

A Brief Presentation of the Grounds and Paths of the Perfection Vehicle, Essence of the Ocean of Profound Meaning (Part I)

By Jetsun Losang Dadrin (Tayang, 1867-1937)

Translated by Jules Levinson

EXPRESSION OF WORSHIP

I bow down to the three, Conqueror and the Conqueror's Children—
The Conqueror, the supreme Shakya, sun of propounders.¹
The excellent regent [Maitreya], the unconquered, venerable Protector,
And Manjushri, gathering into one the wisdom of all the Conquerors

I bow down respectfully to the great scholars of the country of Superiors²
The venerable Nagarjuna, the supreme Superior, and to his spiritual offsprings,
Aryadeva and glorious Buddhapalita,
As well as Chandrakirti, who clarified the thought of the Superior [Nagarjuna], and so forth.

I bow down from the heart to the collection of scholars of snowy Tibet—
Nyima Drakpa who became the eye of the world,³
The father Losang Jampel Nyingpo and his spiritual offspiring,⁴
And the matchless king of scholars, Sonam Drakpa.⁵

Having bowed my head to the feet of the skilled tutors
Who, clearing away with the eye medicine of stainless scripture and reasoning
The illness of the dim-sight of ignorance from the eye of my mind,
Bestow the glory of seeing the good path of the profound meaning.

Through churning well with a paddle of analysis and effort
The ocean of milk, the word and scripture of definitive meaning,
This good explanation, the essence of butter, arises.
Listen! I give this to those interested persons of clear intelligence.

¹ Gyumay Kensur Losang Wangdu identifies the Conqueror as Shakyamuni Buddha, who conquered both the obstructions to liberation and the obstructions to omniscience in his own continuum.

² The country of Superiors refers to India, the land where Buddhism arose and developed and where many great scholars and yogis practiced and taught.

³ Gyumay Kensur Losang Wangdu identifies Nyima Drakpa as probably being the translator Patsang, who translated Chandrakirti's *Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* from Sanskrit into Tibetan.

⁴ Gyumay Kensur Losang Wangdu identifies Losang Jampel Nyingpo as Tsongkhapa. His spiritual offspring are Gyeltsab and Kedrub.

⁵ Panchen Sonam Drakpa, (1478-1554), authored the textbook literature for Loseling College and Ganden Shardze.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

All the modes of asserting the three—basis, path, and fruit—in the schools of tenets which hold the system of the Compassionate One, our Teacher who confounded the heads of the foxes, the bad proponents [of tenets] by proclaiming the great lion's roar of the tidings of dependent arising, are indeed the stainless thought of the word of the Supramundane Victor. However, the final thought of the Supramundane Victor himself is that although there does not exist even a particle of a phenomenon which is inherently established, it is established by reliable cognition that the presentation of the three—basis, path, and fruit—is surpassingly correct.

This abides well in accordance with the commentary by the great skilled Madhyamikas for whom dependent arising and empty have come to be of the same meaning. For, wishing that in the end all trainees be led to the suchness of the three doors of liberation in accordance with the assertions of the Prasangikas, the Teacher [Buddha] spoke well the four modes of tenet systems for the sake of leading those disciples temporarily [to more profound levels of realization], and from this point of view, the erroneous modes of assertion of the lower [systems] are overcome by the reasonings of the higher systems, and one is set in the non-erroneous [assertions of the] higher systems, and understanding the views of the lower schools of tenets is an excellent method of understanding the views of the higher systems.

Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way Called 'Wisdom'* (*Prajnanamulamadhyamakakarika*) says:

All [phenomena] are real, unreal,
Real and unreal,
And not real or unreal,
This is what Buddha taught.⁶

Arydeva's *Treatise of Four Hundred Stanzas* (*Chatuhshatakashastrakarika*) says:

[Buddha] taught [that all phenomena] are [truly] existent, and [that all phenomena] are not [truly] existent, [that some phenomena are truly] existent [and some] are not [truly] existent,
And that both [the truly existent and the non-truly existent] are not [truly] existent.
By way of the power of [various] illnesses, are all [four of these]

⁶ Nawang Pelden *Explanation of the Conventional and the Ultimate in the Four Systems of Tenets*_(28.4 ff) comments on these lines in the following way:

For the purpose of initially instilling [in disciples] respect for himself [with the thought], "He is omniscient, knowing without exception the ways in which [the world arises]," [Buddha] says that all environments and beings, the constituents, and the sources, are real, or true. Then, when that respect had been instilled [in them], he said that these conditioned things are unreal, that is, impermanent, since they change into other things in every moment. Then, he says that all of these environments and beings are real relative to a childish person [for whom they seem to] abide in their own entity for a second moment after their own time and that these are unreal relative to a Superior's wisdom attained subsequent to meditative equipoise in that [a Superior sees that] they do not abide in their own entity for a second moment after their own time. Then, for those who are suitable vessels for generating the profound view in their [mental] continuum, he says that the unreal which change into something else each moment are not established through their own entities and that the real--those which do not change into something else each moment—are also not established through their own entities. Thus, it is said that Buddha teaches doctrines by way of these four stages to suit the minds of trainees.

Translation by John Buescher and Jeffrey Hopkins.

Not to be called medicine?⁷

As is said in Ashvaghosha's Essay on the *Stages of Cultivating the Ultimate Mind of Enlightenment* (*Paramarthabodhichittabhavanakramavar_nasamqraha*):

However, the Compassionate One
Abiding in the mode of the two truths
[And] thoroughly depending upon conventionalities,
Proclaimed selfless in the great voice of a lion.

Through synonyms such as emptiness, [suchness, final reality,] and so forth,
Limitless examples such as likeness with a magician's illusions, [dreams, mirages,] and so forth,
And the skillful means of a variety of vehicles, [Buddha] made known the meaning of the middle way not abiding in any gross or subtle extremes.

Within the Mahayana there are two [vehicles], the causal Perfection Vehicle and the effect Vajra Vehicle. I will express briefly a presentation of the grounds and paths of the three vehicles in the system of the first [of those], the Perfection Vehicle, in accordance with the uncommon mode of assertion of the glorious Prasangikas, the great thoroughly non-abiding Madhyamikas, the very peak of all proponents of tenets of the great and small vehicles. With respect to that, there are two parts: explaining the presentation of the grounds and paths generally, and briefly investigating the limits [of pervasion] beginning from the mode of assertion of objects of abandonment and antidotes. The general presentation of grounds and paths has two parts: the presentation of the grounds and paths of Fundamental Vehicle and of Mahayana.

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Bracketed material comes from commentary by Gyumay Kensur Losang Wangdu.

Part One

Fundamental Vehicle Grounds and Paths

The presentation of the grounds and paths of Fundamental Vehicle has three parts: definitions, divisions, and etymologies.

DEFINITION

The definition of a Fundamental Vehicle ground is:

a clear realizer of one who has entered a Fundamental Vehicle path which serves as a basis for the many good qualities which are its effect.

The definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer.

The two, Fundamental Vehicle ground and Fundamental Vehicle path, are synonymous.

DIVISIONS

This has two parts: [Fundamental Vehicle grounds and paths].

Fundamental Vehicle Grounds

When Fundamental Vehicle grounds are divided, there are the eight lesser grounds, because there are the ground of lineage, the ground of the eighth, the ground of seeing, the ground of diminishment, the ground of freedom from desire, the ground of realizing completion, the grounds of Hearers, and the grounds of Solitary Realizers.

Let us express illustrations of these [grounds] respectively:

1. The subject, the four paths of preparation—heat, peak, forbearance, and supreme mundane qualities—of Hearers who progress solely to peace, are grounds of lineage because of being clear realizers of Fundamental Vehicle common beings who are nonmistaken with respect to their lineage.
2. The subject, a realizer of an Approacher to Stream Enterer, is a ground of an eighth [person] of being a clear realizer of the eighth Superior when one counts backwards from Abider in the fruit of Foe Destroyer.⁸
3. The subject, a realizer of an Abider in the fruit of Stream Enterer, is a ground of seeing because of being a clear realizer of a Fundamental Vehicle Superior who initially sees the truth directly.
4. The subject, a realizing consciousness of an Abider in the fruit of a Once Returner, is a ground of diminishment because of being a clear realizer of a Fundamental Vehicle

⁸ Compassion, op. cit., p. 143

Superior who has accomplished diminishment, that is, has mostly abandoned worldly Desire Realm afflictions.

5. The subject, a realizer of an Abider in the fruit of Never Returner, is a ground of freedom from desire because of being a clear realizer of a Fundamental Vehicle Superior who is free from attachment to worldly Desire Realm afflictions.
6. The subject, realizers of the latter three Approachers [that is, Approachers to Once Returner, Never Returner, and Foe Destroyer], are grounds of Hearers because of being clear realizers of Fundamental Vehicle Superiors which are not included in the other grounds.
7. The subject, a realizer of an Abider in the fruit of Foe Destroyer, is a ground of realizing completion because of being a clear realizer of a Fundamental Vehicle Superior who realizes that he has brought to completion the activities of his path.
8. The subject, a realizer of a Solitary Realizer Superior, is a ground of a Solitary Realizer because of being a clear realizer of a Superior of a middling vehicle.

In some scriptures there also exists an explanation [of Fundamental Vehicle grounds] as eight [beginning with] the ground of seeing the wholesome.⁹ Also, when those eight are condensed, they are condensed into two, because they are condensed into the two, grounds of Hearers and grounds of Solitary Realizers.

