



Chapter 4: The dance of the Bodhisattva

The Wu Li Masters know that ‘science’ and ‘religion’ are only dances, and that those who follow them are dancers. The dancers may claim to follow ‘truth’ or claim to seek ‘reality,’ but the Wu Li Masters know better. They know that the true love of all dancers is dancing.

Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li masters*

Nietzsche’s masterpiece, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, begins with Zarathustra’s descending the mountains after ten years of solitary retreat. In the Prologue Zarathustra’s witness of the accidental fall of the rope-dancer and his burial of the dead man in a hollow tree imply that the point of departure of a spiritual journey lies in an awareness of death and the fragile and empty nature of life. All that live must die. Life and death are simply natural phenomena within the process of change. Change is the core of the *I Ching* and its authors consider birth and death as natural processes, the rhythms of Nature that pass from one phase to another like the sequence of spring, summer, autumn and winter. Nietzsche indicates that although death is fated, one can extract something great out of this knowledge. He encourages his readers to triumph over their changing and turbulent environment without spoiling their ‘small gift’, their transient life. He says about ‘our brief span of time’ that ‘we at least want to deal with it grandly and freely’ (PB 52). Unlike the holy sages of the *I Ching* who seek harmony and balance within and without, the Nietzschean *Übermensch* shows a passion for life in his fighting spirit: No matter how, where and when he has the will-power to bring colour to his life, he will not leave it blank when he dies. This is also the awareness of an enlightened being who resolves to achieve supreme enlightenment regardless of his transient earthly existence, as demonstrated by the life of Shakyamuni Buddha.¹ In this context Buddhism is explored in this chapter as a way of life rather than a religion based on faith.

¹ The Sanskrit word ‘Buddha’ means ‘awakened one’. It is the highest degree of saintship of an enlightened being. The term refers to ‘the fully awake, fully realized, complete human being’ (Cleary 1993:1526). There are innumerable Buddhas in the universe. There have been countless Buddhas in the past, and there will be others to become Buddhas in the future. Shakyamuni Buddha (463-383 BC.), the founder of Buddhism, is the historical Buddha who taught the Dharma (Buddhist teachings) on earth.



R. G. Morrison (1997:63) indicates that Nietzsche and Buddhism ‘both see man as an ever-changing flux of forces possessing what may generally be physical and psychological aspects.’ Change is not only recognized by the *I Ching* and Nietzsche, but also by Buddhism. According to Buddhism, ‘physical changes are birth, ageing, sickness and death. Mental changes form, stay, change and vanish. Existence is dynamic. It is like a wheel. It is therefore called the wheel of rebirth’ (Hsing Yun 2002:1). Shakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, presents a teaching aimed at release from the wheel of rebirth, because the fear of death appears to be the greatest suffering of life:

The pains of birth, aging, sickness, death, and grief
Oppress beings without relief.
The Great Teacher takes pity and vows to remove them all
(Cleary 1993:79).

After having seen the phenomena of birth, aging, sickness and death, Prince Siddhattha, later to become Buddha, renounces the world to seek the complete cessation of suffering and to liberate all beings from suffering. Born as a man and living as a mortal, Shakyamuni Buddha attains the supreme state of perfection called Buddhahood. Through his transformation from Prince Siddhattha into a Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha proclaims to the world the latent possibilities and the invincible power of humanity. He demonstrates how man can attain the highest knowledge and supreme enlightenment through his own effort.

Morrison (1997:36) indicates that ‘the qualities required to become a Buddha seem to be similar to those required to become a Nietzschean *Übermensch*.’ The Nietzschean *Übermensch* is paradoxical, however, because Nietzsche tells very little about what the *Übermensch* is like, and asserts that ‘never yet has there been an overman’ (*Z II On Priests*). He makes the *Übermensch* so open to interpretation that his sister ‘assured Hitler that *he* was what her brother had in mind by the *Übermensch*’ (Danto 1965:198). A. D. Schrift (1995:71) points to the paradox that Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* can be portrayed ‘alternatively as a model of the Maslowian self-actualized individual or a fascist moral monster.’ My argument in this dissertation agrees with the former that Nietzsche employs a growth model, aiming at self-actualization within finite human existence. I believe that the attainment of supreme enlightenment by Prince Siddhattha (Shakyamuni Buddha) may serve as an inspiration for actualizing Nietzsche’s hypothetical *Übermensch*.



Although the *I Ching*, Nietzsche and Buddhism all recognize the inevitability of change and the suffering of life, their approaches to change and suffering show affinities as well as differences. The *I Ching* advises its reader to accept natural transformation and to follow fate by consulting oracle. In *Liao-fan's Four Lessons* a monk, named Master Yun, states that 'the *I Ching* was written to help people avoid danger and attract good luck. If everything is predestined then there would be no point in avoiding danger nor in improving one's luck' (1998a:7-8).² Nietzsche, however, champions the affirmer of life who appreciates both danger and good luck. For Nietzsche, although life is full of suffering, it becomes a victory when it appears to the dancing spirit as an experiment in the impossible. This conviction is expressed in his idea of the *Übermensch*. While the Nietzschean *Übermensch* is concerned with individual spiritual growth, the future supreme achievement of humanity, many Chinese believe that this task belongs to the sages rather than to ordinary men. The authors of the *I Ching* emphasize the knowledge and the function of the sage, to attain advantage from the flow of change by conforming to the will of Heaven. The unity of heaven and humanity is the highest virtue of man and this is the way of living for the sage. Instead of stressing individual endeavour of self-perfection, the presence of the sage is anticipated to benefit all. My position is that one may follow the oracle of the *I Ching* to preserve oneself, yet one may deserve something greater if one chooses to be an affirmer of life, by transcending opposites and actualizing the ideal of the highest virtue — the unity between heaven and humanity. I believe that the characteristics of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* may serve as complement to those of the Chinese sage. Also, the exploration of the way to supreme enlightenment might overcome the violence of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* and throw some light on this spiritual journey from beast to *Übermensch*. Self-preservation and a moral life become by-products of this process of self-cultivation or self-perfection.

Although Nietzsche criticizes the Buddhist withdrawal 'from pain into that Oriental Nothing — called Nirvana' (GS P 3), F. Mistry (1981:9) points out that the message of Nietzsche and Shakyamuni Buddha 'is recognisably affiliated and attests to the proximity of their ethical philosophy.' The supreme self-perfection of

² *Liao-fan's Four Lessons* was written by Yuan Liao-fan in the Ming dynasty, nearly five hundred years ago. This true story of Yuan's life was recorded originally for his son. It is a classic among Chinese popular spiritual writing.



Shakyamuni Buddha implies that everyone has the potential to become an enlightened being or even eventually a Buddha. Master Yin-shun (1998:42) indicates that ‘after one has initiated bodhi mind, practiced the bodhisattva deeds, and benefited oneself and others, then, when one attains perfection and completion, one can become a buddha’.³ I call this way to supreme enlightenment or Buddhahood the ‘dance’ of Bodhisattvas. I believe that the path or the ‘dance’ of Bodhisattvas might contribute to actualizing Nietzsche’s idea of the *Übermensch* and the mysterious unity between heaven and humanity as emphasized by the *I Ching*. Thus, in this concluding chapter I will draw upon the inspiration of the *I Ching* and of Nietzsche’s philosophy to illustrate how the ideas of these texts relate to the way of the Bodhisattva for the purpose of indicating how ordinary people can actualize the Nietzschean *Übermensch* and the sage’s way of living.

4.1. Chinese sage, Nietzschean *Übermensch* and Bodhisattva

Bodhi is to be found within our own mind,
And there is no necessity to look for mysticism from without.
Hearers of this stanza who put its teaching into actual practice
Will find paradise in their very presence.

The Sutra of Hui Neng

The authors of the *I Ching* believe that flow and change are the principle characteristics of nature, but that man can observe constant and determinate patterns in these changes. The *I Ching* provides a picture of the world, as suggested by H. Wilhelm (1995:15) ‘a definite system of the images of life.’ By consulting the oracle, its follower can discover the invisible cosmic pattern of a specific moment as revealed by a hexagram and so learn from the oracle which course of action is appropriate to it. The purpose of consulting the *I Ching* is not only to know the future, but to discover the character of a present situation in order to take appropriate action. The authors of the *I Ching* encourage their readers to concentrate on keeping themselves within the

³ *Bodhi*, Sanskrit word, means enlightenment. It refers to the state of being awakened to one’s own Buddha nature. Bodhi mind is ‘the resolution to attain enlightenment’ (Yin-shun 1998:42). To develop bodhi mind means to make a great determination to attain Buddhahood.



flow of change rather than against it in order to grow through its cyclical movement and development. Thus H. Wilhelm (1995:31) remarks that

the Book of Changes derives the idea that man is in the center of events; the individual who is conscious of responsibility is on a par with the cosmic forces of heaven and earth. This is what is meant by the idea that change can be influenced. To be sure, such an influence is only possible by going with the direction of change, not against it.

The authors of the *I Ching* emphasize ‘order,’ which is founded on the five cardinal human relationships, as a means to ‘bridging’ the chaos of changing phenomena, from the multifarious constituent parts to a harmonious whole. Relationships are present everywhere and in the context of Confucian ethics the individual seems to be caught in an invisible web of relationships. The Confucian view has given greater weight to family and society than to individuals, because emphasis on the function of individuals would bring about the danger of destroying family and society. According to this dominant traditional view, an individual is encouraged to lead a moderate, ‘secure’ life, rather than a life of growth, as championed by Nietzsche. Capra (1975:105-106) comments that

in the Chinese view, it is better to have too little than to have too much, and better to leave things undone than to overdo them, because although one may not get very far this way one is certain to go in the right direction. Just as the man who wants to go further and further East will end up in the West, those who accumulate more and more money in order to increase their wealth will end up being poor.

The fear of overdoing something leads to the Chinese preference for security and for avoiding danger. The conception of fate in the *I Ching* is to follow the determinate cosmic patterns, because if one acts against the flow of change, danger and misfortune take place. H. Wilhelm (1995:29) comments on danger as conceived in the *I Ching*:

Danger is the unknown, the mysterious, from which misfortune can arise just as easily as good fortune. Safety is the clear knowledge of the right stand to be taken, security in the assurance that events are unrolling in the right direction.

Nietzsche, however, favours danger and war above order, because strong instincts delight in war and triumph over unfavourable circumstances so as to express their strength, their Will to Power. He insists on ‘the task of weaving onwards the whole rope of life, and in such a way *that the thread becomes stronger and stronger*’ (WLN 11[83]). Nietzsche believes that the kind of strong individual he describes forms ‘a



kind of bridge across the turbulent stream of becoming' (*UDH* 9). In a section of *Gay Science* called 'Good luck in fate' Nietzsche states: 'The greatest distinction that fate can bestow on us is to let us fight for a time on the side of our opponents. With that we are *predestined* for a great victory' (*GS* 323). Nietzsche appreciates fate for providing those opponent aspects that are the prerequisites for attaining great victory in life by fighting against them. His conception of fate is to fight against opposites, obstacles and turbulence for victory. This attitude is symbolized by the lion, the warrior, the second form of the evolving spirit according to Zarathustra's three metamorphoses. 'For a typically healthy person,' Nietzsche says, 'being sick can even become an energetic *stimulus* for life, for living *more*' (*EH* Wise 2). For Nietzsche, this healthy and war-like attitude towards life distinguishes the *Übermensch* from the herd man. I agree with Nietzsche that in order to lead an ascending life it is important to experiment with a fighting spirit, so to overcome the suffering of life, as implied by his idea of the *Übermensch*. What concerns me in this chapter is how a fighting spirit overcomes the violent aspect of life, and whether the way to supreme enlightenment complements the Nietzschean *Übermensch*?

In Buddhism, the attainment of supreme enlightenment is not a vision, but a concrete experience as happens in the life of Shakyamuni Buddha. Nietzsche, however, indicates the *Übermensch* to be achieved only through the process of self-overcoming, which means that his idea remains a vision. Despite the fact that Nietzsche's mouthpiece Zarathustra mentions 'all the steps to the overman' (*Z* P 9), he also indicates that the way to such an achievement does not exist and that one should create one's own way, stating: 'This is *my* way; where is yours?' (*Z* III On the Spirit of Gravity 2) The similarity between the Nietzschean *Übermensch* and Gautama Buddha may throw some light on the realization of Nietzsche's vision for humanity. Morrison (1997:63) points out that both Nietzsche and Buddhism emphasize

the hierarchy that exists or can exist between individuals and within the individual's own nature. For Nietzsche the postulated pinnacle of his hierarchy is the *Übermensch*, a goal which no one has yet attained but which is a potential, if not for all, at least for some. In the case of Buddhism the goal is said to have been realized and attained in the person of Gautama the Buddha some 2,500 years ago, and is a goal that all beings are said have the potential to realize.

The experience of Gautama Buddha demonstrates clearly the way to Buddhahood, as he becomes a Buddha through his own effort, while Nietzsche's writings only raise



our awareness to the possibility of the *Übermensch* without submitting a feasible method of undertaking the dangerous journey from beast to *Übermensch*. The practical guidance Nietzsche fails to provide in this regard might perhaps be found in the way of the Bodhisattva.

The word ‘bodhisattva’, is Sanskrit for ‘enlightened sentient being’. ‘When the term is expressed through direct Chinese translation of the meaning, “bodhisattva” is rendered as “enlightened being,” or “great being,” or “awakened being.” In modern terms, a bodhisattva is a sympathetic illuminate possessed of a kindness and compassion devoted to saving the world’ (Nan 1995:51). Master Hsing Yun (2000:141-142), the founder of Fo Kuang Shan monastery in Taiwan, explains the term ‘bodhisattva’ in this way:

The word ‘bodhisattva’ is a compound of two Sanskrit words. *Bodhi* means ‘enlightened’ and *sattva* means ‘sentient being.’ A bodhisattva, thus, is an ‘enlightened sentient being’ or someone who ‘enlightens sentient beings.’ Sometimes *bodhisattva* is rendered in English as ‘enlightenment being.’ The word ‘bodhisattva’ should be understood in two basic ways. First, a bodhisattva is a sentient being who has attained some measure of enlightenment himself. Second, he is a sentient being whose wisdom has shown him that the greatest enlightenment of all is to help others.

When one has made a bodhisattva vow to seek enlightenment and to liberate all sentient beings from delusion and suffering, one becomes a bodhisattva. Master Hsing Yun (1999:3) indicates that ‘we can all become bodhisattvas as long as we have the commitment to “seek the Buddha Way and deliver all beings.” In fact we describe anyone who has made such a commitment a “bodhisattva with initial determination.”’ This is the initial step of the path of bodhisattvas. In the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, also known as the *Flower Garland Sutra*, the path or process of becoming a Buddha is described according to the doctrine of ‘fifty-two Gradual Stages’ (Odin 1982:236) that a bodhisattva must go through. Master Hsing Yun (2000:142-143) explains that

first a bodhisattva must rely on faith and trust in order to learn the teachings of the Buddha. Following this, he can begin to rely on his awakened wisdom to implement the Buddha’s teachings in the world in which he lives. In the third stage, the sutra says, he will begin to practice the Dharma in a much deeper way than he did at first. In the fourth stage, his understanding of the Dharma will be so deep that his ability to share it with others will also be deepened. In the last stage of growth, the sutra says, the bodhisattva will begin to experience levels of awakened consciousness that he had hitherto only dreamed of.



The last stages of this process are ‘The Two Levels of Enlightenment’: the highest Bodhisattva rank of ‘Equal Enlightenment’ and the highest level of all, ‘Wonderful Enlightenment, Buddhahood’ (1980: xxiii).

