CONCLUSION

So we have reached the end of a historic journey, transcending time and space, of the Indian symbol--Avalokiteśvara-- from its birth place (India) to the land of its primacy (China), from a legendary symbol to a deity living in millions and hundreds of millions of the Eastern minds, and from its manhood to its feminine manifestation. This multi-dimensional transformation has rolled like a snowball, gathering along the road of its development, symbols and attributes of many other legends and literature, some even far removed from Mahayanism.

The foregoing pages have displayed an exercise of some complexity. It has been an exercise of holistic approach, combing the studies in textual tradition and visual tradition. In tackling a topic which amounts to a double track synchronic and diachronic analyses of the expansion and metamorphosis of a popular symbol--Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin-- visual tools are more effective than textual. The only approach that I can make this study is in the form of an illustrated discourse, or resort to the multimedia networking, which would produce a better effect, perhaps, than what has been produced in this volume so far.

Avalokiteśvara was destined from its birth to attain
a unique position in the pantheon of India and other countries. The arrival of Avalokiteśvara in ancient India symbolized the richness and maturity of Indian iconography. While the Indian tradition was fed by the holistic perspective, the working of algebraic methods is easily detectable. Avalokiteśvara was just an X or a Y among many such Xs and Ys. It was this algebraic mode of production which enabled the visual-symbol creators to proceed on an unending course of creation. Such an algebraic rhythm also facilitated the transcendence of the attributes of the deities from one personality to another. What I am saying is that God, according to ancient attitude, might choose to appear as Vishnu, or Siva or Buddha, or Avalokiteśvara etc-- as X or Y in short. In this way, Avalokiteśvara as X can easily associate himself with Y or a variation of Y. This explains the ease in which many experts (Dr. Lokesh Chandra) associate Avalokiteśvara with the Hindu deities, particularly Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The popularity of Avalokiteśvara after birth was due to his conception--particularly his personification of karuṇā (compassion) and as Prajñā (wisdom). While wisdom makes him close to human minds, compassion makes him close to human hearts. As all other deities have, more or less, a measure of these two qualities, Avalokiteśvara's being par excellence in this, makes him easier to assimilate the attributes of other deities than religious boundaries to embrace the attributes of the
Brahmanical deities: Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahma—as if the Hindu trinity were merged into the entity of Avalokiteśvara. He became, thus, the most powerful of all spiritual powers, the father and mother of all. This had actually happened before the symbol took its China trip.

In its journey to China, the Buddhist pantheon initially adopted symbols of Indian origin in the iconic representations. Many of the depictions of Guanyin until the Sui, followed the Indian prototypes. The early representations of the Bodhisattva in China were based on the Indian tradition—he is shown in a triad as one of the two attendants of the Buddha. The other attendant could be either Vajrapāṇi or Mahāsthāmaprāpta. When the Saddharmapundarīka became the most popular Mahayana text in China, the importance of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara/Guanyin also was on the rise. The chapter on Avalokiteśvara came to be treated as a separate sutra. Depictions of Guanyin as the "Saviour from perils" was a common theme. No longer were the Jataka tales an integral part of the composition. The fact that there were many illustrations of the Pumen pin in most of the caves of Dunhuang is proof of the people's faith in a super natural being, who would respond to their cries for help. This was the first deviation from the original Indian tradition. In the country of origin, the Bodhisattva was not depicted as superior to the Buddha, whereas in China this was what was happening as more and
more Guanyin images were made. With the decline of Buddhism, in India Avalokitesvara was regarded as one among the many deities in the Buddhist pantheon. But in Nepal and Tibet and more so in the latter, he was looked upon as the tutelary god. From Tang onwards, other characteristics appeared some of which were purely Chinese. The Song Dynasty witnessed a multiplicity of Guanyin images. The depictions also moved away from strict canonical texts and completely sinicized forms emerged. The introduction of Water and Moon depictions of Guanyin is one such example which indicated absorption and assimilation. Another feature was the introduction of symbols of yin-yang binary (for example, woman, moon, water etc). The assimilation and reorganization process was by then complete. Thus Guanyin in the course of Chinese history assimilated the magical powers and attributes of existing indigenous divinities and such a changeover took place without any tension in the then prevailing social, cultural or religious order.

