it has come to be said that Bodhisattvas have liberated uncountable sentient beings, while there is no one who has been liberated. They ornament majestic Buddha-lands by deeds without any attachment to sights, sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, or ideas. Everything, without exception, is included in the world of the Buddha.

B. The Bodhisattva Path in the *Lotus Sūtra*

The *Lotus Sūtra*, well-known for the idea of Encompassing the Three in One, involves a quite different Bodhisattva Path from that of the *Diamond Sūtra*. It is pointed out by the *Lotus Sūtra* that the Buddha taught only One Vehicle for sentient beings, as all Buddhas did, and the Two or Three Vehicles in the *sūtras* are merely skillful means (SPS, T9: 7b). The Buddha, the World-Honored One, explains that he has appeared in this world for only one great purpose:

The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the world in order to reveal the wisdom and insight of the Buddha to all sentient beings so that they purify themselves. They appear in the world in order to manifest the wisdom and insight of the Buddhas to all sentient beings. They appear in the world so that all sentient beings realize the wisdom and insight of the Buddha. They appear in the world so that all sentient beings can enter the Way of the wisdom and insight of the Buddha. *Śāriputra!* This is the one great purpose for which the Buddhas appear in the world (SPS, T9: 7a).

The Buddhas appear in this world for the one great purpose of revealing and indicating the insight of the Buddha to all sentient beings, so that they may realize and enter the Way of enlightenment. The insight of the Buddha that we refer to here is,

The wisdom and insight of the *Tathāgatas* is extensive, profound, and far-reaching; that is, (1) the four kinds of immeasurable mind (*catur-apramāṇa*: kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity), (2) the four kinds of freedom in teaching the dharma (*catur-pratisaṃvid*: no obstruction in meaning, dharma, languages, and enjoyment of teaching), (3) the ten abilities of the Buddha (*Daśa-bala*: distinguishing right from wrong, knowing the relationship between karma and its results, comprehending various kinds of meditations, judging the inferiority or superiority of people's capacities, seeing into what people understand, knowing people's tendencies, understanding the law of rebirth, remembering the past, knowing the births and deaths of people throughout the three periods of time, and rightly knowing how to extinguish every affliction of oneself and others), (4) the four kinds of fearlessness (*catur-vaiśāradya*: correct enlightenment, eternal extinction of delusion, expounding the obstacles to the Way, and expounding the extinction of suffering), (5) mind-concentration, (6) liberation, and (7) *samādhis* which are profound and endless. They entered deeply into these insights, which people never heard before (SPS, T9: 5c).

In order to reveal this insight so that people can attain it, the *Tathāgata* expounded his teaching through various explanations of causes and conditions, parables, and similes as expedients suited to different people's capacities.

This is well demonstrated by the Seven Parables of the *Lotus Sūtra*: the parable of a burning house (The Parable Chapter), the parable of the poor son of a rich father (The Chapter on Faith and Discernment), the parable of herbs (The Chapter on the Parable of the Herbs), the parable of the Magic City (The Chapter on the Parable of the Magic City), the parable of the gem inside a garment (The Chapter of the Prediction of Enlightenment), the parable of a brilliant gem (The Chapter of Peaceful Practices), and the parable of a physician (The Chapter of the Duration of the *Tathāgata's* Life). Through all these parables, the *Tathāgata* demonstrates that *Ekayāna* is the real teaching, and the Three Vehicles are merely skillful means. Buddhas always teach *Ekayāna* to all sentient beings.

From the introductory Chapter on, the sūtra shows that many Bodhisattvas have come to seek the Way of the Buddha through various causes and conditions. Among all the causes and conditions which lead to the Way of t

the Buddha, the best is the practice of Generosity. In this practice, they gave away not only precious properties, but even their bodies, children, and wives. After leaving home and becoming Buddhist monks (*bhikṣus*), they joyfully recited sūtras, practiced courageously, entered deeply into mind-concentration, obtained ultimate realization, observed the precepts, practiced vigor, made offerings to the relics (*śarīras*) of the Buddha, adorned the world of the Buddha with many *stūpas* and mausoleums, and through these practices, the Buddha-lands became illuminated and wonderful. All this was seen and said by *Maitreya* Bodhisattva (*SPS*, T9: 2b).

Further on in the sūtra, *Mañjuśrī* Bodhisattva said that, in the past, when Sun-Moon-Light *Tathāgata* expounded his teaching, he delivered the Four Noble Truths to the people who seek the way of Śravakahood, Dependent Origination to the people who seek the way of Pratyekabuddhahood, and the Six *Pāramitās* for Bodhisattvas to attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*, that is, to obtain wisdom of realizing the equality and inequality of all things (*sarvathā-jñāna*) (*SPS*, T9: 3c).

In the next Chapter on Skillful Means, the various expedients for enlightenment are taught. For example:

Those who cultivated felicities and wisdoms by hearing the teachings of the Buddhas in the past, or by practicing generosity, the precepts, forbearance, vigor, meditation, or wisdom, have already attained the enlightenment of the Buddha.

Or those who made offerings to the *śarīras* after the Buddha's final Nirvāṇa (*parinirvāṇa*), those who set up and ornamented *stūpas*, or children who made play *stūpas* of the Buddha from heaps of sand, all have already attained the enlightenment of the Buddha.

Or those who carved a statue of the Buddha, or drew – or even encouraged others to draw – a picture of the Buddha, have already attained the enlightenment of the Buddha.

Or the children who, through drawing a picture of the Buddha while playing, became able to accumulate merits gradually and came to be greatly compassionate, they have already attained the enlightenment of the Buddha.

Or those who entered a *stūpa*-mausoleum and said only one 'Namo *Buddhāya*' without even concentrating their minds, have already attained the enlightenment of the Buddha (*SPS*, T9: 8b-9a).