Fundamental Vehicle Paths

When Fundamental Vehicle paths are divided, there are five, because there are the Fundamental Vehicle paths of accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation, and no more learning.

First, the definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path of accumulation is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the doctrine.

When these are divided, there are the three, the small, middling, and great Fundamental Vehicle paths of accumulation.

Second, the definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path of preparation is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the meaning.

When these are divided, there are the four, the Fundamental Vehicle heat, peak, forbearance, and supreme mundane qualities, paths of preparation. These first three each have the three—small, middling, and great [paths]. However, a Fundamental Vehicle supreme mundane qualities path of preparation does not have a division into the three, small, middling, and great, because it is no more than a single, smallest moment in which an action can be completed.

Third, the definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the truth.

When these are divided, there are the two, exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise and exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Fundamental Vehicle paths of seeing

⁹ Compassion, op. cit., p. 143

First, the definition of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the truth for which there is a vanishing of dualistic appearance with respect to emptiness

With respect to that [exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise], there are the three, an uninterrupted path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing, a liberated path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing and an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing which is neither of those two.

First, the definition of an uninterrupted path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing, and (2) serves as an actual antidote to the artificial conception of true existence.

When [uninterrupted paths of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing] are divided, there are the eight forbearances of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing. However, except for being distinguished merely by the factor of isolates, these [eight] are synonymous, for whatever is an uninterrupted path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing must be all eight forbearances.

Second, the definition of a liberated path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing, and (2) is thoroughly distinguished by [or posited by way of its] having abandoned the artificial conception of true existence.

When [liberated paths of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing] are divided, there are the eight knowledges of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing, but [as with the eight forbearances] these [eight knowledges] are synonymous.

Third, [an example of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing which is neither of those two—neither an uninterrupted path nor a liberated path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing] is, for example, an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise in the continuum of someone who is about to achieve a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation. For, at the time of going from a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing to one of meditation, it is necessary to proceed from meditative equipoise to meditative equipoise.

Second, the definition of an exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing is:

a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the truth which does not realize emptiness directly.

When these are divided, there are the two, exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Fundamental Vehicle paths of seeing which abide as method types of realizers, and exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Fundamental Vehicle paths of seeing which abide as wisdom types of realizers. The first is, for example, a thought in the continuum of one on the Fundamental Vehicle path of seeing which is intent on liberation for his or her own sake alone. The second is, for example, an exalted wisdom in the continuum of such a person which directly

realizes all phenomena as empty of true existence, like a magician's illusions.

The definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is:

a Fundamental Vehicle subsequent clear realizer.

When these are divided, there are the two, (1) exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise and (2) exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation.

First, the definition of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is:

a Fundamental Vehicle subsequent clear realizer for which dualistic appearance with respect to emptiness has vanished.

With respect to those [exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation], there are three: uninterrupted paths of Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation, liberated paths of Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation, and exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise which are neither of those two. First, the definition of an uninterrupted path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation, and (2) serves as the actual antidote to the innate conception of true existence that is its corresponding object of abandonment.

When these [uninterrupted paths of Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation] are divided, there are nine cycles, the small of the small uninterrupted paths of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which is the actual antidote to the great of the great conceptions of true existence that is to be abandoned by a path of meditation, and so forth.

Second, the definition of a liberated path of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation and (2) is directly released from the innate conception of true existence that is the corresponding object of abandonment of the uninterrupted path which induces it.

When these are divided, there are eight cycles, such as the small of the small liberated paths of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which is directly released from the big of the big conceptions of true existence, the object of abandonment by a path of meditation. Nine [cycles], however, do not exist, because the liberated path which is directly induced by the diamond-like meditative stabilization of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is the Fundamental Vehicle path of no more learning

The third [an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of the Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which is neither of those two] is, for instance, the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise in the continuum of one who is about to attain the middling of the small Fundamental Vehicle paths of meditation, and so forth, because at the time of moving from a lower Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation to a higher one, one must go from meditative equipoise to meditative equipoise.

Second, the definition of an exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation is:

a Fundamental Vehicle subsequent clear realizer which does not realize emptiness directly.

When these are divided, there are two, the exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which abides as a method type of realizer and the exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which abides as a wisdom type realizer. The first is, for instance, the thought in the continuum of someone on the Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which is intent on the bliss of peace for one's own sake alone. The second, for instance, is an exalted wisdom in the continuum of one on the Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation which realizes subtle conventionalities directly.

Fifth, the definition of a Fundamental Vehicle path of no more learning is:

that which (1) is a Fundamental Vehicle clear realizer of the truth and (2) has abandoned exhaustively the conception of true existence together with its seeds.

When these are divided, there are two, the Fundamental Vehicle path of no more learning which abides as a method type of realizer and the Fundamental Vehicle path of no more learning which abides as a wisdom type of realizer. The first is, for instance, the thought—in the continuum of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer [whose] mind has been captivated by the bliss of complete peace—that, “I will set myself in meditative equipoise in the sphere of peace in the manner of not rising again.” The second is, for instance, an exalted wisdom in the continuum of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer which directly realizes conventionalities as empty, like illusions.

When those five paths are condensed, they are condensed as two, because there are the paths of Fundamental Vehicle common beings—the two, Fundamental Vehicle paths of accumulation and preparation—and the paths of Fundamental Vehicle Superiors—the three, Fundamental Vehicle paths of seeing, meditation, and no more learning.

With respect to those [paths], the two, Hearers and Solitary Realizers who are definite in the Fundamental Vehicle lineage, for the sake of only their own mere release from cyclic existence take the two conceptions of self which are conceptions of persons and phenomena as inherently existent as the main objects of abandonment and the two selflessnesses which are negations of persons and phenomena as inherently existent as the main objects of meditation. They practice [realization of emptiness] for three lifetimes or one hundred eons, and so forth, through mere brief reasoning in conjunction with the collection of merit. Through this, they gradually progress over the four Fundamental Vehicle paths of learning, and finally in dependence upon the diamond-like meditative stabilization of the Fundamental Vehicle path of meditation, they abandon completely the afflictive obstructions and simultaneously actualize the state of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer. Since there are not even slight differences [between Hearers and Solitary Realizers with respect to these topics], individual presentations of the paths of Hearers and Solitary Realizers are not set forth here [in the Prasangika system].

In that way, the formulations of the paths of the two, Hearers and Solitary Realizers, are mostly similar, but are not utterly without difference. For, because naturally, differences in terms of having dull and middling faculties, [respectively], there arise differences of superiority and

inferiority [in terms of ability] to extend or not to extend the collection of merit for one hundred eons and so forth and through the force of that, also with respect to the fruit [which they attain]

Although all our own tenet systems from Svatantrika-Madhyamika on down, assert that in order to attain a Fundamental Vehicle nirvana without remainder, prior to that it is necessary to attain a Fundamental Vehicle nirvana, with remainder, in this system, the stages are definite that, having manifested a nirvana without remainder, after that one manifests a nirvana with remainder, because the meaning of “with remainder” and “without remainder” does not refer merely to being with or without a remainder of suffering aggregates which are impelled by former actions and afflictions. Rather, these mainly refer to possessing or not possessing a remainder of the appearance of true existence.

ETYMOLOGIES

There is a reason for calling Fundamental Vehicle clear realizers “grounds,” because, for example, just as in the world, the ground serves as a basis of production and abiding of fruit trees, forests, and so forth, so these [clear realizers,] by way of a similar quality which is the function of serving as the basis of the production and abiding of mundane and supramundane qualities, are called such.

With respect to those [clear-realizers], there is also a reason for calling [them] “paths,” because they are called such due to the fact of causing progression to the city of liberation. In general, although both terms are used with respect to both grounds and paths it is said that the main bases of using the term “ground” are the factors of method, and the main bases of using the term “path” are factors of wisdom.

Mahayana Grounds and Paths

Part Two Introduction

The presentation of the grounds and paths of Mahayana has three parts: definitions, divisions, and etymologies.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of a Mahayana ground is:

a clear realizer—of one who has entered a Mahayana path—which serves as a basis of the many good qualities which are its effect.

The definition of a Mahayana path is:

a Mahayana clear realizer.

The two, Mahayana ground and Mahayana path, are also synonymous.

DIVISIONS

When Mahayana grounds are divided, there are two, Mahayana causal and effect grounds. Mahayana causal grounds, Mahayana learner's ground, and Bodhisattva grounds are synonymous. Mahayana effect ground, Mahayana non-learner's ground, and Buddha ground are synonymous. When Mahayana causal grounds are divided, there are the two, grounds of Bodhisattva common beings, and grounds of Bodhisattva Superiors.

Chapter One Bodhisattva Common Beings

The definition of a ground of a Bodhisattva common being is:

a Bodhisattva's clear realizer which is included within the grounds of activities of belief.

Ground of a Mahayana common being and path of a Mahayana common being are synonymous.

When grounds of Bodhisattva common beings are divided, there are the two, Mahayana paths of accumulation and preparation.

Mahayana path of accumulation. The definition of a Mahayana path of accumulation is:

a Mahayana clear realizer of the doctrine.

