







(4.) If you engage in grasping, you do not have the View.

(Translated from the Tibetan by Erick Tsiknopoulos, October 23rd-24th, 2018.)

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1 In 1104 or 1005 CE

2 Or 'reddish-yellow' (*dmar ser*)

3 hand gesture

4 Like the way that Maitreya Bodhisattva sits seated upon his throne with his feet flat on the ground.

5 That is, this present or current lifetime

6 *chos pa*, or 'spiritual practitioner', 'religious practitioner', but the implication here is specifically Buddhist (*chos=Dharma*), especially with regard to the aims of Buddhist spiritual practice, namely liberation and enlightenment

7 *khams gsum*, Skt. *Tri-dhatu*: The form realm (*rūpa-dhātu*), the formless realm (*arūpa-dhātu*), and the desire realm (*kāma-dhātu*)

8 And conditioned existence (*srid pa*), synonymous with Saṃsāra, 'cyclic existence'

9 Or 'the determination for emancipation/liberation' (*nges 'byung*)

10 Or 'your own personal purpose/aim/goals' (*bdag don*)

11 On the conventional level of Relative Bodhicitta, *bodhicitta* is the altruistic wish to attain the state of complete Enlightenment or Awakening, Buddhahood, for the sake of all sentient beings, in order to benefit them generally, and also to bring them to the state of Enlightenment in

particular; as well as the determination to practice the Bodhisattva Path of love, compassion, the Six Transcendental Perfections (*pāramitā-s*), etc., which are necessary for achieving that goal of Buddhahood. On the absolute level of Ultimate Bodhicitta, *bodhicitta* is the practice of direct insight into the ultimate nature of phenomena and the true nature of mind. Here the discussion mainly concerns Relative Bodhicitta, especially in its altruistic aspirations for the benefit of others. Notoriously difficult to translate into English and thus often simply left in its original Sanskrit, *bodhicitta* has been rendered numerous ways, some more accurate than others, including “awakened mind” (inaccurate), “awakened heart” (inaccurate), “enlightened mind” (inaccurate), “enlightened heart” (inaccurate), “thought of enlightenment/awakening” (somewhat accurate), “altruistic aspiration to enlightenment/awakening” (accurate), “awakening mind” (accurate), “will to enlightenment/awakening” (accurate), “bodhi mind” (accurate), “bodhi heart” (accurate), and “spirit of enlightenment/awakening” (accurate). “Enlightenment/Awakening Mind” (or “Mind of Enlightenment/Awakening”), is the most literal standard translation of the term, and in many contexts may also be the most appropriate for capturing the nuances of the term *bodhicitta* in English. Care must be made when rendering this term not to wrongly indicate that this ‘mind’ is *one which has already attained Enlightenment*; which is why “enlightened/awakened mind” is inaccurate. It should be noted, however, that *bodhicitta* often has different meanings in Tantric or Vajrayāna contexts.

12 Or “if grasping arising/occurs”. For various reasons I have opted for a more active form here (‘engage’), rather than the passive form used by other translators, although the verb here (*byung*) is generally of the more passive and indeed involuntary variety, and usually means “to occur, emerge, happen, to come to pass, to get”. Using a more active form here also fits in with the previous pattern set in the

foregoing first three lines, namely “If you...”, wherein the instrumentality of an agent is implied in all three cases (albeit less directly in the original Tibetan text). Some have also translated this fourth line as “if there is grasping”. I submit that here a more active verb form is generally more appropriate in English, because it is the agent who is ‘engaging’ in grasping, and that this selfsame grasping does not come from some outside source nor from elsewhere than the grasping mind of the implied agent. In other words, we would not tell someone to “not let grasping happen”, we would tell them to “not engage in grasping”.

13 Or ‘clinging’ (*‘dzin pa*)

14 That is, the Right View or the appropriate view of discerning insight (*prajñā*) which realizes Emptiness and Non-Self, wherein there is no grasping, clinging or fixation on the conceptual elaborations of existence, non-existence, both existence and non-existence, and neither existence nor non-existence, with regard to all phenomena. ‘Grasping’ here is thus attachment to a ‘self’ and to true or inherent existence with regard to oneself, others, and all things, including thoughts and concepts.

15 Or ‘Transcendental Practices’ (*pha rol tu phyin pa*). ‘The Path of Transcendental Perfections (*pāramitā-s*)’ (*pha rol tu phyin pa’i lam*) is another way of referring to the *Mahāyāna* or *Bodhisattvayāna* systems or ‘vehicles’ of Buddhism, which are also sometimes called the *Pāramitāyāna*.

16 *blo sbyong*, methods of training the mind in important topics of contemplation using short instructions

17 The meaning of “all Dharmas” (*chos thams cad*) here is specifically “all Dharma teachings”, but the grammar is perhaps intentionally ambivalent, and could also mean “all phenomena” or “all things”.

