

CHAPTER V
THE MORAL VALUE OF MONASTIC LIFE
IN EARLY BUDDHISM

The Buddha, who discovered the path to enlightenment after a successful process of trial and elimination, proclaims a new way of religious life which he recommends to his followers under the name of *brahmacariya*.¹ We find that as the goal of this life of *brahmacariya*, the accent falls on the release from *dukkha*² and the attainment of *nibbāna*. This is clear from the recurring statement in the texts which is ascribed to the Buddha: "Come. O monk, live the life of *brahmacariya* in order that you may make an end of suffering".³

So the ideal life of the *saṅgha* through methods of practice, moral life within daily life, moral rituals and ceremonies, etc., and the moral value of monastic life in early Buddhism are presented carefully in this chapter.

¹ *So dhammaṃ deseti ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ pakāseti.* (D. I. 62; M. I. 179, 267 etc.).

² *Dukkha*: This word is so wide that it cannot easily be given in a single word like pain, suffering, or sorrow. Sometimes the word is used to cover the totality of its connotation. Each one of these words can be regarded as being valid in its own context. The word 'unsatisfactoriness' is now believed to be having a very satisfactory coverage of the concept *dukkha*.

³ *Ehi bhikkhū'ti bhagavā avoca svākkhāto dhammo. Cara brahmacariyaṃ sammā dukkhassa antakiriya'ti.* (Vin. I. 12); also see S. II. 24.

V. 1. The Practice of *Tisso-sikkhā* as the Foundation of Monastic life

V. 1. 1. The Scheme of Moral Development of *Tisso-sikkhā*

An alternative formulation of the Buddhist scheme of moral development is presented in the form of three progressive and mutually dependent factors of moral training. They are:

- (1) *Sīla*, consisting of moral practices involving the conscious and voluntary transformation of one's patterns of bodily and verbal behaviour.
- (2) *Samādhi*, the development of mental composure and
- (3) *Paññā*, the cultivation of the insight that leads to moral perfection.

The *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* scheme of moral perfection is based on a certain psychological theory about the levels at which immoral traits of the mind function is considered as a basic one. According to Buddhism, immoral behaviour can be explained at a more fundamental level by reference to its deeper psychological roots. Buddhism gives a very important place to psychology in its ethical system. The progressive path of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā* is intended to be a systematic way of tackling the problem of moral evil with deep psychological insight. Immorality in overt human behaviour is, according to Buddhism, only a manifestation at the surface level, of man's deep rooted evil dispositions. Buddhism speaks of the existence and activity of moral evil at three different levels. At the most deep-rooted level, they are dormant or dispositional traits (*anusaya*). Even a person who does not exhibit violent behaviour at a particular moment in his life has the tendency to do so when he meets with a certain situation. This is because he has not overcome the disposition to behave in evil ways. The second level at

which moral evil functions is the one at which there is a mere excitement of feeling and emotion. One often feels the turbulence, discomfort and heat of anger and passion without letting such feeling boil over in the form of observable overt behaviour. Buddhism refers to this psychological level as (*pariyuṭṭhāna*). It is at the third level that evil is manifested in the form of overt action through word and deed leading to the transgression of the moral norms of society (*vitikkama*). It is at this level that human action has a great deal of social significance.

V. 1. 1. 1. The Function of *Sīla*

The function of *sīla* is to deal with immorality at the progress level at which it manifests itself. Immorality becomes more tangible at this level than at the concealed levels of the mind. Hence, Buddhism advises a person to make *sīla* the starting point of moral progress. One is not expected to move from one stage of the path to the other only after attaining absolute perfection in each preceding stage. They are to be cultivated concurrently. The canonical teaching maintains that the fruitfulness of each succeeding stage depends on the degree of perfection attained in each preceding stage. Mental composure which attains growth through wholesome practice morality (*sīla*) and wisdom (*paññā*) which attains growth through mental composure are said to be very fruitful.

Akusala deeds of body and speech proceed from unwholesome tendencies which are deep-rooted in our minds. These deep-rooted tendencies in turn are the consequence of certain repeated patterns of behaviour. Any single action performed has the tendency to be repeated and to be gradually built into a general pattern of behaviour. Particular acts of body and speech feed the unwholesome dispositions and evil traits that are already deep-rooted in our minds, and strengthening them.

Practice of *sīla* is a method by which a person could be vigilant about his overt behaviour through abstention and conscious self-control, and the practice of the opposite type of actions, so that transformation occurs at the grossest and most tangible level of one's personality.

V. 1. 1. 2. The Function of *Samādhi*

The function of *samādhi* is to deal directly with evil at the more subtle level of the human mind. In *samādhi*, there is an attempt to bring about one pointedness and composure of the mind to prevent the excitement of the unwholesome emotions. Here, one takes full conscious control of one's mental activity and fixes the mind through voluntary effort on a single object determined at one's will. The four *jhāna* described in Buddhism exemplify the character of *samādhi*. By means of *samādhi* certain unwholesome emotions are eliminated from the mind, at least temporarily, and certain wholesome emotions such as compassion, mindfulness and equanimity are cultivated.

V. 1. 1. 3. The Function of *Paññā*

Paññā is believed to deal with moral evil at the very source. *Paññā* is the understanding that eradicates all evil tendencies in such a way that they are not born again. In its most elevated sense it is emancipating knowledge. It is when this knowledge dawns that one can confidently declare: "What ought to be done has been done, and the goal of the higher life has been accomplished."¹ At this stage occurs, what in Buddhist terms is called the eradication of *āsava* (*āsavakkhaya*). The *āsava* persists as long as there is ignorance about the nature of things. The Buddha says that the *āsava* are conditioned by ignorance (*avijjā samudayā āsava*

¹ D. I. 84; M. I. 24, 39, 185, 250.

samudayo). The ignorance that has to be overcome in order to put an end to the *āśava* is the mistaken belief that empirical things including one's own personality have permanence (*nicca*), that they are productive of happiness (*sukha*) and that they contain an enduring substance or can be owned by an enduring substance (*attā*). Everything that exists has to be understood as a thing that "has come to be" due to a variety of causes and conditions. Things that have the nature of arising and existing due to interdependence and interrelation of causes have the nature of disintegrating and ceasing to exist when the causes and conditions are removed (*yaṃ kiñci samudayadhammaṃ sabbaṃtaṃ nirodhadhammaṃ*). When this insight becomes firmly established, unwholesome dispositions are cut off at the root. The Buddhist position can be compared with the Socratic view that immorality is due to lack of knowledge. However, the knowledge required in Buddhism is not of abstract forms to be apprehended by the intellect as suggested by Plato, but knowledge of the conditioned nature of all empirical phenomena. The practice of *sīla* is a preparatory stage for the attainment of the final emancipating knowledge. The kind of conduct mentioned under *sīla* does not require any voluntary effort after the final emancipating knowledge has been attained. Buddhism speaks of the person who is in the process of fulfilling the requirements of the path as a trainee (*sekha*) and one who has fulfilled all the requirements, a person who needs no further moral training as an *asekha*.

In brief, these threefold *sikkhā* are the basic teachings which lead the human beings from the passion to dispassion, the darkness to light and the suffering to happiness.¹ The *sikkhā* in the *Pāli* canon contains the

¹ A. II. 1; Cf. D. II. 84.

whole training of a *bhikkhu* with regard to his outward conduct as well as internal moral development.¹ Once in Vesālī, a vajjian *bhikkhu* confessed to the Buddha that he was unable to remember all the rules in which he had to train himself, The Buddha advised him to train himself according to the threefold training *adhisīlasikkhā* (training in higher virtue), *adhicittasikkhā* (training in the higher mind) and *adhipaññāsikkhā* (training in the higher wisdom).² Elaborating on the *adhisīlasikkhā*, the Buddha said:

"And what is the training in the higher virtue? Here, a monk is virtuous, restrained by the restraint of the *pātimokkha*, perfect in conduct and resort, seeing danger in the slightest faults. Having undertaken the training rules, he trains himself in them. This is called the training in the higher virtue."³

According to *Pāli* canonical texts, threefold *sikkhā* is the best path which leads to end suffering and to realize *nibbāna*.⁴ The threefold training aims at eliminating lust, hatred and delusion, thereby helping the *bhikkhu* to acquire *ñāṇadassana*, knowledge and insight, and to become ultimately an *ariya puggala*, a person who has attained one of the four supramundane paths and its relevant supramundane fruition. The goal of the supramundane path is *vimutti*. The Buddha taught about the threefold *sikkhā* which is mentioned in *Majjhima Nikāya* thus:

"Friends Visākha,⁵ the three classes are not arranged in accordance with the *ariyan* eightfold Way, but the *ariyan* eightfold Way is

¹ Cf. C. S. Upasak, *Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms*, p. 234.

² A. I. 230, 235.

³ A. I. 230, 235.

⁴ Dh. v273.

⁵ Visākha, the former husband of Dhammadinnā, also see G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Vol. II, p. 897.

arranged in accordance with the three classes. Whatever, friend Visākha, is perfect speech and whatever is perfect action and whatever is perfect way of living, these things are arranged in the class of Moral Habit. And whatever is perfect concentration, these things are arranged in the class of Concentration. And whatever is perfect view and whatever is perfect thought, these things are arranged in the class of Intuitive Wisdom."¹

V. 1. 2. The Threefold Training Through Noble Eightfold Path

As we know, the Noble Eightfold Path (*Ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*)² is the foundation of the monastic life. It is contained in the Fourth Noble Truth (*Cattāri Ariyasaccāni*)³ which is the Path that leads to the cessation of suffering and *nibbāna*.⁴

In Buddhism, the Noble Eightfold Path is usually subsumed in three groups: Moral conduct (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*),⁵ therewith morality (*sīla*) is first of three sections. When the Eightfold Path is understood in terms of the "three learnings" (threefold *sikkhā*), they are divided into three sections as below:

(1) Moral conduct (*sīla*)

Right speech (*sammā vācā*)

Right action (*sammā kammanta*)

Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*)

¹ M. I. 301.

² Vin. I. 9; S. V. 421; D. II. 312; M. III. 251; Vbh. 99, 235.

³ Vin. I. 9; S. V. 421; Vbh. 99.

⁴ Extinction (of a fire), emancipation, the final bliss; see T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (eds.), *Pāli English Dictionary*, p. 362,

⁵ D. III. 220; A. I. 229ff.

(2) Concentration (*samādhi*)

Right effort (*sammā vāyama*)

Right mindfulness (*sammā sati*), and

Right concentration (*sammā samādhi*)

(3) Wisdom (*paññā*)

Right understanding (*sammā diṭṭhi*)

Right thoughts (*sammā saṃkappa*)

V. 1. 2. 1. Moral Conduct (*Sīla*)

Sīla is ordinarily known as *brahmacariya* and the first request that Buddhists have to observe. It is restraint in physical actions including speech. Right speech, right action and right livelihood are three terms practically include the whole code of moral laws that are prescribed for the conduct of the Buddhist monks and the Path leading to *nibbāna*. In the *Majjhima Nikāya*¹ and in the *Vibhaṅga*,² they are described detail: (1) Right speech (*sammā vācā*) is refraining from speaking falsehood, malicious words, harsh and frivolous talk. (2) Right action (*sammā kammanta*) is refraining from killing, stealing, and misconduct; and (3) Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*) is refraining from earning livelihood by improper means, i.e., arts and crafts of laymen.³

All modes of higher moral cultivation are expected to be practised on the foundation of *sīla*. In the same way as all activity pursued by the application of human strength have the earth as their support, all activity pursued in the path of moral perfection laid down in Buddhism, in terms

¹ M. III. 251f.

² Vbh. 235-6.

³ D. I. 67-9.

of the Noble Eightfold Path, the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*),¹ and the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*)² have *sīla* as their support: "Just as monks, whatsoever deeds requiring strength are done, all of them are done in dependence on the earth, with the earth for their support, even so a monk, depending on virtue, supported by virtue, cultivates the Ariyan eightfold way, makes much of the Ariyan eightfold way."³

V. 1. 2. 2. Concentration (*Samādhi*)

Concentration (*samādhi*) is the doctrine which deals with man's mental training, taming of the mind. It is generally known as *jhāna*. The three terms have been used in the formula of the eightfold path are: (1) Right effort (*sammā vāyāma*) is effort or exertion to remove the existing evil thoughts, to keep the mind free from being polluted by fresh evil thoughts, and to preserve and increase the good thoughts. (2) Right mindfulness (*sammā sati*) is mindfulness of all that is happening within the body and mind including feelings, and examination of the things of the world and at the same time suppressing covetousness (*abhijjhā*) and avoiding mental depression (*doma-nassa*) and (3) Right concentration (*sammā samādhi*)⁴ is four stages of meditation.⁵

V. 1. 2. 3. Wisdom (*Paññā*)

The Wisdom (*paññā*) is the intellectual discipline. It consist (1) Right understanding (*sammā-ditṭhi*) which means the view propounded by the

¹ The seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*): (1) *Sati*, (2) *dhammavicaya*, (3) *virīya*, (4) *pīti*, (5) *passaddhi*, (6) *samādhi*, and (7) *upekkhā*. (D. III. 251, 282; Vbh. 277).

² The four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*): (1) *kāyānupassanā sati paṭṭhāna*, (2) *vedanānupassanā sati paṭṭhāna*, (3) *cittānupassanā sati paṭṭhāna*, and (4) *dhammānupassanā sati paṭṭhāna*. (D. II. 290, 315).

³ S. V. 45.

⁴ Vin. I. 9; S. V. 421; Vbh. 99.

⁵ M. I. 40.

Buddha about the nature of the things of the world and the ultimate. Traditionally, it means realization of the four truths. And (2) Right thoughts (*sammā saṅkappa*) is resolution for renunciation, as also for refraining from hatred and injury to other beings.

By intellectual discipline it means generally the comprehension of the four *ariyasaccas*.¹ But actually, it means realisation of the fact that the *khandhas*, *dhātus*, *āyatanas* etc. are dynamic, having only momentary existence and are devoid of any substance (*anattā*). According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *sīlavisuddhi* (moral purification) and *cittavisuddhi* (perfection in mental exercises) form the two legs of Buddhism, its body being the *diṭṭhivisuddhi* (the true or the Buddhist view about the nature of the Reality). For attaining *diṭṭhivisuddhi* one must comprehend the nature of (1) *Khandhas* (constituents of a being), (2) *Āyatanas* (organs of sense and their spheres), (3) *Indriyas* (faculties), and (4) The characteristics of the four *dhātus* (spheres of existence), the true meaning of the *ariyasaccas* (truths), and of *paṭiccasamuppāda* (the law of causation).

In the *Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta*,² there is almost a comprehensive scheme of the Buddhist doctrine in its three divisions. First, there is the reference to the *sīla*, practices the severer form of which, though approved by the Buddha, has been made optional; it is followed by an exposition of the four *ariyasaccas*, which comprise in a popular form the Buddhist philosophical teaching (*paññā*), and then by an enumeration of the thirty-seven *bodhipakkhiyas*, the eight *vimokkhas*, the eight *abhibhāyatanas*, ten *kasinas*, four *jhānas*, and the six *abhiññās*, in short, all that is denoted by *samādhi*.

¹ D. I. 84.

² The *Sutta* No. 77, M. II.

The eightfold path, as stated above deals with all the aspects of a spiritual life, viz., ethical, psychological and epistemological. The first three of the list relating to speech, deed, and means of livelihood comprises rules that embodied in the *Nikāyas* and *Vinaya*, in which elaborate directions are given about the proper conduct of the monks and nuns. The next two explain the gradual way in which an adept should train up his thought and elevate the mind through a process of concentration to a state of equanimity so that it may remain undisturbed by weal and woe. After attaining perfection in physical and mental discipline, the adept can expect to develop a mind of complete renunciation of worldly attractions and direct his mind to the comprehension of the four Truths and thereby acquire the right view.