When Mahayana paths are divided, there are three, the small, middling, and great Mahayana

paths of accumulation. The differences between the three [levels of the path of accumulation], are exemplified through three occasions of sick person: (1) although he has taken actual medicine, it is not yet certain whether the disease will be cured or not, (2) although certain to recover, it is difficult to recover quickly, and (3) it is easy to recover quickly. Just so, (1) at the time of the small path of accumulation, although one has obtained the precious mind of enlightenment [i.e., the altruistic intention to be become enlightened]—in dependence upon which arise all great and small good qualities of the Mahayana, just as all nourishment arises in dependence upon earth—it is not definite whether it will degenerate or not degenerate. (2) At the time of the middling [path of accumulation], although there does not occur degeneration [of the mind of enlightenment]—[which is at this time] like gold, which, although placed under the ground for time a long time does not decay or turn into something else—one is not able to move quickly to the path of preparation. (3) At the time of the great path of accumulation, one's good qualities increase higher like the daily increase of the waxing moon due to hearing precepts, having gone by magical emanation before the Buddhas of the ten directions in dependence upon the meditative stabilization of the stream of doctrine, and therefore one is definite to move quickly to the path of preparation.

Mahayana path of preparation. The definition of a Mahayana path of preparation is:

a Mahayana clear realizer of the meaning.

When these are divided, there are four, Mahayana heat, peak, forbearance, and supreme mundane quality paths of preparation. Each of these four has three [parts], small, middling, and great because one must accumulate the collections for many thousands of great eons during each of the four Mahayana paths of preparation, heat, and so forth, and therefore, the Mahayana path of preparation is superior to the Fundamental Vehicle path of preparation also by way of divisions.

As soon as one on the great path of accumulation attains a union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness, [he or she] passes to the heat path of preparation. Moreover, positing the division [of the path of preparation] into four, heat, and so forth, by way of the stages of the gradual diminishment of the elaborations of dualistic appearance at the time of setting in equipoise on emptiness and by way of the stages of newly attaining a special capacity to overcome the four manifest conceptions of apprehender and apprehended [as inherently existent] are the same in both the great and small vehicles. Because of that, the four Mahayana paths of preparation, heat and so forth, of one who has had previously the realization of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer must be posited in terms of boundaries which are a special mode of conjunction with the great waves of the two collections. It is posited that one [who has prior realization of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer] attains the Mahayana heat path of preparation in the second moment following the completion of accumulating however much of the two collections must be accumulated at the time of the Mahayana path of accumulation, and [this mode of procedure] is similar until the eighth ground. For, in order for the antidote, the wisdom realizing emptiness, to act as the antidote to the object of abandonment, the obstructions to omniscience, it is necessary to accumulate the great collection of merit for two periods of countless eons Similarly, Gyel-tsap's (Gyal-tshap) Great Commentary on (Maitreya's) "Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle" (Uttaratantra) says:

Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers have realized directly both subtle selflessnesses; nonetheless, at the time of entering the paths of the Mahayana, they definitely enter from the path of accumulation. This is because by way of hearing and thinking they initially settle well the limitless divisions of instances which are included within the accumulation of merit, then familiarize [with those] for one period of countless eons by way of mundane states arisen from meditation and subsequent to that attain the good qualities which are included within the first ground, the twelve [sets] of a hundred qualities, and so forth.

Moreover, although a Bodhisattva abiding in the four Mahayana paths of preparation, heat, and so forth, has not passed beyond the grounds of common beings, he or she is said to possess inconceivable good qualities. The *Cloud of Jewels Sutra* (*Ratnamegha Sutra*) says:

Even if a Bodhisattva who abides on this ground [the Mahayana path of preparation] is a common being, he or she has thoroughly passed beyond the troubles of children and possesses countless good qualities of meditative stabilization, retention, complete liberation, clairvoyance, and so forth.

Chapter Two

Bodhisattva Superiors

This has three parts: definitions, divisions, and explanation of the meaning of the individual divisions.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of a Bodhisattva Superior's ground is:

a Bodhisattva Superior's exalted knower which is affected by both the wisdom directly realizing emptiness and great compassion.

The two, a Bodhisattva Superior's Ground and a Bodhisattva Superior's path, are synonymous.

The definition of an ultimate ground of a Bodhisattva Superior is:

a Bodhisattva Superior's non-conceptual exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise whose entity is non-contaminated and which is affected by great compassion, its accompanier.

Moreover, Chandrakirti's *Auto Commentary on the "Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle Way'* says:

When just the non-contaminated wisdom of Bodhisattvas which is affected by compassion and so forth is divided into parts, they attain the name grounds because of serving as bases for good qualities.

Moreover, although the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of Bodhisattva Superiors and the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of Fundamental Vehicle Superiors are similar in realizing reality directly without being polluted by predispositions of ignorance, the difference of whether or not they are posited as ultimate Mahayana grounds is through the force of their being or not being under the other influence of great compassion and having or not having capacities such as the

twelve [sets] of one hundred qualities, and so forth. Not only that, but there is said to be a very great difference with respect to directly realizing or not realizing suchness from having made the mind vast or not having made it vast with respect to the meaning of the profound [emptiness] by way of [training] in limitless numbers of reasonings on the meaning of suchness, that is to say, the two selflessnesses, at the time of the paths of accumulation and preparation.¹⁰

DIVISIONS

Divisions of Grounds of Bodhisattva Superiors

There are ten because there are [these ten]: the first, very joyful; the second, the stainless; the

¹⁰ Compassion, op. cit., p. 175

third, the luminous; the fourth, the radiant; the fifth, difficult to overcome; the sixth, the manifest; the seventh, the gone afar; the eighth, the immovable; the ninth, good intelligence; and the tenth, clouds of doctrine.

Moreover, with regard to the division into the ten grounds, there is division due to the enhancement of good qualities on later [levels] over former ones. These are the feature of the number of good qualities increasing higher and higher, the feature of the majesty of power increasing higher and higher, the feature of a surpassing mode of practicing the ten perfections, the feature of the mode of taking fruitional rebirths, and so forth. However, since there does not exist even a slight difference with regard to the mode of the ten ultimate grounds' seeing the pure nature, reality, divisions are not made by way of differences of dissimilar entities, objects of observation, or aspects [of those ultimate grounds]. This is because the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds (Dashabhūmika Sutra)* says:

Just as the wise cannot express or see
The trail of any bird across the sky,
So none of the grounds of Conqueror Children
Can be expressed. Then how can one listen?

However [differences between these ultimate grounds] are explained in terms of gradual progression of a mere portion of those [grounds]
By way of love, compassion, and aspirational prayers,
And not in terms of objects of activity of the mind.¹¹

Nonetheless, until the tenth ground there is the difference of newly seeing a formerly not seen factor of freedom from adventitious defilements in terms of the pure nature, reality. For, it is said that the exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of the ten grounds have greater and lesser vision in terms of directly realizing the true cessations which were obtained by the uninterrupted paths of the lower grounds and of not directly realizing the true cessations which will be attained by the uninterrupted paths of the higher grounds. Still, Tathagatas never move from the meditative stabilization which directly actualizes the completely perfect Truth Body, the factor of having abandoned the obstructions which are predispositions. Moreover, the *Praise of the Element of Qualities (Dharmadhātu-stotra)* says:

Just as the crescent moon
Is seen to increase day by day,
Similarly, those abiding on the grounds also
Are seen to increase in stages.

On the fifteenth day of the waxing moon
The moon becomes complete.
Similarly, on the completion of the grounds
The Truth Body is fully manifest.

Furthermore, although Bodhisattva's abiding on the ten grounds and Tathagatas do not

¹¹ *Compassion, op. cit.*, p. 136

differ with regard to seeing reality directly, they differ in that the former have not abandoned predispositions to ignorance and thus do not see [reality] for more than a brief time, whereas, since Tathagatas have abandoned the predispositions to ignorance exhaustively, they never rise from meditative equipoise realizing emptiness directly. The *Sutra [on the Ten Grounds]* says-

Like the sun in the sky where clouds are seen,
Even you Superiors who have the pure eyes of intelligence
Are of partial intelligence. You do not see all.
You Blessed Ones however, who have the Truth Body
Of limitless intelligence, see all the limitless objects
Of knowledge pervading the expanse of space.

There is a purpose for making the division into the ten grounds, because for the sake of refuting wrong conceptions of those who do not assert a presentation of ten grounds in the Mahayana, a division of the Mahayana into ten grounds is made, having set up as an example the existence of the eight lower grounds which are renowned to the Fundamental Vehicle follower himself. Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland of Advice for the King (Rajaparikatharatnavali)* says:

Just as eight Fundamental Vehicle grounds are explained in the Hearer Vehicle,
Similarly, there are ten Bodhisattva grounds in the Mahayana.

Divisions of Paths of Bodhisattva Superiors

There are two: paths of seeing and paths of meditation.

Mahayana path of seeing. The definition of a Mahayana path of seeing is:

a Mahayana clear realizer of the truth.

When these are divided, there are the two, exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise and of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of seeing.

The definition of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of seeing is:

a Mahayana clear realizer of the truth for which dualistic appearance have vanished.

Also, with respect to exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of seeing, there are three, uninterrupted paths of a Mahayana path of seeing, liberated paths of a Mahayana path of seeing, and exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of seeing which are neither of those two. The definition of an uninterrupted path of a Mahayana path of seeing is:

that which is (1) an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of seeing and (2) an actual antidote to the artificial conception of true existence.

When uninterrupted paths of a Mahayana path of seeing are divided, there are the eight

forbearances of a Mahayana path of seeing. Those [eight] also are synonymous [with each other].
The definition of a liberated path of a Mahayana path of seeing is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of seeing and (2) is, distinguished by having abandoned the artificial conception of true existence.

