

GOING FORTH IN THAI SOCIETY

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This study is a research survey with the objective of examining the factors related to going forth (ordination of a Buddhist monk or novice), the objectives of going forth, and the various problems encountered during the time spent in the robes.

The results of the research comprised:

- a. Initial data concerning the population studied
- b. Objectives of going forth
- c. Factors related to going forth
- d. Comprehension of going forth
- e. Problems encountered during the time spent in the robes

(a) Initial data concerning the population studied

The population studied consisted of 920 monks (*bhikkhu*) and novices (*sāmaṇera*) from a total target of 1,000, the full number of which, due to various difficulties, it was not possible to collect data from.

Details of the population studied are as follows:

(a.1) Number included in the study

The population studied consisted of 700 monks and 220 novices, comprising a percentage of 76.8 and 23.2 respectively of the total number.

(a.2) Location of population studied

The population studied were scattered through various localities as follows:

Bangkok and environs: 200, or 22%.

Central Thailand and Cholburi province, 90, and Petchaburi, 100, making a total of 190, or 21%.

Northern Thailand, Chiang Mai province: 180, or 19.5%.

Northeast Thailand (Isan), Khon Kaen province: 180, or 19.5%.

Southern Thailand, Nakhon Si Thammarat province: 170, or 18%.

(a.3) Level of education

The group studied had received both worldly and religious education. Worldly education is the compulsory and general education of the Ministry of Education and tertiary education.

Religious education is study according to the curriculum determined by the Sangha, namely the study of the *nak tham* and Pāli studies, from *nak tham tree* (third-class dhamma), *nak tham tho* (second-class dhamma) and *nak tham ek* (first-class dhamma) levels to the Pāli levels (*prayok*) of 1, 2, 3 and up to 9. This religious study is referred to by the name of *pariyatti dhamma* studies.

Apart from these a certain number of the monks and novices had received both worldly and religious educations, having completed studies at one of the two Sangha universities, Mahachulalongkorn Rachavidyalaya and Mahamakut Rachavidyalaya, and at one of the *pariyatti* schools for general education, which teach first year to sixth year secondary levels in conjunction with Buddhist studies.

The results of our study showed that most of the population studied had received both worldly and religious education, with the majority completing *nak tham tho* (second grade Dhamma) and fourth *prayok* (level) Pāli.

(a.4) Age of the population studied

The population studied was mostly in the age group of 20–24 years. The next largest group was 25–29 years, followed by 30–34 years, 35–39 years, 15–19 years and 40 years and over age groups respectively.

(a.5) Length of stay in the robes

The sample population had lived for different lengths of time in the robes. Both monks and novices had an average monastic age of between 4–8 *vassa* (years). The monks and novices with the lowest age in the robes, between 1–3 months, and the highest, 10 years and over, were the minority.

This accorded with the researcher's objective to divide the population group into three groups as follows:

1. Newly ordained monks and novices
2. Monks and novices who were students

3. Monks of *thera* (elder) status (having gone forth for 10 years or more)

The data obtained was in accordance with real ratios. Monks and novices living in urban monasteries were mostly students studying in both general and *pariyatti* subjects in the Sangha universities.

(b) Objectives of going forth

The study found that most of the monks and novices had gone forth according to tradition, following the custom upheld and maintained from ancient times. This means going forth in the belief that all sons, before getting married, should become monks to repay their debt to their parents, to make their parents happy, and after a period of time disrobe and raise a family.

Next in frequency were those who went forth for the purpose of studying the Dhamma-Vinaya and the subjects made available for study, such as general education, by Sangha institutions, and then those who went forth to dedicate the merit to benefactors, both deceased and living, to preserve the religion, to make a living, and out of faith in the teaching.

(c) Factors related to ordination

The study found three important factors related to the going forth, as follows:

1. Going forth due to the influence of another person
2. Going forth as a personal decision
3. Going forth due to influence of the mass media.

