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Paternalism in the *Lotus Sūtra*

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ABSTRACT

Medical and other analogies which depict the Buddha as a physician or wise parent are found in the *Lotus Sūtra* and are common in Buddhist literature. To what extent does this image of the wise father-figure encourage paternalism in Buddhist ethics? Making reference to the approach to medical ethics developed by Beauchamp and Childress (the ‘four principles’), this paper discusses the ethics of the *Lotus Sūtra* in the light of debate about the justifiability of paternalism in contemporary medical practice. It offers a critique of what appears to be an incipient moral paternalism in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism which manifests itself in a particular development of the concept of skillful means. It is suggested that Buddhist sources which apply the concept of skillful means to normative ethics may be characterized as ‘paternalist’ insofar as the principle of beneficence is allowed undue predominance over respect for autonomy.

“I looked up and saw God . . . and I knew he wanted me to lie”

The Herbal Bed

In two places in the *Lotus Sūtra* the question is explicitly asked whether the deception involved in the use of skillful means is immoral. In both cases the question is raised at the end of a parable in which a surrogate for the Buddha perpetrates a deception. The first time is in the parable of the burning house which occurs in the third chapter of the *sūtra*. The second is the parable of the physician who travels abroad which occurs in chapter sixteen. The parable of the burning house is so well known it hardly needs repetition, but I will quote below the summary provided by Michael Pye:

A wealthy old man has a great house with only one door. The house is in a decrepit state, and a fire breaks out, threatening to engulf all the man's children who are absorbed in play within the house. The old man calls them in vain, then resorts in desperation to skillful means (*fang pien*). Knowing the kinds of things which they all like, he calls out that there are goat-carts, deer-carts and bullock carts waiting for them outside the door. Upon this they all come scrambling out of the house and are saved from the flames. The three kinds of carts are nowhere to be seen, but instead the old man gives to each one a still more splendid chariot, beautifully ornate and drawn by a white bullock.¹

In the following paragraph Pye explains how the question of lying arises:

The question is then raised, by way of comment on the story, as to whether the old man was guilty of a falsehood. Śāriputra's answer to this is that he was not, but it is not only this judgment which is interesting but also its justification. The em-

phasis is put not on the fact that the children received a better vehicle than intended, which might after all be taken to cover their failure to receive the specific kinds which were originally promised. Rather, the discrepancy is justified by the fulfillment of the old man's intention to bring them out from the flames. Even if they had not received any carts at all it would have been inappropriate to speak of a falsehood, because the original thought of the old man was: "I will get my children to escape by a skillful means."²

For convenience I will also quote Pye's summary of the second parable, that of the physician:

A physician is traveling abroad, and in the meantime his sons drink some poisonous medicines and become delirious. When he returns he prepares good medicine for them. The ones who take the good medicine recover, but the others have quite lost their senses and refuse to take the good medicine. The father reflects, and decides upon a skillful means to make them take it. He warns them that he is very old and approaching death, then leaves for another country from where he sends a messenger back to report that he has died. The sons are overcome with grief, come to their senses and take the medicine which he had prepared. Hearing this the father returns and they are united. Immediately following the story the question is raised as to whether the physician in this case was guilty of a falsehood, and the answer returned is that he was not. Then the Buddha declares: "I am also like this. Since I became a Buddha . . . for the sake of all the living I have declared by my power of skillful means that I must enter nirvana, and yet no one can rightly say that I have perpetrated a falsehood."³

Merely to raise the question of whether the Buddha lied is revolutionary in the context of earlier ethical norms. Lies are not the sort of

thing one normally associates with a Buddha, and what prompts the question is surely the clear awareness of the redactors of the text of the tension between skillful means and traditional morality. Buddhism prohibits lying and deception under various of its moral codes, most notably in the fourth of the Five Precepts. The Buddha in the Pali Canon never lies to anyone. He tells us himself “A *Tathāgata* . . . is pure in conduct whether of act, or speech, or thought. There is no misdeed of any kind concerning which he must take care lest another should come to know if it.”⁴ He says that he detests evil conduct in body, word, and thought.⁵ Buddhaghosa says of him that he always speaks the truth.⁶ Arhats as a class are said to be incapable of breaking the precepts such as those against killing, stealing, lying or having sexual intercourse.⁷ On the contrary, Buddhas are traditionally identified with truth and truthfulness and the Pali Canon puts a premium on accuracy, clarity and fidelity. In the light of this to intimate that the Buddha might be guilty of deception is verging on heresy.

