

**CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM
IN VIETNAM**

—A Focus on the Hue Area—

(現代ベトナム仏教—フエ市を中心として)

By
HOANG TRONG SO

(1)

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Photographic Illustrations



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

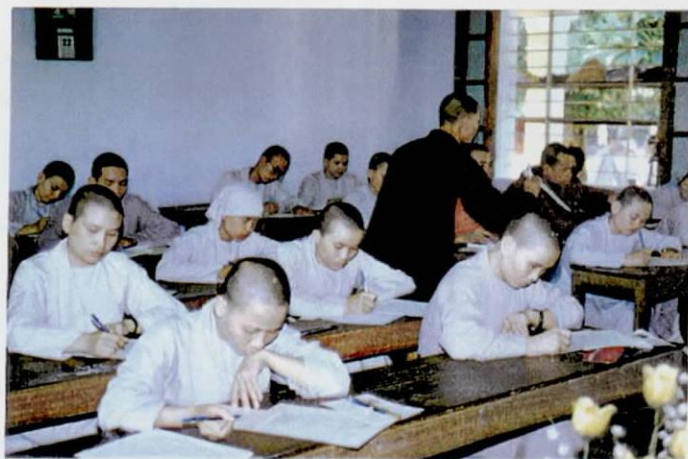


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Photo 19



Photo 20

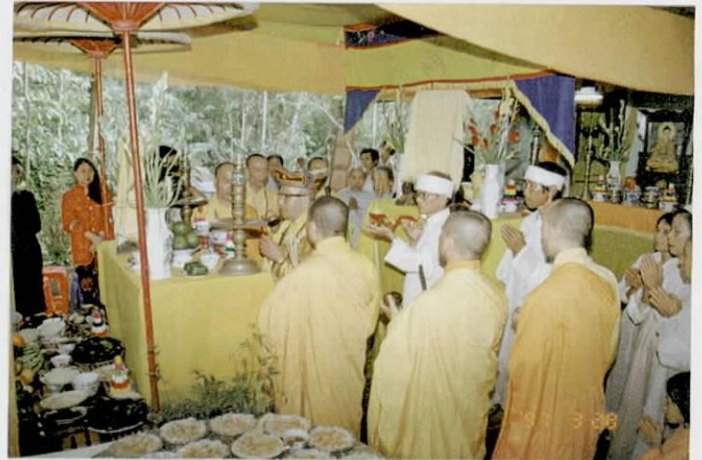


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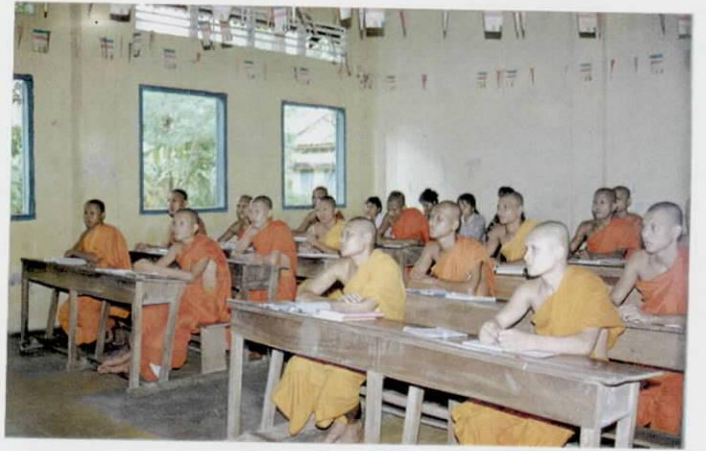


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—A Focus on the Hue Area—

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Introduction

While reading the book “*Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka*” (現代スリランカ上座仏教, Sankibo Busshorin Publishing Co., Ltd., Tokyo, 1986) of my respected supervisor, Professor Egaku Mayeda, I found that this is really an interesting and precious work, whose orientation of study is quite new and attractive about modes of practice and ways of living of the Sri Lanka Theravāda Buddhists. It is the words of “*the age which considers that just only reading the holy scriptures of Pāli language and then coming to understand the Southern Buddhism has already been over*” (p.4) right in his forewords that awakened me and made me recognize that while studying the Buddhism of some country, one should not only depend on its history, but should also rely on the forms of existence of that Buddhism through the modes of practice, ways of living as well as activities of its monks and nuns and layfollowers. Therefore, just studying the history of that Buddhism through books, materials and Buddhist scriptures are not enough to understand wholly the existence of the Buddhism of the country. After all, that is only the study of the past.

Then the age of studying the present existence of Buddhism has come so that one can understand clearly and correctly about the present forms of existence of Buddhism in the countries which have never been introduced in the world like Vietnam. Thanks to reading the above-mentioned book of my supervisor and to his precious words, I have made up my mind to choose the title “*Contemporary Buddhism in Vietnam—A Focus on the Hue Area*” for my Ph.D. thesis. This is theme of study that has never been seen in books of foreign languages nor even in Vietnamese. It is with this persistent purpose that I have tried all my best to complete my thesis in order to introduce the essences and values of Vietnamese Buddhism to the world.

Based on the above title, my thesis includes six main chapters, that is, Chapter One: *Monks—Life and Activities*, Chapter Two: *Nuns—Life and Activities*, Chapter Three: *Traditional Buddhist Rituals & Annual Festivals in Vietnam*, Chapter Four: *Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam*, Chapter Five: *The Vietnamese Khat Si Sect*, and Chapter Six: *The Gia Dinh Phat Tu and Some Other Organizations of Buddhist Layfollowers in Vietnam Buddhism*.

My theme is to focus mainly on the form of existence of Vietnam Buddhism in Hue area, where is the central region of Vietnam, where the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*)—an important organization of Buddhist layfollowers of Vietnam Buddhism—was born, and where many traditions are preserving in the daily life of the Hue people as well as the Buddhists. It is inevitable that each region, North or South of Vietnam, has its own outstanding cultural traditions and characteristics, but I think, through the Hue area, one can understand the whole nation. That is why I have selected the Hue area as the central region for my study of this thesis.

Before explaining the content of my thesis through chapters, I think, it is necessary to give a glimpse of history of Vietnamese Buddhism.

Up to now, there have been no satisfactory answers to the question concerning the period of introduction of Vietnamese Buddhism, but it is mostly agreed that at least Buddhism was introduced into *Jiao-zhou* (交州, present-day Northern Vietnam) as early as the 1st century A.D. through the sea route by Indian merchants. During early centuries of the *Jiao-zhou* Buddhism, there appeared some eminent monks such as *Kang Senghui* (康僧會, Khương Tăng Hội in Vietnamese), *Mei-po* (牟子, Mâu Tử in Vietnamese), *Kālasivi* (支疆梁接, Chi Cường Lương Tiếp in Vietnamese), *Marājivāka* (摩羅耆域, Ma La Kỳ Vực in Vietnamese), *Dharmadeva* (達磨提婆, Đạt Ma Đề Bà in Vietnamese), etc.

Some centuries later, Buddhism became deeply rooted in the land of Vietnam and some Ch'an Masters appeared to open the golden age of Vietnam Buddhism through the dynasties such as Đinh (丁, 968-980), Early Lê (黎, 980-1009), Lý (李, 1010-1225) and Trần (陳, 1225-1400), among which the last two dynasties are considered as the most prosperous age of Vietnamese Buddhism. It is in this period, three Vietnamese great Ch'an Sects, viz. *Vinītaruci* (比尼多流支), Vô Ngôn Thông (無言通) and Thảo Đường (草堂) were born with many successive generations, among which *Vinītaruci* (?-594) is considered to be the founder of the Vietnamese Ch'an with the first and oldest Ch'an Sect in Vietnam under his name. Later, these three main Ch'an Sects were united into one sect named Trúc

Lâm Yên Tử (竹林安子) by the Trần King, Nhân Tông (仁宗, 1279-1293 in reign). Through three above Ch'an Sects, a series of eminent learned and outstanding Ch'an Masters appeared and played the role as National Masters to help the nation such as Vạn Hạnh (萬行, ?-1025), Khuông Việt (匡越, 933-1011), Thông Biện (通辨, ?-1134), etc.

Then under the Nguyễn Dynasty (阮朝, 1802-1945), Buddhism began its period of decline, although there were some revivals, but Buddhism was not as strong and sovereign as in the Lý and Trần Dynasties. It was at that time there arrived a lot of Chinese Ch'an Masters of the *Lin-chi* (臨濟) and *Cao-dong* (曹洞) Sects from China to Vietnam to propagate their Ch'an teachings. That is why nowadays most Vietnamese monks and nuns in the North belong to the *Cao-dong* (曹洞) Sect, and in the Middle and the South to the *Lin-chi* (臨濟) Sect, in which the Hue area mostly belongs to the Vietnamese *Lin-chi* (臨濟) Sect, the Liễu Quán Lineage (了觀派). Through many ups-and-downs of the nation and the Buddhism, the latter still plays the vital and important role as the cultural and spiritual refuge and daily meal for the Vietnamese people as seen nowadays through the existence of the *ngôi chùa* (寺, temples) and the images of its monks and nuns. And this thesis is also an effort to illustrate as much as possible the role of contemporary Buddhism in Vietnam.

Through its title "*Monks—Daily Life and Activities*", in the first chapter I will introduce and discuss about the Vietnamese traditional course of practice to be a *bhikkhu* which includes three main stages, viz. *điều* (beginning practitioner), *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, a novice) and *bhikkhu* (比丘, an ordained monk), in which nowadays how the ceremonies for ordaining precepts of every stage are solemnly taken seriously and performed in Vietnamese temples, what Buddhist scriptures are regulated to study and memorize for each stage. Some holy and important ceremonies such as the *Uposatha* (布薩, *Precept Recital*), *Summer Retreat* (*vassa*, 安居) and *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *Invitation*) are main points to focus on in this chapter through the way of performing these ceremonies, in which the *Summer Retreat* is the most important period of mind-cultivation for the Vietnamese monks and

nuns during three long months. How it is performed in the Hue area as well as in Hochiminh City and another places throughout Vietnam, how the Vietnamese monks and nuns practice during these three months, what differences can be seen through daily schedules applied in temples of monks with the special schedules for the summer retreat applied in normal temples and in centers of summer retreat in Hochiminh City, how the Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers practice during this period of time, etc. are interesting and living matters that I will clearly refer to in this chapter.

Furthermore, in order to understand fully the daily life, the modes of practice, the activities of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna monks after having finished these three months of summer retreat, I also introduce one schedule of a temple in Hue City and one of a Ch'an monastery in Southern Vietnam. Through these two schedules we can realize that although most Mahāyāna monks belong to the Ch'an school, mainly the Lin-chi Sect, they tend toward practicing the Pure Land in combination with the Tantrism with the recitation of many secret *dhāraṇīs* and *mantras* in two sessions of daily recitation—early morning and afternoon, and in Buddhist rituals. Whilst the meditation practice is mainly taken seriously in the summer retreat only. However, the case of monks living in Ch'an monasteries is quite different. They practice meditation and make confession everyday. All these matters show us the complexity of the traditional modes of practice of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna monks, which will be discussed in this chapter.

Besides, how the monks are given Dhamma names and titles by their masters, how the layfollowers are given Buddhist names, and today what the regulations of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha about the nomination for its monks and nuns are, are interesting matters which it is necessary to introduce here.

Apart from the saṅgha of monks, there exists a saṅgha of Mahāyāna nuns, which is my study in the Chapter Two. First of all, I refer to the biography of the founder of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna nuns and then to the traditional course of practice to be a *bhikkhunī* including four main stages, viz. female *điêu*, *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, *female novice*), *sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那, *a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training to become a nun*) and *bhikkhunī* (比丘尼, *an ordained nun*), so that we can have an clear understanding and draw a living picture about the strictness and difficulties to undergo the traditional practice to be come a nun

in Vietnam today. How the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns keep following the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八敬法) through the asking for permission and precepts in the *Uposatha* days, before entering upon the *Summer Retreat*, in the *Invitation* and through the asking for re-ordination from the saṅgha of monks to newly-ordained *bhikkhunīs*, etc., are boiling points of argument referred to in this chapter.

Secondly, in order to have a real and living picture about the modes of practice, the daily life and activities of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna nuns nowadays, I will select to introduce one schedule applied in a nun temple in Hue City and one schedule in a Ch'an nunnery in Southern Vietnam. Before making a comparison with these two schedules, I refer simply to the two sessions of daily recitation in the nun temples through the recitation of some concrete *sūtras*, *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs*. In addition, some special schedules applied for the summer retreat in the nun temples, Ch'an nunneries and centers of summer retreat for nuns are also mentioned here.

In Chapter Three my aim is to refer to some traditional rituals for monks nuns and the layfollowers. Firstly, my goal is to present an outline of the way of performing traditional rites for monks and nuns, in which particularly the *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮) is performed by the Vietnamese monks and nuns twice a month at temples. Through that we can understand that how the spirit of repaying the graces such as the grace of the nation, the grace of the master, the grace of the parents, the grace of the donators, etc. is taken seriously in temples.

Secondly, I mention to the traditional Buddhist rites for the laity performed mainly by monks through two kinds of Buddhist services, one for the dead and the other for the living person. In the kind of Buddhist services for the dead, I present entirely a set of the funeral rites from the *Rite of Purifying the Coffin* (灑淨禮) to the *Rite of Enshrining the Tablet* (安靈禮) with their meaningful and multi-coloured forms. Concerning these rites are after-funeral rites which must not be neglected by the Vietnamese Buddhists to express their graceful affection to the deceased person through the prayers in Buddhist way. Therefore, I also present some main rites such as the *Offering Rite on the First Week* (初旬禮), the *Offering Rite on the Last Seventh Week* (終七齋旬禮), the *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry*

Ghosts (大施餓鬼禮) etc.

Thirdly, apart from the Buddhist services for the dead, the Vietnamese monks also perform the services for the living persons, represented through the some rites such as the praying rite for the sick, the praying rite for the New Year, the praying rite for enshrining the Buddha's image or statue, etc., which I select and introduce in this chapter.

Through the holy and essential rites, we can understand how the monks perform them, what *sūtras*, *dhāraṇīs* and the Buddhas's names are recited, what their contents are, how the faith and belief of the Buddhist followers are expressed through these rites, how they relate to the Taoism and Confucianism are, and their role in the daily spiritual life of the laity.

Fourthly, while performing these rites, the Vietnamese monks utilise some kinds of *sō* (疏, a kind of special letters) and *diệp* (牒, a kind of reports), then some points of argument such as what their contents are, and how their role is played in these rites, are mainly interesting things that I will analyse in this chapter.

Fifthly, beside the Buddhist rites, I also mention some traditional Buddhist festivals performed yearly at temples of monks and nuns, among which the most magnificent and important are the Tet holiday, the *Buddha Jayanti Festival* (佛誕會) and the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會). Moreover, some other festivals performed mainly in the North of Vietnam are interesting events which it is necessary to refer to here. My aim is at drawing a entirely multi-coloured picture about the Vietnamese festivals through the way of performing them, the belief and the customs of the Vietnamese people in general and the Vietnamese Buddhist laity in particular, and their important role in the cultural and spiritual life of the people.

Along with the existence of the Mahāyāna Buddhism in Vietnam, the Theravāda Buddhism also spread its teachings and culture in this country. The presence of this great school in the community of the Vietnam Buddhism is also an important factor and necessity for the writer of this thesis to refer to in Chapter Four. My purpose is to debate on the history of introduction of this school, which some have insisted that the Theravāda Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam in about the 3rd century. That how the opinion can be proved through historical

documents, what exactly the time of introduction of this school into Vietnam is, then after having realized that the time of its introduction, how the Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha was established in Southern Vietnam, and so on, are some of my points of argument.

Next I present a living picture of the modes of practice, ways of living and social activities of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist monks through their daily schedules applied in temples of Hue City and Hochiminh City; then make a comparison with the schedule applied in a Burmese temple. Through that we can understand if the modes of practice of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists belong to Burmese tradition or not. And through my field-work, that these modes of practice do not only belong to the Burmese tradition, but some temples also belong to the Thai tradition as well, make way for my conclusion.