The transformation of Guanyin into a female form should be seen in the overall context of Sinicization. These transformations were not restricted to Guanyin alone. Maitreya was transformed into a totally new form of a "laughing Buddha", a practice still prevalent in
China and Southeast Asia. These developed perhaps, to fit in with certain prevailing ideals then dear to the Chinese, like having an offspring, prosperity etc.

The images of Avalokiteśvara in India are not feminine, although the body has a sensual form similar to the Hindu gods like Śiva, Viṣṇu or Viṣṇu's incarnations like Ram. The well known painting of Padmapani in Cave No.1 of Ajanta no doubt has a sensuous body, but taken as a whole, looks a male Bodhisattva. The paintings of the famous artist Ravi Varma, do not show Hindu Gods as strongly masculine. Essential features of manliness like muscles, broad shoulders are present but there is a touch of conspicuous feminine quality in the images.

In the initial stages when Buddhism started gaining entry in China, no clear distinction was made in the representation of Bodhisattvas. All of them looked alike. It was only in Northern Zhou that certain symbols started appearing in the hands of the Bodhisattvas.

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1 Kenneth K.S.Chen in his book on *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* says that Maitreya became an important figure only when he was introduced in China and his popularity may be gauged by the large number of his images in Yungang and Longmen caves of fifth and sixth centuries. In the seventh century the cult declined, only to reappear again in the thirteenth century as a fat pot-bellied laughing image, said to be based on the legends surrounding the life of a tenth century Chinese monk with a wrinkled forehead and a mountainous belly. His image is seen with a bevy of children all over him and according to Chen it denotes a large family, an ideal sought after by the Chinese.

2 Charles Eliot in *Hinduism and Buddhism* says that Avalokiteśvara is not a mere adaptation of any one Hindu God. Some of the attributes are also that of Brahma. Like Vishnu he holds a lotus. Like Śiva he has the name of ‘Isvara’.
Gradually Sinicization set in with new attributes. Changes were also observed in the looks of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The Bodhisattvas who were initially dressed in dhotis began to lose their manly attire and were dressed in something resembling a skirt. Perhaps this created confusion in the minds of some scholars who could not appreciate the difference between the dhoti and a skirt. Their bare upper torsos were also covered by shawls adding to their feminine mien. Jatāmukuta gave place to a topknot chignon. A typical Guanyin like the Shuiyue Guanyin which is feminine in form is purely a Chinese phenomenon and as such is not seen or known in India from where the concept of Avalokiteśvara originated.¹

Many scholars have sought to prove that Pāndaravāsinī (white clad) was the precursor to the White-Robed Guanyin and have thus tried to explain the feminization of Avalokiteśvara into Guanyin in China. There is also the suggestion of transformation of Tārā into Guanyin. If we look at the occurrence of Tārā, it will be observed that Tārā has also been an independent entity and not necessarily as a consort to Avalokiteśvara. Certain images of Tara are even seen with thousand arms and thousand eyes as in the case of Avalokiteśvara. My study from an iconographic angle,

¹ Diana Paul has expressed certain reservations on this point and says that some forms would have been present. This is however not substantiated by any specific Indian image found in India or abroad.
does not show any evidence of Tārā being transformed into female Guanyin in China or that Pāndaravāsini is actually the Guanyin in white robes. Absence of intermediate figures in space and time indicative of a gradual evolution from Tārā or Pāndaravāsini into the feminine Guanyin in China is perhaps the strongest evidence against such hypothesis. An important aspect that negates the above theory is that the emergence of "White-Robed Guanyin" in China was after a gap of four to five centuries of the appearance of Tara in India. If the colour white symbolized purity, Guanyin could have been shown dressed in white, holding a white lotus seated or standing on a white lotus base. This was not the case and there was no need for sexual transformation either.

