

The Initiation into Novicehood
and
the Ordination of Monk
in the Myanmar Buddhist Culture

by

Mahāsaddhammajotikadhaja Sao Htun Hmat Win

B.A. (Hons.); M.A.; A.M., S.R.F. (Harvard)



Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sāsana

Ministry of Religious Affairs

Yangon, Myanmar

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FOREWORD

The Union of Myanmar is a leading Buddhist country with the Teaching of the Buddha flourishing most in the world. The world has taken an interest in the continuing growth of the Buddha Sāsana as a religious faith. The people of the world want to study the Dhamma, they want to do research into it and practise what they have learnt of it. There are instances where learning, practising and realizing the Dhamma have resulted in an insight into the profound truth of the Dhamma and experience of mental peace and calm.

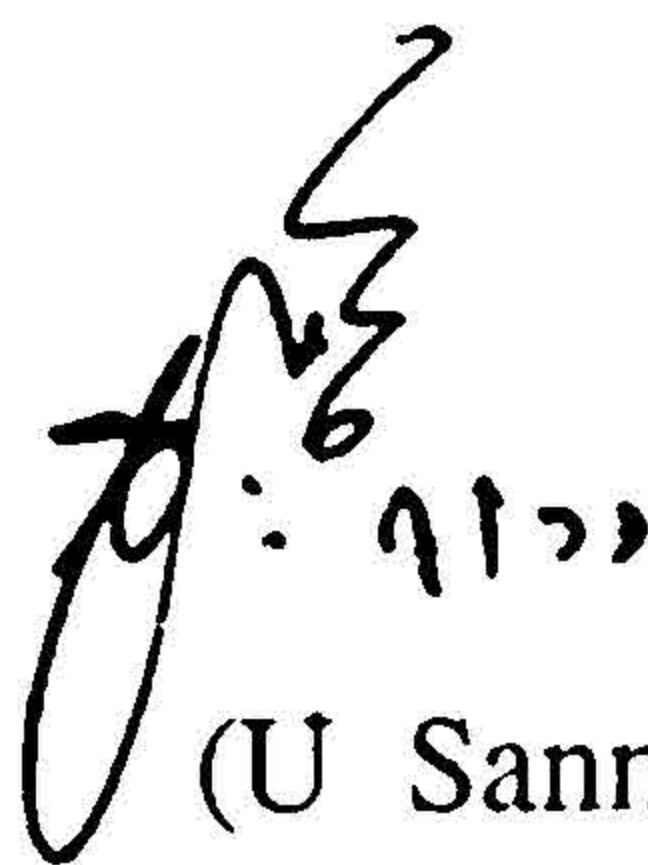
Some of the foreigners who come to Myanmar to practise Buddhist Vipassanā Insight Meditation are not content with practising it as laymen; they wish to join the Buddhist Order of Monks in order to practise it more effectively in strict adherence to the Disciplinary Rules of Conduct.

It is, therefore, necessary for such people to know how one is formally initiated into Novicehood and ordained as a Buddhist monk.

To fulfil this need, we have brought out a reprint of this book “The Initiation into Novicehood and the Ordination of Monk in the Myanmar Buddhist Culture” by *Mahāsaddhammajotikadhaja* U Sao Htun Hmat Win.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to *Mahāsaddhammajotikadhaja* U Sao Htun Hmat Win for his kind permission for the reprint of his work. Thanks are also due to all the officers and staff of the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sāsana who have supervised the work at all its stages, from computer typesetting to the publication of the book.

May the Buddha Sāsana endure long.



(U Sann Lwin)

Director-General

Department for the Promotion and
Propagation of the Sāsana

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	iii
Preamble	1
The Author	13

PART ONE

Myanmar Buddhist Initiation

(ရှင်သာမဏေပြုခြင်း၊ ကိုရင်ဝတ်ခြင်း)	17
The Agenda of Procedures	41
1. Presentation and introduction of the boy aspirant to the Order of monks (ရှင်လောင်းနှင့်ရှင်ဒါယကာတို့ကိုသံဃာတော် များထံအပ်နှံခြင်း)	43
2. Supplicating the Order for the election of a monk to shave the head of the neophyte (ရှင်လောင်းအားဆံချရန်တာဝန်ပေးခြင်း)	43

Contents

	Page
3. Shaving of the head and Preliminary Meditation (ဆံချခြင်း၊ တစပဉ္စကကမ္မဋ္ဌာန်းရှုခြင်း) ...	43
4. Requesting permission for participation (သံဃာ့ဘောင်ဝင်ခွင့်တောင်းခြင်း) ...	44
5. Handing over of the robes to the Chapter (သင်္ကန်းကပ်ခြင်း) ...	45
6. Asking for the robes from the Chapter (သင်္ကန်းတောင်းခြင်း) ...	46
7. Changing from layman clothes into the monastic robes (သင်္ကန်းဝတ်လဲခြင်း) ...	47
8. Request for admission into the Order (သာသနာ့ဘောင်သို့ဝင်ခွင့်တောင်းခြင်း)...	47
9. Taking Refuge in the three Ratanas and pledging to observe the Ten Precepts (သရဏဂုံနှင့် ဆယ်ပါးသီလဆောက်တည်ခြင်း)...	48
10. Appointment of a Preceptor (ဥပဇ္ဈိယလျှောက်ထားခြင်း) ...	52

	Page
11. Ordinance of ten Punishable Offences (ဒဏ်ဆယ်ပါး)	52
12. Ordinance of ten Excommunicable Offences (လိင်ဆယ်ပါး)	53
13. Four Articles on Paccavekkhanā Meditation (ပစ္စဝေက္ခဏာဆင်ခြင်ရန်ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်စုံစာလေးပုဒ်)... ..	54
14. Salutation and Reverence of Parents to the Novice (ရှင်မိရှင်ဖကန်တော့ခံခြင်း)	57
15. The Sermon and Water Libation (တရားဦးဟောရေစက်ချခြင်း)... ..	59

PART TWO

The Higher Ordination of Buddhist Monk

(ဦးပဉ္စင်းတက်ခြင်း၊ ရဟန်းခံခြင်း၊ သိက္ခာတက်ခြင်း)	63
- Purification Rite (သန့်စင်ခြင်း၊ ရဟန်းလောင်းဆုံးမခြင်း)... ..	78
- Ordination Rite (ရဟန်းခံကမ်ဆောင်ခြင်း)	90

	Page
- The Certificate and Registration of Ordination	
(သာသနာဝင်မှတ်တမ်းတင်ခြင်း) ...	97
- Four Dependable Requisites (Nissayā)	
(နိဿယမှီရာပစ္စည်းလေးပါး) ...	99
- Four Akaraṇīya (Pārājika dhamma)	
(အကရဏီယဓမ္မလေးပါး) ...	102
- Sermon of Ordination	
(ရဟန်းခံရှင်ပြုတရားဟောခြင်း) ...	108
Code of Discipline of the Buddhist Monk...	113
- The Pātimokkha of the Bhikkhus	
(ဘိက္ခုပါတိမောက္ခ-ဝိနည်းငယ်) ...	113
- Interrogatories	
(ကြိုတင်ပြင်ဆင်ခြင်း) ...	113
- Introduction, Nidāna	
(နိဒါန်း) ...	117
- Pārājika dhamma-4	
(ပုရာဇိကအာပတ်လေးပါး) ...	120
- Saṃghādisesa dhamma-13	
(သံဃာဒိသိသ်၁၃ပါး) ...	123
- Aniyata dhamma-2	
(အနိယတဓမ္မနှစ်ပါး) ...	132
- Nissaggiya Pācittiya dhamma-30	
(နိဿဂ္ဂိယပါစိတ်-၃၀) ...	134

Contents

	Page
- Suddha Pācittiya dhamma-92	
(ပါစိတ္တိယဓမ္မ ၉၂)	145
- Pāṭidesaniya dhamma-4	
(ပါဠိဒေသနိယလေးပါး)	168
- Sekhiya dhamma-75	
(သေခိယဓမ္မ ၇၅ပါး)	170
- Sekhiya Rules for Training ...	171
- Adhikaraṇa samatha dhamma-7	
(အဓိကရဏသမထ၇ပါး)	180
- Pātimokkha Vinaya Rules	
ပါတိမောက်	183
- Seven Methods and Techniques of Settling the Disputes	
အဓိကရဏသမထ ၇ ပါး	185
The Daily Routine	
နေ့စဉ်ကျင့်ဝတ်	193
- Confessional Catechism	
ဒေသနာကြားခြင်း	194
- The Monastic Education	
ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးကျောင်းပညာရေး... ..	199
- The Tranquillity and Peace	
အေးမြချမ်းသာဆိတ်ငြိမ်ရာ	205

Namō tassa bhagavato arahato sammāśambuddhassa

PREAMBLE

An attempt has been here made to elucidate the dramatic account of a research paper read jointly by Dr. Elizabeth K. Nottingham, the Professor of Sociology of the Queens College, New York, and Sao Htun Hmat Win, the Senior Research Fellow of the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge. The paper was successfully presented in 1961 at Harvard University to the formal convention of the members of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. This paper on Myanmar initiation ceremony was read before that learned society which met at Harvard; and Dr. Elizabeth Nottingham took up some of the sociological aspects while Sao Htun Hmat Win gave a first-person account emphasizing its psychological impact. This delivery had been well received and respectfully recorded in an autobiography of Elizabeth K. Nottingham--*'Born With The Century'* published 22 years after that formal convention. Since then a dramatic appreciation of the intrinsic value of the deep-rooted tradition in Myanmar Culture in the light of the Initiation

of Novicehood¹ and the Ordination of Monk² in Theravāda Buddhism has been incessantly and earnestly demanded by many research scholars in the field of Comparative Study of Religions of the World at the Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, New England, U.S.A.

The ceremony of initiation as a novice in the Buddhist Monastic Order, followed by a longer or shorter period of residence in a monastery, is a traditional requirement for all Myanmar Buddhist boys. The ceremony not only marks a stage in the life cycle of the young aspirant for novicehood as well as a culminating point in the life of the donors of the ceremony who are usually, though not always, the parents of the initiate aspirant, but also furnishes an occasion for the fulfilment of important community functions. These functions include:-

-
1. Initiation of novicehood = ရှင်သာမဏေပြုခြင်း၊
သင်္ကန်းဝတ်ခြင်း
(သာမဏေရပဗ္ဗရ)
 2. Ordination of monk = ရဟန်းခံခြင်း၊ ပဉ္စင်း
တက်ခြင်း၊ သိက္ခာ
တင်ခြင်း (ဥပသမ္ပဒ)

- (1) A re-affirmation of central religious values,
- (2) a re-assertion of community solidarity
- (3) a re-validation of prestige rankings, and
- (4) the operation of certain economic transactions and gift-exchanges.

This treatise will present a case study of an initiation ceremony which took place more than half a century ago (1935) in the Southern Shan State, now one of the fourteen states and divisions of the Union of Myanmar. The social and economic aspects of the ceremony which took place in a town community then possessing but the rudiments of a money economy and little occupational specialization will be considered briefly from a functional viewpoint. In somewhat greater detail the impact of the ceremony and the subsequent period of monastic residence on the initiate himself have been examined, and the interrelationships between community and individual aspects of the initiation complex explored.

This material suggests the hypothesis that a positive relationship exists between the

vitality of the community functions and the potency and depth of meaning of the ceremony for the individual. Additional material collected by the author from urbanized informants in the big cities showing a weakening of individual involvement concomitantly with a decline of community functions, would appear to support this hypothesis, at least in the negative sense.

Indeed, the value of a case history lies in the insights and hypotheses it may suggest. From the true story of the life of the author presented here in this little treatise a number of such insights will occur to the reader. And I am going to confine myself to three of them that occurred to me after reviewing my own account (*between the lines*) diligently.

First, we have here an example of a traditional Buddhist ceremony which has become embedded in a mass of local customs. This is what has happened in many parts of the Buddhist world with religious ceremonies of multifarious types. This situation seems to be very much deplorable, but it is the very vitality engendered by this local embedding that has served to preserve the religious ceremony as an integral part of the culture.

Second, bearing in mind the close relationship between the social and individual functions performed by the ceremony which I am going to stress throughout this book, I would hypothesize that a weakening in the social functions performed by the ceremony will be typically accompanied by a weakening of its significance for the individual. In an agricultural and premonetary economy such as were the Shan State some seventy years ago (1935), the initiation ceremony of novices and the ordination ceremony of monks performed important community functions. However, among the urbanized inhabitants of modern industrial cities, under the conditions of city life, a weakening in the economic and social functions of the initiation ceremony is usually accompanied by a lowering of the age at initiation of a novice--even to a median age of seven years; and a sharply reduced period of residence in the monastery to a period of one week. In short, the emotional and educational impact on the individual has been greatly reduced.

And finally, I am enlightened to discern the important role that an initiation has played in stepping up an individual's entire learning

process, and in giving him the needed psychological inspiration to push him up to a new and more exacting role. The nature of the learning that takes place during the initiation period, as well as the new direction that is given to a person's total life orientation, is extremely impressive to me.

The solemnity given to the whole initiation period by means of its religious setting and the drastically changed environment is an important factor favouring this accelerated learning.

In the second portion of this book I endeavour to relate the ceremony of ordination of a monk in the Buddhist Monastic Order, embellishing the religious drama with the translation of the text Bhikkhu Pātimokkha, the compendium of Disciplinary Rules¹ of the Buddhist monks.

This part is another supporting narration to state that Myanmar youths undergo impressive ceremonies to give public recognition and emotional support to an individual's *transitions* from one age status to another, the sociological

1. ဘိက္ခုပါတိမောက္ခ-ဝိနည်းငယ် လေးစောင်တွင်ရှု။

Compendium of Disciplinary Rules.

technical term for which being '*Rites de passage*.' Higher Ordination as a monk in the Order of Buddhist Monasticism is another important ceremony performed after the lad attains the age of twenty. This ceremony has a predominantly Buddhist colouration, yet nevertheless shares many features in common with boyhood initiation in the Buddhist societies. Both initiation and ordination ceremonies symbolize *separation* from the social surroundings of boyhood, from the world of women and children, for the young postulant leaves the shelter of his family. They also symbolize *incorporation* for he subsequently becomes a member of the religious society composed exclusively of males, namely the Buddhist Monastic Order.

Again, as is customary in such ceremonies, the *transition* is symbolized by a change of clothing, a change of name, and a change in the form of address. An important function of the ceremony is to publicize and to facilitate, both socially and emotionally, this important transition. Thus the initiation and ordination rites typically consist of three parts--*separation, transition* and *incorporation*.

It is well to note here that physiological and social puberty are essentially different and

only rarely converge. Strictly speaking, Buddhist initiation and ordination are not puberty rites, but mark rather social and religious transition. Hence a wide variation in age of initiation and ordination is permissible. For rather different reasons--such as the desire of parents and / or some other donors to obtain merit--multiple initiations and ordinations are permissible too. The same person may be initiated as a novice several times and his ordination as a monk can be repeated more than once, if he has not yet transgressed the deadly sins (*Pārājika āpatti dhammas*).

And again "regeneration" is accomplished in the social world by repeated "rites of passage". Buddhist initiation and ordination are, par excellence, such a rite, and appear to me as an agent not only of social but also of religious regeneration.

In this second part of the treatise I am going to describe one such ordination ceremony, which took place in the Southern Shan State in the Union of Myanmar some sixty years ago (1945). The analysis will lay stress upon its significance not only for the young lad directly involved but also for the local

community of which he and his family were an integral part.

The donation of an ordination ceremony was a culminating act of a very pious Buddhist layman's maturity, and though it might have cost the donor half of his movable property, nevertheless secured for him great religious merit and important social prestige, as *Yahandagā* (the Supporter of a monk).¹

From the point of view of the community, such an ordination ceremony served as a reaffirmation of the group's central religious values. The golden path to Nibbāna must be punctuated by frequent donations of merit-bearing gifts. The most meritorious of these offertories was the gift of a novice, or better still, of a full fledged monk to the Monastic Order. The greatest glory of Buddhism was embodied in the Order of the Saṃgha; so by means of recurrent initiation and ordination ceremonies each generation of elders made symbolic offering of their growing youths for the defence and perpetuation of their common faith. Thus the initiation and ordination ceremonies became media for the "religious

1. ရဟန်းဒါယကာ-ရဟန်းဒကာ- Supporter of a monk

regeneration” of the entire Myanmar Buddhist community.

Again the ceremony reasserted the solidarity of the community, both socially and religiously, by means of the most direct symbolism. The feast was lavishly offered on the day of the ceremony to all invited members of the community, some three thousand strong. The young candidate for initiation and ordination received the gifts and presents from these guests who bound the bands of cotton yarn (*Lek phiwe' chee hmyin*) around the candidate's wrists--which symbolised the binding of the young lad to the entire community with “bands of love”.¹

The ceremony served the community in important economic ways. The frequently occurring ceremonies furnished important occasions for the exchange and redistribution of goods and services.

Certain designated members of kinship groups were honour bound to donate substantially to such ceremonies sponsored by the other members.

1. လက်ဖွဲ့ချည်မျှင်စွပ်ခြင်း = Bands of love

In this way, funds were made available at appropriate times so that each youth in a given kinship group could have his good *'start in life'*. Since the biggest share of the offerings were set aside for the monks of the local monastery, such ceremonies were also a prime means of supporting the Monastic Order: the Samgha. Some of the portion set aside for the monks, however, was frequently re-distributed to the poor of the community. The poor also benefited from the overflow of the portion reserved for the donor of the feast, a part compensation for his very considerable out-of-pocket expenses.

Over and above all this, every single member of the community had some days' fill of food and fun, as equally good portion of the shared religious merit accrued to him / her -- paving the golden path towards the attainment of Nirvana.

Sao Htun Hmat Win

THE AUTHOR

The author of this treatise (*Sao Htun Hmat Win*) is a Myanmar citizen, born in the Southern Shan State, to very devout Buddhist parents Sao Sam Hlaing (a) U Gaw Yar and Nang Htay Htay. Being a Buddhist, he was sent to a monastery in Yawngghwe Township, at the early age of ten to be orientated as a probational neophyte (Po-thu-daw)¹ for one month. Hence he got his personal experience as a steward boy² at a Buddhist monastery very thoroughly under the patronage of learned monks of the Theravāda Monastic Order.

After an intensive course of study as a neophyte he was initiated into novicehood at the age of eleven getting through all those essential traditional ceremonies of novitiation (*Sāmaṇera* in Pāli and *Koyin* in Myanmar).³ He was then studying at the State English Middle School, as a seventh grade regular student and so the initiation ceremony was

1. ဖိုးသူတော် ▪ neophyte

2. ကပ္ပိယကျောင်းသား ▪ steward boy

3. ရှင်သာမဏေ ▪ ကိုရင် ▪ koyin

performed during the summer holidays--March through June. Thus he had gained a good opportunity to learn quite a number of things at a Buddhist monastery for four months. It was long enough to get a thorough experience fulfilling the duties of a Buddhist novice and to study some basic principles of Buddhism in the Thearvāda tradition. Of course he had learned Pāḷi the sacred language medium of Buddhist canonical scriptures. He voluntarily quitted the monastic life of a novice when the Headmaster of the State School officially announced the beginning of the new academic session in July of that year.

When the child attained the age of twenty in 1946, he was ordained as a Buddhist monk (*Bhikkhu* in Pāḷi, *U pazin* in Myanmar)¹ in a Shwegyin Nikāya monastery at Fort Stedman (Maing Hsawk) about twenty miles to the south of Taunggyi, on the eastern bank of the Inle Lake. The local State Prelate of the Order was then a forest-dwelling monk, the Kyauknee Tawya Sayadaw, under whose supervision the newly ordained monk had practised the Insight Meditation. Then he proceeded to the

1. အိက္ခာ - ဦးပဉ္စင် - ဦးပဇင် = U pazin

Sudhamma monasteries to study religious scriptures. During these long six years as a fully ordained Buddhist monk, the author had gone through all the monastic examinations successfully. Then he was appointed by the Elder (Sayadaw) of the Monastic Academy, as a lecturer in Pāli Grammar to teach young novices and monks at the monastic education centres in Mandalay and Rangoon (Yangon).

Then he left the Monastic Order to join the University as a layman for his further studies where he obtained B.A. (Hons.) and Master of Arts Degrees with distinctions in Pāli language and literature and Abhidhamma. He was on this basis appointed an assistant lecturer at the Yangon University to teach Pāli and Abhidhamma in the Department of Pāli Language and Literature. Then in 1957 he quitted the University service to undertake the government duty as the Head of Research Department at the International Institute for Advanced Buddhistic Studies¹ under the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

1. ကမ္ဘာ့ဗုဒ္ဓတက္ကသိုလ် - International Institute for Advanced Buddhistic Studies

Thereafter in 1959 he was awarded the Senior Research Fellowship to study in the Ph.D. programme of the History and Philosophy of Religions at the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. During his brief residence at the World Religions Centre of Harvard University, U.S.A. he got the Master of Arts degree in Research Methodology and the Comparative Study of World Religions at the Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1960. Over the years he was working diligently for his doctorate in the History and Philosophy of Religion but he had to come back home in 1962, to resume the duties of the Head of Research Department and later the Director of Research and Library/Museum of the Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs. Then he was serving in the same government office of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, as the Director of Religious Affairs, until 1986.

Then in 1993 he was awarded by the State Government the title of Mahāsaddhammajotikadhaja;* and later has been honoured as the Dean of the faculty of Foreign Languages at the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University in Yangon (1998-2003).

* မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိကဇောဘွဲ့

The Initiation into Novicehood and the Ordination of Monk in the Myanmar Buddhist Culture

PART ONE

Myanmar Buddhist Initiation Ceremony

The initiation to become a *Sāmaṇera* novice is compulsory and the most important of all religious ceremonies for a Buddhist boy. Of all the merits acquired through charity (*dāna*), the gain accrued by the celebration of *Shīnpyu*¹ the initiation ceremony is the most auspicious one for devout Buddhists in Myanmar. It is deemed worthy to offer one's own son to the Monastic Order of the Lord Buddha, by which the parents of the novice consequently become members of the royal family of the Sakya-muni Gotama, the Buddha.

When the boy is old enough to pronounce the Pāli phrases articulately he is eligible for initiation which temporarily inducts him as a novice into the Monastic Order of the Buddhist Saṃghā. Thus almost every boy has this nucleus and prototypical religious

1. ရှင်ပြု ▪ Shinpyu

experience of forsaking the secular household life and practising the well disciplined monasticism. Myanmar is outstanding in the establishment of the national custom which allows for residing some time in the monastery after the initiation and which has been elaborated into a complex religious ceremony. This Myanmar Buddhist custom has been transmuted into a ritual drama with all the overtones of the original initiation and has become the central Buddhist ceremony.

