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Multitude of Constituents

Bahudhātuka

ཁམས་མང་པོ་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་མདོ།

khamṣ mang po pa zhes bya ba'i mdo

The Sūtra “Multitude of Constituents”

Bahudhātukasūtra

· Toh 297 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 71 (mdo sde, sha), folios 297.a–301.b



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
 - 1. Multitude of Constituents
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
 - Source Text
 - Tibetan Language References
 - Western Language References
- g. Glossary

s.

SUMMARY

- s.1 In this short discourse, also found in a similar form in the Pali canon, the Buddha gives a teaching to Ānanda in which he confirms the suggestion that all negative experiences arise from being foolish, not from being learned, and goes on to summarize for Ānanda what distinguishes a learned person from a foolish one. The learned person, he says, is learned in the constituents, in the sense fields, in dependent origination, and in knowing what is possible and impossible. He then elaborates briefly on each.

ac.

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- ac.1 Translated from Tibetan by the Āli Kāli Translation Group, consisting of Zsuzsa Majer in collaboration with Karma Dorje (Rabjampa), with assistance from William K. Dewey. Edited and introduced by George FitzHerbert and finalized by members of the 84000 editorial team.
- ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *Multitude of Constituents*¹ is a short discourse found in similar but not identical form in the Pali canon (*Bahudhātukasutta*, MN 115), in which the Buddha confirms Ānanda's suggestion that all danger and negative experiences arise from a lack of education, childishness, or foolishness (Tib. *byis pa*, Skt./Pali *bāla*), and not from being skilled, or learned (Tib. *mkhas pa*, Skt./Pali *paṇḍita*).

i.2 The Buddha encourages Ānanda to develop the qualities of the learned and to relinquish those of the foolish. He enumerates these qualities in four categories: being learned in the constituents; being learned in the sense fields; being learned in dependent origination; and being learned in what is possible and impossible. Each of these four categories is then elaborated in turn.

i.3 In the section on the "constituents," from which the sūtra takes its name, the term *constituent* has been chosen to translate the multivalent Sanskrit/Pali term *dhātu*, and its Tibetan equivalent *kham*,² sometimes also translated into English as "element" or "domain." In the context of this discourse, the term is used in a manner similar to *dharma* (Tib. *chos*) to refer to the many facets of experience and the world that is experienced. These constituents together constitute all experience, from the physical world to sensory and mental experience; to areas such as attitude, affect, and right and wrong; as well as to temporality (past, present, and future) and the three realms (Tib. *kham gsum*, Skt. *tridhātu*), which together make up the whole of saṃsāra. In total, sixty-two constituents are enumerated in this discourse. They are presented in an order that reflects the pedagogical orientation of the text, with the most numerous category listed first (the eighteen constituents of the senses), followed by multiple further categories of six, four, three, and finally two.

i.4 In the second and third sections, the twelve sense fields and the twelve links of dependent origination are listed respectively.

- i.5 The fourth section, on knowing what is possible and impossible, or what is tenable and untenable, consists of twelve pairs of contrasting hypotheticals presented as examples, of which only the first eight have parallels in the Pali canon version of the discourse. Knowing what is possible and what is impossible is typically considered the first of the “ten powers” of a buddha, though no allusion is made to this in the sūtra itself.
- i.6 The Pali canon version of the discourse, the *Bahudhātukasutta* (MN 115), has a slightly different framing narrative, in places presents items in a different order, and is somewhat shorter than the version contained in the Tibetan Kangyur. The core structure and contents of the discourse, however, are shared. The Pali version has been translated into English (Bhikkhu Sujato 2018) and several other modern languages.³
- i.7 No extant Sanskrit version of the text has been identified. The Sanskrit title given in the Degé and Lithang Kangyurs, *Dhātubahutakasūtra*, appears to be a back-translation from the Tibetan *khamṣ mang po pa*.⁴ Kangyurs of the Themphangma line, such as the Stok Palace Kangyur, give the preferable Sanskrit form *Bahudhātukasūtra*, which more closely matches the Pali title and has been adopted here.⁵
- i.8 A Chinese translation of the discourse was made in the late fourth century CE by Gautama Saṅghadeva (*Duo jie jing* 多界經, Taishō 26-181)⁶ as part of the translation of the Madhyamāgama. Another translation, using the Sanskrit title *Bahudhātukasūtra*, was made by Faxian in 998 (*Fo shuo si pin famen jing* 佛說四品法門經, Taishō 776).⁷
- i.9 The text carries no colophon in most Tibetan Kangyurs of the Tshalpa and Themphangma lineages.⁸ However, two Kangyurs of the independent or mixed group, the Phukdrak Kangyur and the Namgyal Kangyur, include a colophon stating that it was translated and finalized by the Indian preceptor Surendrabodhi and the senior editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.⁹ This indicates a translation made during the height of the Tibetan imperial patronage of Buddhism in the late eighth to the early ninth century CE. That it was indeed translated during the “early diffusion” (*snga dar*) is confirmed by the fact that it appears in the early ninth-century Denkarma imperial catalog, where it is listed among Hīnayāna sūtras (Tib. *theg pa chung ngu'i mdo*).¹⁰
- i.10 The sūtra was also reproduced in full by Śamathadeva in his commentary to the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā*, which is no longer extant in Sanskrit. The Tibetan translation of this text (*chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel bshad nye bar mkho ba*, Toh 4094), believed to date from the eleventh century,¹¹ includes a parallel alternative translation of the discourse in full.¹² This later translation from Sanskrit closely matches the Kangyur version and was

likely made with reference to the older translation, but in places presents clarifications. No other canonical commentaries on the text in Tibetan have been identified.

