

Bodhisattva of Compassion: The Mystical Tradition of Kuan Yin (Shambhala Dragon Editions)

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This portrait of the Buddhist embodiment of compassion is both an informative study by a leading scholar of Buddhism and an engaging account of the author's search for the mystical significance of the goddess. An object of joyous devotion in Chinese folk religion, Kuan Yin is revered for her saving power: it is said that anyone in distress who calls on her with sincerity will be rescued from suffering and harm. On a deeper level, Kuan Yin symbolizes the liberating energy of compassion, which is an indispensable aid in the quest for enlightenment.

John Blofeld evokes the charming presence of Kuan Yin through colorful anecdotes, personal experiences, and descriptions of Buddhist rituals and legends encountered during his travels throughout China. At the same time, he offers a learned account of the goddess's history and importance in Chinese thought and religion. He explores the origin of the Bodhisattva of Compassion in India and Tibet, in the form of Avalokiteshvara (Tibetan: Chenresig), a male deity who evolved into the gentle mother/maiden figure of Chinese Buddhism. Meditation and visualization techniques associated with Kuan Yin are given, and her principal iconographic forms are described. Illustrated with images from Chinese and Tibetan sacred art, the book also contains translations of devotional poems and yogic texts. *Bodhisattva of Compassion* is undoubtedly the most complete and illuminating picture of Kuan Yin available.

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