

CHAPTER FIVE

The Difficult-to-Conquer Ground

E. THE FIFTH GROUND: THE DIFFICULT-TO-CONQUER GROUND

1. THE FIFTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST

When all the bodhisattvas there came to the end of hearing this teaching on the fourth ground's practice dharmas, their minds were all so filled with great joyfulness, that they were moved to boundless exultation.

There rained down the devas' many sorts of jewels and blossoms that floated softly down like falling snow.

They all then uttered praises in unison: "It is good indeed, Vajragarba, O Greatly Eminent One." {1}

The Paranirmita Vaśavartin Heaven King together with his entire retinue and others, abiding above in space, all felt immense joyous delight, {2}

emanated a multitude of marvelously radiant light rays, created all manner of celestial music, and sang praises of the meritorious qualities of the Buddha and that assembly of bodhisattvas.

The celestial nymphs and others, each with a clear and sublime voice, united their voices in praising the Buddha, and thereupon uttered these words: {3}

"That which the Bhagavat has so assiduously and arduously sought and vowed to bring about from long ago until the present, namely, realization of the unsurpassable genuine path, now, for the first time, has finally been obtained.

"This benefactor of devas and men, after so long, we have now been able to see: Śākyamuni buddha has now arrived here in this celestial palace. {4}

"What from long ago in the past till the present, is unprecedented, we now for the first time meet as the stirring of extraordinary signs. What from long ago in the past till the present, is unprecedented, we now for the first time meet as the emanation of marvelous light.

"What beings have not had from long ago on up to the present,
they now first acquire as such peace and happiness.

What they have not heard from long ago onward, they now hear
as this sound of the great kindness and the great compassion. {5}

"The crossing on over to the far shore of meritorious qualities,
from long ago till now, never reached, they now are able to reach,
including what the King of Āryas has been able to entirely demolish,
namely, arrogance, conception of the existence of a self, and such. {6}

"The one incomparable as an object of offerings,
we have now become able here to present with offerings,
It is he who is able to open forth the path to the heavens
and bring about the realization of all-knowledge. {7}

"The Bhagavat's profound purity
is so immeasurably vast as to be comparable to empty space.
He remains undefiled by any of the dharmas of the world, and,
in this, he is comparable to a lotus blossom residing atop the water.

"He abides in the world as the one who is the most lofty and great,
and, in this, compares to Mount Sumeru, king of golden mountains,
that abides in the middle of the great sea.

Thus it is that we now, so filled with joy, bow here in reverence." {8}

Thus it was that these celestial maidens,
each with a multitude of marvelous sounds,
and with reverent minds, having finished their songs of praise,
then fell silent and thereupon gazed up at the Buddha. {9}

Liberation Moon bodhisattva
then presented a request to Vajragarbha, asking
about the causes and conditions of the characteristic features
of the bodhisattva's acquisition of the fifth ground. {10}

2. VAJRAGARBHA BEGINS THE FIFTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION

{A} Vajragarbha Bodhisattva Mahāsattva then informed Liberation Moon Bodhisattva, saying:

3. TEN IMPARTIAL RESOLUTE INTENTIONS ENABLING FIFTH GROUND ACCESS

O, Son of the Buddha, those bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* who have already completely fulfilled their practice on the fourth ground and then wish to be able to enter the fifth ground then employ ten types of equally regarding resolute intentions¹⁴⁴ to enable entry into the fifth ground. What then are those ten? They are:

First, equally regarding resolute intentions toward the Dharma
of the buddhas of the past.

- Second, equally regarding resolute intentions toward the Dharma of the buddhas of the future.
- Third, equally regarding resolute intentions toward the Dharma of the buddhas of the present.
- Fourth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward the moral precepts.
- Fifth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward the mind.¹⁴⁵
- Sixth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward riding oneself of views, doubts, and regretfulness.
- Seventh, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward the knowledge of what is and is not the path.
- Eighth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward the knowledge and vision associated with the practices.
- Ninth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward achieving ever increasing supremacy in [the practice of] the dharmas constituting the limbs of bodhi.
- And tenth, pure equally regarding resolute intentions toward the equal teaching of beings.