When liberated paths of a Mahayana path of seeing are divided, there are the eight knowledges of the Mahayana path of seeing. These also are produced simultaneously.

Exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of the Mahayana path of seeing which are neither of those two are, for instance, the exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of the Mahayana path of seeing of someone who has had prior realization of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer. The reason for this is: when a Hearer or Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyer enters the Mahayana path they already abandoned the conception of true existence while in the Fundamental Vehicle. Since in order to abandon the obstructions to omniscience, they must accumulate the collection of merit for two countless eons initially, at the time of the [paths of] accumulation and preparation, this person trains chiefly in the collection of merit. Then, since they have already abandoned the afflictive obstructions to omniscience [which are their] objects of abandonment over the seven impure grounds they also train mainly in the collection of merit. Moreover, it is said that, for the sake of empowering the collection of exalted wisdom in meditative equipoise [such a Foe Destroyer] sets in one-pointed equipoise on emptiness, but the [verbal] conventions of uninterrupted path and liberated path are not used for this meditative equipoise. Such a meditative equipoise is neither an uninterrupted path nor a liberated path.

Second, the definition of an exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Mahayana path of seeing is:

a Mahayana clear realizer of the truth which does not realize emptiness directly.

When exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of a Mahayana path of seeing are divided, there are two, exalted wisdoms—of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of seeing which abide as method types of realizers and exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of seeing which abide as wisdom types of realizers. The first is, for instance, an [altruistic] mind generation which is a pure unusual attitude in the continuum of a first ground Bodhisattva. The second is, for instance, an exalted wisdom in the continuum of such a person which directly realizes conventional truths.

Mahayana path of meditation. The definition of a Mahayana path of meditation is:

a Mahayana subsequent clear realizer.

When Mahayana paths of meditation are divided, there are two, exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise and of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of meditation. The definition of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of meditation is:

a Mahayana subsequent clear realizer for which dualistic appearances with respect to emptiness have vanished.

When these are divided, there are three, uninterrupted paths of Mahayana paths of meditation, liberated paths of Mahayana paths of meditation, and exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise of Mahayana paths of meditation which are neither of those two.

The definition of an uninterrupted path of a Mahayana path of meditation is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of meditation and (2) serves as an actual antidote to whichever of the two [types of] obstructions is its corresponding object of abandonment.

When uninterrupted paths of a Mahayana path of meditation are divided, there are two, uninterrupted paths of Mahayana paths of meditation which actually abandon the innate afflictive obstructions and uninterrupted paths of Mahayana] paths of meditation which actually abandon the obstructions with regard to objects of knowledge.

When [uninterrupted paths of Mahayana paths of meditation which actually abandon the innate affliction obstructions] are divided, there are seven, because (1) the six [cycles of] innate conceptions of true existence from the big of the big to the small of the middling are actually abandoned respectively by the six uninterrupted paths of meditation from the second ground to the seventh and (3) the cycle of the three small innate conceptions of true existence are abandoned simultaneously by one moment of the uninterrupted path of the lower part of the eighth ground. This is because the statement that when one attains the eighth ground one is able to abandon in just a short time that which one could not abandon even in one hundred thousand eons of the seventh ground and below is suitable to refer to the capacity of one on this ground to abandon in one moment the cycle of the three small conceptions of true existence which are objects of abandonment of a path of meditation. The reason for this is that there exist on this ground spontaneous deeds pacifying coarse striving and exertion. It is like the way in which the progress of a great ship is difficult until reaching the ocean, but having reached it, it can cross each day [what would have taken] one hundred years [before reaching it]. The *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* says:

O Children of the Conqueror, it is like this: For example, until it reaches the great ocean, a great ship which goes on the great ocean must be forcibly moved and made to go. As soon as it reaches the great ocean, it is carried by billows of wind. It goes without needing to be moved forcibly. It [traverses] effortlessly that which one could not traverse even in a hundred years by means of the previous forcible moving and going.

O Children of the Conqueror, similarly, one who has thoroughly accumulated the collection of roots of virtue of a Bodhisattva and achieves well the Mahayana having reached the ocean of the deeds of Bodhisattvas, by means of a spontaneous exalted wisdom obtains in one brief period a measure of all-knowing exalted wisdom that he could not have obtained even in one hundred thousand eons of those previous forcible deeds.

Both of our textbooks on the general meaning and decisive analysis of [Chandrakirti's Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"] say:

Just that one uninterrupted path of one who has not gone previously on a Fundamental

Vehicle path and has just attained the eighth ground actually abandons all three cycles of the small innate conceptions of true existence and induces the liberated path which is directly released from those [conceptions]. Subsequently, the obstructions to omniscience are abandoned, for, this uninterrupted path has a greater capacity actually to abandon the object of abandonment than the uninterrupted paths of lower grounds. For example, it is like the statement that in the Mantra Vehicle one moment of the objective clear light, the fourth stage, actually abandons both the artificial and innate conception of true existence.

Therefore, Bodhisattva Superiors who have not previously gone on a Fundamental Vehicle path, simultaneously with achieving the liberated path of the lower part of the eighth ground, manifest a nirvana which is a complete abandonment of the afflictive obstructions and become Foe Destroyers who are free from desire with respect to the three realms. This is because, simultaneously with that [attainment of the liberated path of the lower half of the eighth ground], they have abandoned the root of cyclic existence, the two conceptions of self as well as their seeds.

In that way, the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* says, “Here, just at this time, he passes thoroughly beyond sorrow.” Chandrakirti’s *Supplement to (Nagarjuna’s) ‘Treatise on the Middle Way’* says:

Because an awareness which is without desire does not abide together with faults, on the eighth ground, those defilements are thoroughly pacified along with their root, the afflictions are extinguished, and [one] is unsurpassed in the three realms. However, [one] is unable to attain all the fortunes of Buddhas, limitless like the sky.

Chandrakirti’s *Autocommentary on the ‘Supplement to (Nagarjuna’s) ‘Treatise on the Middle Way’* says:

Here [on the eighth ground] there occurs just freedom from desire with respect to the three realms because, without separating from desire, achieving nirvana does not occur.

Also it says:

In that way, all the afflictions are extinguished and one becomes unsurpassed in the three levels, that is, in the three realms, but . . .

[The *Sutra*, *Supplement*, and *Autocommentary*] say this very clearly.

However, it must be asserted that Bodhisattvas on the pure grounds who have had prior realization of a Fundamental Vehicle Foe Destroyer are non-learners since, having previously brought to completion all the activities of a learner with respect to Fundamental Vehicle paths, they have become non-learners; however, they are not non-learners of any of the three vehicles. Also, it must be asserted that Bodhisattvas who have attained a liberated path of the eighth ground and above and have not gone previously on Fundamental Vehicle paths are not non-learners since they have not previously brought to completion the activities of ,learning the paths of. any of the three vehicles; however, since they have destroyed completely the foe of the afflictions, they are Foe Destroyers. This is because of being like, for example, the explanation that in the Vehicle of Highest Mantra one at the [stage of] union of a learner is a Foe Destroyer

but is not a non-learner.

Second, when the uninterrupted paths of meditation which actually abandon the obstructions to omniscience are divided, there are four, because (1) the two, the great and the middling obstructions to omniscience, are actually abandoned respectively by the two, the uninterrupted path of the upper part of the eighth ground and the uninterrupted path of the ninth ground and (2) the two, the coarse and subtle small obstructions to omniscience, are actually abandoned respectively by two, the initial and final uninterrupted paths of the tenth ground. Moreover, this way of not beginning to abandon the obstructions to omniscience until one has abandoned all the afflictive obstructions is very correct because until one has abandoned completely the conception of true existence, one cannot abandon even slightly the predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearances which arise through the force of that [conception of true existence]. For example, without clearing away coarse stains in cloth, a washerman is unable to remove subtle stains in cloth even a little.

Not only that, but with regard to one who possesses the Mahayana lineage initially abandoning the afflictive obstructions and subsequently abandoning the obstructions to omniscience there is another special important point, for it has been said by non-erroneous excellent beings to be similar to the way in which in Mantra, for example, one abandons exhaustively the afflictive obstructions by means of the actual clear light of the four~ stage and after that, having attained a pure illusory body, begins to abandon the obstructions to omniscience.

Second, the definition of a liberated path of a Mahayana path of meditation is:

that which (1) is an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of meditation, and (2) is directly released from either of the two obstructions which are the corresponding object of abandonment of the uninterrupted path inducing it.

When liberated paths of a Mahayana path of meditation are divided, it is easy to understand that there are the ten liberated paths of the path of meditation from the second ground to the tenth.

An exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Mahayana path of meditation which is neither an uninterrupted path nor a liberated path, is, for instance, an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior who is just about to attain the third ground, and so forth. This is because it is said that in all cases, beginning from passing from the end of the Mahayana supreme mundane qualities path of preparation to the first ground [and continuing up through] passing from the uninterrupted path at the end of the continuum [as a sentient being, that is, as a non-Buddha] to the first moment of an omniscient consciousness, it is necessary to make the movement from meditative equipoise to meditative equipoise.

Second, the definition of an exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment of a Mahayana path of meditation is:

a Mahayana subsequent clear realizer which does not realize emptiness directly.

When exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of a Mahayana path of meditation are divided, there are the two, exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of meditation which abide as method types of realizers and exalted wisdoms of subsequent attainment of Mahayana paths of meditation which abide as wisdom types of realizers. The first, are, for instance, the three paths of meditation of aspiration, dedication, and rejoicing in the continuum

of a Bodhisattva on the path of meditation. The second is, for instance, an exalted knower which realizes emptiness in the manner of a conceptual appearance in the continuum of a Bodhisattva on the path of meditation.

Chapter Three

The Ten Grounds of Bodhisattva Superiors

THE FIRST GROUND

The explanation of the good qualities of the first, the Very Joyful, from among the ten grounds has four parts: the mode of achieving the qualities, the mode of achieving majesty of power, the mode of surpassing practice of a perfection, and the mode of taking fruitional rebirths.

The Mode of Achieving Qualities on the First Ground

Here on the first ground one achieves the twelve sets of one hundred good qualities:

1. One sees one hundred Buddhas in different Buddha-lands instantly with the divine eye.
2. By way of that one knows how they bless oneself.
3. One blesses a moment such that it lasts one hundred eons.
4. One enters into displaying the mode of taking birth, the category of the past beginning limit, and the mode of passing to death, the latter limit, within those one hundred eons.
5. One is able to enter into and rise from one hundred different meditative stabilizations in one moment.
6. With one's own body one goes to one hundred worldly realms
7. Through vibrating those hundred [worlds] one causes trainees to aspire [to hear and practice the doctrine].
8. Having illuminated those one hundred [worlds] with one's own light, one teaches others.
9. One ripens one hundred sentient beings in one moment by way of magical emanations.
10. One opens one hundred different doors of doctrine.
11. One emanates one hundred different bodies.
12. One is able to surround each of one's own one hundred bodies with one hundred Bodhisattva Superiors.¹²

The Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the First Ground

A mode of achieving majesty of power exists because the exalted wisdom which realizes emptiness directly, in which one moves from the grounds of activities through belief to the first ground—that is to say, the sixteen moments of knowledge and forbearance of the Mahayana path of seeing—abandons that which is to be abandoned by a path of seeing, the three thorough entanglements together with their seeds.¹³ Then, on the occasion of the wisdoms subsequent to meditative equipoise which are induced by that [uninterrupted path of a Mahayana path of seeing] one accumulates vast collections of merit for the sake of abandoning the great of the

¹² *Compassion, op. cit.*, p. 134.

¹³ The three entanglements are the view of a personal identity as real I and mine, viewing bad systems of ethics and behavior as superior, and afflicted doubt. These are like not wanting to go on a path, mistaking a path, and having doubt about the path. See *Compassion, op., cit.*, p. 141.

great afflictive obstructions of the three realms to be abandoned by paths of meditation. Thereby, one sees signs of being able to abandon those. Through setting in equipoise on emptiness [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to the great of the afflictions of the three realms to be abandoned by a path of meditation and simultaneously one is able to pass to the second ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the First Ground

On this ground, since one has been born into the lineage of the King of Doctrine, the Tathagatha, one outshines Hearers and Solitary Realizers by way of lineage, and due to having overcome exhaustively the chance to generate manifest miserliness whether awake or in dreams, when one gives gifts of one's own body, resources, and roots of virtue, one gives them without observing the inherent existence of the three spheres [of giving, recipient, and given], like moving [something] from one's right hand to one's left hand.¹⁴

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the First Ground

Having taken rebirth as a universal monarch [Chakravartin] controlling Jambudvipa, one furthers the welfare of sentient beings.

In that way, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (441-2) says:

The first of these is the Very Joyful
Since the Bodhisattva is rejoicing.
[He or she] forsakes the three entanglements and is born
Into the lineage of the Tathagatas.

Through the maturation of these qualities
The perfection of giving becomes supreme,
[The Bodhisattva] vibrates a hundred worlds
And becomes a great lord of the world.

There is a reason for calling this ground the Very Joyful because seeing that, through the power of amassing the accumulations in subsequent attainment in dependence upon directly realizing emptiness in meditative equipoise, one has a special capacity to [further] the welfare of sentient beings and to achieve an omniscient consciousness, one attains marvelous mental joy. Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (*Mahayanasutralamkara*) (XX.32) says:

Seeing that one is close to enlightenment
And can achieve the purposes of sentient beings
One generates great joy.
Therefore it is called the Very Joyful

Also, Nagarajuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Since one has thoroughly abandoned unwholesome bases,

¹⁴ Compassion, op. cit., p. 168.

And taken up well the wholesome bases,
At this time that definite realizer
Is called the Joyful.

THE SECOND GROUND

The explanation of the second ground, the Stainless, has four parts.

The Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Second Ground

On this ground one attains one thousand sets of twelve good qualities explained previously.

The Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Second Ground

On the occasion of the exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment, one amasses the collection of merit for the sake of abandoning the middling of the great afflictions which are objects of abandonment by a path of meditation. Having seen the signs of the ability to do this, one sets in equipoise on emptiness. Thereby [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to the middling of the great afflictions which are objects of abandonment by a path of meditation, and one is able to progress to the third ground.

The Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Second Ground

On this ground through the force of the wisdom directly realizing the three spheres as empty of true existence, the three ethics of a Bodhisattva are guarded by way of destroying the opportunity for the generation of the stains of faulty ethics at the time of either waking or dreams.¹⁵

The Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Second Ground

Having taken birth as a universal monarch who controls the four continents, one furthers the welfare of sentient beings. Similarly, Nararjuna's *Precious Garland* (443-4) says:

The second is called the Stainless
Because all ten virtuous actions
Of body, speech, and mind are stainless
And [the Bodhisattva] naturally abides in them.

Through the maturation of these [qualities]
The perfection of ethics becomes supreme,
[The Bodhisattva] becomes a Universal Monarch helping beings,
Master of the glorious [four continents]
And of the seven precious substances.

There is a reason for calling this ground the Stainless because, for example, just as when

¹⁵ The three ethics of a Bodhisattva are the ethics of keeping vows, practicing virtues, and achieving the aims of sentient beings.

one has wiped away the stains on one's face, one's face is free from stains, so this Bodhisattva has abandoned the stains of faulty ethics even in mere dreams, due to which it is called the Stainless. Maitreya's Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras (XX.33ab) says:

Because of being free from the stains of exertion at faulty ethics
It is asserted as the ground of the Stainless.

Moreover, Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

As one who has various stains of desire and so forth is always stained,
Whoever is without stain is called the Stainless.

THE THIRD GROUND

The explanation of the third ground, the Luminous, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Third Ground

On this ground one attains the twelve sets of qualities explained before one hundred thousand-fold.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Third Ground

Here one amasses at the time of subsequent attainment the collection of merit for the sake of abandoning the small of the great afflictive obstructions to the abandoned by a path of meditation. Then, seeing signs [of being able to abandon those] one sets in meditative equipoise on emptiness. Thereby [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to the small of the great afflictive obstructions to be abandoned by a path of meditation, and one is able to move to the fourth ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection

On this ground one achieves a greatly surpassing practice of the perfection of patience, destroying all chances of anger whether awake or dreaming.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Third Ground

Having taken birth as Shakra, lord of the gods, one furthers the welfare the sake of sentient beings.¹⁶

In that way, Nagarjuna's Precious Garland (445-6) says :

¹⁶ "Shakra": strong, powerful, mighty, applied to various gods but especially to Indra." Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 1045.

The third ground is called the Luminous because
The pacifying light of wisdom arises.
The concentrations of superknowledges are generated,
While desire and hatred are extinguished completely.

Through the maturation of these qualities
The Bodhisattva surpassingly practices the deeds of patience
And putting an end to desire completely
Becomes a great wise king of the gods.

There is a reason for calling this ground the Luminous because, like fire burning a collection of firewood, the light of the exalted wisdom which destroys dualistic appearances arises in meditative equipoise whereby in subsequent attainment there dawns an appearance which is like [the color] of clouds [at the time] of sunrise and sunset.¹⁷ Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.33cd) says:

Because of causing the great illumination
Of doctrine it is the Luminous.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Having stopped well the nets of afflictions,
The very clear stainless wisdom
Clears away immeasurable darkness,
Whereby it is called the Luminous.

THE FOURTH GROUND

The explanation of the fourth ground, the Radiant, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Fourth Ground

On this ground one achieves the twelve sets of qualities explained previously one hundred ten million-fold.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Fourth Ground

In subsequent attainment one amasses the collection of merit for the sake of abandoning the great of the middling afflictive obstructions to be abandoned by a path of meditation. Seeing signs [of being able to abandon those] one enters into meditative equipoise on emptiness. Thereby [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to those [obstructions] and one is able to move to the fifth ground.

¹⁷ Translation doubtful.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Fourth Ground

On this ground, destroying manifest occasions of the three lazinesses whether awake or dreaming, one achieves a surpassing practice of the perfection of effort.¹⁸

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Fourth Ground

Having taken birth as lord of the Land Without Combat, one effects the welfare of sentient beings. Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (447-8) says:

The fourth is called the Radiant
Because the light of true wisdom arises
In which [the Bodhisattva] cultivates supremely
All the harmonies with enlightenment.

Through the maturation of these qualities [the Bodhisattva] becomes
A kind of the gods in [the Land] Without Combat,
[He or she] is skilled in quelling the arising of the view
That the transitory collection [is a real self].

There is a reason for calling this ground the Radiant because on this ground, in dependence upon specially cultivating the subtle and coarse [forms of] the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment in meditative equipoise, in subsequent attainment there arises an appearance of light surpassing that of the former ground, whereby it is called such.

Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.34) says:

Because of possessing factors harmonious with enlightenment burning forth like light.
This ground burns away the two whereby it is called the Radiant.¹⁹

Nagarjuna's Praise of the Element of Qualities says:

This ground, due to being illuminated by the light of constant virtue
And encircled by the light of the exalted wisdom that has abandoned commotion
Is asserted as the Radiant.

THE FIFTH GROUND

The explanation of the fifth ground, the Difficult to Overcome, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Fifth Ground

¹⁸ The three types of laziness are (1) enthusiasm for non-virtue, (2) lack of enthusiasm for virtue, and (3) the sense that because of inferiority one cannot practice virtue. See Lati Rinbochay, *Meditative States in Tibetan Buddhism*, London: Wisdom Publications, 1983.

¹⁹ "The two" refers to coarse and subtle view of a personal identity as a real I and mine. Source: Kensur Yeshey Tupden.

On this ground one achieves the twelve sets of good qualities explained previously one thousand ten million-fold.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Fifth Ground

In subsequent attainment one amasses the collection [of merit] for the sake of abandoning the middling of the middling afflictive obstructions to be abandoned by a path of meditation. Seeing signs [of being able to do that] one sets in meditative equipoise. Thereby, [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to those [obstructions] and one is able to move to the sixth ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Fifth Ground

On this ground through the force of (1) destroying the possibility of becoming distracted in either a waking or dreaming state and (2) becoming skilled in the coarse and subtle forms of the four Noble Truths, one achieves a greatly surpassing practice of the perfection of concentration.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Fifth Ground

Having taken rebirth as a lord of the Joyous Heaven, one furthers the welfare of sentient beings.
Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (449-50) says:

The fifth is called the Extremely Difficult to Overcome
Since all evil ones find it extremely hard to conquer [a Bodhisattva on the fifth ground]
[He or she] becomes skilled in knowing the subtle
Meanings of the noble truths and so forth.

Through the maturation of these qualities [the Bodhisattva] becomes
A king of the gods abiding in the Joyous Land.
One overcomes the sources of afflictions
And of the views of all Forders.

There is a reason for calling this ground the Difficult to Overcome because the abandoning of faults and taking up of good qualities [done] on this ground are very difficult even for Bodhisattvas, and it is difficult even for devils such as Garab Wangchuk to overcome [this Bodhisattva], due to which it is called the Difficult to Overcome.

Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.35) says:

Because one ripens well all living beings
And also guards one's own mind
It is difficult to be conquered even by the intelligent.
Therefore it is called the Difficult to Conquer.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Since [the Bodhisattva on the fifth ground] has all the knowledges and arts,

The various aspects of concentrations,
And has conquered afflictions very difficult to overcome,
[This ground] is called the Difficult to Conquer.

THE SIXTH GROUND

The explanation of the sixth ground, the Manifest, has four parts.

The Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Sixth Ground

On this ground one achieves the twelve sets of those good qualities one hundred thousand ten million-fold.

The Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Sixth Ground

On the occasion [of the exalted wisdom] of subsequent attainment one amasses the collection [of merit] for the sake of being able to abandon the small of the middling afflictions which are abandoned by a path of meditation. Seeing signs [of being able to abandon them] one sets in meditative equipoise on emptiness. Thereby [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to those afflictions and one is able to move to the seventh ground.

The Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Sixth Ground

On this ground through the force of destroying obscuration of view with respect to suchness in both waking and sleeping states and becoming skilled suchness, that is to say, the profound depending arising, one newly achieves an uncommon absorption of cessation whereby one achieves a surpassing practice of the perfection of wisdom.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Sixth Ground

Having taken rebirth as a lord of [the Land of] Enjoying Emanation one furthers the welfare of sentient beings.

Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (451-2) says

The sixth is called the Approaching because [the Bodhisattva] is
Approaching the qualities of a Buddha;
Through familiarity with calm abiding and special insight
[He or she] attains cessation and is thus advanced [in wisdom] .

Through the maturation of these qualities [the Bodhisattva] becomes
A king of the gods [in the Land] of Enjoying Emanation.
Hearers cannot surpass one
Those with the pride of superiority are pacified

There is a reason for calling this ground the Approaching [or the Manifest] because through

meditating on dependent-arising according to the forward system and the reverse system one manifests [realization of] the emptiness of true existence of cyclic existence and nirvana and is approaching manifestly the qualities of a Buddha, due to which it is called the Approaching. Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.36) says:

Because of manifesting here [realization of] these two,
Cyclic existence and nirvana [as empty of true existence]
In dependence upon the perfection of wisdom,
It is asserted as the ground of the Manifest.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

With respect to all three aspects of enlightenment,
The all-inclusive marvel and
The profound production and disintegration
This ground is asserted as the Manifest.

THE SEVENTH GROUND

The explanation of the seventh ground, the Gone Afar, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Seventh Ground

[On this ground] one achieves [the twelve sets of] good qualities [explained previously] one hundred ten thousand trillion-fold.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Seventh Ground

Having seen the signs of being able to abandon simultaneously the three cycles of the small afflictive obstructions to be abandoned by a path of meditation, due to having accumulated the collection [of merit] in subsequent attainment, one sets in meditative equipoise on emptiness. Thereby [one meditative consciousness] becomes an actual antidote to all three of those [obstructions] and one is able to move to the eighth ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Seventh Ground

Through the force of having achieved a greatly surpassing practice of the perfection of wisdom, one has the capacity manifestly both to enter into and to rise from in one shortest moment that uncommon absorption of cessation which was attained earlier on the sixth ground, whereby one outshines Hearers and Solitary Realizers also by power of intelligence.²⁰ Also, having cultivated vastly a joy which is free from conceit with respect to all the virtuous roots of oneself and others in terms of the six [perfections] giving and so forth, one achieves a surpassing practice of the perfection of method which increases [that joy] higher and higher.

²⁰ *Compassion, op. cit.*, p. 145.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Seventh Ground

There is a mode of taking fruitional rebirth because, having taken birth as a lord of [the Land of] Controlling Others' Emanations, one furthers the welfare of sentient beings.

In that way, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (453-4) says:

The seventh is the Gone Afar because
The number [of good qualities] has increased,
Moment by moment [the Bodhisattva] can enter
The equipoise of cessation.

Through the maturation of these qualities [the Bodhisattva] becomes a master
Of the gods [in the Land] of Control over Others' Emanations,
[He or she] becomes a great leader of teachers because of
Directly realizing the [four] noble truths.

There is a reason for calling this ground the Gone Afar because, in dependence upon cultivating the path for a long time, there is an uninterrupted relationship between the two, the final path having signs and having exertion, and the path of sole passage.²¹ Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.37ab) says:

Because it is related with the path of sole passage
[This ground] is asserted as the ground of the Gone Afar.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Because of establishing the wheel [of doctrine?], in all aspects
Playing in the lattice-work of light,
And having crossed the mud of the ocean of cyclic existence,
It is called the Gone Afar.²²

THE EIGHTH GROUND

The explanation of the eighth ground, Immoveable, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Eighth Ground

[On this ground] one achieves each of the twelve sets of good qualities explained previously equal to the number of minute particles of one hundred thousand realms of one thousand great billion worlds

²¹ The final path having signs and having exertion refers to the end of the seventh ground. The path of sole progress refers to the last of the three periods of countless eons necessary for attaining Buddhahood in the system of the Perfection Vehicle. Source: Kensur Yeshay Tupden.

²² Translation doubtful.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Eighth Ground

When, having just attained this ground at the time of actualizing the non-conceptual exalted wisdom which is without coarse exertion, the Buddhas of the ten directions arouse [the Bodhisattva] from meditative equipoise and exhort [him or her] to accumulate the collection of merit in subsequent attainment, the Bodhisattva has both passed beyond the youthful grounds and stopped the nirvana possessing [selfish] thoughts.²³ In accordance with the exhortations of the Buddhas, one amasses the collection of merit for measureless eons for the sake of abandoning the obstructions to omniscience. Thereby one abandons the great of the predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearances on the upper half of the eighth ground. Through amassing the collection [of merit] again one is able to move to the ninth ground simultaneously with achieving an actual antidote to the middling of the predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearance.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Eighth Ground

By way of dedicating in the manner of non-observation [of agent, object, and activity] as inherently existent the virtues of the six [perfections], giving and so forth, of oneself and others which were, are, and will be accumulated in the three times as causes of complete enlightenment for the sake of others, and by way of planting various aspiration prayers, one achieves a surpassing practice of the perfection of aspirational prayers.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Eighth Ground

Having taken birth as a great Brahma, lord who is foremost in the generality of the thousand worlds, one furthers the aims of sentient beings. Similarly, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (455-6) says:

The eighth is the Immoveable, the youthful ground,
Through non-conceptuality [the Bodhisattva] is immoveable
And the spheres of [his or her] body, speech, and mind's
Activities are inconceivable.

Through the maturation of these qualities
[He or she] becomes a Brahma, lord of a thousand worlds
Foe Destroyers and Solitary Realizers and so forth
Cannot surpass [this Bodhisattva] in laying out the meaning [of the doctrines].

