



# The Concept of *Bodhicitta* in *Mahāyāna Sūtras*

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## Abstract

This paper is a contribution to the study of the interpretation of the concept of *Bodhicitta*. This concept is a technical term of frequent occurrence in Buddhist Sanskrit literature. Within the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, *Bodhicitta* is closely related to the spiritual practices of the Buddhist aspirant to enlightenment. The form of this study is as follows: first, the meaning of *citta* in Therevada and Mahayana sutras, and the actual meaning of *Bodhicitta*. Secondly, the meaning of *Bodhicitta* depicted in *Mahāyāna Sūtras*. Lastly, the Metaphors and Similes on *Bodhicitta* in the *Mahāyāna Sūtras*, and the types of *Bodhicitta*. Such studies and practice could bring one to the realization that what is described by it is indeed the only possible reality. This means that *Bodhicitta* is the means to as well as the description of the goal to attain.

**Keywords:** Bodhicitta, Concept, Mahayana Sutras.

## Introduction

*Bodhicitta* is a common technical term in Buddhist Sanskrit literature. In the *Mahāyāna* tradition, *bodhicitta* is closely related to the spiritual practice of the Buddhist aspirant to enlightenment. *Bodhicitta* is Sanskrit compound of the words *bodhi* and *citta*. Therefore, before studying the meaning of *bodhicitta*, we should know the meaning of *bodhi*, *citta* and the meaning of *bodhi* in *Mahāyāna* sūtras.

## The Concept of *Citta* in *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna Sūtras*

*Citta* is a Sanskrit word. This term has a long history dating back to the Vedic literature. It is also extensively employed in the *Upaniṣads* and in Buddhist canonical literature. *Citta* has consequently acquired various technical meanings in the course of the development of Indian philosophy and psychology. Some most basic and common meanings of *citta* are: mind, thought, attention, desire, intention or aim, etc... similar to the English word mind, as in the expression ‘to keep in mind’ or ‘she changed her mind.’ (Francis Brassard, 2000:7)

*Citta* is also a very important term in all schools of Buddhism. According to Encyclopedia of Buddhism, (G. P. Malalasekera, 1999: 169) *Citta* is a general term in Buddhist psychology, ethics, epistemology and metaphysics denoting the active element in mind, mentation and the conscious element in ultimate reality. The term that is common to all schools of Buddhism is attested in a wide variety of meanings varying according to textual context and philosophic tradition. It occurs in all strata of Buddhist literature ranging from the earliest authenticated *Pāli* texts down to the latest Tantric works on Buddhist mysticism and the complexity of its usage has sometimes defied all attempts of modern scholarship at determining the specificity of its signification. Scholars, both medieval and modern, have rendered it variously to mean mind, thought, heart, conception, consciousness, mood, emotion, spirit, idea and attitude. Judged by its general usage in the *Pāli Nikāyas*, *Citta* appears basically to refer to the central focus of man’s emotional nature as well as to the seat and organ of thought in its active, dynamic aspect. *Citta* plays a more central and crucial role in Buddhism than in any other Indian system of philosophic thought and religious practice.

In the *Therāvāda sūtras*, the *Pāli Nikāyas*, the term *citta* is defined: *Citta* is the most general sense as the invisible and incorporeal energizer of the body and as the activator of the personality of man is everywhere assumed by the Buddha: hence nowhere defined by

him in his discourses as embodied in the *sūtras* of *Pāli Nikāyas*. The term *citta*, however, has been, by him, equated to two other cognate terms, namely, *mano* and *viññāṇa*: *Yañ ca kho etaṃ bhikkhave vuccati cittaṃ iti pi mano iti pi viññāṇam iti. Evaṃ pi te mano, ittham pi te mano, iti pi te cittaṃ.* (*Dīgha Nikāya*, III, 1890-1911:103)

The two first verses of the *Dharmapada Sūtra* said that *citta* precedes all mental states, *citta* is their chief. So, it decides all actions (pure or impure actions of human beings: 1. Mind precedes all mental states. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with an impure mind a person speaks or acts, suffering follows him like wheel that follows the foot of the ox. (*Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā; manasā ce padutthena bhāsati vā karoti va, tato naṃ dukkhamanveti cakkam' va vahato padaṃ.*). 2. Mind precedes all mental states. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with a pure mind a person speaks or acts, happiness follows him like his never departing shadow. (*Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā; manasā ce pasannena bhāsati vā karoti vā, tato naṃ sukhamanveti chāyā' va anapayinī*). (Ven. S.A. Buddhārakkhita, 2004: 2-3).