Sons of the Buddha, it is through these ten types of equally regarding pure resolute intentions that the bodhisattva *mahāsattvas* become fully able to enter the fifth ground.

4. THE BODHISATTVAS' BASES FOR BUDDHAHOOD AND IRREVERSIBLE RESOLVE

(B) It is due to thorough cultivation of the dharmas assisting realization of bodhi, due to purification of resolute intentions,¹⁴⁶ and due to striving for ever more superior progress on the path that they succeed in achieving buddhahood.

It is due to acquiring the power of great vows, due to relying on the mind of kindness and compassion to never forsake anyone, due to acquiring the power of the mindful and wise mind's reasoning, due to cultivating merit and knowledge; due to never relinquishing the creation of skillful means; due to striving to acquire the ever more superior path's dharmas enabling illumination and contemplation of higher grounds, and due to receiving the protection of the Buddhas' spiritual powers that this bodhisattva then brings forth the definite and irreversible resolve.

5. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTHS

(C) He knows in accordance with reality: "This is the Āryas' truth of suffering, this is the truth of the accumulation of suffering, this

is the truth of the cessation of suffering, and this is the truth of the path to the cessation of suffering.” This bodhisattva:

Knows well worldly truth,¹⁴⁷
 Knows well the truth of the supreme meaning,¹⁴⁸
 Knows well the truth of characteristic signs,¹⁴⁹
 Knows well the truth of differentiating distinctions;¹⁵⁰
 Knows well the truth of the manifestation of establishment,¹⁵¹
 Knows well the truth of phenomena;¹⁵²
 Knows well the truth of production,¹⁵³
 Knows well the truth of cessation with no further production;¹⁵⁴
 Knows well the truth of the causation for entering the path,¹⁵⁵
 And, by sequentially successful establishment in all of the grounds of the bodhisattva, he knows well the truth associated with the cultivation of the Tathāgata’s knowledge.¹⁵⁶

At this time, the bodhisattva:

Knows well the truth of the supreme meaning through always residing within the One Vehicle,¹⁵⁷
 Knows worldly truth through adapting to beings’ mental intentions and thereby causing them to be delighted,¹⁵⁸
 Knows the truth of characteristic signs through distinguishing dharmas’ individual characteristic signs,¹⁵⁹
 Knows the truth of differentiating distinctions through knowing the individual differences between dharmas;¹⁶⁰
 Knows the truth of the manifestation of establishment through distinguishing the aggregates, sense realms, and sense bases;¹⁶¹
 Knows the truth of suffering through the suffering and anguish associated with body and mind;¹⁶²
 Knows the truth of accumulation through the continuities in rebirths in all the paths of rebirth;¹⁶³
 Knows the truth of cessation through the ultimate extinguishing of all the heat of the afflictions;¹⁶⁴
 Knows the truth of the path through bringing forth the dharma of non-duality;¹⁶⁵
 And knows well the truth associated with cultivating the Tathāgata’s knowledge through using the knowledge of all modes to know the sequence involved in all dharmas and in perfection of all the bodhisattva grounds.¹⁶⁶

It is because of the power of resolute faith¹⁶⁷ that he achieves such a knowing awareness, for this is not a case of his having acquired the inexhaustibly complete knowledge of these truths.

6. THE BODHISATTVA'S RESULTANT GENERATION OF COMPASSION & KINDNESS

(D) So it is that the bodhisattva, through the knowledge associated with these truths, knows all conditioned dharmas as false and deceptive, as characterized by ruination, as merely conventionally and momentarily abiding, and as conducive to the deception and delusion of the common person.