As the *Lotus Sūtra* said above, there are many varied practices for a Bodhisattva to attain the enlightenment of the Buddha: the Six *Pāramitās*, carving a statue of the Buddha, building *stūpas*, or saying one 'Namo *Buddhāya*,' even without concentrating one's mind. Respectfully offering flowers, incense,

or music also leads to enlightenment. Thus, the sūtra encourages Bodhisattvas to show the way of the Buddha to all sentient beings through these expedients. The sūtra explains Bodhisattva practices which enable sentient beings to realize the insight of the Buddha in detailed stories such as that of the Never-Despising Bodhisattva, Medicine-King Bodhisattva, Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva, and Bodhisattva of Compassion (*Avalokiteśvara*). In the Chapter of the Never-Despising Bodhisattva (*SPS*, T9: 50b), the story explains how the Never-Despising Bodhisattva got his name. It is because, every time he saw *bhikṣus*, *bhikṣunīs*, *upāsakas* or *upāsikās*, he bowed to them and praised them, saying, "I respect you deeply. I do not disrespect you, because you will be able to practice the Bodhisattva path and become Buddhas." This Bodhisattva did not read or recite sūtras, but only bowed to everyone and praised them with such words. Some of the four groups of devotees who had impure minds spoke ill of him and sometimes struck him, but the Bodhisattva never gave up his way and attitude. In this way, the Never-Despising Bodhisattva attained enlightenment. This Bodhisattva was a former life of the World-Honored One.

Another case of Medicine-King Bodhisattva (*SPS*, T9: 53a) shows how the Bodhisattva had indulged himself in the pleasures of world and how much he practiced asceticism. It is thus said in the sūtra that if anyone should make an offering to the *stūpa* of the Buddha by burning a finger or a toe in order to attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*, then he will receive more merit than one who offers countries, cities, wives, children and various kinds of treasures.

Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva (*SPS*, T9: 55a) is described as one who made offerings to the hundreds of thousands of billions of Buddhas, attended them, and planted the roots of virtue a long time ago. Through these practices, he obtained profound wisdom and great *samādhi*, and thus is good at protecting and liberating all sentient beings. He has the supernatural ability to transform his body in various ways and helps all living beings through that ability. He appears as a *Śrāvaka* to one who can be liberated by a *Śrāvaka*. He also appears as a *Pratyekabuddha*, Bodhisattva, or a Buddha to teach the dharma to sentient beings through his attainment of the *samādhi* by which one can transform oneself into any other living being.

The practices of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva described in the Chapter called '*Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva, Who Hears All the Cries of the Suffering Beings,' (*SPS*, T9: 56c) are the following: if the innumerable sentient beings who suffer call on *Avalokiteśvara* sincerely, then the Bodhisattva will appear immediately and free them from suffering. Even if one were thrown into a large

fire, or experiencing every other suffering, if one were to think steadily of *Avalokiteśvara*, one will finally be saved.

Avalokiteśvara can also metamorphose into a Buddha's body and appear to one who can be enlightened only by a Buddha. *Avalokiteśvara* also takes various shapes, travels through many worlds, liberates sentient beings, and gives courage to those who are afraid. Her/his vow to save sentient beings is as deep as the sea, so that if one hears her/his name and sees her/him, and thinks of her/him wholeheartedly, one will be able to eliminate all sufferings of aging, sickness, and death, and finally attain enlightenment.

The Buddha taught many practices to eliminate the suffering of sentient beings. The Buddha also taught the paths which lead to Nirvāṇa, and that these paths and Nirvāṇa are merely skillful means.

For everything is always fundamentally in the state of Nirvāṇa. If Buddhists fully realize this and practice well, they will reach the state of Buddhahood in the future (*SPS*, T9: 8b).

Because sentient beings cling to and are burned by the desire for sights, sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, and ideas of the Triple Worlds (of desire, form, and formlessness), it is necessary to teach various kinds of skillful means.

Therefore, in the sūtra, it is said that good men and good women enter the *Tathāgata's* room, change into the *Tathāgata's* garments, sit on the *Tathāgata's* seat, and expound the *Tathāgata's* teaching. The merits of these Dharma teachers are praised (*SPS*, T9: 31c). Having awakened to the *śūnyatā* of all things—that is, that everything is always fundamentally in the state of *Nirvāṇa*—the Bodhisattva liberates all sentient beings with peaceful and harmonious forbearance in many different ways.

C. The Bodhisattva Path in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*

The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* is regarded today by *Hua-yen* philosophers as the finest essence of the teachings of the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva path. We can see that the Bodhisattva path in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* is the complete *Ekayāna* Bodhisattva path, because it is based on Encompassing the Three in One. The meaning of the term '*Flower Garland Sūtra (Avataṃsaka Sūtra)*,' which is part of the full title, is that the flowers of Bodhisattva behavior adorn the majestic Buddha-lands.

I summarize the totality of Bodhisattva practices and methods in the *Avat*

avataṃsaka Sūtra in three different ways: the Triple Virtues and Ten Stages, the Ten *Parāmitās*, and the Infinitely Many *Upāyas* for Attaining Enlightenment. In the forty-two levels in the development of a Bodhisattva in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, the first thirty levels of Bodhisattva practice are called the Triple Virtues, which consist of the Ten Abodes, the Ten Practices, and the Ten Dedications. The next ten levels are called the Ten Stages (*daśabhūmi*). Through the practice of these forty levels, the Bodhisattva can reach the levels called Equal Enlightenment and Wondrous Enlightenment. Within these forty levels, there are a great many skillful means for Bodhisattva practice. However, the Ten Stages include all the levels in the Triple Virtues, yet go beyond them. The Ten *Pāramitās* are the essence of and encompass all the practices of all forty levels. All dharma talks delivered by the dharma teachers in the last chapter of the eighty-volume or sixty-volume version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (the Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra) are also encompassed by the Ten *Pāramitās* (Hae-ju Jeon, 1983: 65-71). The Ten *Pāramitās* are the Six *Pāramitās* plus skillful means, vows, powers, and knowledge, and in *Hua-Yen* thought, ten is the number that encompasses all things. I will therefore concentrate on the practices of the Ten Stages and Ten *Pāramitās*, because they are the essence of all Bodhisattva practices in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (Hae-ju Jeon, 1994: 23).

The Ten Stages are as follows:

(1) A Bodhisattva in the Stage of Great Joy is said to be extremely joyful, takes the ten vows, and especially practices the Perfection of Generosity among the Ten *Pāramitās*. The Ten vows are offering to all the Buddhas, keeping and protecting all the teachings of the Buddhas, asking all the Buddhas to turn the wheel of the dharma, practicing all *Parāmitās* in the Six Characteristics found in everything (whole and part, unity and diversity, entirety and fraction), teaching and guiding sentient beings, seeing and knowing all worlds as exactly the same, purifying the Buddha-lands, attaining all the roots of virtue, benefiting sentient beings, and attaining perfect enlightenment.

