



# A Study of Physical Cleanliness Management in Theravada Buddhism

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## Abstract

All the teaching of the Buddha can be summed up that to purify of our mental and physical defilements. It stressed into the purification of purity of action, purity of speech and purity of mentality. And the other form of cleanliness is concerning with the cleanliness of surrounding or environments. In this article, the researcher would like to emphasize on the purification of bodily and the cleanliness of the environment or hygiene, as it directly support to the development of spiritual path.

The results of the study indicate how the general concept of physical cleanliness correlates to other sources appearing in Buddhist texts; either in the Buddhist Canonical texts or in the other Buddhist texts. These were analyzed for a better understanding in a systematic and academic way. The researcher studies in detail how practitioners' practice can be affected and provides an introduction to Theravāda Buddhist teachings. Those who follow the various practices associated with the Buddha's teaching not only cultivated moral strength and selflessness, but also perform the highest service to their fellow human beings. They practice physical cleanliness and gradually develop themselves through good external actions that become the foundations of inner development up until the attainment of the ultimate goal of life: *Nibbāna*. In the modern context, the Centers are revitalizing the practice of physical cleanliness as a means of solving problems in the family, school, society, and the world.

**Keywords:** Physical cleanliness in Buddhism

## Introduction

All the teaching of the Buddha can be summed up that to purify of our mental and physical defilements. It stressed into the purification of purity of action, purity of speech and purity of mentality. And the other form of cleanliness is concerning with the cleanliness of surrounding or environments. In my research work, I would like to emphasize on the purification of bodily and the cleanliness of the environment or hygiene, as it directly support to the development of spiritual path.

While analyzing the *Vinaya Piṭaka* in Pāli canon, one often encounter with certain situation where Buddha instructing monks to keep the environment neat and clean. In *Mahāvagga*; it says *ācariyo me bhante hohi; āyasmato nissāya vacchāmi*,<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, *Mahāvagga* offer the relationship of mentor and students as father and son. And five categories of duties permitted to student to serve his/her mentor. They are such as;<sup>2</sup>

- a) *Attending to the mentor's personal needs.*
- b) *Assisting the mentor in any problems he may have with regard to Dhamma and Vinaya.*
- c) *Wishing, making and dying mentor's robe.*
- d) *Showing loyalty and respect to mentor.*
- e) *Caring for the mentor when he falls ill, not leaving him until he either recovers or passes away.*

Attending mentor's personal needs are further divided into 8 categories. And among five duties, 3 duties are connecting the cleanliness. Such as;

- a) *Arrange his mentor's toiletries for his morning wash-up.*
- b) *Arrange his seat and food for his morning convey (if he has any) and clean up after he is finished.*
- c) *Clean his dwelling and other parts of his dwelling complex, such as the restroom and storage rooms, when they get dirty.*

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<sup>1</sup> Thanissaro, Bhikkhu. **Buddhist Monastic Code 1**, (Metta Forest Monastery, U.S.A, 2001), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Vi. III. 25.

In *Cūllavagga* text exhibits the significance of keeping the toilets clean. As the monastery was dwelling of *Saṅgha*; Buddha was much concern of the hygiene and laid systematic method of using the toilets such as defecating, urinating and spitting. It is said that;

Adds that after one has defecated — inside a restroom or not — one should always rinse oneself if water is available.<sup>3</sup>

In *Visuddhimagga*, Venerable *Buddhaghosa* shows the importance's on making the basis clean for spiritual growth. The cleansing of internal and external basis has been mentioned;

Herein, making the basis clean is cleansing the internal and the external basis. For when his head hair, nails and body hair are long, or when the body is soaked with sweat, then the internal basis is unclean and unpurified..... Formations do not become evident to one who tries to comprehend them with unpurified knowledge, and when he devotes himself to his meditation subject, it does not come to growth, increase and fulfillment.<sup>4</sup>

If the dwellings of monks are unclean or polluted, it directly disturbs the mental development of the practitioners. Thus, the cleanliness of lodging also falls under one of the ten skills in Absorption.