i.11 The Tibetan text concludes with a series of alternative titles for the discourse, namely “The Four Parts,” “The Mirror of the Dharma,” and “The Great Drum of Deathlessness.”

i.12 This English translation was made from the Tibetan as found in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the variant readings recorded in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace Kangyur. Significant divergences from the Pali version, and from the Tibetan version of the discourse found in Toh 4094, have been observed in the notes.

The Sūtra
Multitude of Constituents

1.

The Translation

[F.297.a]

1.1 Homage to Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying in Śrāvastī, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's Park. At that time, Venerable Ānanda withdrew into seclusion. Once he was settled in meditation, the following thought arose in his mind: "Whatever dangers arise, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity,¹³ whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict arises, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned."¹⁴

1.2 In the afternoon, Venerable Ānanda rose from his meditation and went to where the Blessed One was. He bowed his head to the feet of the Blessed One, and then sat down to one side. Once seated to one side, Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "Honorable One, today I went into seclusion, and while settled in meditation, the following thought came to my mind: 'Whatever dangers arise, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity, whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict arises, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned.' "

[F.297.b]

1.3 "Ānanda, it is thus! It is thus! Whatever dangers arise, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity, whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict arises, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned.¹⁵ Ānanda, consider this analogy: if a house made of dried reeds or a house made of hay, or a pile of dry straw, is set on fire, it will indeed be burnt.¹⁶ In the same way, whatever dangers arise, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity, whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict arises, all of them arise from foolishness, not from being learned.

- 1.4 “Ānanda, in the past, whatever dangers arose, all of them arose from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity, whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict arose, all of them arose from foolishness, not from being learned. Ānanda, in the future, whatever dangers may arise, all of them will arise from foolishness, not from being learned. Whatever calamity, whatever harm, contagious illness, or conflict may arise, all of them will arise from foolishness, not from being learned.
- 1.5 “Ānanda, in this way, in the past, in the future, and in the present, those who encounter danger are the foolish, and those who are free of danger are the learned. Those with calamity are the foolish, and those without calamity are the learned. Those with harm are the foolish, and those without harm are the learned. Those with contagious illness are the foolish, and those without contagious illness are the learned. Those with conflict are the foolish, [F.298.a] and those without conflict are the learned. Ānanda, you should know that danger, as well as calamity, harm, contagious illness, and conflict, are from foolishness, they are not from being learned.
- 1.6 “So, Ānanda, you should understand the qualities of the foolish and the qualities of the learned, and having understood the qualities of the foolish and the qualities of the learned, you should abandon the qualities of the foolish, and adopt the qualities of the learned. Ānanda, you should train in this way.”
- 1.7 “Honorable One, how are the foolish classified as ‘foolish’?”
 “Ānanda, the foolish are not learned in the constituents, are not learned in the sense fields, are not learned in dependent origination, and are not learned in what is possible and impossible. Ānanda, in that way, the foolish may be classified as ‘foolish.’ ”
- 1.8 “Honorable One, how are the learned classified as ‘learned’?”
 “Ānanda, the learned are learned in the constituents, are learned in the sense fields, are learned in dependent origination, and are learned in what is possible and impossible. Ānanda, in that way, the learned may be classified as ‘learned.’ ”
- 1.9 “Venerable One, how is it that the learned are learned in the constituents?”
 “Ānanda, the learned know and see the eighteen constituents correctly just as they are—the constituent of the eye, the constituent of form, and the constituent of visual consciousness; the constituent of the ear, the constituent of sound, and the constituent of auditory consciousness; the constituent of the nose, the constituent of smell, and the constituent of olfactory consciousness; the constituent of the tongue, the constituent of taste, and the constituent of gustatory consciousness; the constituent of the body, the constituent of touch, and the constituent of tactile consciousness;

and the constituent of the intellect, the constituent of mental phenomena, and the constituent of mental consciousness. [F.298.b] Ānanda, in this way they know and see the eighteen constituents correctly, just as they are.

1.10 “Moreover, they know and see these six constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of earth, the constituent of water, the constituent of fire, the constituent of wind, the constituent of space, and the constituent of consciousness. In this way, they know and see these six constituents correctly, just as they are.

1.11 “Moreover, they know and see these six constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of desire, the constituent of malice, the constituent of hostility, the constituent of renunciation, the constituent of the absence of malice, and the constituent of the absence of hostility.¹⁷ In this way, they know and see the six constituents correctly, just as they are.

1.12 “Moreover, they know and see these six constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of pleasure, the constituent of pain, the constituent of happiness, the constituent of sadness, the constituent of equanimity, and the constituent of ignorance. In this way, they know and see the six constituents correctly, just as they are.

1.13 “Moreover, they know and see these four constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of sensation, the constituent of perception, the constituent of formation, and the constituent of consciousness.