In *Mahāyāna sūtra*, the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature, which constitutes the immediate literatures source of the *Mahāyāna*, contains an exposition of *citta* which informs and inspires the subsequent teachings of both the *Mādhyamikas* and the *Yogācārins*. In this extensive exposition which is embodied in a number of *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras* the emphasis is placed on the reality of the transcendental nature of *citta*, the empirical *citta* as the means, content and receptacle of conceptual knowledge is rejected as being devoid of any reality. The practice of the perfection of wisdom is said to be not born of *citta*. The obsession is born of the perversion of *citta*. Hence the categorical declaration is made that the perfection of wisdom is completely devoid of *citta*.

The *Mādhyamikas* base their own exposition of *citta* on the above statement in the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*. *Citta* is the first etymologically defined as that which is said to accumulate what which is said to accumulate what is claimed as wholesome and unwholesome and what which regulates the conferment of results and it is recognized that *cetas*, *manas* and *viññāṇa* are the synonyms of *citta*.

## **The Concept of *Bodhi* in *Mahāyāna Sūtras***

One of the great French Buddhologists, Louis de Lavalée Poussin, has said: “*The entire career of a Bodhisattva is to think of Bodhi.*” (L.S. Kawamura, 1997: 95)

In the Buddhist texts, the term *bodhi* usually means the state of being Buddha, or the quality in virtue of which one is Buddha. In general, this term means: perception,

comprehension, knowledge or wisdom. To modern translations, it means either enlightenment or awakening. (Francis Brassard, 2007: 7)

According to Encyclopedia Buddhism: (G. P. Malalasekera, 1999: 178) *Bodhi*: is derived from the root *Budh* (to be awake) meaning knowledge (*jñāna*), enlightenment, and therefore, the knowledge possessed by the Enlightened One, the Buddha. Generally, *bodhi* is said to consist of seven *Constituents of Enlightenment* and it is considered as being attainable through the accomplishment of the principles conducive to the maturing of enlightenment. Besides, in this specific meaning of enlightenment of *Pacceka-Buddha*, sometimes, the term *Sambodhi* is used to denote the enlightenment of the Buddha, *Pacceka-Buddhas* and all *Arahants*. There are also the terms *abhisambodhi* and *sammā-sambodhi* which are exclusively used to connote the enlightenment of the *Buddhas*, sometimes as distinguished from the enlightenment of the *PaccekaBuddhas* and *Arahants*.

The attainment of enlightenment is a personal experience, and therefore, the exact nature and the content of enlightenment cannot be known except by him to whom it has come. The early textual references show the progress of *Shākyamuni* Buddha from leaving the household life and attaining the enlightenment at Bodhgaya is called Bodhi attaining; and the tree, under which, He sat for meditation and attained enlightenment is called Bodhi tree. If there was not this enlightenment there would be no *Buddhas*, no Buddhism, no *Śrāvakas*, no *PratyekaBuddhas*, no *Arhats*, no *Bodhisattvas*. Enlightenment is the basic of all Buddhist philosophy as well as all Buddhist activity- moral and spiritual.

The term *bodhi* is mentioned in the whole of Buddhism, especially in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. In *Mahāyāna sūtras*, the goal of the spiritual practice of its aspirant is *bodhi* or enlightenment. All of these expressions refer to the final experience of the Path of the Bodhisattva. In the *Pāli* Canon, however, there seems to be a distinction between these expressions. Indeed, *bodhi* is used to express the lofty knowledge of an ascetic and the stage of enlightenment by their own means, whereas the final experience of the Buddha is identified as *sammāsaṃbodhi*. The relevance of this observation is that, for the early beginning of the Buddhist tradition, one began to make distinction as to the nature and content of this final goal. The *Mahāyāna* Buddhists were not exempted from this trend and indeed argued that of the non *Mahāyānists*. (Francis Brassard, 2000: 7)

In *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, the desire to help all beings is the reason for which one seeks enlightenment. On the basis of this implication, a distinction was made between the aspirants who were engaged on the *Mahāyāna* path to enlightenment and those who were not. Indeed, according to Atiśa (982-1054) in his *Bodhipathapradīpa*, being can be classified in terms of their aspirations into three types: the lesser, the average, and the superior. To

the lesser type belong those who have no religious aspiration. The average seeks and acts to bring about their own pacification, that is, to attain enlightenment as an *Arhat*. Those of the highest, superior type are Bodhisattvas as they seek to bring a complete end to all sufferings of others. (Francis Brassard, 2000: 31)