In modern times, dwellings of the monks are no secluded as in the ancient times. Many devotees often visit the monasteries and offer in abundant. Mostly, the dwellings of monks are unclean, toilets are very smelly and scattered with cats and dog's defecates and stinking smells.

It's responsible of monks and nuns to keep the monasteries neat and clean. Moreover; clean environment not only provide healthy life but also helps in the spiritual progress. Therefore, *Vinaya Pitaka* strictly offered the duties of monks and nuns for the benefits of Community and Dispensation.

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<sup>3</sup>Thanissaro, Bhikkhu. **Buddhist Monastic Code ,vol.2**, (Metta Forest Monastery, U.S.A, 2001), p.101

<sup>4</sup>Nanamoli, Bhikkhu. (tr.), **The Path of Purification: (Visuddhimagga)**, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1997), p.124

## Buddhist Monastic Life

A monk has to observe the rules of perfect livelihood in order to get his food (*Ājīva pārisuddhasīla*): and make strenuous effort to prevent sinful thoughts arising, to create good thoughts and to fertilize them, he has to resolve that either he shall die in the battle field of psychical progress or conquer and avoid all passionate and sensual longings : cast off all angry thoughts and hatred : not let the mind become indolent and slothful, and his perceptions weak: nor let restlessness and skepticism have control over him. His mind must not dwell on any other subject outside his special psychical field of activity.

He should practice wakefulness by sleeping only four hours during the night that is from ten o'clock to two o'clock in the morning and from two o'clock in the morning to use the cloister. Cleanliness is absolutely necessary for the psychical student. The Lord Buddha emphasizing cleanliness declared that the observance of cleanliness is the fulfillment of the law of the Buddha. Physical cleanliness is a corollary to mental purity. If the oil is impure, and the wick not trimmed and lamp full of dirt the light could not be bright. Dirty nails, unkempt hair, ill-smelling clothes, unclean seat are hindrances to psychical progress.

The object of the Bhikkhu life is to preserve the perfect life of *Brahmacharya*. Renunciation is the law of the Bhikkhu's life. He must not touch gold or silver, nor be attached to his residence, his patrons, his clan, and he must not hesitate to impart knowledge to others. Concealment of knowledge a condemned, he must be always contented with whatever food he gets and be ready to share it with other Bhikkhus. He must not covet anything. He must be ready to leave his residence just as the bird readily leaves one tree to another. He should love solitude, and not be fond of society. Gossip he has to avoid and where he could not be engaged in spiritual talk, he should observe the principles of *jhāna*. He must keep the mind in a state of perpetual activity with perceptions of light and cultivate serenity of mind. His gestures should not show that he is restless.

Buddhism has no central authority, and therefore many different varieties of practice and philosophy have developed over its history, including among monastic communities, sometimes leading to schisms in the *Sangha*. The information presented here, unless otherwise noted, characterizes only certain Buddhist monks who follow the strictest regulations of the tradition.

Monks and nuns are expected to fulfill a variety of roles in the Buddhist community. First and foremost, they are expected to preserve the doctrine and discipline now known as Buddhism. They are also expected to provide a living example for the laity, and to serve as

a “field of merit” for lay followers, providing laymen and women with the opportunity to earn merit by giving gifts and support to the monks.<sup>5</sup>

In return for the support of the laity, monks and nuns are expected to live an austere life focused on the study of Buddhist doctrine, the practice of meditation, and the observance of good moral character. The relative degree of emphasis on meditation or study has often been debated in the Buddhist community. Many continued to keep a relationship with their original families.

According to the *Vinaya*, the *Saṅgha* should not accept a former Bhikkhuni to retake these vows, and for Bhikkhu up to taking three or seven times in a life. Breaking some important *Vinaya* in manners according to the *Vinaya Pitaka* would not be accepted for monasticism again for a lifetime. The disciplinary regulations for monks and nuns are intended to create a life that is simple and focused, rather than one of deprivation or severe asceticism.<sup>6</sup>

Celibacy is of primary importance in monastic discipline, seen as being the preeminent factor in separating the life of a monastic from that of a householder. Depending on the tradition and the strictness of observation, monastics may eat only one meal a day provided either by direct donations of food from lay supporters, or from a monastery kitchen that is stocked (and possibly staffed) by lay supporters.