V. 1. 3. The Practice of *Sīla*

Sīla is believed to be the foundation on which the other two stages in the path are to be developed. This formulation of the path reveals not only the pragmatic character of Buddhism, but also the psychological insights on which the practical aspects of the Buddhist moral system are based. The Buddha speaks of the path to spiritual perfection, or the attainment of *nibbāna* as a graduated one leading systematically from one step to the other. The perfection of *sīla* is recognized as the foundation or the basis of all spiritual endeavours. An intelligent man is supposed to establish himself in *sīla* and develop his mind (*citta*) and cultivate wisdom (*paññā*). It is such a person who is said to be able to disentangle the tangles of evil.¹

¹ A. V. 66.

If the entire Buddhist spiritual training is understood as an attempt to transform the moral nature of man, *sīla* can be considered as the beginning of this conscious and deliberate process of self transformation.¹ Besides, the foremost place of *sīla* in the threefold scheme of training, it occupies a prominent place among other list of spiritual qualities recommended in Buddhism. It is the first of seven stages of purification (*satta visuddhi*) and the second of the ten perfections of a person aspiring to become a Buddha (*bodhisatta-pārami*). The cultivation of *sīla* consists of an attempt to change our patterns of behaviour in such a way that it will ultimately lead to a radical transformation of our dispositional traits. The *Pāli* a scripture enumerates *sīla* in great detail in relation to the spiritual stations and aims of a person. The Buddhist community is traditionally divided into two broad classes as (1) the *bhikkhu* community and (2) the lay community (*gihī*) depending on the seriousness with which the goal of emancipation is sought. Buddhism started as a movement of liberation seekers. It was a spiritual movement of those who were already disenchanted with the ordinary pleasures of the world and were seeking for something believed to be higher. A life of renunciation of the ordinary sensuous pleasures was considered to be a primary requirement if one's immediate goal was to attain moral perfection.

*Pabbajjā*² was considered in the early Buddhist tradition to be both a symbolic and an actual break away from the life of sense pleasures. One was expected to shave off the hair and beard, put yellow robes and leave all household ties and possessions and enter into the life a *bhikkhu*. The Buddha considered household life as a hindrance, as an encumbrance to

¹ G. P. Malalasekera (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. V, p. 150.

² Going forth from the life of the household.

the practice of the higher life in its complete purity. The Buddhist scriptures often mention the conviction expressed by listeners to the Buddha's message that it is difficult to lead the higher life prescribed in Buddhism in its complete purity while living in the household. If immediate progress is intended one is expected to join the *bhikkhu saṅgha*. However, Buddhism never held that the fruits of the Buddhist path cannot be reaped by people who lived a household life.

The most exhaustive list of *sīla* is presented for the moral guidance of the monk. Perfection in *sīla* is said to be one basic reason why the Buddha is praiseworthy.¹ The foremost *sīla* are those meant to restrain a person from performing those deeds which Buddhism includes under the ten *akusala* mentioned earlier. The more elaborate *sīla* mentioned in relation to the life of the *bhikkhu* characterises the life of renunciation which a Buddhist monk is expected to live. The monk's life is also expected to be governed by a set of institutional rules called *sikkhāpada*, enumerated in the Buddhist canonical literature known as *Vinaya*, the books of discipline. These rules came to be recited by the Buddhist community of monks at fortnightly meetings of the *uposatha* to ensure the moral purity of their conduct and remedial action was taken if any member of the community was found to be guilty of any transgression. The moral quality of the *bhikkhu* who observed these rules was expressed in terms of the description *pātimokkha saṃvara saṃvuto* (one restrained according to the rules of *pātimokkha*). In the commentarial tradition of the *Theravāda*, this aspect of a *bhikkhu*'s morality was called *pāṭinsokkhasaṃvarasīla*. The function of the *pātimokkha* rules of the *Vinaya* was to restrain the bodily and verbal behaviour of the *bhikkhu*

¹ D. I. 9ff.

with a certain degree of legal coercion exercised by the collective authority of the *bhikkhu* community. The Buddhist lay community does not come within such an institutionalised and coercive type of moral code. In the case of the Buddhist lay person, *sīla* usually consists of five abstentions, namely, abstention from killing, stealing, unchastity, false speech and the taking of intoxicating drinks. However, the lay person is encouraged to extend the range of *sīla* and practice at least when occasion permits by observing additional precepts which apply to the *bhikkhu* community. The ultimate aim of the *bhikkhu* as well as the lay person in the practice of *sīla* is to lay the foundation for moral perfection by cultivating new patterns of bodily and verbal behaviour.

V. 1. 4. The Importance of *Sīla* towards *Tisso-sikkhā*

If *sīla* is a precondition for the development of *samādhi*, *paññā* is often emphasized. In the last days of the Buddha's life which was given in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*,¹ his repetitive emphasis on the requirement of perfecting *sīla* as a ground for the fruitful cultivation of mental composure, which is grounded on the perfection of *sīla*, is immensely fruitful and beneficial.² It is also maintained that seven consecutive steps can be identified in an individual's gradual progression towards the goal of liberation and that the first in this successive order is *sīla*. Although *sīla* is considered as the foundation for the development of insight, the relationship between *sīla* and insight (*paññā*) are considered to be mutually supportive. The Buddha represented it as agreeing with the view that where there is *sīla* there is *paññā* and where there is *paññā* there is *sīla*. Just as one could use one hand to wash the other hand or one foot to

¹ The *Sutta* No. 16, D. II.

² D. II. 81.

wash the other foot, in the same way, *paññā* is purified by *sīla* and *sīla* is purified by *paññā*.¹ The ultimate goal of liberation is conceived in Buddhism as the attainment of a morally incorruptible state of mind leading to the appeasement of all unwholesome character traits of a person. In the context referred to here, this attainment is described as *anupādā parinibbāna* (perfect appeasement free of clinging). This ultimate freedom is described as a consequence of a stepwise perfection of seven purifications beginning with the purification of *sīla* (*sīlavisuddhi*).² In the "*The Essential of Buddhist Philosophy*", Jujirō Takakusu said that: "The Eightfold Way may be regarded as the practical ethics of Buddhism for the purpose of building up the human character and improving it, but at the same time it is the way of the holy religion for attaining the highest enlightenment, Buddhahood."³ Because it is through not understanding, through not penetrating, the *Ariyan* virtue so we have thus gone on faring, thus gone on running this long time. When the *Ariyan* virtue, concentration and the *Ariyan* wisdom are understood and penetrated, it can cut off the craving and suffering.⁴

As one of the "three trainings" (*tisso-sikkhā*), moral discipline (*sīla*) has been a cardinal virtue of all Buddhists, and practices of restraint, cultivation of good qualities and ritual affirmation of and in some instances ritual confession of breaches, have been important aspects of praxis across the Buddhist world. Of course, the paradigmatic moral discipline is the Buddha's own lifestyle as codified in the *Vinaya* traditions of the different schools, which is treated separately, but laypeople also adopt moral codes which the early tradition systematized

¹ D. I. 12.

² M. I. 147.

³ Jujirō Takakusu, *The Essential of Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 20.

⁴ A. II. 1; Cf. D. II. 84.

as the five, eight and ten precepts (*sīla*), and which have been developed into full-blown lay praxis through *Vinaya*, like texts for laypeople, have been expanded into vow-taking liturgies for advanced adepts, and have palpably shaped social etiquette in Buddhist cultures. This article describes the five, eight and ten precepts of the early tradition, some of the ritual contexts which surround them, some of the ways, they have been expanded upon in later traditions, and some of their discernible impacts upon Buddhist societies.¹

To sum up, *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* are the best of paths of the Buddha teachings which lead to the end of suffering and to realize *nibbāna*.² The Noble Eightfold Path is the Paths to lead to supreme enlightenment; it is also expressive of a sensible, practical approach to life. That is, whenever we have a goal, it is important that we have a clear understanding of what we hope to achieve, so that our thought, speech, and action coincide with the realization of that goal. This means that our entire way of living must also be conducive to that realization. And this requires constant effort, perhaps the essential component in all the different practices within Buddhism. The effort must be guided by mindfulness, so that one is constantly aware of the process leading to a fruitful end. Finally, the entire undertaking must be rooted in meditative experience, which adds clarity and power to the Noble Eightfold Path.

V. 2. Moral Values in Early Buddhism

It is evident that in the Buddhist scheme of moral values, *nibbāna* is the highest level of moral perfection that a person can attain. It is in relation to this attainment that Buddhism attached moral significance to all other

¹ Damien Keown and Charles S. Prebish (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, p. 535.

² Dh. v273.

human concerns. The attainment of *nibbāna* is supposed to be the immediate or remote goal of every Buddhist layman and monk. The life described as the holy or the higher life (*brahmacariya*) was to be lived under the direction of the Buddha to attain this goal.¹ Early Buddhism did not attempt to characterize *nibbāna* metaphysically. It laid great emphasis on the experiential characteristics of the attainment describing it in ethical and psychological terms. *Nibbāna* was conceived as a positively blissful condition attainable in this life itself. However, later forms of Buddhism seem to have been influenced by the absolutistic and transcendentalist views stemming from the metaphysical schools of Indian philosophy, resulting in an undue emphasis on the metaphysical aspects of *nibbāna*, and undermining its ethical significance.

In the evaluation of persons, one who has attained the goal of *nibbāna* is judged to be the most praiseworthy person. Such a person is to be commended as one who is fully endowed with *lanais*. The Buddha says:

A *kṣatriya* is said to be the highest by those who trace back their ancestry. But among gods and men, he (the *arahanta*) who is endowed with knowledge and conduct is the highest.² The Buddha says:

"Out of these four castes, whoever is a monk, who is an *arahanta*, who has eradicated the cankers, is fully trained and accomplished, who has laid down the burden, is freed through right knowledge, he amongst them is reckoned as the highest in terms of righteousness and not in terms of unrighteousness."³

¹ M. I. 148.

² D. I. 199.

³ D. III. 83.

The *Dhammapada* refers to the *arahanta* as the highest being because he has attained the highest goal of *nibbāna*.¹ It is said that as far as the abodes of living beings extend, as far as the end of the realm of becoming, the *arahants* are the highest, the supreme beings in the universe.² So, the Buddha is considered as the highest being ever to be born among living beings. This value is attached to him due to his being the founder of the supreme goal of *nibbāna* and the most competent person to guide others towards that goal.³

Buddhism values the truths, understanding and realization of which ensure the attainment of *nibbāna*, as the "noble truths" (*ariyasaccāni*). The path to the attainment of it is called the noble path (*ariyamagga*). Each item of the Noble Eightfold Path is prefixed with *sammā* meaning 'right'.

When the Buddha is asked to declare in brief what *akusala* is, he mentions these three psychological states.⁴ These three are considered as primary dispositions which result in diverse kinds of moral evil. The numerous patterns of bodily, verbal and mental behaviour characterized in Buddhism as *akusala* are said to be the natural expression of these dispositions.

There are several variant forms of presenting these basic unwholesome dispositions sometimes elaborated into more numerous categories of psychological disposition. The canonical scriptures sometimes mention five hindrances to the attainment of *nibbāna* as a heap of *akusala*. They are:

¹ Dh. v. 97.

² S. III. 83.

³ S. V. 66.

⁴ M. I. 489.

- (1) the intense urge for sensuous gratification (*kāmacchanda*),
- (2) maliciousness (*vyāpāda*),
- (3) sloth and torpour (*thinamiddha*),
- (4) flurry and worry (*uddhaccakukkucca*), and
- (5) doubt (*vicikicchā*).¹

The last three have a specific reference to the Buddhist path of action leading to the supreme attainment. If one is overcome by laziness, instability of mind and recurrent doubt about the efficacy of the path to lead one to *nibbāna* they become hindrances, and therefore *akusala*, from the Buddhist standpoint. On the other hand, the four bases of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*) are considered as a heap of *kusala*.² The unwholesome dispositions are sometimes enumerated as varieties of *āsava* (influxes or cankers) and *anusaya* (dormant evil tendencies of the mind). The *Dhammadāyāda Sutta* and the *Sallekha Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* enumerate long lists of evil dispositions, the latter mentioning also the virtues which are the exact opposite of each evil disposition.³ These scriptural references contain material which is of great importance from the point of view of moral psychology.

According to Buddhism, evil disposition are manifested through the activity of the body, word and the mind. The evils manifested in bodily behaviour are: (1) killing, associated with various forms of violent behaviour involving bodily injury to other living beings; (2) stealing, involving the violation of the property rights of another to satisfy one's own greed and selfish instincts, and (3) unchastity, involving the wrong indulgence in sensuous pleasures specially relating to one's sexual life.

¹ S. V. 145.

² S. V. 145.

³ M. I. 15f, I. 40f.

The evils manifested in verbal behaviour are: (1) flue speech, (2) harsh or unpleasant speech expression of anger and ill will, (3) slanderous speech intended at the creation of dissension and conflict between people, and (4) gossip or frivolous talk which serves no meaningful or useful purpose.

The evil manifested in mental activity are: (1) thoughts of intense greed, (2) thoughts of ill will and (3) wrong or mistaken beliefs harmful to one's moral life. These constitute the standard list of ten *akusala* enumerated in the Buddhist canonical scriptures. The moral precepts and practices that Buddhism prescribes are meant to get rid of the above negative forms of behaviour and replace them with compassionate action. Moral living consists, according to Buddhism, primarily in the abstention from the above *akusala*

V. 3. The Life of the *Saṅgha* in Monastery

V. 3. 1. An Ethical Life

When Lord Buddha set up his *saṅgha* for the first time, His first preoccupation was to lay down such a code of conduct so as to assure a perfect harmony among His religious members. So He taught six *Dhammas* to be remembered, when the monks of Kosambi quarelled with each other. His upbraidings were severe and straight forward.

The Blessed One spoke that there are six *Dhammas* that should be remembered, building up mutual love, mutual respect, leading to harmony, to no quarrel, to mutual understanding, to common aspiration. The six *Dhammas* are: (1) The monk performs his bodily activities imbued with love towards his religious companions, in public as well as in private. (2) The monk performs his vocal activities ... (3) his mental

activities imbued with love towards his religious companions in public as well as in private. (4) Anything that is accepted according to the *Dhamma*, lawfully, even offerings deposited in the begging bowl, the monk should not be the one who does not share them, he should share them with his virtuous religious companions. (5) As to monastic rules, which are unbroken, unspoilt, unsullied, which have no impurities, leading to emancipation, praised by the wise, which are not to be grasped at, leading to concentration, the monk should live in keeping with these rules along with his religious companions, in public as well as in private. (6) As to the views which belong to the Noble Ones, leading upwards, helping those who practise them, putting an end to suffering, the monk should uphold these views along with his religious companions, in public as well as in private.

And these six *Dhammas* should be remembered, building up mutual love, mutual respect, leading to harmony, to no quarrel, to mutual understanding, to common aspiration.¹

The Lord Buddha also teaches Anuruddhā how all of *bhikkhus* have lived happily in harmony with each other, like milk mixed with water, looking at each other with sympathetic eyes. They set up bodily, vocal and mental activities imbued with love, in front of them and behind them. And they should give up their own mind and live in accordance with their mind. Although we have different bodies, it seems as if we have the same mind.²

Again, *bhikkhus* insist before the Buddha that when they are living quarrelling with each other, competing, disputing, arguing with each

¹ M. I. 322.