As noted above, the *Lotus Sūtra* responds to the charge of lying with a denial. In the case of the old man, as noted above, it responds by claiming that the Buddha was not guilty of a falsehood because of his intention, which was “I will get my children to escape by a skillful means.” And in the case of the physician, although the justification offered is less explicit, it would appear to be of the same kind, namely that the intention was to save the lives of the ailing sons.

In the case of the burning house, the *sūtra*’s answer to the charge of lying seems unsatisfactory. If we understand lying to mean the deliberate communication of an untruth with the intention that others may be deceived, it seems indisputable that the old man lied. After all, did he not tell the children — knowing very well that it was not the case — that there were three different kinds of carts waiting for them outside the house? While his motive might have been a benevolent one, his intention (that to which he directed his will in the execution of his plan) was certainly to deceive. And in the case of the second example, how can it be that the physician is not guilty of a falsehood when he himself sent a message

saying he was dead? It is hard to imagine how he could have been confused about the facts in this case! Once again, while his motive was the benevolent one of saving his children, his intention was indubitably that his children should be deceived. How, then, can the *sūtra* maintain that the old man and the physician were not guilty of a falsehood?

I think we must understand the text as claiming not that there was no falsehood in these and the other cases, but that the falsehood was justifiable. The justification offered — that in each case some wise person acting with a good motive “knew best” what should be done — may be characterized as paternalistic. Ethically such conduct seems ultimately grounded by the principle of beneficence. In Western medical ethics the principle of beneficence has been accorded a primary place,⁸ and has traditionally been interpreted to mean that it is justifiable in certain circumstances for a physician to do whatever in his judgment was in the best interests of the patient, even if this meant manipulating the truth. The justification for this turns on the fact that the physician has a deeper knowledge and understanding of the patient’s condition than he himself has, and is committed to the patient’s welfare and well-being. In the words of Beauchamp and Childress:

When the analogy of the father is used to illuminate the role of professionals or the state in health care, it presupposes two features of the paternal role: that the father acts beneficently (i.e. in accord with his conception of the interests of his children) and that he makes all or at least some of the decisions relating to his children’s welfare rather than letting them make those decisions. In professional relationships the argument is that a professional has superior training, knowledge, and insight and is in an authoritative position to determine what is in the patient’s best interests. In short, from this perspective, a professional is like a parent when dealing with independent and often ignorant and fearful patients.⁹

Throughout the *Lotus Sūtra*, the justification offered for the use of

skillful means seems similar to that in paternalistic medicine. It is the case in the two examples cited from the *Lotus Sūtra* (one of which specifically includes a physician) and in other of the parables in the text, such as the son who did not know himself in chapter four, the magic city in chapter seven, or the Buddha's lifespan in chapter sixteen. In all these cases one of the parties is wiser or more knowledgeable and has privileged access to knowledge or information not held by the other. The wiser party, such as the old man in the burning house, the physician or the guide, also seeks from a beneficent motive to manipulate the truth with the aim of furthering the well-being of the other party.

