

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

3. The Canon of Higher Teaching - Commentaries
(3. Abhidhamma Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)
 3. Commentary on the Discussion of Elements
(3. Dhātukathā-aṭṭhakathā)
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PaliVerse

3. Commentary on the Discussion of Elements

2. Explanation of the Exposition

1. First Method: Commentary on the Terms of Inclusion and Non-Inclusion

1. Commentary on the Aggregate Terms

6. Now, in order to show the matrix laid down by way of the five aggregates and so on, having combined it with the method matrix terms beginning with "inclusion, non-inclusion," the section on the detailed exposition has been commenced by the method beginning with "by how many aggregates is the aggregate of matter." Therein, because in the method matrix beginning with "inclusion, non-inclusion," the method-opening matrix was established as "inclusion by three, non-inclusion by three," therefore, in order to show the inclusion of the aggregate of matter and so on, only the three terms of aggregate, sense base, and element were extracted as "by how many aggregates, by how many sense bases, by how many elements." Among "the four truths" and so on, not even one was adhered to. And because the characteristic matrix was established thus as "common, of different subject," therefore in the answer to this question, it was said beginning with "the aggregate of matter by one aggregate." For these aggregates and so on are common to it. Therein, "by one aggregate" means by the aggregate of matter only. For whatever matter, because of being common with the aggregate of matter, goes into inclusion as the aggregate of matter only - thus it is counted by the aggregate of matter only; it is delimited by the aggregate of matter only. "By eleven sense bases" means excluding the mind sense base. For the entire aggregate of matter comprises the ten sense bases and a portion of the mind-object sense base, therefore it is counted by eleven sense bases, delimited. "By eleven elements" means by the eleven excluding the seven consciousness elements, for among these there is no matter that is not included.

In the analytic explanation of the method of non-inclusion, the question was made in brief only as "by how many is it not included?" In the answer, however, because the four immaterial aggregates, one mind sense base, and seven consciousness elements are dissimilar to the aggregate of matter; therefore it was said beginning with "by four aggregates." By this method, inclusion and non-inclusion should be understood in all terms. In this analytic explanation of the aggregates, however - in the section beginning with "by how many aggregates is the aggregate of matter," first in the single-root method of inclusion, five questions and five answers were shown in their own form. In the method of non-inclusion, five questions and five answers were shown in brief. By this means, the questions and answers should be understood in the dyad-root and so on as well. And here only the dyads, triads, and tetrads rooted in the aggregate of matter were shown. But in the pentad, "the aggregate of matter and, etc. the aggregate of consciousness" - thus by way of division, and "by how many aggregates are the five aggregates" - thus by way of non-division - the questions and answers were made in two ways. Thus the method of the canonical text should be understood.

2. Commentary on the Sense Base Terms and So On

22. In the analytic explanation of the sense base term and so on, firstly in the analytic explanation of the sense base term, "the eye sense base by one aggregate" should be understood as included by the one aggregate of matter only, by the one eye sense base only, by the one eye-element only. In the ear sense base and so on too, inclusion and non-inclusion should be understood by this very method. "The unconditioned, setting aside from the aggregates" - here, however, since the unconditioned mind-object sense base is called Nibbāna, and that does not go to the classification by aggregates; therefore "setting aside from the aggregates" was said. "By four aggregates" means by the aggregates of matter, feeling, perception, and mental activities. For the mind-object sense base excluding Nibbāna is included by these. But by the aggregate of consciousness, setting aside the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, and by the remaining sense bases and elements, that is not included. Therefore it was said - "Not included by one aggregate, by eleven sense bases, by seventeen elements." And just as those methods below were rooted in the aggregate of matter, so too here the methods should be understood as rooted in the eye sense base. But having shown only a dyad in the Pāḷi, the question and answer was made without distinction as "the twelve sense bases." In the analytic explanation of the elements too, the same method applies.

40. In the Exposition of Truths - all the dyads, triads, and tetrads were shown in the Pāḷi. And because in the dyads and triads the answer for the truth of path is similar to that of the truth of origin, therefore it was stated immediately after the origin.

50. In the analytic explanation of the faculties - "The life faculty by two aggregates" means the material life faculty is included by the aggregate of matter, the immaterial life faculty is included by the aggregate of mental activities. The remainder should be understood in accordance with the method already stated. But here the determination of the canonical text is similar to the analytic explanation of the sense bases and elements.

