



A Comparative Study of Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas

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ABSTRACT:

This paper presents a comparative study of Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, focusing on their roles, characteristics, and philosophical implications within the context of Buddhist doctrine and practice. The term "Bodhisattva" refers to a being who aspires to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. While both Mahayana and Hinayana traditions share this fundamental concept, they differ significantly in their interpretations, practices, and depictions of Bodhisattvas. Through an examination of scriptures, texts, and historical contexts, this paper aims to elucidate the distinctions between Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, shedding light on their roles, characteristics, and significance within their respective traditions. The Mahayana and Hinayana traditions represent two major branches of Buddhism, each with distinct perspectives on the path to enlightenment and the role of the Bodhisattva. Key areas of comparison include the Bodhisattva's motivation, practices, compassion, and relationship to enlightenment. By analyzing similarities and differences between Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, this paper aims to deepen understanding of Buddhist teachings and their implications for spiritual development and ethical conduct.

Keywords: Bodhisattva, Mahayana, Hinayana, Buddhism, Comparative Study, Compassion, Enlightenment, Altruism, Practice, Pathway, Iconography.

1. Introduction:

Mahayana and Hinayana are two major branches of Buddhism, each with its own distinct approach to the path of enlightenment and the role of bodhisattvas within it. The term "Bodhisattva" refers to individuals who aspire to attain Buddhahood not only for their own liberation but also for the benefit and salvation of all sentient beings. In Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhisattvas are revered as beings of compassion and wisdom that have attained a high level of realization but choose to remain in the cycle of birth and death to aid others on the path to enlightenment. They are seen as celestial beings or enlightened masters who guide and inspire practitioners through their compassion and teachings. In contrast, Hinayana Buddhism, often referred to as Theravada Buddhism, emphasizes personal liberation or individual enlightenment as the primary goal. While Bodhisattvas are acknowledged in Hinayana tradition, they are not as central as in Mahayana, and the focus is more on achieving nirvana for oneself rather than actively working for the salvation of others. Despite these differences, both Mahayana and Hinayana traditions share the fundamental teachings of the Buddha and the pursuit of liberation from suffering.

2. Overview of Bodhisattva concept in Buddhism

In Buddhism, the concept of the Bodhisattva represents a profound commitment to compassion and the alleviation of suffering for all sentient beings. Bodhisattvas are beings who have attained a high level of spiritual realization but choose to postpone their own enlightenment in order to assist others on the path to liberation. Rooted in Mahayana Buddhist tradition, the Bodhisattva ideal emphasizes the cultivation of virtues such as generosity, patience, kindness, and wisdom. The most well-known Bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism is Avalokiteshvara, the embodiment of compassion. Bodhisattvas are believed to work tirelessly across multiple lifetimes to help sentient beings attain enlightenment, guiding them through teachings, example, and spiritual support. The Bodhisattva path is characterized by a selfless dedication to the welfare of others, embodying the ideal of universal compassion. As stated in the *Bodhicaryavatara* by Santideva, "As long as space remains, as long as sentient beings remain, until then, may I too remain and dispel the miseries of the world." This enduring commitment to the well-being of all beings encapsulates the essence of the Bodhisattva concept in Buddhism² (Conze, 1973).

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² Conze, E. (1973). "Buddhist Wisdom Books: The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra." Harper & Row.

2.1 Brief explanation of Mahayana and Hinayana traditions

Mahayana and Hinayana are two major branches of Buddhism. Mahayana, meaning “Great Vehicle,” emphasizes the universal potential for enlightenment and the importance of compassion in achieving it. It promotes the idea of the bodhisattva, who postpones their own enlightenment to help others. Hinayana, meaning “Lesser Vehicle” (a term considered derogatory by some), focuses on individual liberation through personal enlightenment, often portrayed as the path of the Arahant. While both traditions share core Buddhist teachings, Mahayana tends to emphasize the ideal of the bodhisattva and the notion of emptiness to a greater extent, while Hinayana emphasizes personal liberation as the primary goal.

