CHAPTER THREE

THE INITIATION OF NOVICEHOOD
(SĀMANERA)
CHAPTER- III

The Initiation of Novicehood (Sāmaṇera)

3. 0. Introduction

In Buddhism, the initiation is very important. It started since the Buddha’s life-time. The Buddha allowed the novicehood (sāmaṇera) by reciting tisarana in Pāli, in three times as:

"Buddham saranam gacchami. Dhammam saranam gacchami. Saṅgham saranam gacchami" meaning I take refuge in Buddha, dhamma and saṅgha.

The Buddha said, ‘I, bhikkhus, allow the novicehood by reciting Tisarana in three times’. (Anujanami bhikkhave tihi saranagamanehhi samanerapabbajjam). According to Buddhist history Rāhula, son of the Buddha (Siddhattha), was the first sāmaṇera.¹⁵²

Regarding the initiation of novicehood, in order to enlighten those who want to understand it, we have to highlight the procedure of initiation of novicehood according to Myanmar (Burmese) Buddhist culture.

Buddhists in Myanmar believe that the initiation of novicehood is compulsory and important. It is deemed worthy to offer one’s own son to the Monastic Order of the Lord Buddha, by which the parents of the novice consequently become members of the royal family of the Sakya-muni Gotama, the Buddha.

¹⁵² Vi-3, P. 115
When the boy is old enough to pronounce the pāli phrases articulately he is eligible for initiation which temporarily inducts him as a novice into the Monastic Order of the Buddhist saṅgha. Thus every Burman boy has this nucleus and prototypical religious experience of forsaking the secular household life and practising the well disciplined monasticism. Burma is outstanding in the establishment of the national custom which allows the initiation sometime in the monastery after the initiation and which has been elaborated into a complex religious ceremony. This Burmese Buddhist custom has been transmuted into a ritual drama with all the overtones of the original initiation and has become the central Buddhist ceremony.\(^\text{153}\)

According to Burmese tradition, the novice can leave the Order at any time as there is no rigid vow of life-long service. Thus every Burman Buddhist becomes a novice for at least one day in his life; but he usually remains in the monastery for one Lent (vassa) which is about three months, or sometimes if very pious for three Lents. The novice can remain for any length of time that he wishes, for a season or it may be for life. And should he desire at anytime to quit the monastic life and go-forth again into the secular world, it is permitted that he may do so, in Burmese Buddhism.

In general the initiation is celebrated when the boy attains his adolescence; but in particular the age at which such ceremony is performed varies widely. There are some specific cases when the boys are initiated

\(^{153}\) INOB, Pp. 14-15
even at the delicate age of five; this is lawful but only if the candidate can express the pāli phrases quite articulately. The abbot presiding monk may indicate the precedents and recommend on such special occasions by quoting the biographies of the Elders who had attained the arhatship at the age of five or seven and who were highly appreciated by the Lord Buddha.\textsuperscript{154}

Although the common practice is to initiate the boy at the age of twelve, the oldest age for the novice-hood is not limited. There are some cases when the lads have to be initiated. There are some cases when the lads have to be initiated at a very late of for which the postulants will be known as Old Novices (Koyin-gyi). Late entrance into novicehood is usually because of poverty: poor families have to earn for many years to meet the required expense for the ceremony. If they cannot afford them their final resort is to approach the village abbot who will help them acquire the requisite free from his monastery to fulfill their need.\textsuperscript{155}

The Buddha did not allow the sāmapera candidate who has no consent from his parents to enter the Order as novice. This is the event regarding the initiation of novicehood according to pāli literature.

The Buddha, himself, accepted His son, Rāhula, as novice into the Order. But King Suddhodana, the father of the Buddha, regarding Rāhula’s novicehood accepted by the Buddha himself, requested the Buddha that father and grand father (mother and grand mother) loved their son and

\textsuperscript{154} Therapadana, P.
\textsuperscript{155} INOB, P. 16
grand son so much extremely. Therefore, the one who wants to join to the Order as novice or monk should not be permitted without permission from his parents. By dint of His father’s request the Buddha laid down the rule not to permit who has no consent from his parents to enter the Order as novice or monk. If a monk performs a samanera-ordination that is not allowed by the candidate’s parents, he commits dukkata offence (wrong action offence). (Na bhikkhave ananunnato matapitūhi putto pabbajetabbo, yo pabbajeyya apatti dukkatassa).  