² M. I. 206.

other, harming each other with the weapons of the tongue, during these times you behave towards your religious companions, with bodily activities not imbued with love, with vocal activities not imbued with love, with mental activities not imbued with love in public as well as in private. And they see that they are living quarrelling with each other, competing, disputing, arguing with each other, harming each other with the weapons of the tongue. They do not try to understand each other, to accept understanding, you do not try to make peace with each other, to accept peace settlement. Thus, they will come to misfortune, to suffering for a long time to come.¹

As we have known, the world cannot have peace until men and nations renounce selfish desires, give up racial arrogance, and eradicate egoistical lust for possession and power. Wealth cannot secure happiness. Buddhism alone can effect the necessary change of heart and bring about the only real disarmament-that of the mind.

“Deities are fighting with the Asurā,
Human beings are fighting among themselves.
They are not fighters among the fighters
Peaceful while others are self-armed.
Not holders among the holders,
These, I pay homage to them.”²

And Sakka, king of the deities spoke these verses:

"Those who have powers but show patience with the weak,

¹ M. I. 321.

² S. I. 236.

That I call forbearance supreme,
Ever being patient with the weak,
If the strength of the fool is called strength
Then, how we can say of a strong man: "He is a weakling."
The strong one protects the *Dhamma*,
With his refusal to use words of retort.
Worse of the two, are those who, being scolded, have scolded back.
But he who, being scolded, does not scold back,
He is a double winner,
A victor over himself,
And a victor over others. "¹

“... *Idha kho taṃ bhikkhave sobhatha, yaṃ tumhe evaṃ svaakhyāte dhammavinaya pabbajitā samānā khamā ca bhaveyyātha soratā cā ti ...*”²

"O *Bhikkhu*, you should make this well expounded *Dhamma-Vinaya* shine, with your forbearance and gentleness, having gone forth into homelessness."³

"Truly, he lives in happiness,
The *Brāhmaṇa* who is utterly extinguished,
Does not cleave to sense-desires,
Cool he is, and without germs to a new life,
All clingings are cut down,

¹ S. I. 223.

² S. I. 222.

³ S. I. 222.

Pains in the heart are overcome.

Serene and calm, he leads a life of happiness,

And his mind has attained peace and calmness."¹

The *Tathāgata*, the Buddha,

Has compassion for every creature.

.....

Whoso does not accept confession,

When people speak out their faults,

With inner anger, with inclination to ill-will,

He is not free from hatred,

I have no pleasure for hatred,

So I accept your confession."²

V. 3. 2. Its Restrictions

The other three kinds of probation are of the nature of penal discipline for a certain period to be submitted to by *bhikkhus* who fall under an ecclesiastical censure. We read of a stupid *bhikkhu* who violated rules by living in lay society in unlawful association with the world, for which he was placed on probation under an Act of Subordination passed against him. Later on, he rehabilitated himself by correct conduct. The Act of Subordination would also be passed to punish the offences of staying too long in a public rest-house and frequenting a village on more than ordinary occasions.³ Numerous, indeed, are the forbidden practices of the

¹ S. I. 212.

² S. I. 25.

³ Cv. I. 9, 1.

monks under training. They resemble those forbidden to the *Brahmachārin* under the *Brahmanical* system. They are detailed in several texts.¹ The following practices among others are forbidden: injuring plants or vegetables (whence agriculture is tabooed as an occupation of the *bhikkhu*), storing up property, witnessing public spectacles (like theatrical representations, recitations, concerts, musters and reviews of troops,² engaging in games detrimental to progress in virtue, adorning bodies, indulging in mean talk (including fortune-telling), wrangling and acting as a go-between (between kings, ministers, etc.).

V. 3. 3. The Solitary Life and Its Limitations

Up to now we have been considering the system under which the monks live together in a state of mutual dependence and relationship for purposes of their self-culture. But the quest of the ideal which leads these monks out of home into homelessness would not make some of them accept the half-way house of a monastery, but seek the solitude of the forest for a life of meditation. "Many of the Order, unfitted for taking part, even as teachers, in the battle of life, spent all their days in seclusion, being known as forester *bhikkhus*. Others sought the silence of the upland woods and caves to complete the utter mastery of detachment, requisite to usher in the cool and peace of *nibbāna*, or to recruit from wearing mission work."³ It was, however, the elderly and maturer *bhikkhus* who were eligible for the forester's life, as has been already stated. The Buddha himself would sometimes seek in solitude a respite from the worries caused by "litigious, contentious, quarrelsome, and

¹ Cv. I. 13; also see *Tevijja Sutta*, the *Sutta* No. 13, D. I.

² Pā. 43.

³ Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 204.

disputatious *bhikkhus*” and like the tucker would “take delight in dwelling alone in the forest.”¹ We read of the Venerable Bhaddiya living "in the forest, at the foot of a tree, in solitude, but without fear or anxiety, with mind as peaceful as an antelope's."² Another monk, Kassapagotta, lived alone at Vāsabha-gāma in Kāśī, where he was visited by some *bhikkhus* whom he entertained as guests on proceeds of his begging for several days till their travel-weariness was over.³ We are also told of another monk keeping *vassa* alone, receiving robes and dividing them among incoming monks not exceeding four in number.⁴ Life in solitude was sustained by a love of it for its own sake which utters itself significantly in Buddhist literature. This point has been well brought out by Mrs. Rhys Davids.⁵ It is pleasant to see how largely the joy of life in the wild (generally supposed to be a phase of modern consciousness only) gets blended with the spiritual aspirations.

We see him become in heart a wild creature, “filled with the forest sense of things, bathing in mountain tarn, listening in his cave to the music of the rains and to the crash of the storm, joying in the beauty of crag and cloud, of verdure and blossom, of bird-life and the cries of forest-creatures.”⁶ We may sample this early Wordsworthian note in some typical passages cited by Mrs. Rhys Davids from *the Psalms of the Brothers and Sisters*. "To him for whom nothing is left, exceeding good it is that he do live in woods alone ... to lead the forest-life the Buddha praised ... I'll seek the jungle that I love, the haunt of elephants ... lone and unmated in the lovely woods." Again: under the lowering sky and

¹ Mv. X. 4. 7.

² Cv. VII. 1. 6.

³ Mv. IX. I.

⁴ Mv. VIII. 24.

⁵ Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 205f.

⁶ Miln. 353. (On the Alpine qualities of a *Bhikkhu*).

thundering clouds "the brother sits within the hollow of the hills alone, rapt in thought's ecstasy-no higher bliss is given to men than this."¹ *Dhammapāla's* commentary on these poems gives biographical details of each Brother's life. One *thera* who loved the woods was, we learn, known as Woodland (*Vana*)-*Vachchha*. Of another *thera*, *Usabha*, we read: "Finishing his novitiate he went to study in the forests of Kosala at the foot of the mountains. Noticing the loveliness of the woods and the mountains, he said: These trees and creepers are unconscious, yet by the season's fulfilment have they won growth. Why should not I, who have also obtained a suitable season, win growth in the things that are good?."

As Oldenberg points out that the comparative estimation of solitude and of life with others could naturally be only a purely personal matter, and so it appears in the sacred texts.² Sometimes we read expressions like these: 'Let him seek out remote places, therein to dwell; there let him walk that he may become free from all bands. If he does not find peace there, let him live in the Order, guarding his soul from sins with wakeful spirit'.³ And then it is said again: "If he finds a wise associate, a noble comrade of upright walk, then let him live with him, overcoming all temptation. If he does not find one, then let him go forth alone, as a king who abandons his conquered kingdom, like the elephant into the forest."⁴

The fact of the matter is that even among *bhikkhus* who live in the solitude of the woods, it is very unusual for them to live absolutely alone without having other *bhikkhus* in the neighbourhood. The provisions of

¹ Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm of the Early Buddhists: Psalm of the Brethren*, p. 252.

² Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*, p. 367.

³ Miln. 402.

⁴ Dh. v328.

the laws of the Order are wholly based on the supposition that small knots of brethren living near each other come together, who depend on each other to unite for confession, to instruct one another, to strengthen one another in doubt and temptation, to care for one another in sickness, and to keep up spiritual discipline among themselves.¹ Besides the need of attending confessional meetings, the solitude of the *bhikkhus* living in forests was further limited by the needs of life itself. They had to live sufficiently close to a village to be able to reach it on their daily begging rounds.² We have already noticed the case of a *bhikkhu* living in the forest being visited by guests whom he fed by begging for alms. A *bhikkhu* 'dwelling in the woods' 'should rise betimes', place his bowl in the bag, hang it over his shoulder, arrange his upper robe (over both shoulders), get on his sandals, put the utensils of wood and earthenware in order, close the *doorway* and *lattice*, and then leave his lodging-place". And a *bhikkhu* living in the woods should keep drinking-water, and water for washing, and fire, and drill sticks and tinder, and walking staves ready."³

Thus the Buddhists, as in other matters, followed the middle path even in regard to the solitary life. The limitations upon the seclusion of the solitary *bhikkhus* are clearly indicated in the very rule of conduct prescribed for them.⁴ This shows how he must be tied to the neighbourhood of the haunts of humanity and to other material articles (indicated by the italicized words) for the support of his life.

¹ Vin. I. 302.

² Cv. VIII. 6.

³ Cv. VIII. 6.

⁴ Cv. VIII. 6.

V. 4. The Buddha's Mission of Propagation as the Standard for Ideal Life of the *Saṅgha*

In summing up His 45 years of preaching the *Dhamma*, Lord Buddha declared explicitly that He did preach only suffering, the end of suffering, and nothing else.¹ War brings up suffering. Peace means the end of suffering. That is why He is called "A Messenger for Peace".

He exhorted His disciples to go forth to preach the *Dhamma* and to explain the *brahmacariya* (the holy life) for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the advantage, for the happiness of the deities and human beings.²

Lord Buddha made it very clear that His purpose in preaching the *Dhamma* was not to quarrel with other religious leaders and to compete with antagonistic doctrines. There is no quarrel in His preaching. He just shows the way to enlightenment and liberation from all *Dukkha*.

Lord Buddha is always filled with love and compassion for all living beings. Even when He takes rest, He never foregoes His compassion, and His preaching is performed out of compassion for the world.

"...pubbe cāhaṃ bhikkhave etarahi ca dukkhañ-c'eva paññāpemi dukkhassa ca nirodhaṃ ..."³

"O *bhikkhus*, in former times as well as now-a-days, I have expounded only suffering and the cessation of suffering."

¹ M. I. 140.

² D. II. 45, III. 211; S. I. 105.

³ M. I. 140.

When the *saṅgha* have sixty-four *Arahants* in the world, the Lord Buddha encouraged His disciples:

"O *bhikkhus*, you should go forth, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the advantage, for the welfare, for the happiness of the deities and human beings. Do not go two together. O *bhikkhus*, teach the *Dhamma*, good at the beginning, good in the middle, good at the end, with meaning and with form. Reveal the holy life that is complete and entirely pure."¹

With endless love and compassion of the Buddha, He declared the *Dhamma* with only purpose destroying quarrels by the *Dhamma* quarrels.

"... *Nāham Bhikkhave lokena vivadāmi. Loko va mayā vivadati. Na bhikkhave dhammavādi kenaci lokasmim vivadati ...*"²

"O *bhikkhus*, I do not quarrel with the world. It is the world that quarrels with me. O *bhikkhus*, a preacher of the *Dhamma* quarrels with nobody in the world".

Another evident is a dialogue between the Buddha and His doctor, Jīvaka:

"O Blessed One, I have heard this: "How lofty it is, when the heart is filled with love and compassion. O Blessed One, may the Blessed One bear witness to me this fact: The Blessed One is always filled with love and compassion" - "O Jīvaka, what is called lust, hatred and delusion, owing to which anger arises, this lust, this hatred, this delusion has been eradicated by the *Tathāgata*, cut off

¹ S. I. 105.

² S. III. 139.

at roots, made like a *tāḷa* tree stump, unable to sprout up again, unable to spring up again in the future. O Jīvaka, if it is what you have the intention to refer to, I share your opinion". - "O Blessed One, this is what I have the intention to refer to."¹

The Buddha always spread His compassion for all living beings day and night, awake and asleep like following verse:

" ... *Jaggam na sanke na pi bhemi sottum,*

Rattindivā nānutapanti māmam.

Hāniṃ na passāmi kuhinci loke

Tasmā supe sabbabhūtānukampīti ... "²

"Awake, I have no worry.

Asleep, no fear arises in me.

Days and nights, regret does not disturb me!

I do not see any harm in the whole world.

Hence, I do sleep

With compassion for all living beings."

The Lord Buddha once again affirmed that one who is free from delusion will be a living being, not affected by delusion, is born into the world for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the interest, for the welfare, for the happiness of the deities and of human beings.³

"You are all-knowing!

¹ M. II. 368-370.

² S. I. 111.

³ M. I. 83.

You preach the *Dhamma*,
Out of compassion for all living beings.
You have unveiled the curtain;
Endowed with eyes that see all round.
Without impurities,
You outshine the whole world!"¹

V. 5. The Moral Life of the *Saṅgha* in Monastery

V. 5. 1. Four Possessions and Eight Requisites

Of the personal belongings of a *bhikkhu*, the most obvious are his robes and alms-bowl, often referred to as a single unit: *paṭṭacīvaram*. Various additions are made to this. The possessions of a *bhikkhu* bear the common name *parikkhāra*. Earlier texts refer to four such possessions: *cīvarapiṇḍapāta-senāsana-gilānapac-cayabhesajja-parikkhārā*, i.e., robe, alms-bowl, bed and seat, and medicine as help in illness.² Later eight such requisites are enumerated: three robes, bowl, a razor, a needle, the girdle, a water-strainer.³ Various enumerations are given in non-Buddhist sources of the requisites of recluses. We can safely assume that neither the belongings of the wanderers nor those of the monasticized *bhikkhus* were strictly limited by law. The ideal of non-possession, however, demanded that they be frugal and limited to the bare minimum.

In the *āvāsa*, however, which housed a permanent community there was a greater need to acquire property. It is obvious that the needs of a large group living together are greater than those of an individual.

¹ Sn. v378.

² Vin. III, 132; D. III. 268; S. IV. 288, 291; Cnid. 523.

³ J. I. 65, IV. 342; SA. I. 206.

The movable as well as the immovable property of an *āvāsa* belonged to the *saṅgha* and no individual monk had a right to dispose of it.¹ The common ownership of property is the legal outcome of the ideal set before the monks by the Buddha that they should “divide without partiality, and share in common with their upright companions, all such things as they receive in accordance with the just provisions of the order, down even to the mere contents of a begging-bowl.”² Individuals had only the right of use of commonly owned property.

Once the legendary "six *bhikkhus*" ejected the occupants of a *vihāra* with the excuse that "a *vihāra* belongs to the Order." This principle is not disputed though the Buddha disapproved of their conduct.³

The *Cullavagga* gives a list of non-transferable goods classified into five categories:

- (1) An *ārāma* or the site of an *ārāma*.
- (2) A *vihāra* or the site of a *vihāra*.
- (3) Couches, chairs, mattresses, squatting mats.
- (4) Copper pots, copper boxes, copper jars, copper vessels, adzes, hatchets, axes, hoes, spades.
- (5) Jungle-rope, bamboo, coarse grass, reeds, grass, clay, wooden goods, clay goods.⁴

¹ Pāc. 82.

² D. II. 80.

³ Cv. VI. 11, 1.

⁴ Vin. II. 170.