The way to supreme enlightenment is followed in China through the worship of the four great Bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva and Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. These Bodhisattvas hold the highest rank of Bodhisattvas, that is Equal Enlightenment. The Buddhists of China pay homage to these four bodhisattvas whose temples are located on four holy mountains:

On Mount Wu-tai in the north, there was Mañjuśrī (Wen-shu in Chinese) who was an idealised incarnation of Transcendent wisdom, and in the temple dedicated to him Wen-shu was presented in a statue riding a lion. On Mount Pu-tuo in the east, there was Avalokiteśvara (Kuan Yin in Chinese), the Goddess of Mercy, sitting in or standing on a lotus. On Mount Omei in the west, there was Samantabhadra (Pu Hsian in Chinese), who was the incarnation of Universal Goodness and who always rode on a white elephant. On Mount Chiu-hua in the south, there was Kṣitigarbha (Ti Tsang in Chinese), who was Head of Hell and once promised Sakyamuni that he would not become Buddha until he saved all between the *nirvāṇa* of Sakyamuni and the Birth of Maitreya. (in Holm & Bowker 1994:184-185)

These four great Bodhisattvas represent a symbolic way to supreme enlightenment. Firstly, one has to resolve on a bodhi-mind as represented by Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva. Then one has to follow two role models: Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, who represents great compassion, and Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, who represents transcendental wisdom, because one has to cultivate compassion and wisdom which are like the two wings a bird needs to fly. Lastly, one has to fulfil the practical aspect of Buddhism, as represented by Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, to attain supreme enlightenment. Master Yin-shun (1998:219-230) states about the characteristics of a Bodhisattva that ‘bodhi mind is the aspiration, the compassionate mind is the motive, and the wisdom that sees the emptiness of things is the skill to perform deeds’. These characteristics of the bodhisattva may be shown to correspond with those of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*.

4.1.1. Bodhi mind

Having made the resolution, one can be called a bodhisattva
Who presides over all sentient beings.
The worldly and world-transcending virtues
All come from the bodhisattvas. (Yin-shun 1998:217)



The point of departure of the way to supreme enlightenment is an adamant resolution, the bodhi mind. It means to vow to attain *bodhi*, that is ‘to resolve to benefit others and seek perfect enlightenment’ (Yin-shun 1998:207). The bodhi mind is a prerequisite for treading the way to supreme enlightenment. The Buddhist term ‘bodhi mind’ seems to correlate to the double will of Zarathustra’s heart.

‘My glance plunges into the height’, states Zarathustra, ‘and my hand would grasp and hold on to the depth. My will clings to man; with fetters I bind myself to man because I am swept up toward the overman’ (Z II On Human Prudence). Zarathustra’s wanderings lead upwards to the overman and downwards to man, symbolized by the peak of mountain and the depth of the sea. This image of Zarathustra’s will upwards and downwards can also be seen in art portraying Bodhisattvas:

In art, bodhisattvas often are portrayed with one hand pointing up toward the sky while the other points down toward the earth. The hand that points upward symbolizes the bodhisattva’s efforts to help himself, while the hand that points downward symbolizes his desire to help others. (Hsing Yun 2000:142)

The co-existence of height and depth in Zarathustra’s heart implies a unity of opposites. The *I Ching* suggests that this is one of the characteristics of the sage.

According to the *I Ching* cultivating a mutual relationship between subject and object in confronting opposites and conflict is one of the major features of the superior man or sage. About the hexagram *T’ung Jên/Fellowship with Men*, R. Wilhelm (1995:169) indicates that ‘after subject and object assume a mutual relationship, mutual service in fellowship follows, and because of this all things are nourished and become complete in life.’⁴ The hexagram *T’ung Jên* calls on the superior man to unite people. In its ‘Judgment’ it is said that ‘the perseverance of the superior man furthers’ (1950:56 & 452) and in its ‘Image’ it is said that ‘the superior man organizes the clans and makes distinctions between things’ (1950:57 & 453). The emphasis on the function of the superior man in society leads to the Confucian utopia of a ‘Great Society’ which has, however, never come into being. This seems to imply that it may be better to create oneself in overcoming the turbulence of the changing world rather than to rely on the ruler-sage to establish a ‘Great Society’.

⁴ See p. 9 & p.10 of the introduction with reference to the hexagram *T’ung Jên/Fellowship with Men*.



In the hexagram *T'ung Jên/Fellowship with Men* the image of the upper trigram *Ch'ien*, is Heaven, representing strength, and that of the lower, *Li*, is flame, representing clarity. The 'Image' of this hexagram signifies that clarity is within and strength without. It describes the character of a peaceful union of men, as the only weak line in the hexagram unites the five strong lines. The 'Commentary on the Decision' says:

FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN means: 'Fellowship with men in the open. Success. It furthers one to cross the great water.'

The Creative acts. Order and clarity, in combination with strength; central, correct, and in the relationship of correspondence: this is the correctness of the superior man. Only the superior man is able to unite the wills of all under heaven. (1950:452)

The attributes of *Li* are order and clarity and *Ch'ien* is characterized by strength. These are the qualities of the superior man who has clear, convincing, and inspiring aims and the strength to carry them out. Thus the fellowship is made possible by the character of the official or superior man. Fellowship with men in the open succeeds, implying that true fellowship among men is based on a concern that is universal, the goal of humanity, rather than on the self-interest of individuals. If unity of this kind prevails, then even difficult and dangerous tasks, like crossing great water, can be accomplished. However, in order to bring this kind of fellowship into being, a superior man, a persevering leader, is needed.

According to the *I Ching*, it is crucial for a leader to set a common goal for his subjects as a means of maintaining order and prosperity within the community. The authors of the *I Ching* prompt their readers to follow the course of change and also to revere the ruler-sage, so that order can be maintained. For ordinary people, however, the common goal seems to be to find solutions to universal problems such as death, sickness, poverty, greed, anger, jealousy, ignorance, intolerance, ingratitude, polluted environment and so on. These problems appear as chaos to ordinary people and the question lies in how to transcend chaos within and without? Zarathustra asserts that 'one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star' (Z P 5). The Nietzschean *Übermensch* creates himself through the process of self-overcoming by transcending inner and outer chaos. The determination to seek spiritual growth even amidst chaotic forces is a major characteristic of the *Übermensch*. Whereas the Nietzschean *Übermensch* is concerned with individual spiritual growth amidst chaotic



forces, the Chinese sage emphasizes self-cultivation in an orderly fashion. However, although the unity between heaven and humanity is regarded as the highest virtue that the sage is capable of achieving in the Chinese philosophical tradition, how to actualize this idea seems to remain a mystery to ordinary men.

Morrison (1997:224-225) states that ‘by skilfully channelling certain deep rooted tendencies, man can venture on a path of continual self-overcoming that eventually culminates in a new kind of being: a Buddha. Perhaps, by borrowing much from the Buddhists, Nietzsche could have found a practical way of creating his as yet hypothetical *Übermensch*.’ It is in the light of this suggestion that I explore the way of the Bodhisattva in this chapter.

4.1.2. Transcendental wisdom

A Bodhisattva is always thinking, studying, and listening in order to deepen his wisdom and understanding of life. With these skills he teaches others and helps them find joy.

The Eight Realizations of the Bodhisattva Sutra (Hsing Yun 2000:142)

The transcendental wisdom of the Bodhisattva lies in the understanding of the emptiness of things and the emptiness of the self. Master Hsing Yun (2000:94) indicates that such an understanding allows us ‘to see beyond relativity, beyond duality, and beyond all phenomenal distinctions. Emptiness teaches us to see through ourselves.’ Consequently, we might deal with the human predicament in a more effective and creative way.

In Buddhism, emptiness is one of the most important ideas. Emptiness does not mean that things do not exist, rather that they have no self-nature and no independent nature. Master Hsing Yun (2000:79) explains that ‘all phenomena are interconnected and thus not one of them can be said to have a permanent, enduring “nature” of its own. Ultimately all things are “transparent” or “empty.”’ He refers to a wooden table as an example of the empty nature of things: A wooden table exists because of being touched and used, but it stands in emptiness because of ultimately having no self-nature. The table is made of wood that comes from a tree, but the tree depends on soil, water, and sunshine to grow. Then someone cuts it into pieces and distributes it. Finally someone makes the wood into a table and puts it in a house. Thus the existence of a wooden table involves various causes and conditions. If we



trace the causes and conditions on which the table depends for its existence, we would find that ultimately there is no such thing as ‘table nature’, but only an endlessly complex web of interconnectedness and change. Indeed, the karma law of cause and effect seems definite, but the emphasis on conditions implies that one may transform and master one’s destiny according to one’s action. This is the wisdom of enlightened beings. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* points out that enlightened beings recognize the true essence of all things and ‘they know deeds are like illusions, results of deeds are like paintings, all activities are like magic tricks, things born of causes and conditions are all like echoes, and the practices of enlightening beings are all like reflections’ (Cleary 1993:543). Samantabhadra Bodhisattva describes his experience in this way:

I will traverse the paths of the world
Free from compulsion, affliction, and delusion,
Like a lotus unstained by water,
Like the sun and moon unattached in the sky. (Cleary 1993:1514)

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s experience illustrates that the great enlightened beings recognize the empty nature of all things and therefore remain unmoved and unattached, as the sun and moon unattached in the sky, so that they are free from suffering and capable of mastering their destiny while liberating all other beings. The movement of sun and moon reminds the holy sages of the *I Ching* of the principles of yin and yang which bring forth the kaleidoscopic manifestations of life in the natural world.

One of the crucial implications of the *I Ching* is that the same elements, energies or forces, for example the eight trigrams, in their various combinations represent all phenomena. The trigrams *Ch’ien*, ‘The Creative’, and *K’un*, ‘The Receptive’, are the constituent trigrams of both the hexagrams *T’ai/Peace* and *P’i/Standstill*, but the former signifies harmony, while the latter signifies decline. The same elements come to have opposite effects because of change in time and situation. Harmony and decline repeatedly arise and perish in the course of time. Similarly, the last two hexagrams *Chi Chi/After Completion* and *Wei Chi/Before Completion* are made of the same two trigrams, *Li*, ‘The Clinging’, and *K’an*, ‘The Abysmal’, the elements of water and fire. While the latter refers to a transition from disorder to order, the former indicates that the transition from confusion to order is completed. The holy sages of the *I Ching* are aware of the transitory nature of things due to the change of situation and condition, while ordinary men remain unaware of it.



Ordinary men regard all phenomena of the natural world as real, because they are unaware of the transitory, illusive nature of all things. Zukav (1979:240) remarks that “empty” and “full” are “false distinctions” that *we have created*, like the distinction between “something” and “nothing.” They are abstractions from experience which we have mistaken for experience. Perhaps we have lived so long in our abstractions that instead of realizing that they are drawn from the real world we believe that they *are* the real world.’ Ordinary men are moved by, and attached to, countless changing forms of reality. For example, they pay attention to the movement of sun and moon which brings about the alternation of day and night, so that they discern the difference between dark and light without realizing the illusive nature of relativity. So, in their pursuit of external things they are subjugated by changing primal forces and they lose themselves and fail to recognize the richness of their true inner nature.

Everybody has the potential to become an enlightened being, because all share the same true nature. This can be seen to be implied by the findings of new physics, which reveals that in the subatomic world, particle interactions are interactions of energy with energy. The parallels between macrocosm and microcosm, as emphasized by the *I Ching*, imply that we are all energy. As Nietzsche asserts, ‘*this world is the will to power — and nothing besides!* And you yourselves too are this will to power — and nothing besides!’ (WLN 38[12]). It follows that we all share the same true nature. In this context Lord Buddha asks Ananda: ‘Is there any difference between the darkness seen by a blind man in front of him and that seen by a man who is not blind when he is in a dark room?’ (2005:47) Indeed, the darkness seen by the blind man is the same as that seen by a man who is not blind while sitting in a dark room. Enlightened beings and ignorant men share the same true nature — darkness, but only the former recognize their true nature while the latter fail to do so. Shakyamuni Buddha’s point of view is that the organ of sight can reveal forms but that the nature of this seeing belongs to the mind and not to the eyes.

Our mind is accustomed to cling to the dancing ‘dust’, the multifarious changing external objects, and therefore our craving mind is unaware of our true nature. In the *Surangama Sutra* a metaphor of dust and void is employed to illustrate our true nature, unmoved within the movement of things: ‘when the sun rises in a clear sky and its light enters (the house) through an opening, the dust is seen to dance



in the ray of light whereas the empty space does not move. ... that which is still is the void and that which moves is the dust. Consequently, a thing is “dust” when it moves’ (2005:49-50). Shakyamuni Buddha indicates that our true nature is like the void, unmoved, while other things move. We may have been unaware of our true nature. We may be caught in the net of external things which prevent us from returning ‘home’, realizing our true nature, so we are incapable of controlling our destiny. Because the mind of ordinary men usually fervently craves for material satisfaction, they lose themselves in the pursuit of wealth and fame. This is the root of human suffering.

The transcendental wisdom of enlightened beings allows them to realize the co-existence of change and changelessness which is one of the main themes of the *I Ching*. The number 5 is situated in the centre of the Chinese puzzle and remains unchanged in the various relationships of its horizontal, vertical and diagonal combinations.⁵ The mysticism of the *I Ching* seems to be supported by the findings of modern physics. In Chapter 2 I mention Glick’s metaphor of the zoologist who investigates relationships with regard to the sizes of prehistoric animals. The implication of this metaphor is that weight seems not to be the ‘object’ of investigation. While we are accustomed to analyze, conceptualize and computerize the multifarious forms of the natural world through data received by our sense organs, we overlook their essence and the fact that all share the same true nature which is changeless within all changing things.

The assertion of changelessness within change is indicated by the word ‘*T*’ in ‘*I Ching*’ and the book teaches the actualization of this wisdom in transient human existence. The changelessness of change implies that change has a fixed course in which the trends of events develop, so that the process of change or becoming is not chaotic, but follows fixed patterns. In the *I Ching* the whole order of the natural world and life is imaged in two lines charged with spiritual meaning. When the firm line pushes outward it becomes thin in the middle and breaks in two, becoming a yielding line. When the yielding line pushes inward it grows into a firm line. The Tao is the principle underlying growing and breaking. The *I Ching* emphasizes that change represents an organic order corresponding to man’s nature. Even though there are set limits, a responsible person can make an impact on the course of things and master his

⁵ See p.123 with reference to the Chinese puzzle.

fate by understanding the laws of change and intervening in the course of events. Man is the center of events and can make an impact on change. The question seems to be how an individual can practise changelessness within change in accordance with life. The answer lies in the acknowledgement of life and the rejection of the negation of life.

The acknowledgement of life in the *I Ching* involves the recognition that change is eternal without beginning, infinitely reproductive. Life eternally rises and falls, but in its rising and falling lies its invariability. This idea can be seen in the hexagram *Ta Ch'u/The Taming Power of the Great*.⁶ 'Heaven within the Mountain' is the 'Image' of this hexagram:

Heaven within the mountain:

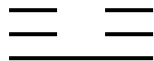
The image of THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT.

Thus the superior man acquaints himself with many sayings of antiquity

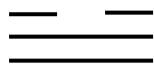
And many deeds of the past,

In order to strengthen his character thereby. (1950:105 &516)

Heaven indicates character, virtue. Strength is denoted by the mountain. The means to this strengthening of character is concealed in the two nuclear trigrams:



Upper nuclear trigram CHÊN, THE AROUSING, THUNDER



Lower nuclear trigram TUI, JOYOUS, LAKE

The lower nuclear trigram *Tui*, 'mouth', refers to words and the upper nuclear trigram *Chên*, 'movement', refers to deeds. 'Heaven within the mountain' indicates hidden treasures. In the words and deeds of the past there lies hidden treasure that men may employ to strengthen and elevate their own characters. This idea of applying knowledge practically seems to correspond to Nietzsche's statement that 'we do not belong to those who have ideas only among books, when stimulated by books. It is our habit to think outdoors — walking, leaping, climbing, dancing, preferably on lonely mountains or near the sea where even the trails become thoughtful. Our first

⁶ See p. 84-85, Chapter 2 with reference to this hexagram.



questions about the value of a book, of a human being, or a musical composition are: Can they walk? Even more, can they dance?' (GS 366) In order to dance one must, according to Nietzsche, have light feet which involves long labour in the harnessing of the 'splendid animal'. Similarly, according to the hexagram *Ta Ch'u/The Taming Power of the Great*, one's creative power, symbolized by Heaven, must be controlled and pressed into labour in order to harmonize the energies within oneself, symbolized by the Mountain. In this hexagram Heaven represents human creative power tamed and held together by the strength of the Mountain. R. Wilhelm (1995:269) explains that 'the creative powers that are surging outward in time are restrained by a very strong inhibition; and by being restrained in this way they are forced to form, not only to become idea, but to continue forming until they enter reality.' In this sense, the importance of taking action rather than analyzing ideas is stressed by this hexagram.