1.14 “Moreover, they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of desire, the constituent of form, and the constituent of formlessness.¹⁸

1.15 “Moreover,¹⁹ they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of form, the constituent of formlessness, and the constituent of cessation.

1.16 “Moreover, they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of the past, the constituent of the future, and the constituent of the present.

1.17 “Moreover, they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of the inferior, the constituent of the intermediate, [F.299.a] and the constituent of the superior.

1.18 “Moreover, they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of the virtuous, the constituent of the nonvirtuous, and the constituent of the neutral.

1.19 “Moreover, they know and see these three constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of learning, the constituent of no learning, and the constituent of neither learning nor no learning.

- 1.20 “Moreover, they know and see these two constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of the contaminated, and the constituent of the uncontaminated.
- 1.21 “Moreover, they know and see these two constituents correctly, just as they are—the constituent of the conditioned, and the constituent of the unconditioned.
 “Ānanda, it is in this way that the learned are learned in the constituents.”
- 1.22 “Honorable One, how is it that the learned are learned in sense fields?”
 “Ānanda, the learned know and see the twelve sense fields correctly, just as they are—the sense field of the eye and the sense field of sight; the sense field of the ear and the sense field of sound; the sense field of the nose and the sense field of odor; the sense field of the tongue and the sense field of taste; the sense field of the body and the sense field of touch; the sense field of the mind and the sense field of mental phenomena. Ānanda, it is in this way that the learned are learned in the sense fields.”
- 1.23 “Honorable One, how is it that the learned are learned in dependent origination?”
 “Ānanda, the learned know and see dependent origination correctly, just as it is, in forward and reverse order, in this way:
- 1.24 “When this is present, this will arise, and when this arises, this will occur. In this way, through the condition of ignorance, there is formation; through the condition of formation, there is consciousness; through the condition of consciousness, there is name and form; through the condition of name and form, there are the six sense fields; through the condition of the six sense fields, there is contact; through the condition of contact, there is sensation; through the condition of sensation, there is craving; [F.299.b] through the condition of craving, there is grasping; through the condition of grasping, there is becoming; through the condition of becoming, there is birth; through the condition of birth, there is old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and disturbance— this mass of nothing but suffering.
- 1.25 “*And so, too, when this is not present, this will not arise, and with the cessation of this, this will cease. In this way, through the cessation of ignorance, formation ceases; through the cessation of formation, consciousness ceases; through the cessation of consciousness, name and form cease; through the cessation of name and form, the six sense fields cease; through the cessation of the six sense fields, contact ceases; through the cessation of contact, sensation ceases; through the cessation of sensation, craving ceases; through the cessation of craving, grasping ceases; through the cessation of grasping, becoming ceases; through the cessation*

of becoming, birth ceases; through the cessation of birth, old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and disturbance—this mass of nothing but suffering—ceases.”.

“Ānanda, it is in this way that the learned are learned in dependent origination.”

1.26 “Honorable One, how is it that the learned are learned in what is possible and impossible?”

“Ānanda, the learned know and see correctly, just as it is, that what is possible is possible, and what is impossible is impossible.

1.27 “Ānanda, this is impossible and does not happen: that the ripening of any negative behavior of the body, or any negative behavior of the speech or mind, will produce things that are desirable, pleasant, joyful, or attractive. This is impossible. This is possible: that the ripening of any negative behavior of the body, or any negative behavior of the speech or mind, will produce things that are undesirable, unpleasant, unjoyful, and unattractive. This is possible.

1.28 “Ānanda, this is impossible and does not happen: that the ripening of any positive behavior of the body, or any positive behavior of the speech or mind, will produce things that are undesirable, unpleasant, unjoyful, and unattractive. [F.300.a] This is impossible. This is possible: that the ripening of any positive behavior of the body, or any positive behavior of the speech or mind, will produce things that are desirable, pleasant, joyful, and attractive. This is possible.

1.29 “It is impossible and does not happen that having engaged in negative behavior of the body, or having engaged in negative behavior of the speech or mind, that by these causes and conditions, after the body has been destroyed, one will be reborn among the gods of the joyful higher realms. This is impossible. It is possible that having engaged in negative behavior of the body, or having engaged in negative behavior of the speech or mind, that by these causes and conditions, after death, when the body has been destroyed, one will be reborn among the hell beings who have fallen into the lower states of rebirth. This is possible.

1.30 “It is impossible and does not happen that having engaged in positive behavior of the body, or having engaged in positive behavior of the speech or mind, that by these causes and conditions, after death, when the body has been destroyed, one will be reborn among the hell beings who have fallen into the lower states of rebirth. This is impossible. It is possible that having engaged in positive behavior of the body, or having engaged in positive behavior of the speech or mind, that by these causes and conditions, when the body has been destroyed, one will be reborn among the gods of the joyful higher realms. This is possible.