6. Explanation of Dependent Origination

61. In the description of dependent origination - Without commencing the question "by how many aggregates is ignorance," only the answer "ignorance is by one aggregate" was thus shown. Therein, "with activities as condition, consciousness" means all resultant consciousness both in rebirth-linking and in occurrence. Therefore he said - "Included by seven elements." Mentality-materiality too should be understood by way of rebirth-linking and occurrence. For that very reason here, having also included the sound sense base, the inclusion by eleven sense bases was shown. Among contact and so forth, the distinction of aggregates should be known. For contact is included by one aggregate, feeling by another, but craving, clinging, and kammic becoming are included by the aggregate of mental activities only. And here the term "becoming" is divided in eleven ways by means of kammic becoming and so on. Therein, kammic becoming, because of having a similar answer to contact and so forth, was shown together with them. Becoming of rebirth, sensual existence, percipient existence, and five-aggregate-constituent existence, because of having

mutually similar answers, were shown together. And because these are only clung-to phenomena, therefore "by eleven sense bases, by seventeen elements" was said. For the sound sense base is not clung-to; that was not taken up here.

68. In the analytic explanation of fine-material existence - "By five sense bases" means by the eye, ear, mind, visible form, and mind-object sense bases. "By eight elements" means by the eye, ear, eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, visible form, mind-object, mind-element, and mind-consciousness elements. Immaterial existence and so on, the three, because of having similar answers, were shown together. Likewise, non-percipient existence and single-aggregate-constituent existence. Therein, "by two sense bases" means by the visible form sense base and the mind-object sense base. In the case of the elements too, the same method applies. Because for the remaining brahmā gods who dwell on a single plane, since the eye exists and since that is its object, the visible form sense base was taken up there.

71. "Birth by two aggregates" means material birth is by the aggregate of matter, immaterial birth is by the aggregate of mental activities. In the case of ageing and death too, the same method applies. "In the case of sorrow and so on too, by one aggregate" means sorrow, suffering, and displeasure are by the aggregate of feeling, lamentation is by the aggregate of matter, anguish and so on are by the aggregate of mental activities - thus the distinction of aggregates should be understood.

73. "The basis for spiritual power by two" means by the aggregate of mental activities and the aggregate of consciousness, by the mind sense base and the mind-object sense base, and by the element of phenomena and the mind-consciousness element. "Meditative absorption by two" means by the aggregate of feeling and the aggregate of mental activities. The boundless states and so on, because of having similar answers, were shown together. But consciousness, although placed immediately after volition, because of having dissimilar answers, was taken up afterwards. Therein, among the boundless states and so on, "by one aggregate" means feeling is included by the aggregate of feeling, perception is included by the aggregate of perception, the remaining are included by the aggregate of mental activities - thus the distinction of aggregates should be understood.

7. Commentary on the Triad Terms

77. Having thus shown the inclusion of the internal matrix, now in order to show the inclusion of the external matrix, the section beginning with "wholesome mental states" has been commenced. Therein, in the feeling triad, "by three elements" means by the body-consciousness, mind-consciousness, and mind-object elements. "By seven elements" means by the eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, and consciousness-elements, and by the mind-element, mind-object element, and mind-consciousness element. In the resultant triad, "by eight elements" means by those very ones together with the body-consciousness element. But the states that have resultant quality, because of having similar answers to those defiled and subject to defilement, were taken together. And just as these, so too in all the triad and dyad terms, whatever term has a similar answer together with whatever other term, that term,

even out of order, was taken together with that other term and answered. Therein, the method of inclusion and non-inclusion should be understood in accordance with what has been stated.

Commentary on the Passage on Inclusion and Non-inclusion.

2. Second Method: Commentary on the Terms of What is Not Included by What is Included

171. Now, in order to distribute the term "not included by what is included," the section beginning with "by the eye sense base" and so on has been commenced. Herein this is the characteristic - For in this section, whatever is included by the aggregate term but not included by the sense base and element terms, or included by the aggregate and sense base terms but not included by the element term - having asked about its non-inclusion by the aggregates and so on, the answer was given. That, however, does not apply to the aggregate of matter and so on. For by the aggregate of matter, only the aggregate of matter itself is included. And that is not such that it is not included by the ten-and-a-half sense bases and elements. And by the aggregate of feeling, only the aggregate of feeling itself is included. That too is not such that it is not included by the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena. Thus, because of the absence of non-inclusion, these and other such terms as the mind sense base, mind-object sense base, and so on were not taken up in this section. But whatever terms indicate a portion of matter unmixed with the immaterial, and a portion of consciousness unmixed with anything else, those are taken up here. And at the conclusion -

"Ten sense bases, seventeen elements,
Seven faculties, non-percipient existence, single-aggregate constituent
existence;
Lamentation, manifest and impinging,
Non-manifest but again impinging, and derived."

Thus they are shown by the summary verse. Therefore, inclusion and non-inclusion should be understood by way of those very same. For by way of questions in this section, having combined twenty states with similar answers by way of sense bases and elements, one question was made; having combined the seven consciousness elements, one; having combined the seven faculties, one; having combined the two existences, one; with lamentation and the manifest and impinging, one; with the non-manifest but impinging, one; with the manifest, one; and with the impinging and derived states, one - thus eight questions were made. Among those, the classification by aggregates and so on should be understood thus, namely - In the first question, firstly, "by four aggregates" means by the immaterial aggregates; "by two sense bases" means by each one among the eye sense base and so on together with the mind sense base; "by eight elements" means by each one among the eye-element and so on together with the seven consciousness elements.