To the Myanmar, this Buddhist novitiation ceremony symbolizes the Great Renunciation of Prince Siddhattha (the Buddha-to-be)¹ and also the initiation of the eight-year-old son of our Lord, Prince Rāhulā Kumāra. Both historical events are symbolized, and dramatized harmoniously in the novitiation ceremony when a boy is sent to the monastery to join the monastic Order as a novice as long as he desires to stay there. He can leave the Order at any time as there is no rigid vow of life-long service. Thus every Myanmar Buddhist becomes a novice for at least one day in his life, but he usually remains in the monastery

1. ဘုရားအလောင်း ▪ the Buddha-to-be

for one 'Lent'¹ which is about three months, or sometimes, if very pious, for three Lents. The novice can remain for any length of time that he wishes, for a season or it may be for life. And should he desire at anytime to quit the monastic life and go forth again into the secular world, it is permitted that he may do so, in Myanmar Buddhism.

In general, the initiation is celebrated when the boy attains his adolescence; but in particular the age at which such ceremony is performed varies widely. There are some specific cases when the boys are initiated even at the delicate age of five; this is lawful but only if the candidate can express the Pāli phrases quite articulately. The abbot², or presiding monk, may indicate the precedents and recommend on such special occasions, by quoting the biographies of the Elders (Therāpādāna) who had attained the Arhatship at the age of five or seven and who were highly appreciated by the Lord Buddha.

Although the common practice is to initiate the boy at the age of twelve, the oldest

1. ဝါဆိုခြင်း • Lent

2. ကျောင်းထိုင်ဘုန်းကြီး • abbot

age for the novicehood is not limited. There are some cases when the lads have to be initiated at a very late age of 20-50 years for which the postulants will be known as Old Novices¹ (Koyin-gyi). Late entrance into novicehood is usually because of poverty: poor families have to earn for many years to meet the required expenses for the ceremony. If they cannot afford them, their final resort is to approach the village abbot who will help them acquire the requisites free from his monastery to fulfil their need.

However, the initiation can be repeated more than once for the boy, if desired. If the parents are wealthy, the postulants² can enjoy the initiation as many times as they wish to. The early age of initiation is sometimes determined by the fact that the aged and ill grandparents want to participate in the grandson's ceremony just prior to their demise, or rather by the fact that the postulant's sister has attained the appropriate age for her ear-boring ceremony and the two celebrations are deemed proper to be carried out jointly. The boy then

1. ကိုရင်ကြီး ▪ Old Novice

2. ရှင်လောင်း ▪ postulant

has to have an early initiation so that his sister's ear-boring ceremony is not unduly delayed.

The merit gained through sponsoring an initiation is so enormous that wealthy families will frequently sponsor not only their own son but also help to initiate other boys whose parents cannot afford the expenses which the ceremony entails. If the family is not blessed with a son of their own, the initiation of a relative's son may be sponsored to gain merit. Thus a boy may repeat the novicehood more than once for the welfare of his kinsmen.

The merit gained through this function is not only quantitatively immense but also qualitatively better than other types of virtue. The merit derived from the initiation ceremony has no functional equivalent. A boy is not considered to be a good Buddhist until he has gone through this religious rite of initiation; and an adult does not attain the status of gentleman until he has sponsored such a ceremony.

Devout parents in Myanmar regard the initiation ceremony of their own sons as of paramount importance and an inevitable duty to be fulfilled. It is counted as the highest

spiritual and ethical performance for posterity, for which both the parents and the son achieve an immense merit in this world as well as the hereafter. This explains why the birth of a son in the Buddhist family is cordially welcomed and hailed with great rejoicing. The parents are blessed with this supreme meritorious act which is the noblest and holiest they can ever fulfil towards their sons.

The religious significance of the initiation ceremony is both symbolic and instrumental. Symbolically, it denotes the conversion of the boy from the status of an ordinary person to a spiritual one; a conversion from the status of the profane to that of the sacred. The boy who dons the yellow robes is no more a common average person; he has been transformed into the Son of the Sakyamuni Buddha. He is no more a member of laity but a member of the Holy Monastic Order. The novice is spiritually superior to all lay beings.

This enhancement of status is symbolised by a dramatic reversal in roles. The boy usually acknowledges the superiority of his parents and elderly persons by the act of physical prostration¹ (Shikkho). But when he becomes

1. ဝပ်တွားရှိခိုးခြင်း • prostration (Shikkho)

a novice his parents have to acknowledge his spiritual and religious superiority by prostrating themselves before him who is their own son. It is fabulous and fantastic but a moving scene when a father prostrates himself reverently before his five-year-old son--a newly initiated novice. Indeed, the boy is no longer the son of that man but he is now the Son of the Lord Buddha.

Instrumentally the parents of the postulant acquire great merit by offering their son to the Buddha to imbue in him the pure and peaceful religion. In the promotion and propagation of Buddhism this offering is the noblest one among all types of charity (*dāna*). Hence it is the responsibility of every parent to see that the boy be initiated so that he may gain the virtues of the Buddhist *summum-bonum*. On the other hand every son must be initiated in order that his parents may have the merit of (*sāsana dāyakā*) religious sponsorship¹ accruing to them. Thus the boy must render his gratitude toward his own mother for her breastfeeding. During the Buddhist Lent of three months, the novice has to de-

1. သာသနာ့ဒါယကာ • religious sponsor

vote himself to the austere religious practices; the first month for his mother, the second month for his father and the third month for himself.

The initiation ceremony is usually held just before the Buddhist Lent (June), but it can be celebrated at any time of the year. However it is preferably done soon after the harvest season when the peasants have the most income from the sale of their crops. As for the children having regular schooling the date of initiation is usually during their school vacation. However, the calculation of auspicious dates and times of the ceremony has to be carefully done by the monks, lay-astrologers, or brahmin priests.

The magnanimity of the ceremony depends upon the condition of the sponsors' budget and the prevailing local customs. The intrinsic value is however to initiate the boy to become a novice who would be admitted to a monastery as his temporary residence. To *shave the head*, to *don the robes*, and to *take refuge in the Three Ratanas*¹ (Buddhist Creeds)² are three most important functions to be

1. ရတနာသုံးပါး ▪ Three Ratanas

1. သရဏဝံ ▪ Buddhist Creeds

performed in the act of initiation. In some cases it is customary to send the postulants to the village monastery without any elaborate procession, but sometimes it calls for complicated procedures and great feasts. The abbot nominates the boy as a neophyte and shaves his head in the presence of his parents or sponsors. By the help of a resident monk in the monastery, the postulant is divested of his secular clothes and is dressed in the yellow robes of a novice. The novice then squats respectfully in front of the abbot raising the folded hands above his forehead and recites the religious creeds in Pāli and the vernacular after the abbot. The abbot counsels the initiated novice to observe ten precepts promulgated for the (*Sāmaṇera*) novice and to abide by the 75 monastic disciplinary rules. The novice also abandons his secular name to be known by his monastic epithet in Pāli designated and conferred by the abbot, usually in accordance with the novice's birth-day of the week. (So *Sao Htun Hmat Win* will receive his monastic epithet of *Shin Vaṇṇadhaja*). He becomes a full-fledged member of the monastic Order as a (*Sāmaṇera*) novice and it is up to his wish and at his disposal how long he

will stay in the monastery. He is allowed to leave at any time and also can be reinitiated as many times as he desires. This is the religious freedom of the Myanmar Buddhist.

To provide and inherit the background symbolic of the Great Renunciation¹ of Prince Siddhattha who at last attained the Supreme Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha, Myanmar Buddhists must spend as much as they can afford. They are obliged to celebrate this traditional ceremony, rites and rituals with the right procedure and most elaborately. It must be to the best of their capability and well organised. Yet, only in the countryside are most of the religious functions and traditional rites and rituals faithfully preserved and observed. The traditional and religious ties are still strong in the rural society, where the traditional Myanmar life still remains unpoluted and unchanged by foreign thoughts and modern ideas. Of course, modern amenities, scientific facilities, and better financial circumstances all make for more lavish ceremonies for those living in the big cities.

1. မဟာဘိနိက္ခမန တောထွက်တော်မူခြင်း။ Great Renunciation

Occasionally there are Communal Shinpyu¹ ceremonies in the Shan Hill tracts and in some villages of Upper Myanmar. Five novices are initiated collectively to commemorate the first group of Five Disciples of Lord Buddha (*Pañcavaggiya Bhikkhus*). Sometimes thirty novices are initiated after the ancient tradition of thirty Bhaddavaggiya princes who were ordained collectively by our Lord Buddha. There can also be sixty novices in a communal initiation ceremony imitating the first batch of sixty missionary monks sent off by our Lord Buddha. One hundred and eight postulants from various walks of life have been collectively initiated in one rare opportunity of the society. Sometimes one thousand novices are initiated en masse in an organised ceremony publicly sponsored by a well-known primate or an abbot or a religious leader. Thus Myanmar society appears to be a huge unit consolidated and unified by the spirit of the initiation ceremony since all the boys of Myanmar society become (*Sakyaputtas*)², the sons of the same Lord Buddha-Sakya muni.³

1. စုပေါင်းရှင်ပြု ▪ Communal Shinpyu

2. သကျပုတ္တသင်္ဂဟဝင်မင်းသား ▪ Sakyaputta

3. သကျမုနိဘုရား ▪ Sakya muni

The number of candidate-neophyte may be one or many but the agenda of procedures do not vary.

All friends and neighbours offer their full moral support to the parents or to the sponsors of the postulant. Everybody in the community extends helping hands. The boy is looked after so that no obstacle might hinder or retard the commencement of the candidate's spiritual development. The spirit of co-ordination and co-operation is radiated in the entire village. Though it may be a performance of an individual family in the interest of its personal glorification, in reality it develops into a public celebration. The entire society becomes active and alive, each one playing an important role.

All inhabitants in the village ardently contribute their labour to the donors so that the necessary preparations for the ceremony are in no way incomplete. Such an initiation ceremony provides an opportunity for villagers from widely scattered areas and different social backgrounds to participate in a common service. These friends bring presents to the sponsors both in cash and kind so as to counterbalance the expenses of the ceremony.

Systematic preparations for the religious ceremony are done discriminately in advance. The son is sent to the monastery to learn from the abbot how to recite properly the prescribed sacred words of initiation, both in the Pāli language of the Buddhist canon and the vernacular tongue (Myanmar).

The sponsors extend the invitations with the help of 'the town-crier' who shouts at the top of his voice announcing the forthcoming ceremony of novitiation. This is a lovely traditional village custom. Invitation cards printed with beautiful designs, sometimes attached with invitation gifts--cigars or cheroots or a package of pickled tea--are despatched to relatives, friends and others.

Numerous items of preparation for the ceremony have to be undertaken well in advance. Another very fascinating custom of the village here in Myanmar is to unhusk the paddy and to polish it into the best quality rice for the forthcoming feasts. Village damsels earn their share of merit by pounding and husking during their leisure time. The elderly ladies are also busy making special gifts to be presented to all the guests as a token of the donor's gratitude for their moral support and

participation. Huge and long ceremonial cheeroots and cigars, small handfans, artificial flowers, joss sticks and other items are colourfully designed to appeal to the receivers.

The most capable cooks in the village engage themselves in careful preparation of meals for the elaborate ceremony. A sumptuous menu must be arranged for offering to the invited monks and the large company of dignitaries. Even young children are busy fetching water, gathering faggots, running errands, washing tens of thousands of utensils and dishes, building and decorating the huge 'maṇḍap'¹, procuring mats, seats, carpets and curtains, helping the village orchestra² (saing-waing) and so forth.

These are all unremunerative duties, observed by the Myanmar conventional rural society. They are all purely voluntary. The donor supplies only the basic materials and the rest is done by the volunteer villagers. Everybody is eager and happy to contribute his spiritual and physical services towards the ceremony. He considers himself to be a

1. မဏ္ဍပ် ▪ maṇḍap = pavilion

2. ဆိုင်းဂိုင်း ▪ orchestra = band

co-sponsor of the ritual to strengthen his own spiritual fulfilment so as to elevate and multiply his virtues of perfection¹(*Pāramīs*).

For three days prior to the celebration of the actual initiation, the highly decorated palace-like 'maṇḍap pavilion' is visited by all village folks young and old in a joyous flutter; to entertain these guests, the orchestra plays incessantly the Myanmar classical *Maṅgalā Byaw*.² Professional as well as amateur singers chant narrative poems about the Great Renunciation and initiation of Lord Buddha, and the novitiation of his only son Rāhulā, 2500 years ago.

The boy-postulant³ is brought back home from the monastery where he has been learning the sacred words and recitals from the village abbot. He is now the 'prince' who is determined to renounce the world. So he is shown before the public with pomp and splendour, the focus of public attention. He is now dressed in royal costume of silk, gold and precious stones, glittering in the sunshine.

1. ပါရမီ ▪ perfection

2. မင်္ဂလာဗျော ▪ ritual drum

3. ရှင်လောင်း ▪ boy-postulant=novice designate=
boy aspirant

It is a rare opportunity for an average commoner to wear such a royal apparel for it was never allowed by the king's court as the wearer would be severely punished for this transgression. However in this case, this boy becomes an extraordinary person who is about to enter the monastic order, and that is much nobler than royalty; so the King happily confers this privilege on the novice-designate, wearing the royal garments.

Many other insignia of royalty, the regalia of Myanmar Kings are also freely used in this ceremony. With a glittering crown of jewels on his head, the neophyte rides on a white steed, sheltered from the sun by great golden umbrellas and attended by 'court ministers' and young 'princess maidens' who hold large betel boxes, bouquets, scepters, receptacles of silver and gold, and other royal emblems. It is traditional that two or three days prior to the ceremony the boy-aspirants pay homage to Lord Buddha at the big pagodas (like Shwedagon, Sulay and others), and be shown to the Nats (Spirits) at the Shrines of the village; and to visit in reverence the village elders and teachers. The boys thus obtain their blessings for a safe and sound

initiation and are able to overpower the evil temptations of Māra the Devil. The village master of ceremony also does not forget to invite, pray and worship "Shin Upagotta"¹ the Holy One, in a small miniature monastery made of bamboo and banana plants, offering candles and other oblations. He thus supplicates the Holy One for the prevention of possible dangers threatened by Māra the Devil.² The dangers sometimes come in the form of heavy torrential rains or fierce thunderstorm which spoil the whole ceremony to the great dismay and despair of the donors. Oftentimes the Māra in disguise kidnaps and hides the candidate-boys until the parents offer a reasonable amount of ransom money to the funds of the village welfare-association organised by the young lads and ladies. This is a ceremonial toll money.

In the Shan State, the candidate-boys sit in the pandal on the stage, to receive the presents and blessings of the guests. The guests give something in token of love for the boys and put threadbands of cotton yarn, on the

1. ရှင်ဥပဂုတ် • Shin Upagutta

2. မာရ်နတ် • Māra the Devil

wrists and around the necks of the aspirant, praying for longevity of life, increase of wealth and advancement of wisdom. This is called *Lek-phwe Chee Hmyin Swoot pwe*¹, the ritual of cotton-thread rings. The presents come in cash and kind. Sometimes the well-to-do close relatives give elephants, horses, buffaloes, oxen, plots of farm-land, gold and silver. Elephants in the forest are given a token present and is light-heartedly called '*Taw hsin khame pay*²' - literally "A present of a wild elephant for protecting you."

Such is a common prestige-present at these ceremonies--the gift of an elephant. The boy-initiates hope that they would receive gifts of money to help further their education rather than gifts of wild elephants, that are wandering unidentified in the forests. Such pretentious gifts amount to nothing more than papers attesting to their ownership. Sometimes to the disappointment of the candidate-boys they receive gifts of no less than seven elephants, but very little money.

1. လက်ဖွဲ့ချည်မျှင်စွပ်ဖွဲ့ ▪ (*Lek-phwe chee hmyin swoot pwe*)

2. တောဆင်ခမ်းပေး ▪ (*Taw hsin khame pay*)

It is very remarkable and interesting from both a socio-anthropological and a psychological point of view that this Myanmar practice of boyhood monastic initiation still remains in general use in Myanmar today, being more strictly observed in the Shan State. The actual novitiation of the boy-initiates is preceded by an elaborate '*Letphwechee-mhyin-swoot*' present giving ritual which serves in part to give the boys a good start in life. It also serves to validate the status of the donors. The lavishness of the accompanying feast also reflects the prestige of the boys' parents. The parents or the sponsors give notice to all the villagers and friends and relatives from far and near that there should be no smoke coming out of their kitchens and fireplaces at home for at least three days. That means the sponsors of the ceremony are prepared to feed several thousand people during the time span of the initiation ceremony.

Now comes the great event--the day of the initiation. Everybody in the village joins the great procession of the ceremony' performed in stupendous splendour. The 'prince-boy', (*Shin laung*)¹ properly dressed in his

1. ရှင်လောဘ်: • Shin laung, the Prince-boy

royal costume, stays in the decorated pandal, seated on a glittering chaise. The pandal is symbolic of a palace and the seat is symbolic of a throne. The Prince is enjoying his worldly pleasures in a royal house prior to his deliberate renunciation of the world to become a novice or a recluse. The playmates and friends treat the postulant with special respect sheltering him with golden umbrellas. The prettiest girls in the village surround him to be at his service.

A handsome white steed, properly saddled, awaits him outside the pandal. It may be a brown or grey pony, but it is called a white horse. Sometimes it is an elephant with a mahout, or a royal palanquin carried by men, or a beautifully decorated float that waits there to carry away the Prince. It is to recall the myth of Prince Siddhattha Gotama galloping away from the palace into the wilderness at midnight; likewise the "Prince" rides away from the pandal to the village monastery in the spirit of "renunciation".

The royal drum is beaten to announce the time of departure and to march in procession. A golden robe to be offered to the Lord Buddha is most reverently carried on the head

of the person who is leading the procession. Then the gentlemen of the village walking in single file carry the offertories for the members of the Order who have been cordially invited from all neighbouring monasteries.

Then comes the Beauty of the Village, holding the ceremonial decorated salver of gold--'Kwuntaung'. It is the highest honour a village maiden can earn, because it means that the public acknowledge her virtues of beauty and chastity. The holder of this 'Kwun taung', the golden salver, is the acclaimed Beauty of that locality. She is "Kwuntaung gaing,"¹ meaning the holder of the Kwun-taung. Other pretty damsels of the village come after her, holding bouquets and flower baskets, and they are known as 'Pantaung-gaing'²

Next follow the proud and happy parents of the Prince-boy carrying the three robes, an alms-bowl, a water-strainer, a razor, a girdle and a needle, which are the eight essential requisites of a novice. Other relatives come after them carrying beddings, mats, a monastic umbrella, a rosary, a palm-leaf fan, a pair of

1. ကွမ်းတောင်ကိုိုင် ▪ holder of the golden salver

2. ပန်းတောင်ကိုိုင် ▪ holder of the flower baskets
and bouquets

slippers and other necessities for the novice who will be residing at the monastery. The canonical scriptures (Tipiṭaka books) are also carried on the heads of persons who are in the procession.

Then comes the (*Shin laung*) Prince riding on a horse, or by some other means of transport, with golden umbrellas above his head, attended by elderly men. They are followed by a musical troupe. The youngsters sing and dance most joyfully to the amusement of the onlookers. Folk songs, hit songs, odes to the Novice, and other chantings are carolled in unison, accompanied by typical Myanmar music which echoes and overwhelms the whole atmosphere. The Myanmar musical troupe of 'Shway-Oh-See' the Golden Drum¹ plays a very dynamic rhythm envied by the 'Doe-Part-Waing'² that stirs up the spirit of the dancers. The most heart-throbbing melody is symphonized by the 'Maṅgalā Byaw'--accompanied by the chanters of odes narrating the life history of Lord Buddha on the occasion of His Great Renunciation. A group of lads recite specially composed versifications, which

1. ရွှေအိုးစည် ▪ Golden drum

2. ဒိုးပတ်ဝိုင်း ▪ Myanmar band

sound very melodious and inspiring; the leader sings the first lines and the group recite the refrain. At the end of every stanza the choir-boys applaud in unison "Shoh-Shoh-Shoh"¹ or 'Shweh-Shweh-Shweh'² which means "May the tears of joy be shed by the parents"

Lavish hands shower coins on the procession, flowers, pop-rice and popcorn out of huge silver bowls, which rain on the promenaders, whilst the children push one another to pick up the coins scattered on the ground. This is the "Shower of Golden Rain" in the ceremony.

A huge spacious stage for the Saṃgha is especially set up in the maṇḍap pandal with the consent of the village abbot because there is no room to accommodate such a big crowd in the village monastery. So the master of ceremonies has to arrange the Assembly Hall for initiation while all others are busy with the ceremonial parade on the village streets.

Placed on display and exhibition on this pandal stage are numerous offertories meant for the monks who have been cordially

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- | | |
|----------|-----------------|
| 1. သှို: | ▪ Shoh, Hurreh! |
| 2. ရှဲ | ▪ Shweh, wet! |

40 Myanmar Buddhist Initiation Ceremony

invited to celebrate the initiation. Just before noon, the members of the Order are offered an elaborate meal. Then lay guests swarm in and they are treated to rich meals, soft drinks, tobacco, betel chewing pan, pickled tea and hot drinks.

Then the procession returns to the pandal --the journey comes to an end, like the termination of travelling through the rebirths of transmigration, saṃsāra. It is true in a religious sense that if the novice attains Nibbāna here in this life, he achieves the culmination of his saṃsāra, his secular life.

It is the most relishing feast for the tired and hungry promenaders who have participated in the procession the whole morning. The Prince is fed with the best dishes to be sure that he is not hungry that evening, because the novice must not take any food in the afternoon according to one of the ten precepts.

The actual initiation draws near and the excited and joyous atmosphere gradually assumes a serene and tranquil aspect.

Traditionally, the young aspirant, who is arrayed in royal costume as was the Prince

Siddhattha before he renounced the world, is paraded around the village riding a white horse in emulation of the Bodhisatta. But some parents break with the tradition and have their sons driven around the village in a bullock-cart or in an automobile, if they possess one.

At a signal from the Master of ceremonies the orchestra stops playing and the dancers are happy to return to their seats very much exhausted.

The Master of ceremonies then announces the agenda of procedure of the Initiation; and this is known in Myanmar as the *Procédure of Novitation*¹(*Shin Kyint Woot*), which is usually expressed both in Pāli and Myanmar or one of the local languages of the country.

The Agenda of Procedures

1. Presentation and introduction of the boy aspirant and the parents to the Order of Monks (*Samāghā*).
2. Supplicating the Order for the election of a monk to shave the head of the neophyte.