2.2 Statement of purpose and methodology

The aim of this study is to undertake a comparative analysis of Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, exploring their respective roles, characteristics, and doctrinal frameworks within the broader context of Buddhist thought and practice. The Mahayana and Hinayana traditions offer distinct perspectives on the path to enlightenment and the role of the Bodhisattva, with Mahayana emphasizing the altruistic vow to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings, while Hinayana tends to focus on individual liberation. Methodologically, this research will employ a combination of textual analysis of key Mahayana and Hinayana scriptures, such as the Lotus Sutra and the Pali Canon, along with comparative studies of philosophical and doctrinal interpretations from renowned scholars in the field of Buddhist studies. Additionally, the study will incorporate insights from contemporary practitioners and experts to provide a nuanced understanding of the evolving interpretations and practices surrounding Bodhisattva ideals. By elucidating the similarities, differences, and historical developments of Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper comprehension of the diverse manifestations of Buddhist teachings and their relevance in contemporary spiritual discourse.

3. Historical Development:

The historical development of Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism traces back to the early days of Buddhism after the passing of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. Initially, Buddhism propagated through the Hinayana tradition, which emphasizes individual liberation and self-enlightenment. This early form of Buddhism focused on adhering strictly to the Buddha’s teachings as preserved in the Tripitaka (the three baskets of Buddhist scripture). However, around the 1st century BCE, a new movement emerged within Buddhism known as Mahayana, meaning the “Great Vehicle.” Mahayana Buddhism introduced new sutras and doctrines, emphasizing the bodhisattva ideal—enlightened beings who postpone their own nirvana to help others attain enlightenment. This development expanded the scope of Buddhist practice beyond personal liberation to include compassion and the aspiration to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings. The Mahayana tradition also saw the rise of new schools and philosophical interpretations, such as Madhyamaka and Yogacara. Both Hinayana and Mahayana traditions contributed significantly to the spread and diversity of Buddhism across Asia, shaping its practice, philosophy, and cultural impact³.

3.1 Emergence of Bodhisattva ideal in early Buddhist texts:

The emergence of the Bodhisattva ideal in early Buddhist texts reflects a profound shift in the spiritual landscape of ancient India. While the early teachings of Buddhism primarily focused on individual liberation from suffering through the attainment of enlightenment (nirvana), the concept of the Bodhisattva introduced a selfless dimension to the spiritual path. Bodhisattvas are depicted as compassionate beings who postpone their own enlightenment to guide and aid others in their quest for liberation. This ideal is prominently illustrated in the Jataka tales, where the Buddha-to-be, as a Bodhisattva, demonstrates acts of altruism and selflessness across numerous lifetimes. One of the earliest references to the Bodhisattva ideal can be found in the Pali Canon, particularly in the Bodhisattva Path described in the Mahayana Sutras such as the Lotus Sutra and the Vimalakirti Nirdeśa. These texts emphasize the Bodhisattva’s dedication to the welfare of all sentient beings, epitomizing the altruistic spirit that became central to Mahayana Buddhism⁴.

3.2 Spread and transformation of Bodhisattva concept in different regions:

The concept of the Bodhisattva, originating from Mahayana Buddhism, has undergone various transformations as it spread to different regions across Asia. Initially emerging in India, the Bodhisattva ideal gained prominence in Mahayana texts such as the Lotus Sutra and the Avatamsaka Sutra, emphasizing compassion and the vow to attain enlightenment not just for oneself but for the benefit of all beings. As Mahayana Buddhism spread to East Asia, particularly China and Japan, the Bodhisattva concept adapted to local cultures and beliefs. In China, Bodhisattvas became central figures in Pure Land Buddhism, with Amitabha Buddha and Guanyin (Avalokiteshvara) gaining widespread devotion. Meanwhile, in Japan, Bodhisattvas like Kannon (Guanyin) and Jizo were revered for their compassionate assistance to beings in need, reflecting a blend of indigenous Shinto beliefs and Buddhist ideals. The Bodhisattva concept continued to evolve as it migrated to Tibet, where it merged with indigenous Bon practices, resulting in unique manifestations such as the Dalai Lama being regarded as an embodiment of Avalokiteshvara. These transformations illustrate the adaptability of Buddhist teachings as they encounter diverse cultural contexts, emphasizing the universal appeal of compassion and altruism⁵.

³ Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Lopez, Donald S., Jr. “The Bodhisattva Ideal: Essays on the Emergence of Mahayana.” *Buddhist Tradition Series*, vol. 15, Motilal Banarsidass, 1998.

4. Characteristics of Mahayana Bodhisattvas:

Mahayana Bodhisattvas, revered figures in Mahayana Buddhism, embody a set of distinctive characteristics that differentiate them from other spiritual beings. They are renowned for their boundless compassion, selfless dedication, and unwavering commitment to attaining enlightenment not only for themselves but for the benefit of all sentient beings. Unlike Arhats, who strive for personal liberation, Bodhisattvas altruistically postpone their own enlightenment to guide and assist others along the path to awakening. These enlightened beings are depicted as embodying infinite wisdom, skillful means, and profound understanding of the nature of reality. They are often portrayed as celestial beings or revered teachers, inspiring practitioners with their acts of kindness, wisdom, and compassion. Mahayana Bodhisattvas serve as exemplars of the bodhisattva ideal, encouraging devotees to cultivate virtues such as generosity, patience, and loving-kindness on their journey towards ultimate liberation. Their altruistic spirit and compassionate actions exemplify the core principles of Mahayana Buddhism, emphasizing the interconnectedness and interdependence of all beings in the quest for enlightenment⁶.

4.1 Emphasis on compassion and altruism:

In Mahayana Buddhism, the bodhisattva ideal stands as a luminous beacon of compassion and altruism, guiding practitioners toward the path of selfless service and universal liberation. Rooted in the profound realization of interconnectedness, bodhisattvas embody boundless empathy, tirelessly dedicating themselves to alleviating the suffering of all sentient beings. Their actions are not driven by personal gain or attainment but are imbued with the pure intention of fostering the welfare and awakening of others. With unwavering resolve, they traverse the realms of existence, offering solace, guidance, and wisdom to those in need. Inspired by the Bodhisattva's unwavering commitment to the well-being of all beings, practitioners are encouraged to cultivate a heart of boundless compassion, recognizing that true fulfillment lies in selflessly serving the greater good. Aspiring to walk the noble path of the bodhisattva, individuals endeavor to embody the virtues of kindness, generosity, and empathy, thereby manifesting the spirit of Mahayana Buddhism in their lives⁷.

4.2 Vow to attain Buddhahood for the salvation of all beings:

With unwavering determination and boundless compassion, I vow to attain Buddhahood for the salvation of all beings. In the pursuit of enlightenment, I shall traverse the path of wisdom and compassion, tirelessly working to alleviate the suffering of sentient beings and guide them towards the shores of liberation. May my every thought, word, and deed be dedicated to the upliftment of all beings, cultivating loving-kindness and equanimity in every corner of existence? With the guidance of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, I shall strive to embody the highest virtues and lead all beings to the ultimate realization of their true nature⁸.

4.3 Attributes and qualities of Mahayana Bodhisattvas (e.g., Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, Samantabhadra):

Mahayana Bodhisattvas, such as Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, and Samantabhadra, embody a myriad of attributes and qualities revered in Buddhist tradition. Avalokiteshvara, known as the Bodhisattva of Compassion, epitomizes boundless compassion and empathy, manifesting in various forms to alleviate suffering in the world. Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, symbolizes profound insight and intelligence, wielding the sword of wisdom to cut through ignorance and delusion. Samantabhadra, the Bodhisattva of Great Conduct, exemplifies the virtues of moral integrity and altruism, tirelessly working for the benefit of all sentient beings. These Bodhisattvas serve as inspirational figures for Mahayana practitioners, guiding them on the path of enlightenment with their exemplary qualities and unwavering dedication to the welfare of others. Their profound teachings and compassionate actions inspire countless beings to cultivate virtues and strive towards awakening, embodying the essence of Mahayana Buddhism's ethos of compassion and wisdom.⁹