Herein this is the method - For by the eye sense base, the aggregate of matter is included by the classification of aggregates. In that included aggregate of matter, by the classification of sense bases, only the eye sense base alone is included. The remaining ten sense bases are not included. By the classification of elements too, by

that, only the eye-element alone is included. The remaining ten elements are not included. Thus, whatever ten sense bases are not included by that, those are not included by the two - the eye sense base and the mind sense base. And whatever ten elements are not included by that, those are not included by the eye-element and by the seven consciousness elements. In the case of the visible form sense base and so on too, the same method applies.

172. In the second question - Because there is no aggregate of consciousness included by whatever consciousness element that is not included by the mind sense base, therefore it is said "included by the classification of sense bases." Here, however, "by four aggregates" means by the four beginning with matter. "By eleven sense bases" means excluding the mind sense base. "By twelve elements" means having removed the six consciousness elements as appropriate, by the remaining twelve. For by the eye-consciousness element, only the eye-consciousness element itself is included; the other is not included. In the ear-consciousness element and so on too, the same method applies.

173. In the third question - the answer for the eye-faculty and so on is similar to that of the eye sense base and so on. But in the case of the femininity faculty and masculinity faculty, two sense bases together with the mind-object sense base, and eight elements together with the element of phenomena should be known.

174. In the fourth question - "By three sense bases" means by the visible form sense base, the mind-object sense base, and the mind sense base. For in those existences, only two sense bases are included by them by way of the visible form sense base and the mind-object sense base. The remaining nine visible form sense bases are not included by three, namely by those very same two and by the mind sense base. "By nine elements" means by the material element and the element of phenomena together with the seven consciousness elements.

175. In the fifth question - "By two sense bases" means, with reference to the first term, by the sound sense base and the mind sense base. With reference to the second term, by the visible form sense base and the mind sense base. As for the elements too, together with each one of those very same, seven consciousness elements should be understood.

176. In the sixth question - "By ten sense bases" means excluding the visible form sense base and the mind-object sense base. "By sixteen elements" means excluding the material element and the element of phenomena. How? For non-manifest but impinging states are the nine gross sense bases. When the aggregate of matter is included by them through the classification of aggregates, by the classification of sense bases those very same nine sense bases are included. The visible form sense base and the mind-object sense base are not included. By the classification of elements too, those very same nine elements are included. The material element and the element of phenomena are not included. Thus, whatever two sense bases are not included by them, those are not included by ten - namely by the nine gross sense bases excluding the visible form sense base, and by the mind sense base. And whatever two elements are not included by them, those should be known as not included by sixteen - namely by the nine gross elements excluding the material element, and by the seven consciousness elements.

177. In the seventh question - "By two sense bases" means by the visible form sense base and the mind sense base. "By eight elements" means by the material element together with the seven consciousness elements.

178. In the eighth question - "By eleven sense bases" means excluding the mind-object sense base, with reference to impinging states; excluding the touch sense base, with reference to derived states. In the case of the elements too, the same method applies. But the interpretation of meaning here should be understood in the manner stated above.

Commentary on the Passage on Not Included by the Included.

3. Third Method: Commentary on the Terms of What is Included by What is Not Included

179. Now, in order to distribute the term "included by what is not included," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of feeling" and so on has been commenced. Herein this is the characteristic - For in this section, whatever is not included by the aggregate term but is included by the sense base and element terms - having asked about its inclusion by the aggregates and so on, the answer was given. That, however, does not apply to the aggregate of matter, the aggregate of consciousness, the eye sense base, and so on. For by the aggregate of matter, four aggregates are not included by the classification of aggregates. Among those, not even a single state is included by that through the classification of sense bases and elements. But are not feeling and so on included by the mind-object sense base? They are included. But the aggregate of matter itself is not the mind-object sense base, for from the aggregate of matter only subtle matter pertains to the mind-object sense base. Therefore those that are included by the mind-object sense base are not included by the aggregate of matter. By the aggregate of consciousness too, the other four aggregates are not included. Among those, not even one is included by that through the classification of sense bases and elements. Thus, because of the absence of inclusion, these and other such terms as the eye sense base and so on were not taken up in this section. But whatever terms indicate a portion of the mind-object sense base unmixed with either consciousness or gross materiality, those are taken up here. Their summary verse is this -

"Three aggregates, likewise truths, and sixteen faculties;
Terms in the mode of dependent conditions, fourteen above fourteen.