The traditional model of benevolent paternalism in medicine just described has increasingly been challenged in the last thirty years, and may be said to be in large-scale retreat before a new approach to medical ethics which emphasizes the autonomy of patients rather than the authority of medical personnel. At the heart of the debate is the conflict between two principles. The first, beneficence, we have already discussed. The second is autonomy. Beneficence lends authority to healthcare professionals to do what they deem in the patient's best interests, while autonomy places the primary responsibility for decision-making in the hands of the patient. The view that when these two principles conflict autonomy should be given priority is now widely regarded as the norm. The following extract from the President's Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical and Behavioral Research is a typical statement of this position:

The primary goal of health care in general is to maximize each patient's well-being. However, merely acting in a patient's best interests without recognizing the individual as the pivotal decisionmaker would fail to respect each person's interest in self-determination. . . . When the conflicts that arise between a competent patient's self-determination and his or her apparent well-being remain unresolved after adequate

deliberation, a competent patient's self-determination is and usually should be given greater weight than other people's views on that individual's well-being. . . . Respect for the self-determination of competent patients is of special importance. . . . The patient should have the final authority to decide.¹⁰

The problem of paternalism in a medical context arises from the fact that the physician's assessment of the situation may differ from that of the patient. Patients may be distressed, depressed, under the influence of drugs and medication, and not competent to make decisions which are fully rational in light of all the relevant circumstances. Other patients may be competent but choose treatment or other options which seem to the physician to be unsatisfactory or even harmful. The problem for the physician is whether to allow the scales to tip in favor of autonomy and respect the patient's choices however unreasonable they may seem, or to weight them in favor of beneficence which may lead to paternalistic intervention.

The concept of paternalism has been analyzed more widely in political philosophy than it has in ethics. As a justification for the restriction of individual liberty by paternalistic political regimes it has been attacked by both Kant and Mill, although neither considered it explicitly in the more complex contexts where it seems justifiable by appeal to beneficence. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the term to the 1880s and gives the root meaning as:

. . . the principle and practice of paternal administration; government as by a father; the claim or attempt to supply the needs or to regulate the life of a nation or community in the same way a father does those of his children.

Beauchamp and Childress offer a shorter definition of paternalism as: "the overriding of a person's wishes or intentional actions for beneficent reasons."¹¹ The issue of truth-telling comes up in many cases involving paternalism, typically in the form of deception, lying, or non-disclosure

of information.

When is paternalism justified? Although Mill opposed paternalism he considered that it was justifiable on some occasions to intervene temporarily in a person's freely chosen actions. He argued that there are cases where a person may be unaware of the dangers involved in the course of action they have embarked upon or may be temporarily unable to understand the true nature of their situation. In his view it would be justifiable to restrain such a person temporarily in order to warn them of the risks they faced, but thereafter they should be released and allowed to make their own choice as to whether to continue on the chosen course or not.

Developing this idea some contemporary writers take the view that paternalism is justified only with the consent of the party to be restrained, whether this is express or implied. They argue that because at times we may all be tempted to engage in rash or dangerous conduct it is reasonable to regard the state as having an implied devolved authority to intervene to protect citizens against themselves. For example, by restricting the freedom of citizens to engage in duelling, the state protects them against the consequences of temporary hot-headed behavior when they feel themselves slighted. But what of the case of mentally deranged persons who are a danger to themselves and others but who do not wish to be confined? Theorists such as Rawls and Dworkin justify their confinement by a "but for" theory of consent, which holds that paternalistic intervention is justified since the person would consent but for their compromised condition. Others, such as Beauchamp and Childress, justify paternalism not through consent but solely by beneficence. They write:

Our thesis is that beneficence alone is the justification of paternalism, just as it is of parental actions that override the preferences of children. We do not interfere in the lives of our children because we believe that they will subsequently consent or would rationally approve. We interfere because we think the intervention gives them a better life, whether

they know it or not.¹²

This reference to children brings us back to the *Lotus Sūtra*, which would appear to share the justification for paternalism just offered. It is getting the children out of the house that justifies the actions of the old man, not their consent. Indeed, it seems pointless to ask for their consent for they are not competent to give it being “attached . . . to their games, . . . unaware, ignorant, unperturbed, unafraid.”¹³ In most of the parables, indeed, those who are the beneficiaries of skillful means (although in some of the more extreme cases to be mentioned below perhaps we should call them the ‘victims’) are repeatedly portrayed as incompetent to make fully autonomous choices.