3. 1. Qualifications for initiation into Novicehood

The followings are the qualifications for initiation into novicehood:

The one who wants to initiate as a novice into the Order must

(1) have consent from his parents,

(2) have eight compulsory requisites (attha-parikkhāra)

(3) be his age of five at least

(4) have preceptor.

These are the procedures for the initiation of novicehood according to Burmese tradition or culture.

(a). When the abbot or a member of the Order agrees to novitiate him, the boy’s head is shaved by a monk or a lay person. The candidate

156 Vi-3, P. 116
meditates upon the constituents of the human body during the shaving of his head reciting:

“**Atthi imasmiṁ kāye kesā, lomā, dantā, taco ... asuci, jegucchā, patikūlā, nijīvā, nissattā**”

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

This is called the meditation on five parts of the body.

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

“**Sakala vaṭṭa dukkha nissaraṇa nibbānass sacchikaraṇathāya imam kāsāvarāḥ gaheṭvā pabbājetha maṁ bhante anukampāṁ upādāya**” meaning “Reverend sir; would you be kind enough to accept this robe and out of your compassion initiate me; in order that I may realize *nibbāna*, the perfect emancipation from the entire cycle of suffering”.  

Eight compulsory requisites (*parikkhāra*) of a novice are:

(1) Alms bowl (*patta*)

(2) And (3) Two upper garment robes (*uttarāsaṅga cīvara*)

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157 INOB, Pp. 37-38
(4) One under-wear robe (*antara vāsaka*)

(5) One girdle (*kāyabandana*)

(6) A raze knife (*vāsika*)

(7) Needle (*suci*)

(8) and water-strainner (*dhammakaraṇa*).

And the candidate recites again:

“*Sakala vaṭṭa dukkha nissaraṇa nibbānass sacchikaraṇatthāya etam kāsāvaṁ datvā pabbājetha maṁ bhante anukampaṁ upādāya*” meaning “Reverend sir; would you be kind enough to return that robe and out of your compassion initiate me; in order that I may realize *nibbāna*, the perfect emancipation from the entire cycle of suffering”.

(c). Then the Preceptor helps the candidate to divest himself of all his layman cloths and cloths him in the yellow robes of a (*sāmañña*) Buddhist novice.

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

“*Bhante sāṁsāra vaṭṭa dukkhato mocanatthāya pabbajjam yācāmi* meaning Reverend sirs; I request admission to the novice-hood in view of the perfect liberation from the cycle of suffering transmigration”.

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158 INOB, P. 39
(e). Ten preceptors of a Novice shall then be observed by the consent of the preceptor.

“Aham bhante tisaraṇena saha dasa sāmaṇera pabbajjasīlam dhammarāṃ yācāmi; anuggahaṁ katvā sīlaṁ detha me bhante” meaning Reverend sir, I request for the ten precepts to be observed by a novice, together with the three refuges. Would you be kind enough to counsel me on the precepts”.

The preceptor intones ‘Yamahāṁ vadāmi tam vadētha meaning thus follow me as I intone’. The candidate agrees to do so saying ‘āma bhante’.

Then the preceptor leads intoning the sacred words of the three refuges.

“Namo tassa bhagavato arahato same-sambuddhassā” (three times) meaning May my honour be to the Glorious, the Almighty, the Infallible, and the Self-enlightened Exalted Buddha”.

“Buddhāṁ saraṇāṁ gacchāmi_ I take refuge in the Buddha (the Enlightened One).

“Dhammaṁ saranāṁ gacchāmi _ I take refuge in the dhamma (the Doctrine).

“Saṅghāṁ saraṇāṁ gacchāmi _ I take refuge in the saṅgha (the Order of Monks).

“Dutiyampi “Buddhāṁ saraṇāṁ gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi Dhammaṁ saranāṁ gacchāmi.
Dutiyampi Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi.”