The percentages of going forth resulting from these factors are as follows:

1. Influence of other people: 56.8% (520)
2. Personal decision as a result of own learning: 23.5% (216)
3. Influence of the mass media: 20.22% (184)

The details of these motivations are as follows:

(c.1) Influence of others

Most of those who went forth did so on the instigation of one of their relatives, such as father or mother. This refers to those who had

no previous intention to go forth but did so because they could no longer endure the demands of their parents. In addition there were those who had gone forth as children, giving as reasons that the teacher (abbot) in their locality encouraged them to do so for the purposes of learning the Dhamma-Vinaya and continuing their general studies. If they had continued to live as lay people their educational opportunities would be limited on account of poverty. Their going forth was a way of providing them with higher educational opportunities.

There were those who gave as extra reasons for their going forth a friend from the same peer group donning the robes and having no companion, so they went forth to accompany their friend. For this to take place a certain amount of support would also be required from the ordinand's own parents and relatives.

Another group were those who went forth out of respect for another person, to whom they wished to dedicate the merits of their going forth. In this group would be senior civil servants who went forth to dedicate the merits to the king or members of the royal family.

(c.2) Own decision

From the questionnaire it was found that a number of monks and novices had gone forth as a result of a personal decision, and not as a result of any encouragement or coercion from others. The reasons for their decisions to go forth were sorrow as a result of loss of a loved or esteemed one, sickness, surviving a serious accident, a predilection for the monk's life from childhood, and economic pressures such as poverty.

(c.3) Influence of the media

Not a few of the monks and novices had gone forth as a result of the influence of mass media, such as newspapers, radio and television. Most of this group tended to go forth according to a model set by a revered monk seen in magazines such as fortnightly and monthly religious periodicals. Such going forth may be called emulative behavior in which the ordinand wishes to model a life-style on a revered personality or an ideal.

(d) Comprehension regarding going forth

Comprehension is ability in noting things in terms of their meaning, their component factors and their roles and functions, as well as effort to penetrate their truths. In essence comprehension means in this sense profound understanding of something; i.e., it is a deeper kind of knowledge than mere apprehension and is a kind of knowledge that also relates to other kinds of knowledge. Thus comprehension of the life style of a renunciant must be taken to mean profound knowledge in relation to going forth and, once gone forth, being able to practice correctly according to the rules and regulations of a renunciant.

To have proper comprehension of something necessarily entails a number of factors, such as family background, level of education, etc.

The study revealed a fairly disparate level of comprehension concerning ordination, which may be broken down as follows:

(d.1) Comprehension of the meaning of going forth

When asked about going forth, monks and novices gave answers on its meaning, in order from more to less, as follows:

1. Going forth means refraining from all evil (22.5%).
2. Going forth means “going forth in the mind,” meaning refraining from all mental misdeeds (17.39%).
3. Going forth is conducting oneself strictly according to the principles of Dhamma-Vinaya (12.73%).
4. Going forth is living the holy life (*brahmacariya*) (11.73%).
5. Going forth is the only way to attain enlightenment (9.24%).
6. Going forth is donning the ochre robe (6.53%).
7. Going forth is dedicating oneself to the religion for the whole of one’s life (4.43%).
8. Going forth is not attaching to things (4.34%).
9. Going forth is abandoning the life of a householder to take up the renunciant’s life (3.82%).
10. Going forth is restraining and controlling body, speech and mind (3.04%).

The meaning of going forth given in the first answer was that given by the greater number of respondents, comprising 22.5% of the total. This definition corresponds with one part of the three-fold all-encompassing description of the teachings of Buddhism—giving up all evil, doing only good, and purifying the mind. The meaning described in this first answer accords with the original Pāli term, *pabbajā*.

It is to be noted that there was a number of monks and novices (6.53%) who understood going forth as being merely the donning of the ochre robe.

(d.2) Comprehension of the objectives of going forth

Most of the monks and novices understood the objective of going forth to be repaying the benefaction of parents. Next in frequency of response were following the tradition and study, as shown below.