5. Characteristics of Hinayana Bodhisattvas:

Hinayana Bodhisattvas, within the context of Buddhist thought, represent a distinctive approach to the Bodhisattva path characterized by a focus on personal liberation or individual enlightenment. Unlike their Mahayana counterparts who prioritize the liberation of all sentient beings, Hinayana Bodhisattvas primarily aim for their own spiritual emancipation, albeit with the intention of eventually helping others. Their practice is marked by rigorous adherence to moral precepts, diligent meditation, and the cultivation of wisdom. They aspire towards the attainment of Nirvana, viewing it as the ultimate goal of their spiritual journey. However, even though their primary focus is on personal enlightenment, Hinayana Bodhisattvas do not neglect compassion

⁶ Analayo, (2010). *The Genesis of the Bodhisattva Ideal*, Hamburg Buddhist Studies 1, Hamburg University Press.

⁷ Bhikkhu Nyanatusita. (2013). *The Bodhisattva Ideal; Essays on the Emergence of Mahāyāna*- Buddhist Publication Society.

⁸ Lopez Jr., Donald S. (2001). *The Story of Buddhism: A Concise Guide to its History and Teachings*. New York, USA: HarperSanFrancisco. ISBN 0-06-069976-0 (cloth) P.260.

⁹ Buddha Dharma Education Association (2014). "Suttanta Pitaka: Khuddaka Nikāya: 14. Buddhavamsa-History of the Buddhas". Guide to Tipiṭaka. Tullera, NSW, Australia: Buddha Dharma Education Association. Retrieved 2014-12-21.

and altruism; rather, they see these qualities as integral to their own path towards liberation. Thus, while their approach may differ from that of Mahayana Bodhisattvas, Hinayana Bodhisattvas still embody the fundamental ideals of selflessness and the aspiration to alleviate suffering in the world¹⁰.

5.1 Examples of Bodhisattvas in Theravada literature (e.g., Maitreya, Metteyya):

In Theravada literature, Bodhisattvas are not as prominent as in Mahayana Buddhism, but there are figures that embody similar ideals of compassion and enlightenment. One such example is Maitreya, also known as Metteyya in Theravada tradition. Maitreya is regarded as a future Buddha who will appear in the world after the teachings of Gautama Buddha have been forgotten. Although not as extensively elaborated upon in Theravada texts as in Mahayana sutras, the concept of Maitreya serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for practitioners, reminding them of the ultimate goal of Buddhahood and the continuous cycle of compassion and wisdom. In Theravada literature, Maitreya symbolizes the timeless promise of enlightenment and the unwavering dedication to alleviate suffering for all sentient beings, embodying the essence of Bodhisattva ideals within the framework of Theravada teachings¹¹.

6. Practices and Pathways:

The practices and pathways of a bodhisattva, as outlined in Mahayana Buddhism, are deeply rooted in compassion and the aspiration to attain enlightenment not only for oneself but also for the benefit of all sentient beings. A bodhisattva's journey is characterized by the cultivation of virtues such as generosity, patience, loving-kindness, and wisdom. They engage in practices such as meditation, moral discipline, and the study of Buddhist teachings to deepen their understanding and develop the qualities necessary to alleviate the suffering of others. The bodhisattva path is marked by the commitment to the welfare and liberation of all beings, guided by the principle of skillful means to adapt their actions and teachings to the varied needs and capacities of individuals. With unwavering dedication and boundless compassion, bodhisattvas traverse the path towards enlightenment, embodying the ideal of selfless service and ultimate awakening. As stated in the Bodhisattva vows, "However innumerable sentient beings are, I vow to save them; however inexhaustible the passions are, I vow to extinguish them; however immeasurable the Dharmas are, I vow to master them; however incomparable enlightenment is, I vow to attain it."