V. 5. 2. The Dress

For the dress of monks, *paṃsukūlacīvara* was the rule while linen, cotton, silk, woollen garments, coarse cloth, hempen¹ were extra concessions (*atirekalābha*). It was at the instance of Jivaka Komārabhacca that Buddha permitted his followers to accept the robes (*cīvara*) offered by laymen. These could be made of six kinds of materials mentioned above.² A monk was allowed only three garments (*cīvaras*), viz., *saṅghāṭi*, *uttarāsaṅgha* and *antaravāsaka*.³ The *cīvaras* had to be made out of cut pieces of cloth so that when sewn together would look like cultivated fields.⁴ There were several rules related to the dyeing of *cīvaras*, drying dyed cloths, division and distribution of the *cīvara* among the recipients, and so forth. In division and distribution many difficulties cropped up, leading to the creation of office-bearers like *cīvarabhājaka* (distributor of robes), *bhaṇḍāgāra* (store-keeper), *cīvarabhāhaka* (keeper of robes), and *cīvarapatiggāthaka* (receiver of robes). Each of these office-bearers was formally appointed by the *saṅgha* by unanimous consent.⁵ The *Pātimokkha-sutta* takes notice of several irregularities in the distribution and use of *cīvaras* and so prescribes punishment for the irregularities. Besides *cīvaras*, the *bhikkhus* were allowed to accept mantles (*pāvāra*), blankets (*kambala*), towels (*mukhapuñchaka colaka*), bags (*parikkhāracolaka*), bathing cloths (*udaka-sāṭika*), and bandages for itches, wounds etc. (*kaṇḍupaticchādi*).⁶ It cannot be definitely stated when the use of shoes by monks came into vogue. According to the tradition, permission was granted by the Buddha for the use of shoes

¹ Mv. I. 30. 4.

² Mv. VIII. 3. 1.

³ Mv. VIII. 13. 5.

⁴ Mv. VIII. 12. 2.

⁵ Mv. VIII. 5-9.

⁶ Mv. VIII. 17-27.

when *Sāgata* was the servitor of the Buddha. Once privilege was given, abuses came into existence. To counteract these abuses, several restrictions had to be imposed regarding colour, shape and material of the shoes¹ and the use of those in the cloisters (*caṅkamaṇa*) or in the presence of the *upajjhāya*, and so forth.

We have discussed above the customs of the *parivrājakas* with regard to dress. The Buddhist ideal was the use of rags taken from dust heaps. This, however, may not have been the universal practice even at the beginning. It certainly fell into disuse with the rise of monastic living. Monks were allowed to accept gifts of robes from lay donors, and there was the annual distribution of material (*kaṭhina*) for robes at the end of the rainy season. The practice of getting new robes at this time may have been a very old custom, for the recluses would have felt the need for new clothes before setting out on their wandering after the rains.

A *bhikkhu* possessed three robes (*ticīvara*): an under garment called *antaravāsaka* or *nivāsana* hanging down from the waist to which it was tied with a girdle (*kāyabandhana*), the *uttarāsaṅga* covering the upper part of the body and reaching below the knee, and the *saṅghātī*, which is a cloak to be wrapped round the body.² This last is often said to have been folded in four and used as a seat.³

The vestige of the old custom of making robes by stitching together rags is found in the rule that the *kaṭhina* cloth should be made of at least five pieces hemmed together.⁴ A robe of a single piece of cloth was

¹ Mv. V. 1. 30ff.

² Mv. VIII. 13, 5.

³ D. II. 134.

⁴ Mv. VII. 1, 6.

forbidden as it would make the monk similar to lay folk.¹ Quite a spurious reason for this practice is given in *Mahāvagga*:² the Buddha wishes the robes of the monks to look like the paddy fields of Magadha laid out in square patches.

The *pātimokkha* further lays down that "when a *bhikkhu* has acquired a new robe one of the three kinds of disfiguring marks must be applied by him, that is green, or mud, or dark brown."³ Here is another attempt to salvage something of the old custom of wearing thrown away rags which were naturally discoloured.

V. 5. 3. The Food

The rules regarding food are not so important as that of the raiment. The *bhikkhus* took only one meal a day under the plea that it was beneficial for good health and that too after the midday.⁴ Besides begging at the odd hours of night aroused suspicion and brought many a *bhikkhu* in trouble.⁵ The alms consisted of cooked food and were received in bowls alone.⁶ Great sobriety of manner was to be kept while touring the village for alms and a *bhikkhu* was to accept anything the householder gave without the least displeasure. The alms were brought to the *vihāra*. The *bhikkhus* used to dine in a hall, the places occupied according to seniority. The eight senior most *bhikkhus* reserved the first eight seats, others coming occupied the seats as they used to come in.⁷ The Buddha lays clown a long prescription of rules as the etiquette the *bhikkhus* should observe

¹ Mv. VII. 1, 6.

² Mv. VIII. 12.

³ Pāc. 58.

⁴ Pāc. 37.

⁵ Mv. II. 2, 6.

⁶ Cv. V. 10.

⁷ Cv. V. 18.

while taking their food and receiving the alms.¹ Most of the *sekhiya* rules come under this class and are needlessly detailed.

The Buddhists had like their contemporaries strong notions about the purity and impurity of food. However, like other *titthiyas*, they had no objection in receiving food from outcasts, pregnant women etc., neither did they refuse things like fish, rice-gruel etc., as other ascetics did. They could take animal food as well. The only precaution taken was that a *bhikkhu* was forbidden to eat flesh of a beast purposely killed for his sake,² and the flesh of useful animals as horses, elephants etc.,³ and of other animals like dogs etc.⁴

V. 5. 4. The Management

We have so far seen how the *saṅgha* exercised its authority in regulating even the most personal affairs of a *bhikkhu*, and guarded him from falling into low depths. The guardianship vested in the invisible *saṅgha* become manifest through the exercise of various laws, and through various agents elected by the *bhikkhus* themselves. The departments were fairly distinguished and each department had an honorary head or supervisor. It is probably for the first time in the history of the world-polity, we see a clear distinction made between functions and appointments of persons made on the two modern principles of the division of labour and democracy.

The management of the *saṅgha* on the basic principles of republican authority and equality again reveals the Buddha not as a mere ascetic uninterested in the world, but as a shrewd and quick eyed

¹ Sek. 27- 40, 41-50.

² Mv. VIII. 31-14.

³ Mv. VI. 7, 23, 10.

⁴ Mv. VI. 23, 12.

politician who picked up the best out of the controlling and progressive forces of actual life and applied them to his system. The Buddha has shown common sense and practical wisdom in the appointment of various supervisors in each of the departments as *Kauṭilya* has done in ascribing the post and the work of each of the officers in the *Adhyakśapracāra*.

First come the *Upajjhāyas* and *Ācariyas* who exerted a direct control on the novices that were not yet called authorised members of the *Āvasa*; because it was only men and women on whom *upasampadā* was bestowed were regarded as recognized and responsible members of the *saṅgha*. Thus in the outset, the *saṅgha* was naturally divided in two groups of the tutors and the taught. We have already noticed that the *Ācariyas* and *Upajjhāyas* were directly responsible for the spiritual as well as moral and physical welfare of the *sāmaṇera*. The appointment of a *sāmaṇerapesaka*,¹ therefore, seems superfluous. What work he really, did, does not at all become clear from the accounts of the *Vinaya*.

V. 5. 5. The Monastery (*Vihāra*)

This part discusses the history of Buddhist monastic dwellings with a focus on their significance as sacred places and centers of moral and ritual practice. The entry on Monastic dwellings provides an overview of the development of early Buddhist monastic residences. The term *vihāra*, "abode" or "dwelling,"² is one of a number of terms applied to the dwelling places of Buddhist monks and nuns in early Indian Buddhist literature. While the term was sometimes used to refer to the individual structures in which members of the *saṅgha* resided, the word came to be

¹ Cv. VI. 21.

² T.W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (eds.), *Pāli-English Dictionary*, p. 642; G. P. Malasekera, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VII, pp. 33- 40.

applied to whole monastic complexes, which eventually comprised a wide range of structures such as residential cells, relic monuments (*stūpas*), Bodhi tree shrines, image halls, teaching halls, structures dedicated to the important *saṅgha* rituals of higher ordination and bi-monthly *pātimokkha* recitation, libraries, and a number of buildings devoted to various practical purposes such as food preparation and sanitation.

Scholars generally agree that the earliest members of the *saṅgha* moved from place to place, begging for their food. This is consistent with the ideal of solitude and detachment from all material possessions found as a continuing theme throughout early Buddhist literature. This ideal was just that: a highly valued standard that has been central to the community's distinctive ethos but that is probably not indicative of how most Buddhist monks and nuns have actually lived. The disciplinary provisions set forth in the surviving *Vinaya* texts point to a form of monastic life far more enmeshed in reciprocal relationships of interdependence with lay supporters than this ideal of solitude, detachment, and homelessness would suggest. This ideal nevertheless continued to be ritually and symbolically enacted through ordination rituals (including head shaving and the donning of distinctive monastic clothing), comprehensive rules prescribing the external deportment of monks and nuns, and through the material organization of monastic spaces which have served both symbolic and practical purposes. And it has remained an ideal more actively pursued by the minority of Buddhist renunciants who have chosen to live in remote caves and forest hermitages.

Early monastic complexes tended to be constructed along trade routes and on the outskirts of towns and urban centers, affording lay

patrons ready access to *Dhamma* instruction and opportunities for merit-making, while providing the resident *saṅgha* members with some degree of solitude for their religious practices.

Given the central roles that monastic ordination and adherence to monastic discipline have played in defining a fundamental separation between members of the *saṅgha* and the community of lay Buddhists, it is not surprising that special ordination halls and rituals for establishing monastery boundaries (*sīmā*) develops. Apart from the special shrines within the monastery precincts that represent the Buddha's continued presence within the community (e.g. *stūpas*, image halls), the ordination hall holds the greatest ritual significance for *saṅgha* members. This prominence is often reflected in its physical construction, by elevating it or physically separating it from the surrounding space. The *saṅgha* members gather regularly within this ritually and physically defined space to reaffirm their disciplinary purity through the *pātimokkha* ceremony, and to recall the transition that each of them has made from the householder's life to membership in the *saṅgha* as they introduce new members to the community. And as Buddhist monks and nuns ritually mark their more symbolic and spatial separation from the life of the laity, a separation physically embodied in the *vihāra*'s distinctive structures, so too lay Buddhists commonly prepare for their temporary ascent to the higher religious status of the *vihāra* through purifying gestures such as removing their footwear and washing their hands.

V. 5. 6. The Monastic Properties

Property was always felt to be against the ideal of poverty of world renunciation. In the human condition, some goods are absolutely necessary, and community living made them even more so. However, the

abuse of such concessions was an ever present danger. To avoid it detailed rules are found in both the *pātimokkha* and the *khandhaka* regarding what is "allowable" and what is not.

For a proper understanding of monastic properties, it is pertinent to have a brief knowledge of Buddhist monasticism. It is within the ambit of monasticism that monastic life begins to exist. Monastic properties form part and parcel of monastic life of the *saṅgha* or the *bhikkhus*. Referring to the characteristic features of Buddhist monasticism, it is said: "All alike (i.e. those who enter the Order) were bound by the vow of poverty, relinquished all personal or individual possession of worldly goods, and sought in meditation and spiritual endeavour that deliverance from the bounds of existence and misery which, the Buddha taught, could never be achieved in the turmoil and distraction of a life in the world. To indicate, therefore, the life of renunciation and strenuous pursuit of the highest aim to which they pledged themselves, the monks were known as *bhikkhus*, *samaṇas*. The community of the *saṅgha*, and with the Buddha himself and the *Dhamma*, the sacred rule or law, formed the Buddhist triad."¹

The aforesaid statement highlights that 'monasticism' is a form of religious life deviated from the pleasures and possessions of a householder's life, with a view to gain spiritual advancement. In the context of Buddhist monasticism, one who enters into a monastic life or the Order should for all purposes aim at the extinction of *dukkha* or unsatisfactoriness in order to put an end to recurrence of births and deaths.

¹ Jame Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 797.

Of course, in inception and intention, the monasteries were not the established houses of the monks. To the latter, no permanent abodes were assigned, but they were to follow the wandering life of ascetic or beggar, dependent for their livelihood upon the gifts of the laity, their only shelter the trees of the forests or booths constructed of leaves and branches (*parṇasālā*, *paṇṇasālā*).

Only during *vassa*, the season of the rains, when travelling became impracticable or could be prosecuted only at grave risk of injury to living beings, was it incumbent upon them to remain in a definite place or permanent building. Caves either natural or artificially excavated in the rock seem to have been among the favorite dwelling places of Buddhist monks. The Buddha is represented as giving permission for five different kinds of abodes: *vihāras*, *aḍḍhayogas*, storied dwellings, attics, and caves.¹ The more elaborate and permanent dwellings were in the first instance, apparently always the gifts of wealthy laymen who desired in this way to do honour to Gautama Buddha himself or to the Order, which he founded. A usual name for the larger monasteries was *saṅghārāma*, the abode or delight of the *saṅgha*; and the term *vihāra* was employed also to denote the temple where the images were enshrined, in a building which in the great monasteries at least, was usually distinct from the main hall."²

It is thus seen, that the earliest monks lead a wandering life except during the *vassa* season, when they lived in permanent dwelling places such as caves. With the passage of time, the Buddhist monks began to lead a settled life in villages and cities, where they were provided with

¹ Vin. II. 146.

² Jame Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 797.

ārāmas and *vihāras* in the form of permanent dwelling places by the devoted laymen and laywomen to gain merits by such offerings or donations. The *Cullavagga* points out evidence of the transition to settled life of the *bhikkhus* as following "... and at that time no permission had been given to the *bhikkhus* by the Blessed one with respect to dwellings. So the *bhikkhus* dwelt now here, now there in the woods, at the foot of trees, on hill sides, in grottoes, in mountain caves, in open plains, and heaps of straw, and at early morning they came in from this place or that place ...".¹ This scene was witnessed by the great merchant of Rājagaha who was amazed at it and offered to build houses for the monks. He addressed the monks thus: "If Sirs, I was to have dwellings created for you. Would you take up your abode in those dwellings?" "Not so O" householder, dwellings have not been allowed by the Blessed One."

"Then Sirs, ask the Blessed One about it and let me know."

This prompted the Buddha to sanction the use of buildings. In this manner "I allow you, O, *bhikkhus*, abodes of five kinds, *vihāras* (residences), *aḍḍhayogas* (lofts), *pāsā* (mansions), *hammiya* (attics), *guhā* (caves)."²

After this sanction (given by the Buddha), the merchant of Rājagaha had sixty houses built for the monks. They were built in one day and hence could not have been very substantial. Nevertheless, here was a decisive step in the movement towards a fully organized monastic life.³

¹ Vin. II. 146; Cf. D. I. 71, M. III. 3; A. II. 210.

² Vin. II. 146.

³ Gunaratne Panabokke, *History of Buddhist Saṅgha in India and Sri Lanka*, pp. 22.

Not only buildings were offered to the *saṅgha*, but parks (*ārāmas*) were also offered by wealthy benefactors. Such grants were made during the lifetime of the Buddha. King Bimbisāra of Magadha offered the Veluvana Park to the Blessed One. *Mahāvagga* gives an account of this offering. It states: "... and the Magadha King Seniya Bimbisāra took a golden vessel (with water in it) to be poured over the Buddha's hand and dedicated the garden to the Blessed one saying. I give this Veluvana pleasure garden, Lord, to the fraternity of monks with the Buddha at its head. The Blessed one accepted the *ārāma*. And in consequence of this event, the Buddha thus addressed the *bhikkhus*, I allow you, O' *bhikkhus*, to receive donation of an *ārāma*."¹

Although at the earliest stage of monastic life of *bhikkhūs*, they had eight requisites namely, three robes, a bowl, a razor, a needle, a girdle and a water-strainer which can be described as the bare minimum movable properties, yet with the affluxion of time permanent buildings as dwelling places and *ārāmas* or parks were donated to the *saṅgha*. Such donations were in the nature of immovable properties. It should be noted that when king Bimbisāra dedicated the Veluvana Park, it was done in such a manner to have it for the entire *saṅgha* headed by the Buddha. The Buddha's acceptance was for the entire fraternity of the monks. Thus, it is crystal clear that at the earliest stage of Buddhist monasticism, there was no private ownership of immovable properties, and donations or offerings of such properties were for the entire of brotherhood of the *saṅgha*.

