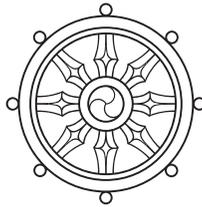


THE TEN BODHISATTVA GROUNDS

The Avataṃsaka Sūtra Chapter 26

To refrain from doing any manner of evil,
to respectfully perform all varieties of good,
and to purify one's own mind—
This is the teaching of all buddhas.

The Ekottara Āgama Sūtra
(T02 n.125 p.551a 13–14)



A NOTE ON THE PROPER CARE OF DHARMA MATERIALS

Traditional Buddhist cultures treat books on Dharma as sacred. Hence it is considered disrespectful to place them in a low position, to read them when lying down, or to place them where they might be damaged by food or drink.

THE TEN BODHISATTVA GROUNDS

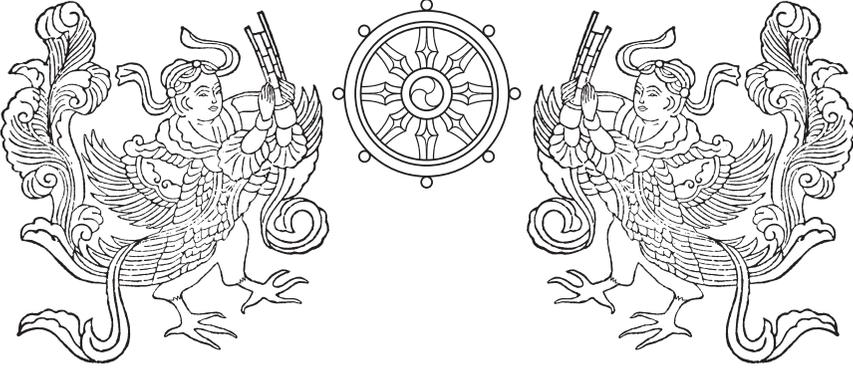
The Avataṃsaka Sūtra

Chapter 26

The Ten Highest Levels of Practice On the Bodhisattva's Path to Buddhahood

As Translated From Sanskrit by Tripiṭaka Master Śikṣānanda
(699 CE)

An Annotated English Translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra
A Trilingual Edition (Chinese / English / Sanskrit)



KALAVINKA PRESS
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
WWW.KALAVINKAPRESS.ORG

KALAVINKA PRESS
8603 39TH AVE SW
SEATTLE, WA 98136 USA
(WWW.KALAVINKAPRESS.ORG)

Kalavinka Press is associated with the Kalavinka Dharma Association, a non-profit organized exclusively for religious educational purposes as allowed within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Kalavinka Dharma Association was founded in 1990 and gained formal approval in 2004 by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to which all donations are tax deductible.

Donations to KDA are accepted by mail and on the Kalavinka website where numerous free Dharma translations and excerpts from Kalavinka publications are available in digital format.

Edition: 10GSIK-SA-1019-1.0-Chinese/English/Sanskrit
 Kalavinka Buddhist Classics Book 12a

Copyright © 2019 by Bhikshu Dharmamitra / All Rights Reserved
 ISBN: 978-1-935413-13-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2019029482

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Śikṣānanda, 652-710, transla | Dharmamitra, Bhikshu, transla

Title: The Ten Bodhisattva grounds : the Avataṃsaka Sūtra, chapter 26 : the ten highest levels of practice on the Bodhisattva's path to Buddhahood / as translated from Sanskrit by Tripiṭaka Master Śikṣānanda (699 ce) ; an annotated English translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra.

Description: A trilingual edition (Chinese/English/Sanskrit) | Seattle, Washington : Kalavinka Press, 2019. | Series: Kalavinka Buddhist classics; book 12a | Includes bibliographical references. | Summary: "The Ten Bodhisattva Grounds" is an annotated English Translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra of Tripitaka Master Śikṣānanda's circa 699 ce Sanskrit-to-Chinese translation of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra, Chapter 26. This text describes in great detail the ten highest levels of bodhisattva practice on the path to buddhahood as taught in that sutra. This trilingual edition (English / Chinese / Sanskrit) includes the facing-page simplified and traditional Chinese texts along with the entire appended P. L. Vaidya Sanskrit text. The Sanskrit section headings are inset in all three languages for easy mutual correlation between the three texts"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019029482 | ISBN 9781935413134 (paperback)

Subjects: LCSH: Tripiṭaka. Sūtrapiṭaka. Avataṃsakasūtra.--Criticism, interpretation,

Classification: LCC BQ1622.A1 D43 2019 | DDC 294.3/823--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019029482>

Kalavinka Press books are printed on acid-free paper.
 Cover and interior designed by Bhikshu Dharmamitra.

Printed in the United States of America

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the memory of the selfless and marvelous life of the Venerable Dhyāna Master Hsuan Hua, the Guiyang Ch'an Patriarch and the very personification of the bodhisattva's six perfections.

DHYĀNA MASTER HSUAN HUA

宣化禪師

1918–1995

ABOUT THE CHINESE TEXT

This translation is supplemented by inclusion of Chinese source text on verso pages in both traditional (above) and simplified (below) scripts. For the traditional character version variant readings from other canonical editions are found as an appendix in the back of the book and, where I have incorporated those variants into the translation, they are usually signaled with an endnote along with my rationale for making the emendation. The traditional-character Chinese text and its variant readings are from the April, 2004 version of the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association's digital edition of the Taisho Buddhist canon. The simplified-character Chinese text is as downloaded from the online Qianlong Chinese Buddhist Canon on July 23, 2018 (<http://www.qldzj.com/>).

Those following the translation in the traditional Chinese version should be aware that the original Taisho scripture punctuation contained in this 2004 edition is not traceable to original editions, is not reliable, and is probably best ignored altogether. (In any case, accurate reading of Classical Chinese should never depend on a previous editor's punctuation.)

ABOUT THE SANSKRIT TEXT

The Sanskrit text is included as an appendix in the back of the book. Use of the digital Sanskrit text is by the kind permission of Dr. Miroj Shakya, Project Director of the Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon. The Sanskrit text itself is the edition edited by P. L. Vaidya and published by The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit learning.

To ease the reader's correlation of the Sanskrit texts with both the English translation and the facing-page Chinese, J. Rahder's alphabetical section headings are embedded in curly braces within all versions of the text (Chinese, English, and Sanskrit).

OUTLINING IN THIS WORK

The ten chapter titles in this work are from the Taisho Chinese text. All other outline headings originate with the translator. Buddhist canonical texts are often so structurally dense that they are best navigated with the aid of at least a simple outline structure such as I have supplied here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The accuracy and readability of this translation have been greatly improved by many corrections, preview comments, and editorial suggestions generously contributed by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Feng Ling, and Nicholas Weeks.