1. The objective of going forth was to repay the benefaction of parents (30.97%).

2. The objective of going forth was to follow the tradition (14.66%).

3. The objective of going forth was to study the Dhamma-Vinaya (10.66%).

4. The objective of going forth was to preserve the religion (10%).

5. The objective of going forth was to raise one's spiritual status by practicing strictly according to the Dhamma-Vinaya (9.79%).

6. The objective of going forth was to practice according to the teaching (8.70%).

7. The objective of going forth was to attain enlightenment (8.59%).

8. The objective of going forth was to fulfill a pledge or avert bad luck (6.63%).

It is to be noted that these different kinds of comprehension of the objectives of going forth lean more heavily to repaying the benefaction of parents than to any of the other objectives, which indicates the level of devotion of sons to their parents. It also shows the gratitude (*kataññū*) and recognition of the benefaction of parents and the response (*katavedī*) to the parents' benefaction by going

forth. Thai society holds the going forth to be one of the loftiest kinds of good deed with especially meritorious results.

Following a long-held tradition was another of the objectives of going forth cited by many respondents. In practicing according to a tradition, the person so practicing may not understand the real meaning or value of that tradition, but simply follow it out of obedience to what the elders have taught. Thus there were some respondents who understood that going forth was following a preferred social tradition, seeing a neighbor going forth, for instance, and following his example, or a younger brother seeing his older brother going forth and following suit.

The custom of going forth provides many kinds of benefit to both those who go forth and to others involved in the act. If it had no value it would probably have disappeared long ago, as shown in the discussion on the purpose or objectives of going forth in Thai society.

(d.3) Comprehension of the monks and novices regarding the renunciant's life

The life of a renunciant is the lifestyle that accords with the observances and practices which one gone forth must hold to and conduct his life by.

In Buddhism these observances and practices are the *sīla* or precepts of the *Vinaya*, consisting of 311 precepts for the *bhikkhunī* (female monks), 227 precepts for the *bhikkhu* (monks), 10 precepts for the *sāmaṇera* (novices), 8 precepts for *upāsaka* and *upāsikā* (male and female lay followers) and 5 precepts for ordinary people. One gone forth must conduct his or her life according to these precepts. In addition he must also practice in accordance with the teaching of the Fully Enlightened Buddha.

From the question, "How do you understand the life-style of one gone forth to be?" results were obtained as follows:

1. A renunciant must lead a life that is independent and free of attachments (26.3%).
2. A renunciant's life is one that entails enduring great difficulty (20.21%).

3. A renunciant's life is made possible through the faith (i.e., support) of the people (11.84%).

4. The renunciant's status is one that enjoins on him to have the constant control of mindfulness (9.57%).

5. A renunciant must work for the benefit of the religion and the country (6.52%).

6. If one who is a renunciant does not repay the benefaction provided by the faithful in the form of offerings of the four supports he becomes indebted to their benefaction in this world and the next (6.09%).

7. A renunciant has the duty of teaching the Dhamma to the people (5.76%).

8. A renunciant must practice strictly according to the principles of the holy life (*brahmacariya*) (5.43%).

9. The renunciant's life must be a homeless one (*anāgārika*) (4.69%).

10. A renunciant must not seek wealth and must not use the Buddhist religion just to make a living from day to day without any effort to bring benefit or any objective in life (3.59%).

From the results given above, we see that most of the monks and novices understood the life of a renunciant to be necessarily one of freedom, without attachments, a life that is beyond the mundane capacity. This indicates a good comprehension of the life of a renunciant according to the teachings of Buddhism. All ten of the answers given above, while seemingly different, are in principle not conflictive and all of them accord with the Dhamma-Vinaya.