There are thirty terms, and in the ten groups;
Two minor intermediate pairs, eight are major intermediate."

But among these terms, having combined terms with similar answers together, altogether twelve questions were stated. Among those, the classification by aggregates should be understood thus. But in the sense bases and elements there is no difference. Therein, in the first question firstly - "By three aggregates" means by the aggregates of matter, perception, and mental activities. But the sense bases and elements should be understood by way of the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena.

Herein this is the method - For by the aggregate of feeling, Nibbāna and subtle matter, perception, and mental activities, not being included by the classification of aggregates, are included by the classification of sense bases and elements. Among those, Nibbāna does not go to the classification by aggregates; the remaining go to inclusion by the aggregates of matter, perception, and mental activities. But even Nibbāna goes to the classification by sense bases and elements. Therefore it was said - "Setting aside the unconditioned from the aggregates, they are included by three aggregates, by one sense base, by one element." But here, in the case of the aggregate of perception, having removed perception, the three aggregates together with feeling should be understood; in the case of mental activities and so on, having removed the aggregate of mental activities, the three aggregates should be understood by way of matter, feeling, and perception.

180. In the second - "By four aggregates" means excluding consciousness. For those, not being included by the classification of aggregates through cessation, are included by the classification of sense bases and elements.

181. In the third - "By two" means by the aggregate of feeling and the aggregate of perception. For by the material and immaterial life faculty, the aggregates of feeling, perception, and consciousness are not included by the classification of aggregates. But among those, only feeling and perception are included by the classification of sense bases and elements. Therefore it was said - "By the aggregates of feeling and perception." By this method, the distinction of aggregates should be understood everywhere. For from here onwards, we shall state only the mere names of the aggregates.

182. In the fourth - "By three aggregates" means in the case of the femininity faculty and masculinity faculty, by feeling, perception, and mental activities; in the case of the feeling pentad, by matter, perception, and mental activities; in the case of the faith faculty and so on ending with contact, by the aggregates of matter, feeling, and perception. In the case of feeling, the judgment is similar to the aggregate of feeling; in the case of craving, clinging, and kammic becoming, the judgment is similar to the aggregate of mental activities.

183. In the fifth - Regarding birth, ageing, and death, it is similar to the life faculty. But by meditative absorption, Nibbāna, subtle matter, and perception, not being included by the classification of aggregates, are included by the classification of sense bases and elements. Therefore, with reference to that, two aggregates should be understood by way of the aggregate of matter and the aggregate of perception.

184. In the sixth - in the triad beginning with sorrow, it is similar to feeling. In the case of anguish and so on, it is similar to mental activities. Again, in the case of feeling, the judgment is similar to the aggregate of feeling; in the case of perception, similar to the aggregate of perception; in the case of volition and so on, similar to the aggregate of mental activities. By this means, inclusion and non-inclusion should be understood in the seventh question and so on as well.

Commentary on the Passage on Included by the Not Included.

4. Fourth Method: Explanation of the Included by the Included Passage

191. Now, in order to distribute the term "included by what is included," the section beginning with "by the truth of origin" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever is included by way of the aggregates and so on by what is included by the aggregates and so on - having again asked about its inclusion by the aggregates and so on of that very same, the answer was given. That does not apply to terms standing having taken even one entire portion among the aggregates, sense bases, and elements. For by the entire aggregate term and so on, there is nothing else included by way of the aggregates and so on which, having included its own includer, could again come under inclusion by that very same. Therefore such terms were not taken up in this section. But whatever terms indicate a portion of mental activities unmixed with anything else - or a portion of feeling, or subtle matter, or a portion of sound - those are taken up here. Their summary verse is this -

"Two truths, fifteen faculties, eleven terms of dependent origination;
Above again eleven, the group terms here are thirty-fold."

But the questions here are only two. Therein, whatever term is taken up in the question, that very same is included by way of the aggregates and so on by whatever states - with reference to those states, it is said everywhere beginning with "by one aggregate" and so on. Herein this is the method - For by the truth of origin, the remaining mental activities excluding craving are included by the classification of aggregates and so on. Again, by those, only craving is included. That craving is again included by the classification of aggregates and so on by the mental activities themselves. The same method applies everywhere. But here, in the questions concerning immaterial states, the aggregate of mental activities or the aggregate of feeling is called one aggregate. In the questions concerning material states, the aggregate of matter. In the question concerning lamentation, the sound sense base is called one sense base. The sound element is called one element; in the remaining cases, the meaning should be understood by way of the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena only.

Commentary on the Passage on Included by the Included.

