




An Analytical Study of Counting The Number of Bhikkhupātimokkham

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[Abstract]

This documentary research is entitled “Analytical Study of Counting the Numbers of Bhikkhupātimokkha. It has 3 objectives: 1) to study the history of Bhikkhupātimokkha 2) to study the significance of Bhikkhupātimokkha and 3) to analyze the counting on the numbers of Bhikkhupātimokkha. The research found that the meaning of the Buddha’s promulgation is the rules that were laid down by the Blessed One. Vinaya, the rules for monks are divided into 2 types. The regulations composed by Buddha himself are called training rule, while other rules concern the duties and regulations. The results of study were also revealed that the oral recitation of pātimokkha for the first time has no evidence to identify the numbers of training rules precepts of apatti aggregate. But there were more than one hundred and fifty training rules raised for recitation. No evidence in Pāli shows what these numbers are. Someone hypothesize about these numbers and had the opinion that there were only one hundred and fifty training rules to be recited, which would be mistakes. However, this research shows that the Buddha has added more training rules

later on. Up to the times he passed away, there were two hundred and twenty training rules, which composed of the four Defeats (pārājika), the thirteen Formal Meetings (samghādisesā), the two undetermined (aniyatā), the thirty Forfeitures (nissaggiyā), the ninety-two minor matters (pācittiyā), the four Confessions (pāṭidesanīyā), the seventy five Trainings (sekhiyā). In the oral recitation of Bhikkhupātimokkha, the seven rules for settling disputes (Adhikaranasamathā) were also added in recitation. Therefore, it is totally two hundred and twenty seven items as mentioned in Vinaya Pitaka Mahavibhagkha Vol.1 and Vol.2 and Parivara Vinaya Pitaka Vol. 8.

Key words: Counting the Number of Bhikkhupātimokkha

Introduction

According to Royal Thai Government Gazette Issue No. 333 Section No. 330 ng dated 4 December 2014, by referring to the announcement of Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand under the provision no. 15 tri (4) which conforms to clergy act year 1962 on additional amendment by clergy act (issue no. 2) year 1992 - specifying Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand has authority to protect master of Buddhism discipline. Therefore, the Thai Buddhist Monks would need to comply with Vinaya Piṭaka by chanting Patimokkha in total of 227 items. This is due to the fact that Buddhist Monks of Thailand has Patimok chanting concept in 2 directions. The first group follows the solution of Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand from the revision of inherited Tripitaka and from the history revision – Phra Upali Thera has explained that training rule precepts of Patimokkha which have to be presented are the four Defeats (pārājika), the thirteen Formal Meetings (samghādisesā), the two undetermined (aniyatā), the thirty for feitures (nissaggiyā), the ninety-two minor matters (pācittiyā), the four confessions (pāṭidesanīyā), the seventy five Trainings (sekhiyā) and the seven rules for settling disputes (Adhikaranasamathā) and these are in total of 227. On the other hand, the second group believe in the reference number of training rules precepts from Sutta Pitaka, The Vajjian Monk (Vajjiputta-

sutta) , One in Training (1) (Paṭhamasikkhāsutta), Dutiyasikkhāsutta (Tutiya Sikha Sutta), and Tatiya Sikha Sutta (Tatīyasikkhāsutta) which conform to Thai translation in various issues of Tripitaka - translated from Buddha's teaching in Pali "Sādhikamidam, bhante (bhikkhave), diyaḍḍhasikkhāpada-satam"; which means in Thai that there are entirely 150 training rules. This second group believe in this translation and 150 training rules to recitation comes every fortnight not include 2 undetermined (aniyatā) and 75 trainings (sekhiyā). Therefore, it has gradually generated confliction. And later this confliction has been raised up to Sangha Supreme Council. Finally, the National Office of Buddhism makes announcement on final decision from Sangha Supreme Council on 27 August 2014, and later on 04 December 2014 it is identified in Royal Thai Government Gazette.