The concept of *bodhi* is described in the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā*, one of the famous texts of *Mahāyāna sūtras*: “By enlightenment (*bodhi*) is meant emptiness, suchness, reality-limit, spiritual realm, and essence. These are, however, names, words, provisional connotations. Enlightenment itself is the highest truth and ultimate reality; it is not subject to change; it is indestructible, beyond discrimination; it is the true, pure, and all-pervading knowledge possessed by all the Buddhas; it is the most fundamental perfection whereby the Buddhas gain an insight into the nature of all realities, of all forms; it is beyond every mode of expression, beyond all thought-constructions created by the mind.” (Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, 2004: 250)

## The Meaning of *Bodhicitta*

In general, *Bodhicitta* is a Sanskrit compound composed of the words *bodhi* and *citta*. The feminine verbal noun *Bodhi* usually means, in the Buddhist context, the state of being Buddha, or the quality in virtue of which one is Buddha. In general, this term means perception, comprehension, knowledge, wisdom, enlightenment, and awakening. *Citta* means mind, thought, attention, etc. Consequently, *bodhicitta* means ‘thought of enlightenment,’ ‘mind of enlightenment,’ ‘will of enlightenment,’ ‘mind turned to enlightenment,’ ‘awakening mind,’ or ‘desire for awakening.’ ...

In Encyclopedia of Buddhism, the term of *bodhicitta* is explained: (R.E. Buswell, 2004: 54). In its most common denotation the term *bodhicitta* refers to the resolution to attain *bodhi* (awakening) in order to liberate all living beings, which defines and motivates the Bodhisattva’s vow. However, even this simple definition entails several layers of meaning and practice. The resolution to attain awakening can be seen as a state of mind or a mental process, but it is also the solemn promise (the vow as verbal act) embodied or expressed in particular ritual utterances, acts, and gestures (recitation of the vows, dedication of merit, etc.) *Bodhicitta* is also the motivating thought and sentiment behind the spiritual practice or career (*caryā*) of the Bodhisattva; as such; it is the defining moment and the moving force behind the course of action that follows and enacts the initial resolution (the first appearance of the thought, known as *Bodhicittopāda*).

*Bodhicitta* or ‘thought of enlightenment’ is an important concept common to *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Tāntric* Buddhism. Though not directly mentioned, the idea is explicit in Theravāda Buddhism. It was in *Mahāyāna*, however, that the *bodhicitta* concept developed along both ethical and metaphysical lines and this development is found in *Tantricism*, too, wherein it also came to be regarded as a state of great bliss (*mahāsukha*). In *Mahāyāna* it developed along pantheistic lines, for, it was held that *bodhicitta* is latent in all beings and that it is merely a manifestation of the *Dharmakāya* (body of law) or *Bhūtatathatā* (suchness of existence, i.e., the Universal Spirit) in the human heart. (G. P. Malalasekera, 1999: 180)

In the work: *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism*, Acharya defines: *Bodhicitta* is the attitude that is based on the great compassion wishing to remove the suffering of all others, and the recognition that, to be of greatest benefit to both oneself and others, it is ideal to attain enlightenment. The *Mahāyānist* engages in all practices with the motivation. For example, practicing generosity, a *Mahāyānist* will be motivated by the thought, ‘Due to this practice of generosity, may I quickly attain enlightenment to benefit all living beings.’ The *Mahāyānist* approach to the small and medium scope practices that are in common with the *Hīnayāna* is also to generate *bodhicitta* with the thought, ‘Due to this practice of the small and medium scopes, may I quickly attain enlightenment to benefit all living beings.’ (Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodan, 1993: 491)

*Bodhicitta* is the foundation of all the precious teachings of the Buddha; its profound meaning is depicted in all Buddhist *sūtras*, especially in *Mahāyāna sūtras*. This is what I would like to consider next.