Expenses incurred in bringing forth this publication were underwritten by generous donations from Craig and Karen Neyman, Madalena Lew, Shuyu Yang, Jiajing Li, Kam Chung Wong, Loritta Chan, David Fox, Upasaka Guo Ke, Yuen-Lin Tan, the BDK English Tripiṭaka Project, and others. Sponsorship of Adobe Indesign book layout was provided by Anagarika Mahendra.

Use of the digital Sanskrit texts is by the kind permission of Dr. Miroj Shakya, Project Coordinator of the Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon Project.

Were it not for the ongoing material support provided by my late guru's Dharma Realm Buddhist Association and the serene translation studio provided by Seattle's Bodhi Dhamma Center, creation of this translation would have been impossible.

Additionally, it would have been impossible for me to produce this translation without the Dharma teachings and personal inspiration provided to me by my late guru, the awesomely wise and compassionate Dhyāna Master Hsuan Hua, the Guiyang Ch'an patriarch, Dharma teacher, and exegete.

Finally, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to the members of the liver care and transplant teams at Seattle's University of Washington Medical Center who cured me of liver cancer in 2010 and gave me a liver transplant several months later. In particular, if it weren't for over a decade of wonderfully attentive and compassionate care by Dr. Renuka Bhattacharya, medical director of UW's liver transplant program, the kindness and skill in three major surgeries by my transplant surgeon, Dr. Jorge Reyes, and the marvelous generosity of an anonymous liver donor, I would have died a half dozen years ago and thus never could have completed the scriptural translations I have produced in the last eight years.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AN	Aṅguttara Nikāya
BB	Buddhabhadra (T278)
BCSD	Hirakawa's <i>Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary</i>
BDK	Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai English Tripiṭaka
BHSD	Edgerton's <i>Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary</i>
BR	Bodhiruci (T1522)
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association's digital edition of the Taisho Chinese Buddhist canon.
DN	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
DR	Dharmarakṣa (T278)
DSBC	Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon's digitized edition of <i>Daśabhūmikasūtram</i> , edited by P. L. Vaidya.
HH	Venerable Hsuan Hua
KB	Kumārajīva assisted by Buddhayaśas (T286)
KJ	Kumārajīva
LTX	Li Tongxuan (李通玄)
MDPL	<i>Materials for a Dictionary of the Prajñāpāramitā Literature</i>
MLDB	<i>The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima nikāya</i>
Mppu	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā upadeśa</i>
MW	Monier Williams' <i>A Sanskrit-English Dictionary</i>
N	Nāgārjuna
PDB	Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism
QL	Qing Liang (唐清涼山大華嚴寺沙門澄觀)
QLSC	Qing Liang's <i>Huayan Shuchao</i> (大方廣佛華嚴經疏鈔會本. L130 no. 1557)
SYMG	The Song, Yuan, Ming, Gong editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon.
SA	Śikṣānanda (T279)
SD	Śīladharma (T287)
T	Taisho Chinese Buddhist Canon via CBETA (Version 2004. ed.) Taipei)
VB	Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi
XHYJL	<i>Xin huayanjing lun</i> (新華嚴經論 – T36, no. 1739) by Li Tongxuan.

GENERAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Chinese Text	6
About the Sanskrit Text	6
Outlining in This Work	6
Acknowledgements	7
List of Abbreviations	8
Directory to Chapter Subsections	11
The Translator’s Introduction	21
The Translation: The Ten Bodhisattva Grounds	29
Part 1 : The Joyfulness Ground	59
Part 2 : The Stainlessness Ground	107
Part 3 : The Shining Light Ground	135
Part 4 : The Blazing Brilliance Ground	163
Part 5 : The Difficult-to-Conquer Ground	185
Part 6 : The Direct Presence Ground	213
Part 7 : The Far-Reaching Ground	245
Part 8 : The Immovability Ground	277
Part 9 : The Excellent Intelligence Ground	351
Part 10: The Dharma Cloud Ground	355
Translation Endnotes	427
Variant Readings from Other Chinese Editions	451
Bibliography	455
Appendix: The P. L. Vaidya Sanskrit Text	457
About the Translator	615
Kalavinka Buddhist Classics: Current Title List	617

DIRECTORY TO CHAPTER SUBSECTIONS

I. THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION	31
A. THE SETTING AND AUDIENCE	31
B. THE GREAT BODHISATTVAS AND THEIR QUALITIES	31
C. THE NAMES OF THE BODHISATTVAS IN ATTENDANCE	33
D. VAJRAGARBHA ENTERS SAMĀDHI AND COUNTLESS BUDDHAS MANIFEST	35
E. THE BUDDHAS PRAISE HIM AND ENCOURAGE HIM TO TEACH THE TEN GROUNDS	35
F. THE BUDDHAS BESTOW QUALITIES AND ABILITIES ON VAJRAGARBHA	39
G. VAJRAGARBHA EMERGES FROM SAMĀDHI AND SPEAKS OF THE TEN GROUNDS	41
1. VAJRAGARBHA SETS FORTH THE NAMES OF THE TEN GROUNDS	41
2. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA FALLS SILENT	43
H. THE CONGREGATION IS CAUSED TO WONDER WHY THERE IS NO EXPLANATION	43
I. LIBERATION MOON BODHISATTVA'S FIRST REQUEST FOR DHARMA TEACHING	43
J. VAJRAGARBHA EXPLAINS HIS SILENCE	45
K. LIBERATION MOON BODHISATTVA'S SECOND REQUEST FOR DHARMA TEACHING	47
L. VAJRAGARBHA FURTHER EXPLAINS HIS RETICENCE TO TEACH THIS DHARMA	47
M. LIBERATION MOON BODHISATTVA'S THIRD REQUEST FOR DHARMA TEACHING	49
N. THE BODHISATTVA CONGREGATION JOINS IN REQUESTING THIS TEACHING	51
O. ¶ THE BUDDHA EMITS BRILLIANT LIGHT FROM BETWEEN HIS EYEBROWS	53
P. ALL BUDDHAS EMIT LIGHT THAT UTTERS VERSES REQUESTING DHARMA	53
Q. VAJRAGARBHA'S PRELIMINARY VERSES ON THE DIFFICULTY OF THIS EXPLANATION	55
II. THE MAIN DOCTRINAL TEACHING SECTION	59
A. THE FIRST GROUND: THE JOYFULNESS GROUND	59
1. VAJRAGARBHA LISTS THE FIRST GROUND'S QUALIFICATIONS & MOTIVATIONS	59
2. THE QUALITIES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S RESOLVE	59
3. THE CONSEQUENCES OF GENERATING THE BODHISATTVA VOW	61
4. THE BASES FOR THE FIRST GROUND BODHISATTVA'S JOYFULNESS	63
5. THE FIRST GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FIVE KINDS OF FEARLESSNESS	65
6. THE BODHISATTVA'S GROUNDS PURIFYING PRACTICES	65
7. THE BODHISATTVA'S TEN GREAT VOWS	69
8. THE MENTAL QUALITIES & FAITH GAINED BY THE 1ST GROUND BODHISATTVA	77
9. THE BODHISATTVA'S REFLECTIVE CONTEMPLATION ON DHARMA AND BEINGS	79
10. THE BODHISATTVA'S RESOLVE, RENUNCIATION, & GROUNDS PURIFICATION	83
11. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	85
12. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF MEANS OF ATTRACTION AND PĀRAMITĀS	87
13. THE BODHISATTVA'S GROUNDS PURIFICATION COMPARED TO REFINING GOLD	87
14. THE BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF FURTHER KNOWLEDGE OF THE GROUNDS	89
15. THE BODHISATTVA'S PATH KNOWLEDGE COMPARED TO A CARAVAN GUIDE	91
16. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE FIRST GROUND BODHISATTVA	93
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	93
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S FOUR MEANS OF ATTRACTION AND MINDFULNESS	93
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	95