- 1.31 “It is impossible and does not happen that two perfect and complete buddhas appear simultaneously in a world. This is impossible. For one to appear is possible.
- 1.32 “It is impossible and does not happen that two universal monarchs [F.300.b] appear simultaneously in a world. This is impossible. For one to appear is possible.
- 1.33 “It is impossible and does not happen that a woman exercises the sovereignty of a universal monarch, or Śakra himself, or Brahmā himself, or Māra himself, or reaches buddhahood in unsurpassed and perfectly complete awakening. This is impossible. For a man this is possible.
- 1.34 “It is impossible and does not happen that a person who perfectly sees the truth intentionally kills their father, their mother, or an arhat, or causes a schism in the saṅgha, or draws blood from the body of a tathāgata out of malice. This is impossible. This is possible for ordinary people.
- 1.35 “It is impossible and does not happen²⁰ that a person who perfectly sees the truth intentionally kills a living creature, and having abandoned the precepts becomes degenerate, and insteads seek outsiders as worthy recipients of offerings, views outsiders as the teacher, believes in purification through auspicious signs and ceremonies,²¹ considers knowledgeable ascetics and brahmins to be those who know what is to be known and who see what is to be seen, adopts the views and ideas of other ascetics and brahmins, and experiences an eighth existence.²² This is impossible. This is possible for ordinary people.
- 1.36 “It is impossible and does not happen that someone whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, who is not beyond suffering, and who has not abandoned the five obscurations could become thoroughly settled in the four applications of mindfulness. This is impossible. It is possible that someone whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, who is not beyond suffering, [F.301.a] but who has abandoned the five obscurations, could become thoroughly settled in the four applications of mindfulness. This is possible.
- 1.37 “It is impossible and does not happen that someone whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, who is not beyond suffering, and who has not abandoned the five obscurations could, by thoroughly settling their mind in the four applications of mindfulness, cultivate the seven branches of awakening. This is impossible. It is possible that one whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, and who is not beyond suffering, but who has

abandoned the five obscurations, could thoroughly settle their mind in the four applications of mindfulness and cultivate the seven branches of awakening. This is possible.

1.38 “It is impossible and does not happen that someone whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, who is not beyond suffering, and who has not abandoned the five obscurations could, by thoroughly settling in the four applications of mindfulness and cultivating the seven branches of awakening, realize individual awakening and reach buddhahood in unsurpassed and perfectly complete awakening. This is impossible. It is possible that one whose mind is thoroughly afflicted, whose wisdom has been weakened, who has turned toward degeneration, and who is not beyond suffering, but who has abandoned the five obscurations could, by thoroughly settling in the four applications of mindfulness and cultivating the seven branches of awakening, realize individual awakening and reach buddhahood in unsurpassed and perfectly complete awakening. This is possible.

1.39 “Ānanda, it is in this way that the learned are learned in what is possible and impossible.”

1.40 “Honorable One, what is the title of this Dharma discourse? How should it be remembered?”

“Ānanda, remember this Dharma discourse as *The Four Parts*, [F.301.b] or as *The Mirror of the Dharma*, or as *The Great Drum of Deathlessness*, or as *Many Constituents*. Therefore, ‘*Many Constituents*’ is the simple designation of this Dharma discourse.”

1.41 *This concludes The Sūtra “Multitude of Constituents”.*

n.

NOTES

n.1 Most Kangyurs, including those among both the Tshalpa and Themphangma lines, as well as the Denkarma catalog, give the sūtra's Tibetan title as *khamṣ mang po'i mdo*, while the Degé and Lithang Kangyurs give it as *khamṣ mang po pa'i mdo*, which is also how it is given in the Tibetan translation of Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* (Toh 4094). It seems likely that the variant Sanskrit title of the discourse found in the Degé and Lithang Kangyurs, *Dhātubahutakasūtra*, is a back-translation from this Tibetan form, *Multitude of Constituents*.

n.2 In the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, the imperial-era Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon, the term *dhātu*, as found in many compounds, is rendered consistently in Tibetan as *khamṣ*, a term that also carries the senses of "field," "province," or "realm." In specific cases, however, in particular *dharmadhātu* and its related compounds (which do not feature in this discourse), *dhātu* is translated with *dbyings*, which also means "space."

n.3 For an English translation from Pali, as well as the Pali source text and listings of translations into other modern languages, see *Many Elements* ([MN 115 \(https://suttacentral.net/mn115/en/sujato?layout=plain&reference=none¬es=asterisk&highlight=false&script=latin\)](https://suttacentral.net/mn115/en/sujato?layout=plain&reference=none¬es=asterisk&highlight=false&script=latin)).

n.4 *Dhātubahutakasūtra*, to make grammatically possible (though still unlikely) Sanskrit, would need to be corrected to *Dhātubahutākasūtra* (i.e., a long ā in bahutā). It seems likely this title was created as a back-translation from the Tibetan *khamṣ mang po pa*, with the nominalized bahutā included to account for the pa nominalizer in the Tibetan. The Dodedrak Kangyur gives the Sanskrit title as *Dhātubahukasūtra*, which is also how it is listed in the Tohoku catalog (Ui et al. 1934, p. 57).