1. ရှင်ပြုမင်္ဂလာအစီအစဉ် ▪ Procedure of Novitation
(ရှင်ကျင့်ဝတ်)

3. The shaving of the head and the preliminary meditation.
4. Requesting permission for participation.
5. Handing over of the robes to the Chapter.
6. Asking for the robes from the Chapter.
7. Changing of layman clothes for the monastic robes.
8. Request for admission to the Order.
9. Taking refuge in the three Ratanas and pledging to observe the Ten Precepts.
10. Appointment of a Preceptor (*Upajjhaya*), the Spiritual Teacher.¹
11. Ordinance of Ten Punishable Offences.²
12. Ordinance of Ten Excommunicable Offences.³
13. Four Articles on *Paccavekkhaṇā* meditation.⁴
14. The salutation and reverence of parents to the newly initiated novice.
15. The Sermon and Water Libation.

1. ဥပဇ္ဈာယ် ▪ Spiritual Teacher

2. ဒဏ်ဆယ်ပါး ▪ Ten Punishable Offences

3. လိင်ဆယ်ပါး ▪ Ten Excommunicable Offences

4. ပစ္စဝေက္ခကာဆင်ခြင်ပုံ ▪ Paccavekkhaṇā meditation

1. Presentation and introduction of the boy aspirant¹ to the Order of monks (Saṃghā)

The Master of Ceremonies² presents the parents and boy aspirant or the neophyte to the Assembly of monks seated on the stage, and supplicates for the performance of the initiation ceremony.

2. Supplicating the Order for the election of a monk to shave the head of the neophyte

The neophyte is reassured that he has sought the consent from his parents, because it is illegal or unlawful to initiate a boy without the permission of his parents. The Master of Ceremonies then supplicates the Order of Monks on behalf of the neophyte for the appointment of a person to shave the head of the boy-aspirant, the Prince.

3. Shaving of the head and the Preliminary Meditation of the Neophyte

When the abbot or a member of the Order agrees to novitiate him, the boy's head is shaved by a monk or a lay person.

1. ရှင်လောင်း - Boy-aspirant=neophyte=candidate

2. ပန်းဝကာ - အခမ်းအနားမှူး - Master of Ceremonies

The neophyte or the candidate meditates upon the constituents of the human body during the shaving of his head, reciting:-

“atthi imasmim kāye kesā, lomā, nakhā, dantā taco¹--asuci, jegucchā, paṭikūlā, nijjivā nissattā.

There are in this body: hair of the head, hairs of the body, nails, teeth, and skin which are unclean, abominable, filthy, lifeless and unsubstantial.”

The hair of the novice is sacred and is not allowed to fall on the ground. A towel sheet is spread by the parents or the sponsors to save the hair. Then the shaven head is cleaned with water and rubbed with turmeric powder.

4. Requesting permission for participation

Having his head shaved and washed well with soap powder and turmeric, the candidate asks permission to sit amidst the congregation of (*Samgha*) the Chapter of monks.

“Ahaṃ bhante Saṃghamajjhe pavesanam āpucchāmi”

1. မဝေဇ္ဇာမ မဗ္ဗဌာနံ: ▪ Meditation on five parts of the body

May I, your reverend sirs, ask your permission to join the congregation of the Chapter of monks.

5. Handing over of the robes to the Chapter

Equipped with the eight requisites of a novice, the candidate is brought into the assembly of monks to request for the formal initiation to become a novice (*Sāmaṇera*). The candidate squats properly holding the robes in his hands paying due respect to the assembly and recites:--

“Sakala vaṭṭa dukkha nissaraṇa Nibbānassa sacchikaraṇatthāya imam kāsāvaṃ gahetvā pabbājetha maṃ bhante anukampaṃ upādāya.”

“Reverend sirs, would you be kind enough to accept this robe and out of your compassion initiate me, in order that I may realize Nibbāna, the perfect emancipation from the entire cycle of sufferings.”

Eight compulsory requisites (*Parikkhāra*)¹ of a novice are:--

1. ပရိက္ခရာရှစ်ပါး ▪ Eight requisites

(သပိက်၊ သင်္ကန်းကြိုး၊ အပေါ်ရုံ၊ သင်းပိုင်၊ ခါးပန်းကြိုး၊ ဓား၊ အပ်၊ ရေစစ်)

1. Alms-bowl (*patta*)
- 2, 3. Two uppergarment robes
(*uttarāsaṅga cīvara*)
4. one underwear robe (*antara vāsaka*)
5. one girdle (*kāvabandhana*)
- 6, a razor (*vāsika*)
7. needle (*sūci*)
8. and water-strainer (*dhammakaraṇa*)

Moreover, other optional requisites are also allowed to be used such as rosary beads, umbrella, palm-leaf fan, slippers, leather mat, staff and others.

The president or a member of the congregation accepts the robes offered.

6. Asking for the robes from the Chapter

And the candidate recites again-

“Sakala vaṭṭa dukkha nissaraṇa Nibbānassa
sacchikaraṇatthāya etaṃ kāsāvaṃ datvā
pabbājetha maṃ bhante anukampaṃ upādāya.”

“Reverend sirs, would you be kind enough to return to me that robe and out of your compassion initiate me in order that I may

realize Nibbāna, the perfect emancipation from the entire cycle of sufferings.”

7. Changing from layman clothes into the monastic robes

Then the Preceptor helps the candidate divest himself of all his royal dress, and clothes him in the yellow robes of a (*Sāmaṇera*) Buddhist Novice.

8. Request for admission into the Order

The candidate, clad in yellow robes and fully equipped with other essential requisites of a novice, squats properly facing the Chapter of monks and supplicates for formal initiation.

Bhante samisāra vaṭṭa dukkhato
mocaṇatthāya pabbajjāṃ yācāmi’

‘Reverend sirs: I request admission to the novicehood in view of the perfect liberation from the cycle of suffering transmigration.

9. Taking Refuge in the three Ratanas and pledging to observe the Ten Precepts

Ten Precepts of a Novice shall then be observed with the consent of the Preceptor.

“Aham bhante tisaraṇena saha dasa sāmaṇera pabbajja sīlaṃ dhammaṃ yācāmi; anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante.”

“Reverend sir, I request for the ten Precepts to be observed by a novice, together with the three Refuges. Would you be kind enough to counsel me on the precepts.”

(The Preceptor intones “Yamaham vadāmi tam vadetha: Thou follow me as I intone.” The postulant agrees to do so saying ‘āma bhante’)

Then the Preceptor leads intoning the sacred words of the three Refuges.

“Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa” (three times)

“May my honour be to the Glorious, the Almighty, the Infallible, and the Self-enlightened Exalted Buddha.”

Buddham saraṇaṃ gacchāmi--I take refuge in the Buddha (the Enlightened One)

Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi--I take refuge in the Dhamma (the Doctrine)

Samgham saraṇam gacchāmi--I take refuge in the Saṃgha (the Order of Monks)

Dutiyampi Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi

dutiyampi Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi

ḍutiyampi Saṃgham saraṇam gacchāmi

Again for the second time, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha.

Tatīyampi Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi

tatīyampi Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi

tatīyampi Saṃgham saraṇam gacchāmi

Again for the third time, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha.

The Preceptor says at this point: "Tisaraṇa gamaṇam paripuṇṇam--You have fulfilled taking refuge in the Three Precious Ideals."

The Postulant replies to this, 'Āma bhante= Thus it is.

The Preceptor then counsels the postulant to observe the ten precepts.

1 Pāṇātipātā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to kill any sentient being.

2. Adinnādānā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to steal things that are not given.

3. Abrahmacariyā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to indulge in ignoble sexual pleasures.

4. Musāvādā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to tell falsehood.

5. Surāmeraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to take intoxicants

6. Vikālabhojanā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to take any food after noontime.

7. Nacca-gīta-vādita-visukadassanā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to enjoy any dancing, singing or playing of musical instruments.

8. Mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanatṭhānā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to indulge in the use of flowers, perfumes, or any other cosmetics.

9. Uccāsayana-mahāsayanā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to use high and grand seats and beds.

10. Jātarūpa-rajata-paṭiggahanā veramaṇi-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.

I observe the precept not to engage in monetary matters and handling of silver and gold.

Then the Preceptor admonishes the novice to observe the precepts diligently and mindfully; and the novice pledges himself saying-“Āma bhante” =Thus it shall be.

Thus, the candidate is fully initiated as a novice, a junior member of the Saṃgha Order.

10. The appointment of a Preceptor, the Spiritual Teacher¹ or “Spiritual Master”

The newly initiated novice thereafter seeks for a spiritual teacher or Preceptor (*Upajjhāyācariya*), approaching an elderly monk saying:--

“Upajjhāyo me bhante hohi” = Would you please be my Preceptor.

When the Preceptor instructs the novice that he must in all sincerity fulfil the duties and ordinances of a novice, the novice pledges “Āma bhante” = Thus it shall be.

11. The Ordinance of ten punishable² (abhorrent/abominable) offences

A novice shall be punished either by the Preceptor or by any member of the Bhikkhu Saṃgha Order if he transgresses any one of the ten offences.

1. He shall not take any food after noon-time until the dawn of the next day.

2. He shall not enjoy dancing, singing or playing of musical instruments.

1. ဥပဇ္ဈာယ်ဆရာ ▪ Preceptor = Spiritual Teacher = Spiritual Master

2. ဒဏ်ဆယ်ပါး ▪ ten punishable offences

3. He shall not indulge in cosmetics, perfume and flowers.
4. He shall not sit on high and grand seats.
5. He shall not be engaged in monetary matters, or handling of gold and silver.
6. He shall not attempt to prevent the income of other monks.
7. He shall not attempt to create the loss of benefit of other monks.
8. He shall not attempt to dislocate the residence of other monks.
9. He shall not abuse or curse the other monks.
10. He shall not create dissension amongst the members of the Order.

12. The Ordinance of ten excommunicable offences¹

A novice shall be disrobed and expelled from the Monastic Order if he is found guilty of any of the ten offences.

1. လိင်ဆယ်ပါး : ten excommunicable offences

1. He must not kill
2. He must not steal
3. He must not indulge in sexual pleasures
4. He must not tell a lie
5. He must not take intoxicants
6. He must not blaspheme the Buddha
7. He must not blaspheme the Dhamma
8. He must not blaspheme the Saṃgha
9. He must not accept any heretical doctrine
10. He must not implicate the nuns.

13. Four Articles on Paccavekkhaṇa Meditation¹

A novice shall everyday meditate upon the four sustenances, namely, robe, food, dwelling, and medicine. This is also known as “The recital of rosary-telling or heads-counting”.

1. With proper meditative introspection and attention. I wear these robes just

1. ပစ္စဝေက္ခကလေးပါး • ပုတီးစိပ်စာလေးပုဒ် ။ Four Articles on Paccavekkhaṇa Meditation

to avoid cold, to avoid heat, to prevent the bites of insects, mosquitoes, snakes, scorpions and bugs, to take shelter from wind and sun, and to cover the shameful parts of the body.

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso cīvaram paṭisevāmi
yāvadeva sītassa paṭighātāya, uṇhassa
paṭighātāya, ḍamśa makasa vātātapa sarisapa-
samphassānam paṭighātāya yāvadeva
hīrikopinappaticchādanattham.

2. With proper meditative introspection and attention I partake of the food not to play, not to be mad with strength, not to beautify my physical structure, not to decorate my body; however I take it just to sustain the vitality of this body, to appease hunger, to support the noble religious practices and that the former diseases may be (cured) dispelled and that the new diseases may not arise; that the balance of diet may be there to me; that there may be no (inconvenience) fault, and so that I may stay comfortably.

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍapātam paṭisevāmi
neva davāya na madāya, na maṇḍanāya, na

vibhūsanāya. yāvadeva imassa kāyassa ṭhitiyā
yāpanāya vihimīsūparatiyā brahmacariyānuggahā-
ya iti purāṇaṅca vedanam paṭihaṅkhāmi, navaṅca
vedanam na uppādessāmi yātrā ca me bhavissati
anavajjatā ca phāsuvihaṅga ca.

3. With proper meditative introspection and attention I live in the monastic shelter and use the facilities merely to avoid cold, heat; to prevent the bites of insects, mosquitoes, snakes, scorpions and bugs, to take shelter from wind and sun; to be able to adjust to the weather and climatic conditions so as to be comfortable and easy in religious practices.

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso senāsanam paṭisevāmi
yāvadeva sītassa patighātāya, uṇhassa
patighātāya. ḍamsa makasavātātapa-sarisapa-
samphassānam paṭighātāya yāvadeva utu
parissaya vinodanappatisallānāra mattham.

4. With proper meditative introspection and attention I take the medicine and utilize medical facilities for the benefit of health, merely to avoid and cure the illness and diseases which may arise and only to overcome the suffering of sickness and pain.

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso gilāna paccaya bhesajja
parikkhāram paṭisevāmi yāvadeva uppannānam
veyyābādhikānam vedanānam paṭighātāya
abyāpajjha paramatāya:

14. Salutation and Reverence of Parents to the new Novice

After the formal admission by the Chapter of senior monks, the lay devotees file up to the front of the assembly hall, the novice's parents in the lead, and then prostrate themselves in reverence before the newly initiated novice (*Koyin*). For the young novice (*Koyin; Shin*)¹ this act of religious reverence on the part of his own parents is the most moving part of the entire ceremony.

Throughout his boyhood he, in common with most Buddhist boys, has been accustomed to bow down in this manner to his parents, everyday. This act of reverence by the parents to the (novice) son is a psychic experience, difficult to be fully appreciated by non-Buddhists, but it is a deeply significant experience to a young boy. His dear mother for the first time folding her hands on her

1. ကိုရင် • ရှင် • သာမဏေ • Koyin = Shin = Sāmaṇera

forehead, pays obeisance to the young novice (*Koyin*) in the presence of a multitude of guests. It is a moment that brings tears of joy, of spiritual excitement, to the near and dear ones. It is the climax of the whole ceremony.

But the obeisance that she pays to the young novice is not, of course, to her beloved son, but to her son as *Koyin* or *Shin*, a member of the Monastic Order, *Samgha*. It is not to the person that she pays obeisance, but to the sacred Robe, and the exalted moral and spiritual discipline (*Sikkhā Sīla*)¹ that is being observed by such a person.

Just as King *Suddhodana* paid his due respect and homage to his son *Buddha Gotama*, when he saw him for the first time in the raiment of a recluse, even so now the father of the novice folds his hands with a gesture of reverence and obeisance, and salutes the young novice. It is really a psychological and exciting religious experience of a lifetime, for the boy.

1. သိက္ခာသီလ • *Sikkhā Sīla*

15. The Sermon and Water Libation

The Master of Ceremonies announces that the Reverend (*Sayadaws*) Abbots are going to preach and recite holy discourses of protection and that¹ the water libation is going to be performed. Then the senior monk delivers a short sermon stressing the various merits to be derived from the Shinpyu Novitiation ceremony. The sermon ends with some words from the Abhidhamma piṭaka, about the Doctrine of Morality, Immorality and Equanimity, (*Kusalā Dhammā*, *Akusalā Dhammā*, *Abyākatā Dhammā*).² Then all the members of the Order (*Samṅha*) recite in unison the (*Paritta*) Holy Discourses of Protection. Finally the water libation is performed by the parents of the novice, pouring down the water jointly. They then announce that they share their merit with others.

“May we, as a result of this good-deed, the Shinpyu ceremony, attain Nibbāna, the ultimate cessation of birth, old age, suffering

1. ပရိတ်တရားတော် ▪ holy discourses of protection

2. ကုသလာဓမ္မ၊ အကုသလာဓမ္မ၊ အဗျာကတာဓမ္မ ▪
Kusalā Dhammā, Akusalā Dhammā, Abyākatā
Dhammā

60 Myanmar Buddhist Initiation Ceremony

and death, the Absolute Peace, the Perfect Bliss, the Ultimate Tranquillity. We have acquired this merit and we share it with all other sentient beings. May all the audience gain equal share of the merit with us, and rejoice. May the Mother Earth stand as witness to this meritorious deed. Please enjoy our merit and appreciate it". Thereupon, the audience applaud in unison, intoning '*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*'¹ "Well done! Well done! Well done!"

Then the monks leave the pandal in solemn procession to the monastery, followed by the newly initiated novice (*Koyin*) with his eyes cast down, and his hands embracing his black alms-bowl. He slowly walks away to the monastery where he will stay to study the scriptures, and to practise the insight meditation of the Buddhist. He has accomplished an important milestone in his life. The noble teachings of Lord Buddha will prepare him to lead a rewarding life. The strict discipline and austerity of monastic life will mould his delicate character and encourage him to confront the future with understanding and loving kindness for all living beings. He will become a

1. ၁၁၇၊ ၁၁၇၊ ၁၁၇ • Well done! (Amen) Prevail!

Buddhist who can withstand the ups and downs of life most courageously. He is and will be gradually moving onward to the Ultimate Goal of Nibbāna just as the slow, deep, rhythmic beating of the great drums. This farewell music of the Orchestra proclaims the happy climax and finale of the Shinpyu Novitiation Ceremony.



PART TWO

The Higher Ordination of Buddhist Monk

(*Upasampada-Kamma*)¹

It is considered to be a fascinating subject to read the description of various ceremonies performed on the occasion of promoting a novice (or a deacon, or a neophyte) to the rank of a Buddhist monk ('*Bhikkhu*' in Pāḷi). This Upasampada Ordination which the candidate has to receive confers a peculiarly sacred character and give a special religious power to him. It inspires him to a more perfect course of life and enlists him as a fullfledged member of the community of monks, the Saṃgha.

It is sincerely believed that the Ordination ceremony helps him get out of the secular profane society and enrolls him into the sacred community. By this performance the Fraternity of Saṃghā helps to raise him from the inferior

1. ဥပသမ္ပဒကမ္မ = Higher Ordination

state of layman to that of a Bhikkhu monk, a superior state of virtue and perfection.

Whoever he may be, a layman or a neophyte, or a probationer, or a deacon, the candidate must necessarily be initiated as a novice, the lower ordination of pabbajja, before he can receive the higher ordination for the monkhood. The first essential qualification to become a candidate for admission to the Order of monks is that one must be of the male sex. Only men are eligible for candidacy. Moreover, he must be free from communicable diseases and from debts; he must have acquired the consent of his parents; he must be at least twenty years of age; and he must be provided for the ordination ceremony with a proper suit of three yellow robes (*cīvara*)¹ and an alms-bowl (*patta*)². To sum up, the candidate must be examined systematically so that he is sure to be exempt from certain moral and physical defects and deformities, that would render him unworthy of being admitted as a member of the pristine Holy Order of Monks. The candidate must willingly pledge himself to a sincere observance of

1. စီဝရံ = သင်္ကန်း = Yellow Robes

2. ပတ္တံ = သပိတံ = Patta = alms-bowl

monastic disciplinary rules and regulations which form the Vinaya constitutions of the Saṃgha Order. This is mentioned in the scriptures as the first essential aspect of higher ordination as *Vatthu*,¹ the personal eligibility.

The second essential aspect of ordination is *Sīmā*, the Ordination Hall², especially established and reserved for such monastic functions. This special building, or rather a boundary is set apart from lay people and animals who are not permitted to enter nor to approach closer than the marble stone stakes that surround the hall as the sign of boundary demarcation, during the performance of the monastic rites and ceremonies. Usually the time and date for the ordination rites are fixed by astrological calculations.

The third essential aspect of ordination of monk is the number of participants in the ceremony; and a minimum of four bhikkhus is mandatory to form an appropriate *Chapter of monks-Saṃghā*. The eldest one will preside over the occasion as the Chairman of the Assembly or the Preceptor (*Upajjhāyācariya*)

1. ဝတ္ထု = ရဟန်းလောင်း = Personal eligibility

2. သီမာ = သီမ် = Ordination Hall : Chapel House;
Sanctuary Hall

of the newly ordained monk. Another elder monk will act as a Counsellor or Instructor (Anusāsaka) who is going to present the candidate to the Assembly for thorough examination. This Counsellor will help the candidate by admonishing him on certain points, the ignorance of which would prove highly prejudicial to and greatly offensive in a professed member of the Order. The third elder monk will read the authorised words of ritual from the prescribed book of compendium (Kammavācā¹ in Pāli) on palm leaves, or on lacquered paper, or even on copper plates, which are usually enclosed within beautifully ornamented silk wrappers and gilded cover. In some cases when the participant monks are more than four, readers are selected to read the Kammavācā in groups of three and to repeat the reading three times.

The remaining colleagues of the Assembly remain solemnly to witness the successful Ordination of a new brother by the Saṃgha.

The fourth important aspect in the ordination ceremony is the Declaration of the Announcer or the Master of the Ordination

1. ကမ္မဝါစာ = Ecclesiastical Scriptures; scroll

ceremony that the Assembly is going to ordain a candidate into the Order lawfully. This is called in Pāli technical term as *Ñatti*.¹ The announcement must be articulate and understandable so that the participants shall unanimously and solemnly approve the performance.

The fifth and most important aspect in the Ordination ceremony is the reading of *Kammavācā* by the Readers, selected by the Chairman of the Assembly for this occasion. *Kammavācā* is the ecclesiastical scriptures or the ceremonial compendium prescribed to be read in the Ordination ceremonies and other monastic rites. Each and every syllable in the text must be read articulately with perfect accent and pronunciation.

There are five essential aspects of monastic Ordination, to transform the candidate into full-fledged bhikkhu or *Upasampanna*; or *Pañcaṅga*; hence *U Pañ-cin* or *U Pazin*² in Myanmar colloquium.

All the ordinances and prescriptions in these texts (*Kammavācā*) are promulgated and sanctioned by the Lord Buddha himself who

1. ၂၇၇ = Announcement = *Ñatti*

2. ၂၀၁၅ = ဝဇ္ဇင်္ဂ = ဦးဝဇ္ဇင်္ဂ = ရဟန်း = Bhikkhu

was the final authority in the monastic Order. So the responsible readers must read very carefully and articulately to pronounce the right sound of each word. Therefore all orthodox members of the Buddhist Monastic Order bear due respect and profound veneration to the contents of the *Kammavācā* text.

Bearing in mind, then, the significance of higher ordination ceremony of a monk (*bhikkhu* or *Upasampada*) for the entire Myanmar Buddhist society it is well to consider its impact upon the individual concerned.

For the purpose of greater immediacy of presentation and more liveliness in reading, the narrative henceforth should be in terms of the first person.

In the previous pages, I have described a traditional ceremony of initiation of a novice in the Myanmar Buddhist Order of Monks which compels all Buddhist boys to reside for a longer or shorter period in a monastery as a compulsory requirement for their religious experience.

Henceforth some brief information about my personal experience of the Higher Ordination of a Monk in the Myanmar Buddhist tradition is to be presented.