Opponents of paternalism would argue that such paternalistic intervention cannot be justified because it involves a violation of individual rights and unduly restricts free choice. They argue that paternalism is unacceptable because authority resides rightfully not in the manipulator but in the individual whose life is manipulated. Antipaternalists argue in general that autonomy should be respected and that unless there are compelling reasons individuals should be free to proceed as they wish.

Much depends, of course, on the facts of each case and the competence of the individual concerned to make autonomous choices. In this connection Joel Feinberg makes a useful distinction between “strong” and “weak” paternalism.¹⁴ Weak paternalism limits the right to intervene to those cases where conduct is either “substantially nonvoluntary” (that is to say, non-autonomous), or when temporary intervention is necessary to establish whether it is fully voluntary. In other words, it requires that the individual’s mental or emotional capacities be compromised in some degree, for example by illness or serious depression. Preventing someone under the influence of LSD from attempting to fly from a high balcony would be an example of weak paternalism. In cases of this kind there is no real conflict between beneficence and autonomy since the individual in question is often temporarily non-autonomous.

Strong paternalism, on the other hand, insists that autonomy may be

overridden even when the individual is competent and has made substantially informed and voluntary choices. Strong paternalism does not invoke notions of compromised ability or the temporary loss of autonomy. Strong paternalism can be seen in cases such as forcibly administering blood transfusions to Jehovah's Witnesses or force-feeding prisoners on hunger strike.

What kind of paternalism do we see at work in the parables in the *Lotus Sūtra*? It would seem to be weak paternalism. Those who are deceived in the parables are depicted as in some respect temporarily compromised with respect to their autonomy. The children are engrossed in their toys and unaware of the very real danger of the fire; the sons of the physician are dying and in need of a cure; the travelers in the wilderness are tired and distressed, and so forth. Furthermore, the deception is a temporary one and the truth is revealed once the danger is past. The parables in the *Lotus Sūtra*, then, are all cases of weak paternalism justified by beneficence and which involve no serious threat to the principle of autonomy.

How accurately these parables reflect the underlying truth of the situation they purport to represent is, of course, quite another topic. Whether the Buddha's early followers can really be likened to deluded children or not is debatable, but it is not a question I can enter into here. When discussing parables it would be unwise to press the analysis of the content too far. If we did, we might begin to raise other questions which might lead us to view the old man in a different light. For instance, why did the old man, who is described as "of incalculable wealth, owning many fields and houses, as well as servants" let his house fall into such a chronic state of disrepair? Is he not indirectly to blame for the near tragedy by allowing his house to become a fire hazard? Was he too mean to spend his money on appropriate fire precautions or just a foolish old man who failed to maintain his property adequately? Apart from the state of the house, why did he permit such serious overcrowding in allowing up to 500 people inside at one time? Perhaps there is a wider social critique intended and the story wishes

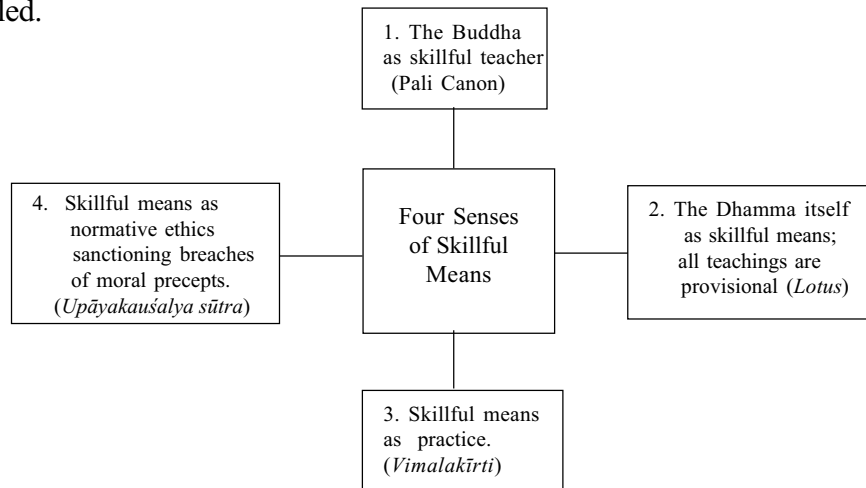
to point an accusing finger at the social workers and civil authorities for failing to address the chronic overcrowding and rehouse the family? Finally, there is no mention of the old man's wife; should we see here a covert reference to the particular problems of single parents?