## Meaning of *Bodhicitta* as Depicted in *Mahāyāna Sūtras*

*Bodhicitta* is the essence of all the precious teachings of Lord Buddha. Lord Buddha emphasized the essential importance of *bodhicitta* in all *sūtras* and he spoke many times about *bodhicitta*, as a means of transformation. Negativity can be transformed by *bodhicitta*, suffering can be transformed by *bodhicitta*, and ignorance and all the five poisons (*Attachment (desire)*, *hatred (anger)*, *delusion (stupid)*, *greed (pride)* and *envy*) can be transformed by *bodhicitta*. It is vital to learn and develop *bodhicitta* in order to achieve liberation. Majority of *Mahāyāna sūtras* contains the concept of *bodhicitta* through the thought of awakening or enlightenment; especially are the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*, *Prajñāpāramitā sūtra*, and etc.

*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* is translated in English as The *Sūtra* of the Lotus of Wonderful Law and it is usually shortly called: *The Lotus Sūtra*.

This *Sūtra* is one of the most important and influential *sūtras* of all the *sūtras* or sacred scriptures of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, revered by almost all branches of the *Mahāyāna* teachings, and over many centuries the object of intense veneration among Buddhist believers throughout China, Korea, Japan, Viet Nam and other regions of Eastern Asia.

The Lotus *Sūtra* that consists of 28 chapters and is divided in 7 volumes. Each chapter mentions different aspects relating to the profound philosophy of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. In this *sūtra*, the concept of *bodhicitta* has been mentioned in all chapters, especially in the three chapters: namely, Expedient means, Simile and parable, and *Devadatta*.

*Prajñāpāramitā sūtra* is one of the most important groups of sutras belonging to *Mahāyāna* literature; it is also one of the oldest Buddhist canonical books translated into Chinese. This *sūtra* is the most primitive and fundamental of all those dealing with the idea of Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*) which developed out of the causation theory in Primitive Buddhism. There were a large number of versions of *Prajñāpāramitā*, such as the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā*, the *Aṅgasaahasrika-prajñāpāramitā*, and the large and smaller *Prajñāpāramitāhridaya*.

In dictionary of Buddhism, Edward Conze has summed up the thousands of lines of *Prajñāpāramitā* in the following two sentences:

One should become a Bodhisattva (or Buddha-to-be), i.e. one who is content with nothing less than all-knowledge attained through the perfection of insight for the sake of all beings.

There is no such thing as a Bodhisattva or as all knowledge or as the Perfection of Insight or as an attainment. (D. Keown, 2003: 219)

To accept both these contradictory facts is to be perfect. Other interesting developments in the Perfection of Insight literature are the concept of skillful means (*upāyakauśalya*) and the practice of dedicating one's religious merit (*puṇya*) to others so that they may gain enlightenment (*bodhi*).

Through these summaries, we can say that the *Prajñāpāramitā* is also presented meaning of *bodhicitta*, the mind of enlightenment and the sake of all beings.

## Types of *Bodhicitta*

In the most of Buddhist works, *bodhicitta* is divided into two types: the mere aspiration (*Bodhipraṇidhicitta*) and the actual progress towards enlightenment (*bodhiprasthānacitta*).

### The Mere Aspiration (*Bodhipraṇidhicitta*)

In the work, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Ven. Śāntideva said: In brief, the *bodhicitta* should be understood to be of two types: the mind which is solicitous ‘praṇidhi’ of *bodhi* and the mind which ventures ‘*prasthāna*’ after *bodhi*. And what is the mere aspiration, Śāntideva explained: “Just as there is palpable difference between one who desire to go (to a place) and one who is on the road (to a place), so also is the difference between the ‘*praṇidhicitta*’ and the ‘*prasthānacitta*’ respectively.” (Parmananda Sharma, 1990: 15)

Throughout Buddhist literature, it is usual to compare *praṇidhicitta* with a man’s desire and will to undertake a journey; on the other hand, *prasthānacitta* is similar to the attitude of a man, who has already set out on his travel. It is clear then, that in *praṇidhicitta* there is a strong element of desire and will. At this moment, the Bodhisattva aspires for enlightenment, but he has not yet taken the essential step toward enlightenment; he is still only wishing to do so.

*Tsongkhapa* (1357-1419), the founder of the youngest Tibetan school (*the Dge-lugs-pa*) has also expressed this view in his famous work, commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*: (L.S. Kawamura, 1997: 97) Though the very nature of both, the Aspiring Attitude (*praṇidhi*) as well as the Realizing Attitude (*prasthāna*), is to think, ‘May I become a Buddha for the benefit of all other Beings,’ there does exist an inward difference between these two attitudes; either they had undergone the action for realizing enlightenment or not. This is the same as for instance (a person) who engenders the wish for going to a country and (a person) who has already set forth on the way (to that country). Thus, the aspiration is only the first step of *bodhicitta*.