It could thus be seen that any donations in the nature of properties that are needed for the use of the *saṅgha* have been given to the *saṅgha* of the Four Quarters and thereby, the ownership of such properties was

¹ Vin. I. 143.

made common. The enjoyment of such properties would be by the monks of a particular monastery, but the acceptance of them is on the basis of *catuddisa bhikkhu saṅgha*. When the ownership becomes common, that is to say, that the monastic properties are for the entire *saṅgha* for their common use, attachment to them is insignificant, which is conducive for spiritual advancement.

From the wandering life to the settled life of *bhikkhus*, the necessity of dwelling places and gardens or parks (*ārāma*) arose, and the lay benefactors having realized such necessities donated them as *saṅghika* properties with the approval of the Buddha during his lifetime. The term *saṅghika* is derived from *saṅgha*, and it means properly dedicated to the whole body of *saṅgha*. Though monastic properties began to increase with the passage of time, they were given or donated by the laity to the *saṅgha*, as common properties of the *saṅgha* of the Four Quarters. The *saṅghika* system did not permit the system of owing *pudgalika* or private properties and also did not affect the spiritual life of monks as attachment to them was not foremost in their minds. Buildings provided them with proper shelter, parks provided as wholesome venues for meditation. Without having vested interest in such properties on an individual basis, monks used them with a spirit of common ownership as means of attaining their spiritual goals.

During the lifetime of the Buddha himself as many as twenty-nine permanent sites and buildings were donated to the Buddha and his followers (*saṅgha*). There were 18 in Rājagaha. 4 in Vesālī, 3 in Kosala and 4 in Kosamī.¹ To constitute a dedication to the *saṅgha* it has been considered to have the following requisites: (1) a donor, (2) a donee (3) a

¹ Gunaratne Panabokke, *History of Buddhist Saṅgha in India and Sri Lanka*, pp. 23; Vin. III. 179.

gift, (4) an assembly of four or more *bhikkhus*, (5) the property, (6) the donor and donee must appear before the assembly of *bhikkhus* and (7) water must be poured into the hands of the donee or his representative.¹

The Buddha himself declared to the monks that there are five things should not be disposed of by an order or by a group or by an individual. (1) Monastery, a site for a monastery. (2) A dwelling place, a tile for a dwelling place. (3) A couch, a chair, a mattress, a squatting mat. (4) A copper pot, a copper box, a copper jar, a copper vessel, an adze, a hatchet, an axe, a hoe. (5) Jungle-rope, bamboo, coarse grass, reeds, tina-grass, clay, wooden goods, clay goods.² These movable and immovable monastic properties belonged to the entire *saṅgha* and they cannot be disposed of. But they are meant for the use of the *saṅgha*.

The ideal in ancient Buddhist recluseship was the complete renunciation of material wealth. However, when the community life began to progress and *vihāras* and *āvāsas* came into being, various kinds of articles and things identified as belongings of the monks came within the purview of monastic properties. Some monks had many goods and requisites and when they passed away there had been claims by some other for such properties. The *Mahāvagga* refers to a case where an incident happened when a monk died, and two other monks claimed the belongings of the deceased monk. This happened when the Buddha was living. When this incident was brought to the notice of the Buddha he laid down a rule. In the following manner, the Buddha says:

“Monks, the Order is he, owner of the bowl and robes of a monk who has passed away. But truly those who lend the sick are of

¹ H. W. Tambiah, *Journal*, RAS (Ceylon), Vol. VIII, part I, p. 82.

² Vin. V. 239.

great service, I allow you. Monks, to give through the Order three robes and the bowl to those who tended the sick; to distribute through the Order that is present whatever few goods, few requisites that are, but whatever many goods, many requisites there are, these are for the Order of the Four Quarters, those who have come in, those who have, not come in. They are not to be disposed of, not to be divided up.”¹

Thus, according to the rule laid down those monks who attended on the deceased monk were given a few robes and the bowl and other properties devolved on the Order of *saṅgha*.

Dr Panabokke says that monasteries from very early times were in possession of lands. May not have been in the lifetime of the Buddha, it may have been during the time at which the Canon was compiled.² Thus, it appears that there has been a gradual increase of monastic properties, both movables and immovable, although at the inception the belongings were confined to the bare minimum. This happened with increase of grants given by the kings and lay donors who were interested in the welfare of the *saṅgha* and the *sāsana*. Grants of properties came to be made to monks residing in particular areas or monasteries, and though such grants were accepted on a *saṅghika* basis, they were possessed by those particular monks for whom they were given.

There had been a valid and good reason to grant lands to the monks living in monasteries. The laity at all times catered to the needs of the *saṅgha* both as a custom and an obligation. They also believed that looking after the *saṅgha* was an act of accruing merit, which assured

¹ Vin. I. 303-304.

² Gunaratne Panabokke, *History of Buddhist Saṅgha in India and Sri Lanka*, p. 129.

heavenly bliss. The continuance of supporting the *saṅgha* became difficult at times of political upheavals and dwindling economic factors due to famines and unstable political conditions from time to time. During such periods, the monks found it extremely difficult to maintain themselves. Rulers as well as wealthy laymen considered these calamities and grants in the form of lands were given to the *saṅgha* with the intention that with the income derived out of them, they would be able to tide over such difficult times. Donations of lands to monasteries became a popular feature and they were added to the monastic properties.

Not only the needs of the *saṅgha*, but the performance of rituals and the maintenance of the Buddha images and shrines, gave rise to the grant of things to monasteries which were different from the requisites of monks allowed by the Master at the early stage of the *sāsana*. There is evidence in the *samantapāsādikā* that for the administration of land given to monasteries *kappiyakāra* (lay administrators) were appointed. By this method, the monks were free of direct dealing with lands and irrigation work.¹

As everything in the world, changes have taken place in monastic properties during the process of evolution, a phenomenon that goes with worldly things. Monastic properties have a long history starting from the time of the Buddha, and these properties vested in the *saṅgha* are still being regarded by the laity as *Sāṅghika* and meant for the exclusive use of the community of *saṅgha*.

¹ Gunaratne Panabokke, *History of Buddhist Saṅgha in India and Sri Lanka*, p. 132.

V. 6. Moral Rituals and Ceremonies

V. 6. 1. The Going-forth (*Pabbajjā*)

The Canon nowhere states that Going-forth is a prerequisite for Acceptance, but many original stories in *Mahāvagga* I describe full ordination as consisting of both steps, indicating that this pattern has been customary since ancient times.¹ In the Going-forth, one leaves the home life for the homeless life, becoming a novice (*sāmaṇera*). After one's head is shaved, one dons the ochre robes, takes refuge in the Triple Gem, and undertakes the ten precepts.² In the Acceptance, one becomes a full-fledged *bhikkhu*, with full rights to live in common affiliation with the *bhikkhu saṅgha*. The Going-forth is not a Community transaction, whereas Acceptance is.

V. 6. 1. 1. The Validity of the Object.

An applicant for ordination must be a male who meets the age requirements, and he must not have any characteristics that would disqualify him from ordination.

V. 6. 1. 2. Age Requirements.

An applicant for the Going-forth must be at least fifteen years old or, if not yet fifteen, "capable of chasing crows away."³ An applicant for full Acceptance must be at least twenty years old,⁴ counting from the time his consciousness first arose at conception in his mother's womb. As this is difficult, if not impossible to date with any accuracy, the usual practice in calculating a person's age is to add six months to the number of years

¹ Vin. I. 11f.

² Vin. I. 22.

³ Vin. I. 79.

⁴ Vin. I. 78, 93.

since his birth, to allow for his having been born prematurely. As the Commentary notes, a baby born after seven months in the womb may survive, but one born after only six months won't. If an applicant less than twenty years old receives full Acceptance, he does not count as a *bhikkhu*; the Commentary says that he remains a novice. Any *bhikkhu* who acts as his preceptor, knowing that he is too young to be accepted, incurs a *pācittiya*; any other *bhikkhus* in the assembly performing the ordination who also know the applicant's age incur a *dukkata*.

V. 6. 1. 3. Disqualifications

The factors that would disqualify an applicant from receiving ordination are of three sorts:

(a) Those absolutely disqualifying him for life, even if he receives ordination, he does not count as properly ordained;

(b) Those marking him as an undesirable member of the Community, if he happens to be ordained, he counts as ordained, but the *bhikkhus* participating in the ordination incur a *dukkata*; and

(c) Those indicating that he is formally unprepared for full Acceptance (for instance, he lacks robes and an alms-bowl or does not have a valid preceptor), the Canon does not state whether these factors absolutely invalidate the applicant's Acceptance, but the Commentary puts them in the same class as the undesirables, above.

A person may be absolutely disqualified if he:

- 1) has an abnormal gender;
- 2) has committed any of the five deeds leading to immediate retribution in hell (*ānantariya/ānantarika-kamma*);

3) has seriously wronged the *Dhamma-Vinaya*; or

4) is an animal.¹

The Canon states that such people may not receive full Acceptance. The Commentary adds (with one exception, noted below) that they may not receive the Going-forth. Even if they receive ordination, they do not count as ordained. Once the truth about them is discovered, they must immediately be expelled.

(1) The prohibition for abnormal gender covers *paṇḍakas* and hermaphrodites. According to the Commentary, there are five kinds of *paṇḍakas*, two of whom do not come under this prohibition: voyeurs and those whose sexual fever is allayed by performing fellatio. The three who do come under this prohibition are: castrated men (eunuchs), those born neuter, and half-time *paṇḍakas* (those with the sexual desires of a *paṇḍaka* during the dark fortnight, and none during the bright fortnight. In the original story for this prohibition, a *paṇḍaka* who had received Acceptance unsuccessfully propositioned by some *bhikkhus* and novices, then succeeded in propositioning some horse- and elephant-trainers, who spread it about, These Sakyan-son monks are *paṇḍakas*.

(2) The five deeds of immediate retribution are:

a) killing one's mother (matricide),

b) killing one's father (patricide),

c) killing an *arahanta*,

d) maliciously injuring the *Tathāgata* to the point of drawing blood, and¹

¹ Vin. I. 87-88.

e) successfully creating a schism in the Community.²

Applicants (*āyācaka*) falling into the above categories should not be given the Going-forth.

As Going-forth is the customary first step in full Acceptance. This means that they should not receive full Acceptance, either. Any *bhikkhu* who gives any of these applicants the Going-forth incurs a *dukkata*.

(1) Those with obligations. This general category includes the following:³

(a) A son whose parents have not given their permission.⁴

(b) A person in the king's (government) service.⁵

(c) A debtor (*coro*).⁶

(d) A slave (*dāso*).⁷

2) Those with serious, disfiguring, or communicable diseases. The Canon separates this category into three types:⁸

(a) A person afflicted with leprosy (*kuṭṭham*), boils (*gaṇḍo*), eczema (*kilāso*), tuberculosis (*soso*), or epilepsy (*apamāro*).

(b) A person with goiter. This was apparently incurable at the time. At present, if such a person is cured, he may go forth. (c) A person afflicted with an "evil" disease.

3) Disturbers of the peace. This category includes three types:

¹ Vin. II. 194.

² Vin. II. 204-5.

³ Mv. I. 42. 2; Vin. I. 77.

⁴ Vin. I. 83.

⁵ Vin. I. 74.

⁶ Vin. I. 76.

⁷ Vin. I. 76.

⁸ Vin. I. 73

(a) A criminal "wrapped in a flag."

(b) A suspect or criminal for whom a warrant has been sent out. At present this would also include people on probation or parole.

(c) A criminal who has broken his shackles, i.e., escaped from prison or other internment.

4) Those marked with severe punishments. The Canon mentions two sorts of applicants here:¹

(a) A person who has been whipped or caned as a punishment. (b) A person who has been branded or tattooed as a punishment.

5) Those who are physically handicapped, feeble, or deformed.²

The Going-forth is not a Community transaction. The Canon's requirements for the procedure are simple: The applicant is given the Three Refuges three times. Although the Canon mentions that *bhikkhus* (plural) are present at the Going-forth, it does not set a minimum for the quorum or any specific qualifications for the *bhikkhu* officiating. However, a *bhikkhu* who does not meet the qualifications of a *bhikkhu*'s preceptor should not have a novice attend to him,³ which suggests that even if the applicant is simply going forth without yet taking full Acceptance, the *bhikkhu* officiating must meet the qualifications of a *bhikkhu*'s preceptor.

The Commentary states further that, before giving the 'Three Refuges', the preceptor must bestow the ochre robes on the applicant or must tell a *bhikkhu*, novice, or layman to put robes on the applicant. If the

¹ Vin. I. 75.

² Vin. I. 75.

³ Mv. I. 36-37.

applicant comes with robes already on, he must take them off and then put them on again. (The tradition in Thailand and Sri Lanka is that a novice wear only the upper and under robes. The Commentary to *Mahāvagga* mentions the outer robe as part of a novice's set of robes as well.¹ However, *Mahāvagga* mentions a novices "robe,"² whereas a parallel passage in *Mahāvagga* mentions a *bhikkhu's* "triple robe," which suggests that novices in the time of the Canon did not wear the outer robe, either).³ Arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, the applicant should pay homage to the feet of the *bhikkhus* and sit on his haunches with his hands raised in *añjali*. Then he should be told: "*Evaṃ vadehi* (Say this)," followed by the threefold formula for going for refuge in the Triple Gem. The Commentary insists that both sides the preceptor and the applicant- must pronounce the refuge formula properly. That constitutes the applicant's Going-forth. It is customary to have him undertake the ten precepts immediately after going for refuge.

V. 6. 1. 4. A Probationary Period (*Parivāsa*)

Another special case is that of an applicant who has previously been ordained in another religion⁴ states that he must first be granted four months' probation. The Commentary maintains that this probation applies only to naked ascetics, but the Canon itself makes an exception only for those whose previous religion teaches a doctrine of *kamma*; therefore, the probation should apply to any religion that would deny the doctrine of *kamma* (saying, for instance, that one's experiences are totally

¹ Mv. I. 12. 4.

² Mv. VIII. 27. 3 .

³ Mv. VIII. 27. 2.

⁴ Mv. I. 38.1.

predetermined by a creator deity or an impersonal force) or would teach special dispensations from *kamma*.

The probation is granted as follows: The applicant takes the Going-forth and then three times requests probation. The Community, if it sees fit, may grant him probation using a motion and one proclamation.

If, while on probation, the applicant behaves in any of the ways listed below, he fails in his probation and is not to be accepted. The Commentary adds that, if he still desires Acceptance, his probation automatically starts again at that point for another four months "even if he fails while in the ordination hall, even if he attains the eight attainments." It adds, however, that if he attains stream-entry, he should be allowed to ordain on that very day. Given, however, that modern meditation traditions cannot agree on what constitutes stream-entry, such a claim would always be controversial, and so the wise policy would be to let the applicant complete his probation. If he has really attained stream-entry, he shouldn't mind.

An applicant fails in his probation if:

(1) He enters the village too early, returns too late in the day. According to the Commentary, 'too early' means while the *bhikkhus* are performing their morning duties; too late means that he stays to eat in the village, discussing worldly affairs with villagers; he doesn't perform his duties for his mentor on his return; he just goes back to his dwelling and sleeps.

(2) He associates with a prostitute, with a widowed or divorced woman, with a "fat princess", with a *paṇḍaka*, or with a *bhikkhūṇī*. According to the Sub-commentary, 'associate' means treating as a friend

or intimate. The Commentary adds that it is all right for him to visit these people as long as he goes with *bhikkhus* on *bhikkhu* business.

