INTRODUCTION

There is a legend in Asia that Bodhisattvas practice deep in the forests, saving our world from destruction. They enact interdependence by embracing the world, beyond good and bad. Perhaps they even have a special dance. These Bodhisattvas are quiet engines of salvation humming along beneath the surface of our societies and our selves.

Bodhisattvas are spiritual masters who live with a vow to save all sentient beings. The word “Bodhisattva” means “enlightened being” or “enlightening being.” Ancient Jataka tales tell about the previous Bodhisattva lives of Śākyamuni Buddha. A prince offered his own body to feed a hungry tigress. A parrot put out a forest fire by endlessly shaking river water from his wings. A hare sacrificed himself to make a meal for a beggar who was actually Śākra, king of the gods, in disguise.1 In “Bodaisatta Shishobo,” (The Bodhisattva’s Four Embracing Dharmas)2 Dogen writes, “In the human world, the Tathāgata took the form of a human being. From this we know that he did the same in other realms.”

Even today there are countless Bodhisattvas, taking just the right form to lead us to liberation. Taigen Leighton writes of these Bodhisattvas as psychological archetypes. This is true, of course. Each of us, no matter how deluded, has qualities of mind, character, and action that can benefit others. Instead of saying “Ladies and gentlemen,” the Zen teacher Nyogen Senzaki, who brought his “floating zendo” from Japan to California in the early Twentieth Century, used to greet his Western audiences as
“Bodhisattvas.” His greeting was an embrace, and a gentle way of prodding his Zen friends to see their deepest qualities.

A Bodhisattva’s vow to save all sentient beings means that she chooses to live within the world of karma, or cause and effect. A Bodhisattva embraces even failure with a willingness to begin again and again.

Buddhism is a universal religion. Its core truth is that each of us is continuously expressing Buddha-nature. This very mind and body is Buddha. You and am Buddha. No one is outside the circle of awakening. We are Buddhas manifesting as Buddhas. And, although every being is Buddha, we are still in need of cultivation. As Shunryu Suzuki Roshi said, "Each of you is perfect the way you are and you can use a little improvement." This improvement is cultivation. It consists of practices that each of us must take on, not for self-improvement, but for the sake of peace. The Vimalakīrti Sutra, one of Mahayana Buddhism’s key texts, describes the Bodhisattva’s social mandate for peacemaking both in terms of manifesting and cultivating.

**SUMMARY**

Chapter I described the importance of the present research study, objectives of the study, why this study has undertaken and some reviews of previous literature for different sources of literature and further this chapter also explains the research methods are followed to collect the required data.

Buddhist conceptions of mind evolved from early attempts to offer a systematic account of human experience as described in the large body of discourses attributed to the
Buddha. The Buddha offered an account of the human individual as a composite of various psychological and physical elements that challenged the prevailing philosophical views, dominated by the UpaniSadīc idea of an enduring, substantive self (ātman). This aggregated view of persons became the object of early and extensive scholastic debates as Buddhists sought to explain how we come to mistakenly apprehend an unchanging and enduring self in a stream of causally interconnected phenomena. The notion that the habitual patterns of behavior which condition human existence are the direct result of an entrenched and abiding belief that we are (or have) an enduring, unchanging, and independent core or self, sets this aggregated view of persons apart from all other philosophical accounts of personal identity in classical India. The proposed study is on the research topic entitled “A Study of Bodhisattva Philosophy”.

In Chapter II, the researcher presented with regard to origin of Bodhisattva philosophy and what is Bodhisattva concept. In addition to the above, it is also presented that Bodhisattva ideal and every day life in the following way. The Bodhisattva ideal is one of the sublimest spiritual ideals that mankind has ever seen. As the literal meaning of the word itself informs us, a Bodhisattva is a being (sattva) who has dedicated himself to the attainment of Supreme Enlightenment (bodhi) for the sake of the material and spiritual welfare of all living beings, and who is prepared to undergo any hardship, and make any sacrifice, in order to achieve this end. In the more colourful and concrete popular versions of the ideal he is indeed sometimes represented as postponing his own entry into Nirvana until such time as all other beings in the universe have succeeded in arriving at that ineffable state, wherein all suffering is forever transcended, and perfect knowledge the knowledge of ultimate reality attained. Yet although such formulations have their own value they should not be taken as literally true, and it should not be
thought that the Bodhisattva Ideal is literally an altruistic as opposed to an individualistic or selfish ideal, or that the Bodhisattva devotes himself to the spiritual good of others to the actual neglect of his own - that he helps others along the path which he himself does not follow. What he does, rather, is to adopt an attitude in which the terms ‘é-self and é-others’ have become meaningless, or rather, in which they have become indistinguishable in the sense of being not ontologically identical but dialectically related, so that in doing good to oneself one does good to others, and in doing good to others.