To regulate training rules the Tathāgata prescribed the training rules for his disciples and recited the Pātimokkha? , Lord of Buddha had regulations conforming to the manner of monks and bhikhunis who improperly performed and were betrayed by villagers and or by other monks. Any improper manners were reported to Lord of Buddha and he then recalled monks/bhikhunis for investigation. Then Lord of Buddha reprimanded and explained about how difficulties of those monks/bhikhunis to be taken care of. He also declared on the benefits of 10 clauses of power in setting sikkhabada precepts, and he also informed to raise regulations to be presented - Buddha teaching in Pali was called "Evañca pana, bhikkhave, imaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ uddiseyyātha", (it's mean order to monks, this training rule should be recited thus) and followed by Training rule regulation. During the starting point of training rule regulation, Training rules were not chanted until Uposatha Day. The backgrounds in brief are as follows;

King Seniya Bimbisāra requested Lord of Buddha to arrange monks meeting and preached on Sabbath day as done by other cults. Lord of Buddha then gave permission to state registered training rules on that day [‘What now if I should allow those rules of training, laid down by me for monks, (to form) a recital of Pātimokkha for them? It would be a (formal) act of observance for them’. I allow you, monks, to recite a Pātimokkha.]. On the first chant of patimokkha, there were no evidences on which

sermons of training rules, how many sermons, how many and which training rule for chanting. There was only Buddha teaching be allowed to monks to chant on that day; that was “All monks, we all escape to be in quiet area in this place where we begin to consider our mind – Now, monks, as I was meditating in seclusion a reasoning arose in my mind thus: ‘What now if I should allow those rules of training, laid down by me for monks, (to form) a recital of Pātimokkha for them? It would be a (formal) act of observance for them’. I allow you, monks, to recite a Pātimokkha. From words of Buddha presenting on the first patimokkha, Lord of Buddha made clear dialogue allowing regulated training rules to be presented but did not specify which training rules items must be presented. That means, during that time there were some legislated training rule.

Lord of Buddha gave necessity on reciprocal chant of patimokkha; for example, he went to inform the venerable Kappina who was Buddhist saint in order to participate in joining chant of patimokkha. And the venerable Kassapa the Great who was the senior Buddhist saint also had intention to participate.

As chant of patimok is significant, researcher perceives the different ideas on the counting number of mentioned patimok chanting that has concerns and should be studied on; how many training rules to chant on Bhikkhupātimokkha in Theravada Buddhism, which training rules, and what observation related to training rules should be presented. In order to protect accurate Buddhist disciplines, according to Lord of Buddha’s intention on the accuracy of chanting patimokkha, – there should be the study in Bhikkhupātimokkha history and the study in the significance of Bhikkhupātimokkha for analysis for further clarity.

Research objectives

To study the counting numbers of Bhikkhupātimokkha in 3 objectives which are as follows;

- 1) To study the history of Bhikkhupātimokkha
- 2) To study the significance of Bhikkhupātimokkha
- 3) To analyze on counting numbers of Bhikkhupātimokkha.

Research Methodology

The study is from documents, scripture, and books; which are the primary source; Pali Tripitaka in Thai - Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University 1996, Tripitaka in Thai translation (reference book, article and page of this research refers to book of Tripitaka in the reference of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya), the Royal Thai Tripitaka scripture, Tripitaka - Mahamakut Buddhist University, Tripitaka - Chaloe Phra Kiat 2006 version (Royal Thai Government Gazette publishing), Tripitaka – English version of Pāli Text Society), Tripitaka – Burmese to Thai translation, and Tripitaka – Sri Lanka to Thai translation. The secondary source documents are Commentary (Pāli version) and Atthakatha in Thai version. The automatic sources are books and other researches which relate to training rules of patimokka and data analysis. The researcher studies and gathers data, then proceeds analysis for meaning along with examining the correction of discipline; according to Lord of Buddha in the Four Great Referrals (Catumahāpadesakathā) stated on Vinaya, Sutta, and the eight Teacher’s instruction [Satthusāsanasutta]. All information from research study is then concluded for answer in accordance with the objective.

Research Study

Part 1 the history of Bhikkhupātimokkha

From the research study, it has been found that Lord of Buddha had regulations conforming to causes which stimulated monk performed not in good manners and created Āsavatṭhānīyānaṃdhammā. Lord of Buddha regulated training rules by himself in accordance with the following steps;

- 1) When monk behaved not in good manners and created Āsavatṭhānīyānaṃdhammā in monk system.
- 2) Lord of Buddha requested monks who behaved not in good manners to ask for more details. Those monks accepted the incident.
- 3) Lord of Buddha specified the outcome of not in good manners.
- 4) Lord of Buddha explained 10 benefits of good manners.
- 5) Lord of Buddha made announcement “And, monks, this training rule should be recited thus” and laid down training rule for the monks.

