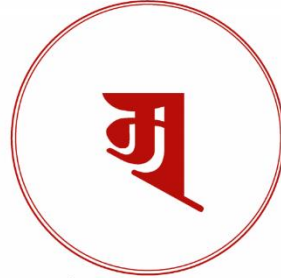


।। अभिसमयालंकारोद्धृतम्बोधिचित्तोत्पादलक्षणम् ।।

|| abhisamayālaṅkāroddṛtam bodhicittotpādalakṣaṇam ||

The definition of giving rise to Bodhicitta,  
taken from the Ornament of Realization



सौगतम्

Saugatam  
Sanskrit Buddhism



Input and explanations by:  
Dharmavardhanajñānagarbha  
(Mattia Salvini)

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## Introduction

|| namaḥ sarvabuddhabodhisattvebhyaḥ ||

The difference between a Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioner and a non-Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioner is Bodhicitta: this is a traditional way to define a Mahāyāna Buddhist by vows, rather than in terms of their view of reality.

Bodhicitta is classified in several different ways, according to the context, and thus the term can have different referents. In the context of being the entry point to Mahāyāna practice, it refers to an intention: the wish to become a complete Buddha, for the sake of all sentient beings.

Two points are here crucial: first of all, Bodhicitta, in this context, is not just a general positive intention (however vast and kind); it is the intention to become a complete Buddha, like Buddha Śākyamuni. Secondly, this is done out of compassion for sentient beings, understanding that they are stuck in the suffering of saṃsāra. The reason that one develops such an intention is the understanding that complete Buddhahood is by far the best way to genuinely help sentient beings, not comparable to any other state one may attain. This is the connection between the object of the intention (Buddhahood) and the motivation behind it (wishing to help others).

Since Bodhicitta is what defines any Buddhist practice as belonging to the Mahāyāna, it is common for Buddhist practices to begin with recitations that express one's giving rise to Bodhicitta. If we check those recitations, we will notice that they conform to the definition of Bodhicitta as offered in the "Ornament of Realization" (Abhisamayālamkāra), one of the treatises transmitted by the future Buddha, Ārya Maitreya, to Ārya Asaṅga. This definition is concise (a half verse) and authoritative, and often quoted by Mahāyāna masters.

I thank Alejandro Martínez Gallardo for very useful suggestions and corrections.





चित्तोत्पादः परार्थाय  
सम्यक्सम्बोधिकामता ॥

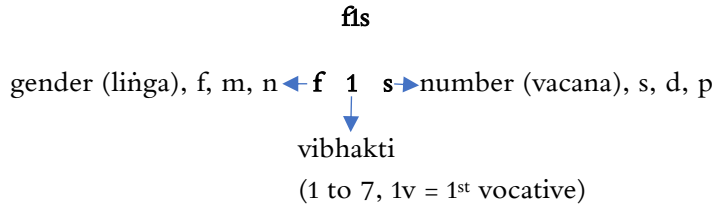
cittotpādaḥ parārthāya  
samyaksambodhikāmatā ॥

The arising of the mind is a desire for perfect, complete Bodhi,  
for the sake of others.

## Grammatical notes and glossary

Nouns have three grammatical genders (feminine, masculine, neuter), three numbers (singular, dual, plural), and seven vibhaktis (the vocative is regarded as a subtype of the 1<sup>st</sup> vibhakti).

Example of abbreviations for nouns:



Thus, fls means:

feminine gender, 1<sup>st</sup> vibhakti, singular number.

Other examples:

m3p = masculine, 3<sup>rd</sup> vibhakti, plural

n5d = neuter, 5<sup>th</sup> vibhakti, dual

cittotpādaḥ parārthāya samyaksambodhikāmatā ||

citta-utpādaḥ, para-arthāya, samyak-sambodhi-kāmatā ||

*cittotpādaḥ* | *cittotpāda* m1s, the arising (utpāda) of the mind, the arising of Bodhicitta, the mind (citta) set on Buddhahood (bodhi) || *parārthāya* | *parārtha* m4s, for the sake (artha) of others (para) || *samyaksambodhikāmatā* | *samyaksambodhikāmatā* fls, the desire (kāmatā) for perfect, complete Awakening (samyak-sambodhi) ||

## References

This is a half verse from the “Ornament of Realization” (Abhisamayālaṅkāra, 1.18ab), one of the five treatises transmitted by Ārya Maitreya to Ārya Asaṅga, according to the Tibetan tradition (the list of five in the Chinese tradition differs).

The Abhisamayālaṅkāra is a set of instructions (upadeśa) on the Perfection of Wisdom, and offers a complete overview of Buddhist practice from the perspective of the Mahāyāna.

Stcherbatsky, Th. and Obermiller, E. (eds.). page 6. *Abhisamayālaṅkāra-prajñāpāramitā-upadeśa-śāstra: the work of Bodhisattva Maitreya*. Bibliotheca Buddhica 23, Fasciculus 1, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR: Leningrad 1929 (page 6).

The whole text can be accessed here:

[http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpus/transformations/html/sa\\_maitreyaAtha-abhisamayAlaMkaranAmaprajJApAramitopadezazAstra.htm](http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpus/transformations/html/sa_maitreyaAtha-abhisamayAlaMkaranAmaprajJApAramitopadezazAstra.htm)