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

“Tatiyampi “Buddhāṁ saraṇam gacchāmi.
Tatiyampi Dhammaṁ saranāṁ gacchāmi.
Tatiyampi Saṅghāṁ saraṇam gacchāmi.”

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

The preceptor says at this point: “Tisaraṇa gamaṇam paripuṇṇam_
You have fulfilled taking refuge in the three precious ideals”

The candidate replies to this “āma bhante_ Thus it is.

The preceptor then counsels the candidate to observe ten preceptors.

1. Paṇātipātā veramaṇi sikkhāpadāṁ samādiyāmi. I observe the precept not to kill any sentient being.

2. Adinnādānā veramaṇi sikkhāpadāṁ samādiyāmi. I observe the precept not to steal the ungiven things.

3. Abrahmacariyā veramaṇi sikkhāpadāṁ samādi-yāmi. I observe the precept not to indulge in un-noble sexual pleasures.

4. Musāvādā veramaṇi sikkhāpadāṁ samādiyāmi. I observe the precept not to tell falsehood.
5. *Surāmeraya-majjapamādaṭṭhāna veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādiyāmi.* I observe the precept not to be intoxicated with narcotics, drugs and alcoholic drinks.

6. *Vikālabhojanā veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādi-yāmi.* I observe the precept not to take any food after noon.

7. *Nacca-gīta-vādita-visukadassanā veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādiyāmi.* I observe the precept not enjoy any dancing, singing or playing of musical instruments.

8. *Mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanaṭṭhāna veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādiyāmi.* I observe the precept not to indulge in the use of flowers, perfumes, or any other cosmetics.

9. *Uccāsayana-mahāsayanā veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādiyāmi.* I observe the precept not use high and grand seats and beds.

10. *Jātarūpa rajata paṭiggahanā veramaṇī sikkhā-padaṁ samādiyāmi.* I observe the precept not engage in monetary matters and handling of silver and gold.

Then the preceptor admonishes the novice to observe the precepts diligently and mindfully; and the novice pledges himself saying _āma bhante= Thus it shall be_.

Thus the candidate is fully initiated as a novice, a junior member of the *saṅgha* Order.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ INOB, Pp. 42-43
(1). The newly initiated novice thereafter seeks for a spiritual teacher or preceptor (Upajīyācariya), approaching an elderly monk saying:

“Upajīyō me bhante hohi _ Would you please be my preceptor”

(2). When the preceptor instructs the novice that he must in all sincerity fulfill the duties and ordinances of a novice, the novice pledges “āma bhante _ Thus it shall be”.

(3). A novice shall be punished either by the preceptor or by any member of the Bhikkhu Sāṅgha Order if he transgresses any one of the ten offences.

(1). He shall not take any food after noon until the down of the next day.

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

(3). He shall not indulge in cosmetics, perfume and flowers.

(4). He shall not sit on high and grand seats.

(5). He shall not be engaged in monetary matters, or handling of gold and silver.

(6). He shall not attempt to create to prevent the income of other monks.

(7). He shall not attempt in create the lost of benefit of other monks.

(8). He shall not attempt to dislocate the residence of other monks.
(9). He shall not abuse of curse the other monks.

(10). He shall not create dissension amongst the members of the Order.

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

(1) He must not kill.

(2) He must not steal.

(3) He must not indulge in sexual (enjoyments) pleasures.

(4) He must not tell a lie.

(5) He must not be intoxicated.

(6) He must not blaspheme the Buddha.

(7) He must not blaspheme the Dhamma.

(8) He must not blaspheme the Samgha.

(9) He must not imbibe any heretical doctrine.

(10) He must not implicate the nuns.

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

"With proper meditative introspection and attention. I wear these robes just to avoid cold, to avoid heat, to prevent the bites of insects,
mosquitoes, snakes, scorpions and bugs, to shelter from wind and sun, and to cover the shameful parts of the body”.

In pāli ‘Paṭisāṅkhā yoniso cīvaram patisevāmi yāvadeva sitassa paṭīghatāya, uṇhassa paṭīghatāya, daṁsa makas vātātapa sarisapa-samphassānam paṭīghatāya yāvadeva hirikopinappaticchādanattham’.