Monastic practices vary significantly according to location. In part, this can be attributed to differences in the scriptural and doctrinal traditions that were received in different parts of the Buddhist world. Additionally, local concessions to social, geographical, and climatic conditions have been adopted by most monastic orders in order to smooth the integration of monks into local communities and to ensure that monks live in a safe and reasonable manner. In cold climates, for instance, monks are permitted to own and wear additional clothing not specified in the scriptures. In areas where begging rounds are impossible (due to traffic, geography, or disfavor by the lay community), monks more commonly employ a kitchen staff of monks or lay followers who are responsible for providing meals for the community.

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<sup>5</sup>Bhikkhu Ariyesako, *The Bhikkhus' Rules A Guide for Laypeople The Theravadin Buddhist Monk's Rules* (Australia: Sanghaloka Forest Hermitage 1998), p.75.

<sup>6</sup>Bhikkhu Sujato, *Bhikkhuni Vinaya Studies*, (Australia: Sanipada Publication, 2009), p. 20.

## Vinaya Rules and Using Toilets in Vinaya Piṭaka

The aim of Buddhist code of conduct (*Vinaya*) was to purge society of sin, like the present day concept of purging society of crime only. Regarding to using toilets, there are many rules and regulation in *Cūlavā Khandaka* of *Vinaya Piṭaka*.<sup>7</sup>

Rules and guidelines on toilet practices appear throughout the *Vinaya*: while the rules of the *Prātimokha* as (lists of precepts) for monks and nuns focus on a clean image of the *Saṅgha*, explanatory chapters add a large number of practical instructions on how to make toilet facilities, and on how to use them properly. Once again, we will use the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* as our principal reference and compare it with the other *Vinaya* when necessary.

Rules on toilet practices are included in the *Prātimokha* is recited during the *Upoṣatha* ceremony. As we will see, the focus is on correct behavior and decorum. In some rules, improper ways of relieving oneself are even equated with animal behavior, leaving no doubt that they are to be avoided. For instance, monks are forbidden to relieve themselves on green grass.<sup>8</sup>

1. This rule's introductory story explains that lay followers consider such behavior to be common among animals. It, therefore, harms the name and reputation of the *Saṅgha*. There is a very similar prohibition in the rules for nuns, albeit in a higher category: any nun relieving herself on green grass commits a *Pācittika* offense.

2. Two distinct reasons are given to justify this relatively strong sanction. The first relates to the extreme embarrassment and damage to the image of the *Saṅgha* that will result if Lay followers find their clothes soiled with urine or excrement that nuns have deposited on a grassy spot. The second relates to the fate of the grass that dies, because of contamination by the nuns' urine and excrement. This second point might be linked to Buddhists' desire to respect some of the common convictions of their lay followers, such as a belief in the sentient life of plants.

3. Lay followers also compare the practice of relieving oneself in water with animals' behavior.

4. It is unclear why this is viewed so critically, although it might have something to do with polluting the water, as this a rule describes water as 'pure', at one point.

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<sup>7</sup>Vi. VII. 10. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Ann Heirman & Mathieu Torck, **A Pure Mind in a Clean Body: Bodily Care in the Buddhist Monasteries of Ancient India and China**, (Gent Belgium, Academia Press, 2012), p.50.

5. A third and final practice that is compared to animal behavior is relieving oneself (urinating as well as excreting) while standing.

6. No further explanation is given for this prescription. One is permitted to stand only if it is impossible to remain clean while squatting.

Decorum linked to a clean image and (to a lesser extent) to respect for some ideas that were common among lay followers but not adopted by the Buddhist dharma lies at the heart of the above rules relating to toilet practices. In this same vein, the rules for nuns contain one further stipulation that is not included in the rules for monks.