- n.5 See [note 1](#) and [note 4](#). Skilling (2009) has noted that in this case the title given in the Themphamga Kangyurs is preferable.
- n.6 *Duo jie jing* 多界經 (*Bahudhātukasūtra*), Taishō 26-181 ([CBETA \(https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0026_047\)](https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0026_047); SAT (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/T0026.html>)).
- n.7 *Fo shuo si pin famen jing* 佛說四品法門經 (*Bahudhātukasūtra*), Taishō 776 ([CBETA \(https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0776\)](https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0776); SAT (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/T0776.html>)).
- n.8 The sūtra is found in the General Sūtra (Tib. *mdo sde*) section in the Degé, Narthang, Choné, Lhasa (Zhol), Urga, and Stok Palace Kangyurs; in the Various Sūtras (Tib. *mdo sna tshogs*) section in the Qianlong Kangyur; and in the Sūtra (Tib. *mdo*) section in the Shey Palace Kangyur. For the details of these variations see the University of Vienna’s [Resources for Kanjur and Tenjur Studies](http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=297&typ=1) (<http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=297&typ=1>). In the Mongolian Kangyur it is entitled *Olan iṣṭayur-un sudur* (*The Sūtra “Many Foundations”*); see also Ligeti (1942), p. 286.
- n.9 Colophon: *khamṣ mang po zhes bya ba’i mdo rdzogs so / rgya gar gyi mkhan po su lenḍa bo[d] de dang / zhu chen gyi lo tstsha ba ban de ye shes sdes bsgyur cing gtan la phab pa* (“This sūtra was translated and finalized by the Indian abbot Sulenḍabod and the principal editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé”). Accessed through [Resources for Kanjur and Tenjur Studies](http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=297&typ=1) (<http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=297&typ=1>).
- n.10 Denkarma, folio 301.a; Herrmann-Pfandt (2008), p. 157.
- n.11 According to the colophon of Toh 4094, Śamathadeva’s *Abhidharma-kośaṭīkopyāyikā* was translated by “the Tibetan translator, the Khampa monk Sherab Öser” and Jayaśrījñāna. The dates of these figures remain uncertain, but Peter Skilling (2020, p. 713) has suggested the eleventh or twelfth century.
- n.12 Śamathadeva, Toh 4094, folios 28.b–33.b.
- n.13 The Tibetan term *yams kyi nad* often refers to an epidemic or contagious disease. Here it is likely used to translate the Sanskrit *upadrava*, which can refer to any accident or sudden onset of disease, distress, famine, or misfortune, hence “calamity.”
- n.14 While here and *passim* the Kangyur versions of the discourse have the construction *byis pa las skye’i mkhas las ni ma yin no*, i.e., that all dangers and all

kinds of disasters arise “*from* the foolish, not *from* the learned,” the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* translation has the alternative construction *byis pa rnams la skye’i/_mkhas pa rnams la ni ma yin no* (Śamathadeva, Toh 4094, folio 28.b), i.e., that all these factors of distress occur “*to/for* the foolish and not *to/for* the learned,” which seems a preferable reading. However, in Bhikkhu Sujato’s translation from the Pali version of the discourse, like the Kangyur versions, we also find “*from*,” so here we have retained the Kangyur reading.

- n.15 This sentence is absent from the Stok Palace version.
- n.16 Here the analogy seems incomplete. In the Pali version (MN 115) the analogy is clearer. As translated by Bhikkhu Sujato (2018), “It’s like a fire that spreads from a hut made of reeds or grass, and burns down even a bungalow, plastered inside and out, draft-free, with latches fastened and windows shuttered.”
- n.17 Bhikkhu Sujato’s translation (2018) of the parallel Pali discourse here reads, “There are these six elements: the elements of sensuality and renunciation, malice and good will, and cruelty and harmlessness. When a mendicant knows and sees these six elements, they’re qualified to be called ‘skilled in the elements’.”
- n.18 More commonly translated as “three realms” (Tib. *kham s gsum*, Skt. *tridhātu*). The “three realms,” like the other *dhātus*, are here constituents of the experienced world.
- n.19 Neither this, nor the following five paragraphs, have parallel content in the Pali version, which here skips directly to the constituents of the conditioned and unconditioned.
- n.20 Neither this, nor the following three paragraphs, have parallel content in the Pali version.
- n.21 *dge mtshan dang bkra shis*, probably rendering the Sanskrit *kautukamaṅgala*.
- n.22 *srid pa brgyad pa*. “A person who perfectly sees [the truth]” (*lta ba phun sum tshogs pa’i gang zag*) refers to a stream-enterer (*srotaāpanna*, *rgyun du zhugs pa*), and such a person can only have seven further rebirths.

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 Ānanda

kun dga' bo

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

ānanda^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A major śrāvaka disciple and personal attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was a cousin of the Buddha (according to the *Mahāvastu*, he was a son of Śuklodana, one of the brothers of King Śuddhodana, which means he was a brother of Devadatta; other sources say he was a son of Amṛtodana, another brother of King Śuddhodana, which means he would have been a brother of Aniruddha).