There is no gainsaying of the course of gradualism in Avalokiteśvara’s journey towards the feminine goddess Guanyin. Therefore the general view that the Guanyin figures have been shown with definite masculine features upto the Tang period only seems to be a little arbitrary than logical. One example of many that goes against this view is the rare image of Guanyin with a small beard and moustache of sixteenth century, Ming Dynasty seen in Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Budapest, Hungary. But it should at once be clarified that a large number of Guanyin images from Tang onwards were

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positively female forms.\footnote{Many of the functioning Guanyin temples now, have definite female forms. A typical image is one fully clothed in the form of a robe with a distinct smile on the face showing benevolence and compassion. This kind of image is seen in many places besides China. I had the opportunity of seeing such images in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Jakarta.}

In this iconographic study, I have come across many forms which can be termed as "androgy nous", not coming within the category of either male or female. These figures are not restricted to any particular period, but they could be termed as "dominant" after the Tang period. From the visual point of view, the figures cannot be called asexual although, in mental perception they could have been thought of as asexual. Asexuality cannot be ascribed or visualized when the gods and goddesses in the Buddhist pantheon were given anthropomorphic forms as in the case of gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon from where the inspiration was taken.

Guanyin images had undergone considerable expansion and multiplication in China and have gone beyond the boundaries of Buddhism. The deity was no longer an exclusive Buddhist religious symbol but had become a popular cultural hero/heroine to both Buddhists and non Buddhists. This took place in China when organized Buddhism was on the decline. Buddhist influence spread to other non Buddhist realms in the daily life and culture of the Chinese though the period cannot be specified. Therefore the multiple images of Guanyin should be seen as the post Buddhist symbol which was
definitely feminine with many additional attributes.

The Chinese political tradition was always secular with the co-existence of different religious beliefs even during the reign of Empress Wu. Buddhism was never a state religion in China and its patronage varied from ruler to ruler with different degrees of control. Any order by any sect needed the approval or sanction of the government. Different rulers passed different orders, for each emperor was influenced by vested interests, resulting in a struggle for supremacy mainly between the Taoist and Buddhist priests.

Buddhism could not be abolished in spite of the three anti-Buddhist waves. Had these waves taken place in quick succession, it could have caused irreparable damage to Buddhism and Buddhist art. The support given by Empress Wu to the religion helped in a way in its revival after the first two anti Buddhist waves. It was during her time that a large number of caves were hewn and many statues of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas sculpted. Directly she promoted herself as a compassionate Bodhisattva and indirectly the religion. It could be safely said that the transformation of Guanyin to a female deity gained momentum during her time. But it was from Song onwards that the transformation process accelerated to a great extent that Guanyin came to be accepted universally as a goddess. Many legends and folklore helped in popularising the goddess. The story of Taoyi's discovery of a piece of fragrant wood floating
in the water near South Wutai mountain led to the first occurrence of Baiyi Guanyin and the upper Tianzhu monastery in Hangzhou undergoing a major revival. The White-robed Guanyin enjoyed widespread popularity from the tenth century. Paintings and statues, tales and myths of Guanyin temples from Northern Song (960-1127) were proof of the importance of the White-robed Guanyin and the emergence of Putuo shan as a famous Guanyin site.

As Buddhism took deep roots in a foreign soil, so did the concept of Avalokiteśvara/Guanyin. There was a gradual change in the style of Bodhisattvas. True that the Confucian tradition did not permit the exposure of female anatomy, but it did not prevent the artists from creating more and more feminine forms of the Bodhisattvas. The patrons could not have objected to beautiful forms but perhaps their ego prevented them from accepting a completely feminine figure. Hence the addition of a tendril like moustache and beard in all the representations of the Bodhisattvas irrespective of whether it was a mural or a statue. But it was not the same case throughout the country. As has been pointed out earlier especially in statues of Dazu Caves, the same male attributes were absent which perhaps enhanced the beauty of the images.

Along with this development, there were the tantric forms of Guanyin, the major ones being- Shiyimian Guanyin-Ekādaśamukha Avalokiteśvara or the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, Qianshou qianyan Guanyin-Sahasra-bhuja.
sahasra-netra Avalokiteśvara or the thousand-armed and thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara, Ruiyilun Guanyin- the Cintāmani-cakra Avalokiteśvara, the Bukong juansuo Guanyin-Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara. Of the four it was the Ruiyilun Guanyin which looked most feminine. Perhaps they let it remain, for there are not many depictions of the tantric forms of Guanyin. What is surprising is that when Tantric Buddhism was introduced in China, Tara the lovable and the most beloved of the Buddhist goddesses was never represented anywhere in any of the caves of China. It is possible that as Guanyin had assimilated all the functions of Taoist as well as Buddhist goddesses there was no need to include the lovely Tara in the Buddhist pantheon of China.

