

「佛家慈悲」是否等同西方 compassion ? 建構含攝佛法的慈悲構念

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摘要

受達賴喇嘛倡導慈悲觀念影響，西方對 compassion 主題之研究近年來風起雲湧、蓬勃發展。但「佛家慈悲」(Buddhist compassion) 是否能等同於西方 compassion ? 因為兩者淵源於不同文化，未必能劃上等號。故本文比較「佛家慈悲」和西方 compassion 概念之差異，並構念化「佛家慈悲」。

為探討「佛家慈悲」和西方 compassion 之差異，本文採取黃光國「文化系統研究方法」，對兩者進行「文化詮釋」。分析結果發現，西方 compassion 意指渴望為受苦者解除痛苦。「佛家慈悲」雖有此義，但在佛學脈絡中，「慈悲喜捨」四無量心乃不可分割之美德系統，故其界定範疇遠較西方 compassion 寬廣。進一步分析發現，「佛家慈悲」之所以發展出相互平衡的美德系統，乃因佛家文化系統中具有人人可成佛的理想人觀，因而四無量心的修行有助邁向諸佛圓滿無瑕的「大慈悲」。

其次，本文依據科學哲學理論建構之倡議，對「佛家慈悲」內涵進行「科學詮釋」。本文先從社會科學角度，分析出「佛家慈悲」構念涵括四面向：除西方 compassion 強調的助人慈悲外，亦包含教化慈悲、鎮定慈悲和平等慈悲，意指「以鎮定情緒和平等心，幫助受苦者離苦得樂，並協助犯錯者改過向善」。此定義不僅呼應四無量心，亦符合達賴喇嘛對於慈悲之論述。本文進一步依據心理學理論和研究發現檢視「佛家慈悲」四面向之間的關係，分析結果顯示新增慈悲的三面向有助於平衡助人慈悲的可能副作用，呼應四無量心理論之預設。

綜上所述，本文根據黃光國之「文化系統研究方法」和「科學微世界」論述，對「佛教慈悲」進行「文化詮釋」和「科學詮釋」。據此構念化「佛家慈悲」，從而證實黃光國倡議之本土社會科學研究方法確實可行。

關鍵詞：文化系統研究方法、四無量心、佛家慈悲、慈悲

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壹、探討「佛家慈悲」內涵之必要性

近來西方心理學界興起對 compassion 的研究，橫跨發展心理學、生物心理學、介入、社會心理學、臨床心理學、應用心理學等領域。西方心理學者將 compassion 研究成果匯聚成《The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science》(Seppälä et al., 2017) 一書，於扉頁載明，將此書獻給達賴喇嘛，感謝他相信 compassion 和科學實徵研究的力量，從而鼓舞了許多研究 compassion 的學者¹。

達賴喇嘛身為佛教僧侶，多年來致力提倡慈悲觀念，其所著書籍幾乎無一未言及慈悲的重要性。達賴喇嘛談慈悲時，英文通常翻譯成 compassion。因此，當許多西方學者受達賴喇嘛之鼓舞而從事 compassion 研究時，多認定自身研究之 compassion 概念等同於達賴喇嘛倡導的慈悲觀念。但是，西方英文 compassion 構念是否確實能等同「佛家慈悲」(Buddhist compassion)？根據以下四項理由，本文認為確有必要探討佛家慈悲之意涵。

一、文化分殊性

文化心理學家 Richard Shweder 等 (1997) 提出：「一種心智，多種心態；普世主義，考量分殊」²，說明人類在共同的心智基礎上，呈現多樣化的文化展示。如同歷史學家余英時 (2007) 所說：「每一個文化系統中的價值都可以分為普遍與特殊兩類。」本土心理學家黃光國 (2009) 亦指出，過去非西方國家的心理學界以西方馬首是瞻，但自 1970 年代末期開始出現本土心理學運動。此思潮顯示，非西方國家的心理學者開始意識到文化分殊的重要性。

鑑於東西方文化雖有其共通的人類心智為基礎，但亦各自衍生不同的文化心態，因此本土心理學者進行研究時須細膩考量文化分殊之處。職是之故，雖然西方 compassion 一字和佛家慈悲一詞表面上看似皆和關懷受苦者有關，但兩者是否能完全劃上等號，尚待進一步的文化考察方能判定。

二、學者之質疑

在西方心理學界，compassion 多指關懷他人苦難、渴望為其減輕痛苦 (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005; Goetz et al., 2010; Goetz & Simon-Thomas, 2017)。但此定義是否能等同達賴

¹ 原文內容如下：“This book is gratefully dedicated to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whose belief in both the power of compassion and empirical research has been an inspiration to so many in the field of compassion science.”

² “One mind, many mentalities; universalism without uniformity.”

喇嘛所提倡的慈悲觀念？已有學者提出質疑。如 Koopmann-Holm 與 Tsai (2017) 指出，達賴喇嘛談慈悲時，包含對敵人和加害者的慈悲，這部分並未包含在西方 compassion 的定義之中。這顯示，佛家慈悲觀念確實不能等同於西方 compassion。因此，有必要進一步探討佛家慈悲的內涵。

三、西方 compassion 介入設計

由於眾多西方慈悲科學研究者對於達賴喇嘛的欽服，在發展 compassion 的介入計畫時往往自述參考佛教修行方法，其實際內容最後超越西方 compassion 的原始定義。比如說，史丹福大學設計的 Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) Program 納入基本的正念訓練 (Goldin & Jazaieri, 2017; Jinpa & Weiss, 2013)。又如，Cognitively-Based Compassion Training (CBCT) 則包含平等心的訓練，課程說明敵人和朋友一樣都渴求離苦得樂，藉由相似性降低學員對敵人的冷漠或敵意 (Mascaro et al., 2017)。上述西方 compassion 介入設計涵蓋正念和平等心，但此二者皆未被包含在西方 compassion 概念的定義中。此脫節現象顯示，佛家慈悲的內涵可能比西方 compassion 更加寬廣，且已影響心理學介入訓練之設計。因此有必要進一步釐清佛家慈悲概念之內涵。

四、self-compassion 的定義

Compassion 意指關懷他人苦難，但 Neff (2003) 提出人們亦可關懷自身之痛苦，從而提出 self-compassion 的構念。Neff 自述其乃參照佛教教義提出 self-compassion 構念，界定 self-compassion 包含三項元素：1. 善待自己，而非批判自己；2. 了解自身犯錯或受苦是人類普遍現象，故無須自絕於人；3. 正念關照負面情緒，而非壓抑或過度認同。若承襲西方 compassion 定義，self-compassion 理應只包含第一項善待自己。但 Neff 提出的 self-compassion 的概念卻包含正念、包容己錯、人類一體等思想。由於 Neff 曾說其乃參照佛教教義提出 self-compassion 構念，由此可推論，佛家慈悲的構念可能比西方 compassion 涵蓋更多面向。

綜上所述，上述理由顯示心理學界有必要比較西方 compassion 和佛家慈悲概念之異同，並檢視佛家慈悲概念的內涵。而在分析兩者異同之前，需要先決定分析異同的方法。以下闡明本文所採取的研究方法。

貳、研究方法

為研究佛家慈悲和西方 compassion 之異同，本文採取黃光國提倡的本土心理學研究方法。其方法不僅呼應哲學家 Charles Taylor(1971)的「文化詮釋」(cultural interpretation)和「科學詮釋」(scientific interpretation)，亦為本土心理學提供更具體之操作內涵和方法。

一、本土心理學研究方法

對於本土心理學研究方法，黃光國(2009)指出，本土心理學不能只停留在實證主義的層次。他主張必須在「本體論／認識論／方法論」上徹底轉變，方可建立本土心理學的科學理論。

具體來說，在研究方法上，黃光國提出「文化系統研究方法」(cultural system approach)，主張本土心理學研究不應只停留在詮釋層次，也不應止於實徵層次，更不應僅以變項比較方式進行跨文化比較。而應透過「由上而下方法」(top-down approach)，建構「涵攝文化理論」(culture-inclusive theories)(Hwang, 2015, 2019)。黃光國(2003)進一步指出，「生活世界」(life world)和「科學微世界」(scientific microworld)並不相同。研究者的職責在於運用「形式理性」，將生活世界中的「實質理性」轉化成科學理論模型。因此，他(黃光國, 2022)主張，本土心理學研究者應致力以西方「科學哲學」理性思維，透過「理論建構」方式梳理東方文化的精髓。

二、「文化詮釋」和「科學詮釋」

西方哲學家 Charles Taylor(1971)提出，主流科學典範是對生活世界做出「科學詮釋」(scientific interpretation)，建構科學理論。然而，當社會科學家直接對所處之文化世界做出科學詮釋時，往往忽略其理論建構可能帶有文化偏見。因此，Charles Taylor 倡議，除了「科學詮釋」之外，社會科學家亦應將文化因素納入考量，對生活世界現象進行「文化詮釋」(cultural interpretation)。

而黃光國提出之「文化系統研究方法」為「文化詮釋」提供一個具體可行的方法。「文化系統研究方法」涵蓋 Archer(1995, 1996)「分析二元論」(analytical dualism)的兩個層次，即文化系統(cultural system)和社會與文化交互作用(sociocultural interaction)，故能超脫實證主義忽略文化系統之謬誤。此外，他倡議建構「涵攝文化理論」，但並非只停留於對文化的描述，而是運用「形式理性」將生活世界轉化成科學微世界的理論模型。此學說之巧思乃在於對「文化詮釋」進行「科學詮釋」，建立起涵攝文化之科學理論。

三、本文研究方向

綜上所述，本文為梳理比較西方 *compassion* 和佛家慈悲概念之異同，採取的研究步驟有二。步驟一為對西方 *compassion* 和佛家慈悲概念進行「文化詮釋」比較，採取的具體分析方法即為傳統的字義分析和黃光國的文化系統研究方法。步驟二則是針對佛家慈悲進行「科學詮釋」，以社會科學角度分析佛家慈悲蘊含之面向。以下分別說明本文之「文化詮釋」和「科學詮釋」的分析結果。

參、文化詮釋：東西方之文化系統分析

為探討西方 *compassion* 構念是否能等同佛家慈悲概念，此節不僅探討這兩個詞彙本身的意涵，並將往上追溯各自於其文化系統所代表的意義。換言之，本節將採取字義分析和文化系統研究方法，分別探討西方 *compassion* 和佛家慈悲概念意涵的異同。

一、字義分析

（一）西方 *compassion* 之字義

字源學 (etymology) 顯示，*compassion* 意指「一同受苦」³。因為 *com-* 為 *with* 之意，而 *passion* 則和 *patient* (*one who suffers*) 相關 (Jimenez, 2009)。Merriam-Webster 網路字典的定義為：「對於他人苦難感到同情，並渴望減輕之」⁴。Cambridge 網路字典的定義相仿：「為他人的痛苦或壞運氣感到同情和悲傷，希望能幫助他們」⁵。

在《The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science》一書，*compassion* 被定義成：「關心別人之苦難或未被滿足之需求，意欲為其減輕此苦難」⁶ (Goetz & Simon-Thomas, 2017)。此心理學定義亦和 Merriam-Webster 及 Cambridge 等英文字典定義相仿。另外，從西方測量 *compassion* 的量表可得知，上述定義確實為目前西方 *compassion* 共通之定義。如 *compassionate love scale* (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005) 雖然根據對象細分成親近他人 (*closed others*) 和陌生人 (*strangers*)，但皆聚焦於對他人苦難之關懷。另一量表 *Santa Clara brief compassion scale* (Hwang et al., 2008) 亦衡量受試者對陌生人遭遇困難時的同情程度。*Multidimensional compassion scale* (Jazaieri et al., 2018) 則將 *compassion* 分為認知 (*cognitive*)、情感 (*affective*)、意圖 (*intentional*) 和動機 (*motivational*) 四個面向，但亦著眼於對受苦者的關懷。由此可知，在西方心理學界 *compassion* 意指「對他人苦難之關懷和為其減輕痛苦之渴望」。

³ to suffer with.

⁴ sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

⁵ a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others and a wish to help them.

⁶ concern for the suffering or unmet need of another, coupled with a desire to alleviate that suffering.

（二）佛家慈悲之字義

根據日本佛教學者中村元(1956/1997)的考察,「慈」是巴利語 *mettā* 或梵文 *maitrī*, 在印度一般的解釋為「真實的友情、純粹親愛之念」。而「悲」是巴利語和梵文的 *karuṇā*, 在印度文獻代表「哀憐、同情、溫柔、有情」等義。南亞上座部佛教則將「慈」(*mettā*) 解釋為「帶給(同朋)利益與安樂的願望」,「悲」(*karuṇā*) 則為「除去不利益與苦的欲望」。大乘佛教繼承上述解釋,如龍樹所說:「慈名愛念眾生,常求安穩樂事以饒益之。悲名愍念眾生,受五道中種種身苦心苦」(《大智度論》)。

雖然「慈」和「悲」各具其意義,但中村元指出,華人一般用法並不區別兩字的差異,而合成連用「慈悲」兩字。而在日本,*maitrī*(慈)或*karuṇā*(悲)單語也往往直接翻譯成「慈悲」。中村元認為此乃因為「慈」和「悲」兩字的意義極為相近,所以實際上幾乎無所差別。正如達賴喇嘛所指出:「二者(指「慈」和「悲」)之間沒有先後順序,就某一點來說,它們是同時發生的。當你希望別人脫離痛苦時,期待別人得到快樂的願望也會一併出現」(Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008/2011)。由此可知,雖然「慈」和「悲」有各自語義,但有鑑於其同時發生,「慈悲」通常連用,指稱我們希望他人能夠「離苦得樂」。

（三）小結

根據上述字義分析,西方 *compassion* 之字義和佛家慈悲相近,兩者皆希望受苦者能離苦得樂。但除了字義分析,社會科學家亦應執行文化系統分析。故本文進一步分析西方 *compassion* 和佛家慈悲背後之文化系統差異。

二、文化系統分析

（一）西方 *compassion* 之文化系統分析

從文化系統角度,西方學者 Eric J. Cassell (2009) 指出, *compassion* 的概念可回溯到亞里斯多德《修辭學》一書。他主張雖然亞里斯多德使用的是 *pity* 一字,但傳達的正是 *compassion* 的概念:「對於具破壞性或痛苦的災難降臨在不應受苦的人們身上,而感受到的痛苦」⁷。

亞里斯多德指出,此種痛苦感受的對象不僅限於不應受苦之人,也會因我們和受苦對象之親疏遠近而有所差距。此外,人們對相似自己之人較易產生 *compassion* (包含年齡、性格、社會地位、出生等之相似性)。換言之,對於我們認同之人(包含親近之人、相似之人、不應受苦之人),我們較易產生 *compassion*。亞里斯多德此番論述意指,人的 *compassion* 感受並非對所有人一律平等。

⁷ a feeling of pain at an apparent evil, destructive or painful, which befalls one who doesn't deserve it.

由此可知，無論從字源學或古希臘哲學，西方 compassion 一字皆指稱感受到我們認同之人的痛苦。因此，西方心理學目前對 compassion 的定義符合其歷史文化淵源。

（二）佛家慈悲之文化系統分析

本文為「佛家慈悲」進行文化系統分析，有三項發現：首先，慈悲為諸佛特質，而成佛為大乘佛教徒最終理想。其次，大乘佛教主張人人皆有佛性，肯定所有人成佛的潛能。最後，成佛需悲智雙修，其中悲指的就是慈悲。說明如下：

1. 慈悲為佛之特質

大乘佛教為「菩薩道」，因此相當重視「慈悲」，如《大智度論》所載：「慈悲是佛道的根本。」在大乘佛教中，成佛以渡眾生是所有大乘佛教徒最終的理想，而佛所具備的慈悲亦超乎一般人的慈悲，被稱為「大悲」(mahākaraṇā) 或「大慈悲」。如龍樹於《大智度論》所答：「諸佛心中慈悲名為大，於人心中名為小。」根據中村元（1956/1997）的考證，「大悲」未見諸大部分原始佛教聖典。而是在佛教晚期，佛陀被神格化後，「大悲」這個概念才建立起來。

常人之慈悲和諸佛之慈悲有何相異之處？《維摩詰所說經》將一般眾生的慈悲稱為「愛見悲」，乃被煩惱纏繞的慈悲（鄭鳳姬，2014）。相對的，佛所展現的「大慈悲」圓滿無暇，如《阿育王經》第一卷所載：「佛滅一切漏，有無比大慈悲。」

2. 慈悲為佛性展現

雖然常人與諸佛之慈悲的境界不同，但是大乘佛教提出「人人皆有佛性」的主張，肯定常人成佛具備「大慈悲」的潛能。如南本《大般涅槃經》第三二卷所載：「大慈大悲名為佛性。」又如《法華經》所云：「如來室者，一切眾生中大慈悲是也。」

3. 慈悲為成佛之道：「四無量心」理論

在大乘佛教中，慈悲不僅是眾生佛性之展現，亦為成佛之道。如藏傳佛教所主張，成佛需要開展菩提心。而菩提心分為世俗菩提心（為利眾生願成佛）和勝義菩提心（了悟空性智慧）(Dalai Lama & Chodron, 2017/2020)。前者即為慈悲，後者即為智慧。由此可知，慈悲與智慧正是成佛所需修行的兩大重點⁸。

而慈悲和智慧的關係，可由《大正藏》二十五卷得知，經云：「菩薩處眾生中，行三十二種悲，漸漸增廣轉成大悲。大悲是一切諸佛菩薩功德之根本，是般若波羅蜜之母，諸佛之祖母。菩薩以大悲心故，得般若波羅蜜。得般若波羅蜜故得作佛。」由此可知，修行慈悲最後能開啟智慧（般若波羅蜜）。那麼，應如何具體實踐慈悲，方能從常人之「愛見悲」蛻變成佛菩薩的「大慈悲」？從慈悲觀念歷史發展得窺一二。

(1) 「四無量心」理論

⁸ 更明確來說，以宗喀巴大師的〈三主要道〉的成佛次第，分別為出離心、菩提心（慈悲）、空正見。另依據宗喀巴大師的《菩提道次第廣論》，成佛次第分為下士道、中士道和上士道（夏允中等，2018）。下士道和中士道修的可說是出離心，上士道方修菩提心。因此，出離心可說是菩提心（慈悲）的前行。

中村元（1956/1997）指出，佛教最初期強調的僅只「慈」，稍後方將「慈」與「悲」並稱，之後又再加上「喜」⁹和「捨」¹⁰兩個德目。以此四心觀想涵蓋一切萬物，被稱為「四無量心」。

關於「四無量心」的意涵，從原始佛教（南傳佛教）到漢傳佛教及藏傳佛教，「慈」與「悲」的意義基本上並無改變，皆為願一切眾生離苦得樂。但在「喜」和「捨」兩個德目上則有演變。