Lord of Buddha regulated training rule in one section at a time. And if any regulated training rule explained not concisely and he foreseen for additional details or any reduction, Lord of Buddha then later made amendment which is called Final ruling (Anupaññatti).

Part 2 the significance of Bhikkhupātimokkha

According to the importance of Bhikkhupātimokkha, the person who became monk in Buddhism had objective practicing to be free from suffering and became sotāpanna, sakadāgāmī, anāgāmi and finally arahant. Therefore, there were practices on behavior, wording and inner which leaded to 3 training; the training in the higher morality (Adhisila-sikkha), the training in the higher mind (Adhicitta-sikkha) and the training in the higher wisdom (Adhipanna-sikkha). Lord of Buddha declared that all training rules which he legislated already included these mentioned 3 sikkha. During that period, training rules demonstrated in Sutta, and the researcher observes that, on any additional registered training rules, all traing rules would have mutual meaning - that is Adhisila-sikkha. Therefore, training rules must be important for monks to study and practice. If there is any violation with no misdemeanor, ambitious would not be achieved. This is especially when the Buddha teaching stated that if any monks violated celibacy foundation there would be the reason of not achieving ambitious.

The origin of Observance (Uposatha) occurred in Buddha era after King Pimbisara requested Lord of Buddha for arranging monk meeting and preaching Dhamma on daily chapel as other cults. Lord of Buddha later allowed such arrangements that the monks gathered for meeting to present the registred training rules in observance day (every semi-montly). This considered importance. In addition, this is to give monks opportunity to meet for learning disciplines, and both previous and new legislated training rule could be added for more details (Buddhist era). And even Arahant, Lord of Buddha adviced that they should also participate in chanting of pātimokkha.

Lord of Buddha regulated one training rule at a time. In any regulations, Lord of Buddha had announcement to present all training rules.

At one time, there were more than 150 training rule comes every fortnight. Later until at the end of his era, more training rules had been added including misdemeanor, there were training rules in total of 220 items. After his nirvana, praying Patimokha in Theravada Buddhism has been in practice conforming to Buddha's promulgation by presenting 220 training rules and the seven rules for settling disputes (Adhikaranasamathā). And there were opinions both agreement and disagreement on the number of training rules and patimokka praying practice by expressing on the literature, memo and description.

Part 3 analyze on the counting number of Bhikhupātimokkham

One group believes that there are 150 Bhikhupātimokkham entirely from 2 main reasons on the misunderstanding on the number of Bhikhupatimokkham; 1) there were clear opinions and sections of items in Pali “Sādhikamidam, bhante(bhikkhave) diyaḍḍhasikkhāpadasatam (150 items), and 2) Pali translation “Sādhikamidam, bhante (bhikkhave) diyaḍḍhasikkhāpadasatam” is misled from the accuracy – both incorrect translation and fixed number of such items. Buddhist study has been inherited in Pali, therefore, it is necessity for the researcher to understand the fundamental of Pali language. The researcher agrees on the book details, and the necessity of Pali learning in order to understand Buddhism. In addition, there should be studies on each event stating in Tripitaka, and refer to the Four Great Referrals stated on Vinaya, Sutta, the eight Teacher's instruction, and commentary. All these are because if there is no applicable study there would generate understanding and incorrectly convey Buddhism disciplines, which could cause Buddhism disciplines to be disappeared.

The researcher studies the counting number of Bhikhupātimokkham by searching the references from Tripitaka both in Pali and translation versions in Thai, English, Singhalese, Burmese, and also include scripture and secondary literature. All are evaluated by referring to the Four Great Referrals stated on Vinaya, Sutta assessment. In conclusion, the counting number of Bhikhupātimokkham is 220 items which composed of the four Defeats (pārājika), the thirteen Formal Meetings (samghādisesā), the two Undetermined (aniyatā), the thirty Forfeitures (nissaggiyā), the ninety-two

minor matters (pācittiyā), the four Confessions (pāṭidesanīyā), the seventy five Trainings (sekhiyā). In the oral recitation of Bhikkhupātimokkha, the seven rules for settling disputes (Adhikaranasamathā) were also added in recitation. Therefore, it is totally two hundred and twenty seven items. And they can be evaluated in section as follows;

1) On the first recitation, there was no evidence on number of training rules. Lord of Buddha informed to refer training rules (there was no indication from Lord of Buddha on number of training rules). Nonetheless, Lord of Buddha did clearly section his regulations into 2 groups; training rules section 1 and Buddha's promulgations in general.