(2) In the Stage of Spotless Purity, the Bodhisattva practices Ten Good Deeds and gets rid of all defilements of delusion by especially practicing the Perfection of Ethics. The Ten Good Deeds are no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no lying, no deceiving others, no two tongues, no harsh speech, no craving, no aversion, no delusion.

(3) One who reaches the Stage of Illumination is said to realize the Three Characteristics of Reality: impermanence, bitterness, and selflessness and acquires the light of wisdom by especially practicing the Perfection of Forbearance.

(4) In the Stage of Intense Wisdom, one practices the Thirty-seven Conditions Leading to *Bodhi* and attains an intense wisdom by especially practicing the Perfection of Vigor. The Thirty-seven Conditions Leading to *Bodhi* are the Four States of Memory (contemplating the body as impure, c

contemplating sensations resulting in suffering, contemplating the mind as impermanent, and contemplating things as being without a nature of their own), Four Proper Lines of Exertion (Effort to put an end to existing evil, Effort to prevent evil arising, Effort to bring good into existence, and Effort to develop existing good), Four Steps toward Free Power (Desire, Effort, Memory, Meditation), Five Spiritual Roots (Faith, Effort, Concentration, Meditation, Wisdom), Five Powers (Faith, Effort, Concentration, Meditation, Wisdom), Seven Degrees of Enlightenment (Discrimination of the True from the False, Effort, Delight, Elimination of Obstacles, Abandonment, Meditation, Concentration), and Eightfold Noble Path (Right Views, Right Thoughts, Right Actions, Right Speech, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Concentration, Right Meditation).

(5) In the Stage of Great Triumph, the Bodhisattva practices to harmonize conventional truth with Ultimate Truth, and practices the Four Noble Truths and especially the Perfection of Meditation.

(6) In The Stage of Immediate Presence, one comes to attain all wisdoms of both the ordinary and the transcendental world, by which he realizes the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination (Ignorance, Formation, Consciousness, Name and Form, Six Bases, Touch, Perception, Craving, Clinging, Being, Birth, Old Age and Death), and especially practices the Perfection of Wisdom.

(7) In the Stage of Far-Reaching, the Bodhisattva reaches the magnificent, wide world of truth, and practices all Ten *Pāramitās* as the main practice, and especially the Perfection of Skillful Means.

(8) In the Stage of Steadfastness, the Bodhisattva realizes that all things are beyond birth and decay (*anutpattikadharma-kṣānti*), attains steadfastness and especially practices the Perfection of Vows.

(9) In the Stage of Meritorious Wisdom, the Bodhisattva attains the Four Unobstructed Wisdoms and becomes a great Dharma teacher who practices the Perfection of Power.

(10) In the Stage of the Dharma Clouds, the Bodhisattva can receive all the great rain of the Dharma, and especially practices the Perfection of Knowledge. The sūtra describes the states of Equal Enlightenment and Wondrous Enlightenment resulting from the practices of these Ten Stages.

The Ten *Pāramitās* encompassing not only all the Ten Stage Practices and but also all Bodhisattva practices of every kind are expressed in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* as follows: *Dāna-pāramitā*, *Śīla-pāramitā*, *Kṣānti-pāramitā*, *Virya-pāramitā*, *Dhyāna-pāramitā*, *Prajñā-pāramitā*, *Upāya-pāramitā*, *Pranidhāna-pāramitā*, *Bala-pāramitā*, and *Jñāna-pāramitā* (GVS, T10: 196b).⁴ These terms are often rendered in English thus: Generosity, Ethics, Forbearance, Vigor, Meditation, Wisdom, Skillful Means, Vows, Power, and Knowledge. The Ten Perfecti

⁴ There are somewhat different transliterations of these Ten *Pāramitās* in other parts of the sūtra (T10: 97a-b; 354c; 374c-375a).

ons are a system which encompasses all Bodhisattva practices.

The sūtra often expounds all Ten *Pāramitās* in a coherent system, or sometimes one of them in detail. All the practices of the *Pāramitās* can be summarized as follows (Hae-ju Jeon, 1996):

(1) Bodhisattvas give their good roots of virtue and all their possessions to sentient beings to satisfy their wants, but never cling to this giving. This is called *Dāna-pāramitā*.

(2) Bodhisattvas eliminate all kinds of burnings from delusions, keep the Buddha's precepts without breaking them and without clinging to any idea of keeping precepts, but give up pride. This is called *Śīla-pāramitā*.

(3) Bodhisattvas dwell in the Buddha's Forbearance and, with a compassionate mind, do no harm to living beings, but abstain from all unwholesome acts, and keep an equal and serene attitude toward sentient beings. This is called *Kṣānti-pāramitā*.

(4) Bodhisattvas always practice excellent and beneficent deeds, bravely and not idly but diligently, and no one can prevent them from persevering. Bodhisattvas are never satisfied with their merits. This is *Virya-pāramitā*.

(5) Bodhisattvas see the path of wisdom clearly before them, and by this wisdom can concentrate their minds powerfully, eliminate scattered thoughts, and enter all kinds of *samādhi*. This is *Dhyāna-pāramitā*.

(6) Bodhisattvas contemplate the uncountable things which neither arise nor disappear, and realize the way things and enter the gate of all wisdoms and rest forever. This is *Prajñā-pāramitā*.

(7) Bodhisattvas cultivate their immeasurable wisdom, and when they save sentient beings, they transform their bodies according to sentient beings' tastes and capacities, but the Bodhisattvas are not attached at all to these transformations. This is *Upāya-pāramitā*.

(8) Bodhisattvas endlessly rescue sentient beings, set forth the majestic Buddha-lands, make offerings to all the Buddhas, and realize the mutual interpenetration of all things. Their practices pervade the entire universe and they thereby attain the wisdom of the *Tathāgata*. Thus, Bodhisattvas fulfill the great vow of *Samantabhadra*, so their vows are unshakable. This is *Pranidhāna-pāramitā*.