In order to understand more clearly the matter, I think, it is necessary to refer to the daily life of the Theravāda monks through their course of practice including three stages, *điêu* (beginning practitioner), *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, a novice) and *bhikkhu* (比丘, an ordained monk). Through this information we can realize difficulties, changes and preservice of precious traditions of the Theravāda Buddhists while existing in a country of ruling Mahāyāna Buddhism like Vietnam. Moreover, the inter-relations between the Mahāyāna and Theravāda in Vietnam, the close combination and influence of the Mahāyāna in Theravāda through the first stage of probationary practice as a *điêu* which cannot be seen in other Theravāda countries, or the followance of the tradition of reciting the Pāli sūtras, are interesting points for my discussion in this thesis.

Besides, nowadays how the Theravāda Buddhists perform the ceremony of ordaining the Ten Precepts to their *sāmaṇeras*, or the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony to the *bhikkhus*, or how and when they perform the *Uposatha* (布薩, *Precept Recital*), *Summer Retreat (vassa, 安居)* and *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *Invitation*), are really important points for my study and discussion of this chapter.

Finally I make mention of some traditional festivals and ceremonies performed by the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists. Thus through this information I can draw a living picture of the existence of the Theravāda Buddhists in Vietnam, and can give the answer to the question why the Theravāda

Buddhist temples, monks and activities are not to be seen in Northern Vietnam.

In the Chapter Five I introduce Buddhist sect called the Khất Sĩ (乞士, *Mendicant*) which was established recently in 1944 after the introduction of the Theravāda Buddhism into Vietnam. Firstly I refer to the biography of the founder, Minh Đăng Quang (明燈光), of this sect, through it we can understand the origin of the modes of practice and ways of living of its monks and nuns. Furthermore, in order to understand clearly these matters and, in addition, the ideology of this sect, my focus is mainly on the founder's work, the *Chơn Lý* (眞理, *The Truth*) and the *Nghi Thức tụng Niệm* (*Rituals for Recital and Chanting*) to analyze the thoughts of the founder and scriptures utilised for recitation by the sect's monks and nuns. I have found out some remarkable characteristics through these books.

The sect's mixture between the two great Buddhist traditions, Theravāda and Mahāyāna, the Vietization and poetization of its scriptures, the characteristics of its robes and its method of making robes and bowl, and its period of development, are mainly interesting points of argument to which I refer in this chapter so that they can shed light for my conclusion of why only in a short period of time from its establishment up to now, the sect has gained some successful achievements in founding so many temples and its number of monks and nuns has increased greatly, and especially why this sect has developed its activities flourishingly in the South of Vietnam, mainly in the West Region.

Besides, to understand at present how monks and nuns of this sect practice, how they have adapted to the new environment, how their courses of practice to be a *bhikkhu* and *bhikkhunī* are, what the different with the formerly regulated schedule by their founder and the present schedules applied in temples of monks and nuns, I select two schedules, one of the Tịnh xá Trung Tâm (中心精舍)—the Headquarters of monks—and the other of the Tịnh xá Ngọc Phương (玉芳精舍)—the central place for nuns—to discuss in this chapter.

Then apart from the 250 precepts for a *bhikkhu* and 348 precepts for a *bhikkhunī*, monks and nuns of this sect ought to follow another 114 regulations as precepts. They are so essential and helpful for the forth-goers (*pabbajitas*) that I

think it is necessary to discuss them here.

In the final chapter I focus on the activities, modes of practice of the Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers through some organizations and groups as seen mainly in the Hue area, typically the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*), the *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trại* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng Pháp Hoa* (法華道場, *Lotus Flower Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng Đồng Niệm* (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*) and the *Hội Từ Thiện* (慈善會, *Charitable Association*).

First of all, I present a discussion on the period of establishment of the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*) through its former organizations such as the *Đoàn Đồng Ấu Phật Tử* (童幼佛子團, *Buddhist Children Commission*), the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*), etc. Through that we can understand how these organizations have changed their purpose, orientation of activities, their rules, their program of teaching and training Buddhist doctrine to their members through every historical stage, how the need to have a Buddhist organization to train the Buddhist youngsters in place of the saṅgha to propagate the Buddhist teachings to the people as widely and effectively as possible.

Then at present that how the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* exists under its modes of practice, how its members make contribution to the social activities, to the prosperity of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, what its role plays in the community of Vietnam and the nation, are main and necessary points of argument which I mention to through its present program of Buddhist teachings and courses of training for its members.

Next I refer to some organizations of the Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers as mentioned above. Some matters such as how their purpose and modes of practice are, the content of practice, the importance of their existence in the spiritual life of the laity are also interesting discussions which I try to illustrate an all-embracing living picture about the necessary existence of the *Gia Đình Phật*

๗๘ as well as these organizations in the community of Vietnamese Buddhism.

Finally I would like to express my special thanks to my respected supervisor, Professor Egaku Mayeda, who helped me so much in many respects during my study in Japan, especially, gave me precious and valuable advices for my thesis so that I can finish it successfully now.

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Chapter I

Monks—Life and Activities

Up to now, the study on modes of practice as well as the way of living of Vietnamese monks and nuns cannot be seen in Buddhist books written in both Vietnamese and other foreign languages. In order to understand the reality as well as the existence of Buddhism in one country, I think, one should not depend only on its Buddhist history, but on other factors such as the modes of practice and ways of living of its monks and nuns. In this chapter, I like to introduce and focus on these matters of the Vietnamese monks at present as seen mainly in Hue City.

My aim is to refer to every aspect of their traditional practice which is still preserved up to now in this region through the course of practice to be a *bhikkhu*, the daily schedules as seen in monks temples of Hue City, and in addition, in the Ch'an monasteries in Southern Vietnam, some important ceremonies such as the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*), the *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *invitation*), the summer retreat or the *Upasampadā* (受具戒, *higher ordination*).

A. Course of practice to be a *bhikkhu*

I. Meaning of *pabbajjā*

Before referring to the course of practice to be a *bhikkhu*, I like to give some explanations and meanings of the word *pabbajjā*. *Pabbajjā* (出家), *pravrajyā* in Sanskrit, being a mode of mind practice in Buddhism, means renunciation from the worldly life to go forth into a holy life. For man it plays a very important role as a big change in his life and as a starting point to enter into the saintdom. *Pabbajjā* has three meanings:

- Leaving the worldly home (出世俗家): renunciation from worldly life such as doing business, living with wife and family, etc.

- Leaving the affliction (*kilesa*, 煩惱) home (出煩惱家).
- Leaving the home of *Three Realms* (出三界家): renunciation from the home of *Three Realms*, that is to say, desire-world (*kāmadhātu*, 欲界), form-world (*rūpadhātu*, 色界) and formless world (*ārūpadhātu*, 無色界).⁽¹⁾

Furthermore, two kinds of *pabbajita* (出家者, one who goes out from home and undertakes the holy life or a forth-goer) are named as one who physically leaves home (身出家) and one who does so in spirit and conduct (心出家). Then from this meaning, there are further four divisions of *pabbajitas* (出家者, *forth-goers*):

- One who physically leaves home, but in spirit remains with wife and family.
- One who physically remains at home but whose spirit goes forth.
- One who leaves home, both body and spirit.
- One who, body and spirit, refuses to leaves home.⁽²⁾

The case I refer here is one belongs to the third division, that is, one who really leaves his worldly home with his or her body and mind and goes forth into the saintly life.

It is believed in Vietnam that if in a family has someone who became a *pabbajita* (出家者, *forth-goer*), then all members of the family as well as his or her relatives will enjoy and receive the uncountable merit (*puñña*, 功德) done by him, by which even the dead will also be reborn in the *Pure Land* (淨土) or the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvatī*, 極樂) of the *Amitābha Buddha*. Among all meritorious deeds, *pabbajjā* (出家, *forth-going*) is considered as the best one which is illustrated in poems:

One man does the meritorious deed, thousand men enjoy it.

One tree is in blossom, ten thousand trees smell its odour.⁽³⁾

In Vietnam, there are three steps of practice: *điêu* (newcomer or beginning practitioner), *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, novice) and *bhikkhu* (比丘, an almsman or ordained

monk) or *samana* (沙門, a recluse). Every step has its particular significance and importance. To advance to the bhikkhuship, one must experience these following difficult steps.

II. First step—*pabbajjā* celebration for *điêu*

1. Importance of practice as a *điêu*

It is said that the Vietnamese *điêu* is a different way of pronouncing of the word *đạo* (道), or *tao* in Chinese and *dō* or *michi* in Japanese, which means *way* or *path* in English. Sometimes he is called *chú tiểu* (a small one). It means that he is too “small” and young in his age as well as his mind-cultivation. A *điêu* is considered as one who begins going forth into the holy path of mind practice. the former is more popular than the latter. These ways of calling are popularized in Hue City as well as in Southern Vietnam, but in the North is little different, that is to say, the beginning pratitioner is often called as *sư bác*. Here I utilise the way of calling as applied in Hue City as well as in Southern Vietnam.

A *điêu* is considered as one who begins going forth into the holy path of mind-cultivation. Therefore, in Vietnam, the period of practicing *điêu* is taken seriously, because this is the first important step for him to be able to advance towards higher ones.

Anyone who vows to go out from home and undertakes the holy life through the permission of his parents and the acceptance of the temple’s abbot, regardless of any age, he will be accepted to reside at temple. Finally he he must experience a period of trial in at least 1 or 3 months, living in the temple with the form of a layman (*upāsaka*). During that time, he will be permitted to wear monk’s clothes or can keep up his worldly clothes.

2. The *pabbajjā* celebration for *điêu*

After that time, if the abbot see that his qualification is enough to become a

pabbajita (出家者, *forth-goer*), he will celebrate a *pabbjā* (出家, *forth-going*) ceremony in good lunar days such as either ceremonial days of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas⁽⁴⁾ or *Uposatha* (布薩, *observance*) days.⁽⁵⁾ Because normally one believes that the more important thing when one wants to do, the more seriously one often takes. The good day will be regarded as having great influence to his period of practice. The family and relatives of the *điêu* and some Buddhist followers of the temple always take part in the ceremony with all their hearts wishing him all the best.

In the case of having not received the *Three Refuges* (*ti-saraṇa*, 三歸) and *Five Precepts* (*pañca-sīla*, 五戒) yet, he will be ordained and then shaved his head not completely but always a part of hair left ahead. The reason is that after becoming a *pabbajjā* a long or short time, he may return to the worldly life; then a part of hair to be left is considered as an a chance for those who do that. Besides, a newcomer, who firstly enters the holy life, remains affliction (*kilesa*, 煩惱) and craving (*taṇhā*, 渴愛), which are symbol of left hair. However, if the *pabbajita* is aged, he will be shaved completely. The mode is also applied for both Theravāda and Mendicant *điêu*, male and female. It can be seen in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong; and the mode applied in Vietnam nowadays, I think, has Chinese influence.

From this day on he is called *điêu* plus his worldly name. For example, *điêu Tâm*, *điêu Thành*, etc. Although he had already his dhamma name after the *pabbajā* ceremony, but it is not utilised popularly during this probationary period of practice as a *điêu*.

3. After the celebration

After the *pabbajjā* celebration has been performed, he openly became a *pabbajita* (出家者, *forth-goer*). He must experience one or two years or more to practise as a *điêu*. This is a regulated rule in Vietnamese temples. He must observe all regulated rules and discipline of the temple, always obey senior monks, should be not slothful but often strenuous (*padhāna*, 精勤) in reciting sūtras, doing works, studying and memorizing sūtras regulated for a *điêu*, etc.

Based on the main purpose as seen in Vietnamese temples as “*studying the disciplines before studying the scriptures*”, he will be instructed to study and memorize the *P’i-ni-jih-sung-ch’ieb-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) and then the *Ch’an-mên-jih-sung* (禪門日誦, *Temple’s Daily Recitation*). The reason of studying the disciplines first through the *P’i-ni-jih-sung-ch’ieb-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) aims at helping the beginning practitioners to understand the regulations as well as the ways of living in the temple, and by that way they can become acquainted to the modes of practice of the *pabbajita* (出家者, *forth-goer*) through the path of *Morality* (*sīla*, 戒), *Concentration* (*saṃādhi*, 定) and *Wisdom* (*paññā*, 慧). Moreover, on the condition of following strictly the regulated precepts, there arises the concentration of one’s mind; and on the basic of concentration, the wisdom develops.

Apart from one’s own power (自力), the practitioner should depend on the others’ power (他力), which are believed to be blessed by the Buddhas, the Bodhisattas, the Dhamma Guardians, and so on. Thus the *điêu*, beside studying the disciplines, must also study and learn by heart the *Ch’an-mên-jih-sung* (禪門日誦, *Temple’s Daily Recitation*), so that he can participate daily sessions of recitation of the temple on the one hand; and thanks to the strenuous recital of sūtras through daily sessions, viz. early morning, noon, and afternoon or night, he can be blessed by the others’ power (他力) of the Buddhas, etc. on the other hand. By his own power (自力), he can purify his body and mind to advance higher steps in his period of practice.

After one or two years or more, when the head priest see that he is qualified to be a *sāmaṇera* (novice), he will check whether the *điêu* did memorize all the above scripture or not, if the latter did, the former will choose a good day to ordain him to become a *sāmaṇera*.

III. Second step—celebration for *sāmaṇera* (沙彌)

1. Celebration for *sāmaṇera*

Whilst being a *điêu*, he is not a member of the saṅgha yet, but after becoming a *sāmaṇera*, he will become an official member of the saṅgha and enjoy rights offered by the Order. Then to be ordained as a *sāmaṇera* is also an important step in his mind practice. The celebration for *sāmaṇera* is often celebrated at the same time when having an *upasampadā* (受具, *higher ordination*) ceremony held. Normally the former is performed first and next is the latter. Sometimes the former is celebrated in the form of inner temple (受方丈), that is, only between the master and students. Of course, in this case, the number of superior monks must be at least five.

Based on the *Rite of Ordaining Ten Precepts to Sāmaṇera* (沙彌授十戒法) recorded in the *Learning Book of Widely Ordaining Precepts* (弘戒大學之書), pp. 15-18, before receiving holy precepts, receiver must first confess and reveal all his past acts to the Triple Gem with the following verse:

*Formerly I had made bad acts,
All because of greed, hatred and illusion of old times,
And also because of my body, language and mind,
I now reveal and confess them all.*

I pay worship to Ākāśgarbha Bodhisatva. (3 times)

(我昔所造諸惡業、皆由無始貪嗔癡、從身語意之所生、一切我今皆懺悔。南無虛空藏菩薩)

Then he will be guided to vow as:

*I vow to save boundless sentient beings,
I vow to cut off endless afflictions (kilesa, 煩惱)
I vow to study uncountable doctrines
I vow to attain the unsurpassed Buddhahood.*

I pay worship to Samantabhadra Bodhisatva. (3 times)

(衆生無邊誓願度、煩惱無盡誓願斷、法門無量誓願學、佛道無上誓願成。南無普賢王藏菩薩)

Next, he is transmitted a *sāmaṇera* robe and filtering bag or cloth (濾水囊) which while receiving, he should recite each following gāthās:

*How great is the enlightened clothes,
The formless (animitta, 無相) robe of merit field (puññakkhetta, 福田)
I wear and keep it as following precepts
To widely save all deluded beings.
I pay worship to Kāśāya Bodhisatva
(大哉解脫服、無相福田衣、披奉如戒行、廣度諸群迷。南無袈裟幢菩薩)*

*How good is the filtering bag,
Thing for protecting living beings and practising compassion,
Which I bring along while going out and in,
In comfort with the Bodhisatva way.
(善哉濾水囊、護成行慈具、出入常帶用、方合菩薩道。唵嚩悉波囉摩尼莎婆訶)*

Next the *sāmaṇera* is ordained *Ten Precepts* or rules of training as recorded in the *Mahāvagga* I, 56 as following:

- a. Restraint from onslaught on creatures (*pānātipātā veramaṇī*, 不殺生戒).
- b. Restraint from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā veramaṇī*, 不偷盜).
- c. Restraint from unchastity (*abrahmacariyā veramaṇī*, 不淫戒).
- d. Restrain from lying (*musāvādā veramaṇī*, 不妄語戒).
- e. Restraint from the occasion of sloth (induced by) fermented liquor, spirits and strong drink (*surāmerayamajjapamādatṭhānā veramaṇī*, 不飲酒).
- f. Restraint from eating at wrong time (*vikālabhojanā veramaṇī*, 不非時食戒).
- g. Restraint from seeing shows of dancing, singing and music (*naccagī-tavāditavisūkadassanā veramaṇī*, 不歌舞倡伎及往觀聽戒).
- h. Restraint from the occasion of using garlands, scents, unguents and wearing finery (*mālāgandhavilepanadhāraṇamaṇḍanavibhūsanatṭhānā*

- veramaṇī*, 不著香華鬢及香塗身戒).
- i. Restraint from using high beds, large beds (*uccāsayanamahāsayanā veramaṇī*, 不坐高廣大床戒).
- k. Restraint from accepting gold and silver (*jātarūparajataṭiggahaṇā veramaṇī*, 不捉持金銀寶物戒).