Bodhisattvas are of four different kinds, which is to say, the Bodhisattva ideal - or Bodhisattva Principle - manifests within four different contexts, or at four different levels:

(1) Ordinary human beings who, even without knowing it, are in search of the unchanging peace and everlasting happiness that cannot be found in any form of conditioned existence, but only in the Unconditioned. Such are Bodhisattvas in much the same way that the foetus is a human being, that is to say, they have the capacity for Enlightenment and will realise it provided the necessary conditions are fulfilled, i.e. provided they come into contact with the Dharma etc. (2) Buddhists, especially Mahayana Buddhists, who accept the Bodhisattva Ideal but who have not made any real progress towards its realisation. They may have received the Bodhisattva ordination. (3) Those in whom the Bodhichitta, the supra-individual Thought of, or Will to, Enlightenment has actually arisen, and whose lives are increasingly dominated by, or transformed in accordance with, the Bodhisattva Ideal. Among the Bodhisattvas of this kind are great teachers like Nagarjuna, Milarepa, Tsongkhapa, Hui Neng, and Kukai, some of whom may be so advanced as to be virtually indistinguishable from Buddhas. (4) archetypal Bodhisattvas like Manjusri, Avalokitesvara, Samantabhadra and Kshitigarbha, who are not historical personages, or even individuals in the ordinary sense, but so many different aspects of the
one Cosmic Will to Enlightenment, that is to say of the Buddha principle itself as this is present and at work within the temporal process, eternally leading all beings to perfection.

In Chapter III, the investigator critically analysed the Bodhisattva philosophy in different way such as: (i) Mahayana Buddhism, (ii) Tai Hsu Opinion on Bodhisattva, (iii) The ideal of Bodhisattva and Social Transformation, (iv) Buddhism as a Human-Centered Religion.

Mahayanists differentiate themselves from other Buddhist lineages in terms of two key ideas: the Bodhisattva ideal and the doctrine of emptiness. Many Mahayanists argue that the concept of the Bodhisattva ideal proves Mahayana Buddhism to be morally superior to earlier Theravadin lineages, which do not recognize the Bodhisattva ideal. A Bodhisattva is a being who has attained Enlightenment but chooses to stay in the samsaric realm (rather than in Nirvana) to help other sentient beings also attain Enlightenment. Differently, the arhat is a being who has also attained enlightenment, but who has sought it only for him herself. Whereas the Bodhisattva practices the Buddhist path knowing he she will remain in samsara after liberation to help all other sentient beings also liberate themselves, the arhat never makes this promise. Thus many Mahayanists claim that the Bodhisattva’s compassion reflects true selflessness, and superiority absent from the ‘selfish’ arhat path followed by early Buddhists (Hinayana).

Master T'ai Hsu once said, "A truly cultivated person is, in fact, a Buddha." What this means is that, to reach the perfection of a Buddha, one must first start cultivation as a person. In fact, the Buddhist teachings of the human vehicle are as applicable to us as they are to Bodhisattvas. With determination, any one of us can become a Bodhisattva.
Mencius once made a similar observation: "As honorable as Emperor Shwuen was, as great as Yu was, any determined person is, too." Of course, there are many stages of Bodhisattva development. There are the ten stages of faith, the ten stages of prajna, the ten lines of activities for the universal welfare of others, the ten transfers of merits, and the attainment of ten merits. These stages constitute the first fifty of the fifty-two stages of a Bodhisattva toward Buddhahood. Following these fifty stages is the attainment of enlightenment. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Manjusri Bodhisattva are examples of this stage. The development of a Bodhisattva is not unlike our educational system. Though students in elementary school, middle school, and college are all called students, they do differ in the level of knowledge acquired. Our goal is to make a certain amount of progress in our development as a Bodhisattva.