Both stages are characterized by a sincere wish for enlightenment; however, the first stage (*praṇidhicitta*) is confined to a wishful aspiration by one’s mind. Hence, sometimes *bodhicitta* is seen as the wish for enlightenment and is also translated in this sense and this correctly so when the whole context refers to *praṇidhi*. The second stage (*prasthānacitta*) is characterized by the same mental attitude as *praṇidhicitta*, but it goes a step further than the former in that it starts to realize this aspiration for enlightenment. Thus, the second stage is marked by a more active doing and putting into reality what was hoped for in the first stage.



In the beginning of work *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* (*Commentary on Bodhicitta*), Nāgārjuna prays that: *Just as the Bhagavāns Buddhas and all the great Bodhisattvas produced the thought of enlightenment, in the same way, from now on until (I realize) the heart of bodhi, I shall also produce the thought of enlightenment in order to free those who are unsaved, to relieve those who are not relieved, and to lead beyond suffering those who are still prisoners of it.* (H.H, the Dalai Lama, 2007: 19).

### **The Actual Progress towards Enlightenment (*Bodhiprasthānacitta*).**

The *Mahāyāna* tradition advocates the idea of a twofold division of *bodhicitta*. According to the *Bhāvanākrama* of Kamalaśāla, the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of Śāntideva, there are two types of *bodhicitta*. The first type is called *Bodhipraṇidhicitta* and can be translated as ‘the resolution to attain *bodhi*’ and the second, *Bodhiprasthānacitta*, as ‘progression towards the attainment of *bodhi*’. From the point of view of an understanding of *bodhicitta* as commitment, this twofold division has been interpreted in the following manner: the Bodhisattva must first resolve to become awakened then implement his resolve. Throughout Buddhist literature, it is usual to compare *praṇidhicitta* with a man’s desire and will to undertake a journey; on the other hand, *prasthānacitta* is similar to the attitude of a man, who has already set out on his travel. It is clear then, that in *praṇidhicitta* there is a strong element of desire and will. At this moment, the Bodhisattva aspires for enlightenment, but he has not yet taken the essential step toward enlightenment.

Therefore, Ven. Śāntideva has explained: (Parmananda Sharma, 1990: 84-87). The son of a conqueror, holding on to the *bodhicitta* firmly, should always make an effort without any laziness, not to transgress the teachings. That which is stated on an impulse or without due deliberation should never be acted upon even if (it has been) promised on oath. A course of action which has been well-pondered over by the Buddha’s and their supremely wise sons, or even by myself to the best of my capacity; why any procrastination in (pursuing) that (course?). What will be my fate if, having taken such a vow, I do not practice it in action but, instead, deceives everybody? It has been said even in respect of a small thing that if a person does not give it away having vowed to do so, he becomes a ‘*preta*’ or a hungry ghost. What shall be my fate if, by deceiving everybody, I do not fulfill my vow of affording unsurpassed bliss to beings after having spoken it in thought?

According to Tantric Buddhism also *bodhicitta* is divided into two forms, namely, the relative (*saṃvṛti*) and absolute (*vivṛti*). Relative *bodhicitta* is compassion characterized

by the aspiration to liberate all sentient beings from suffering. Ven. Patruth Rinpoche explained: Relative *bodhicitta* has two aspects: intention and application.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso has also divided *bodhicitta* into two kinds: (Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, 2002: 12) conventional *bodhicitta* and ultimate *bodhicitta*. Usually the term ‘*bodhicitta*’, or ‘mind of enlightenment’, refers to conventional *bodhicitta*. Conventional *bodhicitta* is defined as a primary mind, motivated by great compassion that spontaneously seeks enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings. It is a method for ripening our Buddha seed and is a collection of merit, the main cause of accomplishing the Form Body of a Buddha. Ultimate *bodhicitta* is defined as wisdom, motivated by conventional *bodhicitta* that directly realizes emptiness, the ultimate nature of phenomena. It functions to remove the two obstructions – the obstructions to liberation of wisdom, the main cause of accomplishing the Truth Body of a Buddha. If we practice these two *bodhicittas*, we shall be travelling on the main path that leads to the state of full enlightenment.