The understanding of changelessness within change generates energy for taming the naturally creative power within oneself, shaping it, taking care of it, and nourishing it. In this way one's nature becomes rich, strong, and shining, nourished and supported. The Mountain, Keeping Still, nourishes, gathers, and strengthens life. It implies three ideas: 'First is the idea of solidity and security offered by the mountain. Second is the idea of gathering, which arises because of this solidity. A mountain standing in the atmosphere collects and gathers about it the forces of life. The third idea is one of nourishment and benefit. Life settles in and about the mountain, and the process of life continues' (Wilhelm 1995:275). Life is represented by the image of Heaven, resting within the mountain and being shaped by the mountain. While the Mountain represents a sense of security in life in the hexagram *Ta Ch'u/The Taming Power of the Great*, Nietzsche considers life as an abyss which must be bravely overcome. A sense of danger outweighs any sense of security for Nietzsche.

In the hexagram *Ta Ch'u/The Taming Power of the Great*, the fourth and the fifth lines are the only two weak lines of the hexagram. The fourth line is the weak line of emotions and feelings, while the fifth line is the weak line of subjective experience. The top line is a strong line which refers to Heaven, the Creative, law as a master who controls. It follows that the individual life of perception and feeling as well as the subjective fluctuation between fear and hope and whatever flows from this are subordinated to an objective master. The Tao becomes master over the human and



temporal elements in the individual. Accordingly, the Mountain gives shape to the Creative, like enduring movement coined in form.

A ceaseless stream keeps on moving in front of us without beginning and end. Such is the nature of the 'I' that appears so secure, but is so transitory. The 'I' changes in the course of time, like the beam of a flashlight, illuminating the process of emotional movement. Things seem to transform and change when caught by the beam of light, while the beam alone seems to endure. R. Wilhelm (1995:271-272) states that

the I does not exist, it is merely composed of complexes of the soul's states which, when they become transparent and equipped with a distinctive mark, consider themselves as existent. And while the I is as nonexistent as ever, it is nevertheless now imprisoned in transitoriness. ... Nonetheless, the wheel of suffering is kept in motion because of the craving and greed of the I. The I is willing to accept the nourishment of transitoriness, that is, to nourish itself from illusion. To be nourished by illusion is to resort to nonnourishment and, therefore, craving is created anew each time.

The acknowledgement of life with reference to the transitory and illusory nature of the 'I' is transcendental wisdom. The wheel of suffering is nourished by the 'craving and greed of the I.' Our ignorance of the transitory and illusive nature of existence nourishes the suffering of life. In fact, things come and go, including the I. Wilhelm (1995:276) refers to 'the human being who is not "I" and who is not "you," and yet is within me and within you. ... humankind is I and I am humankind.' Thus the enlightened being corresponds to the Tao of man in that his constituent parts are integral to the whole. The unity of subjective experience and objective law within oneself is a manifestation of changelessness within change. The thorough awakening of the mind to the phenomena of changelessness in change enables the enlightened being to live a dreamlike/wakeful existence. Even though he recognizes the illusive nature of phenomena, he does not negate life. Instead, he participates passionately and naively in his quotidian activities because of his awareness of the interdependence and interrelatedness of all things in the universe. Accordingly, the distinction between subject and object is totally dissolved. Such a recognition is also apparent in Nietzsche's writing:

Main thought! Not that nature deceives us, the individuals, and promotes its ends by hoodwinking us: instead, the individuals arrange all Being according to individual — i.e. false — measures; we want to be right in this case, and consequently 'nature' has



to appear as a liar. In truth, there are no *individual truths*, instead there are merely individual *errors*. The *individual* itself is an *error*. Everything happening within us is in itself *something else* that we do not know: only we put the intention, the hoodwinking and the morality into nature. — But I distinguish: the conceived-conceited individuals and the true ‘life-systems’, of which everybody among us is one — both are conflated into one, while ‘the individual’ is only a sum of conscious feelings and judgments and errors, a *belief*, a little piece of the true life-system, or many little pieces, thought and imagined to be unified, a ‘unit’ that does not hold. We are buds on One tree — what do we know about what may become of us in the interest of the tree! But we have a consciousness, as if we would want to and should be *Everything*, a fantasy of ‘I’ and all ‘Non-I’. *Ceasing to feel being such a fantastical ego! Learning step by step to throw off the supposed individual! Discovering the errors of the ego! Looking into egotism as an error! Don’t you ever conceive of its opposite as altruism! This would be the love of the other supposed individuals! No! Beyond ‘me’ and ‘you’! Feeling cosmic.* (Moeller 2004: 62-63)

Feeling ‘cosmic’, ‘beyond “me” and “you”’, is not a characteristic only of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*, but also of the Tao of man, that knows the oneness of the universe. The idea of ‘feeling cosmic’ can also be described by the Buddhist term ‘non-self’. This is the wisdom of enlightened beings who understand the emptiness of things, including self and the universe, which are mutually interdependent. They recognize that the opposites, such as rich and poor, praise and blame, good and evil, exist because of varying causes and conditions. Attaining the fruit harvest depends on sowing the seeds, watering, sunshine and so on. This state of existence is described by Master Hsing Yun (1999:13-14) in this way: ‘All phenomena of the universe — be it physical or mental, be it self or others — do not exist on their own, but as a result of a combination of many factors. This is the Dharma-realm of oneness. In this state of mind, all differences are equal; truth and phenomena are integrated.’ As mentioned earlier, the notion of the basic oneness of universe is dominant in the Chinese philosophical tradition and is supported by modern physics.

Capra (1975:99) indicates that ‘the central theme of the *Avatamsaka* is the unity and interrelation of all things and events; a conception which is not only the very essence of the Eastern world view, but also one of the basic elements of the world view emerging from modern physics.’ The Chinese world view asserts Tao as the underlying reality of all things. The Tao and the work of the principles of yin and



yang are shown in Capra's diagram.⁷ With reference to this diagram we may visualize the sphere of Tao as a process without end or beginning in a higher-dimensional reality. This state of mind is described by Nietzsche as the 'Dionysian world of eternal self-creating, of eternal self-destroying', 'without beginning, without end' (*WLN* 38[12]). This idea is also expressed by the following verse in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* :

Living beings have no birth,
Nor either any decay;
If one attains such knowledge as this,
One will realize the unexcelled way. (Cleary 1993:284)

In Nietzsche's Dionysian world the interrelatedness and interdependence of all beings and things is also apparent as 'a play of forces and force-waves', described, however, as 'a monster of force' and 'an ocean of forces storming and flooding within themselves' (*WLN* 38 [12]). The dynamic relationship of all things is illustrated by the imagery of the Jewel Net of Indra in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. In the palace of the God Indra there is a net which stretches out infinitely in all dimensions, hung with a single glittering jewel in each of its 'eyes', so that the jewels are infinite in number. An infinite reflecting process takes place, as the polished surface of each of the jewels reflect all the other jewels in the net, ad infinitum. In this way existence appears as a vast web of interdependencies, as a vast organism made of an infinity of individuals, all sustaining each other and defining each other. The 'Net of Indra' symbolizes the principle that all things reflect one another. Thus F. Cook (1977:2) concludes that the image of Indra's net 'symbolizes a cosmos in which there is an infinitely repeated interrelationship among all the members of the cosmos'. This theme is also supported by new physics.

Zukav (1979:238) indicates that this Buddhist idea corresponds to 'the quantum view that all particles exist potentially as different combinations of other

⁷ See Appendix 7. Fritjof Capra refers to a ball going round a circle to illustrate the dynamic unity of polar opposites, indicating that the Tao is the underlying reality of all things. When this movement is projected on to a screen, one sees an oscillation between two extreme points. Capra (1975:146-147) explains that 'the ball goes round the circle with constant speed, but in the projection it slows down as it reaches the edge, turns around, and then accelerates again only to slow down once more — and so on, in endless cycles. In any projection of that kind, the circular movement will appear as an oscillation between two opposite points, but in the movement itself the opposites are unified and transcended'.



particles. ... According to *The Flower Garland Sutra*, each part of physical reality is constructed of all the other parts.' The appearance of physical reality is based on the interdependence of all things. In the natural world everything is produced from conditions and nothing has an independent existence of its own, as everything is connected to and conditioned by everything else. This is the transcendent wisdom of all enlightened beings. All things come into being because of causes and conditions and if causes and conditions dissolve, things become extinct, so enlightened beings would not attach themselves to things as ordinary people do, and this is the core of enlightened practice:

All things are born of causes and conditions —
Their essential nature is neither existent or nonexistent;
And in causes and conditions, what they produce
They ultimately have no attachments at all. (Cleary 1993:565)

Ordinary people wrongly grasp at and attach themselves to conditional things, perceiving these things as real and substantial. Thus they do evil deeds in pursuit of their self-interest without noticing that their deluded acts would cause bad karmic effects and therefore bring about suffering and affliction. Enlightened beings realize the illusive and empty nature of all things and dedicate a myriad good deeds in order to benefit all beings. Both in Buddhist teaching and in Nietzsche's writing it is recognized that in interrelated and interdependent relationships all things sustain each other and grow. This idea is expressed in tree metaphors.

A tree metaphor describing the compassion and wisdom of great enlightened beings can be found in both Nietzsche's writings and in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. Samantabhadra Bodhisattva says that 'all beings are the roots of the Bodhi-tree, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers. If (Bodhisattvas) apply the water of great compassion to all beings (who form its roots), the Bodhi-tree will bloom with flowers, and bear the fruits of the wisdom of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas' (1996a:15). This implies that if one applies great compassion to benefit all beings, one will attain supreme enlightenment and supreme transcendental wisdom. Nietzsche's tree metaphor with reference to the evolution of man in *Zarathustra* shows affinity with this idea: 'It is with man as it is with the tree. The more he aspires to the height and light, the more strongly do his roots strive earthward, downward, into the dark, the deep — into evil' (ZI On the Tree on the Mountainside). Nietzsche also provides



tree metaphor to describe the ‘*incomprehensible ones*’ who ‘keep growing, keep changing’ in *Gay Science*:

We shed our old bark, we shed our skins every spring, we keep becoming younger, fuller of future, taller stronger, we push our roots ever more powerfully into the depths — into evil — while at the same time we embrace the heavens ever more lovingly, more broadly, imbibing their light ever more thirstily with all our twigs and leaves. Like trees we grow — this is hard to understand, as is all of life — not in one place only but everywhere, not in one direction but equally upward and outward and inward and downward; our energy is at work simultaneously in the trunk, branches, and roots. (*GS* 371)

The ‘incomprehensible ones’ may be associated with Bodhisattvas. The tree keeps on growing ‘equally upward and outward and inward and downward,’ never to be an end product. Thus the Nietzschean *Übermensch* is always a work-in-progress. The term ‘incomprehensible’ suggests Nietzsche’s idea of the *Übermensch* as an enigma, an idea also apparent from the subtitle of his masterpiece, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*. About this work Nietzsche claims that he has given mankind ‘the greatest present that has ever been made to it so far’ (*EH* P 4). A gift-giving nature, or compassion in Buddhist terms, is an important theme in this masterpiece and is an important feature of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*.

4.1.3. Great Compassion

For the sake of all suffering beings
You exercise great compassion to liberate them.

The *Avatamsaka Sutra* (Cleary 1993:267)

Great compassion is a prerequisite to the practice of enlightened beings or Bodhisattvas. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* says: ‘The Great Compassionate Heart is the essence of Buddhahood. For the sake of (delivering) all beings, (the Bodhisattva) develops great compassion, and from the great compassion springs the Bodhi-heart, from the Bodhi-heart comes the enlightenment’ (1996a:15). Great compassion is the motivation for enlightened beings to engage themselves in the eternal process of enlightenment, even though they have the transcendental wisdom to see through the empty nature of all things.

The great compassion of enlightened beings can be symbolized by sunshine. Master Hsing Yun (2000:147-148) states that



the compassion of a great bodhisattva can be likened to sunshine, for it warms and illuminates everything it touches. The sun does not discriminate among the things it shines upon, nor does it expect any reward from them. In like manner, a bodhisattva does not discriminate among sentient beings. He does not help just one or two of them, he helps all of them. He turns no one away and he does not expect to be rewarded by anyone.

At the end of *Zarathustra*, a sun metaphor is used to describe the completion of Zarathustra's self-transformation — 'glowing and strong as a morning sun that comes out of dark mountains' (Z IV The Sign). Nietzsche also employs a sun metaphor to represent Zarathustra's love of humanity: The sun

approaches impatiently over the sea. Do you not feel the thirst and the hot breath of her love? She would suck at the sea and drink its depth into her heights; and the sea's desire rises toward her with a thousand breasts. It wants to be kissed and sucked by the thirst of the sun; it wants to become air and height and a footpath of light, and itself light (Z II On Immaculate Perception).

In this passage, the words 'thirst' and 'hot breath' suggest Zarathustra's intensity of love for humanity, 'the human sea' (Z IV Honey Sacrifice). Zarathustra employs the metaphor of 'a thousand breasts' to signify his love of man, as the great love of the sun that satisfies the desire of the sea. Interestingly, the number 'thousand' is also used to describe the great compassion of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. The image of a thousand hands and a thousand eyes is the characteristic of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, who has innumerable skills, symbolized by 'a thousand hands', and always pays attention to everyone at anytime and anywhere where help is needed, symbolized by 'a thousand eyes'. Nietzsche refers to such a generous nature by the term 'squanderer'. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva has a thousand hands to liberate countless sentient beings from suffering. In the same way Zarathustra squanders what is given to him, regarding himself as 'a squanderer with a thousand hands' (Z IV The Honey Sacrifice). The word 'squanderer' is used to describe an individual who possesses overflowing strength, 'squandering his spirit with the unreason of squandering nature' (GS 202). Furthermore, Zarathustra employs the metaphor of a 'honey sacrifice' to indicate the excessive strength of the squanderer. When he descends to 'the human world, the human sea', he provides his best bait to the 'human fish': 'Drip your sweetest dew, honey of my heart!' (Z IV The Honey Sacrifice). Zarathustra gives until he has 'spent and squandered the old honey down to the last



drop' (Z IV The Cry of Distress). Zarathustra's 'honey sacrifice' seems to correspond to the great compassion of enlightened beings who work to liberate all suffering beings.

Whereas Lord Buddha extols the great compassion of Bodhisattvas, Zarathustra appreciates his squandering nature, symbolized by the sweetness of honey. Nietzsche's squanderer, however, is misunderstood by humanity, even though his explosive strength would cause 'a kind of higher morality': 'He flows out, he overflows, he uses himself up, he does not spare himself — and this is a calamitous, involuntary fatality, no less than a river's flooding the land' (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 44). In contrast to the calamity of Zarathustra's squanderer, in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* Lord Buddha asserts that any beings who strive for enlightenment according to Buddhist teachings would attain the blessing of Buddha:

If any sentient beings can accept the teaching,
And, hearing the virtues of Buddha, strive for enlightenment,
He causes them to dwell in the ocean of bounty, forever pure (Cleary 1993:78).

If one practices the Bodhisattva way, one has to observe three important principles. For example, in practicing giving, one's giving has to correspond with bodhi mind, then one's action of giving must be guided by kindness and compassion. In giving one must also have the wisdom to keep in mind the emptiness of things. The great enlightened deed of giving is described by the *Avatamsaka Sutra* as follows:

Great enlightening beings are able to generously give all kind of vessels — gold vessels filled with jewels, silver vessels filled with jewels, lapis lazuli vessels filled with various precious substances, glass vessels filled with innumerable jewel ornaments, mother-of-pearl vessels filled with red pearls, agate vessels filled with coral, white jade vessels filled with myriad delicacies, sandalwood vessels filled with celestial raiment, diamond vessels filled with myriad sublime fragrances — countless precious vessels of all kinds, filled with innumerable various treasures; they give them to Buddhas, because they believe the Buddhas' field of blessings is inconceivable; ... they give to the lowly, poor, and destitute, because they regard all sentient beings equally with the loving eye of great benevolence and compassion; ... they give everything to everyone, because they never reject sentient beings. When they give in this way, they have no attachment to the gift or the receiver. (Cleary 1993:573)

The wealth of enlightened beings is incomparable. In practicing the virtue of giving they give equally to buddhas and to all sentient beings. Enlightened beings acknowledge that to benefit others is to benefit oneself, as also indicated by



Nietzsche's assertion that 'we are buds on One tree'. Zarathustra instructs his disciples to strive 'for the gift-giving virtue' as he does, stating that 'insatiably your soul strives for treasures and gems, because your virtue is insatiable in wanting to give. You force all things to and into yourself that they may flow back out of your well as the gifts of your love' (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1). Zarathustra considers himself 'a giver of gifts' (Z II On the Pitying). He states that 'a gift-giving virtue is the highest virtue' (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1). Indeed, the practice of the virtue of giving is one of the most important aspects of the dance of the Bodhisttva.