「喜」在藏傳佛教中代表「願一切眾生不離無苦之妙樂」（Mingyur & Tworikov, 2014/2015）。在漢傳佛教則經常將「喜」解釋為「隨喜」，也就是為他人的成功、美好特質或善行感到歡喜，如《大般涅槃經》所說：「於諸眾生心生歡喜，是名大喜。」但南傳佛教的《清淨道論》將「喜」定義為「喜悅」，《解脫道論》亦提及「喜」的成就是「除不樂」。一行禪師認為只將「喜」解釋成「隨喜」過於狹隘，他主張「喜」應該也可以詮釋成我們自己內心的平靜喜樂，是一種禪悅（Hanh, 1998/2019）。

「捨」在藏傳佛教中代表「願一切眾生遠離怨親愛憎，常住大平等捨」（Mingyur & Tworikov, 2014/2015）。在漢傳佛教中則轉為要求自身具有平等心，如《大智度論》卷二十記載：「捨名捨三種心，但念眾生不憎不愛。」《成實論》卷一二則云：「是故行者欲令心等，於親捨親；於怨捨怨，然後於一初眾生慈心平等，悲喜亦爾。」簡言之，「捨」意味著怨親平等、一視同仁的平等心。南傳佛教《解脫道論》則主張「捨」的成就是殺除瞋愛，而在《清淨道論》「捨」是以平等心看待一切有情，「捨」的成就為瞋恚和愛著的止息（黃舒鈴，2016）。換言之，「捨」為平等心之意，因能去除對親友之貪著和對怨敵之瞋恚，故能達到怨親平等的境界，也就是以平等的態度看待一切有情。

(2) 「四無量心」的制衡關係

雖然不同傳承的經典對於「四無量心」的解釋不盡相同，但無論在大乘佛教（包含漢傳和藏傳，因藏傳教義採大乘、修行方法採密乘）或原始佛教（即南傳），皆有經典主張此「四無量心」有助去除煩惱。而如前所述，煩惱正是讓眾生慈悲成為「愛見悲」而非諸佛「大慈悲」的原因。如大乘經論《大智度論》卷二十云：「修慈心，為除眾生中瞋覺故。修悲心，為除眾生惱覺故。修喜心，為除不悅樂故。修捨心，為除眾生愛憎故。」《大智度論》卷二十進一步主張，「慈悲」可能會生貪著或憂愁等副作用，此時可透過「捨心」對治：「行者行慈、喜心，或時貪著心生；行悲心，或時憂愁心生——以是貪憂故心亂。入是捨心，除此貪憂，貪憂除故名為捨心。」

南傳佛教的《清淨道論》第九〈說梵住品〉則指出，「四無量心」中每一種心都有其「失敗」，也就是可能的副作用；但每一種心也有其「成就」，也就是其能對治之問題。如關於「慈心」，「瞋恚的止息為（慈的）成就，產生愛著為（慈的）失敗。」關於「悲

⁹ 巴利文和梵文皆為 *muditā*

¹⁰ 巴利文：*upekkhā*；梵文：*upeksā*

心」，「害的止息為（悲的）成就，生憂則為（悲的）失敗。」關於「喜心」，「不樂的止息是它的成就，發生（世俗的）笑則為它的失敗。」關於「捨心」，「瞋恚與愛著的止息是它的成就，發生了世俗的無智的捨是它的失敗。」

然而更進一層分析，可發現由於「喜心」的成就在於止息不樂，故應有助對治「悲心」生憂的失敗。另外，「捨心」的成就之一在於止息愛著，故應該可對治「慈心」愛著的失敗。換言之，在原本「慈悲」德目上增加「喜」和「捨」，將有助降低常人展現慈悲時可能發生的副作用，也就是制約平衡的功能。茲將《清淨道論》中「喜心」和「捨心」對「慈悲」副作用之抑制論述，整理如下：

表 1

四無量心之失敗和成就

四無量心	失敗（副作用）	成就（對治）
慈	愛著	瞋恚的止息
悲	生憂	害的止息
喜	世俗之喜	不樂的止息
捨	世俗之捨	瞋恚與愛著的止息

4. 達賴喇嘛對於慈悲的論述

由於西方 compassion 研究經常提及達賴喇嘛，本文認為應進一步檢視達賴喇嘛所談之慈悲，是否亦包含「四無量心」中的「喜」與「捨」，以確認達賴喇嘛的慈悲概念是否與傳統佛教的慈悲論述相符。

達賴喇嘛主張，慈悲不只是向外幫助他人，也必須向內克服負面情緒。他如是說：「保持慈悲並不夠，一定要採取行動。行動包含了兩種層面，一種是克服心念的扭曲與苦惱，也就是平息憤怒，最後消除憤怒等，這是出於慈悲的行動。另一種行動是比較社會性的、屬公眾的。面對錯誤我們出於慈悲心來改正它」（Dalai Lama, 1992/2015）。達賴喇嘛亦提及：「有些人看到大量痛苦時，感受到的不是慈悲心，而是覺得洩氣或灰心。為了讓人們不要覺得洩氣，可以讓他們看見或學習不同的方向：你有能力克服痛苦。你不覺得洩氣，而是取得一種自信與勇氣的感覺」（Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008/2011）。由此可見，達賴喇嘛認知的慈悲，包含「不樂的止息」，即為四無量心中的「喜」。

達賴喇嘛亦主張：「真正的慈悲不會偏袒、不會不公平。真正的慈悲充滿平等心。」（Dalai Lama, 2005/2015）達賴喇嘛強調：「四海之內皆兄弟。大家的需求都是相同的。…每一個人基本上都是相同的。每一個人都有得樂離苦的權利。…追求快樂以及避免受苦的需求，就是我們在根本上相同的部分，因此，大家都平等…即使我們的特徵有所不同，如種族、語言、宗教、性別、財富等，我們的基本需求卻都是相同的，因而讓我們每一

個人都平等。」(Goleman, 2015/2017) 由此可見，達賴喇嘛認知的慈悲，亦包含四無量心中的「捨」，意即平等心。

(三) 小結

綜上所述，文化系統分析顯示，無論西方亞里斯多德或東方佛家思想皆注意到對受苦者的同情心有可能產生不良的副作用。如亞里斯多德提到，**compassion** 本身並不平等。又如南傳佛教《清淨道論》所指出，慈可能會產生愛著，悲則可能產生憂思。

東西方不同之處在於，西方傳統文化系統並未對 **compassion** 可能產生之異化提出解決方案。而佛家哲學則將「喜」和「捨」加入慈悲，形成「四無量心」的美德系統，藉此彌補慈悲可能產生不良的副作用。

佛家慈悲之所以嘗試找出解決慈悲異化的方案，乃因佛家有成佛理想。在佛教教義中，佛展現的是圓滿無瑕的慈悲，因此不會也不應有異化的問題。為邁向佛境界的「大慈悲」，「四無量心」理論因應而生。

更明確來說，在大乘佛教思想中，成佛是最終的理想。諸佛展現的慈悲圓滿無缺，被稱之為「大悲」或「大慈悲」，不同於常人的「愛見悲」。其次，常人內在具備「佛性」，而「大慈大悲名為佛性」，所以每個人都具備成佛的潛能，亦帶有展現「大慈悲」的可能性。最後，慈悲不僅是佛性展現，亦為成佛之道。由於常人的「愛見悲」仍被煩惱所繫，此時透過「四無量心」的修習，藉由「喜心」和「捨心」對於「慈悲」的制約平衡，有助於降低其副作用，使之更接近圓滿無瑕的「大慈悲」。

藏傳佛教中的宗義學有「根道果」的理論系統架構，即「原理、工夫、成果」或「價值、工夫和境界論」(林彥宏，2005)。將「根道果」概念應用在上述佛家慈悲的文化系統分析，發現「人人皆有佛性」為「根」，也就是成佛之因。「四無量心」修行理論為「道」，有助降低「慈悲」可能產生的副作用，邁向圓滿的「大慈悲」。成佛為「果」，為佛教徒之終極理想。佛家慈悲意涵必須放在這一整個「慈悲根道果體系」中理解，和西方 **compassion** 的字義不盡相同，如表 2 所示。

上述文化系統分析顯示，在東西不同文化系統中，雖然 **compassion** 和佛家慈悲有相通之處，甚至各自之先賢皆指出對受苦者的同情心有可能會有副作用，但由於佛教具有「佛」之理想人觀，佛家慈悲進一步發展出一套「四無量心」的美德系統，造成西方 **compassion** 和佛家慈悲的意涵產生一定程度的差異。此文化背景差異亦可解釋，為何達賴喇嘛對於慈悲的論述超越西方 **compassion** 的定義，包含情緒調節(喜)和平等心(捨)。

表 2

西方 compassion 和佛家慈悲之意涵比較表

	西方 compassion	佛家慈悲
普世性	意涵 感受他人痛苦、渴望為其除苦	願他人離苦得樂
文化分殊性	副作用 限於認同之人或相似之人	貪著 生憂
		根：人人具佛性，慈悲乃佛性展現 道：提出「四無量心」修行理論降低「慈悲」副作用 果：成佛理想（從常人「愛見悲」邁向諸佛「大慈悲」）

透過「文化系統研究方法」完成對佛家慈悲的「文化詮釋」之後，根據黃光國（2003）提出的「科學微世界」概念，本文仍應進一步透過社會科學角度，對上述「文化詮釋」進行「科學詮釋」。

肆、科學詮釋：科學微世界之建構

本文採取黃光國的「文化系統研究方法」，判定西方 compassion 意涵和佛家慈悲概念有相通之處，但佛家慈悲進一步加入喜和捨，形成具文化分殊性的哲學體系，故不能將兩者劃上等號。為釐清佛家慈悲的構念意涵，以下將援引黃光國倡議之「理論建構」方法，對上一節的「文化詮釋」進行「科學詮釋」。首先將依據社會科學理論構念化「佛家慈悲」方法，為其內涵進行科學分類。其次，將根據心理學既有理論，分析佛家慈悲構念中的不同面向之間，是否確實存在四無量心理論所預測的相互平衡的關係。

一、「佛家慈悲」之構念化

以下說明如何構念化「佛家慈悲」。首先探討構念化之研究方法，然後進一步討論構念面向之屬性和定義。

（一）慈悲構念化方法之探討

在佛教哲學中，慈悲可分為常人「愛見悲」和諸佛「大慈悲」，亦可根據「四無量心理論」分為「慈、悲、喜、捨」四心；但上述兩種分類方式其實密切相關。因為從常人

角度觀之，當四心良好發展、相互制衡時，將能抑制各自可能產生的副作用，故會更加接近諸佛圓滿無瑕的「大慈悲」。從諸佛角度觀之，「大慈悲」代表「慈、悲、喜、捨」四心皆已高度發展，臻至「無量」境界。由此可知，「愛見悲」和「大慈悲」的分類方法與「四無量心」可說是互為表裡。因此，若要衡量常人「愛見悲」接近諸佛「大慈悲」的程度，應可測量其「慈悲喜捨」四心的發展程度。

但要測量「慈、悲、喜、捨」四心程度之前，首先必須斟酌如何定義此四心。如前所述，不同的佛教經論對於此四心未必有相同的定義。如何選擇適切的定義？本文主張應以不同德目之間能相互牽制平衡為主要的考量點。此考量點可類比政治學三權分立的「制衡原則」(principle of checks and balances)，民主制度以立法、行政、司法三權相互牽制達到權力平衡，避免一權獨大的弊病。同理，「四無量心」理論主張，慈悲可能衍生的副作用能被「喜」和「捨」制約，達到平衡。故考慮採納四心各自定義時，應從「制衡原則」角度出發。

此外，尚且需要從心理學角度考量如何切割此四心，以形成「慈悲」構念的不同面向。比如，雖然「喜」和「捨」看似可成立兩個相異之構念面向，但「慈」和「悲」兩心縱有不同字義卻難以切割。因為如前所述，當我們祈願受苦者離苦時(悲)，亦盼其得樂(慈)。因此在分析「慈悲」構念的多重面向時，應從心理學角度考量如何進行合理的科學分類。

根據上述說明，對於「慈悲」構念面向之定義和切割，會同時考慮「制衡原則」以及心理學理論學說。以下依序分析「慈」、「悲」、「喜」與「捨」。

(二)「慈」與「悲」之定義與構念面向分析

1. 字義分析

在字義方面，無論南傳、漢傳、藏傳佛教對於「慈」與「悲」的定義相當一致。「慈」為願他人得樂，「悲」則是願他人離苦。

2. 構念面向分析

「慈」與「悲」雖然有各自的字義，但如前所述，兩者往往連用。因為如達賴喇嘛所說，當我們祈願他人離苦時，亦盼其能得樂。因此從構念面向角度，「慈」與「悲」兩者不應分拆成兩個面向，因為若分拆兩者，之間的相關係數可能相當高，最終必須合併成同一面向。

但將「慈」與「悲」合併後，接下來要考量的是：不同的慈悲對象是否需要成立各自的構念面向？以佛學慈悲修行方法「七重因果教授」為例，慈悲觀想對象從自身、親友、陌生人擴及到敵人(Dalai Lama, 2005/2015)。是否有需要根據不同的慈悲對象分別建立各自的構念面向？

首先，對敵人慈悲可說是佛教特色之一。因為西方 compassion 的對象是受苦他人，

並不包括敵人。不僅達賴喇嘛曾於其書多次提及對敵人慈悲的重要性，「七重因果教授」亦涵蓋對敵人的慈悲。如前所述，部分心理學者提出西方心理學的 compassion 定義是否應參考佛教教義，增加對敵人和犯錯者（transgressor）的慈悲（Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2017）？由此可見佛教對敵人和犯錯者的慈悲超越西方 compassion 定義。

其次，若援引「道德基本原則理論」（moral foundations theory）（Graham et al., 2013）分析慈悲對象，可以發現當我們從自身、親友到陌生人逐一擴大慈悲對象範疇時，是在加大我們認同的人群，關懷更多人。換言之，當慈悲對象從自身、親友擴及到陌生人，我們是在擴大「道德基本原則理論」的「關懷原則」的適用範圍。

但面對敵人和犯錯者時，並不僅僅攸關「關懷原則」適用範圍之增加。因為誠如亞里斯多德所說，人們一般只對不值得受苦的人感到憐憫。此乃因為敵人和犯錯者違反「道德基本原則理論」的「公平原則」，我們往往會覺得他們罪有應得，因而難以對其生起憐憫。因此，對敵人和犯錯者的慈悲，不僅需要擴大「關懷原則」的適用對象，還必須超越「公平原則」的心理運作，也就是牽涉到「寬恕」。換言之，對敵人和犯錯者的慈悲難度高於對陌生人的慈悲。

佛教教義如何克服這個問題？達賴喇嘛解釋：「即使是敵人，仍然是人類，也是我們的兄弟姐妹，所以我們必須關心他們。我們的將來也和他們有關，不論是直接地，或是間接地」（Goleman, 2015/2017）。達賴喇嘛進一步說明：「當一個被憤怒所掌握的人傷害了你，你與其感到憤怒，應該對這人產生一絲絲慈悲與憐憫，因為他正在受苦」（Dalai Lama, 1992/2015）。換言之，犯錯者表面上雖然讓他人遭受痛苦，但更深一層來說，犯錯者本身也受其「煩惱」所害才因而犯錯。從這個層次來看，犯錯者本身其實也在受苦。當我們能從這個角度將加害者視為也是受害者時，則較能對敵人和犯錯者慈悲。

但佛教對敵人和犯錯者的慈悲並非任其肆虐，而是協助他們改過向善。首先，達賴喇嘛相信人有改變的可能性：「人類有潛力，可以在生命的某一階段自我重整。...即使是一個殺人犯，也能讓心靈大轉向。」（Goleman, 2015/2017）但這不代表我們應該接受他們的錯誤行為，如達賴喇嘛所說：「寬恕的真諦是：不加諸怒氣到行為者身上，但也不接受他們的錯誤行為。」《EQ》作者 Daniel Goleman(2015/2017)指出，達賴喇嘛認為慈悲行動不只包含解救苦難，亦包含矯正錯誤的人事物，如對抗不公義、保護人權等。換言之，「將犯錯者的行為和犯錯者本身區分開來。反制錯誤行為，但關愛犯錯者——也就是盡力去幫助他，讓他改變他的錯誤行為。」

根據上述分析可知，慈悲敵人應比慈悲陌生人更加困難。因為前者涉及「道德基本原則理論」的「公平原則」，若無法認知加害者也是受害者，將難以超越「公平原則」進而對敵人和犯錯者慈悲。因此，雖然「慈」與「悲」應合成一個構念面向，但「慈悲」應依據對象分成對親友和陌生人的「慈悲」（涉及「關懷原則」之推廣），以及對敵人和犯錯者的「慈悲」（涉及「公平原則」之超越）。

看到親友和陌生人受苦願其離苦得樂，本文將之稱為「助人慈悲」，相近於西方 *compassion* 定義。能超越「公平原則」而將「關懷原則」適用於敵人和犯錯者，協助他們改過，本文將之稱為「教化慈悲」。據上述分析，「助人慈悲」和「教化慈悲」應形成「慈悲」構念之不同面向，因為根據「道德基本原則理論」，兩者背後牽涉到的心理學原則迥然有別。

(三)「喜」之定義與構念面向分析

1. 字義分析

在字義方面，如前所述，南傳、漢傳、藏傳佛教對於四無量心中的「喜」的定義並不一致。南傳佛教對「喜」的定義為「喜悅」(《清淨道論》)，能「除不樂」(《解脫道論》)。而漢傳佛教多將之解釋為「隨喜」，有助除妒。藏傳佛教則將之解釋為「願一切眾生不離無苦之妙樂」。

如果從「制衡原則」角度觀之，南傳佛教「喜悅、除不樂」的定義應對降低慈悲「生憂」的副作用最有幫助。因為漢傳「隨喜」詮釋比較接近「慈」(願他人得樂)，雖應有助降低嫉妒，但對於慈心「貪著」和悲心「生憂」的負面作用並無明顯克制效果。而藏傳「願一切眾生不離無苦之妙樂」的解釋則可為「慈」本意所涵蓋，所以對慈悲可能之副作用亦無直接助益。故從「制衡原則」角度，南傳「喜悅」的字義最為合適被納入作為此一構念面向的定義。

如前所述，達賴喇嘛亦主張，慈悲不只是向外幫助他人，也必須向內克服負面情緒。他說：「保持慈悲並不夠，一定要採取行動。行動包含了兩種層面，一種是克服心念的扭曲與苦惱，也就是平息憤怒，最後消除憤怒等，這是出於慈悲的行動。另一種行動是比較社會性的、屬公眾的。面對錯誤我們出於慈悲心來改正它」(Dalai Lama, 1992/2015)。

綜上所述，若參考南傳佛教「喜」的定義，可以發現其有調節情緒之功能，平靜的禪悅有助降低負面情緒。比如說，可以抑制悲心可能伴隨生憂的副作用，亦可降低面對敵人和犯錯者時可能產生的憤怒。簡言之，當「慈悲」有「喜心」的輔助時，將有助調節沮喪或憤怒等負向情緒，在慈悲的同時內心亦能保持鎮定，也就是情緒平衡。