Personification of spiritual cults was more an Indian practice than a Chinese one. When Buddhism particularly Mahāyānism was introduced into China, the followers were faced with a bewildering variety symbols to choose from. The necessity to have a personal deity to be invoked at the time of adversities soon followed. In this Avalokiteśvara, the all powerful one had universal appeal and was most popular. The exclusive chapter on the prowess of Avalokiteśvara in Saddharmapuṇḍarīka was inspiring. Invoking Guanyin for getting children particularly male issues, saving from perils, relief from social problems women faced and various legends which showed Guanyin as the “saviour” must have contributed to the universal appeal.
Importation of feminity to the deity appears to be thus a Chinese wish to meet the social functions of the society.

In the words of Su Dengpo who was asked by his youngest son whether the words of the sutra were true or false, he replied—"The words of the Sutras are neither true or false. It depends on what I want to see for myself. All things (dharma) are one and the same. If I have insight, fable is truth. If I have not, both truth and fable are false."

From Avalokiteśvara to Guanyin, the journey has taken us to a review of not only the rich imagination of the ancients of India and China, but also to the experiencing of purposiveness of culture and religiosity of the two great civilizations. It is not for nothing that the sophistry of idol-worship has been so elaborately done in painting, sculpture, and stucco at Dunhuang and other sites of Chinese Buddhist monuments. What the deity Avalokiteśvara or Guanyin or any other personification as revealed to the Chinese masses is the new imaginary cosmologic realm of noble ideas, and rich fantasies. The Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin visual magnificence has greatly enriched the Chinese tradition of culture and art.

It is this cultural phenomenon which brings a new dimension to this dissertation. I have been dealing with an intercultural synergy in which Avalokiteśvara plays a pivotal role. The inevitable two-way traffic in cultural intercourse between India and China predetermines the
externalization and internalization of the
Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin metamorphosis as mentioned in the
foregoing pages.

From a holistic perspective all gods can be uni-sex, bi-sex, or mono-sex (either male or female) which need not be approached from the Gongsunzi's logic of "A white horse being not a horse" (baima fei ma). However, as so much academic attention has been focussed on the sex-transformation of Avalokiteśvara in his domestication in China, I cannot but devote space to discuss it, lest my study of Avalokiteśvara should be construed as having a serious omission.

From this starting point, I must point out that the sex distribution in iconography is an unconscious reflection of gender relationship among the humans. A general observation can always be made in this regard that the heavenly pantheon is as male chauvinistic as the human society. Then, the appearance of any female deity in the cultural tradition of any nation should reflect a feminine awakening or assertion in the corresponding social milieu.

It is true that in ancient China there were only a few female deities before the advent of Guanyin. But, the Chinese belief in the symbiosis of yin and yang and their mutual transformation has provided a basis of sex-transformation (what differs between the male and female is the dominance of yang in the case of the former, and yin in the case of the latter). From time immemorial
there has been the popular Chinese belief in the inevitable growth of *yang* at the expense of *yin* and vice versa. Today, as most of the gold medals China wins in international sports competitions are bagged by women not men, people are talking about *yin sheng yang shuai* (With yin blooming yang is in a state of decay). The same *yin sheng yang shuai* phenomenon could happen in historical times as well. The prominent case was when the Lady Wu Zetian became the unprecedented Chinese "Son of Heaven" (reigning empress) which I have discussed in a whole chapter. I cannot think that without this *yin sheng yang shuai* phenomenon which created the era of Empress Wu, a female form of Avalokiteśvara would have spread widely in space and time. Then, how so ever male chauvinistic the Chinese society might be, there was this *yin-yang* binary in the Chinese cultural foundation for the deity Avalokiteśvara to assume a female gender. I have said in so many words explicitly and implicitly that the phenomenon of Empress Wu and that of the feminine Guanyin were two sides of the same coin, as it were.