It was in 1946 when I visited everyday the monastery where my only younger brother was residing as a (temporary) novice. Consequently I became quite intimate and acquainted with the residential monks there. That I decided to become an Upasampada Bhikkhu monk like them transpired for many good reasons. I discussed the matter with local prelate-Sayadaw who counselled me to read the (*Vinaya*) book of Monastic Disciplinary Rules in Myanmar translation. The prelate interviewed me more than once to consider whether I was eligible to become a monk. Satisfied with my qualifications, he advised me to obtain the willing consent of my parents who were still living then.

When I reported the matter to the prelate Sayadaw that all the necessary preparations had been made in accordance with his instructions, he calculated and fixed the day of the Ordination ceremony. And he directed me to be initiated again as a novice and stay for a week in the monastery to learn all the ritualistic words by heart which I had to recite on the day of ordination. Accordingly, one week prior to the fixed date I had gone through the initiation ceremony to pass a term of

instruction as a novice. Then I had several rehearsals with the help of a Counsellor monk to be sure that the ceremony would be celebrated successfully on the appointed day. My sponsor was very particular about the perfection in the eight requisites of a monk (*Aṭṭha parikkhāra*). He told me that the candidate, prior to the Ordination ceremony must be provided with the eight requisites, namely:-

1. an alms bowl (*patta*)¹
2. an upper garment (*saṅghāṭī*)
3. an upper robe (*uttarāsaṅga*)
4. an underwear (*antara vāsaka*)
5. a water strainer (*dhammakaraṇa*)
6. a girdle (*kāya bandhana*)
7. a razor (*vāsika*)
8. a needle with thread (*suci*).

He then explained to me the importance of these requisites without which I could not be admitted into the Order.

Patta, the alms-bowl is a black pot, round and smooth and made of earth or iron. It has

1. ချပ်စုံကြောင်းငါးခုမပြည့်သေးသောသပိတ် = Ūna
pañca-bandhanana patta,

See Nisaggiyapācittiya rules on *patta* in the Pātimokkha text.

a lid to cover it, and a stand. In the beginning of the monastic history monks picked up the broken neckless water jars discarded by housewives, blackened them by baking on the kitchen fire, and they converted them into alms bowls. But later on Lord Buddha allowed the disciples to make new alms-bowl, either earthen or of iron. However bowls made of wood, copper, silver, gold and other valuable metals are not allowed to be used. The monk uses the bowl to receive food from the donors, alms from the devotees, and he eats his meals, right out of this bowl. He eats and drinks out of this bowl because he does not possess any extra cup, plate, silver and glass. But when the lay devotees earnestly request him to use the utensils of the household only then he may condescend to utilize them temporarily in favour of the laity. Even then he must be heedful not to enjoy anything made of gold and silver.

To seek for a new alms-bowl the monk must abandon his old bowl which he had already rebaked and mended five times. If the earthen bowl is broken into pieces, the monk may ask for another one from the Saṃgha community. And yet the regular size of bowl is precisely promulgated in the Vinaya rules.

Civara, the regular robes of a monk are three sheets of garment cut, sewn and dyed in the sap of jack-fruit tree or any prescribed bark of trees, to get brown or dark orange or dark saffron colour. Traditionally, since the ancient days of the Buddha, monks collected discarded rags and washed them clean. Then they cut them into square or rectangular patches which they sewed into three wide sheets of garments. On each of the coloured piece they marked three dark spots *Kappa-bindu*¹ to register them as their three lawful robes.

(a) The big robe is a double-sheet measuring 9 feet by 6 feet used as an over-garment known as *Dukuṭṭa* or *Saṅghāṭi*².

(b) The second robe is a single sheet measuring 9 feet by 6 feet used as an upper garment or robe known as *Uttarāsaṅga*³.

1. ကပ္ပဗိဇ္ဇု = Three dark spots

2. ဒုကုဋ္ဌ = သံဃာဋီ = အပေါ်ရုံသင်္ကန်းကြီး = Over garment

3. ဥတ္တရာသင်္ကန်း = ဧကသီသင်္ကန်း = Upper garment = (သင်္ကန်း ၉ မျိုး = သင်း၊ ကိုယ်၊ ဒု၊ အိပ်၊ မျက်၊ ပရိတ်၊ နိသိဒ္ဓိ၊ မိုး၊ အမာ) သင်းပိုင်၊ ကိုယ်ရုံ၊ ဒုကုဋ္ဌ၊ အိပ်ရာ၊ မျက်နှာသုတ် ပဝါ၊ ခါးပန်း၊ နိသိဒ္ဓိ၊ မိုးရေခဲ၊ အမာလွှမ်း။

- (c) The third piece measuring 6 feet by 4 feet is used as an underwear or loin-cloth known as *Antaravāsaka*¹.

A suit of these three robes is called *Pamsukūlika Cīvara*², i.e. soiled robes. And an austere monk must wear only these three robes. However, when the devout donors offer him ready-made robes of cotton, silk, wool, velvet and other fabrics, he may accept them and wear them in honour of the generous givers.

Yet a monk cannot wear robes made out of the hair and skin of man, dog, horse, elephant, leopard, tiger, lion, bear, wolf and snake. He also is not permitted to use pure black robes and deep dark rugs.

As a matter of fact, a Buddhist monk is allowed to enjoy nine types of *Cīvara* robes in accordance with the Vinaya disciplinary rules of the monastic Order.

1. *Saṅghāṭi* = over garment in double sheet
2. *Uttarāsaṅga* = upper garment, single sheet

1. အန္တရဝါသက = သင်းပိုင် = Under wear or loin-cloth
 2. ပံသုကုလိကစီဝရ = Soiled robe .

3. *Antaravāsaka* = underwear or loincloth
4. *Parikkhāra coḷa*=girdle, cloth belt, handkerchief, napkin.
5. *Nisidana* = seat cover, cloth mat
6. *Mukha puñcana*= face towel
7. *Paccattharaṇa* = bed sheet, bed net, pillow cover, blankets, quilt, coverlet
8. *Vassika sāṭika*= rain cloth, raincoat-robe
9. *Kaṇḍu Paṭicchādaka* = bandage, swathe, diaper undersheet, etc., for a sick monk.

The monk binds the underwear robe to his loins with the girdle made of cotton or silk, but not with a leather belt nor with metal chains. He wears the upper garment of single sheet covering the shoulders and the chest, wrapping it around the body reaching somewhat below the knees. The edge of the underwear and the upper garment must be appropriate and neat around the calves, that is, not one side up and one side down. Then the over-robe is folded and put upon the left shoulder with two ends hanging down, one in front and one behind. This over-garment is

generally used as gown or otherwise as a sunshade or as a blanket. A suit of these three robes (*Ticīvara*)¹ is compulsory for every monk to wear. Separation from the robes even for an overnight constitutes a monastic offence.

Still there are some optional chattels of a Buddhist monk in addition to those eight basic requisites. Rosary beads, umbrella, slippers, palm-leaf fan, walking staff, shoulder bag, stencil and canonical text books, broom sticks, candlesticks, joss sticks, lamp, betel box, tobacco case, and others are also essentials.

But some staunch orthodox schools do not encourage their follower-monks to use slippers, umbrellas and rosary beads. There are some monks who do not even ride the vehicles drawn by men and animals. Many more monks do not smoke tobacco, nor chew 'pān'² betel leaf as a masticatory.

On the appointed day of the ceremony, I had my head and beard shaved clean and all the preparations for the solemn occasion were made early in the morning. The Chapter

1. တိစိဝရ = Three robes

2. ကွမ်း = Pān: betel leaf and nut

Samgha of thirty seven full fledged monks assembled in the (*Sīmā*) Ordination chapel hall, ready to inaugurate the Ordination Ceremony (*Upasampada Kamma*). The Assembly appointed the Most Reverend Kyauknee Tawya Sayadaw Bhaddanta Devinda, the local Prelate of Maing Hsawk, to act as the Chairman of this sacred ceremony.

This *Sīmā* Hall or the Chapel House at Maing Hsawk Township was constructed, restricted and reserved for ecclesiastical services only. It was a sacred sancturay of the Monastic Order, an out of bounds edifice that prohibited the laity during the religious services, monastic rites and ecclesiastical ceremonies.

The boundary was demarcated by white marble stakes around the Hall, which made for a very distinct seclusion of the sacred characteristic of this edifice from other profane buildings.

The Chapel House (*Sīmā Hall*) was an oblong brick building on a remote hillock, a few hundred yards away from the monasteries and the pagoda. Inside the hall on the eastern side was a dais with a marble Buddha Image on it. Candlesticks and oil lamps were lit even

during daytime, in front of the altar. Waterpots were set systematically with filters, water strainers and cups.

It was always clean and the seats were appropriately arranged ready for any monastic function. This was the only Khandha Sīmā of its kind in that locality. It was the Chapel wherein I had received my Higher Ordination.

In the Chapel Hall (*Sīmā*) at the top of the Inner Circle in front of the altar of Lord Buddha Image sat the Chairman Sayadaw. On either side of him sat the elder monks well-known for their scholarship, seniority and sanctity, and down the sides sat other invited monks according to their seniority. The seniority of the elder monks were reckoned from the date of their Higher Ordination. This became an appropriate Assembly of members of the Saṃgha Order. The Chairman Sayadaw sat on a low cushion and the other members sat on carpets, cross-legged in the mood of meditation ready for the solemn service. The participants are required to give their unanimous, unremitting and devout attention throughout the service. The Chairman suggested that every member join attentively in the exhortations, responses, formulas and other function-

ary rites, and to correct every error lest the slip of a single mistake might vitiate the efficacy of the Ordination Rite.

Purification Rite

Then the Chairman requested the members of the Order to purify themselves by confession. So the monks retired two by two together, and each pair squatted down face to face with their folded hands on their foreheads in reverence, made confession of their faults and sins, mutually in whispers.

The Chairman Sayadaw then nominated an experienced competent elder, Reverend U Ādicca and assigned him the duties of Examiner and Instructor of Ordination.

An audience of about two thousand, led by my parents who acted as the Supporters of Four Principal Needs of a monk (*Catupaccaya dāyakās*)¹ were present there sitting on the ground around the Sīmā building outside the marble stakes of demarcation, to witness and celebrate the ceremony. I was waiting at the

1. ဝစ္စည်းလေးပါးဒါယကာ = Supporter of four principal requisites

gate of the Sīmā hall until the Instructor-Examiner Sayadaw¹ came out of the Assembly to usher me to the Chairman Sayadaw.

I knelt down in front of the Chairman and saluted him with folded hands above my forehead.

“Permit me to supplicate. Sir, graciously grant me your sanction and support. Once again, Sir, I supplicate for your sanction and support. For the third time, Sir, I supplicate for your sanction and support.

Then the Instructor advised me that it is right to appoint an Upajjhāyācariya the Preceptor Superior by saying in Pāli: “Pathamam Upajjham gāhāpetabbo, iti vacanato upajjham gaṇha.”

So I requested the Chairman,

Reverend Sir, please be my Preceptor Superior;

A second time, please be my Preceptor Superior;

A third time, please be my Preceptor Superior.

၁. အနုဘာဏ = Instructor = Examiner

In Pāḷi, Upajjhāyo me bhante hohi,

dutiyampi Upajjhāyo me bhante hohi.

ṭatīyampi Upajjhāyo me bhante hohi,

To this the Preceptor Superior replied in Pāḷi:

“Pāsādikena sampādehi” which means,

“Be endowed with graceful personality.”

I acknowledged: “Āma bhante-Yes Sir.”

Then the Instructor Examiner declared, “For the convenience in reading *Ñatti* and *Kammavācā*, (the Ordination rituals) the name of the candidate will be substituted as Nāga and the name of the Preceptor Superior will be substituted as Tissa. So the Assembly is going to celebrate the Ordination Ceremony of Nāga by the permission of the Preceptor Superior Tissa.”

The Instructor Examiner then turned to me and continued to exhort that the Preceptor Superior (*Upajjhāya*) had been appointed and so it was right to inquire whether I had an alms-bowl and three robes in my possession.

Upajjhamṃ gāhāpetvā patta-cīvaram
ācikkhitobbamṃ iti vacanato ācikkhissamṃ”

Vinaya Piṭaka Mahāvagga Pāḷi Upasampadavidhi para
125, 126.

Then pointing his right index finger to the alms-bowl, he said “This is your alms bowl.=

Ayaṃ te patto.”

I responded, “Yes sir=Āma Bhante.”

The Instructor pointing his finger to the robes=“This is your over-garment=Ayaṃ te saṅghāṭi”

I:--“Yes sir=Āma bhante”

Instructor: “This is your upper robe=Ayaṃ te uttarāsaṅgo”

I:--“Yes sir=Āma bhante”

Instructor: “This is your underwear robe=Ayaṃ te antaravāsako”

I:--“Yes sir=Āma bhante”

Then the instructor suggested that I withdraw from the Assembly to a distance of about five feet outside the Sīmā-hall.

“Gaccha amumhi okāse tiṭṭhāhi=Go, Nāga and stand there.”

So I retired, going backward in a reverential posture and stood at the corner outside the chapel hall, facing towards the Assembly with folded hands.

The Instructor then turned towards the Assembly and read “Sunātu me bhante samgho. Nāgo āyasmato Tissassa upasāmapadā pekkho yadi samghassa pattakallam aham Nāgam anusāseyyam

= Listen to my words, Reverend Sirs. Nāga the candidate solicits from the venerable Tissa the favour of being honoured with the Ordination of monkhood. If it is convenient for the Assembly I may admonish Nāga the candidate.”

He then came to me and admonished and examined me by reading out of the Pāli text: “Be attentive to my words, Nāga.

This is the solemn occasion for you to speak the truth, to state what has occurred.

When interrogated concerning anything in the midst of the Assembly, if it be true, you are to answer truly as ‘yes sir,’ and if it is not true, you must say that it is not so. Do not hesitate in silence. Do not frown unhappily.

The authoritative members of the Assembly shall question you as follows and if it is true, answer ‘yes’, and if it is false, answer ‘no’-

Suṇasi Nāga ayam kālo tesaccakālo
bhūtakālo yam tam jātam saṃghamajjhe
pucchante santam atthīti vattabbam, asantam
natthi vattabbam.

Mā kho vitthāsi, mā kho maṅku ahosi,
evam tam pucchissanti.

Nāga te evarūpā ābādhā santi--*Kuṭṭham*
=Nāga, have you any such diseases as these-
-leprosy?"

I : "No sir = natthi bhante."

Instructor : "*Gaṇḍo* = boils?"

I : "No sir = natthi bhante"

Instructor : "*Kilāso* = scrofula, (eczema) itch?"

I : "No sir = natthi bhante"

Instructor : "Soso = asthma, consumption,
cough?"

I : "No sir = natthi bhante"

Instructor : "Apamāro, epilepsy?"

I : "No sir = natthi bhante"

Instructor : "Are you a human being?=Ma
ussosi."

I : "Yes, I am = āma bhante."

Instructor : “Are you a male? = Purisosi.”

I : “Yes, I am = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Are you a free man? = bhūjissosi.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Are you free from debt? = Anaṇosi.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Are you exempt from government service? = Nasi rājabhaṭo.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Have you come with the permission of your parents? = Anuññātosī mātāpitūhi.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Are you of the full age of twenty years? = Paripuṇṇa vīsativassosi.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “Are your alms-bowl and robes complete? = Paripuṇṇam te patta-cīvaram.”

I : “Yes Sir = āma bhante.”

Instructor : “What is your name? = Kim nāmosi.”

I : “I am called Nāga, Sir = Aham bhante Nāgo nāma.”

Instructor : “What is the name of your Upajjhāya Preceptor? = Ko nāmo te Upajjhāyo.”

I : “My Upajjhāya Preceptor is called the Venerable Tissa, Sir = Upajjhāyo me bhante Āyasmā Tissatthero nāma.”*

Leaving me there outside the Sīmā hall, the Instructor then went to the Assembly and asked permission to call me back into the Assembly by reading the Pāḷi scriptures.

“Suṇātu me bhante saṃgho. Nāgo āyasmato Tissassa upasampadāpekkho anusīṭṭho so mayā. Yadi Saṃghassa pattakallam Nāgo āgaccheyya.

Venerable sirs, please listen to my words. I have duly admonished that candidate Nāga who seeks from Venerable Tissa to be ordained in our Order. If it is convenient for the Saṃgha Assembly the candidate Nāga should come into the Chapter.”

The Preceptor called me:-

“Nāga Āgacchāhi=Come hither, Nāga.”

Book of Discipline vol iv pp. 120...

Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga Pāḷi: Upasampadāvidhi:
para 125, 126.

Then the Instructor led me to the Assembly and made me sit in the midst of the Chapter facing towards the Chairman.

I squatted on my heels, my elbows resting on my knees and the folded hands raised to my forehead, a posture of obeisance to the Assembly. And I supplicated the Assembly for formal Ordination, both in Pāli and the vernacular.

“Saṃgham̐ bhante upasampadam̐ yācāmi,
Ullumpatu mam̐ bhante Saṃgho
anukampam̐ upādāya.

Dutiyampi Saṃgham̐ bhante upasampadam̐
yācāmi. Ullumpatu mam̐ bhante Saṃgho
anukampam̐ upādāya.

Tatīyampi Saṃgham̐ bhante upasampadam̐
yācāmi. Ullumpatu mam̐ bhante Saṃgho
anukampam̐ upādāya”.¹

“Venerable Sirs, I request to be admitted to the profession of Upasampada monkhood. Have pity on me; take me from the state of

1. The literal meaning is “Venerable sirs, I ask the Assembly for Ordination. Please have compassion on me and lift me up.” But the Myanmar translation renders more elaborately in accordance with the Commentaries of Vinaya Piṭaka.

layman which is evil and imperfect. and advance me to that of a Bhikkhu monk. a state of virtue and perfection.”

“A second time, I request, Venerable Sirs, to be admitted to the profession of Upasampada monkhood. Please help me to come out of the cycle of birth and death, the wheel of transmigration, and to attain the supramundane state of freedom.

“A third time, I request, Venerable Sirs, to be admitted to the profession of Upassampada monkhood. Please help me to be redeemed from the whirlpool of sufferings, and to be saved on the haven shore of the Higher Path, the Fruition and Nibbāna.”

The Chairman of the Assembly, my Preceptor Superior then selected three eminent elders to read the *Kammavācā*. And he confirmed the Instructor to act as the Examiner, and he requested the Assembly members to come and sit closer to me. So the Examiner proceeded:--

“In order to make it easy and convenient in reading the *Kammavācā* text, let us name the Chairman as Tissa and whenever the name Tissa appears in our reading please understand

it means the Chairman Sayadaw of this Assembly.

And let us name the candidate as Nāga, and whenever we read Nāga in the Kammavācā text, please understand that it means this candidate of Ordination. We are going to read in Pāli as we assume that each and everyone of us understand the meaning of this reading thoroughly.

Then the Examiner read out of the text to secure the consent of the Assembly to ask questions to me.

“Suṇātu me bhante Saṃgho Ayaṃ Nāgo āyasmaṇo Tissassa upasampadāpekkho. Yadi saṃghassa pattakallam aham Nāgam antarāyike dhamme puccheyyam.”

“Listen to my words. Venerable sirs, Nāga this candidate solicits from the Venerable Tissa the favour of being honoured with the Upasampada Ordination. If it is convenient for the Saṃgha Assembly, I may examine this candidate Nāga respecting the disqualification for the monkhood.”

He then asked me the following questions reading the Pāli words out of the Kammavācā text. I had to answer to each

question, Yes sir or No sir, accordingly as had been admonished.

“Sunāsi Nāga ayam kālo te saccakālo, bhūtakālo yam tam jātam aham pucchāmi. Santam atthīti vattabbam, asantam natthīti vattabbam.

1. Nāga, santi te kuṭṭham, gaṇḍo, soso, apamāro iti evarūpa ābādhā?”

“Na santi bhante” or “Natthi bhante”

2. “Manusso-si?”

“Āma bhante”

3. “Puriso-si?”

“Āma bhante”

4. “Bhūjisso-si?”

“Āma bhante”

5. “Anaṇḍo-si?”

“Āma bhante”

6. “Rājabhato na asi?”

“Āma bhante”

7. “Mātāpitūhi anuññāto-si?”

“Āma bhante”

8. “Paripunṇavīsati vasso-si?”

“Āma bhante”

9. “Paripunṇaṃ te patta cīvaram?”

“Āma bhante”

10. “Kiṃ nāmo si tvam?”

“Ahaṃ bhante Nāgo nāma.”

11. “Ko nāmo te Upajjhāyo?”

“Upajjhāyo me bhante āyasmā
Tissatthero nāma”

Thus I got through my examinations well.

Ordination Rite

The Examiner monk U Ādicca reported the result of the examination to the Assembly which was approved by the Readers.

Now I was surrounded by the Inner Circle of the Chapter by the Chairman Tissa-thera and three other selected Readers of Kammavācā Ordination Rituals.

Rev. U Paññāsāmi the Assistant Local Prelate and Abbot of Thale-U Kyaung Taik, Inlay.

Rev. Nandadhaja, the Chancellor Vinayadhara Sayadaw of Waso Kyaung Taik, Maing Hsawk, and Rev. Sumana, the Abbot Sayadaw of Yangon Kyaung Taik, Yawnghwe.

Around the Inner Circle all the participant monks sat close together in solemnity. So it became a unique Chapter of Saṃgha ready to perform the sacred rite of Higher Ordination (*Upasampada Kamma*).¹

Ñatti (Declaration)

Then the three Readers read in unison the sacred words out of the Kammavācā text inscribed on palm leaves. This is the declaration of a motion put at proceedings of the Assembly meeting.

“Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.”

Suṇātu me bhante Saṃgho. Ayam Nāgo āyasmato Tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi; paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram; Nāgo saṃgham upasampadam yācati āyasamatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Yadi Saṃghassa pattakallam. Saṃgho Nāgam upasampādeyya āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena Esā ñatti.

1. Vinaya Piṭaka Mahāvagga Pāḷi, upasampadāvidhi, para 127

The declaration of motion at the proceedings read in Pāli can be rendered as follows:

“Praise be to Him, the Blessed One, the Almighty One and the Enlightened Buddha.

“Reverend Sirs, May the Saṃgha listen to my words. This candidate Nāga desires the Higher Ordination (*Upasampada*) of the Order under the venerable Tissa. He is free from disqualifications for the monkhood. He is provided completely with an alms-bowl and three robes. Nāga the candidate now asks the Assembly of Saṃgha for the Higher Ordination (*Upasampada*) of the Order in the name of his Preceptor Superior (*Upajjhāya*) the venerable Tissa. If it is convenient for the Assembly of Saṃghā, may the Assembly of Saṃghā be moved to ordain the candidate Nāga under the Preceptor Superior, the venerable Tissa. This is the Declaration of motion at the Proceedings.”

