

BUDDHISM, CLASS OUTLINE 4

Mahāyāna Buddhism: Emptiness, Compassion & the Bodhisattva Ideal

1. **Time Frame:** between 150 BCE – 280 CE

2. **Hīnayāna** (“Lesser Vehicle”)

Theravāda (“Tradition of the Elders”)

Pāli School or Pāli Buddhism

arhat

3. **Mahāyāna** (“Great Vehicle”)

(i) compassion (**karuṇā**)

bodhisattva (“enlightened being”)

bodhicitta (“altruistic mind of enlightenment”)

praṇidhāna (the bodhisattva vow)

- Tibetan Sevenfold Meditation on Compassion

(ii) wisdom (**prajña**)

- to overcome ignorance (**avidya**)

4. **śūnyatā** (“emptiness”) as the middle path between

(a) eternalism (absolute existence), and

(b) nihilism (absolute non-existence)

empty of **svabhāva** (“own-being” or “essence”)

- **Nāgājūna** (c. 150-250 CE)

- “The emptiness of all dharmas is empty of that emptiness.”

5. **Dependent Origination** (Paticca-samuppāda)