Finally, after he is instructed to pay worship to the Triple Gem in ten directions, the Sakyamuni Buddha, *ācariyas*, ordaining *upajjhāyas* and the saṅgha of revered monks each three times, the celebration is ended.

In all, some main points in this ceremony can be listed as following:

- Precept-receivers gathering and paying worship to the Triple Gem.
- Confessing former offences.
- Asking superior monks for ordaining precepts.
- Paying worship to the *Four Graces* (四恩).
- Receiving *Ten Precepts*.
- Receiving the filtering bag.
- Paying worship to the *Triple Gem* and superior monks of the ceremony.

2. After the celebration

After being ordained, the *sāmaṇera* will be offered some necessary things like pens, notebooks, towel and cloths to sew clothes by his relatives and other layfollowers. In order to help him to understand and practice rightly ordained *Ten Precepts* (*śikṣāpada*, 十戒), the abbot will instruct him to study and memorize the *Sha-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Mode of Movements of the Sāmaṇera*), and some scriptures such as the *P'i-ni-jih-sung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*), the *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advices of Ch'an Master Wéi-shān*), etc.

When the *sāmaṇera* is considered as having met enough regulated criteria and as showing his determinative wish to be a *bhikkhu*, he will be sent to an

Upasampadā (higher ordination) ceremony to attend an exam before being ordained the bhikkhuship. The criteria are: being full twenty years of age, really a and fully memorizing regulated scriptures, having experiencing a period of practice at least 2 or 3 years, performing all the good behaviours and modes of moral conduct (*iriyāpatha*, 威儀路) from speaking, walking, standing, sitting to lying. The criterion of being a full of twenty years of age is considered as more important than the others.

However, although he may meet some of the above criterion, but lack of the other criteria, he cannot be selected to participate in the *Upasampadā* ceremony. There are also some cases of those who cannot manage to pass the exam, and thus miss the chance. The higher the step is, the more strictly the rules are.

At the beginning of the *Later Chapter of the Gate of Iriyāpatha* (下篇威儀門) of *Briefly Main Vinaya of Sāmaṇera* (沙彌律儀要略) written by a Chinese *samaṇa* named *Zhū-hóng* (株宏) of the *Yún-qī* temple (雲棲寺), we can understand why to be a *bhikkhu* so difficult is.

“The Buddha regulated that when a sāmaṇera is full twenty years of age and has his will to be ordained the upasampadā (higher ordination), if being questioned and not able to answer fully things concerning sāmaṇera, then he may not be ordained the upasampadā. It should be said that you are a sāmaṇera but you do not understand what to do as a sāmaṇera, then to be a samaṇa, which is important and more difficult, how can you do with that? You may go and memorize completely, should listen and understand all, then you can receive the upasampadā. Now if I ordain you the upasampadā, then one will think that becoming a samaṇa and practicing the Buddhist way are quite easy.”⁽⁶⁾

(佛制、沙彌年滿二十、欲受具足戒時、若問、不能具對沙彌事者、不應與具足戒。當云、卿作沙彌、乃不知沙彌所施行、沙門事大難作。卿且去熟學、當悉聞知、乃應受具足戒。今授卿具足戒、人謂佛法易行、沙門易作。)

After the ordination the newly-ordained *sāmaṇera* receives a new dhamma title (法號) beside his former dhamma name (法名) from his own master through which he will utilise during his lifetime as a *pabbajita*. Then from this day on, he is

called *chú* (literally meaning *uncle* in English, but in this case it is a title of higher reverence in monastic life) plus his dhamma title. For example, *chú Tâm Hiếu, chú Quảng Hòa*. Therefore, when hearing the title *điệu* or *chú*, we can distinguish easily whether he is the newcomer or *sāmaṇera*. And as a matter of fact, his worldly name is not called any more because he has received the holy precepts of the *pabbajita* (出家者, *forth-goer*).

Furthermore, his new dhamma title will also be utilised in the *Upasampadā* ceremony when being asked. Then up to this period he has received two religious names: dhamma name and dhamma title.

IV. Third step—*upasampadā* ceremony (受具式)

In Buddhism, both Theravāda and Mahāyāna, the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony is taken extremely serious and performed so strictly that no mistake is forgiven. Because the saṅgha is a collective community which consists of strenuous trainers of their mind and body, then if someone, who is slothful in training and practice, he will become a destroyer of the saṅgha. Moreover, he who did become a *bhikkhu*, will enjoy special favour from the government such as exempting from taxation, not to join the army⁽⁷⁾ or not to be paid travelling expenses when taking bus or train, etc. Furthermore, As for the *sāmaṇera*, to receive higher ordination is his ultimate goal and highest wish at which he always aims.

1. Preparation

Then because of such an importance, before being ordained the *Upasampadā*, the *sāmaṇeras* will be judged as carefully and thoroughly as possible. Indispensable conditions to become a *bhikkhu* are recorded in the *Mahāvagga*⁽⁸⁾ as followings:

- (1) Not having diseases like: leprosy, boils, eczema, consumption, epilepsy
(*santi te evarūpā ābādā kuṭṭham gaṇḍo kilāso soso apamāro*).

- (2) A human being (*manusso 'si*), not an animal (*tiracchānagata*, 畜生).
- (3) A man (*puriso 'si*), not a hermaphrodite (*ubhatovyañjanaka*).
- (4) A freeman (*bhujisso 'si*).
- (5) Without debt (*anaṇo 'si*).
- (6) Not being in the royal service (*na 'si rājabhaṭo*).
- (7) Not a criminal of *Five Inversion Sins* (五逆罪) as a matricide (*mātu-ghātaka*, 殺母者), a parricide (*pitughātaka*, 殺父者), a murderer of a perfected one (*arabantaghātaka*, 殺阿羅漢者), a schismatic (*saṅgha-bbedaka*, 破和合僧者) and a shedder of (a Truth-finder) blood (*lobi-tuppādaka*, 出 [佛身] 血者).
- (8) Having parents' consent (*anuññāto 'si mātāpitūhi*).
- (9) Being full twenty years of age (*paripunṇavāsativasso 'si*).
- (10) Having complete as to bowl and robes (*paripunṇan te pattacīvaram*) and the others.⁽⁹⁾

If whoever allows ordination in violation of these above cases, he commits the offence of wrong-doing (*āpatti dukkaṭa*, 突吉羅罪). In addition, apart from these above conditions, before performing the *Upasampadā* ceremony, the saṅgha must first prepare fully the following things:

a. Inviting a group of ten superior monks:

- One Most Venerable (*upajjhāya*, 和尚), who is called in Vietnamese the Đản Đầu Hòa Thượng (壇頭和尚), the head *upajjhāya* of the *upasampadā* ceremony.
- One *kammācariya* (羯磨師), member of judgement.
- One *anussāna-ācariya* (教授師), judgement officer who is responsible to question and examine those who are to be ordained.
- And seven other superior witness monks (七証) who play role as important eye-witnesses of the ceremony.

The group is often called *Three Master and Seven Eye-witnesses* (三師七証). The number ten or more than ten is a regulated number as seen in the Mahāvagga I, 31, 2 through the Buddha's teaching:

“Monks, you should not ordain through a group of less than ten (monks). Whoever should (so) ordain, there is an offence of wrong-doing. I allow you, monks, to ordain through a group of ten or more than ten (monks).”⁽¹⁰⁾

Besides, the saṅgha also appoints two other superior monks who is responsible to guide and instruct those who are to be ordained (引請師).

As the conditions of becoming a *upajjhāya* are recorded in the *Mahā-khandhaka* (大犍度) as following:

- One who has 10 years' standing or more than that (*dasavassa vā atirekadasavassa*).
- One who can make his disciple stop doing faults.
- One who follows the discipline strictly and firmly.
- One who thoroughly understands the Pātimokkha (波羅提木叉).
- One who can save his disciple from criminal.
- One who has great knowledge (*bhussutaka*, 多聞) and some other conditions.⁽¹¹⁾

b. Performing the *sīmā-kamma*:

Sīmā-kamma (結界羯磨) is act of regulating a boundary or limit (*sīmā*, 結界) where unrelated persons or those who are not ordained are prohibited to enter. *Sīmā* is considered as holy place or purified land for monks to perform important ceremonies such as the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital), summer retreat (*vassa*, 安居), *pavāraṇā* (自恣, a ceremony at the termination of the vassa often called invitation), ect. The *Upasampadā* ceremony must also be held inside the regulated *sīmā* and if being held outside the *sīmā*, it is considered to be invalid.

2. Organizing exam

As seen in Vietnam nowadays, before attending the *Upasampadā*, one who seeks ordination must fill out necessary forms: an application for being ordained, a certification of *sāmaṇera*, an introduction from one's own master, and a record of personal background. Those who cannot manage to get these are not to accepted to attend the ceremony. Otherwise, if he has fulfilled all regulated conditions, firstly, he ought to participate the exam especially held by the Organization Board of the *Upasampadā* Ceremony.

Normally, in Vietnam the *Upasampadā* ceremony is held during three days or more at a great and famous temple of the region. All those who are qualified to be ordained must assemble at the temple during that time. No one are permitted to go outside the regulated *sīmā*. They will be instructed to confess so that they can purify their bodies and minds to receive the holy bhikkhuship.

The first day is the day of taking exam, both oral and writing, whose themes are related to Buddhist teachings, the *Ten Precepts for Sāmaṇera* (沙彌十戒), and some scriptures such as *P'i-ni-jih-sung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*), the *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advices of Ch'an Master Wéi-shān*), etc. If someone fails the exam, he cannot be permitted to be ordained and as a matter of fact, he must leave the *sīmā* right at this first step. In reality, such a case had occurred.

3. The *Upasampadā* ceremony

Those who passed the exam are considered as being qualified to receive the *Upasampadā* precepts.

In combination with the *Upasampadā* ceremony for monks and nuns, the saṅgha also ordains the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭṭasilamādavīma*, 八齋戒) for Buddhist laities as well. About this celebration, I would like to discuss in Chapter VI: *The Gia Đình Phật Tử and Some Other Organizations of Buddhist Layfollowers in Vietnam Buddhism*.

Based on the *Rite of Higher Ordination* recorded in the *Learning Book of Widely Ordaining Precepts* (弘戒大學之書), pp. 24-34, the ceremony is performed with following steps:

a. Inviting the Superior Most Venerable (*upajjhāya*, 壇頭和尚) and *kammācariya* (羯磨師) and the instructor (*anussāna-ācariya*, 教授師):

After gathering all precept receivers who are guided to invite superior monks, the guidance monk (引請師) says:

“Buddhists, now I will instruct you to invite the head upajjhāya (和尚), you should follow all my words.” (佛子我今教汝恭請和尚、所有言詞皆隨我道)

“Reverend, would you be one-minded to listen to me. I am so-and-so who now invite you to be the upajjhāya (either kammācariya or instructor). Would you please for my sake be my upajjhāya (either kammācariya or instructor) whom upon I rely, I will be ordained higher ordination. Be compassion with me. (3 times)” (大德一心念、我某甲今請大德爲和尚 [羯磨師、教授師]、願大德爲我作和尚 [羯磨師、教授師]、我依大德得受具足戒、慈愍故。)

The invited monk replies:

“Oh, good! You should be purified and not indolent (pamatta, 放逸).” (可爾汝清淨莫放逸)

b. Asking the precept-receivers indispensable conditions:

Next the precept receivers are guided to answer indispensable conditions or things (see above part) one of which the receiver committed, he cannot be ordained to be a *bhikkhu*.

c. *Ñatticatuttha kamma* (白四羯磨):

This is a formal act, always utilised in Buddhist rites such as *Uposatha* (precept recital), *Upasampadā* (higher ordination), *Pavāraṇā* (invitation), etc., consists of a

motion and a resolution put three. The *ācariya* on behalf of all precept-receivers tell to the saṅgha:

“Would you please, reverend sirs, listen to me. This so-and-so, who relied on the Upajjhāya such-and-such to ask for higher ordination, now relies on the saṅgha to beg for higher ordination. I (name) am his Upajjhāya and myself judge (him) purity without the commitment of indispensable conditions, full of twenty of age, three robes and bowl. Now time has come and would you please listen and ordain this so-and-so higher ordination. I such-and-such who is the Upajjhāya tell such and such. Do you agree ?”

(大德僧聽、此 [某甲] 從和尚 [某甲] 求受具足戒、此 [某甲] 今從衆僧乞受具足戒、[某甲] 爲和尚 [某甲] 自說清淨無諸難事、年滿二十、三衣鉢具。若僧辰到、僧忍聽、僧今授 [某甲] 具足戒、[某甲] 爲和尚白如是、作白成不。)

After the Eye-witness replies “yes” (成), the receivers bow down their heads, then the guider says:

“Would you please, reverend sirs, listen to me. This so-and-so, who relied on the Upajjhāya such-and-such to ask for higher ordination, now relies on the saṅgha to beg for higher ordination. I such-and-such am his Upajjhāya and myself judge (him) purity without the commitment of indispensable conditions, full of twenty of age, three robes and bowl. Now would you, the saṅgha, please ordain this so-and-so higher ordination who relied on me such-and-such to be the Upajjhāya. The Theras who recognize monks so-and-so to ordain higher ordination, please be silent. And those who do not recognize monks so-and-so to ordain higher ordination, would you please let me know this first formal act to be agreed or not ?”

(大德僧聽、此 [某甲] 從和尚 [某甲] 求受具足戒、此 [某甲] 今從衆僧乞受具足戒、[某甲] 自說清淨無諸難事、年滿二十、三衣鉢具。僧今授 [某甲] 具足戒、[某甲] 爲和尚。誰諸長老忍僧與 [某甲] 授具足戒、[某甲] 爲和尚者、默然。誰不忍者、說此是初番羯磨成不。)

If the Eye-witness replies “yes” (成), the first formal act is considered as successful and this act is performed three times of which at the end a sound of bell is rung and the precept-receivers again bow down their heads.

d. Expounding the *Four Grave Transgressions* (*cattāro pārājikā dhammā*, 四波羅夷法): sex intercourse (*methuna*, 姪), stealing (*adinnādāna*, 盜), onslaught on human lives (*manussa-viggaha*, 斷人命) and lying (*musāvāda*, 妄語).⁽¹²⁾

Then after having expounded the *Four Grave Transgressions*, the Head *Upajjhāya* says that:

“You, the precept receivers, for your sake, I have already expounded the Four Grave Transgressions, after having being ordained, you should follow your upajjhāya of vinaya to study the left precepts. Now because it takes much time to expound all 250 precepts of bhikkhu, I only expounded the Four Grave Transgressions.”⁽¹³⁾

e. Ordaining the *Four Reliance Things* (*cattāro nissayā*, 四依法): reliance on coarse robes (依糞掃衣), reliance on going for alms (依乞食), reliance on sitting under tree (依樹下坐) and reliance on rotten medicines (依腐爛藥).

f. Expounding the *Four Things of A Samaṇa That Should Be Done* (沙門四種所應作法): should not scold against when being scolded by the others (他罵不應返罵), should not be angered by the others when being angered against (他瞋不應返瞋), should not play back when being played by the others (他調戲不應返戲), and should not react when being hit by the other (他打不應返打).

g. Renouncing the *sāmaṇera* robe: before putting on the bhikkhu’s robes, the *sāmaṇera* must perform the rite of getting rid of his robe by putting it off, folding it, kneeling down and saying that:

“Would you please, Reverend Sir, one-mindedly listen to me. I, bhikkhu named so-and-so, who formerly wore this robe, now would like to renounce it.”