Ānanda, having always been in the Buddha's presence, is said to have memorized all the teachings he heard and is celebrated for having recited all the Buddha's teachings by memory at the first council of the Buddhist saṅgha, thus preserving the teachings after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa. The phrase "Thus did I hear at one time," found at the beginning of the sūtras, usually stands for his recitation of the teachings. He became a patriarch after the passing of Mahākāśyapa.

g.2 arhat

dgra bcom pa

དག་བཙུམ་པ།

arhat

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

According to Buddhist tradition, one who is worthy of worship (*pūjām arhati*), or one who has conquered the enemies, the mental afflictions (*kleśa-ari-hata-vat*), and reached liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering. It is the fourth and highest of the four fruits attainable by śrāvakas. Also used as an epithet of the Buddha.

g.3 auspicious thread

dge mtshan dang bkra shis

དགེ་མཚན་དང་བྲག་ཤིས།

kautukamaṅgala ^{AD}

Refers to the Indian custom of tying an auspicious thread, normally around the wrist.

g.4 Bandé Yeshé Dé

ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Yeshé Dé (late eighth to early ninth century) was the most prolific translator of sūtras into Tibetan. Altogether he is credited with the translation of more than one hundred sixty sūtra translations and more than one hundred additional translations, mostly on tantric topics. In spite of Yeshé Dé's great importance for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial era, only a few biographical details about this figure are known. Later sources describe him as a student of the Indian teacher Padmasambhava, and he is also credited with teaching both sūtra and tantra widely to students of his own. He was also known as Nanam Yeshé Dé, from the Nanam (*sna nam*) clan.

g.5 Blessed One

bcom ldan 'das

བཙེམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat^{AD} · *bhagavān*^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature, this is an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four māras, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *'das* to “going beyond” saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four māras.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root √*bhañj* (“to break”).

g.6 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚེངས་པ།

brahmā^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many

universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of the Sahā World” (*sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*mahābrahman*).

g.7 constituent

*kham*s

ཁམས།

dhātu

Often translated as “element,” *dhātu* (Tib. *kham*s) is a term with a wide semantic range. Here, in a manner similar to the term *dharma* (Tib. *chos*), it refers to all the constituents or elements of experience.

g.8 constituent of learning

*slob pa'i kham*s

སློབ་པའི་ཁམས།

śaikṣadhātu

The experience of those in training.

g.9 constituent of no learning

*mi slob pa'i kham*s

མི་སློབ་པའི་ཁམས།

aśaikṣadhātu

The experience of those who have passed beyond training.

g.10 constituent of the conditioned

*'dus byas kyi kham*s

འདུས་བྱས་ཀྱི་ཁམས།

saṃskṛtadhātu

Conditioned phenomena.

g.11 constituent of the contaminated

*zag pa dang bcas pa'i kham*s

ཟག་པ་དང་བཅས་པའི་ཁམས།

sāsravadhātu

The phenomena of saṃsāra influenced by the defilements (Tib *nyon mongs*, Skt. *kleśa*) and karma are classified as contaminated.

g.12 constituent of the unconditioned

*'dus ma byas kyi kham*s

འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཀྱི་ཁམས།

asaṃskṛtadhātu

Unconditioned phenomena.

g.13 constituent of the uncontaminated

*zag pa med pa'i kham*s

ཟག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཁམས།

anāsravadhātu

The phenomena of saṃsāra not influenced by the defilements (*nyon mongs*, *kleśa*) and karma are classified as uncontaminated.

g.14 dependent origination

rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba

རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་པར་འབྱུང་བ།

pratītyasamutpāda

The teaching that everything arises in dependence on something else, which is also applied to the entire process of life and death. This became standardized into twelve sequences of dependent origination, beginning with ignorance, followed by formation, and concluding in death. In the Pali suttas, this was more often taught as a greater number of successive sequences, commencing with ignorance and formation being simultaneous and codependent, like two sticks leaning against each other.

g.15 eighteen constituents

*kham*s bco brgyad

ཁམས་བཅོ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭādaśadhātu

The eighteen constituents through which sensory experience is produced: the six sense faculties (*indriya*); the six corresponding sense objects (*ālambana*); and the six sensory consciousnesses (*vijñāna*).

When grouped these are: the eye constituent, form constituent, and eye consciousness constituent; the ear constituent, sound constituent, and ear consciousness constituent; the nose constituent, smell constituent, and nose consciousness constituent; the tongue constituent, taste constituent, and tongue consciousness constituent; the body constituent, touch constituent, and body consciousness constituent; the thinking-mind constituent, dharma constituent, and thinking-mind consciousness constituent.

See also “constituents.”

g.16 five obscurations

sgrib pa lnga

སྒྲིབ་པ་ལྔ།

pañcanivarāṇa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Five impediments to meditation (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*): sensory desire (*'dod pa la 'dun pa, kāmacchanda*), ill will (*gnod sems, vyāpāda*), drowsiness and torpor (*rmugs pa dang gnyid, styānamiddha*), agitation and regret (*rgod pa dang 'gyod pa, auddhatyakaukr̥tya*), and doubt (*the tshom, vicikitsā*).

g.17 four applications of mindfulness

dran pa nye bar gzhaḡ pa bzhi · dran pa nye bar bzhaḡ pa bzhi

དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་གཞག་པ་བཞི། · དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་བཞག་པ་བཞི།

catvāri smṛtyupasthānāni · catuḥsmṛtyupasthāna

Mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of sensations or feelings, mindfulness of the mind, and mindfulness of phenomena. These relate to a form of meditation in which one sees the body as impure, sensations as painful, the mind as transient, and phenomena as without self.

g.18 Honorable One

btsun pa

བཙུན་པ།

—

One of the standard epithets of the Buddha Śākyamuni, and also a term of respect used for Buddhist monks, akin to the modern address, bhante.

g.19 impossible

gnas ma yin

གནས་མ་ཡིན།

asthāna

That which is untenable or cannot reasonably be expected to occur.