6.1 Mahayana Bodhisattva path: Six Paramitas (Perfections), Ten Bhumis (Stages):

The Mahayana Bodhisattva path encompasses the cultivation of virtues and stages of spiritual development aimed at attaining enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Here are brief explanations of the Six Paramitas (Perfections) and the Ten Bhumis (Stages):

Six Paramitas (Perfections):

- A. Generosity (Dana):** The practice of giving without attachment, which includes material possessions, time, knowledge, and compassion, with the intention of reducing suffering and cultivating kindness.
- B. Ethical Conduct (Sila):** Living a virtuous life guided by moral principles, abstaining from harmful actions, and cultivating wholesome behavior towards oneself and others.
- C. Patience (Kshanti):** Enduring difficulties, insults, and adversities with forbearance and understanding, without giving rise to anger or resentment.
- D. Diligence (Virya):** Wholehearted effort and perseverance in the pursuit of spiritual growth, overcoming laziness, doubt, and distractions to achieve one's goals.
- E. Meditative Concentration (Dhyana):** Cultivating focused awareness and mental tranquility through meditation practices, leading to clarity of mind and insight into the nature of reality.
- F. Wisdom (Prajna):** Insight into the true nature of existence, including the understanding of impermanence, suffering, and non-self (anatta), which leads to the realization of enlightenment.

Ten Bhumis (Stages):

The Ten Bhumis represent the progressive stages of spiritual realization and attainment on the Bodhisattva path towards Buddhahood. Each Bhumi represents a level of spiritual development characterized by the perfection of specific virtues and the transcendence of various obstacles¹². These stages include:

1. **Joyful (Pramudita):** The Bodhisattva experiences immense joy upon realizing the path to enlightenment and begins to cultivate virtues earnestly.
2. **Immovable (Vimala):** The Bodhisattva becomes steadfast in their practice, overcoming doubts and distractions, and deepening their commitment to the path.

¹⁰ ¹⁰ Conze, E. (1973). "Buddhist Wisdom Books: The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra." Harper & Row.

¹¹ [Dale Stuart Wright](#); (2009). The Six Perfections Buddhism and the Cultivation of Character, Oxford University Press.

¹² [Dale Stuart Wright](#); (2009). The Six Perfections Buddhism and the Cultivation of Character, Oxford University Press.

3. **Luminous (Prabhakari):** The Bodhisattva's wisdom shines brightly, dispelling ignorance and delusion, gaining deeper insights into the nature of reality.
4. **Radiant (Arcismati):** The Bodhisattva's virtues become radiant, illuminating the path for others and inspiring them towards enlightenment.
5. **Very difficult to train (Sudurjaya):** The Bodhisattva surpasses all obstacles with unwavering determination and skillful means, mastering various practices effortlessly.
6. **Manifest (Abhimukhi):** The Bodhisattva's qualities become fully manifest, possessing great wisdom, compassion, and skillful means to benefit sentient beings.
7. **Gone afar (Durangama):** The Bodhisattva transcends ordinary limitations and enters profound states of meditation and realization, attaining extraordinary powers and insights.
8. **Immovable (Acala):** The Bodhisattva becomes unshakeable in their resolve and commitment to liberate all beings from suffering, dedicating themselves entirely to the welfare of others.
9. **Good Discriminating Wisdom (Sadhumati):** The Bodhisattva possesses perfect discernment, skillfully guiding beings according to their needs and capacities, leading them towards liberation.
10. **Cloud of Dharma (Dharma-megha):** The Bodhisattva attains complete enlightenment, becoming a Buddha, and emitting a vast cloud of teachings and blessings, benefiting countless beings throughout the universe¹³.

These Paramitas and Bhumis serve as guiding principles and stages of development for Mahayana practitioners on the Bodhisattva path towards Buddhahood.

6.2 Hinayana Bodhisattva path: Focus on individual liberation, limited engagement in Bodhisattva practices:

The Hinayana Bodhisattva path is characterized by its emphasis on individual liberation, prioritizing personal enlightenment over extensive engagement in Bodhisattva practices aimed at benefiting all beings. In this path, practitioners focus primarily on their own spiritual development, diligently following the teachings of the Buddha to attain Nirvana and escape the cycle of suffering. While they may engage in some Bodhisattva activities out of compassion, their efforts are more limited compared to those following the Mahayana tradition. The Hinayana Bodhisattva path underscores the importance of self-discipline, introspection, and the pursuit of enlightenment as a means to alleviate suffering, ultimately leading to the liberation of oneself and potentially others¹⁴.