7. This focuses on how to dispose of excrement. As with the previous rules, this one is motivated by the desire to preserve decorum, but it also stresses the importance of not hurting or irritating others. It stipulates that a nun commits a *Pācittika* if she relieves herself at night in a pot.

8. And then throws the contents of that pot over a wall without looking the following day.

9. As we will see below, members of the monastic community were certainly familiar with chamber pots, although some passages seem to suggest that their use was restricted to those who were sick. This *Pācittika* rule for nuns, however, points to more general use. The introductory story tells how a wealthy person receives all of the filth on his head, which obviously causes considerable indignation, almost to the point of initiating legal action against the nuns. Nevertheless, the nun's carelessness does not lead to an outright ban on throwing excrement over the wall.

Instead, it merely results in a stipulation that due care must be taken at all times. So, in future, the nun does not commit any offense if she first looks around carefully during the day, or snaps her fingers or coughs loudly to warn passersby at night, before disposing of her waste.

This compromise solution to avoid causing embarrassment seems to indicate that it was quite common to throw human waste over the wall. Disposal of waste is also permitted in places that are designed – or at least fit – for the purpose, such as on tiles or bricks, stones, tree-trunks and thorns (all explicitly termed 'dirty places'), or into a pool, the edge of a pit or a dunghill.

Clearly, then, the *Prātimokha* rules on relieving oneself are motivated primarily by a determination to avoid embarrassment, to respect lay people and to preserve a clean image of the *Śaṅgha*.

10. Human wastes have considerable potential to damage this image.

11. In the case of nuns, the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* even stipulates that new can pure dilates who are unable to control their defecation and urination, or who regularly discharge mucus and saliva, should not be ordained.

12. A nun who knowingly ordains such a candidate commits a *Pācittika*.

13. The introductory story for this rule focuses on the fact that such a nun constantly soils her body, robes, and sitting material.

Finally, given this constant focus on a clean image, respect and decorum, it should come as no surprise that the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* also contains *Śaikṣa* rules that state that one should not relieve oneself under or towards a *Stūpa* of the Buddha, or even in the vicinity.

14. One should also not carry an image of the Buddha to toilet facilities (*Sekhiya* rule 77).

15. Although this *Sekhiya* rule are unique to the *Dharmaguptakavinaya*, most *Vinaya* traditions include extensive guidelines on the proper respect due to *stūpas*.

16. Still, the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* is the only one that explicitly refers to excrement and urine in this context. It also adds that having used toilet facilities; one should always wash before carrying a small *Stūpa* (in one's hands).<sup>9</sup>

## The Possess of Physical Requisite to be Cleanliness

The ideal possessions of the Bhikkhu are just his basic requisites: three main robes; alms bowl; waistband; needle and thread; razor and water filter.

**a. Alms bowl:** The alms bowl can be made from clay or iron but must be properly fired to harden it (if clay) and rustproof it (if iron). Three bowl-sizes are mentioned: small, medium and large.<sup>10</sup> There are also several rules about begging for a new bowl before one's old one is worn out, which entails forfeiture of the wrongly acquired bowl.

**b. Hair of the head:** The hair of the head should not be worn long. It should be shaved at least every two months or when the hair has grown to a length of two fingerbreadths—

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* p.67.

<sup>10</sup> In Thailand, the iron bowl has been almost superseded by the bowl made from stainless steel. EV reports that a medium-sized bowl is about 22.5 cm. in diameter.

whichever occurs first, says the Commentary. In Thailand there is the custom that all Bhikkhus shave their heads on the same day, the day before the full moon, so that the Community can present a uniform appearance. Although this is not obligatory, a Bhikkhu who does not follow the custom tends to stand out from his fellows.