Knowing what is possible and what is impossible (Tib. *gnas dang gnas ma yin*, Skt. *sthānāsthāna*) is counted among the ten powers of a buddha (Tib. *stobs bcu*, Skt. *daśabala*).

g.20 individual awakening

rang byang chub

པད་བྱེད་ལྷན་པོ།

pratyekabodhi

This refers to the awakening of pratyekabuddhas (Tib. *rang sangs rgyas*).

g.21 Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's Park

rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga' ra ba

ཇེཏའུ་བུ་ཇེཏའུ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚལ་མགོན་མེད་ཟམ་སྦྱིན་གྱི་ཀུན་དགའ་རབ།

jetavanam anāthapiṇḍadasyārāmaḥ ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the first Buddhist monasteries, located in a park outside Śrāvastī, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kośala in northern India. This park was originally owned by Prince Jeta, hence the name Jetavana, meaning Jeta's grove. The wealthy merchant Anāthapiṇḍada, wishing to offer it to the Buddha, sought to buy it from him, but the prince, not wishing to sell, said he would only do so if Anāthapiṇḍada covered the entire property with gold coins. Anāthapiṇḍada agreed, and managed to cover all of the park except the entrance, hence the name Anāthapiṇḍadasyārāmaḥ, meaning Anāthapiṇḍada's park. The place is usually referred to in the sūtras as "Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍada's park," and according to the *Samghabhedavastu* the Buddha used Prince Jeta's name in first place because that was Prince Jeta's own unspoken wish while Anāthapiṇḍada was offering the park. Inspired by the occasion and the Buddha's use of his name, Prince Jeta then offered the rest of the property and had an entrance gate built. The Buddha specifically instructed those who recite the sūtras to use Prince Jeta's name in first place to commemorate the mutual effort of both benefactors.

Anāthapiṇḍada built residences for the monks, to house them during the monsoon season, thus creating the first Buddhist monastery. It was one of the Buddha's main residences, where he spent around nineteen rainy season retreats, and it was therefore the setting for many of the Buddha's discourses and events. According to the travel accounts of Chinese monks, it was still in use as a Buddhist monastery in the early fifth century CE, but by the sixth century it had been reduced to ruins.

g.22 Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta

'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུ་རྒྱུ་རམ།

mañjuśrīkumārabhūta ^{AO}

“The Ever-Youthful Mañjuśrī,” or “Youthful Gentle Splendor,” an epithet of Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom and one of the Buddha’s principal interlocutors in many sūtras.

g.23 Māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra^{AD}

The principal deity in the highest paradise in the desire realm who attempted to prevent the Buddha’s enlightenment. Also a name for the deities ruled over by him, and further used in the sense of a demon or demonic influence in general that creates obstacles for spiritual practice and enlightenment. Symbolically, the defects within a person that prevent enlightenment.

g.24 perfect and complete buddha

yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas

ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱལ།

saṃyaksambuddha

The attainment of a buddha, who has gained total freedom from conditioned existence, overcome all tendencies imprinted on the mind as a result of a long association with afflicted mental states, and fully manifested all aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

g.25 possible

gnas

གནས།

sthāna

That which is tenable or can reasonably be expected to occur. Knowing what is possible and what is impossible (Tib. *gnas dang gnas ma yin*, Skt. *sthānāsthāna*) is counted among the ten powers of a buddha (Tib. *stobs bcu*, Skt. *daśabala*).

g.26 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśa*). Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.27 sense fields

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཚེད།

āyatana

The senses as sources of perception and their respective objects. The twelve sense sources consist of the six sense organs and their respective six objects. They are sometimes called collectively “the six sense fields,” meaning six pairs of two (this set of six is the fifth of the twelve links of dependent origination), or the “twelve sense fields.”

g.28 settled in meditation

nang du yang dag bzhag

ནང་དུ་ཡང་དག་བཞག།

pratisaṃlayana

g.29 seven branches of awakening

byang chub kyi yan lag bdun

བྱང་ཚུབ་གྱི་ཡན་ལག་བདུན།

saptabodhyaṅga

Mindfulness or recollection (Tib. *dran pa*, Skt. *smṛti*); discrimination (*shes rab*, *prajña*); diligence (*brtson 'grus*, *vīrya*); joy (*dga' ba*, *prīti*); pliability (*shin sbyangs*, *praśrabdhi*); absorption (*ting nge 'dzin*, *samādhi*); and equanimity (*btang snyoms*, *upeksa*).

g.30 six sense fields

skye mched drug

སྐྱེ་མཚེད་དུག།

ṣaḍāyatana

Fifth of the twelve links of dependent origination. The senses as sources of perception and their respective objects. They are sometimes known collectively as “the six sense sources,” meaning six pairs, but are also

sometimes taken as two separate groups, making twelve. See also the twelve sense fields.

g.31 Śrāvastī

mnyan du yod pa

སམྱན་དུ་ཡོད་པ།

śrāvastī^{AO}

During the life of the Buddha, Śrāvastī was the capital city in the kingdom of Kośala, in present-day Uttar Pradesh in northern India. The city was at that time ruled by one of the Buddha's royal patrons, King Prasenajit. The Buddha often dwelt in his monastery in the Jeta Grove situated here.