Humor aside, it would clearly be a mistake to press questions of this kind too far, since at some point the parable, like an analogy, begins to break down and a too literalistic treatment will yield increasingly diminishing returns. The central concern of the *Lotus Sūtra*, after all, is not ethics but the notion of skillful means, and for the remainder of this paper I would like to discuss some of the nuances of this term and explain why I think one particular development in the idea is misguided.

I think we can distinguish four separate senses of skillful means in Buddhist sources, the first of which is seen in early Buddhism. According to the Pali Canon, after his own awakening the Buddha reflected on how difficult it would be to communicate his experience and at first inclined away from a teaching career (the story is retold in a more dramatic form in chapter two of the *Lotus Sūtra*). Once he resolved to teach, however, the Buddha excelled as a skillful teacher, elucidating his doctrines using anecdotes, parables, metaphor, imagery and symbolism, or as the texts have it teaching "in many a way and in many a figure." This, it seems, is the germ of the idea of skillful means; as Michael Pye puts it concisely "there is a problem about communicating *Dhamma* to anybody."¹⁵ Central to the notion of skillful means is the dialectic of the "relationship between the articulated form and the inexpressible goal."¹⁶ As Pye tells us, there is no evidence that the Buddha ever used the terminology of skillful means to characterize his teachings. The term 'skillful means' occurs only rarely and incidentally in the Pali Canon, only once, for example, in the whole of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, and only then in as a bare item in a list in the *Saṅgīti Suttanta*. Nevertheless, there appears to be a matrix of ideas common to both early Buddhism and the *Lotus Sūtra*. When the Buddha teaches Brahmins, for example, he borrows and adapts the concepts of Brahmanism. In the *Tevijjasutta* he is asked by two young Brahmins how to

achieve union with Brahma. He criticizes those who speculate about Brahma without having seen him face to face, and then teaches the practice of the *Brahma Vihāras*. Similarly, when asked by Soṇadaṇḍa how to worship the six directions the Buddha gives this ancient Brahmanic ritual a new ethical spin by relating it to social obligations and family life. What we are seeing here is the practice of skillful means before anyone had invented a special name for it. As Pye puts it: “Although the term *upāya* is anachronistic here, strictly speaking, the way of thought which it represents surely is not.”¹⁷

The second phase in the development of the concept is found in the *Lotus Sūtra*, which crystallizes and makes explicit the notion of skillful means understood as a methodology for the transmission of the Dharma. The underlying question the text addresses is how to express the inexpressible, or how to communicate a profound experience — namely enlightenment — in a soteriologically effective way. There are no radically new doctrines in the *Lotus Sūtra*, and its significance lies instead in its bold claim that all teachings are provisional and ultimately to be dismantled.