**c. Razor:** A razor is one of a Bhikkhu's eight basic requisites. He is also allowed a whetstone, a razor case, a piece of felt (to wrap the razor in), and all razor accessories (such as a strop). At present, this allowance would cover all types of safety razors as well. Unless ill—e.g., he has a sore on his head—a Bhikkhu may not use scissors to cut his hair or have it cut. The question of using electric razors to shave the head is a controversial one. Because their cutting action—even in rotary shavers—is like that of scissors, many Communities will not allow their use in shaving the head.<sup>11</sup>

A Bhikkhu may not have gray hairs pulled out. He may not arrange the hair of his head with a brush, a comb, with the fingers used as a comb, with beeswax mixed with oil, or with water mixed with oil. Hair dressing mousse and creams would also come under this prohibition.

**d. Beard:** The beard should not be grown long, although—unlike the hair of the head—there is no explicit maximum length, unless the two month/two fingerbreadth rule is meant to apply here as well. One may not dress the beard as a goatee, a rectangle, or in any other design. The moustache may not be dressed, e.g., by making its ends stand up. Because there is no prohibition against using scissors to cut the beard, electric razors are clearly allowed in shaving the face.

**e. Water strainers:** A water strainer is another basic requisite, used to provide clean water and to protect small beings in the water from being harmed. Three kinds of personal water strainers are allowed, although the first is not defined in any of the texts: a water strainer, a ladle strainer (according to the Commentary, this consists of three sticks tied together as a frame for the straining cloth), a water strainer cylinder (somewhat like a can with one end open, covered with straining cloth, and a small hole on the other end).<sup>12</sup>

**f. Miscellaneous accessories:** A Bhikkhu is allowed to own an umbrella/sunshade and to use it in the area of the monastery—although again, as with footwear, he should

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<sup>11</sup> Bhikkhu Ṭhāṇissaro, *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Bhikkhu Ṭhāṇissaro, *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), p. 41.

lower the umbrella as a sign of respect near a *stūpa*. He is also allowed to use it outside the monastery when he is ill. According to the Commentary, ill here includes when he is feverish or in an irritable mood, when he has weak eyes or any other condition that might be aggravated by not using an umbrella. The Commentary goes on to say that when there is rain, one may use an umbrella to protect one's robes; and when on a journey, one may use an umbrella as a protection against wild animals and thieves.<sup>13</sup>

**g. Umbrella:** The objection against using an umbrella without good reason seems to be that in ancient times it was considered a sign of rank and ostentation. Thus the Commentary goes on to say that an umbrella made out of a single very large leaf—as is sometimes used in Sri Lanka—is allowable in all circumstances, probably because it carries no connotations of rank. If the decorations are on the handle, one may use the umbrella only after scraping them off or wrapping the entire handle in thread so that they cannot be seen.

The following personal requisites are also allowed: a mosquito net, a little water jar (as is still common in India; a small water kettle would also come under here), a broom, a fan, a palmyra-leaf fan (a fan with a handle), a torch, a lamp (flashlights would come under here), a mosquito whisk, and a staff (or a cane).

## Cleanliness of Rules for Footwear

**Footwear:** The Canon mentions two kinds of footwear, leather footwear (*upahana*) and non-leather footwear (*pāduka*). Generally speaking, leather footwear—of very specific sorts—is allowable, while non-leather is not. At present, using the Great Standards, rubber is included under leather for the purposes of these rules.<sup>14</sup>

**Leather footwear:** A Bhikkhu in the middle Ganges Valley may wear new leather sandals only if the soles are made from a single layer of leather. He may wear multilayer sandals if they are cast-off, which according to the Commentary means that they have been worn (presumably, by someone else) at least once. Outside of the middle Ganges Valley, one may wear multi-layer sandals even if they are new.

Sandals may not be worn if the soles or the straps are entirely blue (or green), entirely yellow, entirely blood-red, entirely crimson, entirely black, entirely orange, or entirely beige.

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>14</sup> Bhikkhu Ṭhāṇissaro, **The Buddhist Monastic Code**, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), p. 39.

According to the Commentary, if one takes a cloth and wipes the soles and straps with dye to spoil the color, even if only a little, the sandals will then be acceptable. At present, one may use a pen to mark them to serve the same purpose.