5. Fifth Method: Explanation of the Not Included by the Not Included Passage

193. Now, in order to distribute the term "not included by what is not included," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of matter" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever is not included by way of the aggregates and so on by what is not included by the aggregates and so on - having again asked about its non-inclusion by the aggregates and so on of that very same, the answer was given. That, however, does not apply to the terms that encompass the five aggregates such as the truth of suffering and so on, nor to the terms that encompass subtle matter together with consciousness such as the non-manifest and non-impinging and so on. For by such a term, Nibbāna would not even go to the mere classification of aggregates. There are no remaining states that are not included by the aggregates and so on. Therefore such terms were not taken up in this section. But whatever terms do not indicate the five aggregates and consciousness together with subtle matter as one, those are taken up here. Their summary verse is this -

"All aggregates, likewise sense bases and elements, three from the truths;

All the faculties too, twenty-three from the dependent origination.

"Sixteen terms from the pairs, forty-three in the triads;
Seventy-two in the groups, and seven terms in the minor intermediate.

"The terms stated in the major intermediate, eighteen beyond that;
Only eighteen should be known, the rest are not spoken of here."

But the questions here, having combined by way of similar answers, together with all are thirty-four. Therein, whatever term is taken up in the question, that very same is not included by whatever aggregates and so on - with reference to those states, it is said beginning with "by one aggregate" and so on.

Herein this is the method - For by the aggregate of matter, four aggregates and Nibbāna are not included by the classification of aggregates. But by the classification of sense bases and elements, setting aside consciousness, the remainder are included; thus consciousness alone is not included by all three, namely the classification of aggregates and so on. Again, together with that consciousness, by Nibbāna, four aggregates are not included by the classification of aggregates and so on. All of those again are not included by consciousness alone through the classification of aggregates and so on; thus they are not included by one aggregate, by one sense base, by seven elements. Or - That which by the aggregate of matter is consciousness alone not included by the three classifications of aggregates and so on - by those consciousness states too, those material states alone are not included by the three classifications. Again, those material states are not included by consciousness alone through the three classifications. And consciousness, from the standpoint of aggregates, is one aggregate of consciousness; from the standpoint of sense bases, one mind sense base; from the standpoint of elements, seven consciousness elements. Therefore it is said beginning with "by one aggregate" and so on. By this method, everywhere whatever term is taken up in the question, that very same is not included by way of the aggregates and so on by whatever states - by way of those states, the aggregates and so on should be understood. Therein, in the second question first - It should be understood by way of matter and consciousness. For feeling and so on are not included by the classification of aggregates and so on only by matter and consciousness. And those two aggregates are eleven sense bases and seventeen elements.

195. In the third question - consciousness is not included by the four beginning with matter - by way of those, the aggregates and so on should be understood.

196. In the fourth question - "the eye sense base by the four beginning with feeling" - by this method, the aggregates and so on should be understood everywhere. At the conclusion - "materiality and the mind-object sense base" - the very same states shown by the summary verse have been shown having summarised in another manner.

Commentary on the Passage on Not Included by the Not Included.

6. Sixth Method: Explanation of the Association and Dissociation Passage

228. Now, in order to distribute the term of association and dissociation, the section beginning with "the aggregate of matter" has been commenced. Therein, whatever is obtainable and whatever is not obtainable, all of that is taken up in the question. But in the answer, whatever is not obtainable, that is rejected as "there is not." Association with four, dissociation from four; because of the statement "common, of different subject," association is obtainable only mutually among the immaterial aggregates that are common, having arisen in one continuity at one moment, with the four immaterial aggregates only. But for material phenomena there is no association whatsoever with matter or with Nibbāna, nor of Nibbāna together with matter. Likewise of matter and Nibbāna with the immaterial aggregates, for they are of different subject to them. And just as of the immaterial aggregates with matter and Nibbāna, so too with immaterial phenomena of different continuities and of different moments, there is none at all. For they too are of different subject only to them, because of the dissimilarity of continuity and moment. But this dissimilarity does not exist in the method of inclusion, because it conflicts with the meaning of inclusion. For the meaning of inclusion is merely being subject to reckoning. But it exists in the method of association, for the meaning of association is the characteristic of simultaneous arising and so on. Thus here, for whatever the characteristic of association is not applicable even with a single phenomenon, the rejection "there is not" is made even though it was taken up in the question by way of inclusion. For whatever the characteristic of dissociation is applicable, its dissociation is shown. But whatever terms indicate phenomena mixed with matter or Nibbāna that are not dissociated from even one among the seven consciousness elements, those are not taken up here as they are not applicable in any way. Their summary verse is this -

"Mind-object sense base, element of phenomena, and the truth of suffering,
and life;

The six sense bases, mentality-materiality, and the four great existences.

Birth, ageing and death, nineteen in the triads;

And fifty in the groups, eight terms in the minor intermediate.

Fifteen in the major intermediate, eighteen beyond that;

These are one hundred and twenty-three terms, not obtained in association."