(e) Problems encountered during time gone forth

The important factors of going forth are:

1. The preceptor (*upajjhāya*)
2. The teacher (*ācāriya*)
3. The one going forth (ordinand)
4. The equipment for going forth (*aṭṭhaparikkhāra*: the eight requisites)
5. The four supports

6. Sponsor/relatives
7. The ceremony
8. Fellow monks (*sahadhammika*)

From the questionnaire it was found that there were different problems in regard to each of these factors of going forth. The one for which no problems were found at all was the ceremony. This may be because the ordination ceremonies are conducted in accordance with the principles of Dhamma-Vinaya and customs long upheld in each locality.

Here I would like to analyze the problems encountered in regard to the other factors of going forth as follows:

(e.1) Problems concerning the preceptor

The word *upajjhāya* literally means "one who notices faults large and small," meaning he is one who accepts "sons of good family" for higher ordination amid the assembly of monks. Thus the duty of the *upajjhāya* or preceptor is to be chairman of the ceremony that gives the Buddhist going forth and the guardian of sons of good family responsible for their training and education. The preceptor is thus like a father or mother who begets a child, i.e., he gives birth to monk- or novice-hood to a son of good family. A son of good family who has gone forth must receive close training and education from the preceptor.

The duties of the preceptor are called in Buddhism *saddhivihārikavatta*, which are the customs or observances a preceptor must do for his *saddhivihārika*, or pupil, comprising the following four things: to see to his education; to provide him with bowl, robes, and other requisites; to make an effort to prevent or suppress blemishes—to quench, for instance, a desire to disrobe or relieve a pupil of his wrong view; and to look after him when he is sick.

From the study it was found that preceptors did not perform fully the duties of one who begets. Most of the preceptors, having ordained their pupils, did not teach them the Dhamma-Vinaya, and did not really look after them; monks and novices, after going forth, did not live with their preceptors but in different monasteries;

preceptors lacked the knowledge and ability in the Dhamma, were too old, or were too busy; and preceptors were not selective enough, not looking into the histories of the pupils to whom they gave the going forth.

(e.2) *Problems with teachers*

The *ācāriya* is a monk who performs the duty of teaching monks and novices. Here the term refers to the abbot and guardian (*philiang* in Thai) monks who look after the new monks.

In some places an abbot is also an *upajjhāya*, but most abbots in rural areas are not. Etymologically, the word *ācāriya* means one who imparts knowledge. In this respect an *ācāriya* must be endowed with qualities such as a good knowledge of the Buddhist teachings and good conduct that is worthy of respect, and he has the duty to teach his pupils and impart to them a knowledge and understanding of the teachings of Buddhism.

The results of the study indicated many problems concerning teachers (*ācāriya*), and these problems were the same in almost every locality surveyed except for Bangkok and environs, where teachers were inclined to perform their duties fairly fully. The important problems with teachers, especially in regions far from Bangkok and the large cities, were similar to the problems with preceptors: teachers did not take an interest in teaching and lacked knowledge and ability to teach; they were embroiled in wealth, rank and praise, were too old, could teach only chanting and ceremonies, did not conduct themselves in a way that is worthy of respect and reverence, were authoritarian, and did not encourage the study of general subjects.

(e.3) *Problems with ordinands*

The ordinand is a monk or novice who has received the going forth from a preceptor or teacher. A newly ordained monk is called a *navaka bhikkhu*, while a newly ordained novice is called a *navaka sāmaṇera*. According to Buddhist teachings, a monk who has received the higher ordination (*upasampadā*) from a preceptor is known as a *saddhivihārika* of that preceptor. *Saddhivihārika* means "pupil," one who lives with the preceptor. It is the name given to

one who has received the higher ordination, who must receive attention from the preceptor in many ways, such as education, supply of bowl and robes and other requisites, the suppression of harmful wrong views and nursing care when they are sick, as already stated in the duties of the preceptor.

According to Buddhism, a *saddhivihārika*, an ordinand who lives with his preceptor, is obliged to uphold a tradition of practice or certain duties to his preceptor. This tradition of practice is called “*upajjhāyavatta*” (duties to the preceptor) and briefly it consists of (as in the *saddhivihārikavatta*): taking an interest in serving his preceptor; applying himself to learning from him; making an effort to prevent or suppress any harm, such as a desire to take leave of the robes or wrong view; having respect for the preceptor; when going anywhere to take leave of the preceptor and not simply travel around as one pleases; and taking an interest in nursing the preceptor when he is sick.