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

In pāli ‘Paṭisāṅkhā yoniso piṇḍapātam patisevāmi neva dava ya na madāya na maṇḍanāya na vibhūsanāya, yāvadeva imassa kāyassa thitiyā yāpanāya vihiṁsuparattiyā brahmaśacarīyānuggahāya iti purāṇaṁca vedanām paṭīhaṁkhami, navaṁca vedanām na uppaṁdessāmi yāṭrāca me bhavissati anavajjata ca phāsuvihāro ca’.

With proper meditative introspection and attention I live in the monastic shelter and use the facilities merely to avoid cold, heat; to prevent the bites of insects, mosquitoes, snakes, scorpions and bugs, to shelter from wind and sun; to be able to adjust to the weather and climate conditions so as to be comfortable and easy in religious practices.
With proper meditative introspection and attention I take the medicine and utilize medical facilities for the benefit of health, merely to avoid and cure the illness and disease which may arise and only to overcome the suffering of sickness and pain.

In Pali: “Patisaṅkhāyoniso gilana-pacacaya-bhesajja-parikkharam patisevami yavadeva uppannanam veyyabyadhikanam vedananam patighataya abyapajjha paramataya.\(^{160}\)

3. 2. 0. The conducts for a novice (Sekhiya-dhammas)

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

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

- a. Parimaṇḍala-vagga = Dress

\(^{160}\) INOB, Pp. 45-47
b. *Ujjhagghika-vagga* = Verbal manners

c. *Khambhakata-vagga* = Gait and Body postures

d. *Sakkacca-vagga* = Meals

e. *Kabala-vagga* = Meals

f. *Suru suru-vagga* = Eating, Drinking and Preaching

g. *Pāduka-vagga* = Preaching and Disposal of personal excrements.\(^1\)

The following are *sekhiya-dhammas* rules which should be trained by novices, for good manners, in order to control physical and verbal actions in dressing, eating, speaking etc, according to that as the *bhikkhu-pati-mokkha* mentioned.

3. 2. 1. Parimaṇḍala Vagga = Dress

1. ‘I will dress with the inner robe hanging evenly around me,’ is a training to be observed.

2. ‘I will put on the upper robe hanging evenly around me,’ is a training to be observed.

3. ‘Properly clad will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

4. ‘Properly clad will I sit down in the villages’, is a training to be observed.

\(^{161}\) INOB, P. 142
5. ‘Well-controlled will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

6. ‘Well-controlled will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

7. ‘With the eyes cast down will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

8. ‘With the eyes cast down will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

9. ‘Not lifting up the robes will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

10. ‘Not lifting up the robes will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 2. Ujjaggika-vagga =Verbal manners

11. ‘Not with loud laughter will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

12. ‘Not with loud laughter will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

13. ‘With little noise will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

14. ‘With little noise will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.
15. ‘Not swaying the body will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

16. ‘Not swaying the body will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

17. ‘Not swaying the arms will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

18. ‘Not swaying the arms will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

19. ‘Not swaying the head will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

20. ‘Not swaying the head will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 3. Khambhakata-vagga = Gait and Body Postures

21. ‘Not with arms akimbo will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

22. ‘Not with arms akimbo will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

23. ‘Not covering the head will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.
24. ‘Not covering the head will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

25. ‘Not walking on the heels or toes will I go in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

26. ‘Not with knees raised and clasped or wound round with the upper robe will I sit down in the villages,’ is a training to be observed.

27. ‘Attentively will I accept almsfood’ is a training to be observed.

28. ‘Mindful of the bowl will I accept almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

29. ‘With a proportionate amount of curry will I accept almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

30. ‘Only up to the inner ring of the bowl will I accept almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

31. ‘Attentively will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

32. ‘Mindful of the bowl will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

33. ‘In orderly manner will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

34. ‘With a proportionate amount of curry will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 4. Sakkacca Vagga =Meals

31. ‘Attentively will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

32. ‘Mindful of the bowl will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

33. ‘In orderly manner will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

34. ‘With a proportionate amount of curry will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.
35. ‘Not pressing down the top will I eat almsfood,’ is a training to be observed.

36. ‘Desiring some thing more I will not cover up the soup and curry and condiment with rice,’ is a training to be observed.