In the work, Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism, Geshe Acharya (Tibetan monk) presents three minds for generating *bodhicitta* and four levels of *bodhicitta* (G.A. Thubten Loden, 1993: 149-150). What are the three minds for generating *bodhicitta*? Geshe Acharya explains: There are three different approaches to developing *bodhicitta*. They are different ways of thinking about the attainment of enlightenment and the welfare of living beings. 1. The shepherd-like *bodhicitta* is generating the intention of guiding all living beings to liberation and then following oneself. The person who generates *bodhicitta* this way is like a shepherd who carefully guides his flock before him, attending to their needs first, and following behind himself. 2. The pilot-like *bodhicitta* is generating the intention to take oneself and others to enlightenment together. The person who generates *bodhicitta* in the manner is like a pilot because, as a pilot proceeds, he simultaneously leads all his passengers to their destination. 3. The king-like *bodhicitta* is generating the intention to first attain enlightenment oneself in order to then be able to liberate all other living beings. The person who generates *bodhicitta* in this manner is like a good king who uses his position of power to care for all his subjects.

And, what are the four levels of *bodhicitta*? Geshe Acharya explains: (G.A. Thubten Loden, 1993: 152). *Bodhicitta* can be considered to be of four types depending on which level of the five *Mahāyāna* paths the practitioners has attained:

1. The person who is on either the path of accumulation or the path of preparation is motivated by *bodhicitta* but has not yet developed the direct realization of the true nature of phenomena. Because he is inspired to attain the realization of the true nature of phenomena, his *bodhicitta* is called the *bodhicitta* of inspiration.
2. At the level of the path

of insight a Bodhisattva gains the direct perception of the emptiness of inherent existence of all phenomena. He becomes a superior Bodhisattva and begins to progress through the stages of the Bodhisattva grounds on the path of meditation. His mind is greatly subdued by the realization of the true nature of phenomena and, empowered by great love and compassion, his *bodhicitta* motivates him to love and compassion, his *bodhicitta* motivates him to remove the obstructions to liberation as he progresses from the first to the seventh ground. His *bodhicitta* is called the *bodhicitta* of pure superior intention. 3. As the superior Bodhisattva of the eighth, ninth and tenth grounds progressively removes the obstructions to omniscience, his mind becomes ripe for the realization of Buddhahood. His *bodhicitta*, which is the direct cause of enlightenment, is called fully ripened *bodhicitta*. 4. After tenth ground the Superior Bodhisattva newly attains the four bodies and becomes a Buddha. A Buddha's *bodhicitta* is called the *bodhicitta* with abandonment of obstructions, as a Buddha has completely purified both the obstructions to liberation and the obstructions to omniscience.

Sometimes, *bodhicitta* is also divided into twenty-two types and it is called 'the twenty-two fold division': (Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, 1996: 423-42) *Bodhicitta* can be divided into twenty-two types from the point of the basis for developing *bodhicitta*. The first of the twenty-two types is called earth-like *bodhicitta*. This is another name for aspiring *bodhicitta*. Just as trees, houses, and huge cities depend upon the earth, so all the other levels of *bodhicitta* depend upon aspiring *bodhicitta*, which is the necessary foundation for taking the Bodhisattva vows. When Bodhisattvas develop engaging *bodhicitta* they attain the second of twenty-two types, called gold-like *bodhicitta*. This is so called because like gold it will never degenerate. From this level a Bodhisattva's *bodhicitta* improves until it becomes the cloud-like *bodhicitta* of a Bodhisattva on the tenth ground. Just as from clouds rain falls to nourish the earth, so from the cloud-like *bodhicitta* of a Bodhisattva on the tenth ground the rain of Dharma falls to nourish living beings.

## Conclusion

Given the soteriological context suggested in the present paper, what would be an appropriate translation for *bodhicitta*? The researcher would say that *bodhicitta* means a mind fully pervaded a mind can only be fully pervaded of a thought (which functions like the name of a category) whose content is the desire for enlightenment for the sake of all beings in a shorter form, the thought of the desire for enlightenment. How then *bodhicitta* to be cultivate? Cultivation of *bodhicitta* mean cultivation of the idea or awareness that one's

true nature is to search for enlightenment for the sake of all beings. The spiritual path that one has to follow is therefore simply to develop an awareness of this fact, because it redefines the true nature of all one's actions, the bad ones as well as the good ones, brings about a feeling of detachment. From this feeling of detachment, a sense of peace of mind begins to establish itself on account of, among other things, being relieved from the responsibility of being involved in the course of one's actions and that result in the full realization of the idea that one's actions are always performed for the sake of all sentient beings.

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