(9) When Bodhisattvas use their great extraordinary powers (Power of Profound Insight, Power of Profound Faith, Great Power of Eliminating Suffering, Great Power of Producing Happiness, Power of Having All Merits, Power of Eloquence, Power of *Pāramitā*, Power of Great Vows, Extraordinary Power, Power of Blessings) to liberate all sentient beings, neither *Māra* nor all kinds of theories can undo the effects of these powers. This is *Bala-pāramitā*.

(10) Bodhisattvas realize all phenomena as they truly are, and see that the true nature of all sentient beings is the same as the *Tathāgata* and thus realize all the teachings of the Buddhas. This is *Jñāna-pāramitā*.

In order to purify their practices, Bodhisattvas always have to fulfill the ten *Pāramitās*. As they fulfill them, they arrive at the wisdom of the Buddhas principally through compassionate action.

As seen above, the Bodhisattva Path of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* represented by the Ten Stages and Ten *Pāramitās* includes not only all the practices of Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas but also all the fundamental teachings and practices of the early period of Buddhism. These are all encompassed by the Bodhisattva path of the One Vehicle, which opens the world of the Buddhas to us.

III. Faith in Other-Power in Mahāyāna Buddhism

We have seen the Bodhisattva path as described in the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. These three sūtras often teach many different skillful means, all of which are encompassed in the Six or Ten *Pāramitās*. To be a Bodhisattva, one has to seek the enlightenment of sentient beings as well as one's own enlightenment. Thus, while both Bodhisattvas and Hinayānist practice by Self-Power, Bodhisattvas must practice with more dedication than practitioners who exert themselves solely for their own liberation.

Even though from the Bodhisattva's point of view, Bodhisattvas teach and liberate all sentient beings through many different skillful means, still, from the standpoint of sentient beings, they can be liberated from all suffering and attain enlightenment just by faith and by depending on the power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. We can see both the Practice-of-Self-Power and Faith-in-Other-Power through these Bodhisattvas practices of Self-Power. For example, when Bodhisattvas practice the Perfection of Generosity (an example of Self-Power), they give all things, especially the root of virtue, and all these are received by sentient beings as their own possessions (an example of Faith in Other-Power).

This point is shown by the Bodhisattva practice of transforming their bodies according to the needs of the sentient beings. In the *Lotus Sūtra*, there are the examples of Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva and *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva. Also, in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, there are the examples of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva and the Stage of Steadfastness, in which Bodhisattvas transform their ten bodies for the benefit of sentient beings. In this stage, Bodhisattvas perfect the practice of the Perfection of Vows, and are therefore able to transform their bodies into various forms according to the needs of sentient beings. The number "ten" means "all," so when the sūtra says Bodhisattvas c

an appear as Ten Buddhas, this means they can become all Buddhas (GVS, T 10: 200a-b).⁵

It is said that the Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva has the extraordinary ability to transform her/his body into various forms, such as a *bhikṣu*, a *bhikṣu nī*, an *upāsaka*, or an *upāsikā* or the body of a Buddha to teach. She/he thereby liberates beings in the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, and all other living beings who suffer.

Moreover, if sentient beings who are in trouble call on *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva with their whole heart, *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva will help them immediately. It is also said that everything sentient beings want will be provided just by calling the name of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva. The Buddha says,

If sentient beings bow and make offerings to *Avalokiteśvara*, their merits will be not useless. Hence, all sentient beings should keep the name of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva in their hearts (SPS, T9: 58b).

Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva often transforms the Bodhisattva's body into a Buddha and appears to the person who is ready to be enlightened by a Buddha, and expounds the Dharma. So the Bodhisattva uses the Thirty-three Bodies to liberate sentient beings. It is thus stressed that people always should keep the name of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva in their hearts and prostrate before the Bodhisattva (SPS, T9: 58b).

In the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, the last chapter of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva appears to *Sudhana* as his twenty-eighth Dharma Teacher and shows the path of great compassion to him, because *Avalokiteśvara* has compassion toward all sentient beings. *Avalokiteśvara* teaches and helps sentient beings with the Four All-Embracing Virtues: generosity, affectionate words, benevolent deeds, and identification of self with others. *Avalokiteśvara* often liberates beings by the transformation of the Bodhisattva's Body of Form. *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva says to *Sudhana*,

You, Good man, I have vowed to liberate all sentient beings by perfecting this practice of great compassionate action: to free them from fears

⁵ The Bodhisattva's transformed bodies that are beneficial for the liberation of sentient beings are the following Bodies: of Any Sentient Being, Land, Karmic Retribution, *Śrāvaka*, *Pratyekabuddha*, Bodhisattva, *Tathāgata*, Wisdom, Reality, and Vast Space. Bodhisattvas also have realized the Ten Bodies of the *Tathāgata*: of *Bodhi*, Vow, Rebirth, Abilities, Marks and Merits, Extraordinary Powers, Volitional Rebirth, Blessed Virtue, Reality, Knowing.

of calamity, threat, confusion, bondage, attacks on their lives, poverty, inability to make a living, ill repute, death, intimidation by the crowd, rebirth in miserable conditions, unknown hardships, darkness, separation from loved ones, living with enemies, physical violence, mental violence, sorrow, and depression. I have undertaken a vow to be a refuge for all beings from all these fears and perils.

I have also undertaken a vow to be a refuge for all beings, who will consequently be released from all fears by remembering me, calling my name, or seeing my body (GVS, T10: 367a-b).

Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, as seen above, eliminates all fears from sentient beings through the Bodhisattva's skillful practice of great compassionate action, then teaches sentient beings to aspire to *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* and never turn away from this aspiration.⁶ The 'Volume of Ten Practices' in the *Avataṅsaka Sūtra* explains the real Bodhisattva practice thusly:

If I do not cause sentient beings to attain Unsurpassed Liberation, but on the contrary, if I attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* first, then it will be an improper thing, for it was not my vow in my former lives. Thus, I will delay my Enlightenment until all sentient beings first attain Unsurpassed Wisdom and Perfect Nirvāṇa.

Because this was my vow, not requested by sentient beings, but determined by myself for their benefit, I have taken this vow as an uninvited guest, so that sentient beings can generate the root of their virtues, and cause them to attain various kinds of wisdom (GVS, T10: 108a).