The *Lotus Sūtra* also constitutes a pivotal phase in the further devel-

opment of the concept of skillful means leading to its ethicization in the third but particularly the fourth and final phase. I should make clear that what I am referring to here are not historical developments but logical or conceptual ones, which might have occurred in a range of literary sources in no clear chronological order. What I think we see in certain of the metaphors in the *Lotus Sūtra* is an ambiguity and perhaps the beginning of a slide from skillful means as a teaching device to skillful means as a principle of ethics for bodhisattvas. In the *Lotus Sūtra*, skillful means is a teaching about the nature of the Teaching. However, in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* —which will serve as an example of the third aspect of the concept — skillful means is also about practice, as something done by bodhisattvas in the course of their daily lives. It governs a bodhisattva's mode of relating to other people, and as such begins to lead them into ethically grey areas. Vimalakīrti, for example, dissembles and pretends to be ill. He visits brothels, drinking houses, gambling dens, and converses with harem girls. Although in his capacity as a layman, Vimalakīrti breaks no precepts, his conduct could be described from the perspective of early Buddhism as sailing close to the wind.

In the fourth phase the line skirted by Vimalakīrti is crossed, and we move out of a grey area into one which in terms of traditional moral norms is unambiguously wrong. Here we find bodhisattvas intentionally breaking the precepts, not just the lesser and minor ones but several of the most serious ones. Examples of things which, according to certain texts, bodhisattvas are allowed to do include killing, stealing, having sexual intercourse, and lying. In these contexts skillful means functions as a kind of trump card which overrides the requirements of ordinary morality and supposedly allows the bodhisattva to transgress with impunity. The *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, for example, explicitly permits breaches of the first four precepts in certain circumstances in the course of the exercise of skillful means by a bodhisattva, and clearly wishes to develop skillful means into a principle of normative ethics.¹⁸ An even earlier text, the *Upāyakaśālya sūtra*,¹⁹ recounts an

episode when the Buddha as the captain of a ship in a previous life killed a bandit in order to save the lives of 500 merchants.²⁰ Special categories of permitted offenses find their way into a number of *Mahāyāna* sources. The most recent I have come across is in the sixteenth century Nyingma treatise on moral conduct entitled *Ascertaining the Three Vows*, published recently by Wisdom.²¹ Although for the most part a standard text on vinaya and bodhisattva virtues, this work digresses at one point to claim that the ten evil paths of action (*daśākuśala-karmapatha*) may be performed by one of pure intention who seeks to benefit sentient beings.

Rarely is an attempt made to offer a serious defense for claims of this kind, and as an ethical theory I think it faces serious problems. Notions of this kind have surfaced from time to time in the Christian tradition but have always been rejected by the mainstream in favor of the view of St. Paul that “evil must not be done that good may come of it” (Romans 3:8). I do not intend to offer a critique of this inchoate Buddhist ethical theory here but to link up this fourth aspect of the concept of skillful means with my earlier discussion of paternalism in the *Lotus Sūtra*. To do this, let me quote what the Tibetan text just cited says about the third precept:

It is permitted to commit adultery if a woman or man is suffering tremendously from desire and claiming they will surely die if they do not have such sexual contact. In order to temporarily alleviate their suffering and ultimately lead them to the path of virtue, adultery is permitted as an act of compassion.²²

The scenario envisaged here verges on the farcical. A bodhisattva confronted with such a request might do better to remind the other party that no one ever died from not having sex, and recommend a cold shower as the most appropriate remedy for the complaint in question. Instead, this precept seems to want to turn bodhisattvas into “hookers for Buddha,” with all the deception and manipulation that entails. At

this point beneficence has run riot and autonomy is paid scant heed. Rather than respecting the autonomy of the other party, a bodhisattva is encouraged to manipulate his or her new friend sexually and emotionally on the grounds that “a bodhisattva always knows best.” There are alternative and probably more constructive ways to deal with the situation described, such as encouraging the person afflicted by desire to sublimate the sexual energy into constructive channels or to use this as an opportunity to practice self-control. If the parties are married it might be a good opportunity for marriage counseling. Rather than explore these options, however, the bodhisattva is encouraged to resort to a devious manipulation which is paternalistic in that it discourages individuals from taking responsibility for themselves and denies them the opportunity to grow up by making their own mistakes and learning from them.