The Buddhist ideal of Bodhisattva (Sebastian C.D., 2008) which is the prime ideal in the Mahayana Buddhist preceptor tradition, if hermeneutically analysed, could be seen as a catalyst for social transformation. Individual transformation should lead to a social transformation, or in other words, individual transformation was a prerequisite for social transformation. If we search for the background as to why there was a need for the development of Bodhisattva ideal, the answer becomes clear for the probing minds. Early Buddhism imparted the double ideal of Arhatva (in Pāli: arahatta) and Nirvāna. An Arhat was a liberated being, and she would not be re-born. She had accomplished what was to be done; she had lived the holy life, she attained final emancipation of mind and heart. She was alone, secluded, zealous, earnest and master of her self. Such an Arhat went forth as a preacher and taught the doctrine of Buddha to the people. Buddha had exhorted his disciples to wander and preach the truth for the welfare and liberation of the people, as he loved his fellow creatures and had compassion...
for them. Such was the great ideal of the Arhat, as it was understood during the three centuries after the death of Gautama Buddha. But the Buddhist monks, it seems, began to neglect certain important aspects of it in due course, and they became too self-centered and contemplative. They confined themselves to the four walls of the monasteries and sought for their personal liberation. They began to overlook the zeal for selfless activity among the people. They seemed to have cared only for their own liberation from sin and sorrow. They became indifferent to the great command of Buddha in fulfilling the obligation of teaching and helping all human beings. In this context, may sometime around Second Century B.C, the Bodhisattva doctrine was promulgated by some earnest and diligent Buddhist leaders as a protest against this lack of true fervour and altruism among the monks of that historical moment. “The coldness and aloofness of the arhats led to the movement in favour of the old gospel of ‘saving all creatures’. The Bodhisattva ideal can be understood only against this background of a saintly and serene, but inactive and indolent monastic order” (Har Dayal, 1978). In this sense, the social concern and transformation was the primary motif for the development of the Bodhisattva ideal.

The researcher discussed the Buddhist view of the human being as it relates to dependent origination. At present, there are two opposing camps with regard to the assessment of this concept. One is a positive evaluation recognizing that dependent origination, a teaching of the interdependence of all phenomena, provides a basis for symbiotic relationships between human beings and with nature, which is not found in modern Western individualism. The other is a negative evaluation pointing out specifically that in modern Japanese history this concept has been employed as a theoretical underpinning for totalitarianism and to suppress the rights of the individual. This divergence of opinion makes us question whether or not Buddhism in fact places
importance on human subjectivity. That is, the view that subjective individuals come into existence through interdependent relationships gives rise to the idea of symbiosis between disparate beings and things. In contrast, if dependent origination is viewed as a relationship of interdependence that negates individual subjectivity, it becomes a concept that gives rise to totalitarianism. The impact of Bodhisattva philosophy on Indian society is explained and it also presented the influence of Bodhisattva on Indian Philosophers.

Chapter IV: Today India is again appearing on the Buddhist map of the world. Indians are awakening to their Buddhist past. In the second half of the Nineteenth Century thanks to western and Indian archaeologists and orient lists Indians began to be surprised at the discovery of the Buddhist legacy. To talk of a “revival of Buddhism” in Modern India is right in this sense of the discovery of the Buddhist heritage by Indians. Even today, 199 years after the foundation of the Asiatic Society, 81 years after the foundation of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, 71 years after the foundation of the Archaeological Survey of India, the process of the discovery of Buddhism in India is still going on. There is no doubt about it that much good work has been done in recent decades to disseminate some knowledge about Buddhism among those who care to know or those who can read and write. But the number of those who care to know is small and of those who cannot read or write is very large and much literary and educational work remains to be done in order to give a glimpse of the wonder that was Buddhism in the Indian Sub-Continent before the Muslim invasions.

Chapter V: The investigator illustrated the development of Bodhisattva philosophy in various countries of the world. In the centuries following the Buddha's lifetime, His followers faithfully preserved His teachings and spread it not only
throughout India, but also to many countries in Asia and lately even to Europe and America. During the first five hundred years after the Buddha's Final Nirvana, the Teaching and Discipline were not yet written down. Instead, they were retained in the memories of the monks who periodically assembled to recite and review them. A number of councils were held during this period to make sure that the Buddha's teachings were transmitted accurately.