d. THE RESULT OF THE BODHISATTVA'S LEAVING THE HOUSEHOLD LIFE	95
17. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	95
B. THE SECOND GROUND: THE STAINLESSNESS GROUND	107
1. THE SECOND GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	107
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE SECOND GROUND'S EXPLANATION	107
3. THE TEN RESOLUTE INTENTIONS AS BASES FOR ENTERING THE SECOND GROUND	107
4. THE BODHISATTVA'S OBSERVANCE OF 10 COURSES OF GOOD KARMIC ACTION	109
a. AVOIDANCE OF KILLING	109
b. AVOIDANCE OF TAKING WHAT IS NOT GIVEN	109
c. AVOIDANCE OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	109
d. AVOIDANCE OF FALSE SPEECH	111
e. AVOIDANCE OF DIVISIVE SPEECH	111
f. AVOIDANCE OF HARSH SPEECH	111
g. AVOIDANCE OF FRIVOLOUS SPEECH	113
h. AVOIDANCE OF COVETOUSNESS	113
i. AVOIDANCE OF ILL WILL	113
j. AVOIDANCE OF WRONG VIEWS	113
5. THE BODHISATTVA'S REFLECTIONS ON 10 GOOD AND BAD KARMIC ACTIONS	115
a. REFLECTIONS ON THEIR GENERATION OF THE SIX REBIRTH DESTINIES	115
b. REFLECTIONS ON GENERATION OF THE FRUITS OF THE 3 VEHICLES' PATHS	115
c. REFLECTIONS ON THE 10 TRANSGRESSIONS' 10 KARMIC RETRIBUTION	117
d. RENUNCIATION OF 10 BAD ACTIONS & ROUSING OF 10 ALTRUISTIC MINDS	119
6. HIS REFLECTIONS ON THE PLIGHT OF BEINGS & RESOLVE TO RESCUE THEM	121
7. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	125
8. THE BODHISATTVA'S GROUNDS PURIFICATION COMPARED TO REFINING GOLD	127
9. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF MEANS OF ATTRACTION AND PĀRAMITĀS	127
10. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 2ND GROUND BODHISATTVA	129
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	129
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	129
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	129
d. THE RESULT OF THE BODHISATTVA'S LEAVING THE HOUSEHOLD LIFE	129
11. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	131
C. THE THIRD GROUND: THE SHINING LIGHT GROUND	135
1. THE THIRD GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	135
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE THIRD GROUND'S EXPLANATION	135
3. THE TEN RESOLUTE INTENTIONS AS BASES FOR ENTERING THE THIRD GROUND	135
4. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF ALL CONDITIONED DHARMAS	137
5. THE BODHISATTVA'S RENUNCIATION & QUEST FOR BUDDHA'S KNOWLEDGE	139
6. THE BODHISATTVA'S TEN SYMPATHETIC MENTAL INTENTIONS TOWARD BEINGS	139
7. THE BODHISATTVA'S GENERATION AND PRACTICE OF GREAT VIGOR	141
8. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONQUEST OF THE MEDITATIVE ABSORPTIONS	145
9. THE BODHISATTVA'S DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES	147
10. THE BODHISATTVA'S DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL SUPERKNOWLEDGES	147
11. THE BODHISATTVA'S HEAVENLY EAR	149
12. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF OTHERS' THOUGHTS	149

13. THE BODHISATTVA'S RECALL OF PAST LIVES	151
14. THE BODHISATTVA'S HEAVENLY EYE	151
15. THE BODHISATTVA'S VOW-DETERMINED REBIRTH APART FROM THE DHYĀNAS	153
16. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	153
17. THE BODHISATTVA'S PURIFICATION AND ITS COMPARISON TO REFINING GOLD	153
18. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF MEANS OF ATTRACTION AND PĀRAMITĀS	155
19. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 3RD GROUND BODHISATTVA	155
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	155
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	155
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	157
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	157
20. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	157
D. THE FOURTH GROUND: THE BLAZING BRILLIANCE GROUND	163
1. THE FOURTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	163
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE FOURTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	163
3. 10 GATEWAYS TO DHARMA LIGHT AS BASES FOR ENTERING THE 4TH GROUND	163
4. TEN KNOWLEDGE-MATURING DHARMAS FOR BIRTH IN THE BUDDHAS' CLAN	165
5. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF THE 37 ENLIGHTENMENT FACTORS	167
a. THE FOUR STATIONS OF MINDFULNESS	167
b. THE FOUR RIGHT EFFORTS	167
c. THE FOUR BASES OF PSYCHIC POWER	169
d. THE FIVE ROOTS	169
e. THE FIVE POWERS	169
f. THE SEVEN LIMBS OF ENLIGHTENMENT	169
g. THE EIGHTFOLD PATH	171
h. THE BODHISATTVA'S TEN AIMS IN PRACTICING THE 37 FACTORS	171
6. THE BODHISATTVA'S LEAVING OF WRONG VIEWS, ATTACHMENTS, AND ACTIONS	171
7. MENTAL AND PERSONAL QUALITIES GAINED IN PATH CULTIVATION	173
8. THE BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF TEN KINDS OF VIGOR	175
9. OTHER QUALITIES DEVELOPED IN THE BODHISATTVA'S 4TH GROUND PRACTICE	175
10. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	175
11. THE BODHISATTVA'S PURIFICATION & ITS COMPARISON TO REFINING GOLD	177
12. THE RADIANCE OF THIS BODHISATTVA'S ROOTS LIKE THAT OF A MAÑI JEWEL	177
13. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF MEANS OF ATTRACTION AND PĀRAMITĀS	177
14. VAJRAGARBHA'S STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 4TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	177
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	177
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	179
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	179
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	179
15. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	179
E. THE FIFTH GROUND: THE DIFFICULT-TO-CONQUER GROUND	185
1. THE FIFTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	185
2. VAJRAGARBHA BEGINS THE FIFTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	187
3. TEN IMPARTIAL RESOLUTE INTENTIONS ENABLING 5TH GROUND ACCESS	187
4. THE BODHISATTVA'S BASES FOR THE IRREVERSIBLE BODHI RESOLVE	189

5. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTHS	189
6. THE BODHISATTVA'S RESULTANT GENERATION OF COMPASSION & KINDNESS	191
7. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF CAUSALITY IN BEINGS' PLIGHT	193
8. THE BODHISATTVA'S COMPASSIONATE DEDICATION OF ROOTS OF GOODNESS	195
9. THE FIFTH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S QUALITIES AND THEIR BASES	195
10. THE METHODS USED BY THE BODHISATTVA IN HIS TEACHING OF BEINGS	197
11. THE BODHISATTVA'S ADOPTION OF AN ARRAY OF MEANS TO BENEFIT BEINGS	199
12. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	201
13. THE BODHISATTVA'S PURIFICATION OF HIS ROOTS OF GOODNESS	201
14. GOOD ROOTS PURIFICATION LIKE REFINING GOLD & CELESTIAL PHENOMENA	203
15. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE OF THE PĀRAMITĀS	203
16. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 5TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	203
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	203
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	205
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	205
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	205
17. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	205
F. THE SIXTH GROUND: THE DIRECT PRESENCE GROUND	213
1. THE SIXTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	213
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE SIXTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	215
3. THE TEN DHARMAS OF IDENTITY ENABLING ACCESS TO THE SIXTH GROUND	215
4. SIXTH GROUND ENTRY, ACQUIESCENT PATIENCE & PRIMACY OF COMPASSION	215
5. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF CAUSALITY IN CYCLIC EXISTENCE	217
a. CONTEMPLATION OF THE SEQUENTIAL CONTINUITY OF THE CAUSAL FACTORS	217
b. THE BODHISATTVA CONTEMPLATES THE DEFINITIONS OF CAUSAL LINKS	219
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF MIND AS THE BASIS OF EXISTENCE	221
d. THE CONTEMPLATION OF 2 FUNCTIONS OF EACH CAUSAL CHAIN LINK	221
e. THE CONTEMPLATION OF CAUSAL CHAIN PRODUCTION AND DESTRUCTION	223
f. CONTEMPLATION OF THE 12 LINKS' ASSOCIATION WITH INSEPARABILITY.	223
g. THE TWELVE LINKS AS CONSTITUENTS OF THREE PATHS	225
h. THE TWELVE LINKS' CORRELATION WITH THE THREE PERIODS OF TIME	225
i. THE TWELVE LINKS' CORRELATION WITH THE THREE KINDS OF SUFFERING	225
j. CONTEMPLATION OF THEIR ARISING & CEASING BY CAUSES AND CONDITIONS	225
k. CONTEMPLATION OF THEIR CREATION AND DESTRUCTION OF THE BONDS	227
l. CONTEMPLATION OF "UTTER NONEXISTENCE" AND "UTTER CESSATION"	227
m. A SUMMARY LISTING OF 10 CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE 12 CAUSAL FACTORS	227
6. THE BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF THE THREE GATES TO LIBERATION	229
7. THE BODHISATTVA'S COMPASSIONATE RELUCTANCE TO ENTER FINAL NIRVĀṆA	229
8. THE BODHISATTVA'S SAMĀDHIS RELATED TO THE 3 GATES TO LIBERATION	231
9. THE BODHISATTVA'S TEN TYPES OF RESOLUTE INTENTIONS	231
10. 10 CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S 10 TYPES OF RESOLUTE INTENTIONS	233
11. THE BODHISATTVA'S PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ PRACTICE AND PATIENCE ACQUISITION	233
12. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	233
13. PURIFYING GOOD ROOTS LIKE POLISHING GOLD & MOONLIGHT'S COOLNESS	235
14. THE BODHISATTVA'S SPECIALIZATION IN THE PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ	235

15. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 6TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	237
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	237
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	237
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	237
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	237
16. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	237
G. THE SEVENTH GROUND: THE FAR-REACHING GROUND	245
1. THE SEVENTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	245
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE SEVENTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	247
3. 10 TYPES OF SKILLFUL MEANS & WISDOM ENABLING 7TH GROUND ACCESS	247
4. THE BODHISATTVA'S TWENTY KINDS OF PENETRATING COMPREHENSION	249
5. HIS ADOPTION OF EFFORTLESSNESS, NON-DISCRIMINATION & MEDITATION	253
6. HIS PRACTICE OF 10 PĀRAMITĀS & OTHER DHARMAS LEADING TO BODHI	253
7. VIMUKTICANDRA ASKS ABOUT PERFECTION OF BODHYAṄGA DHARMAS	255
8. VAJRAGARBHA ON THE PERFECTION OF BODHYAṄGAS ON ALL GROUNDS	255
9. VIMUKTICANDRA ASKS ABOUT TRANSCENDENCE OF AFFLICTIONS	257
10. VAJRAGARBHA EXPLAINS THE TRANSCENDENCE OF AFFLICTIONS	257
11. VAJRAGARBHA'S CAKRAVARTIN SAGE KING ANALOGY	257
12. THE CONQUEST OF SAMĀDHIS AND UNPRODUCED-DHARMAS PATIENCE	261
13. VIMUKTICANDRA: "DOESN'T THE 1ST GROUND SURPASS THE TWO VEHICLES?"	263
14. VAJRAGARBHA: "IN ASPIRATION, YES. BY VIRTUE OF PRACTICE, NOT YET"	263
15. VAJRAGARBHA'S ANALOGY OF A PRINCE NOT YET ASCENDED TO POWER	263
16. THIS BODHISATTVA'S UNIQUE PRACTICE & RESTRAINT FROM FINAL NIRVĀṆA	265
17. VIMUKTICANDRA: "WHEN CAN ONE ENTER THE CESSATION SAMĀDHI?"	265
18. VAJRAGARBHA: "FROM THE 6TH GROUND; NOW HE ENTERS & ARISES AT WILL"	265
19. VAJRAGARBHA LIKENS PRACTICE TO SAILING ON THE OPEN OCEAN	265
20. 10 PARADOXICAL ASPECTS OF THE 7TH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE	267
21. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	267
22. GOOD ROOTS PURIFICATION LIKENED TO GOLD INLAY AND SUNLIGHT	269
23. THE 7TH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FOCUS ON SKILLFUL MEANS PĀRAMITĀ	269
24. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 7TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	271
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	271
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	271
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	271
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	271
25. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	271
H. THE EIGHTH GROUND: THE IMMOVABILITY GROUND	277
1. THE EIGHTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	277
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE EIGHTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	279
3. TEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH ENTERING THE EIGHTH GROUND	279
4. TEN TYPES OF COMPREHENSION ASSOCIATED WITH 8TH GROUND ACCESS	279
5. THE UNPRODUCED DHARMAS PATIENCE BASIS FOR "PROFOUND PRACTICE"	281
6. "PROFOUND PRACTICE" LIKE A MONK WITH SUPERKNOWLEDGES & DHYĀNAS	281
7. 8TH GROUND LIKENED TO AWAKENING FROM A RIVER-FORDING DREAM	283
8. 8TH GROUND LIKENED TO THE BRAHMA WORLD'S ABSENCE OF AFFLICTIONS	283