2. 構念面向分析

由於「喜」的概念和「慈悲」字義相當不同，因此應能獨立成為一個面向。所以在上述「助人慈悲」和「教化慈悲」之外，「慈悲」的「喜心」可作為第三個面向。而因其有助情緒平衡，使人在面對受苦者生起悲心時能不過分生憂，亦有助面對犯錯者時平衡憤怒情緒，故本文將此面向命名為「鎮定慈悲」。

(四)「捨」之定義與構念面向分析

1. 字義分析

在字義方面，南傳、漢傳、藏傳佛教對於四無量心中「捨」的定義並非完全一致。在南傳和漢傳佛教，「捨」皆指稱不憎不愛、怨親平等、一視同仁的平等心。在藏傳佛教中也有此義，但是用來祝福他人：「願一切有情遠離怨親愛憎，常住大平等捨」。

若從「制衡原則」角度觀之，南傳和漢傳佛教的定義應較能幫助我們節制「慈悲」可能帶來的副作用。因為當我們自身若因「慈」生貪著，產生心理學上的「內團體偏私」(ingroup favoritism) 問題，此時若能生起「捨」的平等心，理論上將有助降低「慈」的貪著問題。而藏傳祝福他人具有「捨心」，有助對方之福祉，應屬於「慈」的展現。故宜採南傳和漢傳佛教之定義。

2. 構念面向分析

從上述「捨」的字義觀之，著重點在於人與人之間的平衡，不同於「喜」重視的是內在情緒均衡，因此應可獨立成為一個面向。更明確來說，「捨」的功能是降低心理學上的「內團體偏私」問題，而「喜」則有助調節情緒，無論是高度情緒同理受苦者而產生的沮喪憂鬱，或者是面對犯錯者時生起的義憤情緒。由於「捨」的關鍵在於平等，故本文將此面向稱之為「平等慈悲」。

(五)「佛家慈悲」構念定義和四大面向

1. 「佛家慈悲」構念之四大面向

以上透過政治學「制衡原則」和「道德基本原則理論」等心理學理論，逐一釐清「四無量心」意涵，並進行合理的科學分類，歸納出「佛家慈悲」應具有四大面向。「佛家慈悲」四大面向和「四無量心」不同之處，在於將「慈」和「悲」併為同一面向後，再依據慈悲的對象分為對受苦者的「助人慈悲」和對犯錯者的「教化慈悲」。「喜」則對應「鎮定慈悲」，「捨」則對應「平等慈悲」。茲比較「四無量心」和「佛家慈悲」四大面向，如圖 1 和表 3 所示：

圖 1

從「四無量心」的文化詮釋到「佛家慈悲」的科學詮釋

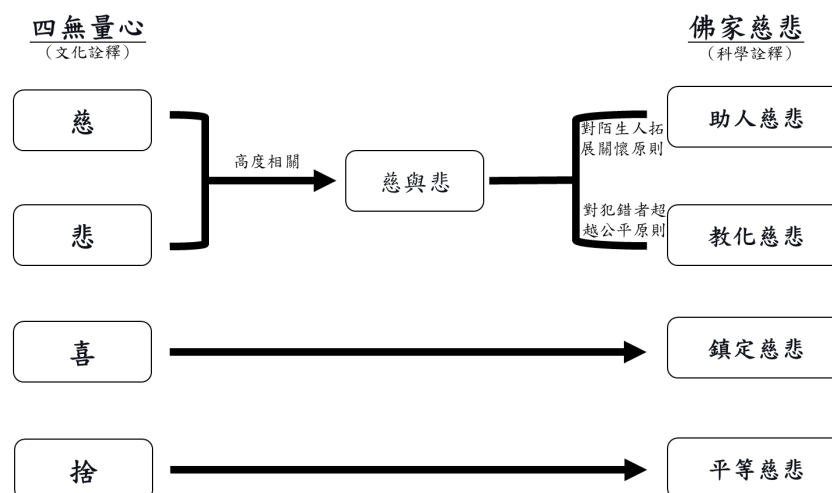


表 3

四無量心和佛家慈悲之對照表

四無量心	意涵	佛家慈悲 四面向	意涵
慈	願他人得樂	助人慈悲	幫助受苦者離苦得樂
悲	願他人離苦	教化慈悲	協助犯錯者改過向善
喜	喜悅平靜	鎮定慈悲	鎮定地幫助受苦者和犯錯者
捨	平等心	平等慈悲	以平等心幫助受苦者和犯錯者

2. 「佛家慈悲」構念之定義

整合上述四面向，「佛家慈悲」可定義為：「以鎮定情緒和平等心，幫助受苦者離苦得樂，協助犯錯者改過向善」。相對於西方 **compassion** 定義只著重幫助受苦者離苦得樂，佛家慈悲定義更加寬廣遼闊。首先在對象方面，不僅幫助受苦者，亦幫助犯錯者。其次，不僅考慮往外幫助他人，亦往內調節自身情緒。最後，不僅往內注重情緒均衡，亦往外關注不同對象間的平等性，不厚此薄彼。

佛家慈悲定義既包含又超越西方 **compassion** 意涵，不僅反映佛教哲學的影響，亦彰顯東方文化的特殊性。佛教教義在發展過程中，「四無量心」理論本身已然考量對他人同情心可能產生異化的副作用。解決之道乃增加「喜」和「捨」兩心，以「制衡原則」制約慈悲可能發生之失敗，以達到均衡狀態。另一方面，西方 **compassion** 的文化系統分析雖然顯示西方哲學家已經考慮到其有限性，但卻未能進一步提出解決之道。職是之故，佛家慈悲的構念內涵遠較西方 **compassion** 豐富。

雖然佛家慈悲的構念展現東方文化特色，具文化特殊性，但從另一個角度來看，佛家慈悲降低副作用的解方卻未必不能適用於西方人。意即，雖然就觀念而言，佛家慈悲之構念具有東方特色；但就制衡負面作用的實際效果來講，由於人類心理具有相當之普世性，故「喜」和「捨」對於 **compassion** 負面作用之節制，極有可能亦適用於西方人。尤其考量到西方 **compassion** 介入部分已納入正念和平等心的訓練，顯示佛家慈悲四面向的平衡作用亦應適用於西方人。

二、「佛家慈悲」四面向之關係分析

透過社會科學視角梳理「佛家慈悲」，發現「佛家慈悲」蘊含四個面向：助人慈悲、教化慈悲、鎮定慈悲和平等慈悲。以下將從心理學理論和研究發現，探討此四大面向之

間的關係。首先將探討助人慈悲可能產生之異化，其次將討論其他三個佛家慈悲面向如何協助平衡助人慈悲可能之異化。

(一) 助人慈悲可能之異化

如上所述，佛家慈悲中的助人慈悲對應的是西方 *compassion*，即渴望受苦者能離苦得樂。回顧東西方文化之文獻和心理學研究成果，助人慈悲可能產生三方面的異化：

1. 對受苦者之憂愁

佛教文獻《清淨道論》指出，「悲心」可能「生憂」。此限制在心理學對應的是 *compassion fatigue* 相關研究（或譯：「悲憫疲憊」，指助人工作者因累積長期工作壓力、過度涉入受苦者的情緒導致自我損耗）（Bride et al., 2007）。同理心研究也指出，高度情緒同理有時會讓同理者承受過多的負面情緒，導致無法真正從事助人行為（Bloom, 2016）。比如說，有位母親目睹兒子受傷血淋淋，感到傷心欲絕。若此時外科醫師對這位母親的痛苦感同身受，將她的兒子想像成自己兒子，外科醫師將因情緒衝擊過大而無法救人。外科醫師必須和自己內心巨大的悲傷脫鉤，方能執刀拯救病患。因此，助人慈悲有可能導致被受苦者憂苦情緒渲染之副作用。

2. 對犯錯者之報復

亞里斯多德指出，*compassion* 的對象往往僅限於不值得受苦之人，不包含我們認為罪有應得之人。《清淨道論》指出，「念他的仇人之死則生歡喜」。根據心理學研究，仇敵的來源之一是攻擊我們關愛之人的加害者。心理學研究發現，對受害者感情越深（愛著較高），對加害者的攻擊傾向越高（Buffone & Poulin, 2014）。如 1945 年德國集中營有許多囚犯被虐死、餓死或押進毒氣室。只不過，現時集中營已經得到解放，受害的並不是之前被關押的猶太人，而是被俘虜的德軍，下手的則是戰勝的美軍。當時有一位美軍上尉在家書中提到，他看到納粹親衛隊被毒打一頓後槍斃，他卻一點也不同情，因為他認為他們自作孽不可活。也就是說，人們常將加害者「非人化」，進而對其施暴（Bloom, 2016）。

心理學實驗亦發現，當實驗參與者看到無辜的人受到電擊，大腦中的島葉（*insula*）會活化，顯示其對他人遭遇苦難產生同情心。但看到之前有騙錢記錄的人受到電擊，實驗參與者的島葉不僅沒有反應，反而和酬賞相關的紋狀體（*striatum*）被活化（de Quervain et al., 2004），呼應西方諺語「復仇是甜美的」（*revenge is sweet*）（Pinker, 2011）。此實驗呼應亞里斯多德的描述，*compassion* 的對象往往僅限於不應受苦之人，而不包含我們認為罪有應得之人。甚至如佛教文獻指出，看到仇敵蒙難，人甚至會心生快感。因此對受苦者之慈悲，有可能產生對加害者之復仇情緒。

3. 內團體偏私

佛教文獻《清淨道論》指出，「慈心」可能「產生愛著」。亞里斯多德亦指出，人們

一般對親近之人較易產生 compassion。上述論述顯示，助人慈悲通常並非一律平等。上述文獻和心理學研究發現相吻合。心理學研究顯示，compassion 情緒往往伴隨催產素（oxytocin）之分泌（Saturn, 2017），但同情心往往只在共享關係中出現，範疇多限於親友、相似性高或外觀可愛的對象（Pinker, 2011），未能擴及外團體（out-groups）。換言之，助人慈悲可能會有內團體偏私（ingroup favoritism）的問題。

（二）教化、鎮定和平等慈悲的平衡作用

對於助人慈悲可能產生之異化，佛教經論提出可能之解方。以下透過心理學相關研究檢證佛教經論之解決方案。

1. 「鎮定慈悲」能緩解對受苦者之憂愁

《清淨道論》指出，「悲心」可能「生憂」，此時需要「喜心」能達成「不樂的止息」。四無量心中的「喜心」對應佛家慈悲的「鎮定慈悲」面向，和情緒調節有關。「鎮定慈悲」透過正念等情緒調節方式，能緩解對受苦現象之憂思。而正念對於負面情緒之緩解作用，已見於諸多研究文獻（Brown et al., 2007）。

2. 「教化慈悲」能緩解對犯錯者之報復

《清淨道論》指出，「慈心」的成就乃「瞋恚的止息」。因此，如果能對犯錯者升起慈心，將有助止息對他們的復仇渴望。對敵人的「慈心」對應佛家慈悲的「教化慈悲」面向，不僅寬恕犯錯者，也致力協助他們改過向善。達賴喇嘛主張，加害者本身也為其煩惱所害（Dalai Lama, 1992/2015）。從歸因理論角度，此屬「外歸因」。當我們對犯錯者進行內歸因，往往會導致負面情感；當我們對犯錯者進行外歸因，較易激起寬恕情懷（Moon & Rhee, 2012）。

3. 「平等慈悲」能緩解內團體偏私

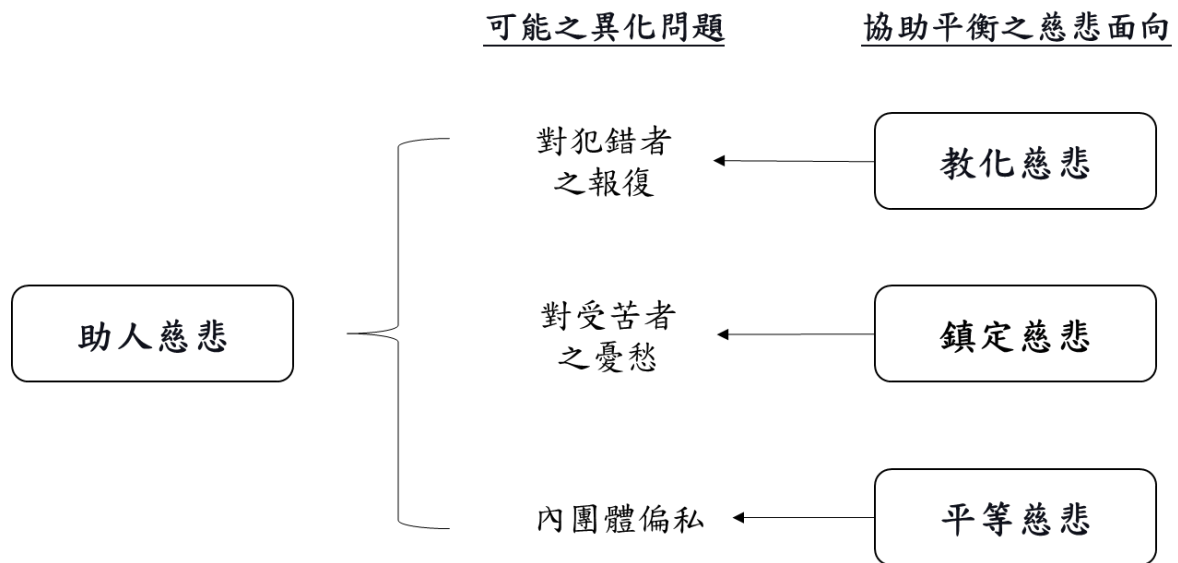
《清淨道論》指出，「慈心」可能「產生愛著」，而「捨心」能達成「愛著的止息」。四無量心中的「捨心」對應佛家慈悲的「平等慈悲」面向。達賴喇嘛建議培養平等心的具體做法是看到所有人類相似之處，他說：「四海之內皆兄弟。大家的需求都是相同的。…每一個人基本上都是相同的。每一個人都有得樂離苦的權利。…追求快樂以及避免受苦的需求，就是我們在根本上相同的部分，因此，大家都平等…即使我們的特徵有所不同，如種族、語言、宗教、性別、財富等，但基本需求卻都是相同的，因而讓我們每一個人人都平等」（Goleman, 2015/2017）。根據心理學「相似吸引效應」（similarity attraction effect）指出，人和人之間的相似性能預測人際吸引，人和人之間的相異互補性則不然（Reis, 2007）。達賴喇嘛提出眾人皆有離苦得樂的需求，有助我們看到陌生人和敵人（包含犯錯者）和我們相似之處，理論上應能增進人際吸引，增進對陌生人和敵人的親近感受，培養平等心。

(三) 小結

綜上所述，從社會科學角度，助人慈悲確實有可能產生特定副作用，包含：對受苦者之憂苦、對加害者（犯錯者）之報復、內團體偏私。而鎮定慈悲、教化慈悲和平等慈悲將有助於緩和上述作用，如圖 2 所示。因此，佛家慈悲包含四面向，乃針對助人慈悲可能產生之異化提出解方，協助降低可能的負面作用，邁向諸佛圓滿無缺的「大慈悲」。

圖 2

「佛家慈悲」之平衡系統



伍、綜合討論

本文試圖釐清「佛家慈悲」與西方 *compassion* 意涵異同之處，並構念化「佛家慈悲」概念，將其分成四大面向。以下略述本文之貢獻、限制和未來方向，和對西方 *compassion* 研究的意義。另從文化角度，說明「佛家慈悲」與西方 *compassion* 的不盡相同背後所代表的文化意義，並詮釋為何來自印度的「慈悲」概念能順利融入東亞文化圈（East Asian cultural sphere or Sinosphere）。再從佛教教義體系中，說明慈悲和無我之間的關係，最後說明「佛家慈悲」構念對現代文明的啟示。

一、研究貢獻

為釐清西方 *compassion* 和佛家慈悲之異同，本文對此二者進行「文化詮釋」，分別從字義分析和「文化系統研究方法」發現，不應將「佛家慈悲」等同於西方 *compassion*。但欲進一步釐清「佛家慈悲」的構念內涵，則需要藉助黃光國提倡的「理論建構」方式，

為其進行科學分類，以切割出合宜的構念面向，並說明各面向之間的關係，意即對「佛家慈悲」進行「科學詮釋」。本文一方面透過「制衡原則」確定「四無量心」各自適切的意涵，另一方面又參酌心理學理論（如「道德基本原則理論」）重新加以分類，得到四個面向：「助人慈悲」、「教化慈悲」、「鎮定慈悲」和「平等慈悲」。將「慈悲」定義為：「以鎮定情緒和平等心，幫助受苦者離苦得樂，並協助犯錯者改過向善」。進一步從社會科學角度分析發現，「教化慈悲」、「鎮定慈悲」和「平等慈悲」此三面向有助緩解「助人慈悲」可能伴隨之異化作用，如對加害者的報復、對受苦者的憂愁以及內團體偏私。

縱上所述，本文貢獻有二：首先，釐清「佛家慈悲」與西方 *compassion* 並非等同構念，進一步分析「佛家慈悲」之構念定義和構念面向，並說明構念面向之間的關係。其次，以此研究展示黃光國倡議的「文化系統研究方法」和「理論建構」，對於本土心理學研究頗有助益。更明確來說，過去國內慈悲研究，有僅依據佛學而做出論述者，雖然考慮到文化系統層次，但卻未能從科學理論建構思維加以檢視（黃舒鈴，2016）。亦有慈悲研究僅透過實徵資料直接為慈悲構念建立不同面向，缺乏文化系統層次的考量（黃舒鈴等人，2015）。本文特色在於同時採取文化系統和理論建構角度，釐清慈悲構念之內涵和面向。

二、「佛家慈悲」構念對西方 *compassion* 研究之意義

如前所述，受到佛教影響，西方部分 *compassion* 的介入訓練計畫已然超越西方 *compassion* 的定義，西方學者定義之 *self-compassion* 亦超越西方 *compassion* 的定義。因此確有必要根據佛家哲學重新定義 *compassion*。本文分析得出之「佛家慈悲」構念，應能解決上述問題，說明如下：

- (1) 助人慈悲：呼應原本西方 *compassion* 之定義。
- (2) 教化慈悲：納入對犯錯者的慈悲，一方面呼應佛教「七重因果教授」，另一方面亦呼應 *self-compassion* 包容己錯的內涵。
- (3) 鎮定慈悲：納入情緒調節，一方面呼應四無量心中的喜心，另一方面則呼應部分西方 *compassion* 介入設計和 *self-compassion* 構念所涵蓋的正念元素。
- (4) 平等慈悲：納入平等心，一方面呼應四無量心中的捨心，另一方面則呼應部分西方 *compassion* 介入所涵蓋的平等心設計元素。而 *self-compassion* 提及之全體人類皆可能犯錯或受苦，也隱含人類一體平等之意涵。