Then the three Readers proceeded reading in unison the Ordination Ritual in Pāli out of the *Kammavācā* text:

Kammavācā = Ordination

“Suṇātu me bhante Saṃgho, ayam Nāgo āyasmato Tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram Nāgo Saṃgham upasampadam yācati āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Saṃgho Nāgam upasampādeti āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Yassāyasmato khatmati Nāgassa upasampadā āyasmatā Tisseṇa upajjhāyena, so tuṇhassa; yassa nakkhamati, so bhāseyya. Dutiyampi etamattham vadāmi.

Suṇātu me bhante Saṃgho ayam Nāgo āyasmato Tissassa upasampadāpekkho, parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi; paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram: Nāgo Saṃgham upasampadam yācati āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Saṃgho Nāgam upasampādeti āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Yassāyasanto khamati Nāgassa upasampadā āyasmatā Tisseṇa upajjhāyena, so tuṇhassa; yassa nakkhamati so bhāseyya.

Tatiyampi etamattham vadāmi

Suṇātu me bhante Saṃgho ayam Nāgo āyasmatā Tissassa upasampadāpekkho, parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi; paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram; Nāgo Saṃgham upasampadam yācati āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Saṃgho

Nāgam upasamādeti āyasmeta Tissena upajjhāyena. Yassāyasamato khamati Nāgassa upasampadā āyasmata Tissena upajjhāyena, so tuṇhassa; yassa nakkhamati so bhāseyya.

The meaning of the readings may be rendered as follows:-

“Reverend Sirs, listen to my words. This candidate Nāga supplicates for Upasampada Ordination under the venerable Tissa. He is free from disqualifications for the monkhood. He has his alms-bowl and robes complete. The candidate asks in the name of his Preceptor Superior the Venerable Tissa, permission of the Assembly to be ordained. Now the Assembly gives him ordination under his Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa. If any of the venerable Assembly approves the ordination of the candidate under his Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa, let him be silent; if whosoever has any objection, let him speak out.

A second time I state this matter again. Reverend Sirs, listen to my words. This candidate Nāga requests of the venerable Tissa to be admitted into the Order. He is free from all defects that would otherwise debar him from the Ordination. He is provided completely

with the alms-bowl and robes. Moreover, he has asked in the name of the Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa, permission of the Assembly to be admitted into the Order. Now the Assembly gives him ordination under his Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa. To whomsoever this seems good let him keep silence, whosoever thinks otherwise let him object verbally.

A third time I state this matter again. Reverend Assembly Sirs, listen to my words. This candidate Nāga requests of the venerable Tissa to be admitted into the Order. He is free from all physical infirmities and mental incapacities that would otherwise debar him from entering the Order. He is likewise provided with complete alms-bowl and three robes. He has asked in the name of the Preceptor Tissa permission of the Assembly to be admitted into monkhood. Now the Assembly yields him the Higher Ordination under his Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa. If any of the venerable Assembly approves the ordination of this candidate please be silent: and if there is any objection let him declare and object that the candidate is unworthy of being ordained.”

Then the Readers announced the successful accomplishment of the Higher Ordination of Nāga:--

“The candidate Nāga has received the ordination of monkhood with the consent of the Preceptor Superior the venerable Tissa. The Assembly approves the resolution; therefore it keeps silence. So I understand that the Assembly has consented.”

“Upasampanno Saṃghena Nāgo āyasmatā Tissena upajjhāyena. Khamati Saṃghassa. Tasmā tuṇhī evametam dhārayāmi.”¹

So at the end of the reading of the final ritual word ‘dhārayāmi’ I became a fully ordained bhikkhu, a full-fledged Buddhist monk, an Upasampada. It was an attainment; It was an achievement; It was indeed a great success in my life.

Then the instructor intervened reading the Kammavācā text in Pāḷi and rendering in the vernacular tongue:--

1. Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga pāḷi. P. 133

“Tāvadeva chāyā metabbā. utuppamāṇam ācikkhitabbam; divasabhāgo ācikkhitabbo; Saṅgīti ācikkhitabbā; cattāro nissayā ācikkhitabbā.”

To register officially the accomplishment of this Ordination, the Assembly must note down the measured portion of the sun (the shadow of the candidate in the sun); should explain the length of the season; should explain the portion of the day; should explain the calendar of time, date, and season of the year altogether. And then the four Resources of a Bhikkhu monk must be explained thoroughly.

The Certificate and Registration of Ordination

Of Yawnghwe subdivision, Maing Hsawk Pastorate, Maing Hsawk ward, the Upper village, the eldest son of U Gaw Yar (a) Sao Sam Hlaing and Daw Htay Htay, Shin Vanṇa aged 20 years has been supported by devout benefactors U Gaw Yar (a) Sao Sam Hlaing and Daw Htay Htay of the Maing Hsawk Ward, the Upper village, to be ordained the Upasampada monkhood. And in this Khandha Sīmā Hall, at the southeast corner of the

Shwe Muṭṭho pagoda, Maing Hsawk Township on the 13th waning moon day of Wagaung, 1308 Myanmar Era on Saturday morning at 9 hours 5 minutes, he is fully ordained and named U Vaṇṇadhaja, under the Preceptor Upajjhāya the Local Prelate, Kyauknee Tawya Sayadaw U Devinda; and the Kammavācā Readers U Paññāsāmi the Abbot of Thale Oo Kyaung, U Nandadhaja the Vinayadhara Abbot of Wazo Kyaung, and U Sumana the Abbot of Yangon Kyaung, Yawngghwe; participated by 18 other elderly monks in solemnity.

Having done all this together, the new monk should be asked about the measurement of his shadow, the season and portion of the day in order that he might give the correct answers and so make it clear that he has properly understood his age as a member of the Order.

Office Seal of the
Local Prelate

Signed (Rev:Devinda)

The Assembly accordingly fulfilled the requirements. This being done, the Instructor admonished me on behalf of the Assembly as follows:--

“Let Nāga the new monk attend to the following duties, which it is incumbent on him to perform, and to the faults hereafter enumerated which you must carefully avoid.

Four Dependable Requisites (Nissayā)¹

1. It is the duty of a bhikkhu monk to earn his food with labour and with the exertion of the muscles of his feet; and through the whole course of his life he must gain his subsistence by such alms-round, the labour of his feet. He is however allowed to make use of all the things that are offered to the Saṃghā Order in general, or to him in particular, that are usually to be enjoyed in banquets, that are sent by casting lots, and that are given at the waxing and waning moons, on sabbath days, and on the first day of the fortnight. O Nāga, the new monk, you may depend upon all these things for your food.

Pinḍiyālopabhojanam nissāya pabbajjā,
tattha te yāvajīvam ussāho karaṇīyo.
Atirekalābho saṃghabhattam uddesabhattam

Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga Pāḷi. p. 133 para. 128,

1. နိဗ္ဗာနလောကီယံ = နိဗ္ဗာနလောကီယံ = Four Dependable Requisites (Nissayā)

nimantanam salākabhattam pakkhikam
uposathikam pāṭipadikam.

2. It is the duty of a bhikkhū monk to wear through humility, yellow coloured dyed robes, made of rags discarded in the streets or at the cemeteries. If however, by his merit and virtue he procures for himself many benefactors, he may receive from them for his habit the following articles: jutes, cotton, silk, wool, hemp and synthetic fabrics. O Nāga, the new monk, this is the requisite to depend upon (*Nissaya*) through the whole course of your life.

‘Paṃsukūlacīvaram nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvam ussāho karaṇīyo-Atirekalābho khomam kōseyyam kambalam bhaṅgam.’

3. It is the duty of a bhikkhu monk to dwell under the shade of lofty trees. But if, owing to his proficiency and zeal in the discharge of his duties, he secures lawfully to himself devout supporters who are willing to build for him a better dwelling, he may dwell in it. The monastery may be made of bamboo, wood or bricks, with four roofs or with two roofs, adorned with turrets and spires, or the flat roof building, or the cave. O Nāga the

new monk, this is the requisite to depend upon (*Nissaya*) through the whole course of your life.

Rukkhāmūla senāsanam nissāya pabbajjā.
Tattha te yāvajīvam ussāho karaṇīyo.
Atirekalābho vihāro adḍhayogo pāsādo
hammiyam guhā.

4. It is incumbent upon a bhikkhu monk to use as medicine, the rotten urine of the cow with myrobalan, nutmeg, clove, pepper ginger, lime and salt in it. He may also avail himself, as medicines, the following materials: butter, cream, oil, honey and molasses.

This is, O Nāga, the new monk, to be practised as (*Nissaya*) dependent now and forever for the entire course of your life.

These are the four dependable requisites (*Nissaya*); you must acknowledge through the whole course of your life.

Pūtimutta bhesajjam nissāya pabbajjā tattha
te yāvajīvam ussāho karaṇīyo. Atirekalābho
sappi navanītam telam madhu phāṇitamiti cattāro
nissayā.*

* Vinayapiṭaka, Mahāvagga pāli p.133

Then there are four rules which must never be disobeyed for fear that you shall be excommunicated and expelled from the Monastic Order.

Four Akaraṇīya (Pārājika dhamma)¹

1. O Nāga, the new bhikkhu monk, being now ordained into the sacred Order, it shall be no longer lawful for you to indulge in sexual pleasures whether with human beings or animals or reptiles or birds. He who is guilty of such offence can no longer be kept in the Order as a monk or as the son of the Buddha (*Sakyamuni*). As the severed head be joined again to the neck and life cannot be restored to the breathless body, even so a monk who has committed fornication can never recover his lost sanctity as a monk or as the son of the Buddha (*Sakyamuni*). Beware, therefore, lest you pollute yourself with such a transgression.

‘Upasmpannena bhikkhunā methuno
dhammo na paṭisevitabbo antamaso

Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga pāli p.134. para.129

1. အကရဏီယဓမ္မလေးပါး (ပါရာဇိကဓမ္မလေးပါး)

Four Akaraṇīya (Pārājika dhamma)

tiracchānagatāyapi. Yo bhikkhu methunam dhammam patisevati, assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo: Seyyathāpi nāma puriso sīsacchinno abhabbo tena sarīrabandhanena jīvitum, evameva bhikkhu methunam dhammam paṭisevitvā assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Tam te yāvajīvam akaraṇīyam.

2. It is unlawful and forbidden to a bhikkhu monk to take things that are not given by the owner, even a blade of grass although their value should not exceed a (*pāda*) quarter silver. Whoever monk takes with the intention of stealing, whether in the village or in the jungle something which costs a (*pāda*) quarter silver or more, then he is hereby deprived of his noble character, and can no more be restored to his pristine state to be a monk nor to be the son of the Buddha. As the withered yellow leaf fallen from its stalk cannot retain its luxuriant foliage and shoot forth green buds any more, even so a monk who has stolen anything (which costs a silver or less than or more than a silver) can never regain his privilege as a monk or as the son of the Buddha (*Sakyamuni*). Beware, therefore, of theft during the whole of your mortal journey.

Upasampannena bhikkhunā adinnam theyya saṅkhātam na ādātabbam antamaso tiṇasalākam upādāya. Yo bhikkhu pādam vā pādārahamaṁvā atirekapādamvā adinnam theyyasaṅkhātam ādiyati, assamaṇo hoti asskyaputtiyo. Seyyathāpi nāma paṇḍupalāso bandhanā pavutto abhabbo haritatthāya, evameva bhikkhu pādamvā padarabam vā atirekapādam vā adinnam theyyasaṅkākam ādiyitvā assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Tam te yāvajīvam akaraṇīyam.*

3. A bhikkhu monk can never intentionally deprive any living being of life or wish the death of anybody even if it is only an ant. Whatever monk deprives a human being of life even down to causing abortion, he becomes not a monk nor the son of the Buddha (Sakyamuni). As the cleft rock cannot be reunited so as to make a whole, even so you who kill any human being be no more allowed to remain in this sacred Order as a monk or as the son of the Buddha (Sakyanmuni). Therefore avoid such homicidal offence throughout your life.

Upasampannena bhikkhunā sañcicca paṇo jivitāna voropetabbo antamaso kunthakipillikam

* Vinayapiṭaka, Mahāvagga pāli. p.134, para. 129.

upādāya. Yo bhikkhu sañcicca manussaviggaham jīvitā voropeti antamaso gabbhapātanam upādāya. assāmaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Seyyathāpi nāma puthusilā dvedhā bhinnā appaṭisandhikā hoti. Evameva bhikkhu sañcicca manussaviggaham jīvitā voropetvā assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Tam te yāvājīvam akaraniyam.*

4. The bhikkhu monk can never arrogate to himself extraordinary powers or supernatural perfections, or through vainglory give himself out as a holy man such for even saying, "I enjoy withdrawing into solitary places". And of evil desires, filled with covetousness if he claims on pretence to enjoy ecstasies, or to deliverance or to concentration or to an attainment, or to the Noble Path or to the Noble Fruition, which he does not acquire and which is not a real fact, he is no more a bhikkhu monk, nor the son of the Buddha.

As the lofty palm-tree that has been cut off at the crown cannot revive again, even so the monk guilty of evil desires, filled with covetousness who claims a superhuman state which he does not acquire and which is not a real fact; will not be restored to his monkhood.

* Vinayapiṭaka, Mahāvagga pāli. p.134, para, 129.

Take care for yourself that you do not give way to such an excess telling a fruitless falsehood.

Upasampanna bhikkhunā uttarimanussa-dhammo na ullapitabbo antamaso ‘suññāgāre abhiraṃamīti. Yo bhikkhu pāpiccho icchāpakato asantamā abhūtamā uttarimanussadhammamā ullapati jhānamā vā vimokkhamā vā samādhimā vā samāpattimā vā maggamā vā phalamā vā, assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Seyyathāpi nāma tālo matthakacchinno abhabbo puna viruḥhiyā. evameva bhikkhu pāpiccho icchāpakato asantamā abhūtamā uttarimanussa dhammamā ullapitvā assamaṇo hoti asakyaputtiyo. Tamā te yāvajīvamā akaraṇīyamā.*

There are the Four Things which are not to be done through the entire course of your life.

Iti cattāri akaraṇīyāni. Etāni te yāvajīvamā akaraṇīyamā.”

Three Main Duties of Bhikkhu

Then the Preceptor Superior Sayadaw admonished me to fulfil three main duties of

* Vinayapiṭāka, Mahāvagga Pāli p.135. para. 129.

a bhikkhu monk: that I must learn the Scriptures and conserve the Oral Tradition to keep the Pariyatti Sāsana¹;

That I must practise the Insight Meditation in accordance with the Teachings of Lord Buddha to preserve the Paṭipatti Sāsana²;

And that I shall have to learn through spiritual experience to attain the Perfect Wisdom--Pativedha Sāsana.³

He then addressed me by the monastic name of U Vaṇṇadhaja to be endowed with seemly behaviour and moral conduct in compliance with the 227 (*Pātimokkha*⁴ *Vinaya*) Disciplinary rules. I must engender the devotional spirit among the new believers and must promote the piety of the old devotees; and I must keep always the glorious banner of our religion flying high for the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha's Teachings.

The Ordination ceremony was solemnly over. I entered the monastic Order as a simple

-
1. ပရိယတ္တိသာသနာ = Pariyatti Sāsana
 2. ပဋိပတ္တိသာသနာ = Paṭipatti Sāsana
 3. ပဋိဝေဓသာသနာ = Pativedha Sāsana
 4. ပါတိမောက္ခသံဝရသီလ = Pātimokkha Samvara Sīla

brother member where I may stay as long as I keep my vows. Should I find, however, that my virtue and self-control are not harmonious with the life of austerity and chastity demanded of me, I am free to leave the Order and be reverted to a layman. But as long as I remain a member of the Noble Order of Monks, absolute obedience to the moral code is enforced. If I do commit any of the 223 lesser offences (*Āpatti*) they can be atoned for by public confession and by penance; but if I do commit any one of the four *Pārājika dhamma*, i.e. cardinal expiation offences, I shall be inevitably expelled from the Assembly of the Perfect Religion.

Sermon of Ordination

Now the Preceptor Superior Sayadaw addressing me by my monastic epithet as U Vaṇṇadhaja, told me that as a full-fledged member of the monastic Order, I now had the right to sit upon the stage in company with other monks, facing the audience. This was the proud moment for which I had been ambitiously waiting, my heart was throbbing in my mouth. Next, every person assembled in that

audience just outside the Sīmā Chapel Hall, including my own mother and father, bowed low in reverence with folded hands before me. I then preached to them a short sermon which I had previously learned by heart. As is customary on such occasions, the sermon elaborated on the merit to be gained by parents through offering their sons to the Monastic Order, for since the son thereby becomes a son of the Sakyamuni Buddha, the donor of a son to the Order in turn becomes closely related to the Buddha.

At the end of the new sermon by the very new monk, my parents and the donors were ready to give the offertories to the Elderly Sayadaws and to me. They considered that the newly ordained monk who had just come out of the Sīmā Hall for the first time was as 'holy' as an 'Arahat'¹ (a Saint) and by virtue of this, to offer him something may yield an immediate good result: longevity, beauty, bliss, strength and wisdom.

It was a most picturesque sight to watch the long and solemn procession of Sayādaw-monks coming out of the Chapel door. All

1. အရဟန္တ = ရဟန္တာ = Arahat

were in yellow robes, barefooted and had bare heads which were bent low looking neither to the left nor to the right. In their arms they carried glittering black alms-bowls.

As the Elder monks passed by, the charitable public greeted them with folded hands and put in the bowls all sorts of offertories and gifts.

We uttered no word of thanks to acknowledge the offerings but passed silently on, wending our way, as solemnly as it could be, back to the monastery. The bowls were all full of varieties of gifts but never was there any money given, because a bhikkhu monk should not touch money, gold and silver. I was then the last member in the procession; and when I got into my dormitory-room as the reaction from all the excitement set in, I was left exhausted both emotionally and physically.

My preceptor then appointed at the monastery a Proctor to supervise me to learn by rote all the two hundred and twenty-seven precepts of a bhikkhu monk which is ecclesiastically known as the Bhikkhu Pātimokkha Text.

The text translated here in this book is derived from the Sixth Buddhist Council Standard Version printed at the Union Buddha Sāsana Council Press, Yangon, in 1956.

During the first lent of my life in the monastery, I had learned by heart the text both in Pāli and Myanmar translation, classified in ten chapters:--

1. Interrogatories about the requisites for forming a Chapter of Saṃgha.
(ပုဗ္ဗကရဏ ပုဗ္ဗကိစ္စ)
2. *Nidāna*-The Introduction. (နိဒါန)
3. *Pārājikadhamma*-The four deadly sins.
(ပါရာဇိက ဓမ္မ)
4. *Samghādisesa dhamma*-The thirteen faults involving temporary suspension from the monkhood. (သံယာဒိသေသဓမ္မ)
5. *Aniyatadhamma*-The two undetermined offences. (အနိယတ ဓမ္မ)
6. *Nissaggiya Pācittiya dhamma*-The thirty faults requiring confession and absolution, and involving forfeiture of the article in reference to which the offence has been committed. (နိဿိက္ကိယ ပါစိတ္တိယ ဓမ္မ)

7. *Suddha Pācittiya dhamma*-The ninety-two faults requiring confession and absolution. (သုဒ္ဓပါစိတ္တိယ ဓမ္မ)
8. *Pāṭidesaniya dhamma*-Four offences requiring confession. (ပါဠိဒေသနိယ ဓမ္မ)
9. *Sekhiyadhamma*-The seventy-five rules of conduct. (ဆေခိယ ဓမ္မ)
10. *Adhikaraṇa samatha dhamma*-The seven rules for settling disputes and cases. (အဓိကရဏ သမထ ဓမ္မ)

CODE OF DISCIPLINE OF THE BUDDHIST MONK

The Pātimokkha of the Bhikkhus

I. INTERROGATORIES

Reverence to the Glorious One, the Almighty One, the Enlightened Buddha.

There are four preliminary obligations which must be met prior to the performance of the Sabbath rites.

- Shall sweep clean the Chapel House (*Sammajjani*)
- Shall light the oil lamps and candle sticks to dispel the darkness in the Chapel House (*Padīpo*)
- Shall place water pots in the Chapel House to quench the thirst and to clean face, hands and feet (*Udakam*)
- Shall arrange the seats in proper order within the Chapel House (*Āsana*)

These four obligations are known as *Pubbakaraṇa*.¹

1. ပုဗ္ဗကရဏ = Pubbakaraṇa (သမ္မုဇ္ဇနီ၊ ပဒီပေါ၊ ဥဒကံ၊ အာသန)

And again there are five preliminary functions which ought to be done prior to the commencement of the Sabbath rituals.

- The consent of the absent monks must be reported to the Assembly by the advocate monks. (*Chanda*)
- The confession of purity and innocence of the absent monks must be reported to the Assembly by the advocate monks (*Pārisuddhi*)
- The date of the Sabbath Day at present must be informed to the Assembly (*Utukkhāna*)
- The number of attendants at the Assembly must be counted and reported to the Assembly (*Bhikkhu gaṇana*)
- The Chairman of the Assembly must nominate an Instructor monk to admonish the nuns (*Bhikkhunī*) at the convents (*Bhikkhunī ovāda*)

These five preliminary functions are known as *Pubbakicca*.¹

1. ပုဗ္ဗကိစ္စ = Pubbakicca (ဆန္ဒ၊ ပါရိသုဒ္ဓိ၊ ဥတုက္ခာန၊
ဂဏန၊ ဩဝါဒ)

The Assembly to perform the Sabbath Rites must be endowed with the four eligible articles:-

- The Sabbath day must fall either on the Fourteenth or Fifteenth Waxing Day or on the fifteenth Waning Day (Fullmoon) of the lunar month (*Cātuddasī* or *Pannarasī*, *Upasatha*)
- The quorum of the Assembly must be not less than four full-fledged bhikkhu monks (*Bhikkhu Kammapatā*)
- All the participant monks must be free from common sin (*Nasabhāga āpattiyo*)
- Novices, nuns, laity, animals, birds and all, other than the bhikkhu monks must not be present there within the inner Circle of the Chapel Hall. They must stay about an arm-length away ($2\frac{1}{2}$ cubits) from the Assembly of monks. (*Vajjaniya puggalā na honti*)

This eligible and appropriate Assembly is known as *Pattakalla*.¹

1. ပတ္တကလ္လ = Pattakalla

(ဥပေါသထ၊ ကမ္မပုတ္တာ၊ နသဘာဝအာပတ္တိ၊
နဝဇ္ဇနိယပုဂ္ဂလ)

116 Code of Discipline of Buddhist Monk

Having met these essential preliminary obligations and preliminary functions, the Assembly of bhikkhu-monks purify themselves in confession, and unanimously assign the duty of recitation of the Pātimokkha Disciplinary Code upon a particular scholarly monk.