Another evidence about this Empress Wu-Guanyin linkage lies in the fact that it was the emergence of the Empress that has led to the gender transformation of the Chinese tribute of *ci* (compassionate and kind) from the person of father to that of mother. One of the first usage of this tribute for mother was the new monastery which Empress Gaozong built in capital Chang'an for the famous pilgrim Xuanzang after the latter returned to
China from India. This monastery was christened cien si (Monastery in memory of the compassionate mother) for Gaozong's late mother. As we know, Empress Wu had a tight rein over her imperial husband throughout, and this name would not have been chosen without her initiative. In other words, it was the contribution of Empress Wu (and others), that whereas earlier the attribute "ci" was for father only, afterwards the Chinese word "cifu" (compassionate father) virtually disappeared from Chinese dictionary. Contrary to this disappearance, the currency of "cimu" (compassionate mother) and "cixun" (compassionate teachings from mother, not father) began feminized during the Tang Dynasty thanks to, I think, Empress Wu's efforts- and the Empress had her own vested interest in gender-transforming "ci".

As I have spelt out in the chapter on Empress Wu, this lady had tried her best to employ symbols and fantasies from Buddhist sources to justify her usurpation of the chair which was exclusively reserved for male— that of the Son of Heaven, i.e., the emperor of China. The Chinese tradition was very particular about "zhengming" (doing things with a proper name/justification). She was desperately looking for an image which could make her up as a lady sent down by Heaven to rule China as an exception. Her utilization and popularization of Dayun jing was because there was a reference of a woman destined to become a ruler in the sutra already dealt with in Chapter 3.
I think it extremely important to take note of this urge of Empress Wu for our enquiry into the gender transformation of Avalokiteśvara. Here was a lady who had wrought an unprecedented social revolution in China—who had, during her life time, transformed the gender of the age-old Chinese image of the "Son of Heaven" from male into female. If such a thing could happen, what else could not?! Another point to note is, as I had just alluded to, was the ideal image in Wu Zetian's quest which should contain two essential elements: Bodhisattva and female. For the Bodhisattva image Avalokiteśvara fitted perfectly. But, from the Indian references it was difficult for her to associate Avalokiteśvara with the female gender--albeit, as I have suggested earlier, there was some ambiguity, at least there was no rigid consciousness in ancient times, about the undesirability of giving a feminine touch to a Bodhisattva. Then, there was another dimension of Empress Wu's image as "shengmu" (holy mother) which was not totally unrelated to the influence of Buddhism and the Tang Dynasty assimilation of Indian cultural quintessence. It was as if a Bodhisattva image (typified by that of Avalokiteśvara) and the image of shengmu had the convergence in the personality of the Empress. This convergence laid the foundation for the gender transformation of Avalokiteśvara on a large scale. I think it did.

My search light, therefore has projected on the course of Avalokiteśvara's gender transformation. I see
the clear contours of this course, and I have tried my best to chalk out its contours. Taken as whole, the Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin transformation was the landmark of a saga that has united the wisdom and imagination of two great civilizations--of India and China. The form Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin course has not deviated from the original purpose of the creators of Buddhism, of the Bodhisattva tradition, and of Avalokiteśvara. It is a historical course which has expanded the mass base of the cult of compassion across the international boundaries of India to the faraway “Far East”--making the deity the most beloved and popular symbol of humankind, particularly in time of personal crisis and suffering of the Asian masses.

From such a perspective it can be said that Avalokiteśvara’s assuming a feminine personality while being called Guanyin is a very logical development in the Asian context. Dr. Lokesh Chandra, who has all along taken a keen interest in the study of Guanyin, made a very insightful observation during the First Seminar on “India and China: Looking at each other” organized by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in New Delhi on November 15-18, 1995. He said that as Avalokiteśvara/Guanyin was the personification of compassion, the deity was logically considered a goddess, as compassion was regarded as a feminine quality in Chinese culture. As I have mentioned earlier, there was a close connection between Chinese culture’s assigning
the attribute of "ci" (compassion) to mother and the rise of Empress Wu. This all the more strengthens the relevance of the Empress with the course of Avalokiteśvara's journey in Chinese cultural development.