2) In any periods, there were some sādhamikamidam, bhante(bhikkhave) diyadḍhasikkhāpadasatam which stated in Sutta – that means there are more than 150 training rules (there was no identification of training rules section). The interpretation of these 150 training rules is according to Pali grammatical translation. And Tripitaka was translated into various languages versions – including the translation of Somdet Phra Buddhakosajarn (Prayuth Puytto) – all these translations indicate that there are more than 150 training rules.

In term of translation of sādhamikamidam, bhante(bhikkhave) diyadḍhasikkhāpadasatam indicates 150 training rules entirely with no previous evidence specifying on which items of training rules, therefore there are some researchers have assumption and section training rules into groups. Nevertheless, using assumption to identify sections of sikkhabadas could generate errors. For that reason, Mahapadesa 4 and Dharma principles should be utilized for reexamination.

3) In period of time, Lord of Buddha had regulated additional sikkhabada precepts. When there is Buddha's promulgation, monks would have further studies. Evidence also tells us that King Seniya Bimbisāra was alive on the first recitation of Bhikkhupātimokkham, and he had living many more years before end of his life. After his death, The Formal Meetings item no. 10 and no. 11 were later laid down. Therefore, both items did not exist on the first recitation.

4) On the first recitation of observance day, there was no clear evi-

dence that all the seven rules for settling disputes were presented – this depended on each the rules for settling disputes which according to all causes to obstruct settling disputes . That means it was possible that all the seven rules for settling disputes or not all were on the first recitation of observance day. However, it has been finalized that all recitation of observance day were promulgated.

5) Lord of Buddha regulated training rule from caused situations of each city (total 7 cities) where located in distance. Obviously, temples of each city were also in distance and different training rules could be promulgated. Areas where Lord of Buddha propagated the Buddhism were in distant, and all communications in those days were not convenient and speedy as nowadays. Nonetheless, monks later learned new registered training rule from words of Phra Thera (senior monk) and could add additional training rule on the next recitation.

In term of the dilemma of training rules recitation limiting at 150 items, some items had been diminished from training rules; including the two Undetermined and the seventy five Trainings. This deviates Vinaya and five (ways for the) recital of the Pātimokkha.

In term of two Undetermined in Pali was called “Evañca pana, bhikkhave, imaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ uddiseyyātha”, (it’s mean order , monks, this training rule should be recited thus) and the fourth (way for the) recital of the Pātimokkha named by The Buddha– these 2 Undetermined training rules were withdrawn from promulgation by Lord of Buddha.

In term of the seventy five Trainings the Lord Buddha laid down these training rule in order to “And, monks, this training rule should be recited thus”

By not promulgating the two Undetermined and the seventy five Trainings from recitation, it means that this does not follow the regulations and rather generates new way for the recital of the Pātimokkha.

To consider the number of training rules in recitation, it should refer to details from both Vinaya and Sutta, and it also should consider the accuracy conforming to the principle of the Four Great Referrals and Vinaya

accessment. In term of the number of the training rules in Sutta which states that “sādhikamidam” - if we consider just Sutta which Buddha teaching is not categorized, the researcher would not be able to identify the items of these training rules. In addition, if we compare this constraint with the case of Bhikhuni; where we could refer the number of Bhikhuni’s training rules; should conclude from Sutta or Vinaya? Would this be from Sutta as the practice monks’? If so, it will be no conclusion because there is the number of Bhikhuni’s training rules are not stated in Sutta but rather stated on Bhikkhuni Vibhaṅga which is Vinaya Pitaka issue no. 3.

Suggestion

For the accuracy of this research, the researcher has attempted to gather all concerned information concerning to Bhikhupātimokkham. However, if there is error in any details which the researcher has gathered, evaluated, interpreted, and referred from Buddha’s teaching in Pali – the readers of this research may rather refer to Buddha’s teaching in Pali which has been persisting for the most importance. For any further study, the researcher may suggest Buddhism teaching in Pali in various viewpoints related to sikkhabada of patimok as follows;

1) To study the number of training rules in “sādhikamidam, bhante (bhikkhave), diyaḍḍhasikkhāpadasatam” from Buddha’s teaching for certain category on which training rules.

2) To study Vinaya which had been regulated before training rule was promulgated. And to study each training rules item of which year was regulated - in order to identify the time period and items in order by Lord of Buddha.

3) To study the number of Theravada Buddhism Bhikhupātimokkham compared to other religious’.

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