CONCLUSION

The Doctrine of Boddhisattva in the Individual and Society Improvement

The one common motif of the Boddhisattvas in Pali scriptures or Boddhisattva in Mahayana texts is the sublime way of inducing in men, the urge for living and letting others live. For inculcation of this higher aspiration in both these systems the same ideas of self-reliance, self-examination, self-awareness, self-responsibility are made to work. The urge is for being earnest, optimistic, thoughtful and careful in every situation. The ideal of the Boddhisattva impinges on a constant and dynamic watch over one's action for realization of the goal. The ideal closely pursued gives spiritual strength and wisdom by which one must cross the shore of misery.

The Boddhisattva is a compassionate being. He teaches one to be kind to all other sentient beings. The cause of human degeneration is selfishness, born of ignorance and conceit that destroy the sacredness of our destined role. It is not understanding the way of extricating oneself from the mire of brutal systems that we fall prey, again and again, to our helpless state of misery. If we could imbibe the ideal of the Boddhisattva in our customary life we can awaken our hidden energy to many useful purposes. It is we who can manage the state in a viable way to make our future bright.
The Impact of Buddhism on Indian society

Buddhism gave the greatest jolt to the orthodox Brahmanism. Buddhism exercised profound influence in shaping the various aspects of Indian society. It developed a popular religion without any complicated, elaborate and unintelligible rituals requiring necessarily a priestly class. This was one of the reasons for its mass appeal. The ethical code of Buddhism was also simpler based on charity, purity, self sacrifice, and truthfulness and control over passions.

It laid great emphasis on love, equality and non violence. It became an article of faith for the followers of the Buddhism. It laid emphasis on the fact that man himself is the architect of his own destiny. It was devoid of any elaborate idea of God. Although Buddhism could never dislodge Brahmanism from its high position, it certainly jolted it and inspired institutional changes in Indian society.

Rejecting the caste system and its evils including rituals based on animal sacrifices, conservation, fasting and pilgrimage, it preached total equality. Promotion of social equality and social justice helped Buddhism to cross the frontiers of Indian sub-continent and became a world religion. In the field of education Buddhism tried to make education practical, action oriented and geared towards social welfare. Most of the ancient Indian universities like Nalanda, Taxila were products of Buddhism.

It has been said that Buddhism came as a reaction to the corruption of the Vedic ideals that were governing the Indian society. The Vedic ideals which were governing society till then had become conventional and lost their inner force. As we have seen in the earlier chapter, the caste system had a high and noble goal; but now it tended to
become hereditary, rigid and inelastic. At the same time the teachings of the Vedic Rishis were being applied in a more and more ritualistic and mechanical manner.

As already seen, Indian society was graded in such a way that all men could participate in a full life according to their stage of evolution under the control of Dharma. As and when one was ready, one could take up the full spiritual life at the appropriate time. Life was not divided into the "spiritual life and the ordinary life" for it was a gradual ascension into spirituality.

But now with the weakening of the Vedic ideals, spirituality waned and the fulfillment of life became an excuse for the uncontrolled indulgence of desires and worldly satisfactions. A temporary period of negation was therefore necessary. Buddhism with its exaggerated stress on the unreality of this world and worldly desires seemed to satisfy this need. In sum, Buddhism came as a reaction to the lowering of the Vedic ideals.

However, Buddhism by its exaggerated emphasis on quiescence and self-abnegation unwisely created a division in society; it created two distinct classes the monk and the layman, the man of the world and the spiritual man. This division implied that the man of the world was inferior to the monk and thus relegated worldly action to the lowest importance. This division of society into two classes, namely the spiritual seekers and the ordinary man created a disharmony and became the author of confusion in society. As a result, under its influence half the nation moved in the direction of spiritual passivity and negation, the other by a natural reaction plunged deep into a marvelous but enervating materialism. The Indian race lost three parts of its ancient heroic manhood, its grasp on the world, its magnificently ordered polity and its noble social fabric.
Thus, Buddhism weakened Indian society although Buddha himself contributed greatly to Indian spirituality. Buddhism never really took firm root in India; it was outside India, in China and Japan and Tibet that it got established. But the Buddha himself was recognised by Indian religion as one of the Avatars. However, it must be added that the Buddhist influence on art was considerable and it inspired for centuries Indian sculpture and painting. Indeed some of the finest pieces of Indian art have been the direct result of Buddhistic influence; one such example is the painting and sculptures in Ajanta and Ellora.