After saying like that once and having the permission of the *Kammācariya* (羯磨阿闍黎師), he is allowed to get rid of the robe and ready to receive new three ones.⁽¹⁴⁾

h. Passing three robes: *Five-Piece Robe* (*antarvāsa*, 五條衣 or 安陀會), *Seven-Piece Robe* or *Upper Robe* (*uttarāsaṅga*, 鬱多羅僧 or 上衣) and *Twenty-Five-Piece Robe* or *Great Robe* (*saṅghāṭī*, 僧伽梨 or 大衣). While receiving each robe, the receivers recite following gāthās:

- For the *Five-Piece Robe* (*antarvāsa*, 五條衣 or 安陀會):

“How good is the enlightened clothes, the unsurpassed robe or merit field, which now I receive and put on, I vow not to leave it in this life to other life.” (善哉解脫服、無上福田衣、我今頂戴受、世世不捨離。唵悉陀耶娑訶)

- For the *Seven-Piece Robe* (*uttarāsaṅga*, 鬱多羅僧 or 上衣):

“How good is the enlightened clothes, the unsurpassed robe or merit field, which now I receive and put on, I vow to wear it in this life to other life.” (善哉解脫服、無上福田衣、我今頂戴受、世世常得披。唵度波度波娑訶)

- For the *Twenty-Five-Piece Robe* (*saṅghāṭī*, 僧伽梨 or 大衣):

“How good is the enlightened clothes, the unsurpassed robe or merit field, which now I receive and put on, I vow to widely save all deluded beings.” (善哉解脫服、無上福田衣、我今頂戴受、廣度諸群迷。)

h. Passing sitting mat (*nisīdana*, 坐具), bowl (*patta*, 鉢), monk’s staff (*khakkhara*, 錫杖) and filtering bag (濾水囊): the same with the acceptance of *Three Robes*, while receiving the each thing, each gāthā is also recited:

- For the sitting mat (*nisīdana*, 坐具):

“The sitting mat, also called *nisīdana*, is to nourish the bodhi mind. When being spread, it

makes me come to the holy land, and follow the Tathāgata's mission." (坐具尼師壇、長養心苗性、展開登聖地、奉持如來命。唵壇波壇波莎訶)

- For the bowl (*patta*, 鉢):

"How good is the patta, the Tathāgata's vessel which corresponds with one's need. I receive and bring along to supply for my body and nourish my wisdom's life." (善哉鉢多羅、如來應量器、奉持以資身、長養智慧命。唵枳哩枳哩嚩日囉吽發吒)

- For the monk's staff (*khakkhara*, 錫杖):

"How great is the khakkhara, the root of wisdom and merit, which I receive and take in hands and make me come to the other bank of freedom (prajñā)." (大哉契契羅、智行功德本、如法而受持、超登般若岸。唵那票嚩那票嚩那票吒鉢底那票帝娜夜鉢嚩吽發吒)

- For the filtering bag (濾水囊):

*"How good is the filtering bag,
Thing for protecting living beings and practising compassion,
Which I bring along while going out and in,
In comfort with the Bodhisatva way."*

(善哉濾水囊、護成行慈具、出入常帶用、方合菩薩道。唵嚩悉波囉摩尼莎婆訶)

Then after listening to the precious advice of the superior monk, head of the ceremony, the newly-ordained *bhikkhus* are guided by the guiding master to pay worship to following titles, each 3 times:

- The Triple Gems in ten directions (十方常住三寶),
- The Sakyamuni Buddha (本師釋迦牟尼佛),
- The Mahābodhisatvas in ten directions (十方諸大菩薩),
- The Upajjhāya by whom the receivers attain bhikkhuship (得戒和尚),
- The Kammācariya (羯磨阿闍黎師),
- The Anussāna-ācariya (教授阿闍黎師),

- The Eye-witness-ācariya (尊証阿闍黎師),
- The Saṅgha of Reverends of the ceremony (同壇大德僧).

Thus ended is the ceremony of higher ordination (*upasampadā*).

4. Offering rite

After being ordained, the new *bhikkhus* are often guided to perform an offering rite. They will be put incense powder into three small holes on their heads and then be burnt until the powder perishes. During that time, surrounding *bhikkhus* recite the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) in loud voices to help the newly-ordained *bhikkhus* to concentrate their minds and prevent from the hotness and suffering caused by burning incense powder.

It is said that the number three, i.e. three holes, symbolizes the Triple Gem, i.e. the Buddha, the Dhamma and Saṅgha. Thus this mode of offering is the representation of the holy offering to the Triple Gem a part of their body, in which the most important and sacred part is the head. Therefore, looking at the head of some monks and nuns, one can recognize that he or she is a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuni* or not if he or she has three holes remained above his or her head.

However, some cases are different because although he has received the offering rite with three holes, but time has passed and some holes or all the three holes disappear. This rite is still preserved in Hue City up to now, but I am not sure with the case of the North or the South of Vietnam.

5. After the higher ordination

After the ceremony, the newly-ordained *bhikkhus* will be offered a set of things which *bhikkhus* use daily such as pens, cloth to sew clothes and robes, some Buddhist books and notebooks, soaps, toothpaste and toothbrush, and also an envelope of money at the food-offering party. Especially a Chinese vinaya book named *Sì-fèn-lù* (四分律) is given to them by the saṅgha. People believe that to

offer newly-ordained *bhikkhus*, who really entered into the stream of sainthood to *succeed brilliantly the saintly seeds and scare the army of devils*,⁽¹⁵⁾ is of much more merit (*puñña*, 功德) than in the case of the *Uposatha*.

Right after that, the saṅgha always opens a class for newly-ordained *bhikkhus* to study the precepts thoroughly so that the latter can master and practise the precepts as correctly as they can. From that time, they are registered in the Saṅgha's Registration Book and enjoy all rights of a *bhikkhu* regulated by the saṅgha. At the first *Uposatha* after the ceremony, the newly-ordained *bhikkhus* will be introduced to members of the saṅgha and instructed duties of a *bhikkhu* to the saṅgha.

6. Remarks

The number of superior monks is ten, Three Superior Masters and Seven Eye-witnesses (三師七証), but it can be five applied for remote places⁽¹⁶⁾ where the amount of monks is so rare and the saṅgha cannot manage to select as enough as ten. However, in Vietnam, the saṅgha always holds the *Upasampadā* ceremony concentratedly, not separately in each temples. Therefore, the participants from everywhere will be sent to a concentrated place and the ten superior monks be invited. For example, when an *Upasampadā* ceremony is held in Hue city, monks and nuns from neighbouring provinces as Quảng Trị, Đà Nẵng, Nha Trang, and sometimes even from remote areas such as Hochiminh City, Dalat City, etc. also come to participate the ceremony. Then the ceremony becomes very big and nationwide.

The date to organize an *Upasampadā* ceremony is quite different depending upon the specific region of Vietnam because it costs money and time. Normally, the saṅgha often chooses good and important days when monks and nuns concentrate fully such as days of *Uposatha* (precept recital), *Pavāraṇā* (invitation), anniversaries of patriarchs, or of Bodhisattas and Buddhas.⁽¹⁷⁾ In Hochiminh city, a biggest and most prosperous city of Vietnam, where there are many Buddhist sects, temples and a lot of monks and nuns living, every year the *Upasampadā* is

held twice or three times which once the participants amounts 200 or more. But as the case of Hue City, a developed city where lives of people remain difficult, the saṅgha often organizes only once every 1 or 2 years. Therefore, there are some cases of those who have reached the time of being ordained, they are often introduced to go to Hochiminh City or other places where the *Upasampadā* is held.

One remarkable characteristic I would like to refer to here is that in Vietnam, concretely in Hochiminh city, in the past most of *Upasampadā* ceremonies were organized not only for Mahāyāna, but also for Theravāda and Mendicant sect as well. The tradition is still preserved up to now. Participants of all sects always assemble altogether at the same place, the same time to do regulated things; but when being ordained, the superior monks of each sect ordain precepts for monks and nuns belonging to their sect. Therefore, among members of Three Superior Masters and Seven Eye-witnesses (三師七証), we can see the presence of members of three Sects, Mahāyāna, Theravāda and Mendicant. The reunification of all sects so that they can sit together under the unique leading of one saṅgha, I think, is a remarkable characteristic of Vietnam Buddhism which cannot be seen in the other countries.

As for the *Four Reliance Things* (*cattāro nissayā*, 四依法), the second and third, *reliance on going for alms* (依乞食), *reliance on sitting under tree* (依樹下坐), in reality, are not seen to apply in daily practice of Mahāyāna Buddhist monks and nuns.

The rite of passing the monk's staff (*khakkhara*, 錫丈) is recorded in the *Learning Book of Widely Ordaining Precepts* (弘戒大學之書), but nowadays it is not seen to be performed in *Upasampadā* ceremonies in Vietnam. However, the monk's staff (*khakkhara*, 錫丈) is installed at the Patriarch Hall of every temple and plays an important role in the great formal rites for hungry ghost (大施餓鬼式) and for release from false charges (解冤拔度式).

B. *Uposatha* (布薩) ceremony

I. Its meaning and purpose

Based on the Vedic word *upavasatha*, *uposatha* means the eve of the Soma sacrifice or the day of preparation. But when Buddhism came into existence, the word became to mean the day preceding four stages of the moon's waxing and waning, viz. 1st, 8th, 15th, 23rd nights of the lunar month that is to say, a weekly sacred day, a *Sabbath*.⁽¹⁸⁾

At the time of Lord Buddha, wanderers of the other sects would always gathered together on the 14th, 15th and 8th of the half-month to speak dhamma and expound their views. Then people came to hear their dhamma (give teachings), gaining affection and faith in them and becoming adherents of the wanderers. Seeing that, King *Seniya Bimbisāra* of Magadha reported it to the Buddha. On this occasion, the Buddha allowed his monks to assemble together on those days of the half-month to *recite the Pātimokkha (pātimokkhaṃ uddisati)*.⁽¹⁹⁾

Thus, later the Buddhists both monks and nuns and layties adopted the days for the recitation of the precepts recorded in the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) so that they can memorize the ordained precepts and keep following them as strictly as possible. Moreover, if someone who may have an offence (*siyā āpatti*), he can reveal either it in the midst of the saṅgha (*saṅghamajjhe*) or in the midst of a group (*gaṇamajjhe*) or to one individual (*ekapuggale*). Thanks to doing that, he will be purified his mind and body without being worried about that.

In Vietnam, the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) is often held twice a month on the full moon day and the first day of lunar month, viz. 15th and 1st. In Hochiminh City, the ceremony cannot concentratedly perform at one place, because of so great amount of monks and nuns and so many temples. However, there are some concentrated places where are big and famous temples can be seen. In Hue City, in spite of having a rather great number of monks and nuns, its saṅgha still keeps the tradition of performing the *Uposatha* concentratedly at one place.

II. The *Uposatha* day

In Hue city, all the members of the saṅgha often gather together in the early morning at about 6:30 to perform the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) in this day, at the same time the layfollowers also are present to take upon themselves the *Uposatha* vows, viz. the *Eight Sīlas* during the day.⁽²⁰⁾ Here I would like to introduce the process of performing the ceremony in Hue city which consists of following main steps:

1. Preliminary preparations

According to the Pāli Vinaya, there are 9 kinds of deeds which must be performed before the *Uposatha* ceremony. They are:

- a. Cleaning the *uposathāgāra*, viz. hall for *Uposatha*.
- b. Lighting lamps.
- c. Making ready seats.
- d. Putting out drinking water and water for washing.
- e. Reporting the giving consent (*chandam dātum*, 與欲) of the sick bhikkhu, if having.
- f. Reporting his entire purity (*pārisuddhi*).
- g. Announcing the reason.
- h. Counting the number of *bhikkhus*
- i. Giving precept to *bhikkhunīs*.⁽²¹⁾

As seen in the Mahāyāna Buddhism of Hue city of Vietnam, the things to be prepared beforehand are generally the same, but a bit different with the above.

- a. Cleaning the place where the ceremony will be held. In Vietnam, the place is the Main Hall of the temple.
- b. Preparing incense sticks, flowers, fruits and lighting lamps to offer to the Buddha. Monks of temples where the ceremony is held prepare flowers

- and fruits the day before to perform the ceremony of confession (*paṭikara*, 懺悔). According the original tradition from the time of Lord Buddha which is still kept up to now in Theravāda Buddhist countries like Srilanka, Burma, Thailand, etc.,⁽²²⁾ before the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) ceremony, monks should prepare fully things as putting out drinking water and water for washing (*pāṇiyaṃ paribhojaniyaṃ upaṭṭhāpeti*), making ready a seat (*āsanam paññāpeti*) and making lights (*padīpam karoti*).⁽²³⁾ But the tradition of putting out water for washing does not exist in Mahāyāna Buddhism.
- c. Appointing a reciter of the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) and a *kammadāna* (維那), viz. the monk who is responsible to strike the bell, and a monk to strike the wooden instrument (悦衆) during the chanting. Normally the years' standing (*vassa*, 夏臘) of the former should be higher than the latter.⁽²⁴⁾
 - d. Approving the absence of the sick. If there are who are ill and cannot take part in the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) ceremony, they must entrust someone who will go to the ceremony to request consent (*chandaṃ dātum*, 與欲) and to proclaim their observance of the precepts and their entire purity (*pārisuddhi*).⁽²⁵⁾ The ceremony should be held among the Order of monks who are entire purity without any offence (*āpatti*).⁽²⁶⁾ Anyone who has committed an offence cannot participate in the ceremony. If a monk intentionally does this, the other entirely pure *bhikkhus* can prohibit him. This is called *Prohibition of Observance* (*pātimokkha-ṭhapana*, 遮說戒).⁽²⁷⁾ Furthermore the reporter of the entire purity is responsible to announce it to the saṅgha, if he intentionally does not do that, there is an offence of wrong-doing (*āpatti dukkata*, 突吉羅罪) for him.⁽²⁸⁾
 - e. Announcing the entire purity of the sick.
 - f. Announcing the season.
 - g. Counting the number of *bhikkhus*.
 - h. Giving precept to *bhikkhunīs*. It is done right before reciting the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本).