37. ‘If not ill, I will ask for food for myself and eat it’, is a training to be observed.

38. ‘Not with a captious mind will I look at another’s bowl’, is a training to be observed.

39. ‘I will not make up too large a morsel of food is a training to be observed.

40. ‘I will make each morsel of food round’, is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 5. Kabala-vagga = Meal

41. ‘I will not open the mouth till the morsel of food is brought close,’ is a training to be observed.

42. ‘I will not put the fingers into the mouth while eating,’ is a training to be observed.

43. ‘I will not talk with the mouth full,’ is a training to be observed.

44. ‘I will not eat by tossing the morsel of food into the mouth, ’is a training to be observed.

45. ‘I will not eat by breaking up the morsels’ is a training to be observed.
46. ‘I will not eat by stuffing the cheeks,’ is a training to be observed.

47. ‘I will not eat shaking the hands about,’ is a training to be observed.

48. ‘I will not eat scattering grains of rice,’ is a training to be observed.

49. ‘I will not eat putting out the tongue,’ is a training to be observed.

50. ‘I will not eat smacking the lips,’ is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 6. Surusuru-vagga = Eating, Drinking and Preaching

51. ‘I will not eat making a hissing sound,’ is a training to be observed.

52. ‘I will not eat licking the fingers’, is a training to be observed.

53. ‘I will not eating scraping the bowl’, is a training to be observed.

54. ‘I will not eat licking the lips’, is a training to be observed.

55. ‘I will not touch a drinking cup with my hands soiled with food’, is a training to be observed.

56. ‘I will not throw out in the village rinsing of the bowl containing rice’, is a training to be observed.

57. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a sunshade in his hand’, is a training to be observed.

58. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a staff in his hand’, is a training to be observed.
59. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill, and yet has a knife in his hand’, is a training to be observed.

60. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has a bow in his hand’, is a training to be observed.

3. 2. 7. Pāduka-vagga = Preaching and Disposal of personal excrements

61. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing sandals’, is a training to be observed.

62. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing shoes’, is a training to be observed.

63. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet rides in a vehicle’, is a training to be observed.

64. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet lies in a bed’, is a training to be observed.

65. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is sitting with knees raised and clasped or wound round with the upper robe’, is a training to be observed.

66. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is wearing headgear which covers all his head’, is a training to be observed.

67. ‘I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet has his head covered up’, is a training to be observed.
68. 'While sitting on the ground myself, I will not preach Dhamma to one who is not ill and yet is sitting on a seat', is a training to be observed.

69. 'I will not preach Dhamma, while sitting on a low seat myself, to one who is not ill and yet is sitting on a high seat', is a training to be observed.

70. 'I will not preach Dhamma standing, to one who is not ill and yet is sitting down,' is a training to be observed.

71. 'I will not preach Dhamma following one who is not ill and yet is going in front', is a training to be observed.

72. 'I will not preach Dhamma walking at one side of a path, to one who is not ill and yet is walking along the path', is a training to be observed.

73. 'I will not ease myself standing if not ill', is a training to be observed.

74. 'I will not ease myself spit on living plants of not ill', is a training to be observed.

75. 'I will not ease myself or spit on portable water, if not ill', is a training to be observed.\(^{162}\)

3. 2. 8. A daily-life of a novice

In the Buddha's Teaching (sāsanā), a novice should serve two types of task (dhūra). They are gantha-dhūra and vipassanā-dhūra. Dhūra,
literally, means burden. *Gantha-dhūra* indicates the meaning of the burden of studying Scriptures.\(^{163}\)

*Vipassanā-dhūra* means the burden of practicing meditation. It means that a novice must take either learning and teaching the Scriptures or practicing meditation as the daily routine. If a novice does not take the two types of *dhūra*, his becoming novicehood is worthless and meaningless according to Buddhism.

Now, this is the Burmese Buddhist Culture regarding the daily-life of novicehood. According to Burmese tradition, a novice should get up from bed early morning. The morning service and homage to the Lord Buddha before the monastic shrine, the sharing of merits and meditation of Loving-kindness to all sentient beings should be done.