It will not be out of place to note the differences between Hinduism and Buddhism.

- Hinduism is based on the Veda while Buddhism rejects the Veda. Veda means revealed knowledge, which one accepts in order to grow in knowledge. Buddhism accepts nothing on trust, but asks to test everything by one’s reason and experience.

- The first principle that Vedic Knowledge posits is Sat, Being, Pure Existence, Reality. The first principle Buddhism posits is Asat, Non-Being, Non-Reality.

- This metaphysical position is faithfully translated in the respective logical positions of the two. Buddhist logic considers negation as a simple contrary to affirmation. It is not an entity; it is the lack of entity. Hindu logic makes of negation a positive statement but on the minus side, just as Hindu mathematics did not consider zero as valueless but gave a special position to it.

- The Vedic Rishis declared that all existence is built upon delight, all things are born out of delight and move from delight to delight, and delight is their final culmination. Buddhism said misery is the hallmark of things created; sorrow is the marrow and pith and the great secret of existence.
Contribution of Buddhism to Indian culture

Buddhism greatly influenced the Indian religion. It gave to Indian people a simple and popular religion. It rejected ritualism, sacrifices and dominance of priestly class. It has also left its permanent mark on Indian religious thought. Buddhism appealed to the masses on account of its simplicity, use of vernacular language in its scriptures and teachings and monastic order. Buddhism left deep impact on the society. It gave serious impetus to democratic spirit and social equality. It opened its doors to women and shudras. Buddhism encouraged abolition of distinctions in society and strengthened the principle of social equality.

The Buddhist Viharas were used for education purposes. Nalanda, Vikramshila, Taxila, Udyantpuri, Vallabhi and others Cities developed as high Buddhist learning Centres. Buddhism helped in the growth of literature in the popular language of the people. The literature written both in Pali and Sanskrit were enriched by scholars of Hinyana and Mahayana sects. The Buddhist texts like Tripitakas, Jatakas, Buddha charita, Mahavibhasa, Miliand panho, Lalit Vistara are assets to indian literature.

The main contribution of Buddhism to Indian life is in the domain of architecture, sculpture and painting. The Stupas, Viharas, Chaityas that were built at Sanchi, Bahrut, Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Amravati, Taxila and other places are simply remarkable. The Sanchi Stupa with its beautiful ornamental torans is considered a masterpiece in architecture. The cave temples of Ajanta, Karle, Bhaja, Ellora etc show their achievement in rock cut cave temples. The Ajanta painting depicting touching scenes of Buddha’s life are world famous.
They bear a testimony to the heights reached by them in the field of painting. This Buddhist art forms a glorious chapter in the history of Indian art and architecture. They fostered a new awareness in the field of culture. Buddhism established intimate contact between India and foreign countries. Indian monks and scholars carried the gospel of Buddhism to foreign countries from the 3rd Century B.C, onwards and made it the prominent religion of Asia. These religious movements helped in carrying the message of Indian civilization to many distant countries of Asia. It also helped in assimilating foreign influence in Indian culture.

**Buddhism Today**

One of the lasting strengths of Buddhism has been its ability to adapt to changing conditions and to a variety of cultures. It is philosophically opposed to materialism, whether of the Western or the Marxist-Communist variety. Buddhism does not recognize a conflict between itself and modern science. On the contrary, it holds that the Buddha applied the experimental approach to questions of ultimate truth.

In Thailand and Myanmar, Buddhism remains strong. Reacting to charges of being socially unconcerned, its monks have become involved in various social welfare projects. Although Buddhism in India largely died out between the 8th and 12th Centuries A.D, resurgence on a small scale was sparked by the conversion of 3.5 million former members of the untouchable caste, under the leadership of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, beginning in 1956. A similar renewal of Buddhism in Sri Lanka dates from the 19th Century.