The following types of footwear, even when made with leather, are not allowed: footwear with heel-coverings (such as sandals with heel straps), boots (or sandals with straps up the calf), shoes, footwear stuffed with cotton (or kapok), decorated with partridge (or quail) wings, with toes pointed like rams' horns, with toes pointed like goats' horns, with toes pointed like scorpion tails, footwear with peacock feathers sewn around it, and other types of decorated footwear. Also not allowed is leather footwear embellished with lion skin, tiger skin, panther skin, black antelope skin, otter skin, cat skin, squirrel skin, or flying fox skin. The Commentary states that if one removes the offensive part of the footwear, one is allowed to wear what remains. It also states that the allowance for new multi-layer leather footwear in outlying areas implies that all skins (except human skin) are allowable for footwear there as well, but it is hard to understand why this would be so.<sup>15</sup>

In brief, above all mentioned possessions are a monk's own properties to be clear and clean by physically and mental impurities attachment for those of matter.

## Physical Cleanliness of ALMS-Food

As has been mentioned above, the Buddha said that there were four necessities of life: clothing, food, shelter, and medicine.

The Buddha taught in the *Majjhima Nikāya* and *Aṅguttara Nikāya*<sup>16</sup> that the basic source of food for Bhikkhus was that received on the morning alms round (*Piṇḍapāta*). This daily dependence on alms food reminds both the Bhikkhus and the lay devotees of their interdependence and prevents the Bhikkhu from becoming too isolated from the lay community. He 'meets' them every day and eats the food that they share with him. Several important rules are concerned with this as well as a major section of the *Sekhiya* Training rules.

An alms round is not considered begging, for the Bhikkhu does not solicit anything but is ready mindfully to receive any alms that lay people may wish to give. Although alms food may sometimes be meager, the Bhikkhu is always expected to be grateful for whatever

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<sup>15</sup>Bhikkhu Ṭhāṇissaro, *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), p. 39.

<sup>16</sup>M. I, 10; A. III, 387.

he is given.<sup>17</sup> It is surprising how particular we can be about what food we like to eat; and what complications that can cause. This is reflected in the way rules concerning ‘edibles’ are arranged, which may seem very complex especially when the Bhikkhu’s life is supposed to be so simple. It should be borne in mind that the rules often deal with extraordinary circumstances and try to prevent them from becoming the norm.

## The Maintenance of Environmental Cleanliness in Vinaya Piṭaka

Environmental pollution has assumed such vast proportions today that man has been forced to recognize the presence of an ecological crisis. He can no longer turn a blind eye to the situation as he is already threatened with new pollution-related diseases. Pollution to this extent was unheard of at the time of the Buddha. But there is sufficient evidence in the *Pāli* canon to give us insight into the Buddhist attitude towards the pollution problem. Several *Vinaya* rules prohibit monks from polluting green grass and water with saliva, urine, and feces. These were the common agents of pollution known during the Buddha’s day and rules were promulgated against causing such pollution. Cleanliness was highly commended by the Buddhists both in the person and in the environment. They were much concerned about keeping water clean, be it in the river, pond, or well. These sources of water were for public use and each individual had to use them with proper public-spirited caution so that others after him could use them with the same degree of cleanliness. Rules regarding the cleanliness of green grass were prompted by ethical and aesthetic considerations. Moreover, the grass is food for most animals and it is man’s duty to refrain from polluting it by his activities.

Herein, the researcher would like to express some of *Vinaya* rules related to environmental cleanliness. They are as follows:<sup>18</sup>

“Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall dig the ground or have it dug--that is a *Pācittiya*.”

“There is *Pācittiya* in destroying any vegetable.”

“Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall sprinkle water with living creatures in it, or shall cause such to be sprinkled on grass or on clay--that is a *Pācittiya*.”

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<sup>17</sup> Bhikkhu Thāṇissaro, **The Buddhist Monastic Code**, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), p. 495-504.

<sup>18</sup> T.W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg (trs.), **Vinaya Texts: Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. 17, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1881), pp. 32. 33. 57.