He then is admonished by a monk to observe the ten precepts of *sāmanera*. A novice admonishes all the scholar boys in the monastery to observe the five precepts of the laity, and all the morning services are concluded by the sharing or merits so and on. Then at 9:00 O’clock having changed into clean robes and washed the alms-bowls all the novices set out in a long procession into the village quarters for alms-round.\(^{164}\)

His face cast down to the ground and looking neither to the left nor to the right, his arm embracing big black bowls to receive the alms-food come the novice in slow and solemn procession; and from the houses come forth women and children with a little curry, or fruit, or something to eat.

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\(^{163}\) Concise Pali-English Dictionary, P. 94
\(^{164}\) INOB, P. 163
to put into the alms-bowls. The novice expresses no word of thanks, but passes silently on. The gifts are not acknowledged. The cover of the alms-bowl is removed, and when the offertories have been put in, it is recovered. And when he has completed his usual round, with his bowl full of eatables, he went his way back to the monastery as solemnly as he departed. Thus the teachings of the Lord Buddha are fulfilled.

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

Since a novice gets his daily food from such regular alms-round and because he does not partake of anything after noon, he needs no money for shopping in the market; he needs no other means to prepare and cook his food. He has no means of storing food for the next day either. Thus he is free from all the troubles in connection with food. If only he has a bowl to put the alms in, and if only he is healthy and strong enough to go out in the morning to receive the offertories from the devout families, then he gets enough food to sustain himself for the day. The food he receives is well cooked and usually the best part of the meal. So a novice has noting to do with kitchen work and recipe collection or menu itemization.
I discussed in this Chapter, the initiation of novicehood such as qualifications for novicehood, the procedures how to perform the novicehood, rules what the novice should observe and train, and the daily life of a novice.

Actually, a daily life of a novice is very simple according to Burmese tradition. He should learn or teach the scriptures and practice meditation including observing the rules mentioned above such as two kinds of ten precepts and seventy five sekhiya-dhammas, Rules for Training of Conduct.\textsuperscript{165}

In summery and conclusion, some prefer to call the teaching of the Buddha, a religion, others call it a philosophy, still others think of it as both religion and philosophy. It may, however, be more correct to call it a ‘way of life’.

The Buddha addressed his noble message of selfless service, morality and boundless loving kindness not only to kings, princes, nobles and millionaires but also to the poor, lowly and needy. He provided equal opportunities for all and enhanced the status of people. He declared that the road to spiritual development is open to all in every condition of life, high or low, saint or sinner, who would care to turn a new leaf and seek perfection.

\textsuperscript{165} INOB, Pp. 164-165
Regarding the Buddha, Pandit Nehru often referred to the Buddha as the greatest son of India. Dr. S. Radhadrishana, another Indian leader and philosopher, in paying a glowing tribute to the Buddha states:

‘In Gotama Buddha we have a mastermind from the East second to none as far as the influence on the thought and life of the human race is concerned, and sacred to all as the founder of a religious tradition whose hold is hardly less side and deeper than any other. He belongs to the history of the world’s thought, to the general inheritance of all cultivated men ...’

In ‘The Tree Greatest Men in History’, historian H.G. Wells writes: “In the Buddha you see clearly a man - simple, devout, lonely, battling for light - a vivid human personality, not a myth. He too had a message to mankind universal in character. Many of our best modern ideas are in closest harmony with it’. In some ways the Buddha is nearer to us and our needs…”

The Buddha established a classless society by opening the gates of the saṅgha to all deserving individuals, making no distinction between caste or class. Likewise, for the first time in history the Buddha founded the religious order of nuns for women, irrespective of class or caste. He thus gave equality to womanhood for spiritual development.

In this chapter, I discussed the procedures for novicehood and the conducts for a novice such as sekhiya-rules (training rules). Although the

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Buddha laid down these training rules for novices, actually these rules should be trained not only by a particular monks, novices and nuns but also by all the large number of society in order to procure the etiquette of seemly behaviour and proper manners.

As a matter of fact, we can say that the training rules, laid down by the Buddha, are in closest harmony with society and nearer to us and our needs, even today, for irrespective of religion, nation, sex, colour, place, beliefs, traditions, customs and theories.