There is a reason for calling this ground the Immoveable because, through the force of having vanquished any chance for generating manifest conceptions of true existence and of having thoroughly pacified coarse exertion, one is not moved by either discrimination having signs or

²³ "The youthful grounds" refers to the first seven Bodhisattva grounds. Source: Kensur Yeshey Tupden. "Nirvana possessing [selfish] thought" is a literal but doubtful translation.

signless discrimination having exertion.²⁴ Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.37cd) says:

Because [this Bodhisattva] is not moved by the two discriminations
[He or she] is definitely called the Immoveable.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Since [this Bodhisattva] is definitely held by the Buddhas,
Enters the ocean of exalted wisdom, and
Is spontaneously without striving,
[He or she] is not moved by the circle of demons.

THE NINTH GROUND

The explanation of the ninth ground, Good Intelligence, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities on the Ninth Ground

[On this ground] one attains [the twelve sets of] good qualities [explained previously] equal to the number of minute particles of ten hundred thousand countless realms of a great thousand billion worlds.

Mode of Achieving Power on the Ninth Ground

On this ground, just as the prince approaches being bestowed empowerment as regent, [this Bodhisattva] approaches close to being bestowed the empowerment of great light rays. Having amassed the collection [of merit] for the sake of abandoning the coarse of the small predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearance, one sees the signs of being able to abandon [those]. From within meditative equipoise on emptiness one is able to go to the tenth ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Ninth Ground

One achieves a greatly surpassing practice of the perfection of power from the point of view of having come to have a potent capacity for definite achievement of the six perfections, not being overwhelmed by the discordant class of any of them.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Ninth Ground

Having taken birth as a great Brahma, lord of a million worlds, one accomplishes the aims of sentient beings.

In this way, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (457-83) says :

²⁴ "Discrimination having signs" refers to the conception of inherent existence. "Signless discrimination having exertion" refers to an awareness realizing emptiness in the continuum of a non-Buddha. Such a consciousness is free from coarse exertion but not from subtle exertion. Source: Kensur Yeshey Tupden.

The ninth ground is called
Good Intelligence.
Like a regent [the Bodhisattva] has attained correct individual
Knowledge and therefore has good intelligence on this [ground].

Through the maturation of these qualities
[The Bodhisattva] becomes a Brahma who is master of a million worlds
Foe Destroyers and so forth cannot surpass [him or her]
In responding to questions in the thoughts of sentient beings.

There is a reason for calling this ground Good Intelligence because one attains the good intelligence of the four individual correct knowledges and cannot be surpassed by Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers from the point of view of [internal] contradictions or mistakes and so forth with respect to thoughts or questions in the minds of trainees.²⁵ Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX. 38ab) says:

[Because it has] the good intelligence of the individual correct knowledges
This ground is that of Good Intelligence.

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

Since this yogi has completed
All the individual correct knowledges
And sermons teaching the doctrine,
This ground is asserted as that of Good Intelligence.

THE TENTH GROUND

The explanation of the tenth ground, the Cloud of Doctrine, has four parts.

Mode of Achieving Qualities of the Tenth Ground

[On this ground] one achieves [the twelve sets of] qualities [explained previously] equal to the number of subtle particles in an inexpressible number of an inexpressible number of Buddha Lands.

Mode of Achieving Majesty of Power on the Tenth Ground

As soon as one attains this ground, the Buddhas of the ten directions bestow the empowerment of great light rays whereby one becomes a lofty regent of the Ones Gone Thus the kings of doctrine. In subsequent attainment, one achieves a similitude of a Buddha's mode of acting for the sake of others, whereby one finishes very quickly the accumulation of the collection [of merit that takes]

²⁵ The four individual correct knowledges refer to knowledge of names, functions, the mode of abiding—emptiness—and to fearlessness. Source: Kensur Yeshay Tupden.

three periods of countless great eons. Then one actualizes the vajra-like meditative stabilization, the Mahayana path of meditation which is the actual antidote to the very subtle predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearance. In the next moment one is able to pass to the Buddha-ground.

Mode of Surpassing Practice of a Perfection on the Tenth Ground

Since one has gained a similitude of a Buddha's eye [of wisdom] for which all the secreties of the Conqueror's speech are not hidden, one achieves a greatly surpassing practice of the perfection of exalted wisdom within which, completely apprehending by oneself the words and meanings of the high speech, one ripens others.

Mode of Taking Fruitional Rebirth on the Tenth Ground

Having taken birth as Maheshvara, king of the gods in the Highest Land, one effects the welfare of sentient beings.

In this way, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (459-601) says:

The rain of excellent doctrine falls,
The Bodhisattva is consecrated
With light rays by the Buddhas.

Through the maturation of these qualities
The Bodhisattva becomes a master of the gods of Pure Abode,
[He or she] is a supreme great Lord, master
Of the sphere of infinite wisdom.

There is a reason for calling this ground Cloud of Doctrine because just as a worldly harvest increases when rain clouds gather in the sky and rain falls, so the clouds of doctrines such as the retentions and meditative stabilizations gather in the mental continuum of a tenth ground Bodhisattva, which is like the sky, and the rain of doctrine falls, increasing the collection of the marvelous harvest of virtues in the continuums of trainees and for this reason it is called Cloud of Doctrine.

Maitreya's *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX.38cd) says:

Because like a rain cloud the two pervade
The doctrine [like] the sky, it is called Cloud of Doctrine.²⁶

Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities* says:

The stainless body which has this nature of wisdom
Arising everywhere from the retentions of the Buddhas,
Equal to the sky,
Is a cloud of doctrine.

²⁶ "The two" can refer to either (1) retentions and meditative stabilizations or (2) love and compassion. Source: Kensur Yeshay Tupden.

Chapter Four

Buddhahood

The explanation of the effect ground has three parts: definitions, divisions, and the mode of actualizing the effect.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of the Buddha ground is posited as:

A final exalted wisdom which possesses the supreme of all aspects.

The definition of a Mahayana path of no more learning is posited as:

A Mahayana clear realizer which has abandoned exhaustively the two obstructions.

Also, the two, Buddha ground and Mahayana path of no more learning, are synonymous. In brief, whatever is a Mahayana ground which has completed all the good qualities of separation [from faults], such as the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the eighteen unshared qualities of a Buddha, and so forth, and all the fruitional good qualities, such as the thirty-two major and eighty minor marks and so forth, is called the Completely Radiant Buddha Ground. In this way, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (461-3) says:

The ground of Buddhahood is different.
Being in all ways inconceivable,

Its boundless extent is merely said
To encompass the ten powers;
Each of [a Buddha's] powers is immeasurable too
Like [the limitless number] of all migrators.

The limitlessness of a Buddha's
[Qualities] is said to be like
That of space, earth, water, fire
And wind in all directions.

DIVISIONS

In general, there are many divisions of Buddha bodies, such as those into five, four, and three, but when [these divisions] are condensed, they are condensed into two, the Truth Body [which is the fulfillment of] one's own purposes and the Form Body [which is the fulfillment of] others' purposes. This is because the two, the Complete Enjoyment Body and the Emanation Body [which make up] the excellent Form Body that is the imprint of having completed the collection of merit, are the conventional body [which is the fulfillment of] others' purposes, and the two, the Nature Body and the Wisdom Truth Body, [which make up] the excellent Truth Body that is

the imprint of having completed the collection of wisdom are the ultimate body [which is the fulfillment of] one's own purposes. Moreover, Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (212) says:

The Form Body of a Buddha
Arises here from the collection of merit.
The Body of Truth in brief, O King,
Is born from the collection of wisdom.

Also, Nagarjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:

By this virtue may all beings
Complete the collections of merit and wisdom
And attain the two excellent bodies
Which arise from merit and wisdom.

Also, Maitreya's *Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle* says:

The ultimate body, [the fulfillment of] one's own purpose
And the conventional body, [the fulfillment of] other's purposes, which depends on that . . .

In such passages [the Buddha bodies] are set forth in many Mahayana scriptures and their commentaries.

THE MODE OF ACTUALIZING THE EFFECT

Whether one is definite in the Mahayana lineage from the very beginning or even is temporarily definite in the Fundamental Vehicle lineage, it is definite that, in the end, entering into the Mahayana path, one must become fully purified [as a Buddha]. Therefore, whichever of those one is, initially one settles through limitless reasonings the very subtle selflessness having two aspects [the selflessness of persons and of phenomena]. Then one practices the Mahayana paths completely without separating from the branches of familiarizing with just that view, whereby one progresses serially over the grounds of engagement through belief and the grounds of Bodhisattva Superiors.

One abandons without remainder the predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearance by means of the vajra-like meditative stabilization that is the exalted wisdom at the end of the continuum of the ten grounds. Thus, in the next moment one actualizes the Truth Body which perceives directly all the limitless instances of objects of knowledge like a wet olive placed in the palm of the hand. This is done with [the Wisdom Truth Body] and the suchness which is the reality of the exalted mind possessing the two purities having become of one taste, like water placed in water.²⁷ Simultaneous with actualizing that Truth Body, the adamant body of mental nature of the person at the end of the continuum of the ten grounds, which has the aspect of being adorned by major and minor marks, becomes a Complete Enjoyment Body which is not different

²⁷ "The two purities" refer to the natural purity "which is the absence from beginningless time of inherent existence in the pure sphere of Buddhahood," and the adventitious purity "which is the absence in the pure sphere of Buddhahood of the adventitious stains--the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience--through the application of their antidotes." *Meditation on Emptiness, op. cit.*, chapter on "Buddhahood."

in entity from the Wisdom Truth Body and the continuum of which is not severed even for a moment until space is consumed. From every hair pore of this Complete Enjoyment Body there always arise numberless Emanation Bodies. These make displays uninterruptedly, as long as the sky remains, for the sake of migrators with inconceivable sport of exalted body, speech, and mind exactly in accordance with the constituents, thought, and dormancies of migrators.