144 Code of Discipline of Buddhist Monk

Venerable Sirs, the Thirty Cases entailing Expiation with Forfeiture have been recited.

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Nissaggiya Pācittiya niṭṭhitā



II. INTRODUCTION¹

Reverend Sirs, may the Assembly harken to my words. Today is the Sabbath Day on the fifteenth of the lunar month. If it is convenient and appropriate to the Assembly, the Assembly may observe the Sabbath and may propound the Pātimokkha Disciplinary Code.

Has the preliminary function been carried out by the Assembly?

Did you reverends confess your purity according to the disciplinary moral code?

I am going to propound the Pātimokkha Disciplinary Code.

Let us listen respectfully and introspect carefully on all these rules.

The monk who has committed a sin, should declare it immediately.

If you have done nothing wrong, you may remain silent.

1 § 31§ = Introduction

If all of your reverends remain silent, then I shall count that you are innocent and pure at heart.

This means I am asking you each and every one, individually.

Thus do I announce three times in this way to the Assembly.

In spite of three times of announcement, if a certain monk does not reveal the sin he has committed, which is still fresh in his memory, he is guilty of the Latent Lie--*Sampajāna Musāvāda*.¹

This offence of the Latent Lie is censured by the Blessed One as an obstacle in the path to Nibbāna.

Therefore, if the monk remembers his guilty offence and wishes to purify himself, he should declare his apparant offence here and now.

He will be relieved and his conscience will be clear and be at ease if he does so.

This introduction is propounded to your reverends Sirs, I ask the first time; and the second time I ask; and the third time I ask if

1. သမ္ပဇာနည်သဘဝါဒ = *Sampajāna Musāvāda*

your reverends are all innocent and clean from all sins. Because your reverends are all innocent and clean from all sins, therefore you all remain in silence. We assume that you are all clean and innocent, Sirs.

This is the chapter of Introduction in the Pātimokkha Disciplinary Code.

Venerable Sirs, the Introduction has been recited. Herein I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So do I record it.

Nidānuddeso paṭhamo

End of First Section on Introduction



III. PĀRĀJIKA DHAMMA¹

These four Offences which entail loss of monkhood come up here for recitation.

1. A monk who, undertaking the Rules of Discipline and not having disavowed his Training and not having declared his unwillingness to stay as a Bhikkhū, indulges in any kind of sexual intercourse even with an animal commits an offence entailing loss of monkhood and he is not to be associated with.

2. A monk who either in a village or elsewhere in the forest takes with the intention of stealing what has not been given to him, where the theft is such that rulers, catching a thief, would flog him or imprison him or banish him, saying 'You are a robber, you are wicked, you are stupid, you are a thief,' commits an offence entailing loss of monkhood and he is not to be associated with.

3. A monk who intentionally deprives a human being of his life or provides the means for suicide, or praises death, or incites him to

commit suicide saying 'Of what use to you is this evil difficult life? Death is better for you than life' thus having his mind set on the other's death and with the idea that he should die, praises death in various ways or incites him to commit suicide, commits an offence entailing loss of monkhood and he is not to be associated with.

4. A monk who boasts, with reference to himself, of clear superhuman knowledge and divine insight which are preventive or destructive of Kilesas (Defilements) and which are the attributes of those who have attained Jhāna, Magga and Phala, without having such superhuman knowledge or divine insight, as well as a monk who, having been guilty of contravention of this rule (and having lost his monkhood) and being desirous of the clean status of a novice or a layman, confesses subsequently, on being examined or without being examined: Sir, I said "I know", without really knowing and "I see" without really seeing. I have made an empty boast and told a lie', commits an offence entailing loss of monkhood and he is not to be associated with, provided that he was not under an ambitious delusion. *adhimāna*.

Venerable Sirs, the Four Cases of Defeat (Pārājika dhamma)¹ have been recited, in any one of which if a bhikkhu admits to be at fault he is no longer entitled to (live in) communion with bhikkhus; as (he was) before (the admission) so (he is) after (the confession of the fault); he is defeated and no more in communion.

Herein I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein: that is why they are silent. So do I record it.

Pārājikuddeso Duttiyo

End of Second Section on Pārājika.

1. . ပါရာဇိကဓမ္မလေးပါး = Four Cases of Defeat (Pārājika dhamma)

IV. SAMĠGHĀDISESA DHAMMA¹

Thirteen offences which require Formal Meetings of the Order for their Exoneration come up for recitation.

1. Intentional emission of semen except in a dream is an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

2. A monk who with sexual desire and a perverse intention, contacts a woman holding her hand or holding a braid of her hair or rubbing against any part of her body, commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

3. A monk who with sexual desire and a perverse intention makes suggestions to a woman with lewd words just as a young man makes suggestions to a young woman with words relating to sexual intercourse, commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

4. A monk who with sexual desire and a perverse intention speaks in praise of ministering to his sexual pleasures in the presence of a

1. . . . သံဃာဒိဿေသမ္မေ ဘု-ဝါး = Sami ghā disesa
Dhamma (Thirteen
gross offences)

woman, saying 'Sister, this is the highest kind of ministration that a woman should minister with to one who is virtuous, of good conduct, and leading the holy life like me', commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

5. A monk who acts as a go-between telling a man's desire to a woman or a woman's desire to a man in order to bring about their union as husband and wife or otherwise or to bring about their union even for a moment, commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

6. A monk who builds a hut or a small monastery or has it built without a donor, by his own begging and for his own advantage, should make it or have it made according to the measure. This is the measure: twelve *sugata* spans in length and seven such spans in width. Monks should be brought to mark out the site. A site which is not unsafe and which has an open space round it, should be marked out by the monks.

If a monk builds a hut or a small monastery or has it built by his own begging on a site which is unsafe and which has no open

space round it, or if he does not bring the monks for marking out the site, or if he exceeds the measure, he commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

7. If a monk is building a big monastery for his own use, having a donor, monks should be brought to mark out a site, which is not unsafe and which has an open space round it, and it should be marked out by those monks.

If a monk builds a big monastery on a site which is not safe and which has no open space round it, or if he does not bring monks to mark out the site, he commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

8. A monk who, being angry, malicious and malignant, makes against another monk an unfounded charge of an offence entailing loss of monkhood, thinking, 'Thus perhaps may I drive him away from this holy life', the charge being unfounded, and who subsequently confesses his wrong-doing on being examined or without being examined, commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

9. A monk, who, being angry, malicious and malignant, accuses another monk of an offence entailing loss of monkhood making use of only some of the facts, those facts really concerning some other being, thinking, "Thus perhaps may I drive him away from this holy life," and the accusation being based on some facts relating to some other being, though he subsequently confesses his wrong-doing, on being examined or without being examined, commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

10. If a monk tries to cause a schism of the united Order or persists in taking up and advocating a cause which will lead to a schism, other monks should say to him, 'Do not, Venerable One, try to cause a schism of the united Order or persist in taking up and advocating a cause which will lead to a schism. Let the Venerable One be united with the Order. The Order, which is united, live happily, rejoicing, without disputing and under the same code.'

And if that monk, after he has been spoken to thus by the other monks, persists as before, the other monks should admonish him up to three times to desist from his endeavour.

If he desists after having been admonished up to three times, that is right and good¹. If he does not desist, he commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

11. If a monk (i.e., a monk who is attempting to cause a schism) has one, two or three monks who follow his leadership and speak for disunity, and if these should say, 'Sirs, please do not say anything to this monk; this monk is one who speaks Dhamma; this monk is one who speaks Vinaya; this monk speaks after ascertaining our wishes and views. He knows. He speaks with us; and what he does has our approval. The monks should say to them, 'Do not speak thus. This monk is not one who speaks Dhamma; this monk is not one who speaks Vinaya. Please do not let a schism in the Order seem good to the Venerable Ones. Let the Venerable Ones be at one with the Order. The Order which is united, lives happily, rejoicing, and without disputing and under the same code.

If those monks, having been spoken to thus up to three times, should desist, that is right and good.

1. ကုသလံ = kusalam = right and good

If they should not desist, they commit an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

12. If a monk is by nature difficult to advise and being spoken to by the monks according to the Vinaya Rules, he makes himself one not to be spoken to, saying 'Do not say anything to me, Venerable Ones, either good or bad, and I will not say anything to the Venerable Ones, either good or bad. Refrain, Venerable Ones, from speaking to me. Then the monks should say to him 'Do not, Venerable One, make yourself one not to be spoken to, let the Venerable One make himself one to be spoken to; let the Venerable One speak to the monks according to the Vinaya Rules; the monks will then speak to the Venerable One according to the Vinaya Rules. The number of the Bhaddha's disciples increases in this manner, by mutual advice and mutual help to rise above offences.

If that monk after having been admonished up to three times desists, that is right and good.

If he does not desist, he commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

13. If a monk, who lives depending on a village or a little town, is one who spoils families (by making them lose faith and veneration) and is of improper conduct, and his improper conduct is seen and heard and families which are spoilt by him are seen and heard, let the monks say to him, "The Venerable One is one who spoils families and is of improper conduct. The Venerable One's improper conduct is seen and heard and the families which are spoilt by the Venerable One are seen and heard. Let the Venerable One depart from this residence. Enough of his living here!"

If this monk, having been spoken to thus by the monks should say "The monks are given to favouritism and the monks act unjustly out of hatred and stupidity and fear; they banish some for such an offence; they do not banish others; the monks should say to him 'Venerable One, do not speak thus. The monks are not given to favouritism and the monks are not acting unjustly out of hatred and stupidity and fear. The Venerable One is one who spoils families and is of improper conduct. The Venerable One's improper conduct is seen and heard, and the families which are spoilt by the

Venerable One are seen and heard. Let the Venerable One depart from this residence. Enough of his living here!

If, after having been admonished thus up to three times, he desists that is right and good.

If, he does not desist he commits an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration.

Venerable Sirs, the Thirteen cases entailing Initial and Subsequent Meeting of the Community have been recited, nine being established on the first transgression and four on the third transgression, in any one of which if a bhikkhu admits to be at fault he must live on probation¹ with no choice in the matter for as many days as he knowingly concealed (the fault); and when the bhikkhu has finished the probation he must undertake in addition the six-night penance² for Bhikkhus. When the bhikkhu has completed the penance he must be reinstated³ where there is a Community of Bhikkhus comprising a chapter of twenty. If a community of Bhikkhus comprising a chapter

1. ပရိဝတ္တ = ပရိဝါသ = on probation (Parivāsa)

2. မာနတ္ထ = penance (Mānatta)

3. အတ္တဘု = reinstate (Abbhāna)

of even one less than twenty should (proceed to) reinstate that bhikkhu then that bhikkhu is not reinstated and those bhikkhus are censurable. This is the proper course there.

Herein I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Samghādisesuddeso tatiyo

End of Third Section on Samghādisesa



V. ANIYATA DHAMMA¹

Offences which are indefinite (i.e., offences the nature of which have to be determined according to the following Rules of Procedure).

1. If a monk sits down together with a woman on a seat which is secluded, hidden from view, and convenient for an immoral purpose and if a trustworthy woman lay devotee seeing him, accuses him of any one of three offences, namely: (1) an offence entailing loss of monkhood, (2) an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration, or (3) an offence of slackening or backsliding and the monk himself confesses that he was so sitting, he should be found guilty of one of those three offences (i.e., of the offence of which he is accused by her).

2. If the seat is not hidden from view and is not convenient for an immoral purpose but is sufficiently so for speaking to a woman with lewd words, then if a monk sits down on

1. အနိယတဓမ္မန္တပါး = Aniyata Dhamma (Two indefinite offences)

such a seat together with a woman the two alone, and a trustworthy woman lay devotee seeing him accuses him of one of two offences, namely:- (1) an offence requiring formal meetings of the Order for its exoneration, or (2) an offence of slackening or backsliding and the monk himself confesses that he was so sitting down, he should be found guilty of one of the two offences.

Venerable Sirs, the two indefinite cases have been recited.

Hercin I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Aniyatuddeso Catuttho

End of Fourth Section on Aniyata.



VI. NISSAGGIYA-PĀCITTIYA DHAMMA¹

The thirty faults requiring confession and absolution and involving forfeiture of the article in reference to which the offence has been committed.

Cīvara Vagga

1. A monk who keeps an extra robe for more than ten days after the robe is finished and after the Kathina privileges² are withdrawn, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

2. After the robe is finished and the Kathina privileges are withdrawn, a monk who stays away from his three robes, even for one night, except by special permission of the Saṃgha, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

3. If non-seasonal material for a robe arises for a monk after the robe is finished and after the Kathina privileges are withdrawn and if the monk wishes to accept it, he may do so. However, having accepted it he should make a

1. နိဿဂ္ဂိယပါစိတ္တယဓမ္မ ၃၀ ပါး = Nissaggiya-pācittiya
Dhamma

(Thirty Confessions involving forfeiture)

2. ကထိန်အာနိသင် = Kathina privileges

robe quickly. If the material be not sufficient for a robe, it may be laid aside by that monk for a month at the most provided that he has expectation for a supply of the deficiency. If he lays it aside longer than a month, even if there is such expectation he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

4. If a monk gets an old robe washed or dyed or beaten by a nun who is not his relative, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

5. If a monk accepts a robe except in exchange, from the hand of a nun who not is his relative, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

6. If a monk asks a man or woman householder, who is not his relative, for a robe, otherwise than on a proper occasion, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence. This is a proper occasion--when the monk has been robbed of his robe or his robe has been lost or destroyed.

7. If a man or a woman householder who is not a relative of that monk, i.e. the monk whose robe has been stolen or destroyed, brings many robes and invites him to accept

them, he should accept at the most an inner robe and an upper robe. If he accepts more than these, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

8. If a man or a woman householder who is not a relative has set aside the price in cash or kind of a robe, saying 'I will get a robe with this and offer it to the monk whose name is so and so, then if the monk out of desire for something better, approaches him or her without having been invited, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

9. If two men or two women householders who are not related to the monk concerned set aside the prices for two separate robes saying 'We will buy separate robes with these separate prices and offer them to the monk whose name is so and so, then if the monk, out of desire for something better, approaches them without having been invited and makes special arrangements with regard to a robe saying, 'I ask you, please combine and buy a better robe like this or like that with those separate prices and offer it to me jointly,' he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

10. If a king or one in the service of a king or a brahman or a householder sends the

price of a robe to a monk by a messenger saying "Buy a robe with this price and offer it to the monk whose name is so and so," and if the messenger approaches the monk and says 'Venerable Sir, this price of a robe is brought for the Venerable One. Let the Venerable One accept it,' then the messenger should be told by the monk 'Brother (*Āvuso*), we do not accept the price money of a robe; but we do accept a robe, if it is at the right time and if it is suitable.' If that messenger says to the monk, 'Is there someone who is the Venerable One's attendant?,' then the caretaker of the monastery or a lay-devotee should be pointed out as an attendant by the monk who wants the robe saying 'This person is the attendant of the monks.' If that messenger, after instructing the attendant, approaches the monk and says "Venerable Sir, I have instructed the person whom the Venerable One pointed out as an attendant; let the Venerable One approach at the right time; he will offer you the robe." Then the monk who wants the robe should approach the attendant and ask and remind him two or three times, saying 'Brother, I am in need of a robe.' If, after asking and reminding two or three times, he succeeds in obtaining the robe, that is good.

If he does not succeed in obtaining the robe, he should stand silently for it four times or five times or six times at the most. If he succeeds in obtaining that robe standing silently for it four times or five times or six times at the most, that is good.

If he, after trying more than that, succeeds in obtaining that robe, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

If he does not succeed at all in obtaining it, he should either go himself to the place from where the price of the robe was brought, or send a messenger to say, 'That price of a robe which you sent for a monk has not done any good to that monk. Please ask for return of your property. Please do not let your property be lost.' This is the proper procedure in such a case.

11. If a monk makes or causes to be made a rug mixed with silk, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

12. If a monk makes or causes to be made a rug of pure black wool, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

13. A monk who is making a new rug or causing a new rug to be made, should take

two portions of pure black wool, a portion of white wool and a portion of reddish brown wool. If a monk makes or causes to be made a new rug without taking two portions of pure black wool, a portion of white wool and a portion of reddish brown wool, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

14. Having made or caused to be made a new rug, a monk should keep it for six years, and if, either after abandonment of that rug or without having abandoned it, he makes or causes to be made a new rug, within six years except by special permission of the Saṃghā, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

15. A monk who makes or causes to be made a new seat-rug (Nisīdana) should take a piece about a *sugata*-span from all round the old one, in order to disfigure the new one. If the monk makes or causes to be made a new seat-rug without taking a piece about a *sugata*-span from all round the old one, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

16. Wool may accrue to a monk while he is on a long journey. It may be accepted by that monk if he wishes, but having accepted it,

he should carry it by himself for three yojanas¹ at the most, if there are no carriers. If he carries it further than that, even if there are no carriers, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

17. A monk who gets wool washed or dyed or combed by a nun who is not a relative, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

18. A monk, who accepts gold or money or gets another to accept it for him, or acquiesces in its being put near him, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

19. A monk who makes a sale or an exchange of one of various kinds of things in respect of gold and money, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

20. A monk, who makes barter of one of various kinds, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

1 ၇ ဇိဇ္ဇေနိ. = ယောနာ = Yojana = About seven
miles

Patta Vagga

21. An extra bowl may be kept for ten days at the most. A monk who keeps it longer, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

22. If a monk who has a bowl which has been mended in less than five places asks for and gets a new bowl, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

That new bowl should be surrendered by the monk to an assembly of monks and the last bowl of that assembly of monks should be given to the monk saying 'Monk, this for you is a bowl which should be used till it breaks'. This is the proper procedure in such a case.

23. A monk who has accepted medicines which may be partaken of by sick monks, that is to say, ghce, fresh butter, oil, honey, molasses, may store and use them for seven days at the most. If he exceeds that period, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

24. A monk should look for a robe for the rainy season when there remains only one month of the hot season¹ and he should wear or begin to wear it when there remains only half a month of the hot season.

1. ၫံၼ်း = hot season = summer

If he looks for a robe for the rainy season earlier than a month before the end of the hot season or if he makes and wears a robe for the rainy season earlier than half a month before the end of the hot season, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

25. A monk who, having given a robe to another monk, takes it back by force or causes it to be taken back by force as he is angry and displeased, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

26. A monk who asks for yarn himself and has robe material woven with it by weavers, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

27. A man or a woman householder who is not a relative may have robe material woven for a monk. Then, if that monk, not having been invited before, approaches the weavers and makes special arrangements with regard to the robe material, saying 'Now, Sirs, this robe material is being specially woven for me. Make it long, wide and thick, and make it well woven, well scraped and well combed. I may be able to give you something--even some food, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

28. If an "urgent" robe accrues to a monk ten days before the full moon of Kattika, Temāsika,¹ and if he knows of the emergency, he may accept it. Having accepted it, he may keep it until the robe season. But if he keeps it longer than that, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

29. A monk who lives up to the full-moon of Kattika,² after he has spent the Lent there, in such jungle lodgings as are regarded as insecure and dangerous may, if he wishes to do so, keep one of his three robes in a village; and if there be any reason for doing so, he may live without that robe for six nights at the most.

If he lives without it longer than that except with the permission of the monks, he commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

30. A monk who knowingly causes diversion of any offering from the Saṃgha to himself, commits a Nissaggiya Pācittiya offence.

1. ကတ္တိကတေမာသိက = သီတင်းကျွတ်လ = Kattika
temāsika

2. ကတ္တိက = တန်ဆောင်မုန်းလ = Kattika

SUDDHA PĀCITTIYA DHAMMA¹

The ninety-two faults acquiring confession and absolution--

Musāvāda vagga

1. Telling a conscious lie is a Pācittiya offence.

2. Insulting or abusive speech is a Pācittiya offence.

3. Speech calculated to estrange friendly monks from each other is a Pācittiya offence.

4. If a monk teaches the Dhamma to one who is not a monk, uttering letters of the alphabet, syllables, words or phrases simultaneously with him, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

5. A monk who lies down with one who is not a monk for more than two or three nights in the same building under the same roof and within walls which are complete or almost complete, commits a Pācittiya offence.

1. သုဒ္ဓပါစိတ္တိယဓမ္မ ၉၂ ပါး = *Suddha Pācittiya Dhamma* (Ninety-two faults)

6. A monk who lies down with a female in the same building under the same roof and within walls which are complete or almost complete, commits a Pācittiya offence.

7. A monk who preaches Dhamma to women in more than five or six words except in the presence of a man of understanding, commits a Pācittiya offence.

8. If a monk informs one who is not a monk of his having attained Jhāna, Magga or Phala even though it is true, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

9. If a monk informs one who is not a monk of another monk's disgusting offence, except by special permission of the Saṃghā, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

10. A monk who digs the ground or causes it to be dug, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Bhūtagāma Vagga

11. Destruction of vegetable growth is a Pācittiya offence.

12. A monk who evades questions or harasses the monks by remaining silent commits a Pācittiya offence.

13. Speech which makes other monks look down upon another monk as well as speech which is merely defamation of that monk is a Pācittiya offence.

14. A monk who puts or causes to be put in the open air a couch or a chair or a mattress or a stool belonging to the Order, and goes away without restoring it and without having it restored and without informing any monk, novice or caretaker, commits a Pācittiya offence.

15. A monk who spreads a mat or has it spread in a monastery belonging to the Order, and goes away without restoring it or without having it restored, and without informing any monk, novice or caretaker, commits a Pācittiya offence.

16. A monk who in a monastery belonging to the Order knowingly encroaches upon the space of a monk who has arrived there before him, thinking 'He who finds the space too narrow will go away', and without any other reason commits a Pācittiya offence.

17. A monk who being angry or displeased, drags a monk out of a monastery belonging to the Order, or causes him to be

dragged out therefrom, commits a Pācittiya offence.

18. A monk who sits or lies throwing himself down heavily on a couch or a seat, the legs of which protrude between the crossbeams in an upper storey of a monastery belonging to the Order, commits a Pācittiya offence.

19. A monk who is building a big monastery should have mortar applied thickly in order that the door frame, the door leaves, the parts of the wall which may be hit by the door leaves when the door is opened, the windows and the parts of the wall which may be hit by their door leaves, may be strong; and he should, standing where there are no green crops, give instructions for roofing it with two or three layers of roofing material.

If he gives instruction for roofing it with more than three layers, he commits a Pācittiya offence even though he gives them standing where there are no green crops.

20. A monk who throws on grass or ground, water which to his knowledge contains insects, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Ovāda Vagga

21. A monk who, without having been authorized by the monks, gives advice to ordained nuns with reference to the eight garudhammas, commits a Pācittiya offence.