It is thus quite natural that there are so many cases in which sentient beings rely on Bodhisattvas to become liberated.⁷ The *Avataṅsaka Sūtra* emph

⁶ In present Korean Buddhist Communities, most of the laity believe in *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva, rather than any other Buddha or Bodhisattva, as their own Personal Buddha (the Buddha or Bodhisattva one vows to and on whom one especially relies). The *Thousand Hands Sūtra*, which is the principal chant used in most offering ceremonies, contains the vow of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva to save all sentient beings. This vow is chanted by Buddhists, who take it as their own vow or who want to be relieved from suffering by means of this vow. The most representative vows, the Sixteen Vows, are derived from the *Verse of the Vow of the White Flower Monastery* written by Ŭisang (625-702 C.E.), who was a *Hua-Yen* monk-philosopher in the Silla Dynasty. Even today this vow is chanted by Buddhists as follows: "I vow to be the refuge for people who see my presence and hear my name." Buddhists strongly believe that even if they just listen to the name of *Avalokiteśvara* Bodhisattva or see the presence of *Avalokiteśvara*, they will be liberated from suffering and enlightened.

⁷ Belief in Pure-Lands (especially in the Buddha of the Western Paradise, *Amitābha*) is the main system of belief which depends on the power of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas.

asizes faith because it inspires Bodhisattvas to aspire to *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*:

When Bodhisattvas determine to seek enlightenment,
 This is not without cause, not without conditions;
 Engendering pure faith in the Buddha, Dharma, and *Saṅgha*,
 By this they produce a broad, magnanimous mind.

Faith is the basis of the Path, the mother of virtues,
 Nourishing and growing all good things,
 Cutting away the net of doubt, freeing from the torrent of passion,
 Revealing the unsurpassed road of Nirvāṇa.

Faith is the unspoiled seed of virtue,
 Faith can grow the seed of enlightenment.
 Faith can increase supreme wisdom,
 Faith can reveal all Buddhas (*GVS*, T10: 72b).

In addition, the sūtra explains Ten Kinds of Faith which can never be exhausted (*GVS*, T10: 111b, 292c). The objects of all the Ten Kinds of Faith of Bodhisattvas are the three jewels – the Buddha, the Dharma, and the *Saṅgha* – which are the basis for all practices which produce merits and show the way to enlightenment. Among these three jewels, the power of the Buddha is most stressed in the sūtra, because the power of the Buddha is the greatest of the three. For this reason, Bodhisattvas put their faith in the immeasurable virtues of the Buddha, respect, praise and admire them, make offerings, and finally attain enlightenment.

Those who believed in the teachings of the Buddhas in their past lives have already obtained wisdom and happiness and have become a light to illuminate the ordinary world. If one were to develop faith from hearing of the unlimited power of the Buddha, then he surely will be a Buddha, it is said

as. *Amitābha* was the Dharma-Treasury Bodhisattva who accomplished his forty-eight vows in his past life and built the Western Paradise. The Dharma-Treasury Bodhisattva had taken the vow that, after he attained Unsurpassed Enlightenment, he would be the Buddha who built the Buddha-land in which all sentient beings can live in peace. Finally he became *Amitābha* after he accomplished his forty-eight vows. It is said in the *Sukhāvotī-vyūha Sūtra* that among his vows were the refusal to attain Buddhahood until he had brought all living beings to his Paradise, because he had taken a vow that all sentient beings would attain enlightenment if they were to call on the name of *Amitābha* ten times with all their hearts, even though near death. According to the 'Volume of the Duration of the Life of the *Tathāgata*' in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, one *kalpa* in the world of *Śākyamuni* is equal to a day and a night in *Amitābha*'s land.

And if one believes today in the teachings of the Buddha, he will be perfectly enlightened, and will not hesitate to spread the teachings of the Buddha (GVS, T10: 100c-101a).

The sūtra gives the vow to see the Buddha as follows:

I would rather suffer the pains of hell
While able to hear the name of the Buddha
Than to experience boundless pleasure
Without hearing the name of the Buddha (GVS, T10: 83a).

I would rather be in the unfortunate realms
While always able to hear the name of the Buddha
Than to be reborn in a fortunate realm
Without hearing the name of the Buddha,
even for a short time (GVS, T10: 326c).

When sentient beings have this strong faith, the Buddhas remember and protect them, and they are able to be reborn in the house of the *Tathāgata*.

The forty-volume version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, called *The Book of the Great Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra*, compiled much later, says,

When my life is almost at an end,
May I remove all obstacles
May I see *Amitābha* Buddha face to face
And be reborn in the Land of Bliss (ASS, T10: 848a).

The Land of Bliss of *Amitābha* Buddha is another name for the World of the Treasury of Flowers that had been built by *Vairocana* Buddha in the Buddha's incarnation as *Amitābha*.⁸

As we have seen above, various kinds of Buddhist worship are presented in the sūtras. In the *Diamond Sūtra* worship of *stūpas* and of the Body of Form was rejected in favor of the Body of Dharma. In the *Lotus Sūtra*, *stūpa* worship was revived. In the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, we find all of these forms of worship. Through the power of the Buddha's vows in His previous life, the Buddha appears as Bodhisattvas and liberates all sentient beings by skillful

⁸ This point is shown by the fact that, like the monasteries of the *Hwa-ōm* mountains that had been established by Ŭisang (625-702 C.E.), the founder of Korean *Hwa-ōm* (*Hua-yen*) tradition, and his disciples, *Pusōk-sa*, the home monastery of Korean *Hwa-ōm* tradition, and many other temples enshrine *Amitābha* Buddha in the main hall.

We see the skillful means of the *Hwa-ōm* tradition for sentient beings in the *Verse of the Vow of the White Flower Monastery* (Paekhwa-Toryang-Palwōn-mun) and the *Verse of the One-Vehicle Vow* (Ilsūng-Palwōn-mun), both written by Ŭisang.

means. If sentient beings believe deeply and rely on this power and on the vows of the Buddha, they then can be liberated and be reborn in the family of the Buddha and in the lands of the Buddha.

IV. The Bodhisattva Path of One Vehicle: Non-duality of Self and Others

Up to this point, I have considered the Practice-of-Self-Power and Faith-in-Other-Power. Now I will show that these two paths are not really completely different, separate paths. We could have anticipated this conclusion from our earlier statement that both paths can be seen in the Bodhisattva practices of Self-Power.