At this time, the bodhisattva's great compassion for beings becomes ever more supreme and directly manifest and he is then able to bring forth the light of great kindness.

7. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF THE CAUSALITY OF BEINGS' PLIGHT

(E) Having acquired the power of knowledge such as this, he never forsakes any being and always strives to acquire the Buddha's knowledge. He contemplates all past and future conditioned dharmas in accordance with reality and thereby knows that it is from previous ignorance, becoming, and craving that beings produce their flowing along in cyclic births and deaths wherein they are unable to move to escape from their place of refuge within the five aggregates and thus increase their great accumulation of suffering and anguish. He knows that, within this, there is no self, nothing belonging to a self, no being, no person, no agent of knowing, and no entity possessed of a lifespan. He knows this is also just so in the future and also knows whether or not there is any escape to be had from this ceaseless deluded covetous attachment and boundless ignorance.

(F) He then thinks:

Common people and other beings are all so very strange. Because of their ignorance and delusion, they take on a countless and unbounded number of *asanykhyeyas*¹⁶⁸ of bodies that have been destroyed, are now being destroyed, and will be destroyed in the future. In this way, they are forever subject to births and deaths. They are unable to bring forth thoughts of renunciation for the body, but rather ever increase the mechanisms for producing bodies subject to suffering.

They are always swept along in the waters of the stream of cyclic births and deaths wherein they are unable to go against its current. They take refuge in the abode of the five aggregates and are unable to abandon it. They do not fear the poisonous snakes of the four great elements and are unable to extricate the arrows of their own pride and views. They are unable to extinguish the blazing fire of their desire, hatred, and delusion, are unable to destroy the darkness of ignorance and delusion, and

are unable to dry up the great sea of their cravings and attachments.

They do not seek to encounter the great *ārya* and guide who possesses the ten powers. They always follow along with resolute intentions influenced by *māras*¹⁶⁹ and, within the city of cyclic births and deaths, they are for the most part diverted by bad ideation and mental discursion.¹⁷⁰

{G} Such suffering, solitary, and poverty-stricken beings have no one to rescue them, no one to shelter them, and no one possessed of the ultimate path. There is only myself, this one person, who, with no comparable companions, will proceed to cultivate and accumulate merit and wisdom. I will then use these provisions to cause all these beings to dwell in a state of utmost purity and then continue on in this until they are caused to acquire the Buddha's unimpeded power of wisdom with respect to all dharmas.

8. THE BODHISATTVA'S COMPASSIONATE DEDICATION OF ROOTS OF GOODNESS

(H) He also contemplates thus: "It is through right contemplation that one is able to develop the power of knowledge." He vows that he will devote all the roots of goodness he accumulates to the liberation of beings, doing so for the sake of:¹⁷¹

Rescuing all beings;
 Seeking the best circumstances for all beings;
 Seeking happiness for all beings;
 Benefiting all beings;
 Bringing about the liberation of all beings;
 Causing all beings to have no more suffering or anguish;
 Causing all beings to leave behind all coarse and evil endeavors;
 Causing the purification of all beings' minds;
 Causing all beings to adopt the training;
 And causing the extinguishing of all beings' misery and suffering while also bringing about the fulfillment of their wishes.

9. THE FIFTH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S QUALITIES AND THEIR BASES

(I) As for this bodhisattva dwelling on this fifth ground, the Difficult-to-Conquer Ground:

Through never forgetting any dharma, he becomes one possessed of mindfulness;
 Through resolute and definite wisdom, he becomes one who is wise;
 Through understanding the intent of the scriptural texts and their correct sequence, he becomes one possessed of the path;