9. THE BUDDHAS' MANIFESTATION BEFORE THE 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	283
10. THE BUDDHAS' PRAISE & INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	283
11. THE IMPORTANCE OF BUDDHAS' APPEARING TO 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVAS	287
12. WHY 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICES ARE SO MEASURELESS	287
13. THIS BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICES LIKENED TO SAILING OUT ONTO THE OCEAN	287
14. THE BODHISATTVA'S CONTEMPLATION OF BUDDHA'S ALL-KNOWLEDGE	289
15. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE ARISING AND DESTRUCTION OF WORLDS	289
16. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE FOUR ELEMENTAL PHASES	289
17. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF ATOMS' MANIFESTATIONS IN WORLDS AND BEINGS	291
18. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE THREE REALMS OF EXISTENCE	291
19. HIS APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN ADAPTIVE BIRTHS TO TEACH BEINGS	291
20. HIS TRANSCENDENCE OF DISCRIMINATIONS & KNOWLEDGE OF 10 BODY TYPES	295
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S MANIFESTATION OF DIFFERENT BODIES FOR BEINGS	295
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF BEINGS' BODIES	297
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE BODIES OF LANDS	297
d. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF RETRIBUTION, 2 VEHICLES, AND BODHISATTVA BODIES	297
e. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF TATHĀGATAS' BODIES	297
f. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE KNOWLEDGE BODY	299
g. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE DHARMA BODY	299
h. THE BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE EMPTY SPACE BODY	299
21. THE BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF TEN KINDS OF SOVEREIGN MASTERY	299
22. TEN CHARACTERISTIC ASPECTS OF THIS EIGHTH GROUND BODHISATTVA	301
23. TEN TYPES OF POWER IN WHICH THIS BODHISATTVA IS WELL ESTABLISHED	301
24. THE TEN NAMES OF THIS EIGHTH BODHISATTVA GROUND	303
25. ADDITIONAL 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA QUALITIES AND PRACTICE ASPECTS	305
26. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	305
27. THE BODHISATTVA'S FURTHER ACQUISITION OF BUDDHAS' DHARMA LIGHT	307
28. THE RADIANCE OF GOOD ROOTS LIKENED TO A SAGE KING'S CROWN	307
29. THIS BODHISATTVA'S RADIANCE LIKE THAT OF A BRAHMA HEAVEN KING	307
30. THE 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FOCUS ON THE SKILLFUL MEANS PĀRAMITĀ	309
31. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 8TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	309
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	309
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	309
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	309
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	309
32. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	311
I. THE NINTH GROUND: THE EXCELLENT INTELLIGENCE GROUND	317
1. THE NINTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	317
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE NINTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	319
3. TEN EARNESTLY PURSUED ENDEAVORS ENABLING NINTH GROUND ACCESS	319
4. THIS BODHISATTVA'S TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF KARMA	321
5. HIS TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF ENTANGLING THICKETS	321
6. TEN TYPES OF REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF BEINGS' MENTAL ASPECTS	321
7. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE AFFLICTIONS' CHARACTERISTICS	323
8. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF KARMIC ACTIONS	325

9. HIS REALITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF BEINGS' FACULTIES	325
10. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF BELIEFS, SENSE REALMS, AND RESOLUTE INTENTIONS	327
11. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE LATENT TENDENCIES' CHARACTERISTICS	327
12. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH BIRTHS	329
13. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF HABITUAL KARMIC PROPENSITIES	329
14. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THOSE FIXED IN RIGHT, IN WRONG, OR UNFIXED	331
15. HIS KNOWLEDGE-BASED ADAPTIVE TEACHING AND LIBERATION OF BEINGS	333
16. THE BODHISATTVA'S COMMAND OF FOUR TYPES OF UNIMPEDED KNOWLEDGE	333
a. TEN PERMUTATIONS OF EXPERTISE IN THE FOUR UNIMPEDED KNOWLEDGES	335
17. HIS ACQUISITION OF DHĀRAṆĪS & FURTHER RECEIPT OF BUDDHAS' DHARMA	339
18. HIS EXPOUNDING ON DHARMA THROUGHOUT A GREAT TRICHILICOSM	341
19. THIS BODHISATTVA'S 10 TYPES OF VOICE-LIKE EXPRESSION IN TEACHING	341
20. HIS INDEPENDENT COMMAND OF COUNTLESS SIMULTANEOUS VOICES	343
21. THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR IN QUEST OF THE LIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE	343
22. THE BODHISATTVA'S SEEING AND SERVING OF COUNTLESS BUDDHAS	345
23. HIS GOOD ROOTS' PURITY LIKE THE GOLD OF A CAKRAVARTIN'S CROWN	345
24. HIS GOOD ROOTS' PURITY LIKE A BRAHMA HEAVEN KING'S RADIANCE	345
25. THE NINTH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FOCUS ON THE POWERS PĀRAMITĀ	347
26. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 9TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	347
a. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	347
b. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	347
c. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	347
d. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	349
27. VAJRAGARBHA BODHISATTVA'S SUMMARIZING VERSES	349
J. THE TENTH GROUND: THE DHARMA CLOUD GROUND	355
1. THE TENTH GROUND'S INTRODUCTORY VERSES AND DHARMA REQUEST	355
2. VAJRAGARBHA COMMENCES THE TENTH GROUND'S EXPLANATION	357
3. THE TEN CATEGORIES OF PRACTICE BEFORE ENTERING THE TENTH GROUND	357
4. THIS BODHISATTVA'S SUBSEQUENT ACQUISITION OF SAMĀDHIS	359
5. THIS FINAL SAMĀDHI'S MANIFESTATION OF AN IMMENSE RADIANT LOTUS	361
6. THIS BODHISATTVA SITS ATOP A LOTUS ENCIRCLED BY RETINUE BODHISATTVAS	361
7. HIS BODY EMANATES LIGHT ILLUMINATING TEN REALMS OF BEINGS	363
8. THE LIGHT RAYS FORM A CANOPY THAT MAKES OFFERINGS TO ALL BUDDHAS	365
9. THE LIGHT RAYS CIRCLE AROUND ALL BUDDHAS AND ENTER THEIR FEET	365
10. THE 10 REGIONS' BODHISATTVAS COME, MAKE OFFERINGS & ENTER SAMĀDHI	365
11. THEY EMANATE LIGHT FROM THEIR CHESTS THAT ENTERS HIS CHEST	367
12. ALL BUDDHAS SEND FORTH LIGHT THAT ENTERS THIS BODHISATTVA'S CROWN	367
13. THIS BODHISATTVA ACQUIRES SAMĀDHIS AND ALL BUDDHAS' CONSECRATION	369
14. THE SIMILE OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE WHEEL TURNING SAGE KING'S SON	369
15. THE CAPACITIES ARISING FROM THIS BODHISATTVA'S CONSECRATION	369
16. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF ATTAINMENTS	369
17. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSFORMATION	371
18. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF SUSTAINING BASES	373
19. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF SUBTLITIES OF PRACTICE	373
20. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE TATHĀGATAS' SECRETS	375

21. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERPENETRATION OF KALPAS	375
22. THIS BODHISATTVA'S KNOWING OF THE BUDDHA'S PENETRATING KNOWLEDGE	377
23. THIS BODHISATTVA'S ACQUISITION OF COUNTLESS LIBERATIONS	379
24. THIS BODHISATTVA'S SAMĀDHIS, DHĀRAṆĪS, AND SUPERKNOWLEDGES	379
25. THIS BODHISATTVA'S LIMITLESS MEMORY POWER	379
26. HIS LIMITLESS MEMORY COMPARED TO THE OCEAN'S LIMITLESS CAPACITY	381
27. VIMUKTICANDRA ASKS ABOUT THE LIMITS OF THIS BODHISATTVA'S MEMORY	381
28. VAJRAGARBHA'S ANALOGY DESCRIBING THIS BODHISATTVA'S MEMORY POWER	381
29. THE DHARMA CLOUD BODHISATTVA'S GREAT DHARMA RAIN	383
30. THIS BODHISATTVA'S USE OF SPIRITUAL POWERS IN TRANSFORMING WORLDS	385
31. HIS USE OF POWERS IN MANIFESTING BODIES & SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA	387
32. THE CONGREGANTS WONDER: "WHAT MORE COULD EVEN A BUDDHA DO?"	391
33. LIBERATION MOON ASKS VAJRAGARBHA FOR AN EXPLANATION	391
34. VAJRAGARBHA ENTERS "THE NATURE OF ALL BUDDHA LANDS' SAMĀDHI"	391
35. LIBERATION MOON ASKS ABOUT THIS SAMĀDHI'S NAME AND CAPACITY	393
36. HE ASKS: "WHAT MORE MIGHT A BUDDHA'S POWERS ACCOMPLISH?"	395
37. VAJRAGARBHA CONTRASTS A FEW CLUMPS OF EARTH TO ALL WORLDS	395
38. VAJRAGARBHA COMPARES MANY BODHISATTVAS' WISDOM TO ONE BUDDHA'S	395
39. THE NATURE OF THIS BODHISATTVA'S PRACTICE AND WISDOM LIGHT	397
40. THE LIGHT OF HIS WISDOM COMPARED TO THAT OF REAL GOLD	397
41. THIS BODHISATTVA'S WISDOM LIGHT COMPARED TO MAHEŚVARA'S LIGHT	399
42. THE BUDDHAS' ONGOING TEACHING OF THIS BODHISATTVA	399
43. THE TENTH GROUND BODHISATTVA'S FOCUS ON THE KNOWLEDGES PĀRAMITĀ	399
44. VAJRAGARBHA'S FINAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE 10TH GROUND BODHISATTVA	399
45. THE BODHISATTVA'S STATION AND DHARMA PRACTICE	399
46. THE BODHISATTVA'S MINDFULNESS	401
47. THE BODHISATTVA'S ASPIRATION TO SERVE BEINGS	401
48. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BODHISATTVA'S VIGOR AND VOWS	401
III. THE FINAL SUMMARIZING DISCUSSION OF THE TEN GROUNDS	401
A. HIS EVENTUAL ALL-KNOWLEDGE LIKENED TO RIVERS' FLOW INTO THE SEA	401
B. THE 10 GROUNDS' DIFFERENCES LIKENED TO THOSE OF 10 MOUNTAIN KINGS	403
1. THE FIRST GROUND COMPARED TO THE SNOW MOUNTAIN KING	403
2. THE SECOND GROUND COMPARED TO THE FRAGRANCE MOUNTAIN KING	403
3. THE THIRD GROUND COMPARED TO THE VAIDHARĪ MOUNTAIN KING	403
4. THE FOURTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE RISHI MOUNTAIN KING	405
5. THE FIFTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE YUGAMDHARA MOUNTAIN KING	405
6. THE SIXTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE HORSE EAR MOUNTAIN KING	405
7. THE SEVENTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE NIMINDHARA MOUNTAIN KING	405
8. THE EIGHTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE CAKRAVĀDA MOUNTAIN KING	407
9. THE NINTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE KETUMAT MOUNTAIN KING	407
10. THE TENTH GROUND COMPARED TO THE SUMERU MOUNTAIN KING	407
11. THE TEN GROUNDS IN ALL-KNOWLEDGE LIKENED TO MOUNTAINS IN THE SEA	407
C. THE TEN GROUNDS COMPARED TO TEN ASPECTS OF THE GREAT OCEAN	407
D. THE TEN GROUNDS COMPARED TO A LARGE MAṆI JEWEL	411
E. THE PREREQUISITE CONDITIONS FOR HEARING THE TEN GROUNDS TEACHINGS	413

F. LIBERATION MOON ASKS: “HOW MUCH MERIT BY HEARING THIS TEACHING?”	413
G. VAJRAGARBHA EXPLAINS MERIT AND IMPORTANCE TEN GROUNDS TEACHING	413
H. THE AUSPICIOUS SIGNS OCCURRING WHEN THIS SUTRA’S TEACHING ENDED	413
I. THE 10 DIRECTIONS’ BODHISATTVAS ATTEST TO THE TEACHING’S UNIVERSALITY	415
J. VAJRAGARBHA’S SUMMARIZING VERSES AUGMENTED BY THE BUDDHA’S POWERS	415

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Continuing my focus on translating bodhisattva path texts important in the history of Classic Indian and Chinese Mahāyana Buddhism, I present here my English translation of "The Ten Grounds" chapter of the *Greatly Expansive Buddha's Flower Adornment Sutra* (*Mahāvaiṣṭya-buddha-avatamsaka-sūtra*) as translated by Tripiṭaka Master Śikṣānanda some time between 695 and 699 CE. The subject of this six-fascicle 26th chapter, "The Ten Grounds," is the bodhisattva's ascent through ten "grounds," "planes," or "levels" of spiritual path cultivation transited by the bodhisattva as he progresses from the state of a common person toward that of a fully enlightened buddha.