換言之，透過「佛家慈悲」構念之提出，將有助整合目前西方 *compassion* 定義和其介入設計的分歧，亦有助對應 *self-compassion* 的構念內涵。如表 4 所示。

表 4

「佛家慈悲」對西方 compassion 定義/介入和 self-compassion 定義之涵攝

「佛家慈悲」 四面向	compassion 定義	compassion 介入設計	self-compassion 定義
助人慈悲	V	V	V (善待自己)
教化慈悲		V (如：CBCT)	V (包容己錯)
鎮定慈悲		V (如：CCT)	V (正念)
平等慈悲		V (如：CBCT)	V (人類一體)

註：打「V」表示具有該面向的慈悲內涵，而括弧內的文字則顯示在其介入設計或定義下的內容。另外，CBCT：Cognitively-Based Compassion Training；CCT：Compassion Cultivation Training。

另根據「七重因果教授」，慈悲觀想對象從自身、親友、陌生人擴及到敵人 (Dalai Lama, 2005/2015)，顯示 self-compassion 為 compassion 之基礎。根據上述分析，除了對象不同，self-compassion 的涵蓋範圍較現有之 compassion 定義寬廣，但本文認為並不宜更改關懷對象（從自身改為他人），直接套用在佛家慈悲 (Buddhist compassion) 的構念定義上，原因有二。首先，就方法學而言，雖然 self-compassion 號稱根據佛教教義而來，但現有論文並未說明它如何分析佛教文獻得出三個元素。因此，對於佛家慈悲的構念定義，本文認為不應直接套用 self-compassion 的三個元素，而是需要如本文從根本上直接分析佛家哲學中慈悲的意涵。其次，就實際分析結果而言，雖然佛家慈悲和 self-compassion 具有某種程度的對應，如表 4 所示，但是實際上亦存在重大差異。比如說，self-compassion 中的人類一體概念並非用來培養平等心，而是安慰自己說明所有人都會犯錯和痛苦，自己並不孤獨。因此，無論就方法學或實際分析結果之對照，皆顯示佛家慈悲之定義不宜直接套用 self-compassion 的三元素內涵。

三、研究限制和未來方向

本文有以下三項研究限制，可做為未來研究方向參考。首先，本文側重於理論探討，未來應進一步進行實徵研究。不僅檢驗本文提出的慈悲構念是否能適切區分為上述四個面向，並可進行跨文化驗證以考察其是否具有普世性。另外，對於「教化慈悲」、「鎮定慈悲」和「平等慈悲」有助平衡「助人慈悲」副作用的立論，亦可透過實徵研究加以檢驗。

其次，大乘佛教以「慈悲」為根本，本文未必涵蓋佛教所有慈悲相關概念。雖然本

文論及常人和諸佛兩種慈悲（「愛見悲」vs. 「大慈悲」）與「慈、悲、喜、捨」之「四無量心」，但尚有其他分類方式。如《大智度論》卷四十所載：「慈悲心有三種：眾生緣、法緣、無緣。」「眾生緣慈悲」為凡夫眾生所發之慈悲心，「法緣慈悲」為了悟空性的覺者所發之慈悲心，而「無緣慈悲」則為諸佛菩薩無限的慈悲。由於世間多為凡夫，故此分類方式雖在佛教上有其意義，但如按此分類方式進行心理學測量。將因覺者和諸佛菩薩樣本稀少性而有其侷限性。本文基於此考量，不以「眾生緣、法緣、無緣」為分類方式，而以「四無量心」為基礎，發展「佛家慈悲」構念定義和面向分析。但若未來有合適樣本，《大智度論》的慈悲心層次亦可作為「佛家慈悲」構念發展的參考。

最後，本文釐清「慈悲」構念意涵並提出四大構念面向，但並未能深入探討每一個慈悲面向背後的心理機制。例如，本文雖然提及「教化慈悲」涉及是否能將犯錯者看成受害者，但對於形成此一慈悲面向背後的心理機制，未來應可進一步深入探討。

四、東西會通之文化比較

本文比較西方 *compassion* 和「佛家慈悲」構念的差異，發現西方 *compassion* 涵蓋渴望受苦者除苦的概念，並提及可能之副作用；佛教哲學則進一步思考如何節制慈與悲可能發生的副作用，從而形成「四無量心」理論。換言之，西方 *compassion* 概念涉及定義和副作用，「佛家慈悲」則包含定義、副作用和解方。

西方 *compassion* 和「佛家慈悲」之間不僅存在相異之內涵，亦反映東西文化不同的特色——西方呈現分析思維方式 (*analytical thinking*)，而東方呈現整體思考模式 (*holistic thinking*) (Masuda & Nisbett, 2001)。具體而言，「四無量心」納入「喜」和「捨」兩個德目，構成多項美德的動態系統，呈現的正是整體思考模式。相對的，西方 *compassion* 則聚焦於關懷受苦者。雖然西方的「寬恕」概念相近於佛家慈悲的「教化慈悲」面向¹¹，情緒調節和「鎮定慈悲」面向亦相去不遠，啟蒙運動的「世界公民」 (*world citizen; cosmopolitan*) 理念接近「平等慈悲」面向，但是這些概念皆未統整於一個大概念之下。西方這些有助節制 *compassion* 副作用的概念和「佛家慈悲」呈現方式並不相同，未能如「佛家慈悲」藉由「四無量心」理論形成一個德性系統，相互制衡調節。

上述東西方文化特色不僅呈現於思維方式，深究其根源，和對人內在之預設密切相關。在東方，大乘佛教主張人人皆有「佛性」，而佛性內含所有德性，如六祖慧能所言：「萬法盡在自心，何不從自心中，頓見真如本性？」並云：「自性迷，即是眾生；自性覺，即是佛。慈悲，即是觀音；喜捨，名為勢至」（《六祖壇經》）。由此可見，諸佛菩薩「自性」充分開展，故具備諸多德性，包含慈、悲、喜、捨四無量心。因此「佛性」呈現多

¹¹ 雖然寬恕和教化慈悲有相似之處，但教化慈悲蘊含更加積極的意涵，即致力協助犯錯者改過向善，回歸正途。

面向特色。

但在西方主流思想中並無類似佛教佛性的自性預設。相反的，柏拉圖所主張，人內在有「理性」能去認識外在的「至善理型」。「理性」作為認識外在事物的基礎，重視的是分析，而非整合。職是之故，雖然西方有寬恕、情緒調節和世界公民等概念，但並未能如佛教「四無量心」理論整合成一個相互制衡的德性系統。甚至近來西方心理學家以「理性」作為節制 compassion 副作用之解方，如是主張者包含哈佛心理學教授 Steven Pinker (2011) 和耶魯心理學教授 Paul Bloom (2016) 等。

但「理性」是否足以遏制 compassion 可能帶來的副作用？有學者認為值得商榷。如西方宗教學者史密斯 (Huston Smith, 2003) 所言，緣起於十七世紀的「現代心靈」重視「理性」，強調科學至上，但卻有其限制。史密斯進一步提出，人除了「理性」之外，還有「智性」(intellect)。有別於「理性」的邏輯推理作用，「智性」寄寓在潛意識的層次，能讓心靈和世界連結在一起，給予人直覺能力。史密斯據此提出「神聖潛意識」(the sacred unconscious) 的概念，認為這才是自我的最根本。史密斯認為，「覺者」(如佛陀) 就是能觸及自己內在最深層潛意識的人，恆常處於一種神聖感之中，在不同場合流露合宜的情緒，也勇於承擔責任大步向前。史密斯提出的「神聖潛意識」相近於東方「自性」概念。由此可知，史密斯認為「自性」的作用能超越「理性」的限制。進一步推論，相對於以有限的「理性」平衡 compassion 的異化，以更開闊的「自性」所流露出來的種種美德相互節制達到平衡狀態，應更為全面有效。

總而言之，西方 compassion 一字和「佛家慈悲」一詞不僅意涵不盡相同，從更寬廣的角度觀之，兩者差異反映了東西方不同的文化取向。簡言之，「佛家慈悲」概念所以能整合不同德目形成一個動態系統，和東方的整體思維模式有關。此外，東方哲學提出「自性」預設，能生各種美德，亦有助形成「四無量心」理論。

五、儒佛文化之相通性

「慈悲」一詞淵源於印度佛教，但卻能在東亞文化圈生根，和佛教與儒家文化具有相當程度的互通性有關。雖然儒家入世而佛教出世，但儒家孔子的核心學說為「仁」，其概念與佛教「慈悲」十分相近，如孔子所說：「仁者愛人」。職是之故，雖然佛教剛傳入中國時，大小二乘並傳（重視「解脫道」的小乘佛教和重視「菩薩道」的大乘佛教），但小乘佛教在中國並未發展起來（賴永海，1995）。此乃因大乘佛教「為利眾生願成佛」的教義和儒家「內聖外王」主張有異曲同工之妙，故以儒家為主體的古代中國社會傾向吸納大乘佛教而非小乘佛教。

更有趣的是，儒家「仁」的概念也統攝諸多德性，和佛教慈悲的「四無量心」有相仿之處。本文分析得到的「慈悲」構念四大面向，亦得見於「仁」之意涵。在「助人慈

悲」方面，孔子指出「孝弟也者，其為仁之本與」。孔子以孝悌為仁的基礎，期勉人們最終能「汎愛眾，而親仁」，也就是《禮運·大同篇》的「人不獨親其親，不獨子其子」之意。若能臻至「博施於民而能濟眾」的境界，就可稱之為「聖」。換言之，仁者仁愛的對象不限於親友，更廣及天下之人，是謂「汎愛眾」。

在「教化慈悲」方面，儒家主張「德主刑輔」，也就是以道德教化為主、刑罰為輔（葉楠，2009）。在儒家理想中，為政者仁民愛物，故必施行道德教化，以協助百姓免於觸法而受罰。如果統治者未能盡到道德教化之責就嚴懲百姓，孔子予以嚴厲譴責，即「不教而殺謂之虐」（楊義芹，2010）。換言之，儒家以「德治」為主，目標是透過道德教化防止犯罪於未萌，「刑」是不得已的手段（馬琚，2004）。

在「鎮定慈悲」方面，孔子提到「仁者不憂」、「君子不憂不懼」，顯示「仁」不僅能愛人，亦對負面情緒調節有所幫助。而儒家情緒調節對象不僅包含憂慮、恐懼，也涵蓋憤怒等負向情緒。首先，儒家提倡情緒平衡，如〈中庸〉所載：「喜怒哀樂之未發，謂之中；發而皆中節，謂之和。」職是之故，孔子讚揚《詩經》「哀而不傷」。其次，孔子困於陳而絕糧，依舊「講誦弦歌不衰」。子路心生不平，孔子平靜地回答：「君子固窮，小人窮斯濫矣！」此外，孔子在面對不公不義時依舊能泰然處之，乃因他深知憤怒易失去理智繼而導致不良後果，如其所言：「一朝之忿，忘其身，以及其親，非惑與？」（陳雪麗，2000）

在「平等慈悲」方面，儒家不僅主張「仁者愛人」的對象要從親人向外推到外人和犯錯者，甚至主張要將他人當成自己親人看待，如孟子所說：「老吾老以及人之老，幼吾幼以及人之幼。」王陽明認為仁者之所以能視人如己，是因為修養已臻至「一體之仁」。如其於〈大學問〉一文所指出：「大人者，以天地萬物為一體者也。…大人之能以天地萬物為一體也，非意之也，其心之仁本若是，其與天地萬物而為一也。…是故見孺子之人井而必有怵惕惻隱之心焉，是其仁之與孺子而為一體也，孺子猶同類者也。」

由上可知，類似於佛教「慈悲」，儒家的「仁」亦呈現多面向特色。如朱熹於〈仁說〉一文以「仁」統攝諸德：「語心之德，雖其總攝貫通，無所不備，然一言以蔽之，則曰仁而已矣。…人之為心，其德亦有四，曰仁、義、禮、智，而仁無不包。」

儒家的「仁」亦具多面向德性，可能是因為儒家學說亦有「自性」預設。如儒家孔子曾言「天生德於予」，孟子提出「盡心、知性、知天」，〈中庸〉記載「天命之謂性」。甚至連道家老子亦主張「道生之，德蓄之」。東周時期儒道兩家皆認為「形而上宇宙本體」賦予人「內在本體」，為修德之基礎。而此「內在本體」即為人的內在善性。道家名之為「德」，孔子名之為「仁」，孟子名之為「性」，〈中庸〉名之為「誠」，明朝王陽明名之為「良知」。「自性」的概念經由提綱挈領能統攝諸德，有助形成一套德性系統。職是之故，重視慈悲的大乘佛教能順利融入重視仁的儒家文化中，水乳交融，相互影響和激盪。

六、與「無我理論」之對話

在佛教理論中，慈悲為通往無我的路徑。「無我理論」(nonself theory)指出，「自我」(egotism)的欲望正是痛苦的來源，乃依賴外在暫時的人事物得到快樂，此種樂趣必然是起伏不定的。相對的，「無我」放棄自我的享樂原則，能從內在找到恆久的真正快樂。佛教追求的終極目標涅槃，正是一種無我的境界。而要達到涅槃無我的境地，需要透過持戒無欲、慈悲行動、靜坐冥想、培養佛智等修行方法(Shiah, 2016)。實徵研究亦支持，無我理論中的持戒無欲，能夠過降低死亡焦慮的部分中介，增進心理健康(Kuo et al., 2022)。

涅槃無我的境界能破除虛假的自我，回歸萬事萬物相互連結的實相，即「自他不二」。如《華嚴經》的帝網重重，明珠之間相互輝映，相互涵攝，你中有我，我中有你。一如達賴喇嘛所說，在這個世界中大家都是相互依存的，而非各自獨立的。又如一行禪師聽聞泰國海盜非禮越南難民中的年輕女孩，寫下〈請以真名呼喚我〉一詩：「我是因被強暴受辱而躍入深海的十二歲小女孩，也是帶著不懂得覺察和感受的心出生的海盜...我的喜悅如春日天空般清翠，溫暖著萬方花草。我的苦痛凝滯成淚水，淹沒四大深遂汪洋。請記得以我的真名呼喚我，讓我能同時聽見我所有的哭泣與歡笑，讓我覺知苦痛與喜悅同為一體。請記得以我的真名呼喚我，讓我驚慟而覺醒，也讓我的悲憫心門從此敞開。」

簡言之，佛家無我的概念，破除人我對立，將所有眾生和萬事萬物連結成一重又一重浩瀚無盡的帝網。因此「佛家慈悲」不僅慈悲受苦者，亦悲憫犯錯者，更穿透各自獨立的假相，觸及相互依存的實相。當修行者能發展出「四無量心」，以慈悲連結眾人和萬事萬物，虛假的自我逐漸消泯，空性智慧躍然展露，如藏傳佛教噶舉派〈了義大手印祈願文〉所載：「於諸痛苦無邊有情眾，願我心續生起強烈悲。悲時難忍大悲震撼力，空性赤裸閃耀現於前。」因此，悲智雙運將有助修行人更加接近無我涅槃的境界。故在大乘佛教理論中，慈悲為通往無我的必要過程。本文透過文化系統分析和社會科學角度，賦予「佛家慈悲」科學定義，同時亦為「無我理論」中提及的慈悲元素做出貢獻。

七、「佛家慈悲」對現代文明的啟示

雖然現代物質文明昌盛，科技發達，但是人類也面臨空前危機——個人耽溺於物質追逐而心靈空洞、資本主義弱肉強食造成貧富不均、竭澤而漁造成環保永續問題。面對這些沉重的全球議題，達賴喇嘛呼籲年輕一代應發起「慈悲革命」。他於《呼喚慈悲的革命》一書中說明，在個人層面，慈悲心對新神經元的形成有正向影響。在人際層面，當社會對人性持有正面看法時，基於互信和共同利益，權力鬥爭將轉變成關懷經濟，慈悲

的普世價值也將取代懲罰恐懼的道德觀念。在環境層面，對地球的愛將有助人類守護自然資源 (Dalai Lama & Stril-Rever, 2017/2020)。簡言之，面對當前世界文明層出不窮的問題，達賴喇嘛提出的解方是「慈悲」。

然而，要提升世界的人心，「慈悲」的定義若侷限於西方 compassion 的定義，將無法面面俱到涵蓋上述使命。比如說，雖然達賴喇嘛主張：「要讓別人快樂，實踐慈悲；要讓自己快樂，實踐慈悲」(“If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want yourself to be happy, practice compassion.”) (Dalai Lama, 2009)，但若無「四無量心」的相互制衡，「慈生貪著悲生憂」的副作用會導致慈悲的異化。「悲生憂」會影響個人幸福感，而「慈生貪著」則可能會降低對外團體成員的關懷。此外，若未如佛教慈悲納入對犯錯者的關懷，懲罰恐懼的道德觀念將會繼續盛行於世。最後，若不能將「平等慈悲」推行到地球之母，人類亦難以節制濫砍濫伐、焚林而田的工具理性。因此，若欲提倡「慈悲革命」，第一步工作或許是回頭重新檢視「慈悲」構念的內涵。因為「工欲善其事，必先利其器」，推廣「慈悲」首先應釐清何謂「佛家慈悲」，而這正是本文嘗試回答的研究問題。

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Conceptualize Buddhist Compassion: Differentiating Buddhist Compassion from Western Compassion

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Abstract

In psychological literature, compassion is conceptualized as the desire to alleviate the suffering of others. It is presumed that Buddhist compassion refers to the same definition. However, from a cultural psychology perspective, it is essential to compare and contrast the definition of compassion and the content of Buddhist compassion since these two terms originate from two distinctly different cultures. As indicated by Richard Shweder, the collective human psyche exhibits "one mind, many mentalities." To bridge this research gap, we first made a "cultural interpretation" of compassion and that of Buddhist compassion to examine the discrepancy between these two. Second, we made a "scientific interpretation" of Buddhist compassion to elucidate this construct as well as related dimensions.

Specifically, to make a "cultural interpretation" of compassion and that of Buddhist compassion, we adopted both word analysis and Kwang-Kuo Hwang's "cultural system approach." Word analysis showed that compassion and Buddhist compassion seem alike. However, the cultural system approach revealed that these two differ since Buddhist philosophy attempts to resolve the potential downside of compassion by proposing the "four immeasurables" (*mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā*, and *upekkhā*). The joy element (*muditā*) can help balance our depression in the face of other people's sufferings. Further, the equality element (*upekkhā*) can help reduce our attachment to loved ones, thereby lowering in-group favoritism and out-group dehumanization. The four immeasurables are a pathway to move from ordinary people's imperfect compassion towards flawless, boundless "great compassion" demonstrated by buddhas.