2. Performing the ceremony

When everything is ready and the regulated time has come, a big drum and great bell are struck three times. After having put on their yellow robes, monks gather orderly in the Main Hall. The elder the monks are in front, the newly-ordained monks are behind. Then the process of main ceremony is as following:

- a. After the most superior monk offered incense sticks⁽²⁹⁾ to the Buddha, the *kammadāna* chants in the special way of three times of bows⁽³⁰⁾ and then everyone pay worship.
- b. Next they chant a stotra⁽³¹⁾ and recite the *Mahā-karuṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲神咒).
- c. After the Order having taken their seat and recited three times the auspicious name of *Sakyamuni Buddha* (南無本師釋迦牟尼佛) and an *Opening Gāthā*,⁽³²⁾ they start reciting *Paying Respect Gāthā* (歸敬偈) right at the beginning of the *Sī-fèn-lù* (四分律). After that, the reciter asks following questions and the *kammadāna* replies in response to each:

“Has the Order assembled ?” (僧集否)

“Yes, the Order assembled already.” (僧已集)

“Are you in harmony ?” (和合否)

“Yes, [we are in] harmony.” (和合)

“Have those who haven’t been ordained the *upasampadā* gone out already ?” (未受具戒者已出否)

“Yes, they have.” (已出)

“Have the giving consent (*chandaṃ dātuṃ*, 與欲) and entire purity (*pārisuddhi*) of the *bhikkhus* who did not come been reported ?” (不來諸比丘說欲及清淨)

“Has who dispatched the *bhikkhunis* to come to receive teaching precept ?” (誰遣比丘尼來受教訓)

“Yes, they have come.” (已來)

Then after the *bhikkhunīs* have come in among the *saṅgha*, paying worship three time, kneeling down and telling something, the *Pātimokkha* reciter will deliver precepts to the *bhikkhunīs*. After the *bhikkhunīs* have left, the reciter asks:

“Now the *saṅgha* is in harmony, what then will we do ?” (僧今和合何所作爲)

“[We] recite the *Pātimokkha*.” (說戒羯磨)

Then the reciter keeps on reciting as followings:

“Listen, Reverend sirs, now is the [lunar] fifteenth day when we perform the *Uposatha* and recite the *Pātimokkha*. If time has come, then the *saṅgha* patiently listen. To recite the *Pātimokkha* in harmony, [I] declare such and such. Oh, *bhikkhu*, I would like to recite the *Pātimokkha* while one and all of us present listen properly and pay attention to it. If someone who may have an offence (*āpatti*) should reveal (*āvikareyya*) it. Those who have no offence should be silent. By your becoming silent, I shall thus know that the reverend ones are quite pure (*pārisuddhi*). If being asked by the others, you should answer with truth. Then like that the *bhikkhus* among the Order, whatever monk remembering while it is being proclaimed up to the third time that there is an existent offence, you should reveal it. Those who should not reveal it commit the offence of intentional lying (*sampajānamusāvādam*). Then intentional lying is called a stumbling-block (*antarāyiko dhammo*) by the Buddha.”

“Therefore, if that *bhikkhu* who remembers himself and knows that there was an offence in him, and who desires purity; he should reveal. For when it is revealed, there comes to be comfort to him. If he should not do so, the offence is heavier.”⁽³³⁾

“Reverend sirs, I have recited the *Pātimokkha*’s preface already. Now I ask you, Reverend sirs, are you pure ? I declare that such and such three times. Reverend sirs, are you pure ? By your becoming silent, you should maintain such things like that.”

(大德僧聽、今僧十五日布薩說戒。若僧時到僧忍聽。和合說戒白如是。諸大德、我欲說戒。衆集現前、默然聽善思念之。若有他舉者、即應如是實答。如是諸比丘在衆中、乃至三唱憶念有罪當發露、不發露者、得故妄語罪。佛說故妄語是障道法。彼比丘自憶念知有罪、欲求清淨當發露。發露則安隱、不發露罪益

深。諸大德、我已說戒經序。今問諸大德、是中清淨不。如是三說。諸大德、是中清淨。默念故是事如是持)⁽³⁴⁾

After the *Pātimokkha*'s preface has been recited, the reciter begins reciting the content of the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) in order, that is to say, the *Four Offences Involving Defeat* (*cattāro pārājikā dhammā*, 四波羅夷法), the *Thirteen Offences Entailing a Formal Meeting of the Order* (*terasa saṅghādisesā dhammā*, 十三僧伽婆尸沙法), the *Two Undetermined Offences* (*dve aniyatā dhammā*, 二不定法), and then the rest are announced as though it had been already heard.

Finally after the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) has been recited already, the head superior monk always delivers a short speech to all member of the saṅgha to advice them to keep following strictly the precepts, analyze what had been done during half a month, and announce what will be done in the next half.

Then the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital) is ended with the *Merit Transferring Gāthā* (廻向偈)⁽³⁵⁾ altogether with three times of striking the big drum and bell.

3. Remarks

One of the duties of monks is to have to participate in the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital) ceremony, except for the sick. However, as mentioned above, the sick must always be responsible to entrust someone to convey his purity and give consent (*chandaṃ dātum*, 與欲) for his absence. Giving consent is a symbol of a letter of attorney, through which he will be permitted to be absent.⁽³⁶⁾ It is also his proof for not being against anything decided by the Order while he was absent. This is an essential deed which reflects the duty and responsibility of every member of the saṅgha towards its rise and fall.

Thanks to the recitement of the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) twice a month, while listening to every loudly-recited precept, a monk can reflect himself on his mind and body, practice and follow the precept correctly and strictly. Naturally, the monk does need to learn by heart all the precepts, but through the one-minded concentration in every *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital), he can easily

learn the precepts by heart. If there may be an offence in him, he can reveal and confess in the midst of the Order, or a group, or to an individual. As a matter of fact, *for when it is revealed there comes to be comfort to him (āvikatā hi 'ssa phāsu hoti).*⁽³⁷⁾ Therefore, the more frequently the Order keeps up the tradition of *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital), the more the Saṅgha and Buddhism can develop and prosper as well.

Concerning the tradition of confession (*paṭikara*, 懺悔) to establish entire purity before performing the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital), there is a difference about way of confession between Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism as seen in Vietnam, concretely in Hue city. Normally, the former performs it right in the *Uposatha* before reciting the *Pātimokkha*, but the latter does it the night before the *Uposatha* day.

All over Vietnam on this day, the Buddhist followers also take advantage to practice the *Eight Sīlas* (*aṭṭasīlamādavīma*, 八齋戒).

According to ways to recite the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) regulated by the Buddha, there are five ways⁽³⁸⁾ in which to recite the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) nowadays in Hue city as well as in Vietnam, the fourth way is popular. That is, having the provenance (*nidāna*) recited, then the *Four Offences Involving Defeat* (*cattāro pārājikā dhammā*, 四波羅夷法), then the *Thirteen Offences Entailing a Formal Meeting of the Order* (*terasa saṅghādisesā dhammā*, 十三僧伽婆尸沙法), then the *Two Undetermined Offences* (*dve aniyatā dhammā*, 二不定法), and then the rest are announced as though it had been already heard.

C. Duties of monks

As mentioned above, one of monk's duties is to participate in the *Uposatha* ceremony twice a month. Because after having been ordained, the monk is revered, paid respect to and given offerings. Therefore, he must follow and practice the ordained precepts as severely as he can. In the *Paying Respect Gāthā* (歸敬偈) right at the beginning of the *Sī-fèn-lù* (四分律), we can understand the important and significance of precept practice as follows:

*“In the world, the king is the most powerful,
Among all streams, the sea is the greatest,
Among all stars, the moon is the biggest,
Among all saints, the Buddha is the highest,
Among all vinayas, the Pātimokkha is the best.”⁽³⁹⁾*

(世間王爲最、衆流海爲最、衆星月爲最、衆聖佛爲最、一切衆律中、戒經爲上最)

Thus the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) is so important that it is compared with best, greatest things in the world such as a king, the sea, the moon and the Buddha. Moreover, in the *Last Teachings Sūtra* (遺教經), the Buddha regards the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) as his permanent existence in this world:

“Oh, bhikkhus ! After my passing away, you should pay respect and reverence to the Pātimokkha just the same as with the blind meeting light, the poor gaining jewels. You should know that it is your great master, just the same as with my existence in this world.”⁽⁴⁰⁾

(汝等比丘、於我滅後、當尊重珍敬波羅提木叉、如闇遇明、貧人得寶、當知此則是汝等大師、若我住世無異此也)

Therefore, the strict practice as well as the regular recitation of the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) is considered as *making the Buddha’s teaching exist everlastingly (saddhammatṭhitiyā, 令正法久住)⁽⁴¹⁾* in this world.

Based on this meaning, the second duty of monk is to have to follow the precepts during his life. The more correctly and strictly monks do this, the more the saṅgha enhance its prestige and faith of its followers, and as furthermore, the Buddha’s teachings will become more and more popular. The precept practice of monk does not only influence greatly his own process of enlightenment, but also relates to the rise and fall and destiny of the saṅgha and Buddhism as well.

Thirdly, monks must take part in important ceremonies held by the Order,

such as the summer retreat, the *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣), the *Buddha Jayanti Day*, the *Filial Piety* (*ullambana*, 盂蘭盆) *Day*, etc.

Fourthly, a monk should implement and fulfill any duty assigned by the saṅgha.

Fifthly, he must observe the law issued by the government.

Sixthly, he should learn and practice the Buddhist teachings so that he can get a enough knowledge and understanding so that he can transmit and enlighten Buddhist followers.

And seventhly, he must observe all rules and regulations in his temple.

In all, these are seven main duties of monks as seen in Vietnam.

D. The summer retreat and Invitation (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) ceremony

After being ordained, the *bhikkhu* has the duty of participating in the summer retreat regulated by the saṅgha once a year. Three months of “*stop going out*” is a period of time for him to train himself his body and mind as strictly as possible. When this time has ended, there comes the formal ceremony of *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) and along with the *Filial Piety Festival* (*ullambana*, 盂蘭盆會).

In Vietnam, all Mahāyāna Buddhist monks and nuns from the North to the South also take the same time to enter the summer retreat during three months, that is, from the lunar 15th day of April to the 15th day of July yearly.

I. The summer retreat

1. Meaning of summer retreat

Vārṣika (s.) or *vassa* (p.), meaning *rainy season* (雨期), lasting roughly from June to October, is the period of time of rains in India. Therefore, the Buddha regulates that all monks should stay at one residence not go out so that they can prevent from trampling down the crops and grasses, injuring life that is one-facultied and bringing small creatures to destruction.

Therefore, those who intentionally go out on tour commit an offence of wrong

-doing.

“Monks, having entered upon the rains, but not having kept either the first three months or the last three months, one should not set out on tour. Whoever should (thus) set out, there is an offence of wrong-doing.”⁽⁴²⁾

During this time, monks are not allowed to go out of the regulated area (*sīma*), staying in the temple to practice meditation, recite sūtras and study. But in Mahāyāna Buddhist countries like China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, ect., at this time is the summer season of lunar calendar when monks also enter upon retreat, then it is called the summer retreat.

Thus from that meaning, there comes some phrases of words such as *Nine Weeks of One Summer* (一夏九旬), *Nine Weeks of Stopping Going Out* (九旬禁足), *Settling Rules of Vassa-residence* (結制安居), *Entering on the Summer Retreat* (*vassupagamana*, 結夏 or 入夏), *Release of the Summer Retreat* (解夏).

Moreover, based on the rules regulated for the summer retreat, after finishing once, monks will receive one vassa (夏臘), i. e. year of age of the *bhikkhu*. Then those who are above five vassas (五夏以上) will be called *ācāriya* (阿闍梨, superior monk), and above ten vassas *upajjhāya* (和尚, most venerable).

There are 3 periods of entering on the summer retreat:

- Pre-summer retreat (*purimikāvassupanāyikā*, 前安居): beginning from April, 16th.
- Mid-summer retreat (中安居): beginning from the period of time from April, 17th to May, 15th.
- Ex-summer retreat (*pacchimikāvassupanāyikā*, 後安居): beginning from May, 16th.⁽⁴³⁾

In the life of monks, the summer retreat is considered as the most important period of time to concentrate all his mind for practice and reflect himself. In Vietnam as well as in other Mahāyāna Buddhist countries such as Korea, China,

etc., the summer retreat is held during 3 lunar months of the summer season, in which the Vietnam case is right after the lunar 15th day of April, the *Buddha Jayanti Day*, up to 15th day of July, the *Filial Piety Day*.

2. Preparations

Before entering the summer retreat, Vietnam Buddhists always celebrate the *Buddha Jayanti Festival*. Then one or two weeks before monks clean the temple and normally on the lunar 14th day of April, they already made preparations of flowers, incense and necessary things for that important day as well as for the day of entering upon the summer retreat.

In Hue city of Vietnam, monks always enter upon the summer retreat at their own temples, but they come to a central temple, now Tũ Đòm (慈曇), to perform the rite of entering upon summer retreat. However, the case is quite different with Hochiminh city where most monks and nuns gather at centers for summer residence, but because the numbers of monks and nuns are so many that they cannot concentrate at one place to perform the formal ceremonies as *Precept Recital* (*uposatha*, 布薩), *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣), etc.

As for monks coming from other places, who wish to enter the summer retreat at some temple of this place, must arrive at least 3 days before to ask for permission from the abbot of the temple.

The rite of entering upon the summer retreat at these centers is often performed as follows:

a. Inviting a *upajjhāya*:

In order to bring purification and strenuousness to monks during the period of 90 days, the assembly should invite an aged and well-learnt *upajjhāya* who has the ability of answering all questions of the assembly to be their spiritual leader.

b. Assigning duties:

The day before performing the rite, monks assemble to elect a *Board of Duties*

(職事班) including 1 Assembly Caretaker (守衆), 1 Duty-distributor (*kammadāna*, 維那), 1 Affair Manager (悦衆), 1 Affair Director (知事) and 1 secretary. The rest of monks are assigned to do daily works.⁽⁴⁴⁾

This case is applied for temples in the Middle Area as well as in Hue city. However, as seen at centers of summer retreat in Hochiminh city, where the number of monks is much greater than in Hue city, members of the Board of Duties are assigned more concretely and thoroughly.

For example, Tuyền Lâm temple (泉林寺), located at 265 Hùng Vương Street, Ward 9, District 6, Hochiminh City is one of municipal well-known center of summer retreat, where every year more than 100 monks from everywhere, especially from the West Region of Vietnam, come to enter the summer residence. The 1997 year's Board of Duties of the center consisted of:

- A *Dhyāna Head* (禪主),
- A *Vice Dhyāna Head* (副禪主),
- A *Head of Center* (主香), who manages all monks and nuns, normally the Main Representative of a district is invited to be this duty.
- A *Vice Head of Center* (副主香),
- An *Affair Director* (化主), who is responsible to take care all affairs in the center.
- A *Vice Affair Director* (副化主),
- A *Secretary*, and
- A *Cashier*.
- A *Director of Guests* (知客), who is responsible to receive guests as well as Buddhist followers.

Besides, there are concrete branches whose duties are assigned as followings:

- Lamps and Incense (香燈), who takes care of affairs concerning lamps, incense, fruits, etc. in the temple.
- Dining House (行堂), who takes care of assigning groups to clean the

- dining house, lay the tables before and after the time of having lunch.
- Assignment of Works (工作), who is responsible to assign works for groups.
 - Sanitation (衛生), who is responsible to direct groups to clean the temple.
 - Carrying Water (引水), who takes care of the suppliment of water for monks using daily. This case is applied for temples where there is no water services. Then monks must carry water from wells or the river.
 - Health, and
 - Attendants.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Then the Assembly is divided into many groups of which the leader is called *Group Head* (正衆), and the person who is responsible to guide a group of monks to recite sūtras and follow all recital sessions is called *Guider of Recitation* (正那).

Thus the assembly altogether invites those who have been selected in the list of Board of Duties. A list of the names of monks who will enter upon the summer retreat and the Board of Duties is passed to the *Dhyāna Head* (禪主) or the *Eye-Witness Upajjhāya* to ask for agreement.

c. Taking and offering incense (拈香):

After the assembly have gathered at the Main Hall, the *Dhyāna Head* (禪主) or the *Eye-Witness Upajjhāya* kneels down to take and offer incence. Then the *Duty-Distributor* (*kammadāna*, 維那) chants a following stotra or hymn (讚) often utilised in Vietnam Buddhist ceremonies and rituals called the *Incense Stotra* or *xiāng-zèn* (香讚):

*The burner of incense has just been burnt,
Through the dhamma-dhātu is smelt its sweet ordour,
By the ordour the countless Buddhas come to realize from afar,
Regarding to each place, they gather in auspicious clouds,
With all our sincere mind
The Buddhas appear fully with their bodies.*

We pay homage to the Bodhisatta of Fragrant-Cloud Canopy.