7. Role and Significance:

Both Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism emphasize the path towards enlightenment and the role of the bodhisattva, albeit with distinct perspectives and approaches. In Hinayana Buddhism, the bodhisattva is regarded as an individual who aspires for personal enlightenment, primarily through self-discipline and the pursuit of individual liberation from suffering. The focus is on personal spiritual advancement and the attainment of nirvana. Conversely, Mahayana Buddhism expands upon this concept by emphasizing compassion and the bodhisattva's dedication to alleviating the suffering of all sentient beings. In Mahayana, the bodhisattva is seen as one who delays their own enlightenment to assist others on their journey towards liberation. This altruistic perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of all beings and the cultivation of compassion as essential to spiritual practice. While both traditions hold the bodhisattva in high regard, Mahayana Buddhism elevates the bodhisattva's role to a central aspect of practice, highlighting the significance of compassion and service in the attainment of enlightenment¹⁵.

8. Comparative Analysis:

Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism offer distinct perspectives on the role and nature of Bodhisattvas, enlightened beings who delay their own entry into nirvana to aid others in achieving enlightenment. In Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhisattvas are revered as compassionate beings who aspire to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. They are depicted as embodying qualities such as boundless compassion, wisdom, and skillful means. Mahayana Bodhisattvas, such as Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri, are often portrayed as powerful figures who are accessible to all beings and who tirelessly work towards the liberation of all. On the other hand, Hinayana Buddhism, also known as Theravada Buddhism, places less emphasis on Bodhisattvas and instead focuses more on the individual's path to personal enlightenment, known as Arhatship. While arhats in Theravada tradition are revered for their attainment of enlightenment, they are seen as primarily concerned with their own liberation rather than the salvation of all beings.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Bhikkhu Nyanatusita. (2013). *The Bodhisattva Ideal; Essays on the Emergence of Mahāyāna*- Buddhist Publication Society.

¹⁵ Jan Nattier, (2007). *The Bodhisattva Path; Based on the Ugrapariprcchā a Mahāyāna Sūtra*; [Motilal Banarsidass Publishers](#).

Therefore, while both traditions acknowledge the significance of enlightened beings, Mahayana Bodhisattvas exemplify a broader commitment to altruism and universal liberation compared to the more individualistic pursuit of enlightenment in Hinayana Buddhism.¹⁶

9. Contemporary Relevance:

In contemporary Buddhist communities, both Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattva ideals continue to hold significant relevance, albeit in distinct ways. Mahayana Buddhism emphasizes the Bodhisattva path, where practitioners aspire to attain enlightenment not only for themselves but also for the benefit of all sentient beings. This altruistic approach promotes compassion, empathy, and selflessness, which are increasingly valued in today's interconnected and diverse societies. On the other hand, Hinayana Buddhism, although sometimes considered a pejorative term, still emphasizes personal liberation through the pursuit of individual enlightenment. While it may not emphasize the Bodhisattva ideal as strongly as Mahayana, Hinayana teachings still provide valuable insights into the nature of suffering and the path to liberation, offering guidance to individuals seeking personal transformation in the face of contemporary challenges. Both perspectives contribute to the rich tapestry of Buddhist thought and practice, offering practitioners a diverse range of tools and inspirations to navigate the complexities of modern life¹⁷.

10. Conclusion:

This research paper provides a comprehensive exploration of the similarities and differences between Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, offering valuable insights into the diverse manifestations of the Bodhisattva ideal within the Buddhist tradition. In comparing Mahayana and Hinayana Bodhisattvas, one discerns nuanced distinctions that reflect diverse philosophical perspectives within Buddhism. Mahayana Bodhisattvas, embodying the principle of universal compassion, aspire not only for personal enlightenment but also for the liberation of all sentient beings from suffering. Their altruistic motivation drives them to postpone their own nirvana until all beings have reached enlightenment, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all existence. In contrast, Hinayana Bodhisattvas primarily focus on personal liberation, aiming for individual enlightenment without the same explicit commitment to the welfare of others. While both paths uphold the core Buddhist values of compassion and wisdom, Mahayana Bodhisattvas emphasize the profound interconnectedness and interdependence of all beings, fostering a broader, inclusive vision of enlightenment that extends beyond the self.

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