Usually, once a son of good family has ordained as a monk or novice, he must learn the principles of the Dhamma-Vinaya to be practiced, and know the various duties involved in his work. But since those going forth do so as a result of different motivations or objectives from the very first, interest in studying the Dhamma-Vinaya also varies. Here differences in upbringing may also be cited as an important factor determining differences in the basic character and predilection for the objectives and comprehension of going forth.

Overall, from the survey, it can be stated that problems relating to the ordained, or monks and novices, are as follows: lacking a proper knowledge of the Buddhist teachings due to lack of attention to teaching on the part of preceptors and teachers; difficulty in adjusting to the new way of life—this point is probably rooted in their not having gone through a period of training in the wat before taking the going forth, so that newly ordained monks and novices tended to be in a constant state of confusion and stress; not having time to serve their preceptors and teachers; some ordinands possessing no prior faith in the going forth, but doing so perfunctorily just to please their parents or to abide by the tradition;

a number of ordinands having weak constitution and physical disabilities; some of the ordinands being stubborn and taking no interest in learning, not believing or obeying the instructions of their preceptors and teachers; some finding the food insufficient, etc.

(e.4) Problems with the equipment of going forth

The equipment for going forth refers to the things necessary for going forth, which are the eight requisites (*aṭṭhaparikkhāra*). The eight requisites are the utensils of a Buddhist monk, comprising: lower robe (*antaravāsaka*), upper robe (*cīvara*), outer robe (*saṅghāṭi*) (the robe folded over the shoulder when monks are wearing their upper robes folded over one or two shoulders), bowl, razor or nail-cutter, needle, belt, and water filter. Apart from these there is the later addition of the inner vest (*aṅsa*) (a thin cloth that covers one shoulder and is sewn together near the waist. It is used like a singlet but is of different shape).

The survey revealed that there were not many problems with these necessary requisites of the going forth, but problems such as scarcity, insufficiency, high prices and frequent theft of requisites were found in some areas. For example, in Chiang Mai in the north there was one wat with a great many monks and novices staying in a student's dormitory in the wat which was difficult to oversee and theft of requisites was a regular occurrence.

(e.5) Problems with the four supports

The Buddhist teachings list the four supports as the necessities of life. They are food, clothing, shelter and medicine. Problems with the four supports or necessities of life differed. Most problems were with dwelling places. Next in frequency were problems with food and with clothing respectively. Not many problems were found in regard to medicine.

Senāsana are dwelling places such as *kuṭi* (monks' dwellings), *vihāra* (halls) and furniture such as tables and chairs. Even the foot of a tree, if used as a place to live, is called *senāsana*. *Senāsana* is one of the four supports which are necessary for the life of monks and novices (the four supports are food, shelter, clothing and medicine). Monks and novices rely on *senāsana* as dwelling places,

to sit and sleep. Thus the *senāsana* is important and of use to the monks and novices, and these *senāsana* are made possible by the faithful offerings of people who revere the Triple Gem. *Senāsana* are regarded as communal belongings. Thus it is the duty of a monk living in a *senāsana* to look after it, not to let it become dirty, to keep it clean, neat and tidy, to use it carefully so that it does not become dilapidated or damaged, and to put his belongings away and not leave them scattered around in a mess.

The survey revealed a number of interesting problems in regard to *senāsana*. Mostly they were problems of lack of dwelling places, dwelling places in a state of deterioration, dwelling places disturbed by houses (being too near the dwellings of householders), dwelling places dirty and unkempt, dwellings soiled by domestic animals such as dogs and cats, householders encroaching on monastery grounds to conduct their businesses, rendering the dwelling places of the monks unsuitable as places for the practice of Dhamma, and in some places it was found that abbots were so intent on building their *uposatha* halls that monks and novices were forced to work like laborers and had no time to study the Dhamma-Vinaya or practice the Dhamma. These problems were found in varying degrees in all regions.