The Bodhisttva path to enlightenment corresponds to Nietzsche's vision of creating 'new suns'. In *Gay Science* Nietzsche employs the sun metaphor to present an overall philosophical justification of every individual's way of living and thinking, stating that a sun

bestows warmth, blessings, and fertility on him; it makes him independent of praise and blame, self-sufficient, rich, liberal with happiness and good will; incessantly it refashions evil into good, leads all energies to bloom and ripen, and does not permit the petty weeds of grief and chagrin to come up at all. In the end one exclaims:
How I wish that many such new suns were yet to be created! (GS 289)

The passage describes a vision of creating 'new suns', implying a new way of living and thinking. To be able to create a sun for oneself appears to be Nietzsche's ambition for humanity. Nietzsche's vision may be realized through entering the knowledge of Buddha and cultivating the practice of Bodhisattvas. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* mentions people

Comprehending the true nature of things,
Yet not conceptualising the nature of things,
Knowing things have no essence and no discrimination —
Such people can enter the Buddha's knowledge.
(Cleary 1993:626)

The sun metaphor does not only describe the great kindness and compassion of enlightened beings, but it also signifies their transcendental wisdom, as the sun equally shines for all without discrimination. It is important to understand that when great enlightened beings practise the virtue of giving 'they have no attachment to the gift or the receiver.' Consequently, enlightened beings are free from conflict and affliction. They perform their pure deeds by means of transcendental wisdom. They see the emptiness of things, so their great wisdom becomes a tactful means.



Great compassion and great wisdom appear as the distinct characteristics of enlightened beings. They do not discriminate between sentient beings or expect to be rewarded by anyone. Master Hsing Yun (1999:14) indicates that ‘with the great wisdom of the non-discriminating mind, bodhisattvas attain the ultimate bodhi (enlightenment) and masterfully lead sentient beings onto the path of enlightenment.’ The *Avatamsaka Sutra* says:

The truly awake know all things
Are nondual, beyond duality, all equal,
Inherently pure as space,
Not distinguishing self and nonself. (Cleary 1993:1011)

Whereas Bodhisattvas attain ‘ultimate bliss’, Zarathustra’s giving is not only a blessing, but also a danger. Thus Zarathustra comments to his disciples: ‘When your heart flows broad and full like a river, a blessing and a danger to those living near’ (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1). In this context the Nietzschean *Übermensch* is described in terms of calamity and frenzy. Zarathustra exclaims:

Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this lightning, he is this
frenzy. (Z P 3)

I believe that to overcome this frenzied and violent aspect of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* one should cultivate one’s mind to be an unbounded horizon of space, non-attached, non-discriminating, and non-dual, having the qualities of heaven and earth, as implied by the *I Ching*. In fact, ‘space’ always denotes our true mind or nature in Buddhist teaching.

4.1.4. The primacy of mind

Strange indeed! Strange indeed! Strange indeed! All living beings have the Buddha nature. All can become Buddhas. It is only due to false thinking and attachments that they do not certify to attainment.

Flower Adornment Sutra Preface

In the dance of the Bodhisattva, transcendent wisdom and great compassion go hand in hand. Such an achievement derives from the diligent and genuine labour of his mind. Master Hui Neng (1998:18) describes the enlightened mind as space or void, exempt from the turbulence of ‘dust’:



There is no Bodhi-tree,
Nor stand of a mirror bright.
Since all is void,
Where can the dust alight?

The enlightened being makes an effort to enlarge the horizon of his mind as much as he can, like space without boundary. He strives to cultivate his mind as space in order to embrace all things, and at the same time lets things go without being hurt or harmed in dealing with the illusory nature of existence.

Nietzsche's Dionysian world, however, is apparently violent, 'a play of forces and force-waves', which appears to Nietzsche as 'a monster of force' (WLN 38 [12]). 'Space' is a metaphor to describe the mind of the enlightened being in Buddhist teaching, while Nietzsche employs the mirror as a metaphor to describe the mind of his storming Dionysian world. The mind of the former is like space, functioning in quiescence among dancing dust, while that of the latter reflects 'an ocean of forces storming and flooding' (WLN 38[12]). Consequently, the former foregoes suffering and affliction, while the latter experiences nausea and seasickness. Enlightened beings, like Master Hui Neng, thoroughly understand the empty nature of all things, so a 'mirror mind' appears as void as space to them. Their mind do not attach to any things within or without. Thus, enlightened beings are free from affliction and suffering even in a chaotic, changing environment. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* states:

Those enlightening beings, while in the world,
Are not attached to any internal and external phenomena;
Like the wind travelling unhindered through the sky
Is the function of the great beings' mind. (Cleary 1993:539-540)

While the mind of great enlightened beings is like space, functioning like the wind, moved but unattached, the mind of ordinary people is caught in the net of external things, where they don't realize their true mind or Buddha nature. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* says that 'there is no difference between the mind, the Buddha, and all sentient beings' (Hsing Yun 1999a:67). Shakyamuni Buddha points to the failure, shared by all beings, of recognizing their true nature, which causes them to lose themselves. In the *Lotus Sutra* Lord Buddha employs the metaphor of a beggar who carries a priceless pearl in his sleeve without knowing so to illustrate the unawareness of the intrinsically pure nature, the Buddha nature of ordinary men.



Indeed, every sentient being has the potential to attain enlightenment through the process of self-cultivation and self-transformation. Master Hsing Yun (2006:8) points to the fact that ‘sentient beings are buddhas-to-be. Since a Buddha originates from a human being, every human being has the potential to become a Buddha, because his or her pure nature is no different from that of a Buddha.’ The main reason for not being able to eliminate affliction and attain supreme enlightenment is laziness to cultivate a pure mind:

If one wishes to eliminate
The countless faults and ills,
One should work with diligence
On the Buddha-teaching.
...
Like when the dazzling sun shines
A child shuts its eyes
And complains ‘Why can’t I see?’
So too are the lazy like this. (Cleary 1993:305)

Enlightened beings diligently and sincerely commit themselves to accumulate enlightened virtues, so that their minds remain unmoved in confronting the kaleidoscopic forms of things. On the highest level of existence, that of enlightened beings, the root of discrimination is completely severed because of the knowledge that all true nature is originally pure. Ordinary people, however, are lazy and ignorant of the work of enlightened beings. The the *Avatamsaka Sutra* uses the following sun metaphor to describe the work of enlightened beings :

When the sun first comes up
It shines first on the high mountain, then the others,
Then shines on the high plains, then the whole land,
Yet the sun never has any discrimination.
The light of Buddha is also thus,
First illumining the enlightening beings, then the self-enlightened,
Then last the listeners and all sentient beings,
Yet the Buddha basically has no stirring thoughts. (Cleary 1993:988)

This metaphor illustrates how the sun shines equally on all beings. If one is blind or always remains in a dark room, one never sees sunshine, even though the sun shines all day long. Ordinary men indulge themselves in daily activities with fervent desire according to a discriminating and attached mind. Enlightened beings, however,



follow their innate true nature rather than to pursue external things. According to the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, ‘when they perceive any objects of sense, whether pleasant or unpleasant, they do not conceive like or dislike — their minds are free, without faults, broad pure, joyful, blissful, free from all sorrows and troubles. Their minds are flexible, their senses are pure and cool’ (Cleary 1993:547). Enlightened beings cultivate the broadest horizon of their minds as space, whereas the ordinary man’s mind is like a vessel, occupied with discrimination and attachment with regard to earthly things — gain or loss, like or dislike, usefulness or harm, unaware of the path of enlightenment.

The manifestation of the diversity of things is a product of the mind. It follows that one’s resolution is like a seed that one sows in one’s mind. The same action would have different results according to one’s resolution, whether self-interested or impartial. The *Sutra on the Original Vows and the Attainment of Merits of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva* says:

If virtuous people of future times will practise good deeds according to the Buddha’s Teachings, or make offerings for repairing Buddhist pagodas or temples or mending Buddhist Sutras, their merit, small as a hair though it be, or a dustmote or a grain of sand or a drop of water, if they will transfer such merits to beings of the ten realms of space, such meritorious persons will receive inconceivably great bliss for hundreds of thousands of lives.⁸ If they will transfer their merits to their family and relatives, their relatives will receive happiness for three lives. (1983:26)

According to Buddhist teaching, the ability to attain enlightenment lies in one’s mind. To train their mind not to create discrimination is the pure practical work of enlightened beings on the way to supreme enlightenment. Master Hsing Yun (2000:157) indicates that ‘the core of Buddhism is human heart. All Buddhas were

⁸ Master Hsuan Hua (1980:xxviii) indicates that the terminology ‘dust motes’ and ‘hair tips’ denote the smallest quanta in existence. They are used to describe ‘the dynamic interaction of limitless fields, a fluid dance at the molecular level.’ Because in ancient times Buddha did not carry out experiments at the subatomic level, so ‘the Buddhas did not employ the exact terms “protons”, “nucleus”, or “electrons”, but the Sutra covered these and more. That they declined to use scientific apparatus did not stop the sages and Bodhisattvas from certifying to a state wherein realms as infinite as Ganges sands lay bare before their eye of Wisdom. They perceived these states through spiritual insight (in-sight), and not through their sense organ.’



human beings before they became Buddhas.’⁹ In the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, the Book titled *Purifying Practice*, the enlightened being Chief in Knowledge asks Manjushri Bodhisattva a series of questions with reference to the practices of enlightened beings, such as, ‘How can enlightening beings attain faultless physical, verbal, and mental action?’, ‘How can they attain pure physical, verbal, and mental action?’ and ‘How can they fulfill the means of transcendence — generosity, self-control, tolerance, effort, meditation, and wisdom?’¹⁰ (Cleary 1993:312). The answer to these questions lies in the usage of one’s mind. Manjushri Bodhisattva replies that

if enlightening beings use their mind properly, they can attain all supreme qualities, can have a mind unhindered in regard to all enlightening teachings, can remain on the Path of the Buddhas of past, present, and future, never leaving it even while living in the midst of sentient beings, can comprehend the characteristics of all things, cut off all evil and fulfil all good. They will be physically most excellent, like Universally Good; all of their practical vows they will be able to fulfil, and will be free in all ways, and will be guides for all sentient beings. (Cleary 1993:313)

Then Manjushri Bodhisattva proceeds to describe the ways of living of the enlightened beings whose minds concentrate on unpolluted, undistorted, pure activities in everyday life. In their daily activities, sitting, walking, working, eating and so on, each moment enlightened beings think of benefiting all beings. Even in danger and difficult situations they still wish the best for all beings:

If in danger and difficulty,
They should wish that all beings
Be free,
Unhindered wherever they go. (Cleary 1993:314)

⁹ Similar to waves and particles which are energy, heart and mind refer to the same thing. As the Chinese understand as ‘heart’ what English-speaking people understand as ‘mind,’ so sometimes to write idiomatic English the word ‘mind’ is used in English translation. In this dissertation the words ‘heart’ and ‘mind’ are interchangeable.

¹⁰ The six transcendences or *paramitas* are the practices of the Bodhisattvas. They are: giving (generosity), ethics (self-control), tolerance, effort, meditative concentration and wisdom. Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:154) indicates that ‘*paramitas* is a Sanskrit word that literally means “crossing over to the other shore.” Its deeper meaning is completion, fulfillment, transcendence, arrival at the truth, perfection’. The six *paramitas* are the deep virtues that lead the Bodhisattva to enlightenment.



This line — ‘They should wish that all beings’ — is a vow common to all daily purifying activities of enlightened beings. It is the key to cultivating a pure mind and performing actions which are pure. Enlightened beings elevate their mind by making this vow for each and every action, and thus their minds are pure, like space. Ordinary men cultivate a discriminating mind and indulge in the pursuit of self-interest in their actions, while enlightened beings vow to benefit all beings. Enlightened beings recognize that all beings share the same true nature, so they make a ceaseless effort to help all beings and by doing so they eventually help themselves to attain supreme enlightenment. In this way their light shines on all without discrimination, but ordinary men with their discriminating mind cling to the multifarious changing forms of things whose true nature they are unaware of.

Nietzsche urges us to learn to act as Nature does in order to become what we are. He notes ‘how accommodating, how friendly all the world is toward us as soon as we act as all the world does and “let ourselves go” like all the world!’ (*GM II 24*) Indeed, ‘letting go’ is a characteristic of the unattached mind and, together with the ideal of acting in accordance with the world, appears to be the core of the mysterious union of man and universe. Perhaps the style of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* in dealing with life may unveil this mystery. The ideal of acting in accordance with the world is embraced in the Chinese trinity of heaven, earth and man in the *I Ching*. It is symbolized by the structure of trigrams, where man occupies the central line of the trigram. This signifies that man is the product of heaven and earth. As the work of the principles of yin and yang, man has the potential to reveal the wonders of heaven and earth. Thus the work of the superior man is shown in the ‘Image’ of the hexagram *Ch’ien/The Creative*:

The movement of heaven is full of power.
Thus the superior man makes himself strong and untiring.
(1950:6 & 373)

Similarly, the core of the work of enlightened beings involves ‘enlightened virtues.’ Their work is timeless and untiring. The work that should be done by enlightened beings or Bodhisattvas on the way to attain supreme enlightenment is described in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* in this way:

Observing the boundless past, present, and future,
Studying enlightened virtues
Without ever tiring of it:
This is what work should be done. (Cleary 1993:289)



The *I Ching* emphasizes the power of the movement of heaven, which people have to follow so that they would become strong and untiring like heaven. In the *Avatamsaka Sutra* a similar idea is expressed:

Just as the sun without clouds overcast
Shines throughout the ten directions,
Its light beams having no difference:
So is the truth of all Buddhas. (Cleary 1993:303)

To benefit all is the characteristic of the sun, image of heaven, and the same applies to the earth. Nourishing and facilitating the growth of all things without discrimination is the nature of the earth, and also the truth of all Buddhas:

Just as the nature of earth is one
While beings each live separately,
And the earth has no thought of oneness or difference,
So is the truth of all Buddhas.
...
Just as the element earth, while one,
Can produce various sprouts,
Yet it's not that the earth is diverse:
So is the truth of all Buddhas. (Cleary 1993:302-303)

The oneness of earth nourishes all growing things. This symbolizes the truth of all Buddhas, which correlates with the wisdom of the hexagram *K'un/The Receptive*:

The earth's condition is receptive devotion.
Thus the superior man who has breadth of character
Carries the outer world. (1950:12 & 389)

The doubling of the trigram *K'un* in this hexagram indicates that the earth might dedicate itself without forfeiting its nature. One has to cultivate one's character to attain inner strength in order not to be swayed by the changing external environment. While heaven is actively in movement, the earth is entirely devoted to rest. The former demonstrates the way the superior man would constantly and diligently foster his character to attain inner strength, while the latter shows that he is capable of quiescently enduring the outer world without being swayed by it. Thus the images of the two hexagrams, movement and rest, creative and receptive, which are manifestations of the principles of yin and yang, represent the way the superior man attains peace inwardly in spiritual cultivation and outwardly harmonizes himself in society without forfeiting his true, inner nature. This is the highest life that man



should strive to attain. In short, the Chinese view asserts that a sage is capable of accomplishing spiritual cultivation within and shining forth in society without, so that a sage would lead the highest life.

The earth in its 'devotion' carries all things without exception. The same applies to the superior man who cultivates his character to be boundless, pure and sustainable, as the 'space' described in Shakyamuni Buddha's metaphor, so that he is capable of supporting the diversity of people and things. The description of such a mind is also apparent in the *I Ching* in the hexagram *K'un/The Receptive*. It is made of six broken lines, which reveals an empty space in the middle of the hexagram, signifying the spacious mind of an individual, while the hexagram *Ch'ien/The Creative* consists of six unbroken lines, signifying the inexhaustible creative power of heaven. This seems to indicate that an empty heart receives the continuous flow of energy from the Creative, as the earth constantly receives energy from heaven to make things grow. Furthermore, the structure of the hexagram *Chung Fu/Inner Truth*, consisting of two yielding lines in between two firm lines above and below also reveals an open space in the centre of the hexagram, implying that the centre, or the heart, of an individual should be void, because voidness is without boundary and limit.¹¹ Broadening the space of one's heart as much as one can, to embrace all, appears to be one of the decisive factors of actualizing the unity of heaven and humanity.