(爐香乍熱、法界蒙熏、諸佛海會悉遙聞、隨處結祥雲、誠意方殷、諸佛現全身。南無香雲蓋菩薩)。

Next he calls on every title of Buddhas, Bodhisattas and patriarchs for the assembly to pay worship to. Then he kneels down to sing in special voice that “*Sakyamuni Tatbhāgata*” (釋迦牟尼如來) and the assembly replies with the same voices three times “*Settlement of summer retreat*” (結夏安居)。

d. Performing the formal act of summer retreat:

- As for the Theras:

After finishing the session of sūtra recital, the assembly divides to sit both sides of the Main Hall in order from the monks of higher vassas to lower ones. First two *upajjhāyas* who have highest vassas come to face to face in turn to say that:

“Would you, Reverend Sir, be one-mindedly to listen to me. I, bhikkhu so-and-so, now take refuge to the such-and-such as the saṅghārāma to enter the 3 months of former summer retreat.” (3 times)

(大德一念、我比丘... 今依... 僧伽藍、前三月夏安居)

The listener says “*good*” (善) in reply and after saying “*so*” (爾), the sayer pays respect to the former once. If the listener is the sayer’s disciple, he must pay worship back while being paid by his teacher. Moreover, he should kneel down to listen not to sit down. However, if the listener is the sayer’s master, he can sit down while being paid worship.

- As for the assembly:

A little difference of formal act is for the case of normal monks who can divide every groups of 2 or 3 person to perform the act. After paying respect once to the *Head Thera* (Venerable), they say as above. Then the Thera gives an advice that:

“*You should not be indolent !*” (知莫放逸)

“*We will follow your teachings.*” (依教奉行) The sayers reply.

“*On whom do you rely as Discipline Master ?*” (依誰持律者)

“*We rely on such-and-such as Discipline Master.*” (依... 律師)

“*Then if there is any question, just come to ask me.*” (有疑當往問)⁽⁴⁶⁾

Thus when groups have finished the formal act in turn, there comes the rite of striking bell and board.

d. Striking bell and board (開鐘板):

- Two kind of bells:

In Buddhism, there are 2 kinds of bells, viz. great bell (大鐘) and small bell (小鐘). Great bell, also called *temple bell* (梵鐘), *whale bell* (鯨鐘), *afternoon bell* (曉鐘), *morning bell* (昏鐘), *waking-up bell* (開枕鐘), *dark bell* (幽冥鐘), etc., is used for striking before the recital sessions of early morning and night and also at Buddhist rituals and ceremonies. The bell strike at night aims at alarming that the impermanence is so quick that the mind-practitioners should try their best to practice without indulgence; and the strike at early morning is at waking up everyone to strenuously practice so that they can free from the darkness of the round of *saṃsāra* (輪迴), viz. birth and death. The great bell is often stricken 108 sounds (times) as the meaning of the abolition of the sentient beings' 108 afflictions (*kilesa*, 煩惱).⁽⁴⁷⁾

The small bell consists of 2 kinds, viz. *assembly-announcing bell* (報衆鐘) and *upon-depending (adhiṭṭhāna) bell* (加持鐘). The first, also called *assembly-hall bell* (僧堂鐘), is laid at the *Assembly (saṅgha) Hall* (僧堂) or *Dhamma Hall* (法堂). This bell is used when assembling monks, inviting superior monks, having meal, reciting sūtras, etc. The second, laid at the altars in the Main Hall or Patriarch Hall, is used for sūtra recital.

As for the board, made by copper or wood, also has the same usage with the *assembly-hall bell* (僧堂鐘) to announce the time of practice and study, of doing works, etc.⁽⁴⁸⁾ The copper, also called *cloud board* (雲板), is hung at the temple's

treasury and the wood at the Abbot's room (方丈寮), *Chief Seat's room* (首座寮), *Assembly Hall* (僧堂), ect.⁽⁴⁹⁾

- Rite to start striking bell and board:

In the summer retreat, the bell and board play an important role not only to announce monks but they are said to vibrate even dragons, devas and dhamma-guardians as well. Therefore, before entering upon the summer retreat, it is necessary to perform the rite of striking bell and board. The time to perform this rite was regulated at 1: 00 a.m. in the early morning of the lunar 15th day of April (for former settlement of boundary) or the lunar 16th day (for later settlement of boundary). Because this time is completely quiet and pure.⁽⁵⁰⁾

The *Assembly Caretaker* (守衆) kneels down to say that:

"It is heard that the sound of the golden bell directs towards previous empty kalpa (saṃvarta-siddha kalpa, 空劫), that the sound of jade board transmits to the kalpa of Bhīṣma-garjita-ghoṣa-svara-rāja (威音王). Now I hang them in front of hall as the instruments to express the perfect harmonious rules of wisdom. Now it is the time when the present abbot hands down lamps to ensure the path. Taking robes and bowl to propagate the dhamma for the sake of the sentient beings, he prays for prosperity for the temple, for the dānapati (followers) who take refuge and pay respect to. Now that the time has come, be auspicious and best wishes (to the assembly)."

(竊以、金鐘韻響於空劫之前、玉板聲傳於威音那伴⁽⁵¹⁾。吾今揭示堂前、用表定慧圓融軌則。當今方丈、傳燈續道、將爲衣鉢、弘法利生、再祈梵刹有慶、壇信皈崇。凡向時中、吉祥如意。)

Then the following hymn is praised:

"The sounds of the golden bell and jade board pervade to 3.000 worlds. They are hung in front of hall during the following nine weeks, which were handed down by the partriarchs through generations, and which have uncountable merit and make the inner and outer temple be peaceful. We pay worship to the Bodhisatta of Merit Forest." (3times)

(金鐘玉板聲三千、九旬揭示在堂前、歷代祖師傳、功德無邊、內外必安然。南無功德林菩薩)

While it is being praised, the *Head Upajjbāya* or the Venerable comes to the bell and board, taking the boardstick in one hand and saying the following dhamma words:

“It is round and square, unlike the golden hand-bell (金鈴), not the wooden instrument (木鐸). The temporary and reality parallel, the square and round work together. It is utilised as rule in twelve times. The dhamma is in you who attain enlightenment depending on the karmic activity of your mind. The mind without impurity and contamination is the Pure Land; without affliction and grief is the Sukhāvātī. The mind-only being Pure Land is justified; the real nature of Amitābha is self-awakening.”

(圓團團方卓卓、不是金鈴亦非木鐸、權實雙行方圓互作、二六時中以爲當則、法在汝成道由心作、不垢不染是西方、無惱無優真極樂、唯心淨土肯承當、本性彌陀由自覺。)

Then he goes on saying:

“One is round and one is square. Thousands of great worlds as numerous as the sands end thinking and measuring. From now on the sounds of the golden hand-bell and the wooden instrument vibrate. Forever glorious is the Buddha-choosing place. A striking of mallet can break off the great empty space.” (striking a mallet)

“Lonely cloud of hundred miles scatters falling down.” (striking a mallet)

“If meeting the person of copper head and iron neck, it depends on you who changes your skin and body.” (striking a mallet)

(一箇圓兮一箇方、大千沙界絕思量、金聲木韻從斯振、萬古森然選佛場。一槌打破太虛空、萬里孤雲隨散落、縱遇銅頭鐵額人、任汝如斯換皮殼。)(52)

e. Settling boundary (結界):

Next the head *upajjbāya* declares the settlement of boundary (結界) which

consists of ten directions, viz. East, West, South, North, South-East, South-West, North-East, North-West, upper and below. There are two kinds of boundaries, viz. inner and outer.

The inner boundary here is the border of the temple where monks enter upon the summer retreat. And the outer boundary can be the border of the city, province or district where monks reside. For example, the outer boundary of Hue city is its border.

Thus the rite of entering the summer retreat is ended following with 3 times of striking great bell and drum.

f. Remarks:

The time for striking bell and board as well the first hour for entering upon a long period of 90 days of monks' summer retreat is considered as holy and important hour. Although it was regulated at 1: 00 a.m., but nowadays it is seen to perform at 3: 30 or 4: 00 a.m. in the early morning before the morning session of sūtra recital.

During the period of three months of summer retreat, the beginning practitioners as well as the *sāmañeras* are also permitted to participate only as followers of summer retreat (從夏者).

3. Regulation applied for the summer retreat as seen in centers of Hochiminh City

To preserve the purity and peace for monks during 3 months of summer retreat, it is necessary to have a regulation applied severely in temples and summer centers. Here I would like to introduce a regulation of 1997 summer retreat applied at Hùng Quốc temple (興國寺) located at 20 Lạc Long Quân Street, District 11, Hochiminh City, where every year there are about more than 100 monks coming here to enter upon the summer residence.⁽⁵³⁾

1. Carrying out the Six Points of Reverent Harmony.⁽⁵⁴⁾

2. *Should keep following assigned works and daily sessions of sūtra recitation.*
3. *Should not be absent at days of Uposatha and confession, at dhamma-talk and activities performed at the center.*
4. *Should be on time and not be absent at lunch time.*
5. *Should be modest and polite in talking with everyone, talking right dhamma at right time.*
6. *If in the assembly there is a sick, should pay a visit to and help him.*
7. *In case of having necessary affair to go out of the boundary:*
 - a. *If going out one day and night, should ask for permission of some revered monk of the Board of Duties.*
 - b. *If going out from one day and night up to seven days, should ask for permission among the assembly.*
 - c. *If attending to go out for Buddhist affairs during seven days, should ask for permission among the assembly in the Uposatha day. Should not exceed 30 days, because it is afraid that he will break the rule of summer retreat. In case of having finished the affair, should return back the temple as soon as possible.*
 - d. *In case of those who exceeded one day and night without the permission of the assembly, he is considered as intentionally breaking the rules of summer retreat.*
8. *Should respect the time of practice during 3 months of summer retreat. Should receive visitors at the visiting room, without exceeding 30 minutes.*
9. *Should fulfil one's work and responsibility assigned through the board of duties.*
10. *Should always encourage each other to practise, study the true dhamma and cultivate the virtue, meditation and wisdom.*

4. Its special daily schedule

Based on the insistence of concentrating all time for monks to practice and cultivate themselves as much as possible during 3 months, the timetable applied for the summer retreat is different from the normal daily schedule. Therefore, all temples' schedules are the same. Here I would also like to introduce the following schedule of the Húng Quốc temple (興國寺):

- 3: 30: waking up, striking great bell.
- 3: 45: early morning session (reciting sūtras)
- 5: 00: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 8: 00: listening to dhamma talk, studying discipline (vinaya).
- 10: 30: noon offering rite
- 11: 00: formal rite of having lunch
- 12: 00: taking rest
- 13: 30: waking up the assembly
- 14: 00: sūtra recitation
- 16: 00: afternoon session (reciting sūtras)
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 18: 30: PureLand session (reciting sūtras)
- 19: 30: walking slowly (*caṅkamana*, 經行) then returning to the Main Hall and entering meditation of 10 minutes.
- 21: 30: sitting in meditation
- 22: 00: sleeping

5. The formal rite of having lunch

Normally before lunchtime monks can wear formal clothes not yellow robe, reciting the name of *Amitābha Buddha* three times and then having meals. However, in the summer retreat monks must perform a formal rite of having lunch.

After the noon offering rite (午供式) has been finished, three sounds of board is struck and then monks gather at regulated place to perform the rite for lunch. Naturally about 15 minutes before ending the noon offering rite, they must be ready with robe put on and leg-tying string tied.

There is a gāthā for monks and nuns to recite while putting on yellow robe and tying string as followings:

“While correcting the robe and tying the string, I pray for the sentient beings to tie up their good roots and not to lose them.” (3 times)

(整衣束帶、當願衆生、檢束善根、不令散失。)

After paying respect 3 times at the Patriarch Hall, everybody in turn takes their own seats, then while sitting, each contemplates that:

“Sitting straight with my well-balanced body, I pray for the sentient beings to sit on the bodhi seat with an unattached mind.” (3 times)

(正身端坐、當願衆生、坐菩提坐、心無所着。)

When opening the bowl to clean, seeing it empty and contemplating that:

“If seeing empty bowl, I pray for the sentient beings to attain the ultimate purity and emptying all afflictions.” (3 times)

(若見空鉢、當願衆生、究竟清淨、空無煩惱。)

Then after having put boiling rice in the bowl, seeing that it is full and contemplating that:

“If seeing that the bowl is full, I pray for the sentient beings to be full and rich of all good dhammas.” (3 times)

(若見滿鉢、當願衆生、具足盛滿、一切善法。)

Next sticking the wooden spoon into the rice with its handle outwards not in towards to oneself and after hearing the striking of a bell and 3 strokes on the board by the attendant, all join their hands to recite once the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *The Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*) and 3 times *“I pay respect to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in ten directions.”* (南無十方常住三寶). Everyone altogether performs the *Mudrā of Three Mountains* (三山印) with left hand then

putting the bowl on it, the right hand with the *Auspicious Mudrā* (吉祥印), raising the bowl up to one's forehead and reciting the following offering verses:

"I offer this to the Vairocana Buddha of Purified Dharma-kāya,

To the Rocana Buddha of Wholly Complete Sambhoga-kāya,

To the Sākyamuni Buddha of Uncountable Nirmāṇa-kāya,

To the Maitreya Buddha Reborn in the Future,

To the Amitābha Buddha of the Sukhāvātī Realm,

To all Buddhas of three periods in ten directions,

To the Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva of Great Wisdom,

To the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva of Great Conduct,

To the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva of Great Compassion,

To all bodhisattvas of great beings,

Mahāprajñāpāramitā (great wisdom for salvation).

These Three Virtues⁽⁵⁵⁾ and Six Flavours⁽⁵⁶⁾ are offered to the Buddhas and the Saṅgha, and to all sentient beings. While eating I pray for all beings to take the joyfulness of meditation as meal and to be fulfilled by the happiness in the dharma."

(供養清淨法身毘盧舍那佛、圓滿報身盧舍那佛、千百億化身釋迦牟尼佛、當來下生彌勒尊佛、極樂世界阿彌陀佛、十方三世一切諸佛、大智文殊師利菩薩、大行普賢菩薩、大悲觀世音菩薩、諸尊菩薩摩訶薩、摩訶般若波羅蜜。三德六味、供佛及僧、法界有情、普同供養。若飯食時、當願衆生、禪悅爲食、法喜充滿。)

When the sound of the bell is heard, all put their bowls down on the table, turning the spoon's handle inwards. The *Kammadāna* (維那) takes 7 wards and puts them in a small cup called *sentient beings' foods* (出生) and contemplates that:

"The dhamma power is so mysterious beyond thought and words, and the compassion is so unhindered as to enable these seven wards to pervade in the ten directions and to donate to all worlds as small as the sands. Om bringing benefit svāhā."

(法力不思議、慈悲無障礙、七粒徧十方、普施週沙界。唵度利益莎訶。)

After hearing the sound of the bell, the assembly recites the *dhāraṇīs* of “*Pervading Foods*” (偏食) and “*Pervading Water*” (偏水), each 7 times, making a contemplation on the first letter of the Sanskrit Siddham alphabet (A,), on the small cup, thinking that one wart can pervade warts as uncountable as the sands of the Gange River to fulfill the hungry ghosts (*peta*, 餓鬼) and gods as well as deities, and that the water can turn into all precious materials like gold and silver, green indestructible gems (*vaidūrya*, 瑠璃), agate (瑪瑙), coral (珊瑚), amber (琥珀), etc., and palaces with all things for the sentient beings.

The *dhāraṇīs* of “*Pervading Foods*” (偏食) and “*Pervading Water*” (偏水) in Sanskrit⁽⁵⁷⁾ are:

- The *dhāraṇīs* of “*Pervading Foods*” (偏食):

Namaḥ sarva-tathāgatāvalokite om sambhara saṃbhara hūṃ.

(南無薩嚩怛他哦多。嚩嚩枳帝。唵。三跋囉三跋囉。吽。)

“I pay respect for things observed and seen by all Tathāgatas. Om ! Universally gather ! Universally gather ! Hūṃ !”