Before I close I feel that I am just at the beginning of an enquiry which is so fascinating, intriguing and complex. Personally, I am pious, and take sanctimony with all seriousness and sincerity. I see a lot of meaning and worthwhile energy in the development of Guanyin in East Asia—particularly China. That is why I have taken up this topic, and would follow up all these efforts which I have taken up this far, for the general good of scholarship and interdisciplinary studies. But, even from the viewpoint of historical materialism one cannot say that such a study borders on obscurantism. We all know that the humans started to bypass god to look into the inner rhythms of nature and matter only a few centuries ago. Before scientific pursuits could bypass god, humans had to live in the realm in which the writ of supernatural power ran supreme. Yet, to dismiss all this as superstition is to ignore the course of gradualism in evolution. Moreover, exercise in spiritual speculation is not always a negative thing. Today, we see clearly the absence of spiritual culture in the western societies where the advancement of materialism has almost gone amuck. Scientists today who can destroy the entire globe if they wish, cannot destroy the virus of AIDS—a tiny living organism. But where these family systems are
healthily maintained and morality upheld, the AIDS virus fails to gain an entry. In other words, morality and family tradition are the best cure for AIDS. Sagacious western intellectuals have already seen the beacon of Eastern spiritual values to the rescue of Western social decadence and AIDS. Thus, the study of Avalokiteśvara-Guanyin binary not only cannot be dismissed as an indulgence in superstition and obscurantism, but should also call for academic respect and even promote futuristic value for the good of the humanity.

To look back, Guanyin, perhaps more than her Indian version of Avalokiteśvara has, in the last one thousand years or more, inspired hundreds of millions of Chinese and other Asians in life. That explains why when you go to the remote places of China (whether in the east or west or north or south) you find Guanyin and hypo Guanyin (those with essential symbols of Guanyin but not being identified as Guanyin) in mist of the local temples-some even without clear Buddhist specifications. Moreover, there exist in China so many "Guanyin miao" (Guanyin temples), Guanyin dong (Guanyin caves), etc in addition to hundreds of geographical names in Chinese map associated either directly with the name Guanyin, or indirectly bearing such names like putuo, luojia etc, which are unmistakable references to the abode of Guanyin, i.e. Potalaka. There is also a famous brand of Chinese tea called Tieguanyin, (Iron Guanyin) which is supposed to have a lot of medicinal and tonic values.
All this demonstrates that the Guanyin legend has not only dominated China's cultural tradition, but also became a part of Chinese environment. If one chooses to ignore this legend all together, one will at once be handicapped while studying Chinese cultural tradition, studying Chinese social and even natural environment.

When we come to the world of art, the presence of Guanyin is even more prominent. First if anyone takes stock of all the historical Chinese artifacts extant today (when one goes to Dunhuang, or the Palace Museum in Beijing, or the East Asian collections of the US or UK museums), the idols of Guanyin stand out as the most numerous. If we ignore Guanyin no fruitful study of Chinese artifacts can be undertaken. Guanyin also forms an important motif in Chinese painting - both in the past and in the present. In ancient and modern Chinese dance, drama, fiction, poetry, there is also frequent reference to Guanyin both as a focal theme and as a general topic.

If we study China's social history, we come across Guanyin as a spiritual guardian-angel for both the Chinese heroes, heroines, and ordinary masses for more than a thousand years; we come across rebel leaders who are blessed by Guanyin to stage earth-shaking revolutions in Chinese history; we come across patriotic desperados (the Boxers at the end of the 19th century is a typical example) fighting external aggressors with fanatic bravery just because they believed that they had enjoyed the blessings of Guanyin. All this makes the study of
Guanyin expand far beyond the realm of iconography into territories of psychology, sociology, politics and history (of course).

In a few years, humankind is entering the third millennium of our common era. When we think of the human future we at once get a dichotomous vision: On the one hand a Brave New World is appearing with the revolution of Information technology in progress, with exciting prospects beckoning us, while, on the other hand, we face the dark and horrifying panorama of ecological destruction, of population explosion, or moral degradation, of war and conflict spreading to cultural and religious arenas, of want, shortage, exhaustion of resources, of hunger and disease, pollution etc. In a sense we are besieged by another dhukha-sagar (Sea of sorrow) and need a new Bodhisattva to ferry us to the yonder shore of peace, prosperity and ecological friendship. Perhaps, the creation of a new Avalokitesvara-Guanyin symbolism or the adaptation of the old symbolism to new human conditions can help us to come out of the global crisis. With such thoughts, I present this study to the academia for examination and scrutiny, and, of course criticism. If this study can create an impact in one way or other, I would have the solace of a fruitful exercise that all the pains, anxiety, sleepless nights, travels and travails, not to mention monetary expenditure are not in vain.
7. Avalokitesvara as Saviour from perils, Kanheri, Cave No. 90.
8. Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara, Kanheri, Cave No. LXVI.
9. Avalokitesvara as door-keeper, Ellora, Cave No. 2.
10. Padmanabha Avalokitesvara, Nalanda, Vihara No. 3.