(e.6) Problems with sponsors of the going forth

The sponsor of the going forth is a person who takes on the burden of expenditure involved in the going forth. Generally sponsors are of two kinds: parents and relatives, and non-relatives.

Sponsors who are parents or relatives do not just abandon their sons or nephews after their ordination, but tend to visit them regularly and see to their needs. Conversely, sponsors who are not relatives will tend to leave the ordinands in the care of the abbot of that monastery after their going forth and will not visit them, see to their needs or ask them how they are going and whether they have enough requisites. In Thai society there is the general belief that once a sponsor has helped someone go forth, he will take on responsibility of looking after the monk or novice as if he were the sponsor's own son. Whatever the sponsored monk or novice lacks,

sponsors will offer it to him and will pledge to look after the monk or novice for as long as he remains in the robes.

The survey revealed that sponsors who were not relatives tended to not visit or look after the ordinands, but those who were relatives would visit ordinands regularly, as shown in the table. This may be because people who volunteered to sponsor ordinations intended merely to buy the robes and eight requisites and take on the other expenditure of the ordination ceremony itself with no obligation to look after the ordinand afterwards. For example, some people may become sponsors of an ordination at the recommendation of a fortune teller who foretold that a dire misfortune may befall them because their star was not good, but that they could escape their fate by going forth or sponsoring someone else's going forth, in which case once the ceremony for going forth had been completed their obligations were over. However, this kind of problem was fairly scarce.

In addition, it was found that sponsors organized ordination ceremonies that were too extravagant, with shows and lengthy ceremonies, and encouraged gambling during the accompanying celebrations, which indicates a lack of understanding of the true objectives of going forth.

(e.7) Problems with fellow monks and novices

Sahadhammika are monks and novices who live together in the same wat or center, comprising monks and novices ordained before, together with and after the ordinand.

The survey revealed a number of interesting problems related to the monks and novices living at the same center or wat as the ordinand, such as inappropriate conduct, lack of control by the preceptor or teacher, selfishness and lack of mutual help.

(f) Recommendations from survey results

(f.1) The results of the survey show that most people understood the going forth to be an accepted custom, which indicates an acceptance of the form of going forth and belief handed down from the past. Few people understood that real going forth according to

the Buddhist principles is for the objective of practicing the holy life (*brahmacariya*). Most ordinands adhered to the example and teachings of their preceptors and teachers as their principle for conduct. This caused their conduct in going forth to incline toward *ācāriyavāda*, believing in and practicing according to the teachings of the teacher, which is a kind of behavior and practice long upheld in Thai society. If the ordinands lived under the care and teaching of a teacher who well knows and understands the teachings of Buddhism, problems of breaches of the discipline would not arise in junior monks. But the problems that are arising in the Thai Sangha at present are partly due to monks and novices not receiving close attention and training from preceptors and teachers. Thus the recommendation here is that preceptors and teachers, who are the leaders responsible for the care and control of junior monks, must be of good quality in terms of learning and conduct. Only learned monks and good teachers should be chosen for the positions of preceptor and abbot. If there were preceptors and teachers of good quality, they would be able to select those individuals who are of good quality for the going forth. This would certainly have the effect of providing the religion with quality religious members. Quality preceptors and teachers would apply themselves to tending and teaching their pupils more strictly and earnestly than preceptors and teachers without quality, and the problem of monks with bad conduct would not arise.

(f.2) The survey revealed many kinds of problems concerning going forth: in the ordinands, in environments not suitable for practicing the Dhamma, in overcrowding of monks and novices in urban monasteries, in insufficient food, and so on. These problems are all a result of social, economic, political and cultural changes. The Sangha institution is part of society. Changes in society must also affect the Sangha.

