
Ornament for Clear Realisation

ལྷན་ བསྟན་བཅོས་མངོན་པར་རྟོགས་པའི་རྒྱན།

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1 October 2021

I.1. Mind generation

I.1.3. THE DIVISIONS OF BODHICITTA OR MIND GENERATION

We will continue from where we left last time which is mind generation or bodhicitta. Within the outline of the presentation of bodhicitta, there are five main headings, and we are discussing the third, which is The Divisions of Bodhicitta or Mind Generation. Within this heading there are five subheadings, and we are up to the fifth.

I.1.3.5. Division by way of entity

There are two types of bodhicitta under this sub-heading:

1. wishing bodhicitta
2. engaging bodhicitta

Last week we discussed the difference between wishing and engaging bodhicitta. Bodhicitta that is explicitly conjoined with the engaging practices, or deeds of the six perfections, is **engaging bodhicitta**. Bodhicitta that is not explicitly conjoined with the deeds of the six perfections is **wishing bodhicitta**. So, the key difference is whether the bodhicitta is explicitly conjoined with the engaging practices.

In the last session, we discussed the implication of the word 'conjoined'. What does 'bodhicitta conjoined with the engaging practices' mean? We noted that conjoined here has the same meaning as it has in the definition of a knower of bases, and so on. When we say 'conjoined with engaging practices', the practices referred to are any of the six paramitas or perfections.

We also find the word 'explicitly' used in this description of the two bodhicittas. This word implies that both the mind generation and the deeds or paramitas must manifestly or simultaneously co-exist.

To get a clearer picture, think about bodhisattvas in the post-meditation period, the period following meditative equipoise. Bodhisattvas engaging in any of the deeds of the six perfections during that period would, at the same time, have bodhicitta generated or manifested in their mind. This is what we mean when we refer to bodhicitta that is explicitly conjoined with the deeds of the perfections – it means that the bodhicitta and the perfection deeds are both manifested at the same time; they are both directly activated or actualised.

If we then think about a bodhisattva in meditative equipoise with the direct realisation of emptiness, they will have a manifested realisation of emptiness at that time, so we can say that this realisation of emptiness is explicit. However, bodhicitta is not manifested or explicit within the bodhisattva's continuum at that time. Therefore, the bodhicitta of arya bodhisattvas in

meditative equipoise with the direct realisation of emptiness is only wishing bodhicitta.

Boundaries

As to the boundaries of wishing and engaging bodhicitta, wishing bodhicitta exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation through to the last continuum of a bodhisattva or sentient being.

Engaging bodhicitta exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation through to buddhahood. The bodhicitta within the continuum of the last continuum of a bodhisattva or a sentient being is an engaging bodhicitta.

This is because the 'explicitly conjoined with', in the definition of engaging bodhicitta, means the simultaneous existence of manifested bodhicitta and a deed of perfection within the continuum of a being. So the question arises – can that sentient being have numerous mental continuums?

There's a lot to discuss here, because one sutra says, 'each sentient being is one continuum of consciousness'. However, we have found here that a sentient being could have two different mental continuums, simultaneously – for example, a mind of bodhicitta, and a mind which is a thought of giving. So, there's a lot to discuss and analyse, in terms of what exactly this quote from the sutra is saying.

Definition of wishing and engaging bodhicitta

If we get into the technicalities of defining the two types of bodhicitta, the definition in our text says that **engaging bodhicitta** is either of wishing or engaging bodhicitta, and is explicitly conjoined with the engaging practices, and **wishing bodhicitta** is either of wishing or engaging bodhicitta, and is not explicitly conjoined with the engaging practices.

So, we have to know the reason why the definition says that bodhicitta is 'either' of the two types. If, for example, instead of saying that bodhicitta is either of two types, you just defined the two types of bodhicitta as being explicitly or not explicitly conjoined with the engaging practices – what is wrong with that definition? For the time being I will leave it up to you to find out the need for these syntaxes in the definitions.

I have always emphasised the importance of analysing issues – raising questions and discussing them with others – in whatever subject we study. When you cultivate your knowledge through this process of questioning and investigating, you'll find that such knowledge remains more firmly in your mind over a long period of time than if you just accept what you read or hear. Otherwise, I could just give you the questions and the answers, and you could learn that way, but such an understanding would not be as firm as one gained through your own analysis.

Let's now move to the next division:

I.1.3.6. Division by terminology

Under this sub-heading, the two types of bodhicitta are:

1. conventional bodhicitta
2. ultimate bodhicitta

Dividing bodhicitta in this way is called division by way of terminology or division by name only. The point is that

conventional bodhicitta is actual bodhicitta, and ultimate bodhicitta is not a bodhicitta but is called ultimate bodhicitta – in other words, it is bodhicitta by name only.

I.1.3.6.1. Ultimate bodhicitta

Ultimate bodhicitta can be explained under five sub-headings:

1. definition
2. division
3. boundaries
4. etymology
5. characteristics or qualities

I.1.3.6.1.1. DEFINITION

The definition of ultimate bodhicitta that we find in our text is, 'it is either of two – conventional and ultimate bodhicitta and a primary mental consciousness of a Mahayana superior being which is non-dual with respect to the suchness of complete enlightenment and abides within the class of realisation of a special wisdom'.