22. A monk who gives advice to ordained nuns with reference to any Dhamma at or after sunset, commits a Pācittiya offence even though he has been authorized by other monks to exhort them.

23. A monk who approaches a convent of ordained nuns¹ and gives them advice with reference to the eight garudhammas, except on a suitable occasion, commits a Pācittiya offence.

A suitable occasion is when an ordained nun is sick.

24. A monk who says, 'The elder monks give advice to ordained nuns for the sake of gain', commits a Pācittiya offence.

25. A monk who gives a robe to an ordained nun who is not a relative, except in exchange, commits a Pācittiya offence.

1. အိက္ခန္တိ = ordained nun = Bhikkhunī

26. If a monk sews or causes to be sown a robe for an ordained nun who is not a relative, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

27. A monk who, having arranged with an ordained nun, goes on a journey--even to a neighbouring village, except on a suitable occasion, commits a Pācittiya offence.

A suitable occasion is when the journey must be performed in the company of merchants and others when the way is unsafe and dangerous.

28. A monk who, having arranged with an ordained nun, gets into a boat going either upstream or downstream, except for going across to the other bank, commits a Pācittiya offence.

29. A monk who eats what, to his knowledge, is food which an ordained nun has prepared or requested householders to offer him, commits a Pācittiya offence, except where those others have prepared the food for him before her request.

30. A monk who sits down in a secluded place together with an ordained nun, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Bhojana Vagga

31. A monk who is not sick may take one meal at a public rest house, a pandal, the foot of a tree, or an open space where there is food prepared for unspecified travellers, patients, pregnant women and monks. If he eats more than that, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

32. *Gaṇabhojana*¹ (eating together in a group), except on a proper occasion, is Pācittiya offence. The proper occasions in this case are-

- (1) When one is ill,
- (2) When robes are being offered,
- (3) When robes are being made,
- (4) When one is travelling,
- (5) When one is embarking,
- (6) When food sufficient for more than three monks cannot be obtained, and
- (7) When food is offered by a Paribbhājaka (wandering mendicant)

33. *Paramparabhojana*² (eating a meal out of turn) except on a proper occasion is a Pācittiya offence.

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1. ဂဏဘောဇဉ် = eating together in a group
 2. ပရမ္ပရဘောဇဉ် = eating a meal out of turn

There are proper occasions in this case:-

- (1) When one is ill.
- (2) When robes are being offered, and
- (3) When robes are being made.

34. In case a monk who has approached a family he invited to take as much as he likes of cakes or sweetmeats (i.e., of any food which has been prepared for presentation or for use on a journey) he may, if he wishes to do so, accept two or three bowlfuls. If he accepts more than that, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

Having accepted two or three bowlfuls, he should take them from there and share them with the monks. This is a proper course in this case.

35. If a monk who has, while eating, refused to have any more when food has been brought within two and a half cubits of him, afterwards chews or eats any food, hard or soft, which has not been formally declared by another monk to be surplus or which is not the leftover after a sick monk has had his meal, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

36. If a monk produces food, hard or soft, which is not surplus, and invites another

monk who, to his knowledge has while eating refused to have any more, saying. 'O Monk, chew or eat' with the object of bringing him into disrepute, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

37. A monk, who eats any hard food or soft food out of time, i.e., after noon and before dawn, commits a Pācittiya' offence.

38. A monk who eats any hard food or soft food that has been stored commits a Pācittiya offence.

39. There are sumptuous foods, namely foods mixed with ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses, fish, meat, milk and curd; and a monk who, though not sick, asks for such sumptuous foods for himself and eats them commits a Pācittiya offence.

40. A monk who puts in his mouth any nutriment, which has not been proferred to him, commits a Pācittiya offence. This Rule does not apply to water and tooth-brush¹.

Acclaka Vagga

41. A monk who gives food to a naked ascetic or a Paribhājaka mendicant male or female with his own hand, commits a Pācittiya offence.

(1) ප්‍රභේදික = ප්‍රභේදික = tooth-brush

42. A monk who having said to another monk 'Friend, we will go into a village or a small town for alms-food', tells him after causing something to be given to him or without having caused anything to be given to him, 'Go away, friend, there is no happiness for me in talking to or sitting with you. There is happiness for me in talking and sitting alone', for that reason only and not for any other reason, commits a Pācittiya offence.

43. A monk who intrudes into and sits down in a house where husband and wife are by themselves enjoying each other's company, commits a Pācittiya offence.

44. A monk who sits down together with a woman on a seat which is secluded and hidden from view, commits a Pācittiya offence.

45. A monk who sits together with a woman, the two alone on a seat which is secluded, commits a Pācittiya offence.

46. A monk who has been invited to a meal and goes out to other houses either before or after having that meal without informing another monk who is present commits a Pācittiya offence, except on suitable occasions; and suitable occasion are when robes are being offered and when robes are being made.

47. A monk who is not ill and who has been invited to ask for medicines should, unless the invitation is made again or is a permanent one, accept it and ask for medicines for four months.

If he accepts it for a longer period, i.e., if he asks for medicine after four months, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

48. A monk who goes without any particular reason to see an army marching, commits a Pācittiya offence.

49. A monk who has some reason for going to an army may stay with the army for two or three nights. If he stays longer than that, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

50. If a monk who is staying with an army goes to a place where there is a fight, sham or real, or where the troops are being counted, or where positions for military operations or manoeuvres are being assigned to troops, or goes to see any array of troops, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

Surāpāna Vagga

51. Drinking intoxicants, is a Pācittiya offence.

52. Tickling another monk with fingers is a Pācittiya offence.

53. Playing in water is a Pācittiya offence.

54. Disrespect to another monk or to the Disciplinary Rules is a Pācittiya offence.

55. A monk who startles or attempts to startle another monk, commits a Pācittiya offence.

56. If a monk who is not ill kindles a fire or causes a fire to be kindled because he wants to warm himself and without any other reason, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

57. A monk who bathes at intervals of less than half a month, except on suitable occasions, commits a Pācittiya offence.

A suitable occasion in this case is--(1) When it is the hot season, i.e., the last one and a half months of summer. (2) When it is hot and humid, i.e., the first month of the rainy season. (3) When the monk is sick. (4) When the monk has done some hard work. (5) When the monk is travelling; and (6) When there is a storm or rain.

58. A monk who gets a new robe must use one of the three means of disfigurement--

dark green, muddy, or black dots at the corner of the robe.

If he uses a new robe without having applied any of those three means of disfigurement, dots at the corner of the robe, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

59. If a monk who has himself given or assigned a robe to a monk, an ordained nun or a novice uses it again without its having been given back to him and otherwise than as an intimate friend, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

60. A monk who hides or causes to be hidden another monk's bowl or robe or seat-cloth or needle case or girdle, even for fun, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Sappāṇaka Vagga

61. A monk who knowingly and intentionally deprives any living being of life, commits a Pācittiya offence.

62. A monk who knowingly makes use of water which contains insects, commits a Pācittiya offence.

63. A monk who knowingly reagitates a dispute which has been settled according to the Dhamma commits a Pācittiya offence.

64. A monk who knowingly conceals another monk's abominable offence commits a Pācittiya offence.

65. If a monk knowingly ordains as a monk a person who is under twenty years of age, that person remains unordained and does not become a monk; other monks who take part are blameworthy and that sponsor monk commits a Pācittiya offence.

66. A monk who knowingly makes arrangements with law-breaking merchants and goes along the same road with them, even to a neighbouring village, commits a Pācittiya offence.

67. A monk who makes arrangements with a woman and goes together with her along the same road, even to a neighbouring village, commits a Pācittiya offence.

68. If a monk says, "The thing (*dhammas*) which the Buddha has declared to be obstruction are not capable of obstructing one who has committed them or is subject to them. I know that the Buddha has taught so. He should be told by the monks, 'Sir, do not say so. Do not accuse the Buddha of having taught so. Accusation against the Buddha is not good.

The Buddha surely could not have taught so. The Buddha has, in more ways than one, declared the obstructive things to be obstructions; and they really are capable of obstructing one.'

If he persists in holding the wrong view, in spite of the monks' telling him so, the monks should admonish him up to three times to give it up.

If he gives it up when he is admonished up to three times, that is right and good.

If he does not give it up, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

69. If a monk knowingly (1) associates with, in teaching the Dhamma or its Commentaries, (2) associates in reciting the Pātimokkha in the Pavāraṇā, or in any other affair of the Saṃghā, with or (3) lies down under the same roof with the monk, who holds that wrong view and who has not expiated the offence and given up the wrong view, he commits a Pācittiya offence.

70. If a novice also says, 'The things (*Dhamma*) which the Buddha has declared to be obstructions, are not capable of obstructing one who has committed them (or is subject to

them). I know that the Buddha has taught so', that novice should be told by the monks. 'Novice, do not say so. Do not accuse the Buddha of having taught so. Accusation against the Buddha is not good. The Buddha surely could not have taught so. The Buddha has in more ways than one declared obstructive things to be obstructions; and they really are capable of obstructing one.' If that novice persists in holding the view in spite of the monks' telling him so, he should be told by the monks, 'Novice, from this day forth you must not point out the Buddha as your Teacher; and you do not have the privilege that other novices have, of sleeping under the same roof with monks for two or three nights. Go unwanted novice, and be ruined.'

A monk who knowingly-

- (1) encourages a novice who has been so ruined, or
- (2) allows such a novice to attend on him, or
- (3) gives him or accepts from him anything, or teaches him or makes him learn, or
- (4) lies down under the same roof with him, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Sahadhammika Vagga

71. If, on being admonished by the monks with reference to a rule of Vinaya, a monk says, "Sir, I shall not observe this rule till I have asked another monk who is experienced and learned in the Rules of Vinaya", he commits a Pācittiya offence.

A monk who means to observe the Rules should know the Rules, and should ask about and think over them. This is proper procedure in the matter.

72. While the Pātimokkha is being recited and a monk disparages the rules saying, "What is the use of reciting these minor and more minor rules which merely cause worry, distress and vexation", he commits a Pācittiya offence.

73. If a monk, having contravened a rule, while the Pātimokkha is being recited half monthly, says, 'Only now do I know that this Rule also is set out and contained in the Pātimokkha and that it comes up for recitation every half-month'; and if other monks know about that monk, 'This monk has set down two or three times previously, while the Pātimokkha was being recited'-- not to say oftener-- there,

for that monk, is no freedom from faults by reason of his pretended ignorance.

He should be required to act in accordance with the Rules of Vinaya for expiation of the offence which he has committed by contravening the Rule.

Furthermore, his foolishness should be brought home to him saying 'No gain for you! No benefit from what you have acquired because you did not follow well, with respect and attention while the Pātimokkha was being recited.'

Pretending further ignorance (after this) is a Pācittiya offence.

74. A monk who being angry or displeased, hits another monk commits a Pācittiya offence.

75. A monk who being angry or displeased raises the palm of his hand to strike another monk, commits a Pācittiya offence.

76. A monk who accuses another monk with an unfounded charge of a Saṃghādisesa offence, commits a Pācittiya offence.

77. A monk who knowingly and intentionally arouses worry in the mind of another monk with the object, 'This will be

unhappiness for him for at least a moment'--for this reason only and for no other reason--commits a Pācittiya offence.

78. If a monk stands eavesdropping where he can hear monks who are quarrelling, disputing and arguing with each other with the objective 'I will hear what they say'--for that reason only and not for any other reason--he commits a Pācittiya offence.

79. A monk who, having given consent to acts which are in accordance with the Rules of Vinaya, subsequently criticises them commits a Pācittiya offence.

80. A monk who, while the Saṃgha is discussing how to decide a case or to solve a problem, gets up from his seat and goes away without asking the Saṃghā's consent, commits a Pācittiya offence.

81. A monk who having given a robe together with other monks who are living harmoniously within the jurisdiction of the same (Sīmā) ordination hall, subsequently criticises them saying, 'The monks have disposed of the property of the Order because of favouritism', commits a Pācittiya offence.

82. A monk, who knowingly causes diversion of any offering from the Saṃgha to any individual, commits a Pācittiya offence.

Ratana Vagga

83. A monk who crosses the threshold of the sleeping chamber of an anointed khattiya king, from which the king has not gone out and the queen has not withdrawn--without previous intimation--commits a Pācittiya offence.

84. A monk who picks up or causes to be picked up any treasure or anything which is regarded as treasure--except within the precincts of a monastery or within the precincts of a building in which he is staying--commits a Pācittiya offence.

A monk who has picked up or caused to be picked up any treasure or anything which is regarded as treasure within the precincts of a monastery or within the precincts of the building where he is staying, should keep it with the intention, 'He whose property it is will come and take it.' This is the right course in such a case.

85. A monk who goes into a village after noon and before dawn, without informing another monk who is present, commits a *Pācittiya* offence, unless there is something urgent to be done.

86. A monk, who makes a needle case or causes a needle case to be made of bone, ivory or horn, commits a *Bhedana Pācittiya*, i.e., a *Pācittiya* offence which can be expiated only after the needle case has been broken.

87. A monk who is making or causing to be made a new couch or chair, should make it or cause it to be made with legs which are eight *sugata* finger breadths in height excluding the lower edge of the frame.

If he exceeds that measurement he commits a *Chedanaka Pācittiya* offence, i.e., a *Pācittiya* offence which can be expiated only after cutting it down to proper size.

88. A monk who makes or causes to be made a couch or a chair stuffed with *tūla* cotton wool or grass, or flax, commits an *Uddhālanaka Pācittiya* offence (i.e., a *Pācittiya* offence which can be expiated only after the stuff has been taken out).

89. A monk who is making or causing to be made a loincloth with fringe should make it of a reasonable size. This is the reasonable size:-In length, two sugata spans; in width, one and a half spans; a fringe of one span.

If he exceeds those measurements, he commits a *Chedanaka Pācittiya* offence.

90. A monk who is making, or causing to be made a piece of cloth to cover skin diseases should make it of reasonable size. This is the reasonable size here:- In length, four sugata spans; in width, two spans.

If he exceeds those measurements, he commits a *Chedanaka Pācittiya* offence, i.e., he must cut the excess portion.

91. A monk in making or causing to be made a cloth for the rainy season, should make it of reasonable size. This is the reasonable size here:- In length, six sugata spans and in breadth, two and a half spans.

If he exceeds those measurements, he commits a *Chedanaka Pācittiya* offence, i.e., he must cut off the excess portion.

92. A monk who makes or causes to be made for himself a robe, which is of the size

of the Buddha's robe or larger, commits a *Chedanaka Pācitta* offence, i.e., he must cut off the excess portion.

This is the size of the Buddha's robe:- In length, nine sugata spans, in breadth six spans.

Venerable sirs, the Ninety-two Cases entailing Expiation have been recited.

Herein I ask the venerable ones; Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Pācittiyaṃ niṭṭhitā

&&&&&

8. PĀTIDESANĪYA DHAMMA¹

Four offences requiring confession

1. If a monk accepts any food, hard or soft, from the hands of an ordained nun who has gone into a village and who is not related to him, and chews or eats it, he should confess saying, 'Sir, I have committed a blameworthy and unbecoming offence which must be confessed separately. I confess it.'

2. Only invited monks have meals in the houses of families. There an ordained nun stands saying, 'Give curry here; give rice here' as if through favouritism. She should be rebuked by those monks saying, 'Keep away, Sister, while the monks eat.'

If even one of the monks does not say, 'Keep away, Sister, while the monks eat', to rebuke her, all the monks should confess saying, 'Sir, we have committed a blameworthy and unbecoming offence, which must be confessed separately. We confess it.'

3. There are families which have been declared to be Sekkha devout² families. If a monk, who has not been invited in advance

1. ပါဠိဒေသနိယဓမ္မလေ့ပါး = Pāṭidesanīya Dhamma

2. သေက္ခ = Devout and pious one

and who is not ill, accepts food, hard or soft, with his own hands, from such devout families and chews or eats it, he should confess saying, 'Sir, I have committed a blameworthy and unbecoming offence, which must be confessed separately. I confess it.'

4. There are such jungle lodgings which are regarded as insecure and dangerous.

If a monk, without having informed beforehand the donor of the lodgings being insecure or dangerous, accepts food, hard or soft, within the precincts of such lodgings with his own hands and although he is not ill, chews or eats it, he should confess saying, 'Sir, I have committed a blameworthy an unbecoming offence which must be confessed separately. I confess it.'

Venerable sirs, the Four Cases that must be confessed have been recited.

Herein I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time, I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Pāṭidesaniyā niṭṭhitā

9. SEKHIYA DHAMMA¹

Rules for Training of Conduct

These seventy-five Sekhiya Dhamma rules are prescribed for both the novices (sāmaṇera) and the ordained monks (bhikkhus) to procure the etiquette of seemly behaviour and proper manners.

These rules are to train the novices as well as the fully ordained monks in the discipline and deportment befitting their high vocation and to help them in leading the monastic life. They are known as *Rules for training* which are textually classified under seven categories:-

1. Parimaṇḍala Vagga - Dress
2. Ujjhagghika Vagga - Verbal manners
3. Khambhakata Vagga - Gait and Body Postures
4. Sakkacca Vagga - Meals
5. Kabaḷa Vagga - Meals

1. သေခိယဓမ္မ = ရှင်ကျင့်ဝတ်နှင့် ရဟန်းကျင့်ဝတ် =
Rules for training of conduct.

6. Suru suru Vagga - Eating, Drinking and Preaching.
7. Pāduka Vagga - Preaching and Disposal of personal excrements.

SEKHIYA RULES FOR TRAINING

These are the 75 Rules of Conduct for sāmaṇera and bhikkhu.

Parimaṇḍala Vagga

1. 'I will dress with the inner robe hanging evenly around me,' is a training to be observed.
2. 'I will put on the upper robe hanging evenly around me,' is a training to be observed.
3. 'Properly clad will I go in the villages, is a training to be observed.
4. 'Properly clad will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
5. 'Well-controlled will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.

6. 'Well-controlled will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
7. 'With the eyes cast down will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
8. 'With the eyes cast down will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
9. 'Not lifting up the robes will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
10. 'Not lifting up the robes will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
11. 'Not with loud laughter will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
12. 'Not with loud laughter will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
13. 'With little noise will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
14. 'With little noise will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
15. 'Not swaying the body will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
16. 'Not swaying the body will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.

17. 'Not swaying the arms will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
18. 'Not swaying the arms will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
19. 'Not swaying the head will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
20. 'Not swaying the head will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.

Khambhakata Vagga

21. 'Not with arms akimbo will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
22. 'Not with arms akimbo will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
23. 'Not covering the head will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
24. 'Not covering the head will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
25. 'Not walking on the heels or toes will I go in the villages,' is a training to be observed.
26. 'Not with knees raised and clasped or wound round with the upper robe will I sit down in the villages,' is a training to be observed.

27. 'Attentively will I accept alms-food,' is a training to be observed..
28. 'Mindful of the bowl will I accept alms-food,' is a training to be observed.
29. 'With a proportionate amount of curry will I accept alms-food,' is a training to be observed.
30. 'Only up to the inner ring of the bowl will I accept alms-food' is a training to be observed.

Sakkacca Vagga

31. 'Attentively will I eat alms-food,' is a training to be observed.
32. 'Mindful of the bowl will I eat alms-food,' is a training to be observed:
33. 'In orderly manner will I eat alms-food,' is a training to be observed.
34. 'With a proportionate amount of curry will I eat almsfood,' is a training to be observed.
35. 'Not pressing down the top will I eat alms-food,' is a training to be observed.

36. 'Desiring something more, I will not cover up the soup and curry and condiment with rice,' is a training to be observed.
37. 'If not ill, I will not ask for food for myself and eat it,' is a training to be observed.
38. 'Not with a captious mind will I look at another's bowl,' is a training to be observed.
39. 'I will not make up too large a morsel of food is a training to be observed.
40. 'I will make each morsel of food round,' is a training to be observed.

Kabaḷa Vagga

41. 'I will not open the mouth till the morsel of food is brought close,' is a training to be observed.
42. 'I will not put the fingers into the mouth while eating,' is a training to be observed.
43. 'I will not talk with the mouth full,' is a training to be observed.
44. 'I will not eat by tossing the morsels of food into the mouth,' is a training to be observed.

45. 'I will not eat by breaking up the morsels' is a training to be observed.
46. 'I will not eat by stuffing the cheeks,' is a training to be observed.
47. 'I will not eat shaking the hands about,' is a training to be observed.
48. 'I will not eat scattering grains of rice,' is a training to be observed.
49. 'I will not eat putting out the tongue,' is a training to be observed.
50. 'I will not eat smacking the lips,' is a training to be observed.

Suru suru Vagga

51. 'I will not eat making a hissing sound', is a training to be observed.
52. 'I will not eat licking the fingers', is a training to be observed.
53. 'I will not eat scraping the bowl', is a training to be observed.
54. 'I will not eat licking the lips', is a training to be observed.
55. 'I will not touch a drinking cup, with my hands soiled with food', is a training to be observed.

56. 'I will not throw out in the village rinsings of the bowl containing rice,' is a training to be observed.
57. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a sunshade in his hand', is a training to be observed.
58. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a staff in his hand', is a training to be observed.
59. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a knife in his hand' is a training to be observed.
60. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a bow in his hand', is a training to be observed.

Pāduka Vagga

61. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing sandals', is a training to be observed.
62. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing shoes', is a training to be observed.
63. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet rides in a vehicle', is a training to be observed.

64. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet lies in a bed', is a training to be observed.
65. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is sitting with knees raised and clasped or wound round with the upper robe', is a training to be observed.
66. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing headgear which covers all his head', is a training to be observed.
67. 'I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has his head covered up', is a training to be observed.
68. 'While sitting on the ground myself, I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is sitting on a seat', is a training to be observed.
69. 'I will not preach Dhamma, while sitting on a low seat myself, to one who is not ill and yet is sitting on a high seat,' is a training to be observed.
70. 'I will not preach Dhamma standing, to one who is not ill and yet is sitting down', is a training to be observed.

71. 'I will not preach Dhamma following one who is not ill and yet is going in front', is a training to be observed.
72. 'I will not preach Dhamma walking at one side of a path, to one who is not ill and yet is walking along the path', is a training to be observed.
73. 'I will not ease myself standing if not ill', is a training to be observed.
74. 'I will not ease myself or spit on living plants if not ill', is a training to be observed.
75. 'I will not ease myself or spit on potable water, if not ill,' is a training to be observed.

Venerable sirs, the Cases of the Rules of Conduct have been recited.

Herein I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the second time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

For the third time I ask the venerable ones: Are you pure in this?

The venerable ones are pure herein; that is why they are silent. So I record it.