While the *I Ching* emphasizes the earth's devotion with regard to the inexhaustible and constantly flowing energy of heaven, the *Avatamsaka Sutra* reminds us of the importance of inner 'seeds', which cause things to come into being on earth:

Just as the earth is one
Yet produces sprouts according to the seeds
Without partiality toward any of them
So is the Buddhas' field of blessings. (Cleary 1993:303)

Although in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* Shakyamuni Buddha describes the actions of enlightened beings in terms of the tireless movement of heaven and the restful nourishment of the earth, it is also understood that the seed of these actions lies in the minds of the enlightened beings:

¹¹ See chapter 3 p. 172 with regard to this hexagram.



In their minds, no high or low —
They tirelessly seek the Path,
As they go, causing sentient beings
To live in good, purifying ways.

Their wisdom benefits all
Like trees, rivers, and springs,
And also like the earth
Upon which everything rests. (Cleary 1993:1112)

Shakyamuni Buddha emphasizes that in the minds of enlightened beings no relative distinction exists — ‘no high or low’. It follows that to cultivate a non-discriminating mind is crucial in the practice of the Bodhisattva. However, the authors of the *I Ching* assert that ‘heaven is high, the earth is low; thus the Creative and the Receptive are determined. In correspondence with this difference between low and high, inferior and superior places are established’ (1950:280). Such an assertion stresses the supreme status of the sage and therefore establishes an insurmountable gap between the sage and ordinary people. Although Mencius asserts that anyone can become a sage, as a Yao or a Shun, ordinary people dare not believe that they are capable of attaining such an achievement. On the one hand, the *I Ching* indicates that man has to conform to the characteristics of heaven and earth, which are non-dual and non-discriminating, without knowing high and low, inferior and superior. On the other hand, the orderly hierarchy of human relationships as set out in the *I Ching* seems to make the unity of man and heaven remain an ideal for generations and generations, creating anticipation of the presence of a sage instead of presenting a goal that every man should strive for.

Non-discrimination is an aspect of space. The non-discriminating mind is recognized by Nietzsche as the *over-wealthy soul*. He refers to the ‘genuine affability’ of the over-wealthy soul. ‘The carelessness of the over-wealthy soul,’ Nietzsche says, ‘only knows hospitality, only ever practises, and knows how to practise, hospitality – heart and home open to anyone who wants to step inside, whether beggar, cripple or king’ (WLN 2[1]). Indeed, in order to triumph over the violent aspects of the natural world and life, as described by Nietzsche’s idea of the Will to Power, an over-wealthy soul should be cultivated. This involves an unbounded horizon of mind to embrace all, like space. With such a state of mind, one would probably be capable of controlling one’s fate without consulting the oracle of the *I Ching*.



According to the Buddhist, one should take responsibility for one's life rather than just accept one's fate. This idea is apparent from the true story of Mr. Yuan Liao-fan, whose work *Liao-fan's Four Lessons* illustrates how he transforms and controls his destiny rather than simply accepts it. Yuan relates how every event turns out exactly as predicted by an old man, named Kong. However, when Yuan meets a Ch'an Master, Yun, who tells him that the average person is under the control of fate because of being controlled by the vital energy of yin and yang, he recognizes that one might change one's fate through one's deeds. Master Yun explains that

fate is created by ourselves, our form is created by our mind, by our thoughts. Good luck or bad luck is also determined by ourselves. ... In the Buddhist sutras ... , it is written that if you pray for wealth and fame, for a son or daughter, or for longevity, you will have them. ... The sixth Zen patriarch, Hui-neng, had said that all the fields of merit are not beyond a small square inch. One seeks from within, in one's own heart, and so one can then be connected with everything. The outside is merely a reflection of the inside. If one seeks into one's own heart into practicing virtuous ways, then we will naturally receive the respect of others and bring prominent position and wealth to ourselves. (1998a:4 -5)

Master Yun clearly states that the core of creating destiny lies in seeking 'within, in one's own heart'. One has to control one's mind and actions in order to control one's fate. Furthermore, one's destiny is created by causes and conditions. The cause is one's will and decision. This situation may be seen to find resonance in an interpretation of modern physics. The experiments of particle physicists prove that light can no longer be regarded as either a particle or a wave, because it is *both*, depending on how physicists look at it. It follows that how we look at the world changes the world.

Zukav (1979:114) claims that *we*, 'the Cogs in the Machine have become the Creators of the Universe.' His remark is inspired by the philosophical implication of Werner Heisenberg's 'uncertainty principle' in new physics, involving the observation that we cannot accurately measure at the same time both the position *and* the momentum of a moving particle. It is our decision to measure either the position or the momentum of the particle. Nature responds according to our decision, what we select as our experiment. We create our own world according to our own determination. It follows that our reality is a creation of the mind. As Zukav (1979:28) notes:



Not only do we influence our reality, but, in some degree, we actually *create* it. Because it is the nature of things that we can know either the momentum of a particle or its position, but not both, *we must choose* which of these two properties we want to determine. Metaphysically, this is very close to saying that we *create* certain properties because we choose to measure those properties.

Zukav (1979:38) indicates that the new physics is ‘based not upon “absolute truth”, but upon *us*.’ By getting rid of bad thought patterns, which produce bad actions, and at the same time constantly doing good deeds, Yuan accumulates as much merit as he can, so that his fate is changed for the better: ‘from miserliness to giving, from intolerance to understanding, from arrogance to humility, from laziness to diligence, from cruelty to compassion, from deception to sincerity’ (1998:7). Ordinary people who are ignorant of this wisdom do evil deeds in pursuit of their self-interest without noticing that their deluded acts would eventually cause harm to themselves. The *Sutra on the Original Vows and the Attainment of Merits of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva* relates, ‘If Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva encounters beings who commit sin by killing, he helps them to realise that such sins shorten their lives. If he encounters thieves and robbers, he will lead them to understand that such evil actions will bring suffering and poverty to those who commit them’ (1983:11). Thus, in order to change one’s fate for the better one has to understand karmic cause and condition as a force underlying all things, so that one will correct all bad habits and bad thought patterns.

To transform his life to perfection is the task of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*. D. W. Conway (1997:20) interprets the *Übermensch* as ‘any human being who actually advances the frontier of human perfectibility.’ W. Kaufmann (1974:254), however, points out that ‘as human beings we have ideals of perfection which we generally find ourselves unable to attain. We recognize norms and standards of which we usually fall short; we long for a triumph over old age, suffering, and death; we yearn for perfection and immortality — and seem incapable of fulfillment. We desire to be “as gods,” but we cannot be so.’ Whereas Kaufmann mourns human impotence, Nietzsche criticizes that ‘man has all too long had an “evil eye” for his natural inclinations’ (*GM* II 24), disregarding the possibility of being reborn in beauty (*GM* II 18). Criticizing Christian morality, Nietzsche urges us to reverse our ‘evil eye’ with reference to ourselves and the natural world and strive for a higher morality. This idea is expressed in the heading of the preface to *The Antichrist*: ‘Revaluation of All



Values' (A P). Nietzsche claims that 'an attempt at the reverse would *in itself* be possible — but who is strong enough for it?' (*GM* II 24) As he considers himself 'Nietzsche as Educator' (*EH* The Untimely Ones 3), his life represents such an endeavour. Thus D. W. Conway (1997:22) indicates that the *Übermensch* is not only an ideal type, but 'a concrete, empirical type' and that Nietzsche thereby 'legislates his own self-creation as an exemplary human being' (Conway 1997:52). As the Nietzschean *Übermensch* embodies the characteristics of the Bodhisattva, Nietzsche's vision seems possible according to the practice of Bodhisattva. Master Hsing Yun (1998a:24) asserts that 'when we can work for the benefit of all beings in the Bodhisattva spirit, when we can help others in a transcendental, yet worldly, way that we have reached the highest form of Buddhist realization.'

From the sun and tree metaphors, which represent compassion and wisdom, and the double will of Zarathustra's heart, which can be associated with bodhi mind, it seems apparent how some characteristics of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* correspond with those of the Bodhisattva. Nietzsche's tree metaphor describes the growth of an organic whole in which the constituent parts are indivisible, involving various conditions and dynamic relationships. Attaining the fruit harvest depends on sowing the seeds, water and sunshine. What kind of seed should be planted in order to attain the harvest of fruit of enlightened beings? The metaphor of seed implies the importance of our thoughts, because each thought is a seed which would probably produce something in the future. Wilhelm (1995:191) explains the requirement that 'thoughts be thought clearly and strongly. Only a pure and absolutely sincere thought can be the seed, a seed planted in the ground.' For the superior man of the *I Ching*, to think pure and sincere thoughts is crucial. Constantly to have pure and sincere thoughts seems to be the key to the dance of the Bodhisattva. I believe that Nietzsche's doctrine of 'eternal recurrence' might throw some light on cultivating such a state of mind.

Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence is a test of spiritual greatness. It serves as a moral stimulus for those who seek at all times to act in a way that they would wish to repeat eternally. This vision is personified by the *Übermensch* whose every moment is to be lived in transforming everything into a reflection of his power and perfection. The doctrine of eternal recurrence also seems to show affinity with Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's practice of living in the moment.



4.2. Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence and the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva¹²

Everything goes, everything comes back; eternally rolls the wheel of being. Everything dies, everything blossoms again; eternally runs the year of being. Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the same house of being is built. Everything parts, everything greets every other thing again; eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself. In every Now, being begins; round every Here rolls the There. The center is everywhere. Bent is the path of eternity. (Z III The Convalescent 2)

Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence involves the notion that the world repeats itself indefinitely and definitely, i.e. whatever there is will return again and is a return of itself in that it has all occurred before and will indefinitely occur again in definite iterations of itself. The world describes a cyclic movement under the notion of eternal recurrence, going and coming back, dying and blossoming, breaking and renewing. The cyclic movement or process is definite, while its phenomena or events indefinitely change. Nietzsche's eternal recurrence shows affinity with the Chinese world view, a non-linear view, and with the cardinal ideas that the *I Ching* is based on. The principles of yin and yang are always at work and their interplay brings about constant change in the world, but at the same time the Tao is changeless, underlying the multifarious changing phenomena. Capra provides a diagram to illustrate the dynamic unity of polar opposites and the Tao, which is represented by a circle.¹³ In Zarathustra's picture of eternal recurrence, the wheel and the ring are also images of the circle, representing being as existing in becoming. Nietzsche's idea of being in becoming corresponds to the theme of changelessness within change in the *I Ching*.

Indeed, everything is transitory, changing and transforming each moment in the world of becoming, but the process itself is changeless. The knowledge of changelessness/change, being/becoming allows an enlightened being to live a holistic, dreamlike/wakeful existence. He acknowledges the transitory and illusory nature of all things, including himself, as all being but a dream. This great wisdom enables him not to crave fervently all earthly things, but to let things go. He would not attach

¹² Samantabhadra is derived from two words: *Samanta* means general or universal and *bhadra* means sage. Thus Samantabhadra represents the principle of universal love or compassion. Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is also known as the Bodhisattva of Great Activity (1996a:39) and Universally Good.

¹³ See Appendix 7.



himself to gain or loss, good or bad, in the dream. Zarathustra states about such an existence that ‘a sage too is a fool’ (Z IV The Drunken Song 10), explaining that ‘whoever has too much spirit might well grow foolishly fond of stupidity and folly itself’ (Z IV The Ass Festival 1). This seemingly foolish existence is an expression of the ‘overflowing power and abundance’ (EH Z 2 & GS 382) of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* or, more precisely, the enlightened being. Nietzsche envisions a child-like innocence and playfulness as prerequisites to the *Übermensch*, because he believes in no ‘other way of associating with great tasks than *play*: as a sign of greatness, this is an essential presupposition.’ (EH Clever 10). The Nietzschean *Übermensch* plays naively, like a child, but at the same time he plays with ‘great seriousness’ (EH Z 2 & GS 382) within the abundant nature of his soul. In this context the Nietzschean *Übermensch* corresponds to the enlightened being who rejects any negation of life and the natural world, even though he recognizes their transitory and illusory nature. He strives not to be tricked into regarding kaleidoscopic earthly forms, including himself, as real. At the same time the knowledge of changelessness within change makes him lead a holistic existence corresponding to Nietzsche’s doctrine of eternal recurrence. Mistry (1981:11) discusses the affinity between Nietzsche’s eternal recurrence and Buddhism, stating that

what is decisive is the ‘action’ relevant and crucial to both perspectives: creative endurance and continual self-surmounting within the present reality. The Buddhist discipline, as also Nietzsche’s, finds its roots in a fidelity to empirical reality and in the vision of things as they are in this reality. The ‘change’ both disciplines inculcate does not involve an alteration of the state of this reality but the transformation of human outlook.

The holistic existence of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* consists not only of the dreamlike/wakeful and playful/serious attitude, but also of the experience of eternity in the moment. His experience of moment/eternity with reference to time can be explained by Nietzsche’s doctrine of eternal recurrence. Stambaugh (1988:115) indicates that ‘the most basic insight of Nietzsche’s thought concerns the non-finality of time.’ The idea that eternity is in the moment is expressed in Zarathustra’s dialogue with the dwarf who personifies the spirit of gravity and points out to him the gateway ‘Moment’. ‘Behold,’ Zarathustra says, ‘this moment! From this gateway, Moment, a long, eternal lane *leads backward*: behind us lies an eternity’ (Z III The Vision and the Riddle 2). Whereas the dwarf regards the eternal lane as two paths meeting in eternity, Zarathustra believes that ‘past and future meet in the general gateway of the present



moment; all time and space come to presence in the eternal present moment' (Stambaugh 1994:125). I. M. Zeitlin (1994:29) indicates that, for Nietzsche, 'every moment is repeated eternally and, therefore, ... every moment is an eternity.' When Zarathustra instructs the dwarf to behold the moment, he means for him to stand in the path, that is the moment. Zarathustra's instruction implies that the emergence of the overman does not derive from mere speculation, but rather from concrete individual action. If man wills this supreme human achievement, he should no longer remain a spectator, but rather be '*himself* the Moment, performing actions directed toward the future and at the same time accepting and affirming the past' (in O'Hara 1985:35). The subject and the deed become one, dissolving in the moment. Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence insists that one has to live in the moment rather than outside of it in the future or the past. The experience of the co-existence of *moment* and *eternity* is interpreted by Nietzsche in this way:

If we say Yes to a single moment, this means we have said Yes not only to ourselves, but to all existence. For nothing stands alone, either in us ourselves or in things: and if just once our soul has quivered and resounded with happiness like a harpstring, then all eternity was needed to condition that one event – and in that one moment of our saying Yes, all eternity was welcomed, redeemed, justified and affirmed. (WLN 7[38])

According to Nietzsche, saying yes to a single moment does not derive from abstract thinking, but rather from experience — 'one event'. This particular moment of experience justifies and affirms all eternity and all existence. If the idea of self-perfection is not limited by time and space, perhaps a new perspective of existence emerges. Nietzsche expresses 'the idea of a new perfection: what does *not* accord with our logic, our 'beautiful', our 'good', our 'true' could be perfect in a higher sense than our ideal itself is' (WLN 7[36]). Indeed, Zarathustra provides a new way of thinking with reference to time in his idea of eternal recurrence:

I come again, with this sun, with this earth, with this eagle, with this serpent — *not* to a new life or a better life or a similar life: I come back eternally to this same, selfsame life, in what is greatest as in what is smallest, to teach again the eternal recurrence of all things, to speak again the word of the great noon of earth and man, to proclaim the overman again to men. (Z III The Convalescent 2)

In this context time is no longer considered as linear and moving towards a definite end, but rather as non-linear, focusing on each moment. Nietzsche's idea of



eternal recurrence implies a cyclic movement of all things, similar to the Chinese emphasis on the fact that everything is in a state of transformation. In each moment the future becomes present and the present past. H. Wilhelm (1995:26) indicates that ‘the Chinese concept of change fills this category of time with content. It has been formed by the observation of natural events: the course of the sun and stars, the passing of the clouds, the flow of water, the alternation of day and night, the succession of the seasons.’ Nietzsche, too, refers to things such as sun, earth, eagle, and serpent and so fills the category of time with natural content. The relative distinction between great and small, like the duality of spirit and body, is assimilated in ‘this same, selfsame life’. The dazzling light of great noon symbolizes the dissolution of moral dualism.