- Through his attention to guarding both himself and others, he becomes one possessed of a sense of shame and dread of blame;
- Through never relinquishing his upholding of the moral precepts, he becomes one who possesses solidity of mind;
- Through skill in contemplative assessment of what constitute correct and incorrect bases, he becomes one possessed of awakened awareness;¹⁷²
- Through not according with anything else, he becomes one who accords with knowledge;¹⁷³
- Through his ability to skillfully distinguish the intended meanings implicit in all Dharma compositions and statements, he becomes one who accords with wisdom;¹⁷⁴
- Through skillful cultivation of the *dhyāna* absorptions, he becomes one possessed of the spiritual superknowledges;
- Through adapting to worldly dharmas in his practice, he becomes one possessed of skillful means;
- ¶ Through thoroughly accumulating the provision of merit,¹⁷⁵ he becomes one who is insatiable;
- Through always seeking to acquire the causes and conditions for wisdom,¹⁷⁶ he becomes one who never abandons his quest;
- Through his accumulation of the causes and conditions for great kindness and great compassion,¹⁷⁷ he becomes one who is tireless;
- Through always practicing right mindfulness, he becomes one who utterly abandons the breaking of moral precepts;
- Through his deep resolve in seeking to acquire the Buddha's ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and eighteen dharmas exclusive to the Buddhas, he become one who is ever mindful of the Buddha's Dharma;
- Through always causing of beings to abandon what is bad and cultivate what is good, he becomes one who adorns buddha lands;
- Through planting the merit for acquiring the adornments of the thirty-two major marks and eighty subsidiary signs, he becomes one who practices the many different sorts of good karmic deeds;
- Through seeking to acquire the physical, verbal, and mental qualities adorning the Buddha, he becomes one who always practices vigor;
- Through making offerings to all Dharma-teaching bodhisattvas, he becomes one who delights in great reverence;

Through having a mind unimpeded by aversion for the expedient means all bodhisattvas resort to in the world, he becomes one whose mind is unimpeded;

And through always delighting in teaching beings, he becomes one who, both day and night, abandons any other sorts of intentions.

10. THE METHODS USED BY THE BODHISATTVA IN HIS TEACHING OF BEINGS

(K) While the bodhisattva engages in such practices as these:

He also practices giving as a means of teaching beings;

He also uses pleasing words, beneficial actions, and joint endeavors as means of teaching beings;

He also uses the manifestation of form bodies as a means of teaching beings;

He also uses the speaking of Dharma to teach beings;

He also manifests the endeavors associated with the bodhisattva practices to teach beings;

He also manifests the great endeavors of all buddhas to teach beings;

He also reveals the transgressions associated with *samsara* to teach beings;

He also reveals the benefits of all buddhas' wisdom to teach beings;

And, as the bodhisattva cultivates in this manner, he uses the path that involves great spiritual powers as well as skillful means employing all different sorts of causes and conditions to teach beings.

Although this bodhisattva uses skillful means involving many different sorts of causes and conditions, his resolve always remains intent upon the knowledge of the Buddha. Thus he never retreats from or loses his roots of goodness.

11. THE BODHISATTVA'S ADOPTION OF AN ARRAY OF MEANS TO BENEFIT BEINGS

(L) Additionally, he always seeks ever more supreme dharmas with which to benefit beings. In order to be of benefit to beings, he becomes adept in all of the classics, skills, and cultural arts of the world, including writing, mathematical calculation, classical works on the nature of stones,¹⁷⁸ and medical procedures for the treating of diseases such as wasting diseases, children's diseases, diseases involving possession by ghosts, diseases involving poisoning by sorcerers, leprosy, and other such disorders.

He acquires knowledge of the classics devoted to such arts as music, singing, dance, humor, and entertainment while also

becoming knowledgeable in matters regarding the state, cities, regions beyond the city walls, villages, buildings and homes, parks, viewing terraces, ponds, springs, flowers, fruit, medicinal herbs, and trees.

He becomes knowledgeable about gold, silver, *mani* pearls, lapis lazuli, coral, amber, mother-of-pearl, carnelian, the discovery of jewel deposits, the courses of the sun, moon, five stars, and twenty-eight constellations, and the interpretation of the relative auspiciousness of signs including the strange signs appearing in association with earthquakes, dreams, and writings, and all signs appearing on a person's body.