15. Simhanada Avalokiteśvara, Mahoba District, Bundelkhand.


18. Ashtamahabhaya-Tara, Ratnagiri, now in Patna Museum.

21. Buddha and attending Bodhisattvas, Western Qin, Binglingsi Cave No. 169.
22. Buddha and attending Bodhisattvas, Northern Liang, Jintasi.

23. Detail of Bodhisattva, Northern Liang, Jintasi.

25. Attending Bodhisattva, Northern Wei, Guoyangdong, Longmen, Luoyang.
26. Standing Buddha and attending Bodhisattvas, Northern Wei, Shiyanzhong dong, Longmen, Luoyang.

27. Attending Bodhisattva, Northern Wei, Cave No. 69, Majishan.

29. Attending Bodhisattva, Western Wei, Cave No. 8, Guangyuan huangzasi, Dazu.

30. Attending Bodhisattva, Northern Wei, Cave No. 435, south wall, Dunhuang.
31. Attanding Bodhisattva, Western Wei, Cave No. 432, Central pillar’s east facing niche, Dunhuang.

32. Triad, Northern Zhou, Cave No. 439, west wall, Dunhuang.

33. Triad, Northern Zhou, Cave No. 439, west wall, Dunhuang.
34. Attending Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 416, west wall niche, Dunhuang.

35. Buddha and Bodhisattvas, Sui, Cave No. 427, main hall, south wall, Dunhuang.

36. Buddha and Bodhisattvas, Sui, Cave No. 427, central pillar's east facing side, Dunhuang.
37. Attending Bodhisattvas, Sui, Cave No. 427, Central pillar's west and north facing niches, Dunhuang.

38. Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 420, west wall niche, north side, Dunhuang.
39. Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 420, outside west wall niche, Dunhuang.

40. Guanyin as saviour from peril, Sui, Cave No. 420, south slope, Dunhuang.
41. Attending Bodhisattvas, Sui, Cave No. 425, west wall niche, Dunhuang.

42. Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 278, west wall, Dunhuang.
43. Guanyin, Sui, Cave No. 276, south wall, Dunhuang.

44. Bodhisattvas and donor child, Sui, Cave No. 401, Dunhuang.
45. Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 394, west wall, south side, Dunhuang.

46. Bodhisattva, Sui, Cave No. 394, west wall, north side, Dunhuang.
47. Preaching Scene, Maitreya and Bodhisattvas, Cave No. 390, north wall, Dunhuang.

48. Shengmu, Southern Song, Dazu.
49. Eleven-Headed Guanyin, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, USA.

54. Guanyin, Tang, south wall outside the entrance to Wanfodong, Longmen.
55. Guanyin, Tang, Yuanhongji dong, west wall niche, Longmen.
58. Guanyin, Tang, Cave No. 19.1, Yungang.

59. Guanyin of Pure Water, Early Tang, Cave No. 10, Dazu.
60. Mahasidhramaprapta, Early Tang, Cave No. 10, Dazu.

64. Thousand-armed Guanyin, High Tang, Danlangzheng shan, Dazu.

65. Hariti (Guizimu), High Tang, Cave No. 68, Dazu.
66. Guanyin, Late Tang, Anyue qianfo zhai, Cave No. 56, Dazu.

67. Guanyin, end of Tang, Ruihai niche No. 10, Dazu.
70. Preaching scene, Early Tang, Cave No. 322, east wall above the entrance, Dunhuang.

71. Preaching scene, Early Tang, Cave No. 220, east wall above the entrance.

73. Eleven-Headed Guanyin, Early Tang, Cave No. 334, Dunhuang.
74. Guanyin in the illustration of Amitabha Sutra, Early Tang, Cave No. 71, north wall, Dunhuang.