The reason for including 'either of two' in the definition is to exclude the mental consciousness directly realising the selflessness of a person within the continuum of a buddha as an ultimate bodhicitta. It is not an ultimate bodhicitta, because we can say it does not satisfy the first part of that definition, which is either of the two.

The reason for including 'Mahayana superior being' in the definition is to exclude the mental consciousness directly realising emptiness within the continuum of a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation or preparation, but who previously had attained the arhatship of lesser vehicles. This bodhisattva does have a non-dual realisation of emptiness, but it is not an ultimate bodhicitta because it is not within the continuum of a Mahayana superior being.

The reason for including 'a special wisdom' is to exclude conventional bodhicitta within the continuum of a buddha as an ultimate bodhicitta. The conventional bodhicitta of a buddha does directly realise emptiness and it is within the continuum of a Mahayana superior being, but it is not an ultimate bodhicitta because it is not a special wisdom but rather a special method.

I.1.3.6.1.1.2. DIVISION

There are eleven divisions of ultimate bodhicitta, one each for the ten bodhisattva grounds and the buddha ground.

I.1.3.6.1.1.3. BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of ultimate bodhicitta begin from the Mahayana path of seeing, or the first ground of bodhisattvas, right through to the buddha ground.

I.1.3.6.1.1.4. ETYMOLOGY

As to the etymological explanation of why it's called ultimate bodhicitta – 'ultimate' refers to what is being realised or cognised by this bodhicitta, which is the ultimate truth, emptiness. So, it's named after the ultimate truth.

We will skip the section on the **characteristics** of ultimate bodhicitta.

I.1.3.6.2. Conventional bodhicitta

Conventional bodhicitta refers to what we normally understand as bodhicitta, and we have already discussed that earlier, so we will now say we've finished the section on the divisions of bodhicitta.

I.1.4. THE BENEFITS OF GENERATING BODHICITTA

There are many special benefits or qualities of bodhicitta. These benefits of generating bodhicitta are not invented but mentioned in the teachings of the great ancient Indian masters based on their own experiences and knowledge of bodhicitta.

1. Bodhicitta is the noble gateway or door to the Mahayana path. Whoever generates bodhicitta is qualified as a Mahayanist. On the other hand, if you lack bodhicitta, then no matter what other qualities you may possess, you are not qualified to be called a Mahayanist. This explains why bodhicitta is the gateway or entry to the Mahayana path. The *Commentary to Bodhicitta* by Nagarjuna mentions that without generating bodhicitta, you will never achieve buddhahood, and that to benefit other beings in samsara, there is no other way. In Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*, he says: 'if you wish to achieve the highest enlightenment...its root cause is bodhicitta', which clearly indicates that we must generate bodhicitta in order to achieve complete enlightenment, because bodhicitta is the root cause of enlightenment.

2. When you generate bodhicitta, merit will arise continuously. Shantideva's *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life* says: 'From that moment, whether asleep or heedless, a force of merit, vast and infinite as the sky will be produced.'

3. Bodhicitta purifies all the causes for rebirth that we have created in the past and prevents us from creating any further causes for unfortunate rebirths. Shantideva's text, *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, says that, just as we can free ourselves from great danger with the support of a courageous person, in the same way, by depending on bodhicitta, we can free ourselves from danger immediately, even if we have committed a powerful evil action.

4. Through bodhicitta, we accumulate the cause for good rebirths, while also increasing whatever virtues we have already accumulated. Shantideva also said in *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life* that all other virtues are like a plantain or banana tree – once it produces its fruit, it won't produce any more. However, the tree of bodhicitta continuously produces fruit, and instead of it being exhausted, it continues to give while you enjoy the fruit.

5. Bodhicitta transforms all the virtues we have accumulated so far into the cause for the highest, complete enlightenment. In the same way that [in the concept of alchemy] a chemical can transmute metal into gold, bodhicitta can transform all our virtues into a cause for the highest enlightenment and makes our virtues inexhaustible. Shantideva says: 'It's like the supreme gold-making liquid, for it transforms the unclean body we have taken, into the priceless jewel of a buddha form. Therefore, firmly seize what is called the bodhi mind.' When the quote refers to 'all other virtues', this means the virtues we create out of a motivation to gain some benefit in this life,

or to find a good rebirth, or even to attain liberation from cyclic existence. So, this quote is saying that all these other virtues are like a plantain tree. The sutra (*Paljin Do* in Tibetan) says, 'If the merit of bodhicitta has a form, the whole sky is not enough to contain it.'

6. We become a worthy object to be revered by gods and humans. Simply by generating bodhicitta, even if one were to be born into a low caste or social status, or into poverty, the moment after bodhicitta is generated, one will become a worthy object to be revered by humans and even by gods. Shantideva says: 'The moment the bodhicitta arises in someone, fettered and weak in the jail of cyclic existence, he is instantly hailed as a son of the sugatas, and honoured by gods and men.'

We have cited scriptural texts to show that these benefits of bodhicitta are not just made up by somebody who has no knowledge or experience of bodhicitta; rather, these benefits are the testimonies of great spiritual masters and realised beings.

After the benefits of bodhicitta, the next heading is:

1.1.5. HOW TO GENERATE BODHICITTA

Under this heading, we will find out about the causes for cultivating bodhicitta, and how we measure our cultivation of bodhicitta, and so on.

We'll leave the teaching here tonight.

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