For because the mind-object sense base is mixed with matter and Nibbāna, it cannot be said to be associated even with consciousness not included therein. But because herein feeling and so on are associated with consciousness, it cannot be said to be dissociated either. The same method applies in the remaining ones too. Thus, because these are not applicable in every case, they are not taken up here. The remaining aggregates and so on are applicable, so having taken those up, the answering of questions was made both individually and by combination. Among those questions, in the first - "By one sense base" means by the mind sense base. "From some" means from feeling, perception, and activities that are included in the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena.

229. In the second - "With three" means having set aside each one asked about, with the remaining ones. "Associated with some" means the aggregate of feeling with perception and mental activities. The others too, having set aside themselves, with

the others. "Dissociated from some" means with matter and Nibbāna. Thus everywhere, in the dissociation from matter, the immaterial should be seen among the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena; in the dissociation from the immaterial, matter should be seen. The third question is of manifest meaning only.

231. In the fourth - Without saying "by how many aggregates" and so on, it has been said "Is it associated with? There is not." That, however, should be understood by way of the aggregates and so on only. In what follows too, in questions of such a kind, the same method applies. For indeed, in the first question, having shown in its own form, thereafter the canonical text is abbreviated. By this method, the interpretation of meaning should be understood everywhere. But where it will not be sufficiently obvious, there we shall proceed only after making it clear.

234. "By sixteen elements": the eye-consciousness element, firstly, having set aside itself, by the six consciousness elements and by the ten material elements. The same method applies to the remaining ones as well.

235. "With three aggregates" means with the remaining ones, having set aside the aggregate of mental activities. "With one element" means with the mind-consciousness element. For origin and path have no association with any other element. "With one aggregate" means with the aggregate of mental activities. "With one sense base" means with the mind-object sense base. "With one element" means with the element of phenomena. For among these, that pair of truths is associated with some.

238. In the question on the faculty of pleasantness and so on - "With three" means with perception, activities, and consciousness. "With one element" means with the body-consciousness element and the mind-consciousness element. "With six elements" means excluding the body-consciousness element.

245. In the question on fine-material existence - due to the existence of all immaterial aggregates and immaterial planes of existence, it is said "not from any." But due to the absence of the nose-consciousness element, tongue-consciousness element, and body-consciousness element, it is said "dissociated from three elements."

256. In the question on decision - "With two elements" means with the mind-element and mind-consciousness element. "With fifteen" means with the remaining ten material elements and with the five beginning with eye-consciousness.

257. In the question on the wholesome - association is rejected because all four aggregates have been grasped by the wholesome.

258. In the question on the triad of feeling - "By one aggregate" means by the aggregate of feeling only. "With fifteen" means by the eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-consciousness elements and mind-element, and by the material elements. "With eleven" means by the material elements together with the body-consciousness element.

262. In the question on states that are neither resultant nor have resultant quality - "With five" means with the five beginning with eye-consciousness. In the question on not-clung-to and not-subject-to-clinging states - "With six" means excluding the mind-consciousness element. In the question on states with applied and sustained thought - "With fifteen" means with the material elements together with the five consciousnesses. In the question on states without applied but sustained thought only - "By one aggregate" and so on should be understood by way of the aggregate of mental activities only. For setting aside the sustained thought of the second meditative absorption, the remaining are called without applied but sustained thought only. Setting aside rapture, the remaining are accompanied by rapture. Therein, sustained thought is not associated with sustained thought, and rapture is not associated with rapture, thus they are called associated with some among the aggregate of mental activities, the mind-object sense base, and the element of phenomena. "With sixteen" means excluding the element of phenomena and the mind-consciousness element only. In the question on states without applied and without sustained thought - "With one element" means with the mind-element. Accompanied by pleasure and accompanied by equanimity have been stated in the feeling triad itself. Those beginning with to be abandoned through vision are just like the wholesome.

271. The limited object is similar to the resultant state. "With one element" means with the element of phenomena. "From some" means from those that therein do not have a limited object. But the element of phenomena, because of being included by four aggregates by virtue of the six arisings of consciousness having a limited object, pertains to the first rejection only. The exalted object and so on are just similar to the wholesome.

273. Regarding the unarisen - "With five elements" means with eye-consciousness and so on. For these are certainly only of the nature of states subject to arising, but they also share in the portion of the arisen. Those beginning with present object are just similar to limited object. Those beginning with root are just similar to origin. With root and not roots also are just similar to accompanied by rapture. Likewise, associated with adherence. Not clung-to are just similar to unarisen. The remainder is of manifest meaning everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Association and Dissociation.