g.32 Surendrabodhi

su ren+d+ra bo d+hi

སུ་རེན་བོ་ནི།

surendrabodhi^{AO}

Surendrabodhi came to Tibet during reign of King Ralpachen (*ral pa can*, r. 815–38 CE). He is listed as the translator of forty-three texts and was one of the small group of paṇḍitas responsible for the *Mahāvīryūtpatti* Sanskrit–Tibetan dictionary.

g.33 tathāgata

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence. *Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.34 ten powers

stobs bcu

ལྷོ་བས་བརྒྱ།

daśabala ^{AO}

The classical list of the Buddha's ten powers, which appears frequently throughout both Pāli and Sanskrit sources, refers to the following powers of knowing (Skt. *jñānabala*): (1) Knowing what is possible and what is impossible (Skt. *sthānāsthāna*). (2) Knowing the ripening of karma (Skt. *karmavipāka*). (3) Knowing the various inclinations (Skt. *nānādhimukti*). (4) Knowing the various elements (Skt. *nānādhātu*). (5) Knowing the supreme and lesser faculties (Skt. *indriyaparāpara*). (6) Knowing the paths that lead to all destinations (Skt. *sarvatragāminīpratipad*). (7) Knowing the concentrations, liberations, absorptions, and attainments (Skt. *dhyānavimokṣasamādhisamāpatti*). (8) Knowing the recollection of past existences (Skt. *pūrvanivāsānusmṛti*). (9) Knowing death and rebirth (Skt. *cyutyupapatti*). (10) Knowing the exhaustion of the defilements (Skt. *āsravakṣaya*).

g.35 **three constituents**

kham s gsum

འཇམས་གསུམ།

tridhātu

Usually translated as the “three realms” that make up saṃsāra: the desire realm (Tib. *'dod kham*s, Skt. *kāmadhātu*), the form realm (*gzugs kham*s, *rūpadhātu*), and the formless realm (*gzugs med kham*s, *ārūpyadhātu*).

g.36 **twelve links of dependent origination**

rten 'brel yan lag bcu gnyis

རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱ་གཉིས།

dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The principle of dependent origination asserts that nothing exists independently of other factors, the reason for this being that things and events come into existence only by dependence on the aggregation of multiple causes and conditions. In general, the processes of cyclic existence, through which the external world and the sentient beings within it revolve in a continuous cycle of suffering, propelled by the propensities of past actions and their interaction with afflicted mental states, originate dependent on the sequential unfolding of twelve links: (1) fundamental ignorance, (2) formative predispositions, (3) consciousness, (4) name and form, (5) sense field, (6) sensory contact, (7) sensation, (8) craving, (9)

grasping, (10) rebirth process, (11) actual birth, (12) aging and death. It is through deliberate reversal of these twelve links that one can succeed in bringing the whole cycle to an end.

g.37 twelve sense fields

skye mched bcu gnyis

སྐྱེ་མཆེད་བརྒྱུག་ཉིས།

dvādaśāyatana

The twelve fields or sense sources consist of (a) the six sense organs or inner sense fields (Tib. *nang gi skye mched drug*, Skt. *ṣaḍādhyātmikāyatana*)—the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind—and (b) their respective six objects or outer sense fields (Tib. *phyi'i skye mched drug*, Skt. *ṣaḍbāhyāyatana*): sights, sounds, odors, tastes, tangible objects, and mental phenomena. They are sometimes collectively called “the six sense sources,” meaning the six pairs of inner and outer sense fields.

g.38 universal monarch

khor los sgyur ba

ཁོར་ལོས་སྐྱུར་བ།

cakravartin

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ideal monarch or emperor who, as the result of the merit accumulated in previous lifetimes, rules over a vast realm in accordance with the Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he bears a wheel (*cakra*) that rolls (*varate*) across the earth, bringing all lands and kingdoms under his power. The *cakravartin* conquers his territory without causing harm, and his activity causes beings to enter the path of wholesome actions. According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, just as with the buddhas, only one *cakravartin* appears in a world system at any given time. They are likewise endowed with the thirty-two major marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), but a *cakravartin*'s marks are outshined by those of a buddha. They possess seven precious objects: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wish-fulfilling gem, the queen, the general, and the minister. An illustrative passage about the *cakravartin* and his possessions can be found in *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), [3.3–3.13](#).

Vasubandhu lists four types of *cakravartins*: (1) the *cakravartin* with a golden wheel (*suvarṇacakravartin*) rules over four continents and is invited by lesser kings to be their ruler; (2) the *cakravartin* with a silver wheel (*rūpyacakravartin*) rules over three continents and his opponents submit to

him as he approaches; (3) the cakravartin with a copper wheel (*tāmracakravartin*) rules over two continents and his opponents submit themselves after preparing for battle; and (4) the cakravartin with an iron wheel (*ayaścakravartin*) rules over one continent and his opponents submit themselves after brandishing weapons.

g.39 Venerable

tshe dang ldan pa

ཚེ་དང་ལྷན་པ།

āyusmat · āyusmān

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A respectful form of address between monks, and also between lay companions of equal standing. It literally means “one who has a [long] life.”