So, too, he becomes knowledgeable regarding the practice of giving, the observance of moral precepts, the focusing of one's mind, the *dhyāna* absorptions, the spiritual superknowledges, the four *dhyānas*, the four immeasurable minds, the four formless absorptions, whatever other matters that would cause no distress to beings, and whatever matters would bring happiness to beings.

Then, out of kindly pity for beings, he brings forth these dharmas¹⁷⁹ in order to influence beings to enter the unsurpassed Dharma of all buddhas.

12. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS

(m) The Bodhisattva dwelling on this Difficult-to-Conquer Ground encounters many hundreds, many thousands, or many myriads of *kotis* of buddhas to whom he makes offerings, expresses his veneration, makes praises, and presents offerings of robes, food and drink, bedding, and medicines. He draws close to them, listens to their teaching of Dharma, and, having received those teachings on Dharma, he leaves behind the home life. Having left behind the home life, he listens to and accepts the Dharma of the Sutras in the presence of those buddhas and becomes a teacher of the Dharma who proclaims the benefits of the Dharma.

13. THE BODHISATTVA'S PURIFICATION OF QUALITIES AND ROOTS OF GOODNESS

He ever increases the supremacy of his extensive learning and accumulation of samādhis up to the point where he is able to carry on such activities beyond a period of even hundreds of thousands of myriads of *kotis* of kalpas during which he never neglects these endeavors. During this time, the meritorious qualities and roots of goodness of this bodhisattva shine forth ever more brightly in their purity.

14. GOOD ROOTS PURIFICATION LIKE REFINING GOLD & CELESTIAL PHENOMENA

Sons of the Buddha, this circumstance is analogous to the refining of real gold that, when polished to a luster with *musāragalva*,¹⁸⁰ shines ever more supremely in its brightness. Because of the power of his skillful means and wisdom, the meritorious qualities and roots of goodness of this bodhisattva who dwells on this ground shine forth ever more supremely in their purity, doing so to a degree that those on lower grounds cannot even approach. He also becomes comparable to the sun, moon, stars, constellations, and heavenly palaces that wind-like forces support and propel along in their courses in such a way that they never depart from the normal course of things.

For such a son of the Buddha who is a bodhisattva dwelling on the Difficult-to-Conquer Ground, because of his skillful means and contemplative thought, his meritorious qualities and roots of goodness shine forth ever more brightly in their purity. Even so, he still refrains from seizing on the ultimate realization and also refrains from swiftly reaching the culmination of the path to buddhahood.

15. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 5TH GROUND BODHISATTVA

Sons of the Buddha, this has been a general explanation of all bodhisattva *mahāsattvas'* Difficult-to-Conquer Ground.

a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE

The bodhisattva *mahāsattva* who dwells on this ground often becomes a Tuṣita Heaven king possessed of fiercely sharp faculties who is able to utterly defeat in debate the proponents of all non-Buddhist traditions.

b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS

In whatsoever endeavors he takes up, whether that be the practice of giving, pleasing words, beneficial actions, or joint endeavors, he never departs from his mindfulness of the Buddha, mindfulness of the Dharma, mindfulness of his bodhisattva companions, and so forth until we come to his never departing from mindfulness of his quest to achieve the perfect acquisition of the knowledge of all modes.

c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS

He thinks: "Oh, when will I finally become able to serve beings as a leader, as one worthy of veneration?", and so forth until we come to his thinking, "Oh, when will I be able to become one upon whom all beings can rely?"