7. Seventh Method: Explanation of the Dissociated from by the Associated with Passage

306. Now, in order to distribute the term "dissociated from what is associated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of feeling" and so on has been commenced. Herein this is the characteristic - For in this section, whatever states are associated with the term taken up in the question, of those states whatever states are dissociated - having asked about their dissociation from the aggregates and so on, the answer was given. That, however, does not apply to the aggregate of matter and so on. For there is nothing called associated with the aggregate of matter. Therefore that and other such terms were not taken up in this section. But whatever terms indicate states associated with the element of phenomena and consciousness unmixed with anything else, those are taken up here. Their summary verse is this -

"Four aggregates and one sense base,
Two faculties, seven element terms;
Three dependent on, and then the contact septad,
Three in the triads, seven in the major intermediate, and

"One with applied thought, one with sustained thought;
And one connected with equanimity only."

At the conclusion - By "the aggregates are four" and so on also, this same meaning is included. Therein, whatever terms have similar answers, those, having combined them even out of order, therein questions beginning with the aggregate of feeling were made. Among those, the classification by aggregates and so on should be understood thus. In the question on the aggregate of feeling and so on, firstly - "By one" means by the mind sense base. "By seven" means by the consciousness elements. "From some" means from feeling and so on in the mind-object sense base. In the question on the consciousness element - "Those states not from any" means those, setting aside the consciousness element which is the term taken up in the question, are the remaining six consciousness-element states, matter, and Nibbāna. Because those are included by all the aggregates and sense bases, they are not dissociated from any aggregates or sense bases. "By one element" means by whichever is taken up in the question, by that very one.

309. In the question on the equanimity faculty - "By five" means by the eye-consciousness element and so on that are associated with equanimity. By this method, everywhere the meaning should be understood by way of those dissociated together with the very term taken up in the question.

Commentary on the Passage on Dissociated from by the Associated with.

8. Eighth Method: Explanation of the Associated with by the Dissociated from Passage

317. Now, in order to distribute the term "associated with what is dissociated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of matter" and so on has been commenced. Therein, all the questions are merely empty questions. For dissociated from the aggregate of matter are the four aggregates, and there is no association of those with anything else. Dissociated from the aggregate of feeling are matter and Nibbāna, and there is no association of that with anything. Thus in all terms. But the absence of association of those that are dissociated should be understood. Thus, because the questions are empty, in all the answers "there is not" - only "there is not" has been said.

Commentary on the Passage on Associated with by the Dissociated from.

9. Ninth Method: Explanation of the Associated with by the Associated with Passage

319. Now, in order to distribute the term "associated with what is associated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of feeling" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever is associated by way of the aggregates and so on - having again asked about its association with the aggregates and so on of that very same, the

answer was given. That does not apply together with terms of matter, or those mixed with matter, or those that include the entire aggregate of matter. For there is no association of others with matter or with what is mixed with matter. Because by those that include the entire aggregate of matter, all aggregates and so on worthy of association have been taken, there is nothing else whatsoever that could enter into association with that. Therefore such terms were not taken up here. But whatever terms indicate a portion of the immaterial unmixed with matter, those are taken up here. Their summary verse is this -

"Four immaterial aggregates, and the mind sense base only;
Seven consciousness elements, two truths, fourteen faculties.

"Twelve terms in conditions, sixteen beyond that;
Eight clusters among triads, and forty-three.

"Seven in the major intermediate pairs, six terms in the back pairs;
These of the ninth term, have gone into classification in the exposition."

But in all questions, whatever states are taken up in the question, those with which they are associated - the classification into aggregates and so on should be understood by way of those. For by the aggregate of feeling, the other three aggregates are associated, and again by those, the aggregate of feeling is associated. That is associated with those three aggregates beginning with perception, with one mind sense base, with seven consciousness elements, and in the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, associated with some perception and mental activities only. The same method applies everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Associated with by the Associated with.

10. Tenth Method: Explanation of the Dissociated from by the Dissociated from Passage

353. Now, in order to distribute the term "dissociated from what is dissociated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of matter" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever states beginning with the aggregate of matter are taken up in the description of the terms of association and dissociation, those very same are taken up in all the questions. But because similar answers were taken together, the terms have come in a different order. Therein, whatever term is taken up in the question, that is dissociated from whatever states - by way of those, the classification by aggregates and so on should be understood. For feeling and so on are dissociated from the aggregate of matter, and the aggregate of matter is dissociated from those. But Nibbāna follows the course of subtle matter only. That aggregate of matter is dissociated from four aggregates, from one mind sense base, from seven consciousness elements, and in the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, dissociated from some states, namely feeling and so on only. The same method applies everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Dissociated from by the Dissociated from.

11. Eleventh Method: Explanation of the Associated with and Dissociated from by the Included Passage

409. Now, in order to distribute the term "associated and dissociated with what is included," the section beginning with "by the truth of origin" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever states beginning with the truth of origin are taken up in the description of the term "included by what is included," those very same are taken up in all the questions. But because similar answers were taken together, the terms have come in a different order. Therein, whatever states are included by the classification of aggregates and so on by the term taken up in the question, whatever there is association or dissociation with them - the classification by aggregates and so on should be understood by way of those.