In the *Avatamsaka Sutra* the practical aspect of the Bodhisattva way is indicated by Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s dedication, which may throw some light on Zarathustra’s idea of ‘this same, selfsame life’. While both Nietzsche and the *I Ching* focus on natural content, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s dedication, in all his ten vows, eternally focuses on caring for all beings in each and every thought,

even though space of the void has end, the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings are all ended. ... Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, oral, and mental deeds without weariness. (1996a:16)

One of the main points of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s practice is the emphasis on purification of action, speech and mind without weariness. This practice consists of ten meritorious deeds, which are the foundation of a meritorious life in Buddhist ethics.¹⁴ The practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva includes more than that of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*. While Nietzsche emphasizes play and dance which can be seen only in performance, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s practice does not only focus on action, but also on speech and mind.

The core of the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is found in his ten vows — his ‘endless’ homage to all Buddhas, his ‘endless’ praises, his ‘endless’

¹⁴ The ten meritorious deeds, also known as ‘Ten Virtuous Practices’, are divided into three categories: Three types of Purification of Actions: to abstain from destroying living creatures, stealing and adultery; Four types of Purification of Speech: to abstain from telling lies, carrying tales, using harsh language and impure talk; Three types of Purification of the Mind: to be free from greed, anger and erroneous views (Fu Ho 1969:31-32).



offerings to Buddhas, his 'endless' penitence, his 'endless' approval and joy in the merits of all beings, his 'endless' request, his 'endless' petition to the Buddhas, his 'endless' practice and following of the examples of the Buddhas, his 'endless' boundless compassion and his 'endless' turning over his rewards of merit to all beings. These ten vows are beyond human conception of time and space. With reference to time, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva employs the word 'endless' to show the eternity of his practice, but at the same time he states that 'thought succeeds thought without interruption' to indicate each moment of his thought. The co-existence of *moment* and *eternity* is present in all of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's practice and vows. With reference to space, he refers to the 'space of the void' and 'the worlds of beings'. The recognition of the co-existence of the *voidness of space* and the *existence of worlds of beings* is another distinctive characteristic of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's practice. As discussed earlier, the mind of the great enlightened being is as vast as space to embrace all beings.

Nietzsche's awareness of eternity/moment seems to correspond to the paradox of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* or *Hua-yen Sutra*. S. Odin (1988:53) indicates that 'the Hua-yen theory of the unhindered interpenetration of past-present-future into a single thought-instant or the immanence of hundreds of thousands of infinitely long eons in one moment, is highly problematic indeed when understood as a theory of causation.' The sphere of great enlightened beings is gigantic and multi-dimensional, or higher-dimensional, and cannot be explained as a causal process. For example, Capra's diagram shows the principles of yin and yang, as well as the process, the Tao, in our three-dimensional world.¹⁵ If infinite balls should be imagined to move in the diagram, human concepts of time and space appear inadequate to describe this inconceivable realm. Our concept of time does not exist in the realm of great enlightened beings. As Nietzsche states, 'time in itself is nonsense; it exists only for a being capable of sensation. It is the same with space. All *shape* appertains to the subject. It is the grasping of *surfaces* by means of mirrors' (P 121). Human abstract conception of time and space is applicable in our daily life for communicating with each other and for making sense of our three-dimensional world, but it is inapplicable in the multi-dimensional sphere. The limitation of our sense organs makes us unable to experience the realm of great enlightened beings, similar to the experiences of

¹⁵ See Appendix 7.



physicists who attempt to interpret the four-dimensional reality of relativist physics. Einstein's theory of the relativity of space-time deals with a four-dimensional reality where force and matter are unified, but this can only be 'experienced' through the abstract mathematical formalism of scientific theories.

Our language and thought patterns have evolved in a three-dimensional world and thus the higher-dimensional reality of great enlightened beings is beyond our sphere of rational and logical knowledge. It might, however, be seen by those who are in a state of deep meditation or concentration. Capra (1975:150-151) indicates that Eastern mystics

seem to be able to experience a higher-dimensional reality directly and concretely. In the state of deep meditation, they can transcend the three-dimensional world of everyday life, and experience a totally different reality where all opposites are unified into an organic whole.

Ordinary people with a discriminating mind attach themselves to phenomena, colours, sounds, fragrances, flavours, and feelings, incapable of seeing and understanding the inconceivable whole. They fail to understand the state of enlightenment, supreme self-perfection. The state of enlightenment is inexpressible in ordinary terms, as is apparent from the legend of the origin of Ch'an, that 'Ch'an was imparted without utilizing any spoken or written language: it was transmitted directly from mind to mind':¹⁶

During an assembly on Vulture Peak (Grdrhakuta), the Buddha picked up a flower and held it up to the assembly without saying a word. The millions of celestial and human beings who were gathered at the assembly did not understand what the Buddha meant, except for Mahakasyapa, who smiled. (Hsing Yun 1998:1)¹⁷

Master Hsing Yun (1998:1) indicates that 'Ch'an is something that can neither be talked about nor expressed in words. The moment language is used to explain Ch'an, we are no longer dealing with its true spirit. Ch'an is beyond all words, yet it cannot be left unexpressed.' Chan is expressed in our daily life. Ch'an Master Pai Chang notes that 'Ch'an is "everyday living."' He says that 'chopping firewood,

¹⁶ Ch'an, means 'quiet contemplation' (Hsing Yun 1998:1), 'meditation' or 'absorption' (Hsing Yun 1999a:124). The Ch'an School is one of the eight schools of Chinese Buddhism.

¹⁷ Mahkashyapa is the first Patriarch of the sect of *dhyana* (Sanskrit term, 'Ch'an' in Chinese and 'Zen' in Japanese).



carrying water, putting on clothes, eating food, standing, and walking are all Ch'an' (Hsing Yun 1998:2). A Ch'an Master sees all phenomena as the manifestations of Ch'an, our true mind. Ch'an Master Ch'ing Yuan states that Ch'an is our true mind which 'transcends all tangible existence, yet it manifests itself in all existences in the universe' (Hsing Yun 1998:2). Meditation is one of the means that Ch'an Masters practise in order to transcend the realm of this-worldliness.

According to Buddhist teaching, meditation is the key to one's inner treasure, i.e. true nature. Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence cannot be known by means of any rational, logical analysis, but rather recognized through meditation. In meditation, 'keeping the mind on one point' (Cleary 1993:692) is important. In fact, it is this one-point spatio-temporal dimension that is expressed by Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence. 'Each moment arises and perishes,' Stambaugh (1988:114) says, 'the moment has no abiding "place." It cannot end *in time*. It ends "vertically" into eternity. Eternity is that "dimension" of time into which time ends.' This vertical dimension of time and space presumes a point spatio-temporal dimension which remains changeless and unmoved in the world of becoming. This seems to be the point of Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence (return).

K. Ansell-Pearson (in Ansell-Pearson & Caygill 1993:92-93) comments on 'the tragic dimension of the experience of eternal return, which results from the fact that it exists beyond the judgment and decision of good and evil. Becoming is not only innocent but tragic. Thus, the thought of eternal return cannot provide the human being with a feeling or sense of the "rightness" (*Richtigkeit*) of action,' because 'its experience is fundamentally extra- or supra-moral.' The experience of such a state of existence might be regarded as tragic for human beings only. Nature, heaven and earth, works as it is. Becoming is tragic only according to a human preference for a stable world in which man is the measure of all things he can control and calculate and manipulate. In itself, becoming or transitoriness is not tragic. R. Wilhelm (1995:271-272) remarks that

in itself, transitoriness is not suffering. Each moment is separate, and be the moment ever so horrid, a second later it has passed. Each moment exists, neither as suffering nor as joy.

Each moment exists, rising and perishing, neither tragic nor happy. Nietzsche defines happiness as 'the feeling that power is *growing*, that resistance is overcome' (A 2). This is his 'healthy morality' (*TI* Morality as Anti-Nature 4). Healthy morality is



dominated by an instinct of life, or will to power, which is capable of commanding ‘shalt’ and ‘shalt not’, while *anti-natural* morality is against the instinct of life. If one lives a natural existence, like the sun which shines on all with inexhaustible energy and like the earth which embraces and nourishes all with devotion, he is in union with the universe, and to him human moral value judgements are not relevant. Such a state of existence is characterized by *living in the moment* as artistic creation.

K. M. Higgins (in Solomon & Higgins 1988:145-146) indicates that ‘the doctrine of eternal recurrence uses aesthetic criteria to evaluate the significance of an individual life. The events of one’s life gain significance when one approaches them as artistic raw material, appropriated in aspiring toward some individually determined vision of greatness.’ It follows that the significance of one’s life should be evaluated according to innate criteria, like the questions posed in Chapter forty-four of the *Tao Te Ching*:

Your name or your person,
Which is dearer?
Your person or your goods,
Which is worth more?
Gain or loss,
Which is a greater bane? (Lao Tzu 1963:105)

A. Nehamas (1985:232) comments about Nietzsche’s life that ‘despite the misery, the poverty, the sickness, the ridicule, and the lack of recognition ... he can ask: “How could I fail to be grateful to my whole life?” (*EH* Epigraph)’ According to Nietzsche, one creates the significance of one’s life each and every moment, so that life, the process itself, represents the meaning of its transient existence. This means that ‘one is to live *in* the here and now, *for* the here and now. It is constitutive of the disposition of the overman, of his higher morality, his celebration of life’ (Thiele 1990:204). Nietzsche indicates that ‘at every moment the meaning of becoming must be fulfilled, achieved, completed’ (*WLN* 11[82]). Thus Nietzsche regards his idea of eternal recurrence as ‘the fundamental conception’ of his *Zarathustra* and the ‘highest formula of affirmation that is at all attainable’ (*EH Z* 1). According to Nietzsche, an ideal mode of existence can be attained in striving toward the *Übermensch*. Zarathustra asserts that ‘the overman is the meaning of the earth’ (*Z P* 3). Nietzsche teaches living life as a series of aesthetically self-fulfilling moments, ‘because only life lived aesthetically yields its fullest realization at every moment’ (Thiele 1990:137). Nietzsche’s demon in *Gay Science* explains:



‘This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence — even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!’

Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: ‘You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine.’ (GS 341).

A person might respond to the question of the demon by cursing the demon or by appreciating the demon as a god. The latter is the response of an affirmer of life. Conway (Hatab 2005:xi-xii) provides the most popular formulation of Nietzsche’s idea of eternal recurrence: ‘We are encouraged to imagine the cosmos as eternally recurring in every detail of every iteration of its every configuration’ and Nietzsche’s readers ‘are generally agreed that it is meant to play an indispensable, if unspecified, role in delivering someone ... to an unconditional *affirmation* of life.’ For Nietzsche, the affirmer of life would give meaning and value to his life each and every moment in the process of self-overcoming. Nietzsche calls this life-affirming attitude *amor fati* — the sheer love of life. Stambaugh (1988:32) indicates that ‘eternal return has to do with fate, above all with *amor fati*.’ Nietzsche’s conception of fate differs from that of the *I Ching* in that Nietzsche teaches equal love for good fortune and misfortune, favourable and unfavourable, blame and praise. He claims: ‘My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. ... — but *love* it’ (EH *Clever* 10). *Amor fati* is not an experience, a moment of ecstasy, which one searches for in one’s life, but rather an attitude of the *Übermensch*.

Stambaugh (1988:88) indicates that ‘the superman is the man who is able to affirm eternal recurrence, the man who experiences eternal recurrence as his own inner being ... The superman is the goal of man; he is the most godlike being that humanity can reach.’ For Nietzsche, this godlike being represents a goal. For enlightened beings, however, this is the realm of existence. The idea of living in the moment corresponds with the declaration of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva that ‘thought succeeds thought without interruption.’ Each moment arises and passes, but great



enlightened beings recognize that the ‘real nature’ of things and phenomena is ‘neither eternal nor non-eternal; it neither goes nor comes’ (Hui Neng 1998:108). Enlightened beings concentrate on living in the moment for practicing mindfulness of action, speech and mind, even though their way to supreme enlightenment involves innumerable periods of time. Interestingly, L. P. Thiele (1990:205) comments on Nietzsche’s recurrence as seemingly showing affinity with the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva: ‘every thought, word, and deed provides a snapshot of the soul, revealing its development, its present state of order, and its potential.’ In this light the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva might provide a practical approach to actualising Nietzsche’s hypothetical *Übermensch*.

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’s first vow is ‘to pay the highest homage and veneration to all Buddhas.’ This means that

by the power of the virtues and vows of Samantabhadra, I (note ‘I’ means any person) have profound faith and deep understanding, as though I were face to face simultaneously with all the Buddhas of all the Buddha-worlds, (such Buddhas) are equal to the (flying) smallest dust-motes in number, throughout the worlds of Dharma and the cosmic void of the ten quarters and the three ages. I worship and adore them constantly with my pure deeds viz the bodily, oral, and mental deeds. (1996a:6)

The realm of great enlightened beings is multi-dimensional, which is expressed by ‘the cosmic void of the ten quarters and the three ages’.¹⁸ However, in our three-dimensional world, anyone can practice this vow by regarding all beings as Buddhas or would-be Buddhas by means of purifying practice in action, speech and mind. According to the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, there is no difference between the mind, the Buddha, and all living beings, because all share Buddha nature:

As is the mind, so is the Buddha;
As the Buddha, so living beings:
Know that Buddha and mind
Are in essence inexhaustible.

If people know the actions of mind
Create all the worlds,
They will see the Buddha
And understand Buddha’s true nature. (Cleary 1993:452)

¹⁸ The ‘three ages’ are great periods comprising the past, present, and future.



Whereas the enlightened know that all things and phenomena are the creation of the mind, the unenlightened are unaware of this; whereas the former attain enlightenment by means of purifying practice, the latter suffer ‘an infinite variety of miseries from deluded acts’ (Cleary 1993:116) and drown in the ocean of sufferings. Different forms are seen according to one’s mental patterns and manifested according to one’s acts:

Just like pictures
Drawn by an artist
So are all worlds
Made by the painter-mind.

Beings’ bodies’ differences
Arise from the mind’s discriminations;
Thus are the lands varied
All depending on acts.

Just as the Guide is seen
In various different forms,
So do beings see the lands
According to their mental patterns.
(Cleary 1993:244)

As discussed earlier, in order to attain supreme enlightenment one has to cultivate a non-discriminating mind like that of Buddha. The importance of non-discrimination is noted in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* in this way:

The Truly Enlightened in the past
The future, and the present,
Forever sever the root of discrimination —
That’s why they’re called Buddha.
(Cleary 1993:380)

In this light, cultivating the first vow of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva by regarding all beings as Buddhas and by paying homage and veneration to them, one would gradually broaden one’s mind to be like space, as do the enlightened. Such a horizon of one’s mind or soul reveals the greatest flexibility, as implied by Nietzsche’s vision of future humanity. He envisions ‘the usual state for these future souls: a perpetual movement between high and low, the feeling of high and low, a continual ascent as on stairs and at the same time a sense of resting on clouds’ (GS 288). In sum, enlightened beings live in the realm of transcendental wisdom and great compassion, so they do not regard sentient beings as distinct from themselves. They recognize that sentient



beings are their heart and mind, and their heart and mind are sentient beings. This is the state of the compassionate mind of enlightened beings.

The great compassion of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is also expressed by his tenth vow — to turn over all one's merits to benefit all sentient beings. This vow means that

all the merits acquired from the commencement of paying the highest homage to all the Buddhas, and serving the needs of all beings, shall be transferred to all beings throughout the Dharma-worlds and the immeasurable spaces of the universe, wishing them always to be happy and free from affliction or illness. All their evil projects will fail, and all their virtuous intentions will be quickly achieved. Close the door against evil, and open the right path of Nirvana to men and Devas. If the beings are suffering the most terrible tortures in expiation of their accumulated evil doings, I will substitute myself and take upon myself the sufferings that their evil deeds have brought upon them, so shall they be released (from evil deeds), and finally attain the supreme Bodhi. Thus do all the Bodhisattvas devote themselves to the cultivation of virtue and merit, and turn the rewards over to the benefit of all beings. (1996a:16)

The tenth vow of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva illustrates how by cultivating virtues and merits and by transferring them to all beings, enlightened beings attain supreme Bodhi. By helping others one actually helps oneself. This vow also implies that one has to take responsibility for one's life. By doing evil, one brings about suffering, but one can attain supreme enlightenment by completely devoting oneself to the benefit of others, even at the expense of oneself. Nietzsche also recognizes this condition:

Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful people and peoples and ask yourselves whether a tree that is supposed to grow to a proud height can dispense with bad weather and storms; whether misfortune and external resistance, some kinds of hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, mistrust, hardness, avarice, and violence do not belong among the *favourable* conditions without which any great growth even of virtue is scarcely possible. (GS 19)

The core of 'great growth' is in the wisdom of recognizing the illusive nature of all things and at the same time rejecting any negation of life because of great compassion for humanity. Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's tenth vow demonstrates the great compassion of enlightened beings who resolve to substitute themselves, taking upon themselves the sufferings of sentient beings. This idea seems to be present in Nietzsche's vision of '*the "humaneness" of the future*':



Anyone who manages to experience the history of humanity as a whole as *his own history* will feel in an enormously generalized way all the grief of an invalid who thinks of health, of an old man who thinks of the dreams of his youth, of a lover deprived of his beloved, of the martyr whose ideal is perishing, of the hero on the evening after a battle that has decided nothing but brought him wounds and the loss of his friend. But if one endured, if one *could* endure this immense sum of this grief of all kinds while yet being the hero who, as the second day of battle breaks, welcomes the dawn and his fortune, being a person whose horizon encompasses thousands of years past and future, being the heir of all the nobility of all past spirit — an heir with a sense of obligation ... if one could burden one's soul with all this — the oldest, the newest, losses, hopes, conquests, and victories of humanity, if one could finally contain all this in one soul and crowd it into a single feeling — this would have to result in a happiness that humanity has not known so far: the happiness of a god full of power and love, full of tears and laughter, a happiness that, like the sun in the evening, continually bestows its inexhaustible riches, pouring them into sea, feeling richest, as the sun does, only when even the poorest fisherman is still rowing with golden oars! This godlike feeling would then be called — humaneness (*GS* 337).