d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS

If this bodhisattva wishes to bring to bear just such diligence in the practice of vigor, in but a moment, he becomes able to acquire a thousand *kotis* of samādhis and able to manifest up to a thousand *kotis* of transformation bodhisattvas to serve as his retinue. Were he to avail himself of the power of vows, through sovereign mastery in the spiritual powers, he could manifest these phenomena in even greater numbers so large that one could never count them even in however many hundreds of thousands of myriads of *kotis* of *nayutas* of kalpas one might attempt to do so.¹⁸¹

16. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES

At this time, Vajragarbha Bodhisattva, wishing to clarify his meaning, then reiterated it in verses, saying:

After the bodhisattvas complete
the practice dharmas associated with the fourth ground,
they equally contemplate the Buddhas of the three periods of time,
the precepts, also equally contemplate the mind itself,
equally contemplate riddance of views, doubts, and regrets,
equally contemplate what practices are and are not the path,
and, having engaged in these equally regarding contemplations,
they become able to enter the fifth ground. {11}

They employ the four stations of mindfulness as bow,
the root faculties as their sharp arrows,
the four right efforts as their steed,
the four bases of psychic power as their vehicle,
the five powers as their sturdy armor,
and are thus able to crush the insurgent afflictions.
They are heroically brave and non-retreating
and thereby directly enter the fifth ground. {12}

They are cloaked in the stainlessness of a sense of shame and blame.
Purity in the moral precepts serves them as fragrant incense,
the seven limbs of enlightenment serve as a floral garland,
and the *dhyāna* absorptions serve them as perfume.

All of their different sorts of thought involving
wisdom together with skillful means serve as adornments.
Thus it is that they succeed in entering
into the parks and groves of the *dhāraṇīs*. {13}

The four bases of psychic power serve as their feet,
right mindfulness as the crown of their heads,

kindness and compassion as their bright and pure eyes,
while it is sharp wisdom that serves as their teeth.

With the roar of emptiness and non-existence of self,
he scatters the insurgent afflictions.

Thus it is that the lion among men
becomes able to enter the fifth ground. {14}

When this bodhisattva succeeds in reaching
and then dwelling within the fifth ground,
he increasingly cultivates the dharmas of supreme purity,
all for the sake of success in the path to buddhahood.

He always implements the minds of kindness and compassion,
is never overcome by disaffection or weariness,
and has as his sole aim the cultivation
of the fifth ground's practice dharmas. {15}

He deeply cultivates the accumulation of the two types of provisions
consisting of merit and wisdom,
implements the power of all different sorts of skillful means,
and aspires to acquire the highest clarity in contemplation.

He is always protected by the Buddha,
succeeds in perfecting mindfulness and wisdom,
and is able to sequentially engage in skillful contemplation
of the truths in accordance with their reality, {16}

namely the truth of the supreme meaning, worldly truth,
the truth of differentiating distinctions, the truth of establishment,
the truths regarding phenomena, arising, cessation, and the path,
on through to the truth associated with what is unimpeded.¹⁸² {17}

Thus it is that he contemplates the truths
with a mind that is subtle, sublime, and pure.
Although he has not yet been able to acquire
the unimpeded liberation,

through his ability to possess wisdom
together with the power of faith,
he succeeds in being that which is supreme over all
of the types of wisdom anywhere in the entire world. {18}

Contemplating the truths in this way,
he is able to entirely realize that conditioned dharmas
are false, artificial, deceptive,
and entirely devoid of any aspect that is substantially real.

He is able to acquire from that radiance possessed by the Buddhas,
a portion of the radiant light of their kindness and compassion

and, for the sake of all beings,
focuses his mind on his quest to acquire the wisdom of the Buddha.
{19}

He knows the nature of prior and later aspects of the conditioned,
realizes that beings are extremely pitiable,
that they have fallen into the darkness of ignorance, and
that they are tied up by the bonds of craving's causes and conditions.