Furthermore, to make a "scientific interpretation," we analyzed the content of Buddhist compassion from a social science perspective and found that it consists of four dimensions: edification for wrongdoers, alleviation for sufferers, serenity within, and equality without (or EASE). Hence, Buddhist compassion can be defined as "helping sufferers and wrongdoers in a

calm and equal manner." By elucidating the construct and the check-balance system of Buddhist compassion, this paper offers a theoretical conceptualization of Buddhist compassion for future empirical validation. Further, this paper also serves as an example of Hwang's "cultural system approach" and "theory building method" to construct a "scientific microworld."

Keywords: Buddhist compassion, cultural system approach, EASE, four immeasurables

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I. The Necessity of Exploring "Buddhist Compassion"

Recently, research on compassion has emerged in the Western psychology community, spanning the fields of developmental psychology, biological psychology, intervention, social psychology, clinical psychology, and applied psychology. Western psychologists gathered the research results on compassion into the book "The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science" (Seppälä et al., 2017). On the title page, these scientists dedicated this book to the Dalai Lama since his belief in the power of compassion and scientific research has inspired many scholars in the field of compassion science.

As a Buddhist monk, the Dalai Lama has devoted himself to promoting compassion for many years. Almost every book written by him emphasizes the importance of compassion. When the Dalai Lama discusses compassion from a Buddhist viewpoint, it is often assumed that the Buddhist concept of compassion aligns with its the English translation. Therefore, when the Dalai Lama inspires many Western scholars to conduct compassion research, they often believe that the Western concept of compassion in their studies is equivalent to the idea of compassion advocated by the Dalai Lama. However, can the Western concept of compassion be equated with "Buddhist compassion"? According to the following four reasons, this paper contends that there is a need to explore the meaning of "Buddhist compassion."

1. Cultural difference between the East and the West

Cultural psychologist Richard Shweder et al. (1997) put forward: "one mind, many mentalities; universalism without uniformity," indicating that human beings manifest diverse cultural differences rooted in a common mind. As the historian Ying-shih Yü (2007) said: "The values in every cultural system can be divided into two categories: universal and specific." Indigenous psychologist Kwang-Kuo Hwang (2012) also pointed out that in the past, psychological studies in non-western countries mainly followed the Western paradigms. However, since the late 1970s, an indigenous psychology movement has emerged. This trend of thought shows that psychologists in non-Western countries are beginning to realize the importance of cultural differences.

Although Eastern and Western cultures have their common human mind as the basis, they also exhibit different cultural mentalities. Therefore, indigenous psychologists must carefully consider cultural differences when conducting research. For this reason, although the term "compassion" in both Western and Buddhist contexts seem to be related to caring for the suffering, whether the two can be considered synonymous requires further cultural investigation.

2. Scholars' reflection on the conceptualization of compassion

In Western psychology, compassion refers to caring for the suffering of others and desiring to alleviate their suffering (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005; Goetz et al., 2010; Goetz & Simon-Thomas, 2017). Can this definition fully capture the concept of compassion advocated by the Dalai Lama? Scholars have raised doubts. As Koopmann-Holm and Tsai (2017) pointed out, while the Dalai Lama emphasizes compassion for enemies and perpetrators, these objects of compassion typically are not included in the Western definition of compassion. This remark suggests that the Buddhist concept of compassion cannot be equated with Western compassion. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the connotation of Buddhist compassion further.

3. Western compassion intervention programs

Due to the respect held by many Western compassion science researchers for the Dalai Lama, they often incorporate Buddhist practices when developing compassion intervention programs. Consequently, these programs often extend beyond the traditional definition of Western compassion. For example, the Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) Program designed by Stanford University incorporates basic mindfulness training (Goldin & Jazaieri, 2017; Jinpa & Weiss, 2013). Similarly, Cognitively-Based Compassion Training (CBCT) includes equanimity training, emphasizing that both enemies and friends desire to eradicate suffering and gain happiness. By highlighting their similarities, this program aims to reduce students' indifference or hostility towards their perceived enemies (Mascaro et al., 2017). Interestingly, although the afore mentioned Western compassion intervention programs cover mindfulness and equanimity, neither of them is included in the Western definition of compassion. This observed disparity suggests that the connotation of “Buddhist compassion” may be broader than that of Western compassion. Therefore, there is a pressing need to clarify the Buddhist concept of compassion.

4. The definition of self-compassion

Compassion in the West means caring for the suffering of others, but Neff (2003) contended that people can also care about their own pain, thus proposing the concept of “self-compassion.” Neff said that she came up with the idea of “self-compassion” with reference to Buddhist teachings. She accordingly defined “self-compassion” to include three elements: kindness towards oneself, a sense of common humanity (everyone errs and suffers), and mindfulness. In the traditional Western understanding of compassion, the definition of “self-compassion” should predominately center on the first facet of self-kindness. However, the concept of “self-compassion” proposed by Neff contains ideas such as mindfulness, tolerance of one's mistakes, and the unity of human beings. Neff said that she proposed the concept of

“self-compassion” with reference to Buddhist teachings. Hence, it can be inferred that “Buddhist compassion” may encompass more aspects than Western compassion.

To sum up, the above analysis indicates that it is necessary for the psychology community to compare and contrast the Western and Buddhist concept of compassion. Therefore, it is imperative to examine the connotation of “Buddhist compassion” and investigate how it differs from Western compassion. Before we analyze the similarities and differences between the two, it is crucial to determine the research method, as explained below.

II. Research Methods

To compare and contrast “Buddhist compassion” and Western compassion, this paper adopts the indigenous psychological research method advocated by Kwang-Kuo Hwang. His method not only echoes the "cultural interpretation" and "scientific interpretation" proposed by philosopher Charles Taylor (1971) but also provides specific operational methods for indigenous psychological studies.

1. Indigenous psychological research methods

Regarding the research methods of indigenous psychology, Kwang-Kuo Hwang (2012) pointed out that indigenous psychology should not just stay at the level of positivism. He advocated a complete change in ontology, epistemology, and methodology to establish scientific theories of indigenous psychology.

Specifically, in terms of research methods, Hwang (2015, 2019) put forward the "cultural system approach," arguing that indigenous psychology research should not only stay at the level of interpretation, nor should it stop at the level of empirical evidence. It should not be restricted to the pan-cultural dimensional approach either. Instead, "culture-inclusive theories" should be constructed through a "top-down approach". Hwang (2003) also pointed out that the "life-world" and the "scientific microworld" are not the same. The duty of researchers is to use "formal rationality" to transform "substantial rationality" in the life world into scientific theoretical models. Taken together, Hwang (2022) advocated that indigenous psychological researchers should strive to use the rational thinking of the Western "philosophy of science" to sort out the essence of Eastern culture through "theoretical construction."

2. "Cultural interpretation" and "scientific interpretation"

Western philosopher Charles Taylor (1971) proposed that the mainstream scientific paradigm is to make "scientific interpretations" of the living world to construct scientific theories. However, when social scientists directly make scientific interpretations of the cultural world in which they live, they often ignore potential cultural bias in their theoretical construction. Therefore, Charles Taylor advocated that in addition to "scientific interpretation," social scientists should consider cultural factors and conduct "cultural interpretation" of life-world phenomena.

The "cultural system approach" proposed by Hwang provides a feasible method for "cultural interpretation." It covers the two levels of "analytical dualism" proposed by Archer (1995; 1996), namely the "cultural system" and "sociocultural interaction." Therefore, it can avoid the fallacy of positivism that neglects the cultural system. In addition, he advocated the construction of "culture-inclusive theories" not just to describe culture but to use "formal rationality" to transform the living world into theoretical models of the scientific microworld. The ingenuity of this approach lies in making "scientific interpretations" of "cultural interpretations" to establish culture-inclusive theories.

3. Research direction

To summarize, this paper takes two research steps to compare and contrast the Western and Buddhist concept of compassion and to sort out the connotation of "Buddhist compassion." The first step is to make a "cultural interpretation" of the Western and Buddhist concept of compassion through traditional word analysis and Hwang's cultural system approach. The second step is to conduct a "scientific interpretation" of "Buddhist compassion" and analyze its dimensions from a social science perspective. The analysis results from "cultural interpretation" and "scientific interpretation" are described below.

III. Cultural Interpretation: Analysis of Eastern and Western Cultural Systems

To explore whether the Western concept of compassion can be equated with the Buddhist idea of compassion, this section discusses the meanings of the two terms. It traces back to the connotations within their cultural systems. In other words, this section will adopt word analysis and cultural system approach to explore the similarities and differences in the meanings of Western compassion and Buddhist compassion.

1. Word analysis

(1) The meaning of "compassion" in the West

Etymology indicates that compassion means "to suffer with." Because *com-* means with, and *passion* is related to the patient ("one who suffers") (Jimenez, 2009). The Merriam-Webster Internet dictionary defines compassion as: "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it." The Cambridge Internet Dictionary defines it similarly: "a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others and a wish to help them."

In "The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science," compassion is defined as: "concern for the suffering or unmet need of another, coupled with a desire to alleviate that suffering" (Goetz & Simon-Thomas, 2017). This psychological definition is similar to definitions in English dictionaries such as Merriam-Webster and Cambridge. In addition, based on the scales measuring compassion in the West, the above definition is indeed the prevalent understanding of compassion in the West. For example, although the compassionate love scale (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005) divides objects of compassion into closed others and strangers, both involve caring for the suffering of others. Similarly, the Santa Clara brief compassion scale (Hwang et al., 2008) measures the degree of sympathy with suffering strangers. The Multidimensional compassion scale (Jazaieri et al., 2018) differentiates four aspects of compassion: cognitive, affective, intentional, and motivational, yet with a clear focus on caring for sufferers. Clearly, compassion in Western psychology circles refers to concern for the suffering of others and the desire to alleviate their pain.

(2) The meaning of compassion (慈悲) in Buddhism

In Chinese, the term corresponding to "compassion" is "慈悲." Japanese Buddhist scholar Hajime Nakamura (1997) pointed out that 慈 is *mettā* in Pali or *maitrī* in Sanskrit. In India, it is generally interpreted as "true friendship and pure love. 悲 is *karuṇā* in Pali and Sanskrit, and it represents compassion, sympathy, tenderness, and affection in Indian literature. Similarly, South Asian Theravada Buddhism interprets 慈(*mettā*) as "the desire to bring (friends) benefits and happiness" and 悲 (*karuṇā*) as the desire to remove unbenefits and suffering. Mahayana Buddhism inherits the above explanation. As Nagarjuna said: "Maitrī refers to the loving care for all sentient beings, always seeking peace and happiness to benefit them. Karuṇā refers to the compassion for all sentient beings, feeling for their various physical and mental sufferings

in the five realms" (Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa; "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom"). In English, they are typically translated into "loving-kindness" and "compassion," respectively.

Although 慈 (mettā/maitrī) and 悲 (karuṇā) have their specific meanings, Nakamura pointed out that typically, Chinese people do not distinguish between the two words, which are often combined and used to express the meaning of "loving-kindness" and "compassion." In Japan, similarly, the monolingual mettā/maitrī or karuṇā is often directly translated as the combined term 慈悲. Nakamura believed that this is because the meanings of the 慈 (mettā/maitrī) and 悲 (karuṇā) are very similar, with very little difference between them. The Dalai Lama also pointed out that there is no occurring sequence between the two (慈 /mettā/maitrī and 悲 /karuṇā). To a certain point, they co-occur. When we want others to be free from suffering, we also want them to be happy (Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008). In brief, we typically hope that others can "escape suffering and attain happiness" at the same time. Therefore, although 慈 (mettā/maitrī) and 悲 (karuṇā) have seemingly different meanings, their co-occurrence results in the combined usage of 慈 (mettā) and 悲 (karuṇā) in Chinese.

(3) Summary

Based on the above word analysis, the connotation of compassion in the West is similar to compassion in Buddhism, both of which hope that sufferers can escape suffering and find happiness. Nevertheless, in addition to word analysis, social scientists should also perform cultural system analysis. Therefore, this article further analyzes cultural systems behind Western compassion and "Buddhist compassion."

2. Cultural system analysis

(1) Cultural system analysis of Western compassion

Western scholar Eric J. Cassell (2009) pointed out that the concept of compassion in the West can be traced back to Aristotle's "Rhetoric." He argued that Aristotle used the word "pity" to convey the idea of compassion: "a feeling of pain at an apparent evil, destructive or painful, which befalls one who doesn't deserve it."

Aristotle pointed out that the object of compassion is not limited to those who should not suffer, and it also varies according to the psychological distance between sufferers and us. In addition, we are more likely to have compassion for people who are similar to ourselves

(including similarities in age, personality, social status, background, etc.). Broadly speaking, we are more likely to have compassion for those we identify with (including those close to us, those who are similar to us, and those who should not suffer). Aristotle's exposition suggests that people do not feel compassion equally towards everyone.

From this we can see that, whether from etymology or ancient Greek philosophy, it is evident that the Western concept of compassion pertains to feeling the pain of those we identify with. Therefore, the current definition of compassion in Western psychology aligns with its historical and cultural origins.

(2) Cultural system analysis of Buddhist compassion

In analyzing "Buddhist compassion" through a cultural system lens, this paper presents three findings: First, compassion is a defining feature of all buddhas, and attaining Buddhahood is the ultimate ideal of Mahayana Buddhists. Second, Mahayana Buddhism asserts that everyone has Buddha-nature, affirming the potential of all sentient beings to become buddhas. Finally, Buddhahood attainment requires both compassion and wisdom.

a. Compassion is characteristic of buddhas

Mahayana Buddhism emphasizes the "Bodhisattva Way," thereby attaching great importance to compassion. As stated in "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom": "Compassion is the foundation of the Buddhist path." In Mahayana Buddhism, becoming a Buddha to save sentient beings is the ultimate goal of all Mahayana Buddhists. Buddhas demonstrate "great compassion" (*mahākaruṇā*) that goes beyond the compassion of ordinary people. As Nagarjuna said in "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom": "Compassion in the hearts of buddhas is called great, and in the hearts of people it is called small." According to the research of Nakamura (1997), the concept of "great compassion" has not been seen in scriptures of primitive Buddhism. It was in the late period of Buddhism, after the Buddha began to be worshiped, that the concept of "great compassion" was established.

What is the difference between the compassion of ordinary people and the compassion of buddhas? "The Suttas of Vimalakīrti" describes the compassion of ordinary beings as compassion with attachment, entangled by troubles (Cheng, 2014). In contrast, the "great compassion" shown by the Buddha is perfect and flawless, as recorded in the "Ashoka Sutra" (Vol. 1): "The Buddha destroys all taints and possesses incomparable great compassion."

b. Compassion is the manifestation of Buddha-nature

Although compassion between ordinary people and buddhas differs, Mahayana Buddhism advocates that "everyone has Buddha-nature." It affirms that ordinary people possess the

potential of "great compassion" to become buddhas. As recorded in the "Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra" (Vol. 32) in the Southern Edition: "Great compassion is called the Buddha-nature." Likewise, the "Lotus Sutra" says: " In the abode of the Tathagata, the great compassion among all sentient beings is manifested."

c. Compassion is the path to Buddhahood: The Theory of "Four Immeasurables"

In Mahayana Buddhism, compassion is not only the manifestation of the Buddha-nature of all sentient beings but also the path to Buddhahood. As Tibetan Buddhism advocates, becoming a Buddha requires the development of bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is divided into conventional bodhicitta (wishing to become a buddha for the benefit of all beings) and ultimate bodhicitta (realizing the wisdom of emptiness) (Dalai Lama & Chodron, 2017). The former is compassion while the latter is wisdom. From this, we can see that compassion and wisdom are the two major practices required to attain Buddhahood.

The relationship between compassion and wisdom is elucidated in the "Taishō Tripitaka" (Vol. 25), which says: "A bodhisattva performs thirty-two kinds of compassion among all living beings, gradually expanding and turning into great compassion. Great compassion is the root of the merits and virtues of all buddhas and bodhisattvas. It is the mother of Prajna Paramita (great wisdom) and the grandmother of all buddhas. Bodhisattvas, because of their great compassion, attain Prajna Paramita. By attaining Prajna Paramita, they achieve Buddhahood." From this, we can see that the practice of compassion can finally lead to great wisdom (Prajna Paramita), and then to Buddhahood. How should we practice compassion concretely to transform from the "imperfect compassion" of ordinary people into the "great compassion" of buddhas and bodhisattvas? The historical development of the concept of "Buddhist compassion" provides some clues.

(a) The theory of "Four Immeasurables"

Nakamura (1997) pointed out that in the early stage of Buddhism, only loving-kindness (慈/mettā/maitrī) was emphasized at. Later, loving-kindness (慈/mettā/maitrī) and compassion (悲/karuṇā) were mentioned together. Afterwards, another two virtues of joy (喜/muditā) and equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) were added, forming the framework of "four immeasurables," a practice that cultivates the four qualities of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity by visualizing all beings through these four states of mind.

Regarding the connotation of the "four immeasurables", the meanings of loving-kindness (慈/mettā/maitrī) and compassion (悲/karuṇā) remain consistent across various Buddhist traditions, including Theravada, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhism. Basically, these two words refers to the wish that all sentient beings will be free from suffering and find happiness.

However, there are changes in meanings of the two virtues of joy (喜/muditā) and equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) across different schools of Buddhism.

Joy (喜/muditā) in Tibetan Buddhism represents the wish that all beings will be inseparable from suffering-free bliss (Mingyur & Tworkov, 2014). In Han Buddhism, joy (喜/muditā) is often interpreted as "empathetic joy", that is, feeling happy about the success, good qualities or good deeds of others, as the "Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra" says: "To bring joy to all living beings is great joy." However, Theravada Buddhism's "Visuddhimagga" (or "The Path of Purification") defines joy (喜/muditā) as simply "joy," and "Vimuttimagga" (or "The Path of Freedom") also mentions that the achievement of joy (喜/muditā) is the elimination of unhappiness. Thich Nhat Hanh (2002) believed that it is too narrow to interpret "joy" as "empathetic joy." He believed that joy (喜/muditā) can be interpreted as our own inner peace and joy, which represents Zen joy.

Equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) in Tibetan Buddhism is understood as the wish that all living beings are free from attachment, aversion, and hatred, and always live in the state of great equality (Mingyur & Tworkov, 2014). In Han Buddhism, the focus shifts to an individual's endeavor to cultivate an equal mind. For example, it is recorded in "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom" (Vol. 20): "Upekṣā (equanimity) is about letting go of the three types of attachments. When contemplating sentient beings, one should neither hate nor love." "Tattvasiddhi" (Vol. 12) states: "Therefore, the practitioner who wishes to cultivate an equal mind should let go of attachments to loved ones and relinquish aversions to adversaries. Only then can one have an equanimous loving-kindness towards all sentient beings from the start, and the same applies to compassion and joy." In short, equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) means the equanimity of treating foes and loved ones equally, a mind that sees all with the same benevolence. In Theravada Buddhism, "The Path of Freedom" maintains that the achievement of equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) is to eradicate hatred and attachment. In "The Path of Purification," it refers to treating all sentient beings with an equal heart, and its achievement is the elimination of hatred and attachment (Huang, 2016). In other words, equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) refers to an equal mind, because it can eliminate the attachment to family and friends and the hatred of enemies. Accordingly, it can achieve the state of equality towards all sentient beings.