- The *dhāraṇīs* of “*Pervading Water*” (偏水):

Namaḥ surūpāya tathāgatāya, tad yathā, om sru sru prasru prasru svāhā.

(南無蘇嚩婆耶。怛他哦多耶。怛姪他。唵。蘇嚩蘇嚩。鉢囉蘇嚩。鉢囉蘇嚩。莎婆訶。)

“I pay respect to the Tathāgata of Wonderful Body. That is to say, om. Appear ! Appear ! Appear well ! Appear well ! Svāhā !”

After having finished the contemplation, the *Kammadāna* passes the cup to the attendant, who recites the following verse of *Sending Foods* (送食):

“Oh ! Eagle, the mythical golden-winged bird (*supanna*), all hungry ghosts in open field and demon *Hārītī*,⁽⁵⁸⁾ mother and sons, come here to be fulfilled by this sweet dew (*amata*).”

(大鵬金翅鳥、曠野鬼神衆、羅殺鬼子母、甘露必充滿。唵。穆帝莎訶。)

Next the *Head Upajjhāya* or Venerable say the following dhamma words:

“The Buddha regulates that the bhikkhus while eating contemplate on five things. Of those who have an unsettled mind and those who gossip, it is difficult for them to be free from the debt of offering donators. Then after hearing the bell sound, each one-mindedly recite: I pay worship to the Amitābha Buddha.”

(佛制比丘、食存五觀、散心雜話、信施難消、大眾聞磬聲各正念。南無阿彌陀佛。)

Then everyone raises one’s bowl up to one’s forehead making the contemplation on five things as follows:

*“Firstly, measuring if the labour is more or less and where this food comes from;
Secondly, observing if my merit is sufficient or incomplete to receive this offering;
Thirdly, refraining from mind offences of which greed, hatred, etc. are principal;
Fourthly, it is mainly to take this food as good medicine for treatment, to prevent from the up-drying of this body; and
Fifthly, because the attainment of enlightenment, I receive this food.”*

(一、計功多少、量彼來處。二、忖已德行、全缺應供。三防心離過、貪等爲宗。四、正事良藥、爲療形枯。五、爲正道故、方受此食。)

Next is the way of leaving some rice which is out in another cup by taking rice from the bowl, more or less, according to one’s will, then taking the cup of rice, making the following contemplation:

“All my cultivated merit are universally transferred to all demons and animals who having eaten this food are exempted from sufferings, abandon their bodies and are reborn in joyful realm. This blessed reward of the Bodhisattva is as limitless as the empty space. The offering gains such a result increasing without end. Om bringing benefit svāhā.”

(以今所修福、食已免極苦、捨身生樂處、菩薩爲福報、無盡若虛空。施獲如是果、增長無休息。唵度利益莎訶。)

Next each performs the following *Three Contemplations* (三觀):

“I vow to cut off all evil deeds. I vow to practice all good deeds. I vow to save all sentient beings.” (願斷一切惡、願修一切善、誓度一切衆生。)

And two *gāthās* are recited before eating:

“When the Five Contemplations are completely performed, I can receive this food to bring benefit to the sentient beings and allow them to all enjoy.” (五觀週全、方受此物、普利衆生、一茶言い皆蒙。)

“While receiving this flavour, I pray for the sentient beings to attain the Buddha’s best flavour and to be fulfilled with sweet dew.” (若受味時、當願衆生、得佛上味、甘露滿足。)

While eating everyone should one-mindedly think of the Buddha’s name or perform the Five Contemplations so that they can refrain from the unsettlement of mind. Having finished the meal, each pours water into the bowl, washing and contemplating that:

“Taking the water to wash the bowl as heavenly flavour of sweet dew, I offer to all demons and gods so that they can gain their satiety.”

(以此洗鉢水、如天甘露味、施與諸鬼神、悉皆獲飽滿。唵。摩休囉悉莎訶。)

Then after pouring the water out, taking the toothpick, one should contemplate that:

“Taking the toothpick with my hand, I pray for the sentient beings to attain the wonderful dhamma and ultimate purity.” (手執楊枝、當願衆生、皆得妙法、究竟清淨。唵。

薩吧嚩述答、薩哩吧、荅哩嘛、薩吧嚩述怛。唵。嚩莎訶。)

And while using the toothpick, a *gāthā* is recited:

“While picking my teeth, I pray for the sentient beings to purify their minds and cut off all afflictions.” (嚼楊枝時、當願衆生、其心調淨、噬諸煩惱。唵。阿暮伽、彌摩隸、爾嚩迦囉、僧輸馱你、鉢頭摩、俱摩囉、爾嚩僧輸馱耶、陀囉陀囉、素彌麼犁、莎嚩訶。)

Then while taking a cup of water to drink, another *gāthā* is recited:

“The Buddha contemplates and sees in a cup of water having 84,000 insects. Then if this dhāraṇī is not recited, to eat the sentient beings’ meat is the same.” (佛觀一鉢水、八萬四千蟲、若不持此咒、如食衆生肉。唵。嚩悉波囉摩尼莎訶。)

And the assembly goes on reciting:

Saptānām samyakṣambuddha-koṭīnām tad yathā. Om cale cale cundi svāhā.

“I pay respect to the Saptakoṭibuddha (the fabulous mother of seven koṭis of Buddha) of perfect universal wisdom. That is to say, om. The one that moves about. the one that is laid upon my head. The revered Cundi. Svāhā.”

(薩哆喃、三藐三菩陀、俱胝喃、怛姪他。唵。折隸主隸準提、娑婆訶。)

“Those who make an offering gain benefit from itself. Those who enjoy to make an offering, attain peace and happiness later.”

(所謂布施者、悉獲其利益、若謂樂布施、後必得安樂。)

“Having finished the lunchtime, I pray for the sentient beings to make clear their doings which are full of Buddhist teachings.”

(飯食已訖、當願衆生、所作皆辦、具諸佛法。)

The assembly continues reciting the Buddhas’ names while walking slowly around the Main Hall three or seven rounds, reciting the confession verses, the Three Refuges and returning back to their own rooms. Thus is ended the special rite of having lunch.⁽⁵⁹⁾

The rite in which monks ought to participate is performed everyday at

lunchtime during three months of summer retreat. Those who cannot manage to be present at that time because of Buddhist affairs, must ask for prior permission from the assembly.

5. Remarks

Through the above-mentioned regulations and schedule we can see that most of time in a day is devoted by the monk, mainly to practice and study. The important principle is that after having entered upon the summer retreat, monks and nuns must reveal and confess their past offences (*āpatti*) so that they enable to purify their own minds and bodies. Therefore, at the first stage of summer retreat, viz. the first 2 or 3 weeks, the *Head Upajjhāya* or the abbot of the temple always instructs them to recite the *Thúy Sám* (水懺經, *Shui-ch'an ching*) or *Lúang Hoàng Sám* (梁皇懺經, *Liang-huang-ch'an-ching*).⁽⁶⁰⁾

The last two weeks are reserved for the recitation of *Ullambanasūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-peng-ching*) and the *Sūtra of Parents' Heavy Grace* (父母恩重經, *Fu-mu-ên-chung-ching*). This is the representation of the spirit of rewarding favours to present alive parents as well as the parents of many forms of existence and parents of past seven generations which will be performed on the lunar 16th day of July, the traditional *Filial Piety Day*.

The rest of middle weeks are for the other sūtras such as *Flower-Adorning Sūtra* (*Mahāvaiṣṭya-buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, 華嚴經), *Nirvāṇa-Entering Sūtra* (*Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, 大般涅槃經), *Diamond Sūtra* (*Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, 金剛般若經), *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, 法華經), etc. First the assembly often decides what sūtras will be recited in this summer retreat. For example, last year the *Flower-Adorning Sūtra* was already recited, then the *Nirvāṇa-Entering Sūtra* (*Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, 大般涅槃經) will be exchanged for this year. The rest of time an individual can select one of these sūtras to recite or read formally depending on his vow.

The summer retreat is the period of stopping setting on tours or going out carried out according to the spirit of Buddha's time. Nevertheless, nowadays there

are so much Buddhist services such as praying for the dead, the sick, or the dāna rite for hungry ghost (施餓鬼式), etc. even during this 3 months that monks have to go out frequently to meet the need of the Buddhist followers. Because it is believed that monks who entered upon the summer retreat recite sūtras and make confession and practice much more strictly than normal days; then they are much more purified and have more merit. For this reason, it is in this period that the Buddhist followers often perform dāna offerings and organize formal rite for offering to the hungry ghosts much more than usual. And as a matter of fact, as seen in Hue city monks become busier in this season.

Compared with the special schedule applied for the summer retreat with the common schedule (see below), there are some following differences:

- The time of labouring in the morning is replaced by time of reciting sūtras, making confession by paying worship to Buddhas' auspicious names. If those who do not go to school, they must follow this schedule. If a monk is busy at school, he will follow the afternoon or night session. If he is busy all day, then he must do it in holidays.

- At noon, instead of having lunch at the dining house, after having put on their yellow robes, monks must gather at a regulated place, not at the dining house but possible at the *West Hall* (西堂) or *Patriarch Hall* (祖堂) of the temple, to perform the special lunch rite, which is called in Vietnamese as *quá đường* (過堂).

- On common days, monk only strikes great bell at 19: 00 at night. However, during 3 months of the summer retreat, a Pure Land rite is held 20 or 30 minutes after the striking of the great bell. This rite aims at praying for being born in the Pure Land (*Sukhāvātī*, 淨土), therefore the *Smaller Sukhāvātīvyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經) and the auspicious name of *Amitābha Buddha* are recited. Naturally in common rite the name is also recited together with the others, but in this rite the name is recited much more times than usual.

- Especially there also is a regulated time for reciting the Buddhas' names and meditation about 30 minutes before going to bed.

During three months of summer retreat, monks spend their most time for mind-cultivation and study through sessions of sūtra recitation and listening to dhamma talks. Apart from these, monks don't forget doing charitable activities by visiting and donating gifts to poor people or those who are victims of natural calamities. Especially the deed of constructing the friendly houses and presenting to poor people is an useful and humane activity of Vietnamese monks and nuns, which can be seen popularly in Hochiminh City as well as other places throughout Vietnam. Moreover, the tradition of "offering to ten temples" during three months of summer retreat is highly appreciated among the saṅgha. Therefore, monks and nuns of temples frequently organize groups of layfollowers to go to the centers of summer retreat to offer things as well as money. This is also an activities which makes good opportunity for the laity to perform meritorious deeds.

E. The Invitation (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣)

The day before the *Filial Piety Day* on the lunar 15th day of July, the Vietnamese monks and nuns prepare everything for the ceremony. Then the day after finishing the ceremony, they perform a rite for ending 3 months of severe and strenuous cultivation which is often called the *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) or the ceremony of *Releasing the Summer Retreat* (解夏).

As regulated by the Buddha in his lifetime, there are two days for the performance of the *Invitation*, i.e. the fourteenth and the fifteenth.(61) However, as mentioned above, in Vietnam nowadays the *Invitation Day* is usually performed on the lunar 16th day of July. The reason is that monks and nuns are very busy to celebrate the *Ullambana Festival* the day before, July 15th, then they cannot hold the *Invitation* ceremony at the same time.

I. The ceremony

Also the same with the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) Day, monks often assemble at one place to perform the ceremony of *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣). In

Hochiminh City, they always perform it at their own temples or regulated temples or at concentrated centers of summer retreat organized by the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association. However, the case of Hue City is different. Monks always gather at one place, present-day Tũ Đãm Temple (慈曇寺), to celebrate the *Invitation* as well as other important ceremonies.

In the early morning of the day, monks assemble at the Main Hall of the temple after three sounds of the great bell are struck. One of the superior monks kneels down to offer the incense sticks and at the same time, the great bell and gig drum are struck three times.

Next the *Kammadāna* (維那) intones the following stotra and the assembly altogether recites:

“The perfume of Morality, the perfume of Concentration and the perfume of Wisdom; then the perfume of Enlightenment and the perfume of Freedom of Knowledge (which create) a magnificent and bright cloud spreading throughout the Dhamma Realm, now we offer to the Triple Gem in ten directions. We pay homage to the Perfume-Offering Bodhisatta.” (3 times)

(戒香定香與慧香、解脫解脫知見香、光明雲臺遍法界、供養十方三寶前。南無香供養菩薩。)

Then the *Kammadāna* (維那) praises in a special voice that “*Sakyamuni Tathāgata*” (釋迦如來) and the assembly reply in harmony that “*releasing the summer retreat and [performing] the Invitation.*” (休夏自恣). Next he goes on saying that:

“The release of the summer retreat and the performance of the Invitation are the important path leading to the gate of attaining the Buddhahood; the confession and repentance of offences are really a good target for monk’s conduct. The more the good roots are planted, the rounder and brighter are the joyous fruits. If [we] do not rely on the boat of Precepts, how can [we] get to the other shore of Nirvāṇa? Now is the 16th day of July, based on the rules regulated by our Buddha, which is the time to release the summer

retreat when the assembly gathers, coming to the precious Main Hall to recite secrete scriptures and to release former settlement. From now on, if there are the off-breaking of the Four Grave Prohibitions (catu-pārārikā, 四重) and the committment of the Ten Evil Things (dasākusala, 十惡),⁽⁶²⁾ then confess yourselves; and if the Three Poisonuos Things (三毒)⁽⁶³⁾ and the Seven Concealing Offences (七遮 [罪])⁽⁶⁴⁾ happen, just listen to the advice of the others. If being seen or heard and suspected, all these offences must be repented each by each. The offences which are created by either this body or this mouth or this mind, should be confessed. The bondage of objects of organs of senses and the offences caused [from the grasping of] what is heard and seen, accumulated as highly as heaps of offences. Now especially the gate of confession is opened to wash out all offences of oneself and of the others. Confession means confessing what has been done in the past, and repentence means repenting what will be done in the future. Therefore, it is said that we vow to destroy the offences which have been done; and dare not do the offences which are never done. That is the confessing method of the Invitation which has been applied from the old days up to now.”

(休夏自恣、成佛門之要道、懺愆悔過、實僧行之良謀、善因培植、樂果圓明、不憑戒行之慈航、曷到涅槃之岸。資者七月十六日、誠當我佛者、制休夏之時、雲集衆僧、登臨寶殿、諷演秘彰、開解其制。自今已後、破四重踏十惡、恣任自珍、起三毒犯七遮、隨從他說、若見若聞若疑、一一須悔、或身或口或意、重重當懺、根塵纏縛、聲色愆連、積如罪累、特開懺摩之門、灌滌自他之罪。懺則懺於已往、悔則悔其將來。故云、已作之罪、願乞消滅、未作之罪、不感更作。古今皆制、自恣懺悔。)

Then a group of 2 or 3 monks come in front of the superior monk, having paid respect to him once and knelt down, one monk on behalf of the group says the following passage one up to three times, each time paying respect once:

“Reverend Sir, be one-mindedly and listen to me. Today the assembly perform the Invitation. So do I, bhikkhu so-and-so. If there are offences which are seen, heard and suspected; would you, Reverend Sir, tell me out of compassion, and having seen, heard and suspected that they are offences I will make confession correctly, in accordance with the

rules.”

(大德一心念、衆僧今日自恣、我比丘...亦自恣。若見聞疑罪、大德哀愍故語我、若見聞疑罪、當如法懺悔。)

Then after all members of the assembly have finished the Invitation, they go on reciting the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒) and the *gāthā* of confession as follows:

“I now confess all evil acts which were formerly made by my body, language and mind all because of the without-beginning greed, hatred and illusion. I pay homage to the Confession -Requesting Bodhisatta.”

(我昔所造諸惡業、皆由無始貪瞋礙、從身語意之所生、一切我今皆懺悔。南無求懺悔菩薩。)⁽⁶⁵⁾

Thus is ended the ceremony of Invitation with the great bell and big drum being struck three times. After that, monks gather to pay respect to all superior monks to express their special thanks to the latter for their kind-hearted and precious supervision and teachings during three months of summer retreat.