Under the Communist republics in Asia, Buddhism has faced a more difficult time. In China, for example, it continues to exist, although under strict government regulation
and supervision. Many monasteries and temples have been converted to schools, dispensaries, and other public use. Monks and nuns have been required to undertake employment in addition to their religious functions. In Tibet, the Chinese, after their takeover and the escape of the Dalai Lama and other Buddhist officials into India in 1959, attempted to undercut Buddhist influence.

Only in Japan since World War II have truly new Buddhist movements arisen. Notable among these is Soka Gakkai, the Value Creation Society, a lay movement associated with Nichiren Buddhism. It is noted for its effective organization, aggressive conversion techniques, and use of mass media, as well as for its nationalism. It promises material benefit and worldly happiness to its believers. Since 1956 it has been involved in Japanese politics, running candidates for office under the banner of its Komeito, or Clean Government Party.

Growing interest in Asian culture and spiritual values in the West has led to the development of a number of societies devoted to the study and practice of Buddhism. Zen has grown in the United States to encompass more than a dozen meditation centers and a number of actual monasteries. Interest in Vajrayana has also increased. As its influence in the West slowly grows, Buddhism is once again beginning to undergo a process of acculturation to its new environment. Although its influence in the U.S. is still small, apart from immigrant Japanese and Chinese communities, it seems that new, distinctively American forms of Buddhism may eventually develop.

**Buddhism and Global Peace**

The concept of philosophy, major schools under Hindu Philosophy, Buddha as an Incarnation of Vishnu, Origin and Evolution of Buddhism and its spatial diffusion, the
Buddhist Councils, the Schools of Buddhism, and Buddha’s Teachings for global peace were the major areas of discussion in this paper. Buddhism has two major schools of the Theravada and Mahayana but the ultimate goals of both the schools are to secure and maintain peace, happiness, social welfare and harmony in human society all over the world.

We can conclude that the principles and teachings of Buddhism should be followed in order to maintain peace at global level. In this aspect, the new democratic government has to play a crucial role. The establishment of the Siddhartha University in Nepal will be a noble step in this area. We have to join hands with all in order to raise the world-embracing vision of a Buddha where all nations, races and creeds will come to love one another, and injustices, wars and discrimination will vanish. We have to develop better understanding among the peoples with different cultures and cooperate together to improve the lives of the people not only spiritually and intellectually, but also socially, economically in terms of proper utilization of resources available.

We are in need of changing the world in which harmony and cooperation will prevail. The Buddha’s teachings contain many practical techniques for calming anger, controlling desire, and creating harmonious relationships. In a world as full of violence and corruption as ours, people seek comfort and wisdom from a spiritual path that teaches nonviolence, contentment, compassion, generosity of spirit, and peace of mind. Buddhism teaches us to cultivate peace in our hearts and work to relieve the sufferings of all living beings, without exception. Now, in this time of fear and uncertainty in Nepal, Buddha’s message of peace and compassion is very essential to unite us all in an atmosphere of peace and political stability. Buddhism must address current social problems such as
racism, sexism, environmental deterioration, and economic injustice. We must join hands to demonstrate our commitment towards peace by correcting social and economic inequalities.

**Buddhism in Indian Thought**

This brief survey of the place of Buddhism in Indian thought has brought to light a number of significant facts:

Firstly, the inadequacy of the current theories about the cultural evolution of the Indian subcontinent was strongly felt. There is a need to re-examine the data available with a view to assessing the pre-Aryan and other influences on Indian thought.

Secondly, the question of the relationship between Upaniadic philosophy and Buddhism is not so simple as to be dismissed with the generalized statement that Buddhism is another version of the Upaniads. The issues involved are so complicated that one should go deeper into details; it is idle to talk in terms of the spirit behind the Upaniads and general impressions, which unfortunately tend to be highly subjective. Literary data, alone, can give a full picture and with the evidence, which could be collected from the Pali Texts, there was adequate proof that the most popular theory on the subject is unacceptable. And this applies not only to the Upaniadic problem but also to that of the Sankhya system.

Lastly, the contributions to Indian thought made by the Buddha should be carefully borne in mind. It was no doubt the Buddha's admirable sense of humility, which led to his statement that he was not an original thinker. His theory of Dependent Causation or Origination was the most remarkable contribution to Indian thought. It is unique in the history of philosophy.
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