The godlike feeling of 'humaneness' is an expression of the richness of the over-wealthy, described by Nietzsche in terms of the inexhaustible richness of the sun, moved by great kindness and compassion. The recognition of the basic oneness of the universe, that all is interrelated and interconnected, implies that by constantly practicing good deeds and getting rid of all evil projects, one grows in helping others to grow. In this way, eventually, one may arrive at this inexhaustibly rich state of existence.

The passage about the humaneness of the future mentions various kinds of soul, the invalid, the old man, the lover, the martyr, and the hero. This indicates that one should expand one's soul to embrace all differences. Nietzsche urges an awareness of various horizons of mind or soul. Zarathustra yearns for an awakening of humanity, the expansion of the horizon of the soul: 'Who has heart enough for it? Who shall be the lord of the earth? Who will say: thus shall you run, you big and little rivers!' (*Z* IV The Drunken Song 4) Zarathustra employs a sea metaphor to describe a soul that remains clean from pollution, the soul of future humanity, the *Übermensch*:

Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea to be able to receive a polluted stream without becoming unclean. Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this sea. (*Z* P 3)



This 'sea', as the horizon of the soul of the *Übermensch*, marks a difference between the state of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* and that of the Bodhisattva. As discussed earlier, the great enlightened being whose soul is without boundary like space, is in a state of complete quiescence. The Nietzschean *Übermensch*, however, whose soul is like a sea, storming and flooding, is in a state of violence. In order to overcome this violent aspect of existence, one has to learn to broaden one's mind to be like space in the process of self-transformation on the path to supreme enlightenment. The importance of learning is illustrated by the pilgrimage of the youth Sudhana.

In the *Avatamsaka Sutra*'s 'Entry into the realm of reality', the youth Sudhana visits fifty-three mentors for learning the ways of attaining buddhahood. It begins with Manjushri Bodhisattva who instructs the youth Sudhana to go on the pilgrimage of supreme enlightenment and teaches him to ask his spiritual benefactors: 'how an enlightening being should learn the conduct of enlightening beings, and how to apply it; how one is to fulfil, purify, enter into, carry out, follow, keep to, and expand the practice of enlightening beings, and how an enlightening being is to fulfil the sphere of universally good action' (Cleary 1993:1179). It ends with Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's practice. It is thus suggested that the conclusion to all these enlightened practices lies in the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* affirms the emergence of Buddhas of past, present, and future in this way: 'All those enlightening beings, with their retinues, were born of the practices and vows of the Universally Good enlightening being' (Cleary 1993:1145). In this light the *Avatamsaka Sutra* implies that because all beings have the potential of becoming Buddha, all beings should make the maximal use of their life by determining to follow the way to supreme enlightenment and cultivating enlightened practices diligently, especially the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Thus Samantabhadra Bodhisattva asserts the possibility for human beings to become equal to him:

I wish my body, speech, and thoughts always be pure, and that the behaviour of others of the various worlds may be the same. Whosoever possesses such wisdom is entitled 'Samantabhadra'. I wish that I shall be equivalent to him in every quality.
(1996a:25-26)

'Purity' is the quality derived from the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Zarathustra who teaches the overman also advocates purification through knowledge: 'With knowledge, the body purifies itself; making experiments with knowledge, it



elevates itself' (Z I On the Gift-Giving Virtue 2). The word 'pure' may indicate a natural state beyond good and evil. Pure knowledge transcends relative distinction and makes Zarathustra free from craving, thus bringing about self-perfection:

Just now my world became perfect; midnight too is noon; pain too is a joy;
curses too are a blessing; night too is a sun — go away or you will learn: a sage
too is a fool. (Z IV The Drunken Song 10)

Zarathustra concludes that 'the purest shall be the lords of the earth' (Z IV The Drunken Song 7). This 'pure' quality is apparent in Zarathustra's temperament. In the Prologue to *Zarathustra*, it is said that Zarathustra walks 'like a dancer' and that 'his eyes are pure' (Z P 2). Indeed, what happens to Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is true of all enlightened beings. The Fourth Part of *Zarathustra* begins with 'The Honey Sacrifice', where Zarathustra says to his animals: 'What is happening to me, happens to every fruit when it grows ripe' (Z IV The Honey Sacrifice).

Learning from mentors forms the core of the youth Sudhana's pilgrimage and Nietzsche, too, instructs those who '*want to become those we are*' to 'become the best learners' (GS 335). Nietzsche regards himself as an educator and exemplar, stating that 'I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who make things beautiful. *Amor fati*: let that be my love henceforth!' (GS 276) Making things beautiful is a practical aspect of learning. This is *amor fati*, to learn to love one's fate and thus to become a Yes-sayer to life. Enlightened beings are those who have an indomitable determination to make things beautiful, even unto attaining perfect enlightenment.

Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch* and his doctrine of eternal recurrence seem to find expression in some of the practices of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. To become what one is, *Übermensch*, according to Nietzsche's vision, or to attain supreme enlightenment, according to Buddha's teaching, the dance of the Bodhisattva — developing bodhi mind, cultivating the virtues of wisdom and compassion, and the practice of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva — would be a feasible way of transcending the turbulences and obstacles of internal and external phenomena in a process of self-overcoming or self-transforming. In this way, even though the *Übermensch* is always a work-in-progress, the mysterious union of man and universe would be achieved spontaneously.



In short, the principles of yin and yang on which the *I Ching* is based imply contradictions and opposites as precondition for the growth of life. In ‘The Drunken Song’ in *Zarathustra*, the opposites — midnight and day, dream and waking, joy and agony — go together for eternity. For a dancing spirit, to consult an oracle in order to make decisions and take appropriate action in order to attract good fortune and avoid misfortune seems unnecessary. An affirmer, a yes-sayer to life, welcomes both Yes and No as a test of strength and a stimulus to lead an ascending life. Thus I quote ‘The Drunken Song’ from *Zarathustra* to inspire those who would learn to live life to the fullest, like the Chinese sage, the Nietzschean *Übermensch*, and the enlightened being:

O man, take care!
What does the deep midnight declare?
‘I was asleep —
From a deep dream I wake and swear:
The world is deep,
Deeper than day had been aware.
Deep is its woe;
Joy — deeper yet than agony:
Woe implores: Go!
But all joy wants eternity —
Wants deep, wants deep eternity.’
(Z IV The Drunken Song 12)



Conclusion

This day is done,
And life dwindles accordingly.
Like fish with little water,
What joy is there!
Endeavor for good progress,
As if to fight a fire burning on one's own head.
Just keep impermanence in mind,
And guard against looseness and indifference.

Samantabhadra's Admonition

The assertion of change is one of the similarities between Chinese philosophy and that of Nietzsche. The meaning of the word 'I' in the *I Ching* indicates that change is inevitable. Change and changelessness coexist in the universe. All things in the universe transform eternally because of the interplay of yin and yang, but the Tao is invariable. While the principles of yin and yang generate and rejuvenate all things, a process symbolized by the yielding and firm lines in the *I Ching*, the Tao forms the underlying principle of the universe. Thus the Chinese philosophical tradition is concerned with seeking the Tao, in contrast to the Western search for truth.

Nietzsche, however, rejects any 'absolute truth', but favours a pragmatic truth in this world of flux. He describes his Dionysian world as a monster of forces, of energy, of which we are a part. All things are constituent parts, interrelated and interconnected in change, in the whole. The natural world can be symbolized as an ocean with thousands and thousands of storming waves, eternally changing without beginning and without end. Nietzsche's description of the world in terms of the Will to Power characterizes *change* as the essence of the natural world. Nietzsche also uses the term 'world of becoming' to describe the flowing energy constantly flooding and ebbing in the life of the natural world.

Although Nietzsche's philosophy and the *I Ching* both affirm change, there are also some differences between them. According to Nietzsche, change is always accompanied by violence and destruction. To illustrate the Will to Power Nietzsche postulates his Dionysian world of eternal self-creation and self-destruction. He considers the constant change in the world as chaotic and violent, like a storming and raging sea. Change in the *I Ching*, however, is orderly and predictable. Its authors



organize change in a systematic and structured way, represented by eight trigrams and sixty-four hexagrams. The *I Ching* holds that fate is predictable, that therefore one may consult the oracle on how to follow one's fate to attain good fortune and to avoid misfortune and danger.

Inspired by the true story of Yuan Liao-Fan, I believe that one can control one's destiny, leading an ascending life or a descending life, not according to any external forces, but according to the labour of one's soul. The key to controlling one's fate lies within, one's mind or heart, so one has to broaden the horizon of the mind as much as one can, so that it becomes like space. This idea is apparent in the structure of the hexagrams *Chung Fu/Inner Truth* and *K'un/The Receptive*. The open space formed by the structure of these two hexagrams implies that one should broaden one's heart, like space, to embrace all. The idea of unmoved 'space' and moving 'dust' involves the notion of the basic oneness of the universe, where everything is interdependent and interrelated in the whole. A moral implication of this idea is that if one benefits others, then one benefits oneself. This is the way in which Yuan creates his destiny. Yuan keeps on doing good deeds and discontinuing bad habits, so that eventually he succeeds in transforming his fate and in not being bound by prediction any more. It follows that although fate is predetermined, one has the potential to transform it. If one determines to seek a better life, then one should take responsibility for one's life in benefiting others, so that one need no longer to consult an oracle.

Giving is one of the ways in which Yuan succeeds in transforming his fate. This is one of the practices of enlightened beings. Zarathustra, too, appreciates gift-giving as the highest virtue. Zarathustra calls this gift-giving love 'selfishness' as opposed to 'sick selfishness', 'an all-too-poor and hungry one that always wants to steal' (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). Nietzsche advocates an experimental approach to morality and his pragmatic morality of benefiting all is contained in his *ideal selfishness*:

continually to watch over and care for and to keep our soul still, so that our fruitfulness shall *come to a happy fulfilment!* Thus, as intermediaries, we watch over and care for to the *benefit of all*; and the mood in which we live, this mood of pride and gentleness, is a balm which spreads far around us and on to restless souls too. (*D 552*)

For Nietzsche, the stillness of the soul and the gentleness of its mood are prerequisites for spiritual growth. Nietzsche always employs a sea metaphor to describe the chaotic temperament of the natural world and the *Übermensch* in his writings. Stillness and



gentleness are features of the sea, but so too are violence and destruction are also its characteristics. The co-existence of gentleness and violence in a sea appears as an expression of the interplay of yin and yang. While the *I Ching* emphasizes harmony and balance within and without amid these two primary forces, harmony is not appreciated in Nietzsche's philosophy. His Dionysian world as a storming sea does not strive towards a state of equilibrium. For Nietzsche, in order to grow, one has to confront danger, so he encourages us 'to live dangerously' (*GS* 283) and to be life-affirmers with an attitude of *amor fati*. I agree with Nietzsche's warlike attitude towards danger and obstacles, which can be regarded as a stimulus. By fighting and overcoming obstacles in this constant process of self-overcoming, one learns from each experience and therefore broadens the horizon of one's mind. Thus one cultivates one's mind to be a mind like space that embraces all dancing 'dust', including violence and chaos, without being disturbed, hurt or harmed. Life becomes a spiritual journey on which one keeps on growing.

Although both Nietzsche's philosophy and that of the *I Ching* emphasize spiritual elevation, the former stresses self-overcoming and self-creating whereas the latter relies on the instruction and inspiration of a sage. I regard any change as representing an opportunity to create new things and to grow. Therefore, I agree with Nietzsche about learning from new experiences rather than with the Chinese sages who favour familiar experience in self-cultivation and educating oneself by following the Decree of Heaven. The Chinese sages advocate the following of fate, avoiding danger, adapting to the environment and obeying authority. Confucian ethics champions human-heartedness and righteousness and condemns the seeking of private profit. The Taoist prefers a natural state of existence and thus prefers the life of the hermit. Taoist sages believe that under heaven all forms of life come together in the One, so they champion the idea of living in harmony with Heaven. They emphasize the free development of the individual. The Confucians consider man primarily as a social being and revere the sage as the culmination of humanity. The sage is capable of fostering his character to attain inner strength and of enduring the outer world without being swayed by it. He harmonizes himself with society without giving up his nature. The ancient Chinese thinkers stress the importance of cultivating the Tao, yet they champion the presence of a holy sage to inspire ordinary people. The highest virtue, that of the unity between heaven and humanity, is an ideal for sages to strive for. Taking appropriate action according to given situations as revealed by the oracle



is an inspiration for ordinary men to overcome the uncertainty and confusion of human life and to maintain inner balance and harmony. However, the latent intent of the propaganda of obeying one's fate and adapting to the environment is neither self-actualization nor self-transformation, but self-preservation.

Nietzsche criticizes the desire for self-preservation. He favours self-overcoming, so that the suffering and transience of human life could be transformed into happiness. A sorrow-filled experience of reality is transfigured by will into the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche describes the 'formula for our happiness [as] a Yes, a No, a straight line, a goal' (A 1). The straight line represents great determination of the mind to achieve a goal on which one decides. For Nietzsche, the goal is the *Übermensch*. I agree with Schutte (1984:124) that 'the idea of the *Übermensch* is the projection of the will to power, the one goal transcending all others and manifesting the meaning of the earth.' The Nietzschean *Übermensch* enjoys life willy-nilly, loving errors and loving life, which involves strong will-power. Although resistances are usually avoided by the common man, they are welcomed by the dancing spirit. Nietzsche writes in his late notebooks: 'many small resistances, overcome repeatedly, easily, as in a rhythmic dance, bring with them a kind of *stimulation of the feeling of power*' (WLN 7[18]). The will-power to overcome resistances is one of the qualities of the *Übermensch*.

Although both Nietzsche's philosophy and the *I Ching* are concerned with the development of humanity in a rapidly changing world, different approaches are apparent. According to the holy sages of the *I Ching*, obeying our fate and adapting to our environment maintains order and well-being of family, society and nation. Order is the prerequisite for bridging chaos and maintaining harmony and balance within and without. For Nietzsche, however, the dancing spirit constitutes this bridge. According to the *I Ching*, choosing appropriate action to avoid danger and misfortune is the execution of one's free will, but this interpretation seems to concentrate on self-preservation. Nietzsche's fighting spirit, on the other hand, is a free spirit that is on the way to becoming *Übermensch*. He states that

one could conceive of such a pleasure and power of self-determination, such a *freedom* of the will that the spirit would take leave of all faith and very wish for certainty, being practiced in maintaining himself on insubstantial ropes and possibilities and dancing even near abysses. Such a spirit would be the *free spirit* par excellence. (GS 347)



The free spirit dances even near abysses, challenging danger, and its dance signifies its overcoming of the relative nature of all things, certainty/uncertainty, substantiality/insubstantiality, and its recognition of the unity of the whole. Nietzsche dares to call himself the first immoralist, drawing attention to the process of the self-overcoming of morality in which the relative distinction between morality and immorality dissolves in the whole, a total affirmation of life. The life-affirmer learns from error and 'exploits bad accidents to his advantage' (*EH Wise 2*). Nietzsche expresses the strength of the life-affirmer in this way: 'I am strong enough to turn even what is most questionable and dangerous to my advantage and thus to become stronger' (*EH Clever 6*). In order to attain greatness the higher type of man has to become who he is, saying Yes to life even when it is terrible and questionable. In this, Nietzsche's approach to life seems to be different from that of the *I Ching*.