The *Ekayāna* sūtras give many examples of the non-duality of the Practice-of-Self-Power (skillful means practiced by Bodhisattvas) and Faith-in-Other-Power (ways for sentient beings to attain liberation). The Parable of the Burning House and the Chapter of the Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva in the *Lotus Sūtra* will supply one example for this:

O *Śāriputra!* Although that affluent man had physical strength, he did not use it. He only earnestly employed skillful means to save his children from the disaster of the burning house, and later he gave each of them a large cart made out of precious treasures. The *Tathāgata* is exactly like this.

Although the *Tathāgata* has power and fearlessness He does not use them, but rescues sentient beings from the burning house of the triple world only through wisdom and skillful means, teaching the three vehicles : *śrāvaka*, *pratyekabuddha* and Buddha (SPS, T9: 13b).

World-Honored One! My ability to transform my body comes from your powers, your extraordinary powers, your merits, and your wisdom (SPS, T9: 55b).

Wondrous-Voice Bodhisattva voluntarily transforms the Bodhisattva's body into various forms to liberate sentient beings, even though they do not ask him to. However, it is said that these transformations are by the power of the *Tathāgata* or by the wisdom of the *Tathāgata*.

It is easily seen in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* that the practices of Bodhisattvas to liberate sentient beings are due to the power of the Buddha. The teaching of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* is first set forth by the wonderful light of Vairocana Buddha, who in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* is the Interfusion of the Three Buddhas.

has, and is the principal Buddha of the *Hua-yen* tradition. Each of *Vairocana* Buddha's teachings are then explained again by Bodhisattvas as Dharma teachers. To show the practices and character of the *Hua-yen* Bodhisattvas as Dharma teachers, I present the following table, which also gives the location, Dharma teacher, and main topics for each section of the eighty-volume version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*:⁹

9 Assemblies	7 Locations	39 Chpt.	Bodhisattva Dharma Teacher	Topic	Divisions by Teacher	Divisions by Path
1 st	Dharma Hall (Bodhi-Tree)	6	Samantabhadra	The State of the Actuality of the Buddha's Enlightenment	Samantabhadra Teachings	Buddha (Enlightenment)
2 nd	Hall of Universal Light	6	Mañjuśrī	Faith	Mañjuśrī Teachings	Sentient Beings (Faith)
3 rd	Sumeru Heaven	6	Dharma-Wisdom	Ten Abodes		
4 th	Suyama Heaven	4	Merit-Forest	Ten Practices	Ten-Stage	Bodhi-sattva (Practices)
5 th	Tuṣita Heaven	3	Vajraketu	Ten Dedications	Teachings	
6 th	Īśvara Deva Heaven	1	Vajragarbha	Ten Stages		
7 th	Hall of Universal Light	11	Samantabhadra (usually)	Equal and Wondrous Enlightenment	Samantabhadra	Buddha
8 th	Hall of Universal Light	1	Samantabhadra	Wondrous Enlightenment (All Bodhisattva's Acts)	Teachings	(Enlightenment)
9 th	Jeta Grove	1	53 Dharma Teachers (Mañjuśrī up to Samantabhadra) to Sudhana-śreṣṭhi-dāraka	Gates of Liberation	Mañjuśrī up to Samantabhadra Teachings	All

As seen in the Table, the eighty-volume version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* consists of thirty-nine chapters in eighty fascicles, which describes nine assemblies held in seven different locations. The first eight assemblies in the sū

⁹ For the textual structure of sixty-volume version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, see Hae-ju Jeon(1993: 22-24).

tra are sometimes called the first part of the sūtra, as distinguished from the last part of the sūtra, which describes the ninth assembly and is called the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*. This *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* is further divided into a main, first part, in which the Buddha speaks, and a subsidiary, second part, which is the story of *Sudhana*.

The first part of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* can be divided into three divisions by considering location, Bodhisattva Dharma teacher, and topic: (1) the group of *Samantabhadra's* teachings in which *Samantabhadra* appears as the main Dharma teacher and expounds the state of the actuality of the Buddha's enlightenment in the Dharma Hall and the state of Equal and Wondrous Enlightenment in the Illumination Hall; (2) the group of *Mañjuśrī's* teachings in which *Mañjuśrī* as the main teacher inspires sentient beings to have faith; and (3) the group of teachings of the Ten Stages which explain the Bodhisattva practices cultivated in the four heavens. The Ten Abodes, Ten Practices, and Ten Dedications are all included in the teachings of the Ten Stages. The Hall of Universal Light is symbolic of the place of enlightenment, which is under the *Bodhi* tree, which is also called the Dharma Hall.

It is important to note that *Mañjuśrī* delivers his teaching to sentient beings about faith in the Hall of Universal Light – the same location in which *Samantabhadra* teaches about the Buddha's enlightenment. From this, we can infer the deep meaning that all sentient beings can become Buddhas because their whole beings are the seeds of the Buddha; furthermore, fundamentally, they are not different from the Buddha. Hence, sentient beings only need to realize their Buddha nature. This is an example of the principle in *Hua-yen* philosophy that cause and effect interpenetrate each other. Here, sentient beings are the cause and Buddhahood is the effect. Because sentient beings are not different from the Buddha, cause and effect are non-dual.

Moreover, this principle can be seen in the aspiration of Bodhisattvas for *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* in the first stage of the Ten Abodes. Through Faith, sentient beings come to aspire to *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* and become Bodhisattvas. At this moment, by realizing they are not fundamentally different from the Buddha, they immediately attain *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. Therefore, this first stage of the Ten Abodes, the Stage of First Aspiration, is not only the stage at which a sentient being becomes a Bodhisattva, but is also the stage in which a Bodhisattva attains *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* (GVS, T10: 89a). Thus, Bodhisattva practices after this stage serve only to adorn the majestic Buddha lands, because they are all altruistic deeds proceeding from *Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. Even though we sometimes consider these Bodhisattva practices to be the causes of enlightenment, we see here that they are

e also the effects of enlightenment. This shows the non-duality of cause and effect in this adorning of the majestic Buddha lands. The sūtra also says,

As is the mind, so is the Buddha;
As the Buddha, so living beings:
Know that Buddha and mind
Are in essence inexhaustible (GVS, T10: 102a).¹⁰

To realize that the mind of all sentient beings is exactly the same as Buddha's mind, which is characterized by wisdom, is called Pure Faith (GVS, T10: 72b). This Pure Faith is unique to the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (Hae-ju Jeon, 1983: 47-55). Those who realize that their minds are not fundamentally different from the Buddha's and aspire to live properly and become Bodhisattvas are already Buddhas. In the Buddha-lands adorned by these Bodhisattva practices, there are no beings that are not Buddha; hence, in the universe of *Hua-yen*, all beings are the manifestations of the *Tathāgata*. This is the fundamental reason why Self-Power and Other-Power are non-dual. These teachings are the unique virtues of *Hua-yen* Bodhisattva practices, and are shown by various paths in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*.