“‘Not on growing grass will I ease myself, or spit.’ This is a discipline which ought to be observed.”

“‘Not into water will I ease myself, or spit.’ This is a discipline which ought to be observed.”

Noise is today recognized as a serious personal and environmental pollutant troubling everyone to some extent. It causes deafness, stress, and irritation, breeds resentment, saps energy and inevitably lowers efficiency. The Buddha’s attitude to noise is very clear from the *Pāli* canon. He was critical of noise and did not hesitate to voice his stern disapproval whenever the occasion arose. Once he ordered a group of monks to leave the monastery for noisy behavior.<sup>19</sup> He enjoyed solitude and silence immensely and spoke in praise of silence as it is most appropriate for mental culture. Noise is described as a thorn to one engaged in the first step of meditation, but thereafter noise ceases to be a disturbance as the meditator passes beyond the possibility of being disturbed by sound.

The Buddha and his disciples revealed in the silent solitary natural habitats unencumbered by human activity. Even in the choice of monasteries the presence of undisturbed silence was an important quality they looked for. Silence invigorates those who are pure at heart and raises their efficiency for meditation. But silence overawes those who are impure with ignoble impulses of greed, hatred, and delusion. The *Bhayaḥherava Sutta* beautifully illustrates how even the rustle of leaves by a falling twig in the forest sends tremors through an impure heart. This may perhaps account for the present craze for constant auditory stimulation with transistors and cassettes. The moral impurity caused by greed, avarice, acquisitive instincts, and aggression has rendered man so timid that he cannot bear silence which lays bare the reality of self-awareness. He, therefore, prefers to drown himself in loud music. Unlike classical music, which tends to soothe nerves and induce relaxation, rock music excites the senses. Constant exposure to it actually renders the man incapable of relaxation and sound sleep without tranquilizers.

As to the question of the Buddhist attitude to music, it is recorded that the Buddha has spoken quite appreciatively of music on one occasion.<sup>20</sup> When *Pañcasikha* the divine musician sang a song while playing the lute in front of the Buddha, the Buddha praised his musical ability saying that the instrumental music blended well with his song. Again, the

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<sup>19</sup>M. I, 457.

<sup>20</sup>D. II, 267.

remark of an *Arahant* that the joy of seeing the real nature of things is far more exquisite than orchestral music<sup>21</sup> shows the recognition that music affords a certain amount of pleasure even if it is inferior to higher kinds of pleasure. But it is stressed that the ear is a powerful sensory channel through which man gets addicted to sense pleasures. Therefore, to dissuade monks from getting addicted to melodious sounds, the monastic discipline describes music as a lament.<sup>22</sup>

The psychological training of the monks is so advanced that they are expected to cultivate a taste not only for external silence, but for the inner silence of speech, desire, and thought as well. The sub-vocal speech, the inner chatter that goes on constantly within us in our waking life is expected to be silenced through meditation. The sage who succeeded in quelling this inner speech completely is described as a *muni*, a silent one.<sup>23</sup> His inner silence is maintained even when he speaks!

It is not inappropriate to pay passing notice to the Buddhist attitude to speech as well. Moderation in speech is considered a virtue, as one can avoid four unwholesome vocal activities thereby, namely, falsehood, slander, harsh speech, and frivolous talk. In its positive aspect moderation in speech paves the path to self-awareness. Buddhism commends speaking at the appropriate time, speaking the truth, speaking gently, speaking what is useful, and speaking out of loving-kindness; the opposite modes of speech are condemned. The Buddha's general advice to the monks regarding speech is to be engaged in discussing the Dhamma or maintain noble silence.<sup>24</sup> The silence that reigned in vast congregations of monks during the Buddha's day was indeed a surprise even to the kings of the time.<sup>25</sup> Silence is serene and noble as it is conducive to the spiritual progress of those who are pure at heart.