For Nietzsche, the significance of one's whole existence stands in relation to one's task and the greatest of all tasks is 'the attempt to raise humanity higher' (*EH BT 4*). Zarathustra encourages us to lead an aesthetic existence which transcends the accepted values of society and is free to self-mastery. He speaks extra-morally of a state 'beyond good and evil.' The *Übermensch* stands for the transcendence of duality. The Confucians, on the other hand, teach conformity to accepted social values and norms rather than individual preference and creativity. They affirm moral order and moral values as supreme, deriving from the laws of heaven. For Nietzsche, moral order is not possible in a storming ocean, as Will to Power is described. He declares that existence, as a work of art, does not fall within the sphere of morality. His emphasis on the creativity of life seems even to disregard harmony in human relationships.

The Chinese philosophical tradition shows an appreciation for the five cardinal human relationships that is conspicuously absent in Zarathustra's fighting spirit, the lion warrior. In Zarathustra's three metamorphoses of the spirit, the highest form of the spirit is a playing child. A similar metaphor can be found in both the Taoist and Confucian schools. The first form of the evolving spirit, the camel, the load-bearer, carrying out its duties and bowing to moral norms and values may be applicable to the Chinese sages. I believe that Zarathustra's warrior metamorphosis, which is absent from the Taoist and Confucian teachings, may be regarded as a complement to Chinese philosophy.

A synthesis of the different approaches of the *I Ching* and Nietzsche's philosophy with regard to life is shown in Figure 2, which I call the 'Tao of the future sage'. The five cardinal relationships of the *I Ching* are maintained and with a flexible internal relationship between self and deed the enlightened being triumphs over dynamic human relationships, carrying out his task of accomplishing self-perfection. He harnesses his internal chaos and at the same time surrenders to change and unites with heaven by means of individual creativity. Figure 2 is an attempt to illustrate this idea:

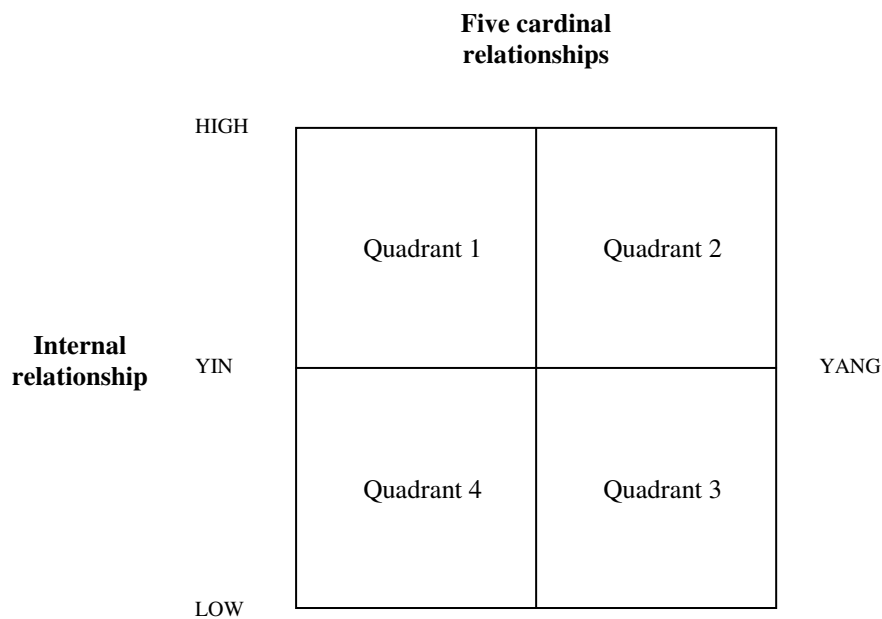


Figure 2: The Tao of the future sage

In the *I Ching*, the Tao of heaven and earth demonstrates a fixed, vertical relationship between high and low and it relates to the human world in terms of the five cardinal relationships between superior and inferior, that is the relationship between sovereign and subject, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder and younger brother, and the equal connection of friend and friend. This is the relationship between the self and others. The Tao of the future sage not only allows him to follow these five vertical relationships, but also to expand horizontally into a dynamic internal relationship with his own will, desires, drives, and attitudes each moment of the process of self-creation. The ideal of self-creation is prominent in Nietzsche's philosophy. Solomon (2003:10) mentions as 'one of the tasks of Nietzsche's philosophy — philosophy as self-transformation — to harmonize or in any case



reconcile these conflicting selves.’ Nietzsche prompts his readers to aspire to the ‘ideal of “self-creation” out of a conflict of sub-selves’ (Solomon 2003:10) Figure 2 above is an attempt to embrace Nietzsche’s ideal of self-creation in a Chinese context.

The sun and earth are models of authority in quadrant 1, like the sovereign or the father. If a deed is to be done that would make a contribution of growth, then the future sage, being a subordinate or son, should exhibit a yin attitude, gentle and submissive in carrying out the deed. Quadrant 2 also involves authority, but if a deed would cause harm to others because of the self-interest of authority, then the subordinate might assume a yang attitude, self-assertive and strong, to find a solution to the issue and not be bound by blind loyalty. In quadrant 3, in dealing with his subordinates, the future sage should show the masculine strength and expertise of a coach, in helping them to grow spiritually and professionally. When in quadrant 4, his subordinates are afraid of making mistakes and are incompetent in their work, the future sage should assume a feminine caring and loving attitude to teach and to encourage them in order to benefit the organization and its members. Each deed leaves its touch of colour in the diagram according to the will of the future sage who appears as an artist painting on his canvas of life. In the end, the artwork, whether a poem, music or a painting, defines the meaning of the life of the future sage by means of pattern or melody. This is an aesthetic evaluation, not a moral one. In this way the opposites of yin and yang, eternity and moment, self and others, dissolve and unify in the performance of the art.

Nietzsche envisions the *Übermensch*, who strives joyfully to become who he is and lives life as a series of aesthetic episodes, like a child at play. According to Nietzsche’s eternal recurrence, the episodes of the internal and external world repeat themselves indefinitely and definitely. Stambaugh (1988:54) notes, however, how Nietzsche’s idea of ‘eternal return’ may seem contradictory at first: ‘On the one hand, Nietzsche emphasizes the inevitable, fate-full character of recurrence. There is no getting away from it. It is the inexorable law of the world. On the other hand, Nietzsche calls upon man to use his creative power in the shaping of his own fate.’ Shaping fate by overcoming obstacles attests to will-power. Through will-power the strength of the Dionysian artist is increased and in this way he creates the significance of his life. If obstacles can be constantly overcome, life will be gradually elevated to a higher stage of self-creation, becoming what one is. Although the fear of misfortune, failure and defeat vexes most of us, Nietzsche appreciates the victory of the fighting



spirit who is rich enough to be defeated, because an over-wealthy soul enjoys its state of being while it is indifferent to the opposites — victory and defeat. Thus Nietzsche states that ‘what is best about a great victory is that it liberates the victor from the fear of defeat’ (*GS* 163). Not only the *I Ching* emphasizes the importance of labouring from within, but also for Nietzsche the measure of victory does not lie in external material things, but rather within, in a rich inner reality, personified by the *Übermensch*. Such a rich state of existence is speechless and cannot be understood by analysis and conception, and therefore Nietzsche criticizes language and the overemphasis of its value.

Nietzsche’s doctrines of the Will to Power, the *Übermensch* and Eternal Recurrence were considered by his contemporaries as paradoxical and problematic. However, by shifting one’s frame of reference, paradox may cease to be problematic. Modern physics presents a new way of seeing and interpreting the physical world. Chaos theory affirms a non-linear world view, according to which Nietzsche’s notion of eternal recurrence may appear less bizarre than before. For example, the findings of new physics in the twentieth century undermine Newtonian physics which regards space and time as independent absolutes. The three-dimensional world of space and time gives way to a four-dimensional space-time continuum. The visible three dimensional reality and the invisible higher-dimensional reality should be regarded as a whole. The recognition of the unity of the visible and the invisible, changelessness and change, eternity and the moment, allows our spirit to experience a higher level of existence. Our subjective experience of our world implies that we create the significance of our life. Through the creative power of the *Übermensch* Nietzsche’s Will to Power manifests itself. O. Schutte (1984:104) indicates that Nietzsche’s intention ‘in portraying the world and the self as will to power — and nothing besides — was to enlarge the horizons of one’s experience and to allow the tides of becoming to reinvigorate the self with life’s flowing energy.’ The *Übermensch*, the ideal human type ‘becoming who he is’, is the highest maxim of Nietzsche’s moral theory. This is the highest form of the Will to Power, actualized by the *Übermensch* in the process of the self-overcoming of morality. In the *I Ching* the highest virtue — the unity between humanity and heaven — is accomplished by the Chinese sage, the man of Tao, by means of maintaining harmony and balance within and without.



The ideal of unity of heaven and humanity seems to be presented by the *I Ching* as a task for the superior man or sage only, when in fact anyone has the potential to make it a reality, if they determine to do so and act according to the qualities of heaven and earth. The Nietzschean *Übermensch* and the enlightened being recognize that all beings are parts of one tree and all have the potential to become ripe fruit by benefiting other beings. Thus, in order to complement the ideal of the superior man in the *I Ching* and the *Übermensch* in Nietzsche's philosophy, the characteristics of the enlightened being, the Bodhisattva, are explored. My belief is that ordinary people should not wait for a sage to make a valuable contribution to their societies. Individuals can attain self-perfection and control their destiny according to their determination and action. They should move towards a better life for themselves and others instead of depending on others to act. J. F. Kennedy (in Maxwell-Mahon & Titlestad 1993:134) in his Presidential Inaugural Address urged the Americans, to 'ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.' It is crucial to understand that the growth of society depends on the effort of all members of the society. The growth of the parts, i.e. individuals, is the growth of the society as a whole. The future sage does not necessarily make a self-sacrifice for the benefit of social life and for the destiny of his people, but rather practises 'ideal selfishness' to achieve self-perfection.

All beings have the potential to become enlightened beings, because we all share the same true nature or essence. Master Hui Neng (1998:60) indicates that 'as the light of a lamp can break up darkness which has been there for a thousand years, so a spark of Wisdom can do away with ignorance which has lasted for ages.' Ordinary people and enlightened ones are no different in essence. While the former subjugate themselves to the multifarious changing forms because of ignorance, the latter enjoy complete freedom from their actions because of enlightenment. Enlightened beings 'know all things are unreal, suddenly arising and suddenly perishing, having no solidity or stability, like dreams, like reflections, like phantoms, like illusions, fooling the ignorant. Those who understand in this way will be able to comprehend all actions' (Cleary 1993:457). An enlightened being is indeed a man of action.

The point of departure on the way to supreme enlightenment lies in resolving on a bodhi mind, an idea corresponding to Zarathustra's will of peak and abyss: Nietzsche's metaphor of climbing to the peak of a mountain and descending to the



human sea implies the will to cultivate the love of humanity and the wisdom to become what one is. For an enlightened being, however, his will or resolution is greater than becoming what he is, because he vows to attain supreme enlightenment. This *will* is the key to overcome the illusive nature of the world and life without degrading the physical world and negating life. The enlightened being endeavours to make this will become an actuality. While the love of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* for humanity is apparent from his gift-giving virtue, the enlightened being's compassion is shown in the practice of Bodhisattvas, symbolized by the sun metaphor in both Nietzsche's philosophy and Buddhist teaching. Indeed, a compassionate mind and transcendental wisdom make enlightened beings keep on benefiting all beings without despairing of the suffering and illusion of life.

The key to success in the process of self-creation or self-transformation lies in a change of mind. The mind of an enlightened being remains unmoved and unattached in facing all multifarious things. Zarathustra employs the metaphor of the stillness of the bottom of the sea in contrast to the movement of the waves to describe his state of existence. When one determines to become what one is, one strives for a pure, non-discriminating and unattached mind that remains unmoved, like space, embracing all earthly 'dust'. One strives for broadening one's mind, like the sun that shines on all, and cultivating an attitude like the devoted earth that nourishes people and that tolerates the differences of people, such as racial, religious, cultural and gender differences. Through this sun-nature one emits light to all around one. As the flame of one lamp may kindle thousands of others, light will produce light, so the light of his heart may illuminate the hearts of his fellow men. I believe that such a mind is urgently needed in South Africa to heal those whose souls have been wounded by the suffering of poverty, disease and crime, to create good human relationships, to reduce the violence among its citizens and to create a happy and prosperous society.

Chinese philosophy seems to advocate a discriminating mind on the principle of the five cardinal relationships. However, the principle of interrelatedness and interpenetration in the universe implies that we are in essence no different. We are all energy in Nietzsche's Dionysian world. By understanding that all are interrelated and interconnected, as apparent in the tree metaphor mentioned earlier, one recognizes that the growth of the tree is one's own growth. One leads a life of natural morality, like sun and earth, both metaphors employed by Nietzsche and the *I Ching*. One's radiant sun-nature shines for all and makes things bright, while one's earth-nature



nourishes all and makes things grow. To make things grow and be light is one's quality, but like heaven and earth, one does all work freely and spontaneously. As Nietzsche states, 'to become what one is, one must not have the faintest notion *what one is*' (*EH* Clever 9). One concerns oneself with this-worldly matters, cherishing activities and working to fulfil oneself, but at the same time one spontaneously unites oneself with heaven. Such an individual can help others in a transcendental, yet worldly way. By doing so, one transcends the dualism of the this-worldliness of Confucianism and the other-worldliness of Taoism. Although the utopia of the Confucian school, the Great Society, has never realized, a paradise can be achieved within one's own heart. In this way ordinary people carry a paradise within their heart.

'*To become those we are,*' Nietzsche says, and 'to that end we must become the best learners and discoverers of everything that is lawful and necessary in the world' (*GS* 335). To be the best learner in actual practice and not merely in human abstraction, to live in the moment, is the core of the practice of the Nietzschean *Übermensch*. According to Nietzsche, we are always in-between beast and *Übermensch*. The future sage is proposed as a personification of this 'in-between' state. He is capable of mastering his chaotic inner reality in order to foster the highest virtue, the unity between heaven and humanity, because of his qualities of sun and earth, as described in the *I Ching*. As everything is the creation of our mind, we project ourselves onto the world, so that we create our world corresponding to our beliefs. It follows that we carry our own paradise in our heart. Attainment of this paradise involves a change of heart, to broaden it from vessel to ocean, and eventually to space, to transform it from darkness to light, from ignorance to wisdom. Great determination is important for bringing about productive change in our reality within and without.

The future sage, who carries paradise in his heart and has a pure mind, transcends dualism, gain and loss, good and bad, yin and yang, because they are parts of the whole, the process of life. He loves life and is capable of saying Yes to life even when it is terrible. To live in the moment as an affirmer of life is the core of the practice of future sage. He is mindful each and every moment of performing his daily activities and to let things flow spontaneously. Thus he is serious in playing, like a playing child who only carries out his own will, who follows his own self and has thus won his world. He alone has the power to create something new, that is his life.



His life is a piece of art which may invite various interpretations, but this picture is painted in authentic experience. Indeed, such a state of existence is beyond logic, numbers and language. The Tao of the future sage is speechless, beyond any words and concepts, but can be witnessed by the mind of a Ch'an master. He emits radiance, shining for all. Such a life can perhaps be compared to the Chinese writing system, which has existed for nearly five thousands years and whose self-preservation seems to be a mere by-product of the spontaneity of the Tao expressing itself in forms. Form is an expression of the heavenly spirit. In this sense the significance of the life-form of the future sage is represented by patterns rather than words.

T.S. Eliot, in his poem *The Waste Land*, manages to express the uncertainty and bewilderment of the post-first world war period. Perhaps his poem speaks the voices of our current period as well. Since man is an open possibility and his fate a probability which can be controlled by himself, the last movement of the poem may be understood to suggest a way of life for ordinary people. The thunder speaks and says: Datta (to give), Dayadhvam (sympathy) and Damyata (self-control). By practising the proposal of the thunder and the way of the future sage in everyday life, ordinary people may happily and freely cope with the wasteland of the world of flux, even though they do not consult the oracle of the *I Ching*. The thunder's words promise a blessing (shantih) to those who listen and respond:

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih

(Allison 1970:1012)