(3) He is not adept at the major and minor affairs involving his fellows in the holy life, is not dexterous, not diligent, not quick-witted in the techniques involved in them, is not willing to do them or to get others to do them. The Commentary says that ‘major affairs’ mean such things as repair of the *cetiya* and other buildings for which *bhikkhus* are called together for work; ‘minor affairs’ mean the *Khandhaka* protocols; not diligent means, for example, knowing that there's work to be done, he goes into town early for alms, returns to his room to sleep until late in the day; not willing to do them means making excuses based on illness or "just showing his head"- i.e., showing up briefly at the work site without actually doing any work.

(4) He does not have a keen desire for recitation, interrogation (asking questions about the meaning of the *Dhamma*,¹ heightened virtue, heightened mind, or heightened discernment. According to the Commentary, heightened virtue means the *pātimokkha*; heightened mind, worldly concentration; heightened discernment, the transcendent paths.

(5) He feels angered, displeased, and upset if dispraise is spoken of the teacher, the view, the persuasion, the preferences, the belief of the religion from which he has come over. He feels gratified, pleased, and elated if dispraise is spoken of the Buddha, *Dhamma*, or *Saṅgha*.

¹ A. VIII. 2.

V. 6. 2. The Acceptance (*Upasampadā*)

V. 6. 2. 1. The Acceptance Ceremony

If, after four months, the applicant has not "failed" in any of these ways, he may be given full acceptance.

None of the texts discuss the case where he does fail and yet is given the full Acceptance. Apparently, the acceptance would still be valid, and yet the *bhikkhus* giving it would each incur a *dukkata*.

The validity of the assembly, the quorum for full Acceptance in the middle Ganges valley is ten *bhikkhus*. In the outlying districts (this covers the entire world outside the middle Ganges valley), the quorum is five and one of the five is a *Vinaya*-expert. Here the Commentary defines *Vinaya*-expert as one competent to recite the transaction statement, but this seems overly lenient. As the Commentary itself notes when explaining,¹ the presence of a "competent, experienced" *bhikkhu* capable of reciting the transaction statement is assumed in all Community transactions. Thus there would seem to be no reason to mention it here as a special requirement. A more likely definition for *Vinaya*-expert in this context would be a *bhikkhu* well-versed in the *pātimokkha* and knowledgeable about the rules and procedures related to Going-forth and Acceptance.

The Acceptance ceremony of a *bhikkhu*, anyone wishing to become a *bhikkhu* must fulfill certain conditions:

- The candidate must be male and at least twenty years old.

¹ Mv. I. 28. 3.

- He must never have committed any grievous crimes and, if previously 'ordained', he must not have been guilty of any defeater (*pārājika*) offenses or have entered some other religion without disrobing first. He should also be of good reputation; fit and healthy enough to carry out the duties of a *bhikkhu*; not in debt; not subject to government service; and have permission from parents or guardian.¹

The acceptance ceremony requires a prescribed ordination boundary (*sīmā*), a preceptor (*upajjhāya*) and a quorum of *bhikkhus* to validate the formal *saṅgha*. In the formal procedure the candidate is examined as to these necessary qualities and, if every *bhikkhu* is satisfied, they receive him into the *saṅgha*, the community of *bhikkhus*. This adds yet another link in the *bhikkhu*-lineage, for he can participate in future assemblies and help receive other new *bhikkhus*, as *bhikkhus* have done for two and a half thousand years.² When a candidate requests admission to the Community he does not make any life time vows 'but offers himself for training and instruction under his Preceptor's guidance. His Preceptor will instruct him about the *pātimokkha* Rule and the minor rules that all *bhikkhus* should observe.

All the monks and nuns were supposed to observe eight precepts from day they join the *saṅgha*. In the beginning, all those who joined the *saṅgha* had to the credit spiritual perfection of the past. Having joined the *saṅgha*, they became *Arahanta* in very short time. Till the *saṅgha* was 12 years old the least advanced who joined the *saṅgha* was stream-enterer. There was no need for the Buddha tells them to be on eight precepts.

¹ Vin. I. 77ff.

² See Ven Somdet, *The Entrance to the Vinaya, Vinayamuka*, Vol. I, p. 4.

Later on when name and fame of *saṅgha* attracted all those whose motives were not pure then the Buddha had to introduce *Vinaya* rules.

Like so many other aspects of the *Vinaya*, the procedures for ordination, the patterns to be followed in accepting applicants into the Community, were not determined all at once, but grew in response to events over time.

There were three main stages in their development. In the first stage, during the very early years of the Buddha's career, when an applicant asked to join the Community the Buddha would simply say, 'Ehi bhikkhu' ... (Come, *bhikkhu*). That constituted the applicant's acceptance into the Community. As the Community grew, the Buddha sent his *bhikkhu* disciples their separate ways to spread the teaching. When they inspired others to join the Community, they had to bring the applicants back to the Buddha for him to accept. Seeing the difficulties this entailed- roads were poor; the *bhikkhus* and their applicants had to travel great distances on foot- the Buddha allowed individual disciples to accept applicants on their own, using the formula of going for the Triple Refuge. This was the second stage. In the third stage, when the Buddha saw that the Community required a more formal organization, he rescinded the going for the Triple Refuge as a means of acceptance and replaced it with a formal Community transaction, using a motion and three reclamations.

Even then, however, the rules and procedures governing ordination continued to develop in response to events recorded in the Canon. And after the closing of the Canon, traditions continued to build up around the act of ordination, so that different sects within the *Theravāda* school have differing customs surrounding the basic core of instructions included in

the Canon and explained in the commentaries. In this chapter, we will focus on the common core: the aspects of the ordination procedure that are absolutely necessary for it to be a valid Community transaction. After a few general remarks, our discussion will start with the validity of the object, i.e., the applicant for ordination, followed by the validity of the assembly and the validity of the transaction statements. Anyone interested in learning the complete patterns for ordination as currently practiced in the various *Theravādin* sects should consult the ordination guides issued by those sects.

V. 6. 2. 2. The steps of acceptance

V. 6. 2. 2. 1. Instruction

After the applicant has been sent out of the assembly, a competent, experienced *bhikkhu* is authorized through a formal motion to instruct him about the thirteen obstructing factors. One *bhikkhu* may give the motion to authorize another, or may give it to authorize himself. The "instruction" is a rehearsal of the questions the applicant will be asked in the midst of the Community just prior to his full Acceptance. It is interesting to note that not all the possible disqualifications for full Acceptance are included in the list of thirteen. The *Vinaya* postulates that, in the very beginning, these were either the only disqualifications or the ones reckoned most important. The second possibility is unlikely, as only three of the thirteen are absolute.

When the instruction is complete, the instructing *bhikkhu* returns first to the assembly and recites a formal motion to inform the assembly that the applicant has been instructed and that the applicant should be allowed into the assembly.

After the applicant comes and requests full Acceptance, an experienced, competent *bhikkhu* (usually the same one who instructed the applicant) recites a formal motion to authorize himself to quiz the applicant about the thirteen obstructing factors. When he has finished the quiz, the preliminary steps are done.

V. 6. 2. 2. Full acceptance

The transaction statement for full Acceptance consists of a motion and three proclamations. As with all other transaction statements, it should be recited by an experienced, competent *bhikkhu*. At present, it is often recited by two *bhikkhus* together. The applicant becomes a *bhikkhu* when the third proclamation is finished. If two or three applicants are requesting full Acceptance at the same time, they may all be included in a single transaction statement as long as they have the same preceptor, but not if their preceptors are different. No more than three may be included in a single transaction statement. The Commentary notes that this single transaction statement can mean either one statement covering all the candidates, recited by one *bhikkhu*, or a separate statement for each candidate all recited at the same time by an equal number of *bhikkhus*. This last possibility, although it would create a cacophony, is probably intended for Communities where none of the members can put the transaction statement into the plural forms required by more than one candidate.

V. 6. 2. 2. 3. Subsequent steps

Immediately after full Acceptance, the Canon says, the shadow (time of day) should be measured. The length of the season should be told, the portion of the day told, along with the "rehearsal," which, according to

the Commentary, means drilling the candidate to make sure that he has memorized these three pieces of information. At present, the time is marked with a reliable clock or watch, and then recorded together with the date and the names of the preceptor and the announcing teachers.

The Canon also states that the four supports should be told immediately, and that the new *bhikkhu* be given a companion who will tell him of the four things never-to-be-done (i.e., the four *pārājika* rules). At present, the common practice is for the preceptor to tell both the four supports and the four things never-to-be-done immediately after the transaction statement. That concludes the procedure:

"*Bhikkhus*, I allow a preceptor.¹ The preceptor will foster the attitude he would have toward a son ('son-mind') with regard to the student. The student will foster the attitude he would have toward a father ('father-mind') with regard to the preceptor. Thus they- living with mutual respect, deference, and courtesy- will arrive at growth, increase, and maturity in this *Dhamma-Vinaya*."²

V. 6. 3. The *Saṅghakamma*

The republican character of the early *saṅgha* found practical expression in the assemblies, technically called *saṅghakamma* that decided the common policy and settled disputed questions. The holding of frequent assemblies, as we have seen, was praised by the Buddha as one of the seven conditions of welfare of the *saṅgha*. The *uposatha* and the *pavāraṇā* were the first reasons for such assemblies. With the growth of

¹ Preceptor: *Upajjhāya*; S. *Upadhyāya*, a spiritual teacher, preceptor or master; see T.W. Rhys Davids and Willam Stede (eds.), *Pāli English Dictionary*, p. 141; cf. Vin. I. 45, 53, 62, 119, IV. 130; S. I. 185; A. II. 78, III. 69.

² Mv. I. 25; Vin. I. 45.

common living, however, many other occasions arose that needed common discussion and decision.

An act which is related to the *saṅgha* in any way was a *saṅghakamma*.¹ Several Buddhist texts refer to various types of *saṅghakamma*. According to them, some acts were disciplinary and disputable and some were non disciplinary and non disputable.²

The *parivāsa*, the *mānatta*, the *tajjaniya*, the *nissāyya*, the *pubbājanya*, the *paṭisāraṇiya*, the *pakāsaniya* and the *Brahmadanda* belonged to first group.³ But the second group, although it is non disciplinary and non-disputable, it is important in the Buddhist *saṅgha*.

Its ecclesiastical acts such as the *upasampadā*, the *uposatha*, the *pavāraṇā*, the *kathina*, the *abbhāna* ect.,⁴ played the great roles in the Buddhist *saṅgha* for the progress and the growth of Buddhism.

It is to be noted here that at the time of the performance of a *saṅghakamma* all monks who lived within the *sīmā* of an *āvāsa* were present. Their presence was compulsory. But if someone failed to appear in person, he sent his consent and then his presence was counted by proxy.⁵

The Buddhist *saṅgha* introduced several rules for various *saṅghakammās*. The number of monks which constituted an assembly was necessary for these purposes.

The *Mahāvagga* refers to four monks for all ecclesiastical acts except the *upasampadā*, *pavāraṇā* and *abbhāna*, five monks for all

¹ Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, p. 146.

² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁴ Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, p. 148.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 146, 299.

ecclesiastical acts except the *upasampadā* in border countries and *abbhāna*, ten monks for all ecclesiastical acts except *abbhāna*, and twenty monks and upwards for *abbhāna* and all other ecclesiastical acts.¹

It is interesting to note here that every member of an assembly had the right to express his opinion in an assembly meeting ecclesiastical act. Every act was performed with the resolution which has presented before the assembly thrice and when all the members gave their consent, then it was passed by the assembly meeting. It not only shows that all ecclesiastical acts were based on democratic ideals, but also indicates that every opinion had some value in the Buddhist *saṅgha*.

For the transaction of *saṅghakamma*, it would be necessary to assemble whole the *saṅgha* together. Any one not able to join in it either remains outside of the boundary of the *āsāsa* or sent his consent through another which was called *Chanda*. The completeness of the assembly is instated on, and in the *Mahāparinibbānasutta*, one of safeguards against the degeneration of the *saṅgha* is said to be the holding of the complete assemblies for the purpose of the *saṅghakammas*.² A complete assembly for the purpose of various *saṅghakammas* is defined as one consisting of.³

The form of the *saṅghakamma* consisted of two parts: First *Ñatti* (resolution) and then *Anussāvana* (proclamation of the proposed act or *kammavācā*).⁴

The inversion of this order would invalidate the whole proceeding *abinito*.⁵ The matter for decision by *saṅghakamma* was defined by a

¹ Mv. IX. 4. 2.

² D. II. 77.

³ Mv. IX. 4. 2.

⁴ Mv. IX. 3. 2.

⁵ Mv. IX. 3. 7.

bhikkhu in the form of resolution placed before the whole assembly. “Let this (the matter defined) be done” then followed the proclamation. Those who were against the resolution were called upon to speak and those who were for it to remain silent. This proclamation might be made only once when the act was called a *Ñattidutiya kamma* or thrice when it was a *Ñatticatuttha kamma*. Some *saṅghakammas* belonged to the first order and some to the second, and the observance of this distinction was essential for the validity of an act.

To sum up, the following would be the essential conditions of a valid act:¹

(1) The presence of the minimum number competent to perform the act. This was a condition precedent. The other word, ratification (*anumati*) by member who was not actually present at the *saṅghakamma* given after it had been performed was invalid. This was decided at the Council of Vesālī.²

(2) The consent of all the absentees conveyed by *Chanda*.

(3) The proposal of the resolution (*Ñatti*).

(4) The proclamation of *kammavācā* (*anussāvana*), once or thrice according as the act was the *Ñattidutiya* or of the *Ñatticatuttha* class.

(5) Consent to the proposal given by the silence of all duly qualified members of the assembly. Then there was a division of opinion, it became a case of *Adhikaraṇa* (Dispute), which must be settled as per rules explained below.

¹ Mv. IX. 3, 9.

² Cv. XII. 1, 10.

The failure to satisfy any of these conditions would invalidate the act. The act was invalid, it might be impugned at another by way of a *Kiccādhikaraṇa*.

In brief, *saṅghakamma* took place in order to maintain and rise up the *saṅgha*. It plays the great role in the Buddhist *saṅgha* for the progress and the growth of Buddhism in early time and nowadays as well.

V. 6. 4. The Uposatha

V. 6. 4. 1. The Origin of the Uposatha Ceremony

The *Pāli* term *uposatha* means observance.¹ It refers a ceremony to be performed by the Buddhist clergy on the 14th or 15th day of the half-month.² Unless it is for the sake of unity or unanimity of the community, (*saṅghasamaggī*) the *uposatha* should not be done on a non-*uposatha* day.³ This type of *uposatha* is called a *sāmaggi-uposatha* in the *Parivāra*.⁴ Following the practice of the non-Buddhistic sects, the Buddha, at the request of king Bimbisāra, introduced in the Buddhist *saṅgha* the ceremony of *uposatha* wherein the *pātimokkha* was recited every fortnight.⁵

It was said that the Buddha at first merely asked the monks to assemble on 14th, 15th and 8th days of the half month but did not instruct them on what they should do on the day.⁶ When the lay devotees came to the monasteries to listen to the *Dhamma* found the monks remaining silent, they told this matter to the Buddha asked the monks to recite or preach the *Dhamma*. But not long afterwards, probably after giving

¹ Vin. I. 100-136 (Mv. II).

² Vin. I. 111 (Mv. II. 14. 1).

³ Vin. I. 136 (Mv. II. 36. 4); Vin. I. 357 (Mv. X. 5. 14).

⁴ Vin. V. 123.

⁵ Vin. I. 101 (Mv. II. 1).