There have been two relatively complete Chinese translations of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* itself from Sanskrit, the first of which was an edition in 34 chapters and 60 fascicles completed by Tripiṭaka Master Buddhahadra in 421 (T 278) and the second of which was an edition in 39 chapters and 80 fascicles completed by Tripiṭaka Master Śikṣānanda in 699 (T 280). My reasons for drawing this "Ten Grounds" chapter from the Śikṣānanda edition rather than the Buddhahadra edition were two-fold. First, the Śikṣānanda edition is more complete and, outside of Japan, it has generally now regarded as the "standard" edition ever since the middle of the Tang Dynasty. Secondly, I had already been introduced to the Śikṣānanda edition by my guru, the Venerable Hsuan Hua, this in the context of his lectures on it which started in San Francisco in 1970 or '71.

In order to encourage a better understanding of these ten bodhisattva grounds and the bodhisattva path in general, I have also translated three other closely related works:

Kumārajīva's 4-fascicle *Ten Grounds Sutra* (T 286);

Nāgārjuna's 17-fascicle *Treatise on the Ten Grounds* (T 1521);

Śikṣānanda's 80-fascicle *Flower Adornment Sutra* (T 279).

The first two of these three related works are Kalavinka Press publications. Even though I finished the first draft of my *Flower Adornment Sutra* translation in early 2014, due to the inevitable delay imposed by editing, revising, and incorporating recommended improvements from colleagues, it could easily be a few more years before I release it to publication.

Regarding this “Ten Grounds” text itself, because it also circulated as an independent scripture known as the *Ten Grounds Sutra* (*Daśabhūmika-sūtra*), it does not exist only as a chapter of the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*. There is no real consensus on whether this text was, per the tradition, originally integral to the *Avataṃsaka Sutra* or was instead an independently circulating scripture later incorporated into the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*. In any case, in addition to the later Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Mongolian editions of this text, there are six relatively early surviving Chinese editions as follows:

- Dharmarakṣa (c. 297 CE), T 283;
- Kumārajīva assisted by Buddhayaśas (c. 408–412 CE),¹ T 286;
- Buddhabhadra (c. 418–20 CE), as *Avataṃsaka Sutra* Ch. 22, T 278;
- Bodhiruci (c. 508–511 CE), in Vasubhandu’s commentary, T 1522;
- Śikṣānanda (c. 695–699 CE), as *Avataṃsaka Sutra* Ch. 26, T 279;
- Śīladharma (c. 790 CE), T 287.

In English, there have been several translations, as follows:

- Megumu Honda from the Sanskrit of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*;²
- Buddhist Text Translation Society (partial) of the Śikṣānanda edition’s Chapter 26;
- Thomas Cleary, supposedly (but not really) from Śikṣānanda’s edition of the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*, this in Ch. 26 of his *Flower Ornament Scripture*.³

The Megumu Honda translation was done in 1961–62 when he was still a student at Yale, and, although perhaps useful for beginning students of Sanskrit, its utility is diminished by the author’s early difficulties with both Sanskrit and English.

The BTTS translation is so far only a partial translation consisting of a translation of the first four of the ten grounds. I have been advised by a member of that translation team that, as of July, 2018, the tentative publication date for the remainder of the BTTS translation is still 2 or more years away.

Regarding this “Ten Grounds Chapter” itself, Thomas Cleary’s translation is represented as a translation from the Chinese of the Śikṣānanda edition of the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*. However, it is no such thing. His translation of Chapter 26 which he calls “The Ten Stages” chapter appears to instead be a loose translation of the P. L. Vaidya Sanskrit edition of the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra*. Hence his supposed translation of this chapter has little if any relation to Śikṣānanda’s Chinese edition of the *Avataṃsaka Sutra*.

Although there are other schemas describing the levels of cultivation through which one passes in cultivating the bodhisattva path, the “ten grounds” arrangement described in this text is really quite standard for the Classic Indian Mahāyana tradition. As listed in the introductory section of this chapter, these ten levels of progress along the bodhisattva path are as follows:

- 1) The Ground of Joyfulness (*pramuditā*);
- 2) The Ground of Stainlessness (*vimalā*);
- 3) The Ground of Shining Light (*prabhākarī*);
- 4) The Ground of Blazing Brilliance (*arciṣmati*);⁴
- 5) The Difficult-to-Conquer Ground (*sudurjayā*);
- 6) The Ground of Direct Presence (*abhimukhī*);
- 7) The Far-Reaching Ground (*dūraṅgamā*);
- 8) The Ground of Immovability (*acalā*);
- 9) The Ground of Excellent Intelligence (*sādhumatī*);⁵
- 10) The Ground of the Dharma Cloud (*dharma-megha*).

Each of these grounds is correlated with the practice of one of these ten perfections:

- The perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of moral virtue (*śīla-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of patience (*kṣānti-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of vigor (*vīrya-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of *dhyāna* meditation (*dhyāna-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of wisdom (*prajñā-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of skillful means (*upāya-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of vows (*prañidhāna-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of powers (*bala-pāramitā*);
- The perfection of knowledge (*jñāna-pāramitā*).

There are also other correlations between particular grounds and important bodhisattva skills and capacities. Examples include:

- The four means of attraction on the first four grounds;
- The thirty-seven enlightenment factors on the fourth ground;
- The four truths on the fifth ground;
- The twelve links of conditioned arising on the sixth ground;
- The unproduced-dharmas patience on the eighth ground;
- The four unimpeded knowledges on the ninth ground.

According to this text, as the bodhisattva moves from one level to another in his cultivation of the ten grounds, he sees more and more buddhas, manifests more and more bodhisattva transformation bodies attended by bodhisattva retinues, and appears as a bodhisattva king in higher and higher stations of existence. This bodhisattva kingship phenomenon begins with his appearance as a king over the continent of Jambudvīpa on the first ground after which he appears as a king over all four continents on the second ground, appears as a king of the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven on the third ground, and so forth, finally culminating with his appearance as a king of the Akaniṣṭha Heaven on the tenth ground.

There are a few technical difficulties that I encountered in translating this text from Chinese, most of which involve ambiguities in meaning introduced by the limitations of Chinese language in accurately reflecting Sanskrit technical term nuances. This problem is well evidenced by the particular Chinese-language technical term translations chosen by Śikṣānanda. (The challenges I encountered in translating Kumārajīva's *Ten Grounds Sutra* were nearly identical.)