Herein this is the method - By the truth of origin, first, the states included in the aggregate of mental activities are included by the classification of aggregates and so on. And those, being associated with the remaining three aggregates, with one mind sense base, with seven consciousness elements, and having set aside craving among the aggregate of mental activities, the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, being associated with the remaining ones, are called associated with some. But they are dissociated from one aggregate of matter, from ten visible form sense bases, and from material elements; and in the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, being dissociated from matter and Nibbāna, they are called dissociated from some. By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Associated with and Dissociated from by the Included.

12. Twelfth Method: Explanation of the Included and Not Included by the Associated with Passage

417. Now, in order to distribute the term "included and not included by what is associated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of feeling" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever states beginning with the aggregate of feeling are taken up in the description of the term "associated with what is associated," those very same are taken up in all the questions. Therein, whatever states are associated with the term taken up in the question, whatever there is inclusion or non-inclusion with them - the classification into aggregates and so on should be understood by way of those.

Herein this is the method - For the aggregate of feeling is associated with perception and so on. Those beginning with perception are included by three aggregates beginning with perception, by two sense bases - the mind-object sense base and the mind sense base, and by eight elements - namely the element of phenomena and the seven consciousness elements; they are not included by the remaining aggregates, sense bases, and elements. By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Included and Not Included by the Associated with.

13. Thirteenth Method: Explanation of the Associated with and Dissociated from by the Not Included Passage

448. Now, in order to distribute the term "associated with and dissociated from what is not included," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of matter" and so on has been commenced. Therein, whatever states have questions similar to the aggregate of matter in the fifth description of the term "not included by what is not included," and whatever are similar to immaterial existence, those very same are taken up. But the remaining do not hold good, thus they are not taken up. For by the aggregate of feeling, material and immaterial states are not included by way of the aggregates and so on. And there is no association whatsoever of those. Therefore, whatever terms hold good, those very same, having been combined together with similar answers, are taken up. Therein, whatever states are not included by way of the aggregates and so on by the states taken up in the question, those with which they are associated and from which they are dissociated - the classification by aggregates and so on should be understood by way of those.

Herein this is the method - By the aggregate of matter, to begin with, it is consciousness alone that is not included by the three classifications. That is associated with the three aggregates beginning with feeling, and within the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, associated with just those beginning with feeling. It is dissociated from one aggregate of matter, from ten visible form sense bases and material elements, and within the mind-object sense base and the element of phenomena, dissociated from matter, Nibbāna, and phenomena. With reference to that, it was said beginning with "those states by three aggregates." By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere.

Commentary on the Passage on Associated with and Dissociated from by the Not Included.

14. Fourteenth Method: Explanation of the Included and Not Included by the Dissociated from Passage

456. Now, in order to distribute the term "included and not included by what is dissociated," the section beginning with "by the aggregate of matter" and so on has been commenced. Therein, those terms for which dissociation does not hold, those were not taken up in this section. But what are those? The mind-object sense base and so on. For the mind-object sense base, dissociation does not hold with even one among the aggregates and so on. In the case of the element of phenomena and so on too, the same method applies. Their summary verse is this -

"Mind-object sense base, element of phenomena, and the life faculty;
And the term mentality-materiality, and the six sense bases.

"The triad beginning with birth, one term in the twentieth triad;
One at the end of the triads, and seven terms in the minor intermediate.

"Ten only in the groups, fourteen in the major intermediate;
Six terms beyond that, and all in brief;
The terms that are not obtained are forty and seven."

And at the conclusion - The verse "mind-object sense base, element of phenomena" was also spoken to illustrate this very meaning. But setting aside these, all the remaining ones are obtained. Among those, the classification by aggregates and so

on should be understood in accordance with the method already stated.

Commentary on the Passage on Included and Not Included by the Dissociated from.

Concluding Discussion

And to this extent -

Skilled in the varieties of elements, the Treatise on Elements which the Truth-finder declared;

The elucidation of the varieties of method-openings of that is completed.

For by this elucidation of the varieties of method-openings, by an intelligent person it is possible;

To know all the methods too, thus it was spoken as merely a condensed account.

But if I were to speak in detail of each and every term;

The words would be exceedingly many, and the meaning would be without distinction.

Thus, in a text of less than two recitation sections, whatever this was done by me;

May the merit attained by this effort be for the happiness of the world.

The commentary on the Discussion on Elements is completed.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is part of the PaliVerse Project - the first complete, unified English translation of the Pāli Canon together with its Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) and Subcommentaries (Tīkā), accompanied by interactive study tools. PaliVerse is an ongoing project. The AI translations are continuously improved through experts' revisions and feedback. This text is the latest translation as of the date of download.

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