(b) The check and balance relationship of the "Four Immeasurables."

Although different Buddhist traditions have distinct interpretations of the "four immeasurable minds," both Mahayana Buddhism (including Han and Tibetan Buddhism, because Tibetan Buddhism adopts Mahayana teachings with Tantric practices) and primitive

Buddhism (or Theravada Buddhism) contend that the "four immeasurables" can help eliminate afflictions. As mentioned earlier, afflictions draw the line between ordinary people's imperfect compassion and buddhas' great compassion. The practice of the "four immeasurables" can moderate afflictions and guide people to approach Buddhahood. For example, "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom" (Vol. 20) says: "Cultivating the mind of loving-kindness is to eliminate the anger towards all living beings. Cultivating the mind of compassion is to eliminate the annoyance towards all living beings. Cultivating the mind of joy is to eliminate the displeasure. Cultivating the mind of equanimity is to eliminate the love and hatred towards all living beings."

It is noteworthy that this treatise further contends that loving-kindness, compassion, and joy may have side effects such as attachment or sorrow, thus necessitating the cure of "equanimity." As stated in Vol. 20, "The practices of loving-kindness and joy sometimes begets attachment; compassion is sometimes taken with sorrow. Attachment and sorrow confuse our hearts. The mind of equanimity remove attachment and sorrow and therefore is called equanimity."

Likewise, "The Path of Purification" in Theravada Buddhism points out that each mind of the "four immeasurables" has its "failure," i.e., possible side effects. However, each mind also has its own "achievement," addressing certain problems it can solve. For example, regarding loving-kindness (慈/*mettā/maitrī*), "the cessation of hatred is the achievement of loving-kindness, and the generation of attachment is its failure." Regarding compassion (悲/*karuṇā*), "the cessation of harm is the achievement of compassion, and the generation of worry is its failure." Regarding the joy (喜/*muditā*), "the cessation of unhappiness is its achievement, and the occurrence of (worldly) laughter is its failure." Regarding equanimity (捨/*upekkhā/upekṣā*), "the cessation of anger and love is its achievement, and the occurrence of worldly ignorant equanimity is its failure."

Further analysis reveals that the achievement of "joy" manifests in the cessation of unhappiness; therefore, this mind should be able to counter worries arising from the failure of "compassion." Similarly, the achievement of "equanimity" exhibits in the cessation of attachment, so it should be able to reduce attachment resulted from the failure of "loving-kindness." This suggests that incorporating "joy" and "equanimity" into "loving-kindness" and "compassion" creates a check-and-balance system that minimizes potential side effects in the practice of Buddhist compassion. This synergistic relationship among the four immeasurables is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Achievements and failures of four immeasurables

Four immeasurables	Failure (negative outcome as a side effect)	Achievement (positive outcome as a remedy)
Loving-kindness (mettā / maitrī) Compassion (karuṇā) Joy (muditā) Equanimity (upekkhā / upekṣā)	cause attachment	cease anger
	cause sorrow	cease cruelty
	cause worldly-minded merriment	cease unhappiness
	cause worldly-minded indifference	cease anger and attachment

d. The Dalai Lama's discussion on compassion

Given the frequent references to the Dalai Lama in Western compassion studies, it is essential to examine whether the compassion he speaks of also includes joy (喜/muditā) and equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā). This examination will help determine whether the Dalai Lama's interpretation of compassion aligns with the traditional Buddhist teachings on compassion.

The Dalai Lama (1992) advocates that compassion is not only about helping others outwardly but also involves overcoming negative emotions inwardly. He contends that maintaining a sense of compassion is not enough; instead, people should take compassionate actions at two levels: (1) an inner action that addresses the distortion and distress of the mind, i.e., aiming to quell and eliminate anger; (2) a more social and public action that seeks to correct mistakes out of compassion." The Dalai Lama also pointed out that when some people witness a lot of suffering, what they feel is not compassion but rather discouragement or despair. To prevent people from feeling discouraged, we can help them learn a different perspective: They have the ability to overcome suffering. Therefore, they don't feel discouraged, but gain a sense of confidence and courage (Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008). It can be seen from this that the compassion recognized by the Dalai Lama includes "the cessation of unhappiness," which is the achievement of joy (喜/muditā).

The Dalai Lama also advocated that true compassion does not show favoritism or unfairness; instead, it is filled with a sense of equality (Dalai Lama, 2005). He further emphasized that all humanity are brothers since we all seek happiness and avoid suffering. This is a fundamental right for everyone. Therefore, we are all equal even though we differ in race, language, religion, gender, wealth, etc. The fact that our basic needs are the same makes each

of us equal (Goleman, 2015). Clearly, the compassion recognized by the Dalai Lama also includes the equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā).

(3) Summary

To sum up, cultural system analysis shows that both Aristotle in the West and Buddhist teachings in the East have noticed that compassion for suffering may have adverse side effects. As Aristotle mentioned, people do not feel compassion equally towards everyone. Similarly, "The Path of Purification" in Theravada Buddhism points out that loving-kindness may produce attachment while compassion may lead to sorrows and worries.

The difference in the concept of compassion between the East and the West is that the Western cultural system did not proposed a solution to the possible alienation of compassion. In contrast, Buddhist philosophy incorporates joy (喜/muditā) and equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā) to "Buddhist compassion" to form a virtue system of the "four immeasurables," thereby reducing the possible adverse side effects of compassion.

In Mahayana Buddhism, attaining Buddhahood is the ultimate goal. However, many grapple with the challenge of alienation within their practice of compassion. Practicing the "four immeasurables" assists in purifying the flawed compassion of ordinary people by reducing their afflictions, bringing them closer to the ideal of great compassion of buddhas. In fact, every individual inherently possesses Buddha-nature, a doctrine that indicates that everyone has the potential to attain Buddhahood and manifest great compassion. Intriguingly, compassion is not only a manifestation of the Buddha nature but also the path to Buddhahood.

Tibetan Buddhism develops a theoretical system framework of "ground, path, and fruition," i.e., "principle, effort, and achievement" (Lin, 2005). Applying the concept of "ground, path, and fruition" to the above-mentioned cultural system analysis of "Buddhist compassion," we found that the "ground" is "everyone has Buddha-nature," which is the cause of Buddhahood attainment. The "path" is the practice of "four immeasurables," which helps reduce the possible side effects of compassion, moving towards the consummation of great compassion. The "fruit" is Buddhahood attainment, the ultimate ideal of Mahayana Buddhists. The meaning of compassion in Buddhism must be understood within this compassion system of "ground, path, and fruition," which is very different from Western compassion, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparison between Western compassion and Buddhist compassion”

		Western compassion	Buddhist compassion
Universality	Meaning	Feel the pain of others and desire to alleviate their suffering	May others be free from suffering
	Side effects	Limit compassion to those we identify with or see as similar to ourselves	May cause attachment or sorrows
Cultural specificity			<p>Ground: Everyone possesses Buddha-nature, and compassion is the manifestation of this Buddha-nature.</p> <p>Path: Practice the <i>four immeasurables</i> to reduce the side effects of compassion.</p> <p>Fruition: Attain Buddhahood by moving from ordinary people's imperfect compassion to buddhas' <i>great compassion</i>.</p>

The above cultural system analysis shows that although there are similarities between the Western compassion and “Buddhist compassion,” both cultural systems recognize the potential side effects of sympathetic feelings towards those who suffer. However, Buddhism harbors the idealized figure of the Buddha and provides the practice of “the four immeasurables,” paving a path towards Buddhahood attainment. This leads to a certain degree of differentiation between Western compassion and “Buddhist compassion.” This cultural distinction also explains why the Dalai Lama's interpretation of compassion goes beyond the Western definition of compassion, encompassing not just sympathy for sufferers but also emotional regulation (joy/喜/muditā) and an equal mind (equanimity/捨/upekkhā/upekṣā). Using the "cultural system approach," this paper begins with a "cultural interpretation" of “Buddhist compassion. From there, we delve into a "scientific interpretation" of aforementioned analysis, as guided by Hwang's (2003) concept of "scientific microworld."

IV. Scientific Interpretation: The Construction of a Scientific Microworld

Through Hwang's "cultural system approach," this paper reveals that there are overlapping aspects between Western compassion and “Buddhist compassion.” Nevertheless, “Buddhist compassion” further incorporates joy (喜/muditā) and equanimity (捨/upekkhā/upekṣā), forming a culturally distinct philosophical system. Therefore, the two cannot be equated. To

clarify the concept of “Buddhist compassion,” the following sections employ the "theoretical construction" method proposed by Hwang, applying "scientific interpretation" to the "cultural interpretation" from the previous section. Initially, we conceptualize "Buddhist compassion" based on social science theories, aiming for a scientific classification of its connotation. Subsequently, based on existing psychological theories, we analyze whether there is indeed a mutually balanced relationship between the various aspects of Buddhist compassion, as predicted by the theory of the “four immeasurables.”

1. The conceptualization of "Buddhist compassion"

The following section delves into the conceptualization of "Buddhist compassion." To begin with, we outline the conceptualization method, and then examine the attributes and definitions of its constituent dimensions.

(1) Discussion on the conceptualization method of compassion

In Buddhist philosophy, compassion can be divided into ordinary people's "compassion with attachment" and buddhas' "great compassion." It can also be categorized into loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity, according to the "four immeasurables." However, the above two classifications are closely related. From the perspective of ordinary people, when the four minds develop well and balance each other, they will be able to restrain the possible side effects, drawing practitioners closer to buddhas' perfect and flawless "great compassion." From the perspective of buddhas, "great compassion" signifies that the four minds of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity have been highly developed and reached the "immeasurable" realm. From this, we can infer that the classification of "compassion with attachment" and "great compassion" is intertwined with the "four immeasurables." Therefore, if we want to measure the degree to which ordinary people's "compassion with attachment" approaches buddhas' "great compassion," we can assess the development of their four minds of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

However, before measuring the degree of the four minds of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity, we have to first consider how to define them. As mentioned earlier, different Buddhist scriptures may not share the same definitions for these four minds. How do we choose appropriate definitions? This paper contends that the primary consideration lies in whether different virtues counterbalance each other. This point of consideration can be analogized with the political science concept of the "principle of checks and balances." In a

democratic system, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches restrain one another to achieve a balance of power, preventing any single branch from becoming overly dominant. In the same way, the "four immeasurables" holds that the possible side effects of loving-kindness and compassion can be alleviated by joy and equanimity to achieve a delicate balance. Therefore, when considering definitions for the four minds, we should approach from the perspective of the "principle of checks and balances."

In addition, it is crucial to consider how to classify these four minds from a psychological perspective to uncover distinct aspects of "Buddhist compassion." For example, while joy and equanimity represent different facets of "Buddhist compassion," loving-kindness and compassion, despite their different literal meanings, are intricately intertwined and challenging to separate. As mentioned earlier, when we wish the sufferers to be free from suffering (i.e., compassion), we also hope for their happiness (i.e., loving-kindness). Therefore, when analyzing the multi-faceted nature of "Buddhist compassion," we should consider a reasonable scientific classification from a psychological perspective.

Based on the above discussion, we will consider both the "principle of checks and balances" and psychological theories to conceptualize "Buddhist compassion." The following is an analysis of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity in order.

(2) The analysis of loving-kindness and compassion

a. Word analysis

In terms of literal meaning, the definitions of loving-kindness (慈/*mettā/maitrī*) and compassion (悲/*karuṇā*) in Theravada, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhism are quite consistent. Loving-kindness is to wish others happiness while compassion is to wish others to be free from suffering.

b. Construct-dimension analysis

Although loving-kindness and compassion have distinct meanings, as mentioned above, the two are often consolidated into one term and used together. As the Dalai Lama said, when we wish for others to be free from suffering, we also wish their happiness. Therefore, it may not be pragmatic to treat loving-kindness and compassion as two separate dimensions. If they are separated into two distinct dimensions, the correlation coefficient between them would likely be so significant that it would necessitate merging them into a single aspect in the end.

However, once loving-kindness and compassion are combined, another question arises: Should different objects of compassion constitute distinct construct aspects? For example, in the Buddhist compassion practice method of "seven-point cause and effect instruction," the

object of compassion meditation extends from oneself, family, friends, strangers to enemies (Dalai Lama, 2005). Is there a need to establish distinct constructive dimensions tailored to different compassionate objects?

Firstly, having compassion for enemies is arguably one of the distinguishing characteristics of Buddhism because the object of Western compassion is suffering others, rather than enemies. Not only did the Dalai Lama emphasize the importance of compassion for enemies many times in his books, but the "seven-point cause and effect instruction" also encompasses compassion for enemies. As mentioned earlier, some psychologists have proposed that the definition of compassion in Western psychology should refer to Buddhist teachings to incorporate compassion for enemies and transgressors (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2017). This remark shows that Buddhist compassion for enemies and transgressors transcends the Western definition of compassion.

Secondly, if we draw on the "moral foundations theory" (Graham et al., 2013) to analyze the objects of compassion, we can find that when we expand our circle of compassion from ourselves, family, friends, to strangers, we are broadening our circle of identification and care. In other words, when the objects of compassion extend from ourselves, family, friends, to strangers, we are expanding the application of the "care principle" within the "moral foundations theory."

Nevertheless, with respect to enemies and wrongdoers, it is not just about extending the scope of the "care principle." As Aristotle said, people generally feel pity for those who do not deserve to suffer. Conversely, we do not feel pity for those who deserve to suffer, such as enemies or transgressors. We often feel that they get what they deserve since they violate the "fairness principle" of the "moral foundations theory." Hence, it is challenging for us to feel compassion for them. Therefore, showing compassion for enemies and transgressors requires more than extending the application of the "care principle." It also involves the practice of "forgiveness" to go beyond the "fairness principle." In other words, having compassion for enemies and wrongdoers is more difficult than doing so for strangers.

How do Buddhist teachings address this problem? The Dalai Lama explains that enemies are also human beings, so they are our brothers and sisters. We must care about them since our future is also related to them, whether directly or indirectly (Goleman, 2015). The Dalai Lama also stated that when a person gripped by anger hurts you, instead of feeling angry, we should have compassion for this person because s/he is also suffering" (Dalai Lama, 1992). In other words, although on the surface transgressors make others suffer, at a deeper level, they too are also victimized by their own "afflictions" that lead them astray. From this viewpoint,

wrongdoers are also suffering. When we can see perpetrators as victims from this perspective, we will be more compassionate to enemies and wrongdoers.

However, “Buddhist compassion” for enemies and wrongdoers is not about allowing them wreak havoc but helping them to mend their mistakes and become good. For instance, the Dalai Lama believes that people can have the potential to transform. He said that even a murderer can experience a profound change (Goleman, 2015). Nevertheless, this does not mean we should accept their wrong behaviors. The Dalai Lama pointed out that the essence of forgiveness is: not directing anger towards perpetrators, but also not accepting their wrong behaviors. Daniel Goleman (2015), the author of "EQ," pointed out that the Dalai Lama believes that compassionate actions include not just alleviating suffering but also rectifying wrongs, such as fighting against injustice and protecting human rights. In other words, it is crucial to distinguish wrongdoers' behaviors from wrongdoers themselves. We should counter the wrongdoing, but care for wrongdoers—try to help them to change their wrongdoing."

From the above analysis, it is evident that having compassion for enemies and wrongdoers are more challenging than for strangers. This is because the former involves the "fairness principle" of the "moral foundations theory." if one cannot recognize that the perpetrator is also a victim, it will be challenging to go beyond the "fairness principle" and be merciful to enemies and transgressors. Therefore, although "loving-kindness" and "compassion" should be combined into one constructive aspect, this combination should be further divided into compassion for family, friends, and strangers (involving the extension of the "care principle") and compassion for enemies and wrongdoers (involving the transcendence of the "fairness principle").

This paper refers the wish for family, friends, and strangers to be free from suffering and find happiness as “alleviation for sufferers,” or "alleviating compassion". This dimension aligns closely with the Western definition of compassion. Further, we term the ability to go beyond the "fairness principle" to apply the "care principle" to enemies and transgressors, assisting them to correct their mistakes, as “edification for wrongdoers,” or “educative compassion.” Based on the above analysis, both "alleviating compassion" and "educative compassion" form two different aspects of "Buddhist compassion" because according to the "moral foundations theory," the underlying psychological principles behind these two are distinctly different.

(3) The analysis of joy

a. Word analysis

As mentioned above, the definition of "joy" (喜/muditā) in the “four immeasurables”

varies in different Buddhist traditions. Theravada Buddhism defines "joy" in "The Path of Purification" as simply "joy," possessing the power to eradicate unhappiness based on "The Path of Freedom." In Han Buddhism, "joy" is often understood as "empathetic joy," which helps to eliminate jealousy. Tibetan Buddhism interprets it as the wish for all beings to remain inseparable from suffering-free joy.

From the perspective of the "principle of checks and balances," the Theravada definition, which emphasizes that "joy" can eliminate unhappiness, should be most helpful in reducing the side effect of sorrows arising from compassion. On the other hand, the Chinese tradition's "empathetic joy" seems to align more closely with the notion of "loving-kindness" (may others be happy). Although "empathetic joy" can help reduce jealousy, it does not notably restrain the pitfalls of attachment (arising from loving-kindness) or sorrow (stemming from compassion). Similarly, the Tibetan interpretation of "joy" also echoes the connotations of "loving-kindness" and "compassion." Therefore, from the perspective of the "principle of checks and balances," the Theravada interpretation of "joy" is the most suitable as the joy aspect of Buddhist compassion.

As mentioned earlier, the Dalai Lama also advocates that compassion is about helping others outwardly and overcoming negative emotions inwardly (Dalai Lama, 1992). Given that the Theravada definition of "joy" can help regulate emotion, and that Zen joy from meditation can help reduce negative emotions, it can potentially suppress sorrows and worries stemming from "compassion" and reduce anger and hatred in the face of enemies and wrongdoers. In short, when the mind of "compassion" is assisted by the mind of "joy," negative emotions such as depression or anger can be regulated, achieving emotional balance.

b. Construct-dimension analysis

Given the distinct definition of "joy" in Theravada Buddhism, it should be able to constitute an aspect of Buddhist compassion. Therefore, in addition to "alleviating compassion" and "educative compassion," "joy" can be added to "Buddhist compassion" as the third aspect. Because it helps to balance negative emotions by reducing sorrows arising from compassion and anger when facing the wrongdoer, this paper named this aspect "serenity within," or "serene compassion."