The logical outcome of the evolution of skillful means in this direction is to turn Buddhism into a religion of reincarnating nannies constantly looking for new noses to wipe. To employ a medical analogy once again, bodhisattvas are being encouraged to treat the symptoms rather than the cause of the disease. The causes of suffering are craving and ignorance, but it seems that bodhisattvas are being encouraged in these texts to act as if all that mattered was the alleviation of the symptoms. Suffering, however, is not always pointless, and can often lead to personal growth and spiritual maturity. For these texts, however, pain is the ultimate evil, and accordingly the role of the bodhisattvas is to be a social worker who infantilizes his or her clients, running hither and thither with Kleenex and Band-Aids to soothe every ache, pain and tantrum.

To sum up, I have identified four aspects of skillful means in Buddhist sources. The first refers to the Buddha’s personal skill as a teacher and involves no dissembling or deception of any kind. The second aspect is the one we see in the parables in the *Lotus Sūtra*, such as that of the Burning House. The text is concerned mainly with the nature and status of the Dharma as a vehicle for communicating the truth, and only addresses ethical questions obliquely, as when it asks and answers in the negative

the question whether the Buddha told a lie in chapter two. We see there the germ of the idea of how skillful means could be stretched beyond a concern about teaching the Dharma to a practice engaged in by bodhisattvas. The parables in the *Lotus Sūtra* embody a form of paternalism which may be described as ‘weak’ insofar as the balance between beneficence and autonomy has not tipped too far in favor of the former. The third aspect of skillful means is seen in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* where it becomes an aspect of a bodhisattva’s conduct, in other words something a bodhisattva does. The fourth and final development is seen in those sources which explicitly authorize the breaking of precepts by bodhisattvas. At this point the concept has become misshapen by being stretched far beyond its original context. Happily, this final development in the evolution of skillful means does not appear to have attained wide acceptance in the *Mahāyāna*.²³

Notes

¹ Pye, Michael. *Skillful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism*. London: Duckworth, 1978: p.37.

² *ibid*: p. 37 f.

³ *ibid*: p. 57.

⁴ D. iii. 217.

⁵ Vin. iii. 3.

⁶ DA. i. 914.

⁷ D. iii. 235; d. iii. 133.

⁸ In the Hippocratic work *Epidemics*, it is expressed in the form “As to disease make a habit of two things—to help, or at least to do no harm.” Quoted in Beauchamp, Tom L. and James F. Childress. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, Third ed. Oxford: University Press, 1989: p. 209.

⁹ *ibid*: p. 212 f.

¹⁰ *ibid*: p. 210.

¹¹ *ibid*: p. 214.

¹² *ibid*: p. 216 f.

¹³ Hurvitz, Leon. *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sutra)*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976: p. 58.

¹⁴ Feinberg, Joel. "Legal Paternalism." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 1 (1971): 105-124.

¹⁵ Pye, *Skillful Means*: 123.

¹⁶ *ibid*: 124.

¹⁷ *ibid*: 128.

¹⁸ See the discussion of this text in chapter five: Keown, Damien. *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*.

¹⁹ Katz states, "Its composition may date from the first century B.C. *The Skill in Means (Upāyakaśālya) Sūtra*. Trans. Mark Tatz. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994: p. 1 (1994:1).

²⁰ The story is narrated in Tatz (1994:73ff).

²¹ Panchen, Ngari and Wangyi Gyalpo. *Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1996.

²² *ibid*: p. 96.

²³ Tatz disagrees, suggesting "The higher ethic wrought by skill in means affects the whole of the Bodhisattva path" (1994:16). A lot depends, of course, on what one understands by a "bodhisattva." Is it any follower of the *Mahāyāna*, or a highly evolved enlightened being? Since the *Upāyakaśālya sūtra* ends by expressly forbidding its novel interpretation of *upāya* to be communicated even to independent Buddhas (Tatz 1994:87), it would seem to be reserved for those closer to the end of the path than the beginning.