⁶ Vin. I. 102.

careful thought to it, the Buddha decided to introduce an innovation of his own to the *uposatha* of the *saṅgha*. He laid down that the monks to recite the *pātimokkha* instead of talking about the *Dhamma* on two Observance days of every a month, those were the 14th and the 15th.¹

After going for refuge in the *Tisarāṇa*,² the Buddhist laity keeps the five precepts regularly. In the *uposatha* day, the Buddhist laity is instructed to observe the *uposatha-sīla* comprising eight precepts.³

On the *uposatha* day, the devotees will come to the monastery early in the morning and spend twenty-four hours there, observing the precepts. By observing the eight precepts, they cut themselves off from their daily life which is beset with material and sensual demands. The purpose of observing the Eight Precepts is to develop tranquillity and, insight meditation to train the mind and to develop oneself spiritually. During this period of observing the precepts, devotees spend their time reading religious books, listening to the Teachings of the Buddha, meditating, and also helping with the religious activities of the monastery. The following morning, they revert from the Eight Precepts to the five precepts intended for daily observance, and return home to resume their normal life.

V. 6. 4. 2. The Purpose of the *Pātimokkha* Recitation

The *Vinaya Piṭaka* records the purposes of the recitation of the *pātimokkha* which laid down for disciples by the Buddha thus:

For the restraint of evil-minded men, and for the dwelling in comfort of well behaved monks.

¹ Vin. I. 111 (Mv. II. 14.1).

² The Three Refuges: The refuge in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*.

³ A. IV. 248.

For the restraint of the cankers belonging to here and now, for combating the cankers belonging to future states.

For the restraint of dreadful actions belonging to here and now, for the combating of dreadful actions belonging to future states.

For the restraint of blamable actions belonging to here and now, for the combating of blamable actions belonging to future states.

For disciples by the Buddha for the restraint of fears belonging to here and now, for the combating of fears belonging to future states.

For the restraint of unskilled things belonging to here and now, for the combating of unskilled things belonging to future states.

Out of compassion for householders, for breaking up the factions of evil-minded (individuals).

For pleasing those who are not yet pleased and for increasing the number of those who are pleased.

For establishing True *Dhamma*, and for protecting Discipline.¹

We also found out two reasons the recitation of the *pātimokkha* was laid down for disciples by the Buddha that are for the excellence of the Order and for the comfort of the Order.²

It can thus be said that the *pātimokkha* is the collective body of rules that *bhikkhus* are obliged to train in, and are obliged to recite every two weeks, when living in communities, for the sake of unity, harmony, continuity, and the various other reasons mentioned above.

¹ Vin. V. 223.

² Vin. V. 223.

V. 6. 4. 3. The Preparations of the *Uposatha* Ceremony

Before the recitation of the *pātimokkha* took place, the *uposatha* hall was cleaned properly, the arrangement of the seats was done, lamps and drinking water was served, the day was announced, the declaration of *pārisuddhi* by all the members was done, and monks were selected for asking and answering questions related to the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* etc.¹ The Buddhist *saṅgha* fixed one *uposatha* hall in either a *vihāra* or an *Aḍḍhayoga*, or a storied building, or a house, or a cave in one district.² The *uposatha* ceremony was not to be held by an incomplete congregation. In order to hold the *uposatha* ceremony, it was the duty of the Buddhist *saṅgha* to fix the boundary, i.e., *sīmā* from a landmark consisting in a mountain, in a rock, in a wood, in a tree, in a path, in an ant-hill, in a river, in a sheet of water etc.³

The Buddhist *saṅgha* wanted to give more importance to the *uposatha* ceremony and that is why, it then introduced new rule to the effect that the *uposatha* assembly required the presence of not only the existing members of an *āvāsa* but also of those who belonged to another *āvāsa* but was present on the *uposatha* day within the *sīmā* of that *āvāsa*. Sometimes, members of an *āvāsa* held an assembly without being assured of the presence of members belonging to another *āvāsa* but dwelt within the *āvāsa* on the *uposatha* day. For bonafide mistakes, rules were prescribed. But, it is to be noted here that as a rule, if the members of another *āvāsa* were large in number, the assembly had to be held anew. However, when an assembly was held purposely to avoid or to exclude the incoming members of another *āvāsa*, then the members, who joined

¹ Mv. 11. 10.

² Mv. 11. 8.

³ Mv. 11. 6.

the assembly, became guilty of either serious or minor offences. The Buddhist *saṅgha* gave directions to the monks that except on an urgent business of the *saṅgha*, they were not allowed to leave their residence on the *uposatha* day. There were special procedures for the declaration of *pārisuddhi* by a sick monk, for obtaining his consent to the ecclesiastical acts passed in the assembly and for dealing with a monk who became insane.

V. 6. 4. 4. The Recitation of the *Pātimokkha*

The ceremony required the presence of all members of the Buddhist *saṅgha*. They there confessed the sins of omission and commission committed, if any, during the last fortnight to make the offenders as well as the assembly pure. For the recitation of the *pātimokkha*, the minimum number of members required was four; and for declaration of *pārisuddhi* only, the minimum number of monks wanted was two.¹ But in both the cases, the actual attendance of the members was absolutely necessary. It is interesting to note here that the *pātimokkha*, was recited in the *uposatha* assembly when the members had declared their purity (*pārisuddhi*)². When *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhuṇīs*, *sāmaṇeras*, *sāmaṇerīs* were undergoing punishment or persons not admissible to the *saṅgha* (such as eunuch, hermaphrodite etc.,) were not be present in the *uposatha* assembly.³ Hence, the recital of the *pātimokkha* was prohibited when there was any impure monk in the assembly.

The *pātimokkha* is recited by one *bhikkhu* "the reciter of the *pātimokkha*" (the *pātimokkhuddesaka*) who has been appointed by the

¹ Vin. I. 115.

² Vin I. 102, 136.

³ Vin. I. 115 (Mv. II. 16. 8). In the time of the Buddha, when Devadatta recited the *Pātimokkha* before an assembly that contained laymen. This matter was told to the Buddha, the Buddha said that the *Pātimokkha* should not be recited before an assembly that contains laymen.

senior *bhikkhu*.¹ The reciter is preferably the most senior *bhikkhu*, but if he is unable to recite it then another competent *bhikkhu* can be appointed by him to do the recitation. If there is no *bhikkhu* who can recite the *pātimokkha* in a residence then one *bhikkhu* has to be sent elsewhere to master it from a *pātimokkha* reciter.² This shows that monks used to recite the *pātimokkha* together in order to learn it. Nowadays, however, *bhikkhus* learn the *pātimokkha* from textbooks.

When some *bhikkhus* asked the Buddha about the ways for the recital of the *pātimokkha*, the Buddha said that there were five ways of reciting the *pātimokkha*:³

(1) In the first brief recitation only the *Nidāna* section is recited and the other sections are just announced (*anussāvita*) but not recited.

(2) In the second brief recitation only the *Nidāna* and the *Pārājika* sections are recited, the rest is just announced.

(3) In the third brief recitation the first three sections are recited.

(4) In the fourth brief recitation the first four sections are recited while the other sections are just announced.

(5) The fifth one, the recitation in breadth or extensive recitation (*vitthāruddesa*) is the one in which all the rule sections are recited and is the normal one. The other four are recitations in brief that can be done in exceptional cases of danger.⁴

The first four brief recitations can be done only in case of danger. It is an offence of wrong doing (*dukkata*), to recite the *pātimokkha* in

¹ Vin. I. 115 (Mv. II. 16. 9).

² Vin. I. 116 (Mv. II. 17. 5).

³ Vin. I. 112 (Mv. II. 15. 1).

⁴ Mv. II. 15. 3–4.

brief when there is no danger.¹ The recitation in brief is also allowed in case none of the *bhikkhus* in a monastery knows the *pātimokkha* and a *bhikkhu* has to be sent to another monastery to learn the *pātimokkha* but is unable to learn it in full before returning.²

The recital of the *pātimokkha* was made in several abridged forms according to the cases of emergency. In cases of necessity, monks from other *āvāsa* were invited or the recitation of the *pātimokkha* in the *uposatha* assembly. If there is a danger, to recite the *pātimokkha* in brief³ and if there is no danger the *pātimokkha* should not be recited in brief. The Buddha said that the recited of the *pātimokkha* in brief if there were some thus dangers: A danger from kings, a danger from thieves, a danger from fire, a danger from water, a danger from human beings, a danger from non-human beings, a danger from beasts of prey, a danger from creeping things, a danger to life, a danger to the *Brahma*-faring (*Brahmacariya*).⁴

V. 6. 4. 5. The Formal Acts for *Uposatha*

When the *bhikkhus* asked the Buddha about the formal acts for the *uposatha*, The Buddha said that there were four formal acts for *uposatha*:

- (1) Not according to rule in an incomplete Order (*adhammena vaggam*).
- (2) Not according to rule in a complete Order (*samaggam*).
- (3) According to rule in an incomplete Order. And
- (4) According to rule in a complete Order.

¹ Vin. I. 112–113 (Mv. II. 15. 4).

² See Vin. I. 116 (Mv. II. 17. 5); Vin. I. 119–20 (Mv. II. 21. 3–4).

³ Vin. I. 112 (Mv. II. 15. 3).

⁴ Vin. I. 112–3 (Mv. II. 15. 4).

Out of these four cases, only the last one is legal and only it is allowed by the Buddha and He exhorted his disciples should train it regularly.¹

V. 6. 4. 6. Three Kinds of *Uposatha* Day

There are three kinds of *uposatha* according to the day on which *uposatha* should be observed. They are:

- (1) *Pakati Uposatha*;
- (2) *Paṭijāgara Uposatha* and
- (3) *Pāṭihāriya Uposatha*.

The Buddha expounded in the *Catumahārāja sutta* of *Tikanipāta Aṅguttara Nikāya*² that there should be threefold *uposatha* according to the day on which *uposatha* should be observed.

V. 6. 5. The *Vassa* and the *Āvāsa*

During the early history of Buddhism, the *saṅgha* existed as simply another sect of the community of wanderers known as *parivrājakas*. One custom which seems to have been observed by all these sects was that of suspending the wandering life during the rainy season. The Buddhists used this temporary settling down as a means to cultivate living together in concord, establishing careful rules for the observance of the rainy season (*vassa*), and thus differentiated themselves from the rest of the wanderers' community by establishing the rudiments of Buddhist monastic life.

¹ Vin. I. 111 (Mv. II. 14. 2-3).

² A. I. 142.

Buddhist rainy season settlements were generally of two types: *āvāsas* or dwelling places which were determined, constructed, and kept up by the monks themselves, and *ārāmas* or parks which were donated and maintained by some wealthy patron. With the *āvāsas* and *ārāmas*, huts called *vihāras* were constructed for monks' residences.

The days of rain-retreat were, however, the busiest days with the *bhikkhus*. (The observance of the *vassāvassa* came into vogue among the Buddhist monks at an early date). The observance of the *Vassāvassa* came into vogue among the Buddhist monks at an early date. This period of *vassa*, coincides with the monsoon season in India; it began with full-moon day of *Āsāḍha* and ended on the full-moon of *Kattikā*.¹ To avoid the inconvenience of travelling in the rains and the change of injuring sprouts and insects, it was enjoined that the *bhikkhus* should stay at one place (*āvāsa*) during the three months of the rains, commencing from the day next to the full moon of *Āsāḍha* (June-July) or *Śrāvaṇa* (July-August).² The ceremony of entering upon the *vassa* is very precisely put by Buddhaghosa: "They are to look after their *vihāra* (if it is in a proper state) to provide food and water for themselves, to fulfil all due ceremonies, such as paying reverence to sacred shrines, etc. and to say loudly once, twice or thrice 'I enter upon *vassa* in this *vihāra* for these three months.'³ Then they are to enter upon the *vassa*.

The *vassupanāyikā* (entering upon the *vassa*) was absolutely obligatory on the part of a *bhikkhu*; if this rule was violated, the guilty *bhikkhu* was charged with *dukkata*.⁴ A *bhikkhu* who once began the *vassa*

¹ Mv. III. 2. 2.

² Vin. I. 137.

³ Vin. I. 137.

⁴ Mv. III. 4. 2.

could not change his residence,¹ except under special circumstances, he could be absent from his residence for a week, and could break the *vassa* temporarily only on account of grave emergency and not if the *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhuṇīs*, *sikkhamāṇas*, *sāmaṇeras*, lay-devotees or female devotees did not send for him.²

However, in case when a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuṇī* was sick,³ in case the mental peace of a *bhikkhu* was disturbed,⁴ in case a *bhikkhu* took a false doctrine,⁵ in case a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuṇī* was sentenced for a grave offence viz. *parivāsa*, *mānatta* etc.,⁶ in case a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuṇī* was rehabilitated,⁷ if in case the *saṅgha* was going to proceed against a *bhikkhu* or a *bhikkhuṇī*, *tajjanīya-kamma*, *pabbājanīya-kamma* etc.,⁸ in case the *upasampadā* was to be conferred upon the *sikkhamāṇa*,⁹ in case a *sāmaṇera* or a *sikkhamāṇa*, or a *sāmaṇeri* were sick¹⁰ or they wanted to take upon themselves the precepts¹¹ etc., then a *bhikkhu* could break the *vassa* for seven days even.

The residence could also be changed during the *vassā*, if there was any danger to the life of the *vihāra* from wild beasts, reptiles, or from the *vihāra* which was on the brink of ruin, or if a person tried to tempt a *bhikkhu* with gold, or sensual pleasure. Any way the moral and physical safety was secured first. Only when no danger or emergency of any sort described above, presented, the *bhikkhu* could under no plea change his

¹ Mv. III. 4. 2.

² Mv. III. 5. 4.

³ Mv. III. 6. 2, 12-15.

⁴ Mv. III. 6. 3.

⁵ Mv. III. 6. 16-17.

⁶ Mv. III. 6, 7, 8.

⁷ Mv. III. 6, 9, 18.

⁸ Mv. III. 6, 10, 19, 20.

⁹ Mv. III. 6, 23, 26.

¹⁰ Mv. III. 6, 25, 27, 28.

¹¹ Mv. III. 6, 29.

quarters. The *vassā* thus served the intended object, viz. of saving the green plants etc, which were trodden by the feet of the wandering *bhikkhus* and of doing away with the troubles and dangers which the *bhikkhus* encountered while journeying in the rains. Thus, for avoiding any harm that would befall a *bhikkhu* in the rains, to prevent too many *bhikkhus* thronging together, to recite and to further the cause of *Dhamma* through discussions, exchange of thought, teaching and learning when many *bhikkhus* from different provinces and of different capacity came together, the system of making convenient *āvāsas* was fixed by natural boundaries was introduced. The boundaries of an *āvāsa* were fixed by streams, lakes hills, ridges, anthills, a road, woods etc. This place however, was neither too near nor far removed from the city; it should be at any place where alms were easily got.

The *Mahāvagga* even throws a clear warning that *vassa* should not be kept where a majority of people were non-believers, as in such a place the *bhikkhus* would not be supported by the people.¹ Safety being the chief motive of the rain-retreat, it is not unnatural to find a *bhikkhu*, a wandering mendicant, with very little personal possessions, a lover of the open air settle under a roof. The Buddha had made a precise rule that no *bhikkhu* was to keep the *vassa* in the open air,² nor in hollow trees.³ They were also given instructions that they could not enter upon the *vassa* in a house meant for keeping dead bodies,⁴ or under a sunshades⁵ or under an earthenware vessels;⁶ The last two ways of entering upon the *vassa* however, seem improbable and even invented, because neither the

¹ Mv. III. 10.

² Mv. III. 12. 5.

³ Mv. III. 12. 3-4.

⁴ Mv. III. 12. 6.

⁵ Mv. III. 12. 8.