76. Buddha with two disciples, two Bodhisattvas and two guardians, High Tang, Cave No. 45, Dunhuang.

77. Guanyin Bodhisattva, High Tang, Cave No. 45, Dunhuang.
79. Preaching scene, High Tang, Cave No. 444, south wall, Dunhuang.

80. Bodhisattva, High Tang, Cave No. 320, west wall, Dunhuang.
81. Bodhisattva, High Tang, Cave No. 194, Dunhuang.
82. Bodhisattva, Middle Tang, Cave No. 159, Dunhuang.
83. Preaching scene, Middle Tang, Cave No. 220, Dunhuang.
84. Thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, Late Tang, Cave No. 161, ceiling decoration, Dunhuang.

85. Ruyi Guanyin, Late Tang, Cave No. 14, Dunhuang.
89. Bodhisattva, Song, Cave No. 165, Majishan.

90. Female Attendant, Song, Cave No. 165, Majishan.
91. Baiyi Guanyin, Southern Song, Cave No. 136, Baishan, Dazu.

92. Baiyi Guanyin, Song, Anyue huayan dong, Dazu.
95. Shuyue Guanyin, Northern Song, Cave No. 113, Beishan, Dazu.

96. Rosary in Hand Guanyin, Song, Cave No. 125, Beishan, Dazu.

97. Rosary in Hand Guanyin, Southern Song, Cave No. 136, Beishan, Dazu.
100. Purple Bamboo Guanyin, Southern Song, Anyue pilu dong, Dazu.

101. Ruyue Guanyin, Southern Song, Cave No. 196, Beishan, Dazu.
102. Thousand-Armed Guanyin, Southern Song, Cave No. 8, Baoding shan, Dazu.

103. Hayagriva, Southern Song, Cave No. 22, Dafowan, Dazu.
104. Goddess of fertility, Southern Song, Cave No. 9, Shimen shan, Dazu.

105. Shuiyue Guanyin, Western Xia, Cave No. 237, west wall ante-room, Dunhuang.
109. Guanyin, Northern Song, Longxing temple, Chengling.


111. Guanyin, Padmapani version, 471 AD, British Museum.

112. Guanyin, 485 AD, Padmapani version, Stimson Memorial Collections, Seattle Art Museum, USA.
113. Guanyin, Northern Wei, City Art Museum St. Louis, USA.
114. Guanyin, Northern Wei, Musée Guimet, Paris, France.
Head of Guanyn, Sui, Chauncey McCormick Gallery, Chicago, USA.
119. Hayagriva, 11th century, Kurkihar, Bihar, now in Patna Museum.

120. Hayagriva, Dunhuang scroll, 10th century, Musée Guimet, Paris, France.

121. Hayagriva, Japanese, 1241 AD.
122. Guanyin, Song, University Museum, Philadelphia, USA.

123. Shuiyu Guanyin, Song, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, USA.

124. Shuiyu Guanyin, 11th-12th century, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, USA.
125. Shuiyue Guanyin, Yuan-Ming, Museum fürKunsthandwerk, Frankfurt, Germany.

126. Guanyin, Song, Freer Gallery of Arts, Washington, USA.


131. Guanyin, 10th century, Nitta Group Collection, National Palace Museum, Taiwan.
132. Eleven-Headed Guanyin, Nitta Group Collection, National Palace Museum, Taiwan.

133. Thousand-Armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin/Avalokitesvara, Nitta Group Collection, National Palace Museum, Taiwan.
134. Thousand-Armed Guanyin, 18th century, Art Institute of Chicago, USA.
135. Eleven-Headed, thousand-armed Guanyin, Ming, Fuller Memorial Collection, Seattle Art Museum, USA.

136. Guanyin, 19th century, Ivan Hart Collection, New York, USA.
138. Songzi Guanyin, 17th-18th century, Art Institute of Chicago, USA.
140. Nyoirin Kannon Bosatsu, Chintamani cakra Avalokitesvara, Edo period, Japan.
141. Bodhisattva Kannon, Sanju Sangendo, Kyoto, Japan.
142. Hariti, Kushana period, from Sirkii Pakistan, Lahore Museum, Lahore.

143. Hariti, Kushana period, Sahri-Bahlol, Pakistan, now in Peshawar Museum, Peshawar.

144. Hariti with Pancika, Late 5th century, Cave No.2, Ajanta, Maharashtra.