(4) The analysis of equanimity

a. Word analysis

The definition of equanimity (捨; upekkhā/upekṣā) in the "four immeasurables" also varies across different Buddhist traditions. In both Theravada and Han Buddhism, "equanimity" refers

to a state of being free from both hatred and attachment, treating all people impartially and equally. This understanding is also present in Tibetan Buddhism, but it is also used to bless others: "May all sentient beings stay away from resentment, love, and hatred, and live in an equality state forever."

From the perspective of the "principle of checks and balances," the definitions of Theravada and Han Buddhism seem to be more helpful in mitigating the possible side effects of "loving-kindness." More specifically, "loving-kindness" can lead to attachment, resulting in the psychological issue of "ingroup favoritism." Theoretically, "equanimity" can help reduce this clinging issue. On the other hand, blessing others to possess "equanimity" in the Tibetan tradition seems a manifestation of "loving-kindness." Therefore, it is more appropriate to adopt the definitions of Theravada and Han Buddhism.

b. Construct-dimension analysis

While "joy" centers on achieving inner emotional balance, "equanimity" underscores the equal treatment towards all sentient beings. Therefore, "equanimity" should stand alone as an independent aspect of "Buddhist compassion." More specifically, "equanimity" can reduce the problem of "ingroup favoritism," while "joy" helps to regulate emotions. Given that the essence of "equanimity" is equality, this paper refers to this aspect as "equality without," or "equal compassion."

(5) Conceptual definition and four aspects of "Buddhist compassion."

a. Four aspects of the concept of "Buddhist compassion"

Through the "principle of checks and balances" from political science and the "moral foundations theory" from psychology, we have clarified the meaning of the "four immeasurables" and categorized them from a scientific perspective. Accordingly, "Buddhist compassion" is divided into four dimensions: alleviation for sufferers, edification for wrongdoers, serenity within, and equality without. The difference between the four facets of "Buddhist compassion" and the "four immeasurables" is that in "Buddhist compassion," loving-kindness and compassion are combined into one aspect, which is then divided into "alleviating compassion" and "educative compassion" based on the object of compassion. Furthermore, "joy" corresponds to "serene compassion," and "equanimity" corresponds to "equal compassion." The comparison between the four dimensions of "Buddhist Compassion" and the "four immeasurables" is shown in Figure 1 and Table 3.

Figure 1

From the cultural interpretation of the “four immeasurables” to the scientific interpretation of “Buddhist compassion”

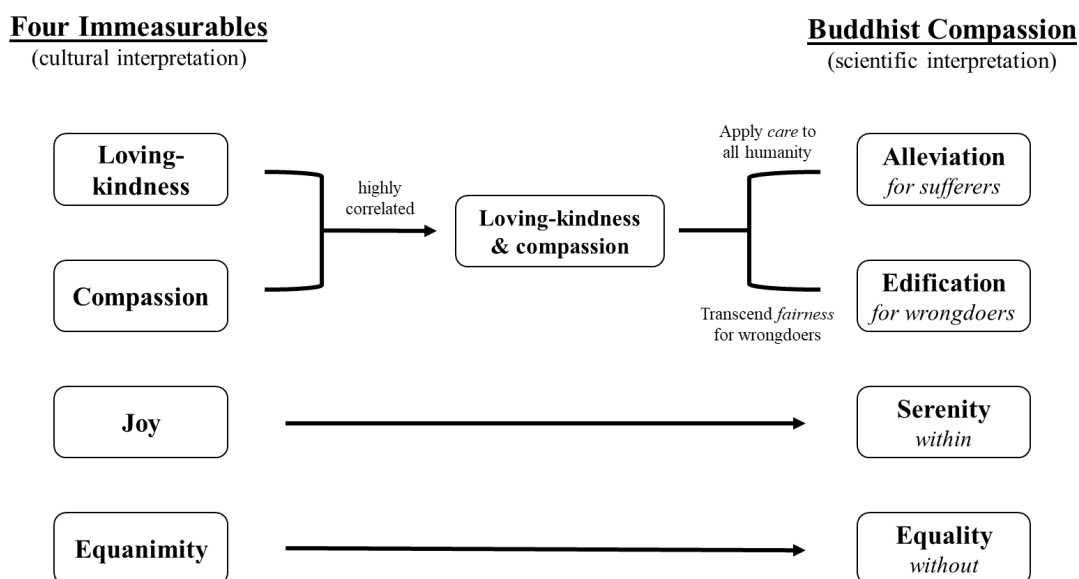


Table 3

A comparison table of the “four immeasurables” and “Buddhist compassion”

Four immeasurables	Meaning	Four Dimensions of Buddhist Compassion	Definition
Loving-kindness (mettā / maitrī)	May others attain happiness	Alleviation <i>for sufferers</i>	Help sufferers to be free from suffering and attain happiness
Compassion (karuṇā)	May others be free from suffering	Edification <i>for wrongdoers</i>	Assist wrongdoers to correct mistakes and turn towards goodness
Joy (muditā)	Feel peacefully joyful	Serenity <i>within</i>	Calmly help sufferers and wrongdoers
Equanimity (upekkhā / upekṣā)	Be equal-minded towards all beings	Equality <i>without</i>	Equal-mindedly help sufferers and wrongdoers

b. Definition of "Buddhist compassion"

Based on the above four dimensions, "Buddhist compassion" can be defined as "helping sufferers and wrongdoers in a calm and equal manner." Compared with the Western definition of compassion, which focuses on helping sufferers, the Buddhist definition of compassion is broader and more expansive. First of all, in terms of objects, it helps not only those who suffer but also those who make mistakes. Secondly, it does not just consider helping others externally

but also regulates emotions internally. Finally, it pays attention to both inward emotional balance and outward equality among different individuals.

“Buddhist compassion” encompasses and transcends the Western meaning of compassion, reflecting the cultural nuances of Buddhist philosophy and highlighting the uniqueness of Eastern culture. In the development of Buddhist teachings, the theory of the "four immeasurables" has already considered the possible alienating side effects of loving-kindness and compassion. The solution is to incorporate “joy” and “equanimity” to counteract potential pitfalls through the "principle of checks and balances." On the other hand, although the cultural system analysis of Western compassion shows that Western philosophers have discovered its limitations, they did not proposed a solution. For this reason, the Buddhist concept of compassion is more extensive and richer than Western compassion.

Although the concept of “Buddhist compassion” reveals the distinct characteristics of oriental culture, it doesn't necessarily mean that its approach to mitigating negative effects is inapplicable to Westerners. That is to say, while, conceptually, “Buddhist compassion” stems from the East, its actual effects in countering the negative implications may very well apply universally, given that both Westerners and Easterners share “one mind.” Especially considering that compassion interventions in West have incorporated mindfulness and equality, we suggest that the balancing role of the four facets of Buddhist compassion can also be applicable to the West.

2. The interrelationship of the four dimensions of "Buddhist compassion"

By examining "Buddhist compassion" through the lens of social science, we discover that it contains four aspects: alleviation for sufferers, edification for wrongdoers, serenity within, and equality without. The following will explore the relationship between these four aspects from the psychological perspective. First, we will discuss the possible alienation of “alleviating compassion.” Then, we will discuss how the other three aspects of “Buddhist compassion” can help balance the possible alienation of “alleviating compassion.”

(1) Possible alienation of “alleviating compassion”

As mentioned above, the alleviating aspect of Buddhist compassion corresponds to Western compassion, both of which signifies a desire for the sufferer to escape suffering and find happiness. Based on literature from both Eastern and Western cultures and psychological study results, “alleviating compassion” may lead to alienation in three aspects:

a. Sorrow for sufferers

The Buddhist literature "The Path of Purification" points out that "compassion" may give rise to sorrow. This alienation corresponds to the psychological concept on "compassion fatigue," which refers to the self-depletion of helping workers due to the accumulation of prolonged work pressure and excessive emotional involvement with sufferers (Bride et al., 2007). Empathy research also indicates that heightened emotional empathy sometimes overwhelms the empathizer with negative emotion, making it difficult to truly engage in helping behaviors (Bloom, 2016). For example, a mother was devastated because her son was injured and bleeding. If, at this time, the surgeon empathizes with the mother's pain and imagines her wounded son as his own, the surgeon may be unable to save the patient due to the emotional overload. To save the patient, the surgeon needs to detach himself or herself from the great sadness in the heart. Therefore, "alleviating compassion" may lead to the side effect of overwhelming distress and sorrow.

b. Retaliation against wrongdoers

According to psychological research, the more profound our affection for the victim (higher attachment), the greater our tendency to attack the perpetrator (Buffone & Poulin, 2014). For example, in 1945, many prisoners in German concentration camps were tortured, starved, or gassed. However, by that time the concentration camps have been liberated, so the victims were not the previously imprisoned Jews but the captured German soldiers, with victorious American warriors perpetrating the acts. A U.S. military captain mentioned in a letter home that he had no sympathy watching the Nazi SS being brutally beaten and then shot because he believed they brought it upon themselves. That is to say, people often "dehumanize" the perpetrators and then commit violence upon them (Bloom, 2016).

Psychological experiments have also found that when participants saw innocent people receiving electric shocks, the insula in the brain was activated, indicating that they felt compassion for the suffering of others. However, when they saw people who had previously cheated money received electric shocks, there was no insula response. Instead, their reward-related striatum was activated (de Quervain et al., 2004), echoing the Western proverb "revenge is sweet" (Pinker, 2011). This experiment reflects Aristotle's discourse that our compassion is typically reserved for innocent people who do not deserve suffering, excluding those deemed deserving their misfortune. Remembering the death of one's enemy may even bring joy, as stated in "The Path of Purification." In other words, there is even a sense of pleasure in seeing one's enemies suffer. Therefore, compassion for the sufferer may generate vengeful emotions against the wrongdoer.

c. Ingroup favoritism

The Buddhist literature "The Path of Purification" points out that compassion may lead to attachment. Aristotle also noted that people are more likely to have compassion for those they are close to. The above observations indicate that "alleviating compassion" is not often not equally distributed. The above literature aligns with psychological findings. More specifically, psychological research has shown that the emotion of compassion often accompanies the secretion of oxytocin (Saturn, 2017). However, such feeling often appears in shared relationships. It is mostly limited to family and friends, those highly similar to us, or those with cute appearance (Pinker, 2011), failing to extend to outgroups. In other words, "alleviating compassion" may have the problem of ingroup favoritism.

(2) The balancing effect of educative, serene, and equal compassion

Buddhist scriptures propose solutions to the alienation issues that may arise from "alleviating compassion." The following section verifies these solutions through psychological research.

a. "Serene compassion" can ease the sorrow for the suffering

"The Path of Purification" points out that compassion may generate sorrow and distress, while "joy" can achieve "cessation of unhappiness." As previously mentioned, "joy" in the "four immeasurables" corresponds to the "serenity" aspect of Buddhist compassion, both of which involve emotional regulation. Hence, "serene compassion" can relieve sorrow about the suffering others through emotional regulation methods such as mindfulness. The effect of mindfulness on alleviating negative emotions has been found in many research literature (Brown et al., 2007).

b. "Educative compassion" can mitigate the revenge towards wrongdoers

"The Path of Purification" points out that the achievement of "loving-kindness" is "the cessation of hatred." Therefore, if one develops "loving-kindness" towards wrongdoers, it will help quench one's desire to revenge on them. The "loving-kindness" towards the enemy corresponds to the "edification" aspect of "Buddhist compassion," forgiving those who have made mistakes and helping them to correct errors and become good. The Dalai Lama (1992) contends that perpetrators are victims of their afflictions. From the perspective of attribution theory, this is a form of "external attribution." When we make internal attributions to wrongdoers, it often leads to negative emotions; when we make external attributions to wrongdoers, it is easier to forgive them (Moon & Rhee, 2012).

c. "Equal compassion" can alleviate ingroup favoritism

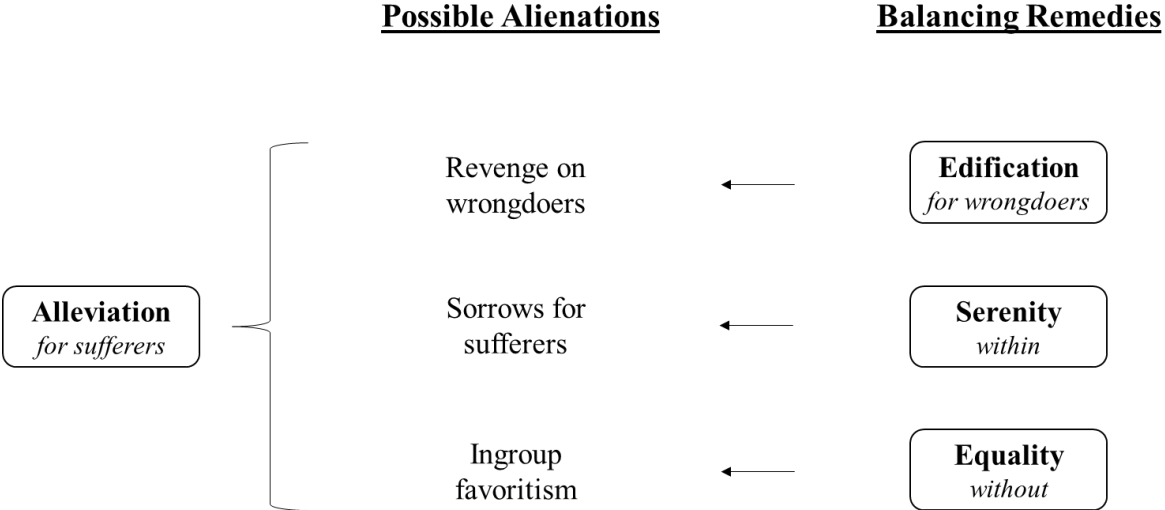
"The Path of Purification" points out that "loving-kindness" may generate attachment, thereby necessitating "equanimity" to achieve "the cessation of attachment." The "equanimity" in the "four immeasurables" corresponds to the "equality" aspect of Buddhist compassion. The Dalai Lama suggested that one way to develop an equal mind is to see the similarities in all human beings. He said that we are all brothers. We all have the same needs. We all have the right to happiness and freedom from suffering. The need to seek happiness and to avoid suffering is fundamentally what make us all alike. Therefore, we are all equal. Even if we have different characteristics, such as race, language, religion, gender, wealth, our basic needs are the same, making each of us equal (Goleman, 2015). The psychology principle of the "similarity attraction effect" states that similarity between people can predict interpersonal attraction, whereas complementary differences between people do not necessarily do so (Reis, 2007). The Dalai Lama proposes that all human beings share a fundamental desire to eradicate suffering and find happiness. This perspective helps us recognize the similarities between ourselves, strangers, enemies, and wrongdoers. Hence, this view can enhance interpersonal attraction, foster a sense of closeness with strangers and enemies, and cultivate "equanimity."

(3) Summary

From the social science perspective, "alleviating compassion" may lead to specific side effects, including distress for the sufferer, revenge on the wrongdoer, and ingroup favoritism. Fortunately, "Buddhist compassion" also contains "serene compassion," "educative compassion," and "equal compassion" that can help alleviate the above effects, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

The check-and-balance system of Buddhist compassion



By offering solutions to possible alienation issues of “alleviating compassions,” these three dimensions help to reduce potential adverse effects, thereby moving towards the perfect “great compassion” of buddhas.

V. Discussion

This paper aims to compare and contrast “Buddhist compassion” and Western compassion and to conceptualize “Buddhist compassion” through cultural and scientific interpretation. The following outlines this paper’s contributions, limitations, and future directions, as well as its significance to compassion research in the West. Also, from a cultural perspective, this paper elucidates the cultural nuances of “Buddhist compassion” in contrast to Western compassion, and explains why the concept of “compassion” from India can be smoothly integrated into the East Asian cultural sphere (or Sinosphere). Then, based on the Buddhist teachings, we clarify the relationship between compassion and nonself. Lastly, we discuss the insights that the concept of “Buddhist compassion” can offer to modern civilization.

1. Research contributions

To compare and contrast Western compassion and “Buddhist compassion,” this paper undertook a “cultural interpretation” of both through word analysis and cultural system approach. We found that “Buddhist compassion” should not be equated with Western compassion because “Buddhist compassion” involves a large Buddhist cultural system that entails in-depth exploration.

To clarify the concept of “Buddhist compassion,” we adopted the theoretical construction method advocated by Hwang, providing a “scientific interpretation” of this construct. This approach allowed us to scientifically delineate the construct into four aspects and explain the interrelationship among them. On the one hand, this paper used the “principle of checks and balances” to determine the appropriate meanings of the “four immeasurables.” On the other hand, it referenced psychological theories (such as “the moral foundations theory”) for reclassification, resulting in four dimensions: alleviation for sufferers, edification for wrongdoers, serenity within, and equality without (or “alleviating compassion,” “educative compassion,” “serene compassion” and “equal compassion”). “Buddhist compassion” is thus defined as: “helping sufferers and wrongdoers with a calm and equal manner.” A further analysis found that the latter three dimensions can help alleviate the potential alienation associated with

"alleviating compassion," such as revenge on wrongdoers and sorrow for sufferers and ingroup bias.

In sum, the contributions of this article are twofold: Firstly, it clarifies that "Buddhist compassion" and Western compassion are not synonymous concepts. It further analyzes the conceptual definition and constructive dimensions of "Buddhist compassion," elucidating the relationship between these dimensions. Secondly, this study demonstrates the "cultural system approach" and "theoretical construction" proposed by Hwang, which are very beneficial for indigenous psychological research. More specifically, prior indigenous compassion studies were based solely on Buddhist literature. While they acknowledged the Buddhist cultural system, they fell short in constructing cultural-inclusive theories (e.g., Huang, 2016). Other compassion studies directly establish different aspects of compassion through empirical data, lacking consideration of the cultural system (e.g., Huang et al., 2015). A unique feature of this study is that it adopts both the perspective of cultural systems and that of theoretical construction to conceptualize "Buddhist compassion."

2. The implication of "Buddhist compassion" for Western compassion research

As mentioned above, under the influence of Buddhism, some Western compassion intervention programs have surpassed the definition of Western compassion. The construct of "self-compassion" defined by Western scholars has also transcended the scope of Western compassion. Therefore, there is a pressing need to redefine compassion based on Buddhist philosophy. The construct of "Buddhist compassion" derived from our analysis can address the above issues, as explained below:

- (1) Alleviating compassion: This dimension echoes the definition of Western compassion.
- (2) Educative compassion: This dimension refers to compassion for those who make mistakes. On the one hand, it resonates with the "seven-point cause and effect instruction" of Buddhism, and on the other hand, it echoes the "common humanity" aspect of "self-compassion" that tolerates one's mistakes.
- (3) Serene compassion: This dimension contains emotional regulation. It not only echoes the "joy" of the "four immeasurables," but also reflects the mindfulness element covered by some compassion intervention practices in the West and by the construct of "self-compassion."
- (4) Equal compassion: This dimension refers to the mind of equality. On the one hand, it aligns with the "equanimity" of the "four immeasurables," and on the other hand, it matches the element of equality covered by some compassion intervention programs in the West.