Even Buddhist laymen were reputed to have appreciated quietude and silence. *Pañcangika Thapati* can be cited as a conspicuous example. Once *Mahanama* the *Sakyan* complained to the Buddha that he is disturbed by the hustle of the busy city of *Kapilavatthu*. He explained that he experiences calm serenity when he visits the Buddha in the quiet salubrious surroundings of the monastery and his peace of mind gets disturbed when he goes

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<sup>21</sup>Thag. 398.

<sup>22</sup>Bhikkhu, Bodhi (tr.), **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha** (Samyutta Nikāya), (Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2000), p. 352.

<sup>23</sup>Sn. 207-221; A. I, 273.

<sup>24</sup>M. I, 161.

<sup>25</sup>M. II, 122; D. I, 50.

to the city.<sup>26</sup> Though noise to the extent of being a pollutant causing health hazards was not known during the Buddha's day, we have adduced enough material from the *Pāli* canon to illustrate the Buddha's attitude to the problem. Quietude is much appreciated as spiritually rewarding, while noise condemned as a personal and social nuisance.<sup>27</sup>

## The Monastic Smmgha Duties in The Society

The main task of the Buddhist monastic community is to preserve and practice the Teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha Himself had indicated that the survival of the Teaching depended upon the existence of the monastic community, whose members can devote all their time and energy to this important task. Having accomplished this, they can use their learning and wisdom to help society as a whole.<sup>28</sup>

Although the members of the Buddhist monastic community have renounced the worldly life, they still have an important contribution to make to the welfare of the society. For instance, they help to solve the problems of the lay followers through counseling.

Finally, the members of the monastic community also help to provide various social services for the lay community. The Buddhist monasteries have an important role to play in the education of the young and even today, there are Buddhist schools functioning alongside state schools. In addition, Buddhist monks and nuns help in the running of free clinics, orphanages, homes for the aged and the sick and other welfare organizations.

As a conclusion remark of this chapter, the researcher tried to explain how the Buddhist monastic life related to physical cleanliness, and how a buddhist monk behave in proper way.

## Conclusion

Cleanliness is about recognizing your inherent value as a human being. Cleanliness is also regarded as a sign of spiritual growth and purity. Keeping everything clean and tidy is a way of showing that you care about yourself, other people and your surroundings. It is a

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<sup>26</sup>S. V, 369.

<sup>27</sup>Lily de Silva (ed.), **Buddhist Perspective on Ecocrisis: The Buddhist Attitude towards Nature**, (Kandy: BPS, 1987), pp. 9-29.

<sup>28</sup>Bhikkhu Ṭhāṇissaro, **The Buddhist Monastic Code**, Vol. II. (California, Metta Forest Monastery, 2001), pp. 490-494.

good habit to keep our surroundings and ourselves clean and tidy. Some nations attach the utmost importance to cleanliness. Cleanliness of body leads to purity of mind, which elevates our moral and spiritual life. Preservation of health: Cleanliness ensures good health. If the body is regularly washed, dirt cannot choke the pores of the skin. This removes dirt through perspiration. On the other hand, if the pores are choked up, the impurities of the body cannot come out, and various diseases may follow.

Exercise can do no good if we do not keep our body clean. We should. Therefore, be most careful in this respect. We should also keep our dress and clothes clean, and we should avoid dirty food. We should carefully throw the domestic waste in the garbage boxes. If one adheres to all these habits, one can be free from diseases and lead a happy life.

Cleanliness is important for healthy mind, body, and spirit. Our first duty is to be clean. Every morning, as soon as you get up, you must clean your teeth, and wash your face, and your hands and feet. If possible, you may bathe and wash your whole body. If you cannot bathe as soon as you get up, you ought to do so at least later and always before you take your food. Cleanliness and hygiene are important from not only the public health point of view, but also socio and economic development of the family. There is no doubt to say in this era sanitation dictates the human life. Positivity. Keeping things clean and in order gives you and others a happy feeling, and so does being good and peaceful. Taking positive action to clear up the environment or just to spring clean our cupboards feels great. Taking positive action to be kind to others and do good deeds also feels wonderful. These feelings of positivity are not so different from each other: here, cleanliness and Godliness are very similar in terms of the effects they have on our minds.