⁶ Mv. III. 12. 9.

sunshade nor the earthen vessel proved a good shelter in the rains. The objection of the Buddha, on the other hand, that the *bhikkhus* should not live in hollow trees, or in the home where dead bodies were kept is quite sound and natural.

V. 6. 6. The *Pavāraṇā*

The ceremony of *pavāraṇā* was performed at the end of the *vassavasa*. The object of the ceremony was to confess all sins of omission and commission (seen, heard or apprehended) that may have been committed during the *vassāvasā*.

Pavāraṇā is the antithesis of the *Vassūpanāyikā*, so far as it concludes the period of the *vassa*. It took place on the fourteenth or fifteenth day of the month (*catuddasikā* and *paññamasikā*) of *Kattikā*. Some time, the *bhikkhus* did not like to vacate their comfortable places at once, or some difficulty arose so that *pavāraṇā* could not be performed on that day; in such cases the date was postponed to the day of *Komudi Cātumāsini*. It was, however, an obligatory ceremony, and could not be discarded. Its nature is like the *pātimokkha* procedure, judicial. The *Mahāvagga* tells us that the Buddha enjoined the *bhikkhus* to lead the *vassa* together. Naturally when too many people gathered together, there were misunderstandings, mishaps, lapses etc., which were to be cleared before the gathering was dissolved. This was done by inviting the *bhikkhus*, by *saṅghakamma* and *Ñatti*, to confess their faults, accuse the wrong doer and proclaim the sort of punishment or penance the guilty person deserved.¹ The *pavāraṇā* was introduced by the Buddha with the

¹ Mv. IV. 16.

intention that the *bhikkhus* might live in peace and happiness sharing mutual confidences during the *vassa*.

Later on, the *pavāraṇā* ceremony was distinguished by two kinds, viz. the *Mahāpavāraṇā* and *sangaha-pavāraṇā* (the abridged *pavāraṇā*).¹ The *sangaha* is totally different from the former one, viz. the postponing of *pavāraṇā* to *Komudī Catumāsini*. This is an instance which shows how the *Vinaya* and its terminology were undergoing gradual change from time to time.

The period of *vassa* ended with two ceremonies, viz. *pavāraṇā* and *kaṭhina*. The *pavāraṇā* has the character of an old institution. Living together for over three months, the monks were bound to offend each other and in general get on each other's nerves. However, they wished to part as friends, and *pavāraṇā* was the common gathering during which they asked pardon of each other in public.

The story that is advanced to explain its origin is significant. A group of monks of the Kosala country entered the rain retreat and, in order to pass it "on friendly terms and harmoniously," decided to observe total silence. The Buddha is said to have instituted the *pavāraṇā* as a way of passing the rains on friendly terms, because he disapproved of such silence.²

At the *pavāraṇā*, each *bhikkhu* asks the assembled monks to indicate his faults which they may have "seen, heard, or suspected." The formula is simple:

¹ D. I. 241; T.W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (eds.), *Pāli- English Dictionary*, p. 166.

² Mv. IV. I. 1-13.

"Your Reverences, I invite the *saṅgha* in respect of what has been seen, heard, or suspected. Let the Venerable Ones speak to me out of compassion, and seeing I will make amends."¹

This is repeated three times.

The earliest form of the *pavāraṇā* may well have been the first occasion for such a public confession within the Buddhist *saṅgha*. The *pātimokkha* confession at the *uposatha*, I feel, is an extension and an elaboration of this *pavāraṇā* confession. The main difference between the two is that in the *pātimokkha* it is the guilty *bhikkhu* who confesses his faults, while in the *pavāraṇā*, he invites the others to indicate his faults. This extension could well be understood in the light of what has been said regarding the extension of the residence at an *āvāsa* from three months to the whole year. Another interesting point that emerges from this is the reason behind the *pātimokkha* confession. If we regard it as an extension of the *pavāraṇā* then the reason should have been the same, viz., to make the life at the monastery friendly and harmonious.

V. 6. 7. The *Kaṭhina*

Kaṭhina in *Pāli* means hard, firm, stiff, etc.² As a technical term in Buddhism the word *kaṭhina* denotes a cotton cloth offered to the *bhikkhus* annually after the conclusion of the 'rainy retreat' (*Vassāvāsā* q.v.) by the lay supporters, for the purpose of making robes.³ This practice started quite early in the *sāsana* with the approval from the Buddha himself. The Buddha, addressing a group of *bhikkhus* at Jetayana, granted permission for the dedication of *kaṭhina* cloth to the *bhikkhus* who had successfully

¹ Mv. IV, 1, 14.

² T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (eds.), *Pāli- English Dictionary*, p. 178.

³ Vin. I. 253, II. 115-117.

completed their rainy retreat (*anujānāmi bhikkhave vassaṃ vuttānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ kaṭhinaṃ attharituṃ*).¹ The laity when they make an offering to a single *bhikkhu* or a group of *bhikkhus*, dedicate the offering to the whole congregation, but in practice the *bhikkhus* living in a particular monastery make use of that offering. So, in the case of the *kaṭhina* too, the offering is made to the *bhikkhus* living in a particular monastery.

In the other hands, the *kaṭhina* was the distribution of material for robes and took place the day after the *pavāraṇā*. The need for new robes after the rainy season, when not only the inclement weather but moths and insects destroyed clothes, is obvious. In the early period, this would have been a very opportune time to replace the tattered robes, for immediately after this the recluses took off on their eight-month long wandering. In the later period at least, robes were normally presented by the laity to the *saṅgha* and rarely to individual monks. Hence, there was a store of robes in the *avasa* and it was taken care of by an officer called *kaṭhina-vatthāraka*. During the ceremony, he spread out the new robes and indicated the ones for the *theras* (the senior *bhikkhus*) and the ones for the *navakas* (the junior *bhikkhus*).

The Buddhist rain retreat assumed a busy aspect owing to the distribution of *kaṭhina*-cotton cloth in the *saṅgha*. The clothes were dyed, repaired, washed and properly preserved and distributed ceremoniously, accompanied with *saṅghakamma* and *Ñatti*.

The rules about *kaṭhina*, however, are in many places obscure and it is, at times, difficult to understand the exact significance of the rules

¹ Vin. I. 254.

and their practical application. Most of the *Nissaggiya Pacittiya* rules and the rules regarding the suspension of *kaṭhinatthāra*¹ are of this type.

The *kaṭhina* was the name formerly given to hard cotton cloth alone, but gradually as the rules regarding the dress of the *bhikkhus* relaxed, even silk and other finer fabrics² came to be known by the common term "*kaṭhina*". Consequently, *kaṭhina* came to be the designation of the common clothing of the *bhikkhus* in the *saṅgha*.

The clothes were regarded as the property of the *saṅgha*. It was permissible to *upāsakas* to offer a particular *bhikkhu* a piece of cloth; but that he had to give to the *bhikkhu* in the name of the *saṅgha*.³ Thus, the *saṅgha* used to receive and store cotton cloth. Before distributing, the cloth was dyed yellow or orange colour; it was stitched and robes were made.⁴

To see whether all the inmates of the *saṅgha* got their share or not, to receive duly robes from the *upāsakas* and to save the cloth from destruction, a special robe-receiver (*Cīvarapaṭiggāhaka*) was appointed by the formal consent of the *saṅgha*. The clothes were sorted, estimated, and shared according to their proper value. Then the assembled *bhikkhus* were counted, divided into groups; and then distribution was made accordingly.⁵

After the robes were ready, a pile was made of them. A competent senior *bhikkhu* (*cīvarabhājaka*) came forward and with a formal

¹ Mv. VII. 3-10.

² Mv. VIII. 2. 35-36, Mv. VIII. 3.

³ Mv. VIII. 5. 2.

⁴ Mv. VIII. II. 2, 29.

⁵ Mv. VIII, 99.

procedure an immediate distribution was effected.¹ Every *bhikkhu* who spent the *vassa* in the same *āvāsa* was entitled to have a share in it.² As in the case of the *senāsanas* no outsider could claim a share in the *kaṭhina*. The distribution was made on thoroughly democratic principles. All the inmates were to have an equal share of robes, viz. three, the neediest served first, the *Theras* being no exception to this.³ Only the novices shared half the portions.⁴

The *kaṭhina* was suspended in case a *bhikkhu* changed his domicile or his wardrobe was new and not in a condition to be given up when other *bhikkhus* had their *kaṭhina*.⁵ In case, a *bhikkhu* spent *vassa* in one place and attended the *kaṭhina* at another, he should receive half the portion of clothes from either domicile.⁶

The *bhikkhus* living in a monastery where the *kaṭhina* cloth is offered, used to discuss and decide among them as to whom the cloth is to be given. Normally, the selection is made considering the state of the robes of the *bhikkhus* in the temple. If the robes of a *bhikkhu* who has observed the rainy retreat are very old and torn out, the first preference is given to him. If there are several *bhikkhus* having only old and torn robes, priority is given to the eldest of them all, provided he has enough assistants to help him to make the robe the same day. If he does not have the necessary assistants and if a younger *bhikkhu* is able to prepare the robe the same day with the assistance of his helpers, preference is given

¹ Mv. VII. 1. 5.

² Mv. VII. 13. 1.

³ Mv. VIII. 9. 2.

⁴ Mv. VIII. 5, VIII. 6.

⁵ Mv. VII. 1. 7.

⁶ Mv. VII. 25. 4.

to the latter. But normally, the younger *bhikkhus* invite the eldest in the temple to accept the cloth promising him their help to make the robe.

The Buddha has specifically mentioned that only the *bhikkhus* who observe rainy retreat are entitled to receive the *kaṭhina* cloth.¹ A *bhikkhu* who has spent the rainy retreat in one *vihāra* is not entitled to receive the *kaṭhina* cloth offered at another *vihāra* (*Aññasmim vihāre vutthavassāpina labhanti*).

Further a *bhikkhu* who has not kept the rainy retreat properly or a *bhikkhu* who has taken upon himself to observe the rainy retreat a month later than the accepted date is also not entitled to receive the *kaṭhina* cloth from the laity.

The *kaṭhina* cloth can be offered by gods or human beings. Apart from laymen a *bhikkhu*, a novice or a *bhikkhuṇī* also can make offerings of *kaṭhina* cloth to the *bhikkhus*.

If the person offering the *kaṭhina* cloth to the *bhikkhus* is ignorant of the formal procedure to be followed, he should ask a senior *bhikkhu* about it. Normally, a cloth which is enough to make one robe out of the three robes should be offered to the *bhikkhus* before dawn saying: *Kaṭhina cīvaram saṅghassa dema* (I offer this *kaṭhina* cloth to the congregation of *bhikkhus*). It is also suitable to make an offering of needles, thread, colouring, meals and other requisites for the use of those who help in the making of the *kaṭhina* robe.

The *bhikkhu* who is entitled to accept the *kaṭhina* cloth, too, should know the correct procedure regarding the *kaṭhina cīvāra* (robe). An old cloth brought from a weaver's house is not suitable. After receiving the

¹ Vin. I. 255.

new cloth as *kaṭhina*, he should wash it carefully and stitch it with the assistance of other *bhikkhus* of the temple, that day itself. The robe must be then dyed and spread out in the sun to dry. If he receives other *kaṭhina* clothes from other laymen, he should select the best out of them for the *kaṭhina* robe.

A *kaṭhina* cloth (*kaṭhinadussa*) becomes a *kaṭhina* robe (*kaṭhina cīvāra*) when it is accepted by a *bhikkhu* after following the necessary procedure. Traditionally, the *bhikkhu* who receives the *kaṭhina cīvāra* has to wear that robe and deliver a sermon to the lay supporters who gather at the monastery in the evening the same day. In this sermon, it is customary to discuss the benefits and the merit that will accrue to the donors (*dāyakas*) of the *kaṭhina* cloth. The term *kaṭhina* is also used to denote a wooden frame used by the *bhikkhus* in sewing their robes.¹

The Buddha himself has mentioned about the great importance of offering the *kaṭhina cīvāra* (*kaṭhinānisamsa*). Even as the mountain *Mahāmeru* cannot be moved by the strongest wind, the merit that accrues to the donor of a *kaṭhina* robe is great and firm. The *Nāgitāpadāna* too describes the great benefits of offering a *kaṭhina* robe.

In conclusion, Buddhist Monasticism is one of the earliest surviving forms of organized monasticism in the history of religion. It is also one of the most fundamental institutions of Buddhism. Monks and nuns are considered to be responsible for preserving and teaching Buddhist teachings and guiding Buddhist lay followers. The order of Buddhist monks and nuns was founded by Gautama Buddha during his lifetime over 2500 years ago. The Buddhist monastic lifestyle grew out of

¹ Vin. II. 115-117.

the lifestyle of earlier sects of wandering ascetics, some of whom the Buddha had studied under. It was not really isolationist or eremitic: the *saṅgha* was dependent on the lay community for basic provisions of food and clothing, and in return the *saṅgha* members helped to guide lay followers on the path of *Dhamma*. Monks and nuns were expected to live with a minimum of possessions and requisites (Four possessions: robe, alms-bowl, bed and seat, and medicine and eight requisites: three robes, bowl, a razor, a needle, the girdle, a water-strainer), which were to be voluntarily provided by the lay community. Lay followers also provided the daily food that monks required and provided shelter for monks when they were needed. During the Buddha's time, many retreats and gardens were donated by wealthy citizens for monks and nuns to stay in during the rainy season. Out of this tradition grew two kinds of living arrangements for monks, as detailed in the *Mahāvagga* section of the *Vinaya* and *Varsavastu* texts: *avāsā* and *ārāma*. One of the more famous *ārāma* is Anāthapiṇḍika's, known as *Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāma*, built on Prince Jeta's grove. The practice of living communally during the rainy season, prescribed by the Buddha, gradually grew to encompass a settled monastic life centered on life in a community of practitioners. Most of the modern disciplinary rules followed by monks and nuns- the *pātimokkha*- relate to such an existing, prescribing in great detail proper methods for living and relating in a community of monks or nuns. Buddhist monks spend most of their daily life meditating, chanting or making offerings. Monks use meditation to free their mind from passion, aggression, ignorance, jealousy and pride. Buddhist monks choose to live a life of solitude from all of the everyday pleasures to pursue enlightenment. They live without the everyday pleasures just to find *nibbāna*. They live a

peaceful life, not killing a single organism. They follow the rules without faltering. They give up their personal time to teach others about meditation and scriptures, hoping that they too will find inner peace. The monks help without thought of reward but almost always receiving gifts of gratitude.

It is interesting to note that Monks are not allowed to hoard food. Nor are they allowed to cook. So, in order to survive they have to go out in the morning to receive food from Buddhist followers. When they come back, they sort through the food. Some food they will eat straight away for breakfast. Other food they will save for their last meal of the day at 11 a.m. The food that is left over is not wasted. Some may be given to the nuns or children who help out around the temple. Other food is given to poor people who come to the temple at mid-day. Any left-over food is given to the temple dogs or cats.

Therefore, methods of practice, moral life within daily life, moral rituals and ceremonies, the moral value of monastic life, chanting, meditation and making offerings are all parts of a monk's life each helps a monk find his way to ultimate enlightenment. As stated in the Buddhist doctrine, the practice of *tisso-sikkhā* is the gradual steps to *nibbāna*. A monk's devotion is one and the same as his daily goal, which is to follow the Buddha's teachings throughout daily life. As each monk strives to attain his daily goal he is also working on becoming the ideal monk, who is said to be gentle inoffensive, poor and humble and perfectly trained. However, to understand properly what is moral value of monastic life in early Buddhism, we should survey it in modern social life by its applications and contribution in order to resolve all crises which human

beings have been waiting for a resolution. This matter will be discussed practically in the next chapter.