Although the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* teaches that fundamentally the powers of sentient beings, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas are not different, it often speaks as if they were different, but ultimately sentient beings' power and Bodhisattvas' power are the Buddha's power. In the sūtra, each Dharma teacher except *Mañjuśrī* enters a different *samādhi* and, after coming out of the *samādhi*, begins to teach. However, it is said that the Dharma teachers enter these *samādhis* by the extraordinary power of all Buddhas, by the power of the original vow of *Vairocana* Buddha, and by each Bodhisattva's power from planting roots of virtue. For example, in the case of *Samantabhadra's samādhi*:

Good! You are able to enter this all-Buddhas-*Vairocana-Tathāgata*-treasury-Bodhisattva *samādhi*. O disciple of the Buddha, you are able to enter this *samādhi* by the power of all Buddhas everywhere together, the original vow of the illuminating realized one, *Vairocana* Buddha, and your cultivating your own power of vows, which depends on the practices and vows of all Buddhas (GVS, T10: 33a).

¹⁰ In the sixty-volume *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* this verse is;

As is the mind, so is the Buddha;
As the Buddha, so living beings.
Mind, Buddha, and living beings:
These three are not different (T9: 465c).

Because *Samantabhadra* Bodhisattva had completed these vows and practices, *Samantabhadra* was able to attain the power of vows of all Buddhas and enter this *samādhi*. From this *samādhi*, *Samantabhadra* Bodhisattva is able to realize all the wisdom of all Buddhas in the ten directions, and is thus able to explain the world of the Buddha's enlightenment. The people crowded around the Dharma Hall also enter into this *samādhi*, realize wisdom, and thereby become able to understand the Dharma discourse.

Samantabhadra and all the other Bodhisattvas observe the other beings closely through the extraordinary ability of the Buddha and expound to them the teachings of the Buddha.

All these Dharma teachings I shall fully expound
Through the extraordinary power of the Buddha and of all
Tathāgatas (GVS, T10: 34c).

The Dharma talks delivered by Bodhisattvas for sentient beings are all accomplished by the extraordinary power of the Buddha, and all these adornments are also attributed to the extraordinary power of the Buddha. The extraordinary powers of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas come from *Vairocana* Buddha. Being able to perceive everything is also due to the extraordinary powers of all Buddhas (GVS, T10: 36a).

Furthermore, Bodhisattva practices to cultivate sentient beings and the resultant cultivation are all accomplished by the powers of the Buddhas.

By the power of the vow of *Samantabhadra* Bodhisattva
In all worlds of the Buddhas,
He cultivated innumerable practices
Purifying oceans of worlds.

As by the light of the sun
We can see the solar orb,
By the light of the Buddha's wisdom
I see the path the Buddha traveled (GVS, T10: 56a).

Just as a clear eye
Can see colors due to the sun,
So too can a pure mind
See the *Tathāgata* by the Buddha's power (GVS, T10: 122a).

It is by the blessings of the Buddha that Bodhisattvas liberate all sentient beings in the ten directions. It is also by the power of the Buddha that Bodhisattvas generate their *Bodhi*-mind and became Bodhisattvas. Due to the

power of *Vairocana's* vow and the extraordinary powers of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas take their vows and perfect their compassion and wisdom and practice to liberate sentient beings.

The Bodhisattva's offerings, praise, and respect for the *Tathāgata* are practiced without clinging, which is living the incomprehensible Dharma (*GVS*, T10: 105c). The merits of faith and making offerings to the Buddha are immeasurable, just as a fire as small as a mustard seed can burn down a heap of hay as large as Mount *Sumeru* (*GVS*, T10: 278a). In the same way, however small the merit of making offerings to the Buddha, it will be enough to burn through all defilements and allow people to attain *Nirvāṇa* and be reborn in the *Tathāgata's* family.

Beings who gather at the *Hua-yen* assembly of *Vairocana* Buddha had nourished their roots of virtue together with *Vairocana Tathāgata* in their former lives, and had practiced Bodhisattva deeds and had been reborn in the ocean of *Tathāgata's* virtues. They had already accomplished all *Pāramitās*, attained the Buddha's liberation, entered into the place where Buddhas live as they please, and made offerings to the Buddhas. Anywhere that all Buddhas had attained enlightenment, the beings at the assembly always had served the Buddhas and always stayed with them. These beings, due their desire to attend the Buddhas, had perfected their practices according to their vows, and finally reached the Further Shore (*GVS*, T10: 2a).

When they practice generosity,
They should wish that all beings
Be able to relinquish all
With minds free of clinging (*GVS*, T10: 70a).

The true Perfection of Generosity of these Bodhisattvas who accomplished their vows in this way is not merely giving gifts to others, not only generosity with no clinging, but must also lead sentient beings who have faith and receive these gifts to be free from clinging themselves. By not clinging, the one who receives the gift becomes able to be generous to others. This is the test of true *Dāna Pāramitā*. Thus the one who has faith and receives becomes one who gives; the receiver's practice of other-power becomes a donor's practice of self-power when he/she gives to others. Therefore, we say that the merit of true Giving is not different from the merit of true Receiving, and the Practice-of-Self-Power is not different from Faith-in-Other-Power. This view shows the non-duality of Self-Power and Other-Power, which is the non-dual *Ekayāna* Bodhisattva path, as demonstrated by the journey of *Sudhan*

to fifty-three Dharma teachers, one by one, leading to his entering the gate of liberation and finally arriving in the Universe of Dharma.

