

Finally in this section on ethical or moral dhātus, we consider SN 14. 15 and its counterpart SA 447.<sup>32</sup> Here, the Buddha, to illustrate the notion that “by dhātu beings flow together and meet together”, points out eight bhiksus (in SN) or thirteen (in SA); each of them shares with many other bhiksus “walking to and fro” (caṅkamantanti 經行) the same personal characteristic or nature (dhātu). In SN the eight bhiksus and the characteristics they share with their followers are:

1. Sāriputta and his followers possess great wisdom (mahāpañña).
2. Moggallāna etc. possess great psychic powers (mahiddhikā).
3. Kassapa etc. are ascetic indoctrinators (dhutavādā).
4. Anuruddha etc. possess deva-vision (dibbacakkhukā).
5. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta etc. are Dharma-preachers (dhammakathikā).
6. Upāli etc. are vinaya-bearers (vinayadharā).
7. Ānanda etc. have heard/learned much (bahussutā).
8. Devadatta etc. are willers of evil (pāpicchā).

The corresponding SA 447 names thirteen bhiksus, the above 1 to 4 and 6 to 8, together with the following six:

1. Kaundinya (or Ajña-Kaundinya, P. Añña-Kondañña) and his followers are most senior.
2. Śroṇa-Koṭivimśa (P. Soṇa-Kolivīsa) etc. are most diligent in practice.
3. Darva (or Darva-Mallaputra, P. Dabba-Mallaputta) etc. are able and skilled in repairing utensils for the Saṅgha.
4. Pūrṇajit (P. Puṇṇaji) etc. are skilled in argument and good at teaching Dharma.
5. Kātyāyāna (or Mahākātyāyāna, P. Mahā-Kaccāyana/Kaccāna) etc. are skilled in analysing the teaching and explaining the Dharma.
6. Rāhula and his followers are good at keeping the discipline.

Both discourses indicate that those bhiksus keep company because they possess the same dhātu (personal characteristic or nature).

Regarding these various ethical, moral, or personal characteristic dhātus, the two versions share the notion that there are such dhātus possessed by beings. However, while the SN discourses always mention the ethical dhātus

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<sup>32</sup> SN ii, pp. 155-157; T 2, p. 115a-b (CSA ii, pp. 161-162). Another counterpart at EA 49. 3: T 2, pp. 795b-796a.

in connection with past, future and present time, their SA counterparts do not do so.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4. Meditative attainments

SN 14. 11 and its counterpart SA 456 speak of the following seven dhātus:<sup>34</sup>

1. the dhātu of light (ābhā-dhātu 光界)
2. the dhātu of purity (subha-dhātu 淨界)
3. the dhātu of the realm of infinite space (ākāsānañcāyatana-dhātu 無量空入處界)
4. the dhātu of the realm of infinite consciousness (viññāṇañcāyatana-dhātu 無量識入處界)
5. the dhātu of the realm of nothingness (ākīñcaññāyatana-dhātu 無所有入處界)
6. the dhātu of the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (nevasaññānāsaññāyatana-dhātu 非想非非想入處界)
7. the dhātu of the cessation of perception-and-feeling (saññāvedayitanirodha-dhātu) or the dhātu of cessation (有滅界)

The two versions differ regarding the *causal condition* (paṭicca 緣) by which these seven dhātus can be known, and the *attainment* (samāpatti 正受 = stage of meditation) by which each of them can be reached. These are as follows.

SN 14. 11 states that: dhātu 1 (light) is known through darkness (andhakara); dhātu 2 (purity) is known through impurity (asubha); dhātu 3 (infinity of space) is known through material form (rūpa); each of the dhātus 4 to 6 is known through the dhātu named previously (dhātu 4 is known through dhātu 3, etc.); and finally dhātu 7 (cessation of perception-and-feeling) is known through cessation. SA 456 states that dhātus 1 to 3 are known as above; dhātu 4 (infinity of consciousness) is known through space;<sup>35</sup> dhātu 5 (nothingness 無所有) is known through *everything-ness* (所有); dhātu 6 (neither-perception-nor-non-perception) is known through *the*

33 The term for time is addhāna, referring to a long period of time, i.e. a lifetime (PED, p. 26). SN 14. 14-22, 29; SN ii, pp. 154-165, 169. SA 445-448, 450 (counterparts of SN 14. 14-16, 24); T 2, p. 115a-c (CSA ii, pp. 160-163).

34 SN ii, pp. 150-151; T 2, pp. 116c-117a (CSA ii, p. 169).

35 See CSA ii, p. 171, note 3.