Sekhiyadhammā niṭṭhitā

10. ADHIKARANASAMATHA DHAMMA¹

(Seven Ways Settling Disputes)

For the settlement of disputes which arise from time to time,

- (1) Sammukhā Vinaya should be given;
- (2) Sati Vinaya should be given.
- (3) Amuḥha Vinaya should be given.
- (4) Paṭiññāta karaṇa -- Decision should be given according to confession.
- (5) Yebhuyyāsika kamma -- Decision should be given according to the vote of the majority.
- (6) Tassapāpiyāsikā kamma should be performed.
- (7) Tiṇavatthāraka kamma should be performed.

Venerable Sirs, the seven methods of Settlement of Disputes have been recited.

Herein, there times I question you, Reverend Sirs, if you are free from any one of the above-mentioned offences and are innocent. If

1. အဓိကရဏသမထဓမ္မာခုနစ်ပါး = Seven ways of settling Disputes

you have any sin, please declare it here and now clearly. If you are innocent please remain in silence. You all are silent, therefore we consider that you are perfectly innocent and pure in moral conduct.

Reverend Sirs, I have propounded the Introduction (Nidāna); the four *Pārājika* rules whose violation leads to expulsion from the Monastic Order; the thirteen *Samghādisesa* rules which, if violated, lead to a probationary period followed by penance; two indefinite *Aniyata* rules which depend on the evidence and their violation may lead either to expulsion, to probation, or to penance; thirty *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rules whose violation requires forfeiture of the property illegally obtained and expiation; ninety-two *Suddha Pācittiya* rules which involve expiation; the four *Pāṭidesaniya* rules which require confession only; seventy-five *Sekhiya* rules of conduct; and finally the seven rules concerning the settlement of disputes and litigation, *Adhikaraṇa Samatha dhammā*.

This much comes up to be propounded once every half-month in accordance with the Discourses, and in compliance with the Discourses promulgated by our Lord Buddha.

182 **Code of Discipline of Buddhist Monk**

Herein, all members of the Assembly should unanimously practise and observe the rules cheerfully and without any dispute.

This is the end of the complete propounding of the Pātimokkha.



PĀTIMOKKHA VINAYA RULES

This Pātimokkha cited above is a short treatise which the members of the Monastic Order have to recite twice a month on Buddhist Sabbath days. It is a compendium in form which brings together all the monastic rules, promulgated by the Lord Buddha. These disciplinary rules are scattered throughout the Vinaya Piṭaka, the third Basket of the Buddhist Canon. In this book of Theravāda tradition there are altogether 227 regulations which are classified according to severity, into seven categories of Āpatti (sins):-

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Pārājika | 2. Saṃghādisesa |
| 3. Thullaccaya | 4. Pāṭidesanīya |
| 5. Pācittiya | 6. Dukkaṭa, and |
| 7. Dubbhāṣita | |

If we scrutinize this compendium of regulations comprising the Disciplinary Rules, it reveals that it governs three behavioural domains:

- (1) the relationship of the monk with lay society,
- (2) the relationship of an individual monk with other members of the Order,

- (3) The proper expression of his various needs, wants, and ambitions.

To sum up, the basic principle of the Vinaya Rules relates to the regulation of the monk's physical desires and temptation. By observing these Pātimokkha rules, the monk learns not to succumb to desire and passion. He must learn to extinguish desire and achieve detachment (*Pāti rakkhati*) in order that he may attain the Perfect Emancipation, i.e. Nīrvāṇa (Mokkham). If the monk observes and helps to propagate these rules, they deliver him from sufferings such as miseries in infernal regions, etc. Therefore it is known as *Pātimokkha*.¹

Adhikaraṇa-Dispute²

There are four types of religious disputes, namely:

-
1. Tattha pāti rakkhati taṃ mokkheti moceti apāyikādīhi dukkhehi iti Pātimokkham" (Kaṅkhāvitaranī abhinava ṭīkā; Nidāna - vaṇṇanā p.126 Chaṭṭha Saṅgīti Version, 1961)
 2. ဝိဝါဒအဓိကရဏ, အနုဝါဒအဓိကရဏ, အာပတ္တိအဓိကရဏ, ကိစ္စအဓိကရဏ, စုဒ္ဓိတက = defendant; စောဒက = prosecutor ဝိနိစ္ဆယ = decision

1. *Vivāda-adhikaraṇa*- Disputes as to what is lawful and what is unlawful, what is disciplinary and what is not disciplinary, what is the Buddha's Teaching and what is not the Buddha's Teaching, what is an offence and what is not an offence, etc.
2. *Anuvāda-adhikaraṇa*- Disputes arising from accusations as to whether a monk has fallen off or deviated from virtue, right practice, right view and right livelihood.
3. *Āpatti-adhikaraṇa*- Disputes arising from accusations as to whether a monk has contravened a disciplinary rule.
4. *Kicca-adhikaraṇa*- Dispute with reference to the acts or decisions of the Saṃghā Order.

Seven Methods and Techniques of Settling the Disputes

1. *Sammukhā Vinaya should be given*

The Ecclesiastical Court, the Saṃghā should give a decision in accordance with the Disciplinary Rules of Vinaya after making an

inquiry to ascertain the facts in the presence of both the defendant and the prosecutor.

The members of the Ecclesiastical Court shall transgress the Dukkaṭa offence if they decide against a monk in his absence in conjunction with any of the following actions:-

- (a) A decision by which the Court censures a monk in order that he may exercise self-control and abstain from contravening the Disciplinary Rules of Vinaya in future (*Tajjanīya kamma*).
- (b) A decision by which the Court advises a monk to live depending upon a proctor monk. (*Nīyassa kamma*).
- (c) A decision by which the Court expels a monk from a place (*Pabbājaniya Kamma*)
- (d) A decision by which the court directs a monk to ask for pardon of a person whom he has offended (*Paṭi-sāraṇīya Kamma*)
- (e) A decision by which the Court declares that no monk should give anything to the monk against whom the declaration is made, accept

anything from him, teach him anything or learn anything from him.
(*Ukkhepaniya Kamma*)

The Court can make such a declaration when the official inquiry reveals-

- that a monk who has committed an offence does not regard it as such,
- that a monk who has committed an offence has not taken any step to expiate it,
- that a monk will not give up the wrong view.

Thus the Court should decide the case in the presence of both parties, the defendant and the prosecutor. This technique can be applied in settling the disputes of *Vivāda*, *Anuvāda*, *Āpatti* and *Kicca adhikaraṇas*.

2. *Sativinaya* should be given

If an Arahāt (Buddhist Saint), who has been accused of an offence and found by the Ecclesiastical Court after due inquiry to be innocent, and who has abundant caution, asks for a Reminder or Memorandum. (*Sati Vinaya*), it should be given to him. It is a declaration

which will serve as a reminder to prevent all further accusations of the same offence. This technique is used only in the settling of *Anuvāda adhikaraṇa* dispute.

3. *Amuḷha Vinaya should be given*

This is a declaration by the Ecclesiastical Court that a monk who has been charged with contravention of a Disciplinary Vinaya Rule is unable to recollect it, not because he is stupid but because he was insane at the time of contravening the rule. This technique is used to settle the *Anuvāda adhikaraṇa* disputes.

4. *Paṭiññā. Confession should be made by the accused.*

A decision should be made by the Court in accordance with the sincere confession of the accused monk. The Court has to insist that the defendant confess voluntarily and sincerely the offence which he had transgressed. This technique is used especially to settle the *Āpattiadhikaraṇa* disputes.

5. *Yebhuyyasika Kamma should be performed*

The case should be decided according to the vote of the majority among the members of the Court. Usually the doctrinal disputes *Vivāda adhikaraṇa* are settled by means of this technique.

6. *Tassapāpiyasika Kamma should be performed.*

Whenever a defendant monk appears before the Court and has, in the course of his trial, confessed and retracted his confession, evaded questions and told conscious lies, then the court should make a declaration of "his being very bad"-- *Tassa pāpiyasika*.

The declaration of the Court is made as the monk, if virtuous, would do the proper thing and get peace. But if he is bad, he would remain 'ruined' in that manner; and other colleagues would not have anything to do with him.

Anuvāda adhikaraṇa disputes should be settled by this technique.

7. *Tiṇavātthāraka Kamma should be performed.*

This is the act of covering waste up with grass. This technique should be performed when the parties of quarrelsome monks, who have been disputing and arguing with each other, feel-

- that they have said and done many unbecoming things to the elderly monks.
- that their controversy would become rough, aggressive and disrupting if they were to accuse one another of contraventions of the Vinaya Rules.
- and that contraventions of the Vinaya Rules should be covered up, forgiven and forgotten, in the interests of all concerned.

It has the effect of exonerating the offences of all monks who perform it except the Pārājika and the Saṃghādisesa offences as well as offences in connection with the lay society.

This technique is to be used in the settlement of Āpatta adhikaraṇa disputes.

Thus a full-fledged bhikkhu monk must understand the nature and type of disputes and the respective techniques and methods of settling them, in terms of Adhikaraṇa Samatha Dhamma.

This was a very good outset on an eminent journey as a Buddhist monk, to pursue the Enlightenment of the Ultimate Truth, to be liberated from all these anxieties, worries, troubles and hazardous sufferings of the world. I must work hard indeed with consistent zeal and perseverance because there are still many things for me to do. Even in the field of the purity of Sila, there are four phases of observance of Precepts:-

1. *Pātimokkha samvara sīla*¹ is the observance of 227 Pātimokkha disciplinary rules, as already mentioned above, to be from physical and verbal sins.

2. *Paccaya sannissita sīla*² is the observance of the precepts dependent upon the four supporting requisites of a monk, namely, food, robe, shelter and medicine. A monk must always be mindful to utilize lawfully any of these four dependent requisites in compliance with the law and order of the society as well as the monastic community.

1. ပါတိမောက္ခသံဝရသီလ = Pātimokkha Samvara Sīla

2. ပစ္စယသန္တိသီတသီလ = Paccaya Sannissita Sīla

3. *Indriya samivara sīla*¹ is the observance of the precepts to restrain from any unseemly behaviour and manner in terms of the faculties of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. A monk is not supposed to indulge in lustful seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, physical enjoyments and mental distortions. In order to become a gentle, dignified, virtuous, noble, venerable and infallible MAN, a monk must seriously practise meditation and control his six faculties.

4. *Ājīva pārisuddhi sīla*² is the observance of the precepts to purify oneself in his way of living. The ways and means of livelihood must be pure and harmless; and be free from undesirable propensity. A monk must be clean in thought, word and deed in the career of his daily life."

These four categories are collectively known as *Catu pārisuddhi Sīla*³ or the four Phases of Purification of Precepts which each and every monk must observe without fail.

1. ကြိယသံဝရသီလ = Indriya Samivara Sīla

2. အာဇီဝပါရိသုဒ္ဓိသီလ = Ājīva pārisuddhi Sīla

3. စတုပါရိသုဒ္ဓိသီလ = Catu pārisuddhi Sīla

THE DAILY ROUTINE

All the residents in the monastery are accustomed to sleep late at night after reciting all the old lessons by rote or meditating upon the manner in which they have spent the whole day. However, everybody is happy to get up from the coarse and rough coconut mattresses and wooden floor early in the morning before daybreak. The loud and harsh sounds of the brass discs and bronze bells including hollow-wood-gongs, mercilessly beaten by the sleepy young scholars and novices, make everybody jump out of the unc cosy beds. It is about four o'clock early dawn. Washing of faces, mouths and hands, and rushing to the latrines are spontaneously done and everybody is fresh and clean at daybreak.

Hot rice gruel is ready in the dining hall to appease the hungry stomach and there is no complaint even if there is no side dish nor any appetizer. This is the regular breakfast if there occurs no festival and special ceremonial celebration in the monastery.

The daily routine of the monastic life is very busy; the discipline is exacting and rigid.

but never harsh. The morning service and homage to the Lord Buddha before the monastic shrine, the sharing of merits and meditation of loving-kindness to all sentient beings, and the mutual confession among the members of the Order are systematically done in the morning. The junior monk must approach another senior monk to confess his sins, or sometimes the senior member may approach the junior one to confess his guilts. So here is the Confessional Catechism usually intoned by the pairs. Sometimes there are group confessions instead of two by two procedure.

Confessional Catechism¹

Junior: - "Aham *bhante* sabbā āpattiyo
āvikaromi.

- Reverend sir, may I disclose all
my sins."

Senior: - "Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu.

- All right, All right, All right."

Junior: - "Aham *bhante* sambahulā
nānāvatthukā sabbā āpattiyo
āpajjim.tā tunha mūle paḍidesemi.

1. ဒေသနာကြားခြင်း = Confession

Reverend sir, I have committed all these many sins of various nature. I confess them under your kindness and consideration."

Senior: - "*Passasi āvuso tā āpattiyo.*

- Do you realise that these are sins?"

Junior: - "*Āma bhante passāmi.*

- Yes, reverend. I do realise sir."

Senior: - "*Āyatim āvuso samivareyyāsi.*

- Next time you shall restrain well, my fellow."

Junior: - "*Sādhu suṭṭhu bhante samvarissāmi.*

- All right, Reverend, I shall restrain well and appropriately sir."

Senior: - "*Sādhu sādhu sādhu.*

All right. All right. All right."

N.B. Change *āvuso* in place of *bhante*; and *bhante* in place of *āvuso* when the Senior Monk does confession to a Junior Monk, and change *Passatha* instead of *passasi*; and *sanivareyyātha* instead of *sanivareyyāsi*.

All the novices then are admonished by a monk to observe the ten precepts of *sāmaṇera*. A novice then admonishes all the scholar boys in the monastery to observe the five precepts of the laity, and all the morning services are concluded by the sharing of merits, beating the triangular brass discs with wooden hammers.

The monastic educational method is to learn all the Pāli texts by rote and to attend the classes where the learned monk translates the passages and explains the meaning of the doctrine imbibed therein.

Then at 9:00 o'clock, having changed into clean robes and washed the alms-bowls, all the monks and novices set out in a long procession into the village quarters for alms-round.

The schoolboys march along with a triangular brass disc slung on a bamboo staff shouldered between two of them which they strike now and then to call the attention of the villagers that the *Samghā* are coming for alms-round. And behind them, in their yellow robes, their faces cast down to the ground and looking neither to the left nor to the right, their arms embracing big black bowls to receive the

alms-food come the monks and novices in slow and solemn procession; and from the houses come forth women and children with a little rice, a little curry, or fruit, or something to eat, to put into the alms-bowls. The Saṃgha express no word of thanks, but pass silently on. The gifts are not acknowledged. The cover of the alms-bowl is removed, and when the offertories have been put in, it is recovered. And when they have completed their usual round, with their bowls full of eatables, and the containers carried by the boys are also filled with curries and fruits and cakes, they went their way back to the monastery as solemnly as they departed. Thus the teachings of the Lord Buddha are fulfilled, the Saṃghā by living a life of humility and poverty, the laity by exercising their charity towards the venerable ones.

The charitable devotees supply the Saṃghā with the monastery to dwell in, the robes to wear, the medicine to treat with, and the food to eat; and ask in return no thanks but instead be grateful for the opportunities thus given of performing acts of charity and accruing merits and virtues. Thus the daily alms-round serves bilateral benefit for the devotees as well as the devoted ones.

Since a monk gets his daily food from such regular alms-round and because he does not partake of anything after noon, he needs no money for shopping in the market; he needs no other utensils to prepare and cook his food. He has no means of storing food for the next day either. Thus he is free from all the troubles in connection with food. If only he is healthy and strong enough to go out in the morning to receive the offertories from the devout families, then he gets enough food to sustain himself for the day. The food he receives is well-cooked and usually the best part of the meal. So a monk has nothing to do with kitchen work and recipe collection or menu itemization.

The residents in the monastery have a cold bath as soon as they arrive at their residence and hurry up to finish their meals before noon. Then the Saṃgha members have a brief siesta whilst the schoolboys play on the ground in the monastery compound, but keeping in mind not to be too noisy to disturb the snoozing elders.

The Monastic Education

All the classes begin at one o'clock in the afternoon until sunset. The monastic education concentrates on the study of religious scriptures to cover the three Canons of Buddhist literature; **Vinaya** disciplinary rules and regulations, **Suttanta** discourses, and **Abhidhamma** philosophy doctrines.

A common average monk must study the **Pariyatti** Scriptures, or practise the Insight **Paṭipatti** meditation, in order that he may gradually develop and advance his **Paṭivedha** realization of the perfect Truth.

During the three-month Lent of rainy season, all monks have to remain within the monastery and they are not supposed to travel anywhere. Only at the end of the Buddhist Lent which usually falls in October, they are permitted to visit other monasteries, make pilgrimages, attend meetings and conventions, deliver sermons in other villages and towns. They can even transfer from one abode to another, because the Buddhist monk does not take a vow of stability to be attached to a particular monastery forever. After the Lenten period he may leave for any monastery of his choice, to

pursue further study of the scriptures, or to learn in practice more about the Insight meditation, or even for general knowledge and new experience of monastic life in other places.

There are some monastic institutions which concentrate upon the intensive study of lessons preparing monks to appear in the religious examinations. These religious examinations in Myanmar are held by the Government, or by the local bodies of monastic education, or by some associations established for this ecclesiastical purpose. In such cases, an ordinance of the Lord Buddha dispenses the scholar monks from rounding for alms from house to house in the villages. There are pious families who proffer to these student monks their sustenance at their monastic abode. The founder of the monastery or the religious association, who nominates the incumbent, regularly undertakes the support of the monk. The food which is the best of its kind, is regularly brought every morning by the children of the supporters. In case of joint support the children or the workers of the leading families in turn bring the essential eatables to the monastery. An ornamental tiffin receptacle is used, with a tall finial to the cover. These food supplies are

received by the stewards, scholars, and the novices who arrange and set the luncheon table for the monks who must finish their meal before noon. Sometimes the stewards and novices have to prepare rice gruel and other meals at the monastery from raw supplies. The monastic butlers and stewards are usually attached to the monasteries by the wealthy supporters, for the preparation of food and other necessary services. The purpose of this special arrangement is to allow the monks to get ample time in the study or in the practice of meditation.

The senior monk or the Abbot of the monastery has little interaction with the village. Occasionally however, on Sabbath days and on special festival days he leads the devotees in recitation of the discourses, or administering the precepts. On special occasions such as weddings, funerals and some other notable events, he chants the Eleven Holy Discourses of Protection (Paritta)¹. He presides over the initiation ceremony of novices and higher ordination ceremony of monks. Sometimes he accepts the special meals served by his devotees during the

1. ပရိတ်ကြီးဆယ့်တစ်သုတ် = Eleven Holy Discourses of Protection

Lenten season either in the monastery or in the village houses. He preaches sermons appropriate occasions, and gives advice and admonitions to his devotees when they come to the monastery for spiritual help.

The teaching staff in the Monastic Education Institution is usually recruited and organized from the learned members of the Saṃghā; and the Abbot acts as President or Rector of the academy.

Often the Rector or the Abbot is busy with domestic affairs; and he assigns an old deacon or a novice to take care of the school boys teaching them the alphabet and basic arithmetic. The youngsters usually learn the basic principles of the Buddhist Teaching by rote and recite the lessons all in unison chanting loudly enough in chorus to let the Abbot hear from his place so that he can correct on the spot at once whenever they commit a mistake. They all have to write their lessons on the slates or on the wooden boards blackened by soot and rice-glue with talcum pencils. And the young teachers check them everyday to see if the handwriting is neat and tidy, or if the spelling is all correct.

A young tutor monk is appointed by the Abbot to instruct the novices and newly ordained monks in the study of canonical literature and language prescribed for the elementary scholars in the monastic educational programme. Such junior courses of instruction are taught both in Pāli as well as in the vernacular language. Most of the lessons are learnt by heart and the student must be able to recite fluently when the instructor requests him to do so in the class.

The elderly lecturer monks are specialists in their specific subject field and they deliver their lectures at their residential quarters. They may be Professors of Pāli Grammar, or Professors of Vinaya Philosophy and other suttantas. So the advanced students approach these lecturers for their higher academic studies. Among such advanced students are monks, nuns, a few laymen and old novices who have already passed the religious examinations set and sponsored periodically by the Government, or by the Local Board of Monastic Education.

There are however some scholar monks who do not care for sitting any examination, and they learn the scriptures of 'the religion for the religion's sake' only. They also attend all these lectures delivered by the experts at

various monasteries. There is no tuition fees, no admission fees, no registration fees, and no charge whatsoever. The academy is free and open to all interested scholars.

The lecturers conclude their classes for the day just before sunset, to allow the students to stroll for a while to the pagoda for evening service, or to clean the sanctuary.

Then comes evening worship similar to that in the morning. Sometimes there are evening classes for the Advanced Abhidhamma-studies usually discussed in darkness which conclude at nine o'clock late at night. While the elder monks perform their meditation and the youngsters tell the rosary-beads, the scholars recite their daily lessons before they retire to bed. All are so tired and exhausted after such a long day that there is no need for anyone to tell them to be quiet after ten o'clock.

The young steward boys and scholars are happy to go to bed late at night because they have already filled up their hungry stomachs with the remnants and left-overs that they saved from the lunch boxes. And they never regret having to get up early the next morning at dawn to sip the hot rice gruel welcoming them to the routine work and labour of another busy day.

The Tranquillity and Peace

The entire monastery remains cool and calm under the twinkling stars and silvery moonbeams of tropical Myanmar. The picturesque life of Buddhist monasticism is fabulous and really magnificent. In such a monastic life one is tranquil at heart and serene in brain; clean in the physical body and vital in the veins; pure in thought, word and deed whilst every act is virtuous and beneficial, if only one abides in compliance with all the Teachings of the Lord Buddha.

About 190999 adults were registered here in Myanmar as full-fledged ordained monks in 2001, and they have all been supported voluntarily by the 50 million inhabitants of Buddhist Myanmar. Some enter the Saṃgha Order directly from their boyhood as monastery stewards, neophytes and novices without any experience of of secular life. But some enter the ecclesiastic life through ceremonial ordination after having enjoyed the family life of the world for some time. Whoever they may be, they are all recruited into the Order with a variety of aims and objectives. They join the Order because they are disgusted with the world and its miserable propensities, or to avoid

occupational labour and to enjoy a happy easy life, or to transmigrate a better rebirth hereafter and to attain the Nirvana, or just to acquire meritorious means and good result in terms of fortunes and blessings, or to help promote the purification, perpetuation and dissemination of the Teachings of Lord Buddha, or any other motives for becoming a Buddhist clergyman. All these monks are revered equally by the laity with due deference and let them dwell happily and peacefully in those monasteries. Such is the nature of Myanmar Buddhist Monasticism in the heritage of the Theravāda Buddhist Tradition.

THE END



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သယံဇာတ ၂၅၄၅ ကေဘဏ် ၁၃၆၃-၆၄ ခရစ် ၂၀၀၂