This bodhisattva becomes able to extricate
inhabitants of the world from their suffering and anguish.
He realizes dharmas are devoid of any entity possessed of a lifespan
and that, in this sense, they are analogous to grass, trees, and so
forth. {20}

He realizes too, because beings are always beset by two types
of afflictions and their associated causes and conditions,
just as they have come forth from earlier lives to the present,
so too shall they proceed in the same way on to their future lives,
continuing on without cease,

never being able to find the end of suffering's bounds.

He feels pity and sadness for these beings
and thinks, "I should see to their liberation." {21}

"They never escape from the house of the five aggregates,
do not fear the injury wrought by the four great elements,
fail to ever extricate the arrow of the wrong views,
and never extinguish the blazing flames of the three poisons.

"They fail to dispel the darkness of ignorance,
fall down into the great sea of desire,
and remain bereft of the light of wisdom
due to having abandoned their great guiding teacher." {22}

Having come to know these matters,
he ever increases his application of diligence in the practice of vigor.
Whatsoever endeavors he initiates
are all done for the sake of liberating beings.

He always bears in mind right mindfulness and wisdom.
In cultivating the path he possesses the senses of shame and blame.
Utilizing solid resolve together with wisdom,
he causes them to increase even more. {23}

He is insatiable in the cultivation of merit and wisdom,
upholds the moral precepts so that they are not allowed to weaken,
tirelessly strives to develop extensive learning,
and rightly cultivates the practices that purify the buddha lands.

He is insatiable in planting the causes and conditions
for acquiring a buddha's major marks, subsidiary signs, and voice,
and devotes all of the good works he does
for the purpose of benefiting beings. {24}

For the sake of serving the benefit of the inhabitants of the world,
he sees to the production and establishment of classic texts and such,
learns the nature of stones,¹⁸³ ghost-possession, medical formulae, {25}
song, dance, humor, and other such topics

such as methods for establishing halls, towers, gardens, and groves,
and methods for making clothing as well as food and drink.

He shows others where to find deposits of all sorts of precious gems.
Thus it is that he causes the many to be filled with joyous delight. {26}

He is able to interpret signs associated with the sun, moon, five stars,
the twenty-eight constellations, and so forth,
is able to interpret omens of earthquakes, good and bad fortune,
dream writings, and the various sorts of strange events.

He practices giving, observance of the moral precepts, and the rest,
abandons desire, cultivates the *dhyāna* absorptions,
the four immeasurables, and the spiritual superknowledges,
doing so in order to bring happiness to inhabitants of the world. {27}

The bodhisattva possessed of great wisdom
who succeeds in reaching this Difficult-to-Conquer Ground
then makes offerings to many *kotis* of buddhas
and listens to Dharma taught by those buddhas.

The roots of goodness he thus cultivates
are all brought to a state of shining purity,
just as when, using precious *musāragalva*,
one is able thereby to polish real gold to lustrousness. {28}

Just as the bejeweled celestial palaces, that,
accordant with wind-like forces, never depart their normal course,
even amidst worldly dharmas, he bestows benefit, yet is not defiled.
Thus, in this, he is also like a lotus blossom floating atop the water. {29}

The bodhisattva who dwells on this ground
often becomes a Tuṣita Heaven King
whose faculties become ever more fiercely sharp
such that he is able to utterly refute the views of the non-Buddhists.

All of the good works he does
are done for the sake of acquiring the wisdom of the Buddha
and in order to acquire the Buddha's powers and fearlessnesses
with which to be able to liberate beings. {30}

If this bodhisattva diligently cultivates
and thus grows ever more supreme in his power of vigor,
he becomes able to acquire a thousand myriads of *kotis*
of every sort of deep and marvelous samādhi.

He makes offerings to a thousand *kotis* of buddhas,
becomes able to cause a thousand worlds to tremble,
and, commensurate with the power of vows he brings to bear,
may go well beyond such numbers to the point of immeasurability. {31}

And so it is that we reach the end
of this Dharma-accordant explanation
of the fifth ground and the supremely wise eminence there
who is equipped with many different sorts of skillful means. {32}