Furthermore, it echoes the idea of “self-compassion,” which mentions that all people can err or suffer, suggesting a universal equality among all human beings.

In other words, the construct of "Buddhist compassion" can help consolidate the current divergences in the definition of compassion in the West and its intervention design. It also echoes the connotation of the “self-compassion,” as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Buddhist compassion in relation to compassion and self-compassion

Buddhist Compassion	compassion (definition)	compassion (intervention)	self-compassion (definition)
Alleviation <i>for sufferers</i>	V	V	V (self-kindness)
Edification <i>for wrongdoers</i>		V (e.g., CBCT)	V (self-forgiveness)
Serenity <i>within</i>		V (e.g., CCT)	V (mindfulness)
Equality <i>without</i>		V (e.g., CBCT)	V (common humanity)

Note: Marking with a 'V' indicates the presence of that aspect of compassion. The content within the parentheses refers to its specific intervention design or definition. Additionally, CBCT stands for Cognitively-Based Compassion Training, while CCT refers to Compassion Cultivation Training.

In addition, according to the "seven-point cause and effect instruction," the objects of compassion visualization extends from oneself, family, friends, strangers, and even to enemies (Dalai Lama, 2005), showing that self-compassion is the foundation of compassion. While the construct of “self-compassion” focuses on oneself and does not cover other objects, its scope of connotation is broader than the current definition of compassion. Nevertheless, we believe it is inappropriate to directly apply the construct of “self-compassion” to the conceptualization of “Buddhist compassion” for two reasons.

Firstly, in terms of research methodology, although “self-compassion” claims to be based on Buddhist teachings, existing literature does not explain how it derives the three elements from Buddhist scriptures. Therefore, this article believes that the three elements of “self-compassion” should not be directly adopted to conceptualize “Buddhist compassion.” Instead, it is crucial to analyze the meaning of compassion in Buddhist philosophy, as presented in this paper.

Secondly, as far as the actual analysis, although “Buddhist compassion” corresponds to “self-compassion” to a certain degree, as shown in Table 4, there are significant differences between them. For example, the concept of “common humanity” in “self-compassion” is not used to cultivate an equality mind but to comfort oneself by explaining that all people err and suffer and hence we are not alone. Therefore, from both the perspective of methodology and analysis results, the definition of “Buddhist compassion” should not directly incorporate the three elements of “self-compassion.”

3. Research limitations and future directions

This paper has three research limitations, which can serve as reference points for future research directions. Firstly, this paper focuses on theoretical discussions. Future work can delve into empirical research. The concept of “Buddhist compassion” and its four dimensions proposed in this paper should be examined. Its cross-cultural verification should also be conducted to examine its universality. In addition, the argument that "educative compassion," "serene compassion," and "equal compassion" can help balance the side effects of "alleviating compassion" also needs to be tested through empirical research.

Secondly, while Mahayana Buddhism is rooted in "compassion," this article may not cover all compassion-related concepts in Buddhism. Although this article discusses compassion for ordinary people and Buddhas (i.e., "compassion with attachment" vs. "great compassion") and the "four immeasurables" (loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity), there are other ways to conceptualize compassion in Buddhism. For instance, as recorded in "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom" (Vol. 40), there are three kinds of compassion: (1) compassion that has living beings as its object (demonstrated by ordinary beings); (2) compassion that is free from attachment and has dharmas as its object (exhibited by those who have realized emptiness) ; and (3) compassion that has no object (shown by buddhas and bodhisattvas). Since most people in the world are ordinary people, yet to realize emptiness or to attain Buddhahood, this classification method has its limitation for psychological measurements due to the rarity of samples from those who have realized emptiness, buddhas, and bodhisattvas. Hence, this article decided not to adopt this classification method but to use the "four immeasurables" as a foundation to develop the conceptual definition and dimensions of "Buddhist compassion." However, if suitable samples are available in the future, the levels of compassion in "The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom" can also be used as a reference to enrich the concept of "Buddhist compassion."

Finally, while this article conceptualizes "Buddhist compassion" with four dimensions, it does not delve into the psychological mechanisms behind each aspect of "Buddhist compassion." For example, although this article mentions that "educative compassion" involves perceiving wrongdoers as victims of their own afflictions, the psychological mechanism behind this dimension can be further explored in the future.

4. East-West cultural comparison

This article compares and contrasts Western compassion and "Buddhist compassion." It has been found that Western compassion refers to the desire to alleviate the suffering of the sufferer and also mentions possible side effects. Buddhist philosophy, on the other hand, further considers how to reduce the possible side effects of loving-kindness and compassion, leading to the formulation of the framework of "four immeasurables." In other words, while the Western concept of compassion involves definitions and side effects, "Buddhist compassion" includes definitions, side effects, and solutions.

Different connotations between Western compassion and "Buddhist compassion" reflect the distinct characteristics of Eastern and Western cultures. While the West demonstrates analytical thinking, the East showcases holistic thinking (Masuda & Nisbett, 2001). Specifically, the "four immeasurables" incorporate the virtues of "joy" and "equanimity," forming a dynamic system of multiple virtues and exemplifying a holistic thinking style. In contrast, Western compassion focuses solely on caring for sufferers. Frankly speaking, the Western construct of "forgiveness" is similar to the "edification" aspect of "Buddhist compassion," the Western idea of emotional regulation corresponds to "serene compassion," and the Western concept of "world citizen" (cosmopolitan) from the age of Enlightenment is similar to "equal compassion." Nevertheless, unlike "Buddhist compassion" that contains virtues that can balance each other, the afore mentioned Western concepts have yet to form a virtue system to systematically control side effects of compassion.

The afore mentioned difference between Eastern and Western cultures not only reflects distinct thinking styles but also indicates different assumptions about human nature. In the East, Mahayana Buddhism advocates that everyone has "Buddha-nature," which contains all virtues. As the Sixth Patriarch Huineng said: "All dharmas are in one's mind. Why not directly see the true nature from within one's mind?" ("The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch"). He also said: "If you are deluded in your own nature, buddhas are then sentient beings; if you are awakened in your own nature, sentient beings are then buddhas. Loving-kindness and compassion embody

Avalokiteśvara (a bodhisattva of compassion) while joy and equanimity embody Mahāsthāmaprāpta (a bodhisattva of wisdom).” It can be seen from this that the fully-developed "self-nature" of buddhas and bodhisattvas possess many virtues, including the “four immeasurables.” Therefore, "Buddha-nature" presents multi-faceted characteristics.

However, in Western mainstream thought, there is no philosophical presupposition similar to the Buddha-nature in Buddhism. On the contrary, Plato advocated that there is "rationality" in man that can recognize the external "Form of the Good." The concept of “rationality,” as the basis for understanding the external world, emphasizes analytical reasoning rather than holistic integration. Therefore, although the West develops concepts such as forgiveness, emotional regulation, and world citizens, these ideas have not been integrated into a mutually checking and balancing virtue system like the Buddhist theory of "four immeasurables." Recently, Western psychologists have proposed "rationality" as a solution to the side effects of compassion, reflecting the Western paradigm. Advocates of this view include Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker (2011) and Yale psychology professor Paul Bloom (2016).

Is "rationality" sufficient to curb possible side effects of compassion? Some scholars think it is debatable. As Western religious scholar Huston Smith (2003) put it, the "modern mind" that originated in the seventeenth century attaches great importance to "rationality" and emphasizes the supremacy of science, but rationality has its limitations. Smith further proposed that in addition to rationality, human beings also have "intellect." Unlike the logical reasoning function of rationality, intellect resides at the unconscious level, which can connect the mind and the world and grant people intuitive abilities. Accordingly, Smith put forward the concept of "the sacred unconscious," believing that this is the most fundamental of the self. Smith believes that "awakened ones" (such as the Buddha) are those who can touch the most profound unconscious mind within themselves, constantly dwelling in a sense of the sacred, expressing appropriate emotions across different occasions, and bravely taking responsibility and stride forward. "The sacred unconscious" proposed by Smith is similar to the Eastern concept of "self-nature." Hence, Smith believes that the function of "self-nature" can surpass the limitation of "rationality." It can be further inferred that compared to the rationality approach, a "self-nature" perspective is more comprehensive and practical since it allows for the formation of a virtue system where individual virtues can counterbalance each other to achieve a harmonized equilibrium.

In sum, Western compassion and "Buddhist compassion" not only differ in meanings but also, from a broader perspective, reflect distinct cultural orientations of the East and the West. In short, the reason why the concept of "Buddhist compassion" can incorporate various virtues

to form a balancing system is related to the holistic thinking style of the East and the presupposition of "self-nature" in Buddhism.

5. Buddhist compassion vs. Confucian benevolence (ren)

The term "compassion" originated from Indian Buddhism but has taken root in the East Asian cultural circle, largely due to the considerable overlap between Buddhist and Confucian teachings. Although Confucianism is worldly and Buddhism is otherworldly, the core doctrine of Confucianism is "ren" (benevolence or humaneness), which mirrors the concept of "compassion" in Buddhism. As Confucius said, a benevolent person loves others (Analects 12:22). Therefore, although both the Theravada and Mahāyāna were simultaneously introduced to China, the former did not take root while the latter prevailed. This is because Mahāyāna Buddhism's teaching of "Buddhahood attainment for the benefit of all living beings" resonates with Confucianism's ideal of "inner sage and outer king." Therefore, ancient Chinese society featured with Confucianism favored Mahāyāna Buddhism over Theravada Buddhism.

Intriguingly, the Confucian concept of "ren" also encompasses many virtues, mirroring to the "four immeasurables" in Buddhism. The four dimensions of "Buddhist compassion" identified in this article can also be found in the meaning of "ren." Parallel to the idea of "alleviating compassion," Confucius encouraged people to practice filial piety and brotherly love as the foundation of "ren" with the ultimate goal of extending this love to all people. As stated in the "Book of Rites": "They do not regard only their own parents as parents, nor do they treat only their own children as children." Confucius believed that when one can extensively confer benefits on the people and assist all, he or she can be called a "sage." In other words, the object of "ren" is not limited to family, relatives, and friends, but extends to all people worldwide.

Parallel to the idea of "educative compassion," Confucianism advocates that moral education should be the primary, and punishment as secondary (Ye, 2009). In the Confucian ideal, rulers should benevolently love their people, so they promote moral education to help citizens avoid being punished for violating the law (Yang, 2010). If the ruler severely penalized the people without fulfilling the duty of moral education, Confucius condemned it by saying: "Killing without teaching is called cruelty" (Analects 20:2). In other words, Confucianism focuses on "rule by virtue." The goal is to prevent crimes in their infancy through moral education, with "punishment" as a last resort (Ma, 2004).

Parallel to the idea of "serene compassion," Confucius claimed that "a benevolent person

has no worries" and "a gentleman has no worries and no fears." These remarks indicate that "ren" not only generates love for others but also helps regulate negative emotions. The objects of Confucian emotion regulation include negative emotions such as worry, fear, and anger (Chen, 2000). On one hand, Confucianism advocates emotional balance, as recorded in "The Doctrine of the Mean": "When joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure have not yet arisen, it is called the Mean (centeredness, equilibrium). When they arise to their appropriate levels, it is called 'harmony'" (Muller, 2018). For this reason, Confucius praised "The Book of Songs" for being sorrowful without being harmful. On the other hand, Confucianism emphasizes the regulation of negative emotions. For instance, when Confucius was trapped in Chen and ran out of food, he still recited and played music without stopping. He even comforted his dissatisfied disciple by saying: "The noble man remains stable when in dire straits. The inferior man falls apart" (Analects 15:2; Muller, 2021). In addition, Confucius could calmly deal with injustice because he knew that anger can easily lead to loss of rationality and bad consequences. As he said: "If, because of a moment's anger, you endanger your own life, as well as that of your parents, is this not delusion?" (Analects 12:21; Muller, 2021)

Parallel to the idea of "equal compassion," Confucianism not only advocates that the object of "ren" should be extended from family members to outsiders and wrongdoers, but also emphasizes treating others as their own family. As Mencius said: "To care for the old of others as I would care for my own elders, and for the young of others as I would care for my own young" (Mengzi 1A:7). Likewise, Wang Yangming believed that the reason why benevolent people can treat others as themselves is because they have cultivated themselves to reach the realm of "oneness of benevolence." As he stated in the article "the Inquiry on Great Learning": "The great man regards Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body... That the great man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the benevolent nature of his mind that he does so... Therefore, when he sees a child about to fall into a well, he cannot help a feeling of alarm and compassion. This shows that his benevolence forms one body with the child. The child belongs to the same species" (adapted from: Chan, 2014).

From the above, it is evident that, similar to "Buddhist compassion", Confucian "ren" also exhibits multifaceted characteristics. As Zhu Xi said in his article "The Ren Theory," "ren" governs all virtues. Specifically, he stated: "The mind comprehensively captures and integrates all virtues without omission. They can be summed up in one word 'ren'... While the human mind has four virtues: ren, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom, 'ren' encompasses all."

It is fascinating that, similar to "Buddhist compassion," the Confucian concept of "ren"

also exhibits a multi-faceted feature. It is possibly because Confucianism also has the presupposition of "self-nature." For example, Confucius once said that "Heaven has endowed me with virtues" (Analects 7:23). Mencius also proposed "If you fully explore your mind, you will know your nature. If you know your nature, you know Heaven" (Mengzi 7A:1; Muller, 2019). Likewise, "The Doctrine of the Mean" also recorded that "what Heaven confers is called nature" (Muller, 2018). Even Lao Tzu of Taoism stated that "Tao gives birth to it, and virtue nurtures it" (Tao Te Ching 51). Both Confucianism and Taoism in the Eastern Zhou Dynasty believed that a metaphysical cosmic force endows people with "inner goodness," which lays the foundation for cultivating virtue. While Taoism named this inner goodness "virtue," Confucius called it "ren," Mencius termed it "nature," "The Doctrine of the Mean" referred to it as "sincerity," and Wang Yangming of the Ming Dynasty labelled it "innate knowledge." The concept of "self-nature" helps integrate all virtues to form a virtuous system. For this reason, Mahāyāna Buddhism, which emphasizes compassion, was able to be smoothly integrated into Confucian culture, which values benevolence. Buddhism and Confucianism have since influenced and enriched each other, greatly enhancing Eastern culture.

6. Dialogue with the "NonselF Theory"

In Buddhist philosophy, compassion is the path to nonself. The "nonself theory" points out that the desire arising from egotism is the root of suffering since it relies on the external world to obtain happiness. This kind of pleasure inevitably fluctuates given the transient nature of worldly manifestation. In contrast, the state of "nonself" abandons egotistic pleasures, allowing one to find lasting, true happiness from within. Nirvana, the ultimate goal pursued by Buddhism, is a state of nonself. To achieve the state of Nirvana, one needs to practice through keeping precepts without desire, acting with compassion, sitting in meditation, and cultivating Buddhist wisdom (Shiah, 2016). Empirical research also supports that keeping precepts and eliminating desires in the "nonself theory" can improve mental health, partially mediated by the reduction in death anxiety (Kuo et al., 2022).

The nonself state of Nirvana can eliminate the illusory self, allowing one to return to the non-dual reality where everything is interconnected. As stated in the "Avatamsaka Sutra," everything is intertwined like a network of pearls, reflecting and containing each other. There is me in you and you in me. The Dalai Lama also said that in this world we are all interdependent rather than independent. Thich Nhat Hanh's poem "Please Call Me by Your Real Name" illustrates the profound interconnectedness of all beings. Prompted by a tragic event involving

a young Vietnamese refugee girl, he wrote down this poem: " I am the twelve-year-old girl, refugee on a small boat, who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate. And I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving...My joy is like Spring, so warm it makes flowers bloom all over the Earth. My pain is like a river of tears, so vast it fills the four oceans. Please call me by my true names, so I can hear all my cries and my laughter at once, so I can see that my joy and pain are one. Please call me by my true names, so I can wake up, and so the door of my heart can be left open, the door of compassion."

In short, the Buddhist concept of nonself breaks the division between oneself and others, connecting all sentient beings and everything into a vast, interwoven, and endless web. Therefore, "Buddhist compassion" extends beyond sympathy for sufferers and wrongdoers, delving past the illusion of separateness to embrace the profound reality of interconnectedness of all beings. Conversely, when practitioners develop the "four immeasurables" and compassionately connect themselves with everyone and everything, the illusory self will gradually disappear, revealing the wisdom of emptiness. As stated in the "Aspiration of Mahamudra of Definitive Meaning" of the Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism: "May unbearable compassion arise in us for all beings who suffer endlessly. The display of unbearable compassion is unceasing. Within that affection, its empty nature arises nakedly" (Thrangu Vajrayana Buddhist Centre, n. d.). Therefore, in the Mahayana Buddhist teachings, compassion is an essential path towards nonself. In essence, the interplay of compassion and wisdom helps practitioners move closer to the state of nonself, or the realm of Nirvana. By defining "Buddhist compassion" through cultural system analysis and social science perspective, this article contributes to the compassion element mentioned in "nonself theory."

7. Insights from "Buddhist Compassion" for Modern Civilization

Despite the material prosperity and scientific advancements of modern civilization, humanity is facing unprecedented crises. Individuals are addicted to material pursuits, and their hearts are empty. The "survival-of-the-fittest" mentality of capitalism has led to social and economic inequalities across the world. Plus, unsustainable resource depletion has brought about environmental issues. In light of these pressing global issues, the Dalai Lama calls for young generations to launch a "compassion revolution." In his book "*Faites La Révolution*," he explains that at the personal level, compassion positively impacts the formation of new neurons. At the interpersonal level, when society holds a positive view of human nature, power games will transform into a care economy based on mutual trust and common interests. The universal

value of compassion will then replace the moral views driven by punishment and fear. At the environmental level, love for the earth will guide humans to conserve natural resources (Dalai Lama & Stril-Rever, 2017). In short, amid the endless issues of our civilization, the solution proposed by the Dalai Lama is "compassion."

However, to elevate global consciousness, the Western definition of compassion is not sufficient to fulfill the aforementioned missions. For example, the Dalai Lama (2009) advocates: "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want yourself to be happy, practice compassion." Nevertheless, without the balancing influence of the "four immeasurables," various side effects of loving-kindness and compassion may arise, including sorrows, ingroup favoritism, and retaliation against wrongdoers. While sorrows impact our well-being, ingroup favoritism diminishes care for outgroup members, and the retaliation mindset will continue to sustain the practice of "an-eye-for-an-eye" punishment. Finally, if "equal compassion" cannot be extended to Mother Earth, it will be difficult for human beings to control their instrumental rationality of self-interest maximization through excessive natural resource depletion. Therefore, if we want to promote "compassion revolution," perhaps the first step is to re-examine the very essence of "compassion." As Confucius said, "workers who want to do good things must first sharpen their tools" (Analects 15:10). Hence, advocating "compassion" should start with a clear understanding of "Buddhist compassion," and this is precisely the research question this paper aims to address.

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