It is said that the place of [actual] initial full purification by means of the system of the Mahayana Perfection Vehicle is only the glorious Heavily Adorned Highest Pure Land, and the place of displaying later the mode of purification is the Desire Realm.

With respect to where initial Buddhification occurs, Chandrakirti's *Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* says :

Just as the moon in a stainless illuminates clearly [all migrators],
So you strove repeatedly on the prior ground at producing the ten powers [of Buddhahood],
And in the highest pure land you gained that supreme pacification,
The state for the sake of which you strove, the unparalleled completion of all good qualities.

With respect to the mode of actualizing the Truth Body, Chandrakirti's *Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* says:

Through having burned completely the dry fuel of objects of knowledge
This peace is the Truth Body of Conquerors.
It is then without production and without cessation
And [thus] the mind has stopped, whereby [this rank of Buddhahood] is actualized by the
[Complete Enjoyment] Body.

With respect to the mode of actualizing the Complete Enjoyment Body, Chandrakirti's *Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* says:

The Body of Peace manifests like a wish-granting tree
And like a wish-fulfilling gem is non-conceptual.
Until migrators are released it remains for the world's fortune.
It appears to those [Bodhisattvas] free from the elaborations.

With respect to the mode of actualizing the Emanation Body Chandrakirti's *Supplement to (Nagarjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* says:

Again you having the immovable [Truth] Body come to the three existences²⁸ and with emanations
Come [from the Joyous Land], are born, and teach the wheel of peaceful enlightenment.
In that way you compassionately lead to nirvana
All worldly beings having varieties of behavior and bound by many bonds of attainment.

ETYMOLOGIES

Since the etymologies of the [names of] individual grounds have been expressed on the occasion

²⁸ The Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm.

of each one, here is a general etymology of “ground.” There is a reason, for calling the Mahayana path of seeing and so forth “grounds.” This is because [the Sanskrit original of] “ground” (*sa*) is *bhumi*, and in terms of a contextual etymology in the context of the mode of eliminating faults, [a ground] serves as a basis of releasing numberless sentient beings from the frights of the two obstructions, and in the context of the mode of achieving good qualities, [a ground] is a basis of good qualities increasing higher and higher, whereby it is called such. Maitreya’s *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* (XX. 40) says:

Because of ascending higher in those numberless [levels] and
For the sake of numberless beings becoming fearless,
They are called grounds.²⁹

CONCLUDING VERSE

The liberation story of the supreme white swans of Conqueror’s Children
Who greatly move the broad wings of method and wisdom
In order be refreshed in the lotus lake of the qualities of One Thus Gone,
Is the heart-spring of all those fortunate ones wanting liberation.

That the groups of right Hearers and Solitary Realizers wearied by the path of [cyclic] existence,
Having rested for a while in the city of thorough peace,
Are led to the park of the precious supreme vehicle
Is the magical artifice of the leader, the captain.

In the expanse of black clouds of my mind in the midnight of the degenerate age
The flashing for a moment of the illumination of good explanation
Through the brief lightning streak of a virtuous mind
Is the expression of the ceaseless exalted activity of the Conqueror.³⁰

²⁹ Translation doubtful.

³⁰ The source for this metaphor is probably Shantideva’s *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* (*Bodhisattvacharvavata*), Chapter One, Stanza Five:

Just as a flash of lightning on a dark cloudy night
For an instant brightly illuminates all,
Likewise in this world, through the might of Buddha,
A wholesome thought rarely and briefly appears.

Translation by Stephen Batchelor, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979, p. ii.

Chart 1

Cyclic Existence

The three realms and the nine levels

(Read from bottom to top)

3. Formless Realm		9. Peak of Cyclic Existence 8. Nothingness 7. Limitless Consciousness 6. Limitless Space
2. Form Realm		5. Fourth Concentration 4. Third Concentration 3. Second Concentration 2. First Concentration
	1. Desire Realm gods demigods humans animals hungry ghosts hell beings	

Chart Two Five Paths

Path of No More Learning

Path of Meditation

Path of Seeing

Path of Preparation

Path of Accumulation

Chart Three Four Levels of the Path of Preparation

(Read from bottom to top)

Supreme Mundane Qualities

Forbearance

Peak

Heat

Chart Four Path of Seeing

Exalted Wisdom of Subsequent Attainment

1. Method Types of Realizers
2. Wisdom Types of Realizers

Exalted Wisdom of Meditative Equipoise

1. Uninterrupted Paths
2. Liberated paths
3. Those Which Are Neither

Chart Five

Innate Afflictions Forsaken on the Path of Meditation

afflictions regarding the formless realm		peak of cyclic existence 73-81 nothingness 64-72 limitless consciousness 55-63 limitless space 46-54
afflictions regarding the form realm		fourth concentration 37-45 third concentration 28-36 second concentration 19-27 first concentration 10-18
Afflictions regarding the desire realm	small middling big	small of the small 9 middling of the small 8 big of the small 7 small of the middling 6 middling of the middling 5 big of the middling 4 small of the big 3 middling of the big 2 big of the big 1

Chart Six

Eight Levels of Approaching and Abiding

Person	Afflictions already forsaken	Afflictions being forsaken	Path
(8) Abider in the Fruit of a Foe Destroyer	1 – 81	————	No more learning
(7) Approacher to Foe Destroyer	1 – 9	10 – 81	Meditation
(6) Abider in the Fruit of Never Returner	1 – 9	————	Meditation
(5) Approacher to Never Returner	1 – 6	7 – 9	Meditation
(4) Abider in the Fruit of a Once Returner	1 – 6	————	Meditation
(3) Approacher to Once Returner	————	1 – 6	Meditation
(2) Abider in the Fruit of a Stream Enterer	————	————	Seeing – liberated path
(1) Approacher to Stream Enterer	————	————	Seeing – uninterrupted path

Chart Seven

The Grounds of the Mahayana

<u>Ground</u>	<u>Perfection</u>	<u>Afflictions abandoned on this ground</u>
11 All-light (Buddhahood)		
10 Clouds of Doctrine	Supreme Wisdom	Coarse and subtle obstructions to omniscience
9 Good Intelligence	Power	Middling obstructions to omniscience
8 Immoveable	Aspirational Prayer	Big obstructions to omniscience Small afflictive obstructions
7 Gone Afar	Skill in Means	Small of the middling afflictive obstructions
6 Manifest	Wisdom	Middling of the middling afflictive obstructions
5 Difficult to overcome	Concentration	Big of the middling afflictive obstructions
4 Radiant	Effort	Small of the big afflictive obstructions
3 Luminous	Patience	Middling of the big afflictive obstructions
2 Stainless	Ethics	Big of the big afflictive obstructions
1 Very Joyful	Giving	Artificial conception of inherent existence

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Sutras are listed alphabetically by English title in the first section, with other works arranged alphabetically by author in the second and third sections. The fact that the titles of Sanskrit and Tibetan texts have been translated into English does not suggest that the works themselves have been translated.

Abbreviations:

P: Tibetan Tripitaka (Tokyo-Kyoto: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Foundation, 1956)

I. SŪTRAS

Cloud of Jewels Sutra
Ratnameghasūtra
dKon mchog sprin gyi mdo
p897, Vol. 35

Sutra on the Ten Grounds
Dashabhūmikasūtra
mDo sde sa bcu pa
p761.31, Vol. 25

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Āryadeva (‘Phags-pa-lha)
Treatise on the Four Hundred Stanzas
Chatuhshatakashāstrakārikā
bsTan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa
p5246, Vol. 95

Ashvagosha (rTa-dbyangs)
Essay on the Stages of Cultivating the Ultimate Mind of Enlightenment
Paramārthabodhicittabhāvanākramavarnasamgraha
Don dam pa byang chub kyi sems bsgon pa’i rim pa yi ger bris pa
P531, Vol. 103

Chandrakīrti (Zla-ba-grags-pa)
Commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”
Madhyamakavatārabshāshya
dbU ma la ‘jug pa’i bshad pa
P5263, Vol. 98
Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”
Madhyamakavatāra
dbU ma la ‘jug pa
P5261, Vol. 98; P5262, Vol. 98

Gon-chok-jik-may-wang-bo (dKon-mchog-'jigs-med-dbang-po), 1728 – 1791

Presentation of the Grounds and Paths, Beautiful Ornament of the Three Vehicles

Sa lam gyi rnam bzhag theg gsum mdzes rgyan

Buxaduor: Gomang College, 1965

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Vol. IV. pp. 65-190. New Delhi: Guru Deva, 1975

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Ornament for the Mahāyāna Sutras

Mahāyānasūtralamkārikā

Theg pa chen po'i mdo sde'i rgyan gyi tshig le'ur byas pa'

P5521, Vol. 108

Nāgārjuna (kLu-sgrub)

Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way Called 'Wisdom'

Prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakārikā

dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba

P5224, Vol. 95

Praise of the Element of Qualities

Dharmadhātustotra

Chos kyi dbyings su bstod pa

P2010, Vol. 46

Precious Garland of Advice for a King

Rājaparīkathāratnāvalī

rGyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba

P5658, Vol. 46

Also: trans. *The Precious Garland and the Song of the Four Mindfulnesses*. Translated by Jeffrey Hopkins and Lati Rinbochay. New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

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