The strength and development of the institution of Sangha will have a close relationship with the development of society. Thus, if the society is at peace, religious institutions are not disturbed and can carry out their duties smoothly. This in turn helps the society to

grow in a more desirable direction, as for example in the past when the Sangha performed the duty of teaching so that the people lived in peace and harmony.

Again, the development of the Sangha is related to the ruler of the country. In the past administrative leaders also undertook to control and oversee the personnel of the religion. If any problem was found in the Sangha organizations, such as phony or immoral monks (*alajji*), they would have them disrobed and then punished according to the laws of the land. This meant that religious personnel consisted of people who practiced well and did not transgress the established customs as much as we see nowadays. True, even though in the present the law grants the Sangha the authority to govern itself and solve its own problems, the structure of Sangha organizations is weak, which in turn is a result of organization by past governments in their issue of Sangha Acts which did not allow the Sangha to organize itself and solve its own problems. The matter of problems in the structure of Sangha administrative organizations has resulted from lack of dedication on the part of those governing the country. Since this is so, there will always be problems with the Sangha organizations and no solution or improvement will be possible. Thus the government should take on the task of revising and improving the laws and regulations of Sangha administration. This will help to stabilize and improve the Sangha and make it more efficient in the solution of its problems.

(f.3) Nowadays it is not difficult to go forth and most people judge people who are renunciants merely on their external appearance. Sometimes it is impossible to distinguish between true renunciants and phony ones. This point very often causes confusion in the people when a problem arises in the Sangha. This problem of ordination being too easy would no longer be a problem if the regulations in regard to going forth were strictly observed and there was selection of candidates for ordination by strictly examining their qualities in terms of the Dhamma-Vinaya. However, as already stated, most preceptors tend to not be very selective of candidates: i.e., they do not study their past histories or their personal particular,

and conduct ordinations as soon as there is a request or a sponsor, a candidate (*nāga*) and the equipment of going forth.

(f.4) Again, from the survey it was found that comprehension of the going forth tended to accord with the principles of going forth in the texts of the Tipiṭaka, even though some parts of these teachings were not thoroughly understood. In order to have the people comprehend the going forth more correctly and comprehensively, it is necessary to provide the “sons of good family” and guardians of candidates for ordination with information on the real objectives of going forth according to the Buddhist teachings so that faith arises in them prior to the going forth, otherwise problems will arise. Once the going forth has been given, preceptors and teachers should make an effort to look after and teach their pupils thoroughly rather than just leaving newly ordained monks and novices on their own, without an instructor or supervisor.

(f.5) The majority of problems found during the time in robes concerned lack of care and supervision from preceptors and teachers. There was also the problem of insufficient living space. Urban monasteries, in particular, tended to be in crowded areas with many monks and novices living in them. Most of the monks and novices living in these urban monasteries are students. In order to relieve this problem it is necessary to expand the venues of higher education for monks and novices out to the provincial towns and make education there stricter and of higher quality in terms of scholarship and personnel. This is in order to attract monks and novices to the provincial towns or to the provinces of their own homes and not have to migrate to the big cities like Bangkok. While at present the two Sangha universities, Mahachulalongkorn Rachavidyalaya and Mahamakut Rachavidyalaya, have expanded their campuses to other provinces, it is necessary to improve the academic standard and quality of personnel and to support increased budgets both from the government, the Sangha and the general population. This is in order to improve monks and novices who wish to study, so that they have greater learning and ability and can become valuable citizens after

they forsake the renunciant's life and become aids to the growth and prosperity of the religion while they are in the robes.

(f.6) Going forth should involve not only the Dhamma-Vinaya, but also social standards as well. That is to say, it is necessary to inspect the conduct and perseverance of candidates with a trial period in the monastery, in which they practice according to the standards determined by the monastery. Once they have passed the standard, then they can receive the going forth, as some monasteries like Wat Dhammakai, Amphur Khlong Luang, Pathum Thani province, have already put into effect with good result.

[Translated from the Thai version by *Bruce Evans*]