Fortunately, because I could consult the surviving Sanskrit edition, it was for the most part possible to trace the antecedent Sanskrit terms and then choose somewhat more accurate English technical term translations than would have resulted from simply trying to translate Śikṣānanda's terms directly from Chinese. Relative clarity in this matter was aided somewhat by J. Rahder's *Glossary*.⁶ Even though the P. L. Vaidya Sanskrit edition dates from roughly a millennium after the Śikṣānanda and Kumārajīva editions, I think it is still mostly valid to rely on it for this purpose because, even as aspects of meaning at the sentence and paragraph level of the Sanskrit manuscript morph over time with each recopying or transcription from memory, technical terms still tend to remain unchanged. The same cannot be said for the actual text of the scripture because we can readily observe very obvious differences between the Sanskrit edition and the very early Śikṣānanda and Kumārajīva editions.

The first and most obvious problem is the difficulty which the Chinese translations have in reliably reflecting the difference between technical terms such as *jñāna* (knowledge, cognition, etc.) and *prajñā* (wisdom). In an ideal translation world, Śikṣānanda and Kumārajīva would have very rigorously stuck with simply *zhi* (智)

for “*jñāna* / knowledge” and *zhihui* (智慧) for “*prajñā* / wisdom,” but this is not the case, especially in the translation of verse lines where the need for extreme economy in composing Chinese 5- or 7-character verse lines where it often became necessary to shorten *zhihui* (智慧) to simply *zhi* (智), thereby accidentally obscuring for the Chinese reader the difference between “wisdom” and “knowledge.” I found that this problem was fairly easily overcome through consulting the Sanskrit.

Other technical terms which initially produced difficulties due to the widely varying and sometimes deceptive Chinese translations were *adhyāsaya* (usually “higher aspirations,” etc.), *āśaya* (usually “intentions,” “resolute intentions,” “dispositions,” “inclinations,” etc.), and *adhimukti* (usually “resolute beliefs,” “resolute faith,” “convictions,” etc.). Had I not closely tracked the Sanskrit text, it would have been nearly impossible to accurately translate these terms and preserve their distinctions.

Due to the particular need of specialists and advanced students to closely track and distinguish technical terms and other issues such as these, at least in the multilingual editions of my translation, I am including under the same cover not only the facing-page Chinese simplified and traditional texts, but also (in the back of the book) the Sanskrit text.

Use of the digital Sanskrit text is by the kind permission of Dr. Miroj Shakya, Project Coordinator of the Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon Project. The Sanskrit text itself is the edition edited by P. L. Vaidya and published by The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit learning. To ease the reader’s correlation of the Sanskrit text with both the English translation and the facing-page Chinese, I have embedded the alphabetical Sanskrit section headings within all versions of the text (Chinese, English, and Sanskrit).

These very helpful alphabetical section markers originate with Johannes Rahder who embedded them in his 1923 and 1926 editions of the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra*.⁷ In all cases I have placed these alphabetical section headings within the texts in bolded reduced-font “curly brackets” or “braces” as follows: {A}, {B}, {AA}, etc.

In bringing forth this translation, I making no claims to absolute accuracy. Though I have been assisted by critical comments from about a half dozen colleagues and have gone through the manuscript many times, there is probably room for improvement. I hope

that readers who notice errors or infelicities will favor me with constructive email criticism via the Kalavinka website. I hope that this edition will at least serve to encourage a deeper study of this text by students of the Dharma.

Bhikshu Dharmamitra

Seattle,

July 9, 2018

Introduction Endnotes

1. Citing Kusugai, Richard Robinson (*Early Mādhyamika in India and China*, p. 76) says that Kumārajīva is said to have “procrastinated about starting work on the *Daśabhūmika* until Buddhayaśas joined him in the undertaking.” Buddhayaśas arrived in Chang’an in 408, so the translation must date from around that time.
2. Sinor, D., Raghu Vira, Honda, Megumu, & Permanent International Altaistic Conference. (1968). *Studies in South, East, and Central Asia : Presented as a memorial volume to the late Professor Raghu Vira* (Śata-piṭaka series ; v. 74). New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture.
3. Cleary, T. (1984). *The Flower Ornament Scripture : A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra*. Boulder : [New York]: Shambhala Publications ; Distributed in the U.S. by Random House.
4. SA,SD, and Prajñā all translate the name of this *bhūmi* as “the Ground of Blazing Intelligence” (焰慧地). This appears to be the result of an error arising from misinterpreting the Sanskrit name (*arciṣmatī*) by mistaking a suffix indicating possession (*-mat* modified to agree with the feminine noun *bhūmi* to become *-matī*) for a completely unrelated word that means “intelligence,” “intellect,” “mind” (*matī*). (BB, BR, KB, and the Tibetan all recognize *-matī* as a possessive suffix and hence accord with the Sanskrit meaning.) I have chosen to “bridge” the problem by translating the name of this ground as “the Ground of Blazing Brilliance” in order to allow both meanings the be reflected in the word “blazing” and thus more or less accurately translate both the (seemingly erroneous) SA translation and the correct meaning of the Sanskrit.
5. There seem to be two distinctly different understandings of the meaning of this ground:
DR, SA, BB, BR, SD, and Prajñā all translate the name of this *bhūmi* as “the Ground of Excellent Intelligence” (善慧地). DR translates that same meaning slightly differently: (善哉意). The Tibetan translation also corresponds to this with “the Ground of Excellent Insight” (*legs pa'i blo gros*). Strictly speaking, one could infer that most of these renderings appear be the result of an error arising from misinterpreting the Sanskrit name (*sādhumatī*) by mistaking a suffix indicating possession (*-mat* modified to agree with the feminine noun *bhūmi* to become *-matī*) for a completely unrelated word that means “intelligence,” “intellect,” or “mind” (*matī*).

Of all the Chinese and Tibetan translators, it appears that the Kumārajīva-Buddhayaśas translation team may have been the only one to render the name of this *bhūmi* more or less in accordance with the above-referenced “strictly correct” interpretation of the Sanskrit term as “the Ground of Sublime Goodness” (妙善地). The KB edition only employs the possibly erroneous Chinese and Tibetan default rendering once (in its initial listing of the ten bodhisattva grounds), but otherwise accords with the strictly grammatically correct interpretation of the term throughout its detailed discussion of the ninth *bhūmi* itself.

6. Glossary of the Sanskrit, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Chinese Versions of the Daśabhūmika-Sūtra. Compiled by J. Rahder. (Buddhica, Documents et Travaux pour l’Étude du Bouddhisme publiés sous la direction de J. Przyluski; Deuxième Série; Documents—Tome I). Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1928.
7. On page vii in his Introduction to his *Glossary of the Sanskrit, Tibetan, Mongolian and Chinese Versions of the Daśabhūmika-Sūtra*, Rahder says, “capital letters between brackets refer to the sections of the chapters as indicated in my edition (1926).” (They are also present in his 1923 edition of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* that was published together with the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* with only the minor oversight of having left out “A” and “B” at the very beginning of the first *bhūmi*.)