V. Conclusion

Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas, also called Bodhisattvas of Vows, insist on returning to the spirit of the Buddha's original thought, practice the Six *Pāramitās* by the perfect realization that everything is devoid of intrinsic nature, vow to liberate sentient beings – who are not different from Bodhisattvas – and lead them to Unexcelled, Complete, Perfect Awakening (*Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*). This is explained in the earliest Mahāyāna texts, the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*, which include the *Diamond Sūtra*.

At first, Mahāyāna Buddhists criticized Hīnayāna Buddhists, but later some Mahāyāna Buddhists established a skillful teaching called Returning to the One (*Ekayāna*) by Encompassing the Three (*śrāvaka-yāna*, *pratyeka-buddha-yāna*, and *Bodhisattva-yāna*), by which Hīnayāna Buddhists could be led to Mahāyāna Buddhism. This teaching was first presented in the *Lotus Sūtra*, and is the main idea in that sūtra. In this sūtra, various kinds of Bodhisattva practices are suggested, all of which are, however, encompassed in the One Vehicle. The idea of Encompassing the Three in One is completed in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* by demonstrating innumerable Bodhisattva paths. There is neither Hīnayāna nor Mahāyāna, but only the Bodhisattva Path of One Vehicle, which is established only for the purpose of leading all sentient beings to the Buddha-lands.

This Bodhisattva Path is not the way to attain one's own liberation, but is the way to exert oneself to liberate sentient beings. It stresses altruistic practice to eliminate the sufferings of others, rather than one's own sufferings.

This is based on the realization of *śūnyatā*, particularly in that the Bodhisattva's body is not different from that of the living beings in nature. Consequently, Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas can accept many gifts of material things, but are also able to develop their spiritual natures and cultivate profound merits without clinging to these merits, and so live simply and without waste.

Sentient beings can eliminate their suffering and enter the Buddha-land if they take refuge in the Buddha and the practices and vows of Bodhisattvas. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the extension of the Practice-of-Self-Power from seeking only one's own liberation to the liberation of self and others, leads to Faith-in-Other-Power.

However, it is said in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* that Bodhisattvas' practice for others by Self-Power is also caused by the power of *Vairocana's* vows and

the extraordinary powers of all Buddhas. The sūtra gives as an example that, though the eyes see the sun by their eyesight, it is because of the sunlight that the eyes can see.

If one takes refuge in the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, one will also obtain the power to liberate other beings. When the Bodhisattva practices the Perfection of Generosity, if it deserves to be called the Perfection of Generosity, the beings who received the Bodhisattva's roots of virtue and possessions must cultivate their aspiration again to help other living beings. When one Bodhisattva practices the Perfection of Generosity by giving, the one who receives the gift can become a Bodhisattva as well, and can go on to practice the Perfection of Generosity again.

The reason for this is that all sentient beings fundamentally have limitless capacities, like Buddhas; moreover, they are not different from the Buddha in nature. All beings are just the presence of the *Tathāgata*, because of their innate Buddha nature. Bodhisattvas are beings who try to realize this limitless capacity by the extraordinary power of the Buddhas, and, by their practice, lead all sentient beings to aspire to be Bodhisattvas.

Thus, the extraordinary power of the Buddhas is fundamentally the limitless innate capacity of sentient beings, and Bodhisattvas who practice Bodhisattva deeds by the extraordinary power of the Buddhas are sentient beings who live in their true nature. The process by which sentient beings are cultivated by the practice of Bodhisattvas can also be said to be the process by which sentient beings actualize their latent potential by themselves in their lives. Bodhisattva practices are the adorning of the majestic Buddha lands. Sentient beings who live in their true nature are not fundamentally different from the Buddha. Hence, Bodhisattva practice is the same as the true lives of sentient beings. This is the non-dual Bodhisattva Path, in which Self-Power is Other-Power and Practice is Faith.

Glossary of Chinese Terms

* Notes: K=Korean J=Japanese

- Chin-kang-pan-je-po-lo-mi-to ching 金剛般若波羅蜜多經
 Ch'önsu-gyöng(K) 千手經
 Daijō-bukkyō-seiritsuron-sho-setsu(J) 大乘佛教成立論序說
 Hae-ju Jeon(K) 全海住
 Hirakawa, Akira(J) 平川彰
 Hwa-öm-gyöng(K) 華嚴經
 Hwa-öm-hak kaesöl(K) 華嚴學概說
 Ilsüng-Palwön-mun(K) 一乘發願文
 Kisin-ron-so(K) 起論疏
 Koza Daijō bukkyō(J) 講坐大乘佛教
 Miao-fa-lien-hwas ching 妙法蓮華經
 Paekhwa-Toryang-Palwön-mun(K) 白花園發願文
 Palborisim(K) 發菩提心
 Posaldo(K) 菩薩道
 Sagyo-kwa(K) 四教科
 Su-üi-kwa 隨意科
 Süngga-Taehak(K) 僧伽大學
 T'aegong-Wölju- Hwagap-Nonch'ong(K) 泰空月珠華甲論 叢
 Ta-fang-kwang-fo-hua-yen ching 大方廣佛華嚴經
 Ta-sheng Qixin-lun 大乘起論
 Taegyo-kwa(K) 大教科
 Taishō Shinshu Daizo kyo(J) 大正新修大藏經
 Tao-hsing-pan-je-ching 道行般若經
 Ŭisang Hwa-öm Sasangsa yön-gu(K) 義相華嚴思想史研究
 Ŭisang(K) 義相
 Wönhyo(K) 元曉
 Wu-liang-shou-ching 無量壽經
 Yamada, Ryujou(J) 山田龍城

Abbreviation

- T. *Taishō Shinshu Daizokyo*
 K. *Korean Buddhism Collection*
 APS. *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā Sūtra*
 GVS. *Mahā Vaipulya Buddha Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*

SPS. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*
 VPPS. *Vajracchedikā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra*

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(Chin-kang-pan-je-po-lo-mi-to ching; *Diamond Sūtra*), translated by Kumārajīva. T8.
- Thousand Hands Sūtra* (Ch'önsu-gyöng).
- Ta-sheng Qixin-lun of Aśvaghōṣa translated by Kumārajīva. T32.
- Kisin-ron-so* of Wōnhyo. K1.
- Paekhwa-Toryang-Palwōn-mun* of Ŭisang. K2.
- Ilśung-Palwōn-mun* of Ŭisang. K2.

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