III. Remarks

The passage of Invitation as recorded in the Mahāvagga is something different with the above-referred one:

Samghaṃ āvuso pavāremi diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisañkāya vā, vadantu maṃ āyasmanto anukampaṃ upādāya, passanto paṭikarissāmi.⁽⁶⁶⁾

“Your reverences, I invite the Order, in respect of what has been seen, heard or suspected. Let the venerable ones speak to me out of compassion and seeing, I will make amends.”

Normally while performing the *Invitation*, each person always faces to the superior monk to confess in turn; but because of the great number of monks, in reality they are divided into groups of 2 or 3 to perform the confession.

If there is a monk who is ill, he should convey his *Invitation* to some other monks to invite on his behalf. If he does thus, he gains entire purity. But if the consent is not conveyed to another or to the saṅgha by the conveying monk, although gaining entire purity, he (the conveying monk) commits an offence of wrong-doing.⁽⁶⁷⁾

Therefore, one of duties of monks is to attend the Invitation ceremony after the three months of summer retreat and to convey the consent of ill monk, if so having.

In Vietnam, after the *Invitation*, there always are big offering rites performed by the Buddhist followers at temples. It is believed that after a long time of diligent mind-cultivation of monks, then this time is the best time to offer supplements to the latter to collect merit.

According to the tradition as seen in Hue City, monks and nuns often celebrate the Invitation ceremony on the lunar July 14th, but the cases of Hochiminh City and Southern Vietnam are different. Monks and nuns there always do that mostly before this day with a solemn and significant called “*Tạ Pháp*” (謝法), which means “*Dhamma Thanks*.”

F. Daily life of monks

When referring to daily life of monks, it is necessary to see that it is the daily life of all *pabbajitas* (出家者, *forth-goers*) living in the temple, viz. the *điêus*, *sāmaṇeras* and *bhikkhus*. In general, all members direct their efforts to one common goal, that is to say, enlightenment. However, because the period of practice and training of each person is different, viz. longer or shorter, the rank, assigned duty as well as responsibilities of each person are not the same. Based on this meaning, the daily life of each kind of *pabbajita* is different. Moreover, in Vietnam as well as the other Buddhist countries, there are two kinds of temples, viz. temples in the cities and temples in the rural areas. In spite of the difference of environment, daily schedule is the same in general. Then, I think that we should look at the daily shedule in the temple.

I. Daily schedules

In present, the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, there consists of 3 main sects, viz. Mahāyāna, Therāvāda and Khất Sĩ (Mendicant). Because each sect possesses its own special way of training and practice as well as particular activities; the daily life of monks and nuns of each sect is different.

Here I would like to introduce mainly the schedules applied in common Mahāyāna monk temples in Hue area and Ch'an monasteries in Southern Vietnam. The schedules of the Theravāda temples, Khất Sĩ temples, Mahāyāna and Chán nunneries will be referred directly in chapters related to them.

1. Schedule in Mahāyāna monk temples in Hue area

At present, most of Vietnamese monks and nuns belong to the Lin-Chi Sect (臨濟宗), but looking at their daily practice, we can see that their practice does not tend purely to Ch'an, but is combined harmoniously Tantrism and Pure Land. To understand the matter, I would like to introduce a representative daily schedule applied at the famous Báo Quốc temple (報國寺)⁽⁶⁸⁾ of Hue city, where is now located a Buddhist school and where many *Upasampadā* (受具戒, *higher ordination*) ceremonies have been held.

- 3: 00: waking up, striking great bell.
- 3: 30: early morning session (reciting sūtras)
- 5: 00: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 6: 30 ~ 10: 00: labouring or studying at school
- 10: 30: noon offering rite
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 11: 30 ~ 13: 00: taking rest
- 13: 30 ~ 16: 00: self-study of sūtra or going to school

- 16: 30: afternoon session (reciting sūtras)
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 18: 30 ~ 20: 30: doing homeworks and reviewing lessons
- 21: 00: sleeping⁽⁶⁹⁾

Through this schedule, we can see that nowadays most of temples pay special attention to the study of their monks. To train well-learned and moral monks is the purpose of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. Formerly, monks must spend much time for doing farming for self-sufficiency, but today things have changed.

The afternoon session of sūtra recitation is a main duty of monks in the temple. In the city, instead of being held at 16: 30 in rural temples, it is often held at about 19: 00 in city temples. The reason is that at that time the followers are free from work, so they can have time to take part in the rite.

If there are many monks living in the temple, then they will be divided into small groups and take turns to participate in reciting sessions.

Nowadays, in common days most Mahāyāna temples pay little attention to the practice of sitting meditation. One can himself practice at his will, but the regulated time for meditation practice is not seen in their daily schedule. The tendency to popularize the way of practice of Pure Land seems superior than that.

2. Schedule in Chán monastery in Southern Vietnam

Recently in decades of 90 up to now, the current of practicing purely *Ch'an* (*ghāna*, 禪, or *Zen* in Japanese or *Thiền* in Vietnamese) has been developing greatly and flourishingly in Vietnam, whose famous leader is Most Ven. Thích Thanh Từ. He founded many Ch'an monasteries as Chơn Không (真空), Thường Chiếu (常照), Trúc Lâm (竹林) and Ch'an nunneries as Viên Chiếu (圓照), Linh Chiếu (靈照), Huệ Chiếu (慧照), etc. Among these, located at Long Thành Prefecture, South Vietnam, the only main region of having many monasteries and nunneries in Vietnam, Thường Chiếu Ch'an monastery is considered as the latest and most famous where 120 monks and 20 practitioners are residing. Here I would like to introduce the

daily schedule of this monastery.⁽⁷⁰⁾

- 3: 00: waking up, sitting in meditation
- 5: 00: doing assigned works
- 5: 45: having breakfast
- 6: 30 ~ 10: 00: labouring
- 10: 45: having lunch
- 11: 30 ~ 13: 00: taking rest
- 13: 30 ~ 16: 00: studying sūtra
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 18: 30: night confession rite
- 19: 30 ~ 20: 30: sitting walking in meditation (*caṅkamati*)
- 21: 00: sleeping

Based on the spirit of *chán-jiāo-tóng-hàng* (禪教同行), that is to say, harmonizing the practice of meditation, the study of sūtras, the observance of vinaya and labouring, through the above schedule, we can see that the spirit is the same with the famous insistence of the Chinese Ch'an Master named *Bǎi-zhàng-buái-hǎi* (百丈懷海, 749-814), viz. *one day without labouring, one day without eating* (一日不作、一日不食). However, labouring in the morning is not main duty of monks, but they have time to study in the afternoon. Then meditation practice is performed in the early morning and at night before sleeping. Thus there are 3 main duties for monks in Ch'an monasteries, viz. practicing meditation, labouring and studying.

3. Remarks

There are some outstanding characteristics I would like to refer here while comparing with the schedules applied in other Mahāyāna temples:

- a. The main sūtra utilised for recitation in all Ch'an monasteries and nunneries

is the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*) only. Naturally, this sūtra is also always recited in all sessions and important rites in typical Mahāyāna Buddhist temples, but only three times. In Ch'an monasteries and nunneries, it is recited much more than that.

b. In other Mahāyāna temples, a night recital rite is often performed and especially the nights before the *Uposatha* (布薩, *precept recital*) days, a special confession rite is held. However, a confession rite is held frequently in Ch'an monasteries and nunneries every night.

c. In special confession rite of the former, monks chant the auspicious names of the Buddhas and pay worship to them with each name. The case of the latter is quite different. They recite the *Phổ Thuyết Sắc Thân* (普說色身, *Telling All-Embracingly About Rūpakāya*),⁽⁷¹⁾ written by King Thánh Tông (聖宗, 1218-1277) of the Lý Dynasty (李朝, 1010-1225), then the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*) once and then pay worship with ten auspicious names of Buddhas. As for these names, I will refer to in the next Chapter II: *Nuns—Life and Activities*.

II. Daily life of *điêu*

The period of practicing as a *điêu* is considered as the first stage of trial including a lot of difficulties and hardship. The *điêu* requires patience and resistance and a strong bodhi-mind of going forth to be able to get used to daily life in temple. He ought to follow the rules and regulations of the temple and obey the abbot as well as other elder monks. In Vietnam, there is a rule that in spite of any age, he is junior to those who are younger than him. The Vietnamese proverb, *lính buổi mai cai lính buổi hôm*, which means *the newcomer in the morning supervises the newcomer in the evening*, has the same meaning. Because it is believed that when one went forth to homeless, he was reborn; then his age will be recalculated again. That is the reason why the above conception came into existence.

Different with his daily life at home, he can do everything as he likes. In the temple, he must get up early in the morning at 3: 00 or 3: 30 and go to bed late in

the evening. Further, he must fulfill all assigned jobs, and the rest time for learning by heart all instructed scriptures and sūtras. It is believed that the *điêu*, who has no merit, should train and practice in a strict and hard way, reciting the sūtras, serving the abbot, working, etc. so that he can gain merit (*puñña*, 功德) to receive holy precepts. In other words, in order to be ordained with holy precepts the *điêu* must purify himself by accumulating merit. Then the first stage of practice is the purification of his mind and body. He should always be showing his persistent and permanent strenuousness (*nikkama*, 精勤). Different with the *điêu*s of the temples in cities who have much time to study, the *điêu*s of the temples in rural areas must spend more time for doing farming.

Formerly the *điêu*s, *sāmaṇeras* as well as *bhikkhus* were trained and educated in the temple. Then most of them had no certification of secular education. No attention was paid to this field, but to the field of mind practice only. Especially the temples in rural areas were like this. However, nowadays many basic Buddhist schools have been established all over Vietnam where Buddhist and non-Buddhist subjects are being taught, and even there are programmes of secular education for monks and nuns. Therefore, this is a good opportunity for the *điêu* to advance his knowledge and understandings in Buddhist as well as further secular studies. As for the *điêu*s living in remote rural areas, their master sends them to city temples so that they can attend courses at schools.

The *điêu*s are allowed to go to school in days regulated in the timetable, but are prohibited to go out to another places, even to visit his own family. Of course, exceptions for important reasons such as to participate in his own father or mother's funeral, to visit them while they are in gravely ill, etc. Before going out, he must ask the permission of the abbot or the supervisor.

After being ordained as a *sāmaṇera*, he must continue his second step of practice which is much more severe.

III. Daily life of *sāmaṇera*

As a *sāmaṇera* who prepares to enter into the bhikkhuship, he should practice

and train himself much more strictly than a *điêu*. The *I-shan-ching-tse* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advices of Ch'an Master Wéi-shān*), the *Sha-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Mode of Movements of Sāmaṇera*), the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) are main scriptures for him to learn by heart and practice during the probationary period as a *sāmaṇera*. Right at the beginning of the *Sha-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Mode of Movements of Sāmaṇera*), the Chinese *samaṇa* *Zhū-bóng* (株宏) of the *Yún-qī* temple (雲棲寺), the book's author, gives out the meaning of the word *sāmaṇera* as following:

"Shā-mí, srāmaṇera in Sanskrit, is translated here as xi-cí, which means stopping doing evil deeds and practicing compassion, stopping contamination from worldly life and ferrying the living beings with compassion."

(梵語沙彌、此云息慈、謂息惡行慈、息世染而慈濟衆生也)⁽⁷²⁾

Thus, in order to fulfill the mission of a *sāmaṇera* on the basis of the meaning, he must follow correctly the Ten Precepts and equip himself with modes of moral conduct (*iriyāpatha*, 威儀路) such as walking, standing, sitting, lying, speaking, etc.

These precepts are considered as the threshold to advance higher stage of *bhikkhu*. Apart from these, the *sāmaṇera* should train himself in small detailed behaviours and movements in his daily life with his loving-kindness always stretching to the living beings. For example, when getting up, he should contemplate:

"Having begun getting up from sleep, I vow to pray for all sentient beings to attain all enlightened wisdom and see thoroughly the ten directions."

(睡眠始寤、當願衆生、一切智覺、周顧十方)⁽⁷³⁾

Or when washing his face:

"While taking water to wash face, I vow to pray for all sentient beings to attain purified

dhamma without the taint of worldly things (illusion) forever.”

(以水洗面、當願衆生、得淨法門、永無垢染。唵嚩莎訶)⁽⁷⁴⁾

Or even when going to the toilet:

“While being in the toilet, I vow to pray for all sentient beings to give up greed, hatred and illusion and get rid of offences (āpatti).”

(大小便時、當願衆生、棄貪嗔癡、蠲除罪法。唵狠魯陀耶莎訶)⁽⁷⁵⁾

Through the constant self-control and self-awakening with a compassionate mind dedicated to all living beings, he can gradually be tamed in the discipline. Thus in this way, he can develop concentration and wisdom.

Apart from the above daily schedule in common temples, every month there are important rites which all members of the temple, especially the *sāmaṇera* and the *điêu* must participate. They are:

1. Twice Revealing (*āvīkaroti*, 發露) rites which are performed the night before confession night and aim at giving an opportunity to those who may have committed an offense to be able to reveal it to pure elder monks in the temple, and then on this occasion reviewing all deeds of every person during the past half a month.

2. Twice Confession (*paṭikara*, 懺悔) rites whose purpose is to confess offences of the past and present if having so that one can gain entire purity.

4. Twice Reciting precepts of *sāmaṇera* on the night before the *Uposatha* day. This is also a difference with the way of performing of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists, who holds it the same day as with the *Uposatha*.

4. Twice Rites of Invocation and Praise (祝讚) which are held on the eve of the *Uposatha* day. Its aim is at paying memory and worship to the *Four Graces* (四恩), viz. the graces of the nation, the parents, the masters and donors (*dānapati*, 檀越).

All these rites are seen popular in Hue city. The *sāmaṇera* should be present at these rites. Today, beside going to school, most of *sāmaṇeras* must go for doing

Buddhist services for layties such as reciting sūtras at funeral ritual, etc. They are also very busy the same as with monks.

IV. Daily life of *bhikkhu*

The more precepts which the *bhikkhu* follows, the heavier his duty is. As a *Tathāgata* messenger (如來使者), a member of the saṅgha and a spiritual leader of Buddhist followers, the *bhikkhu* ought to train himself strictly in discipline, concentration and wisdom.

In order to follow strictly and correctly the ordained precepts, the *bhikkhu* must study by attending Buddhist courses opened by the Buddhist Basic School or Buddhist Institute. Today, most of Vietnamese monks are having the tendency of studying Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings. As a matter of fact in Hue city, a Buddhist Basic School and a Buddhist Institute were opened recently for monks and nuns. The *bhikkhu* must equip himself knowledge and understanding of all fields of Buddhist doctrines and science so that on the one hand he can follow the Buddha's teachings correctly, and give satisfactory answers to the others' questions about Buddhism on the other hand. Then by that way he can lead others to right behaviour and living. The Chinese Ch'an Master *Wéi-shān* gave us pressingly awaking words in his *I-shan-ching-tsê* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advices of Ch'an Master Wéi-shān*):

"If a juniors inquire for something, (the monk gives) no words to guide them. And if he may have discussed something, nothing related to the teachings in scriptures. Then when being despised, he blames the junior to be impolite."

(後學咨詢、無言接引。縱有談說、不涉典章。或被輕言、便責後生無禮)⁽⁷⁶⁾

Thus the *bhikkhu* should try his best to be spiritual refuge and worthy example for everyone to look at. If he cannot do that he *spent uselessly the offerings of the donors and is really ungrateful to the Four Graces.*⁽⁷⁷⁾

His modes of moral movements (*iriyāpatha*) give deep influence to his juniors

while living together in the same temple. So he should pay careful attention to from his words to working.

Beside studying, the *bhikkhu* must spare time for doing some Buddhist services such as reciting sūtras at funerals or ceremonies praying for safety and comfort for the living, giving Dhamma talks, taking part in social charity activities, etc. They are necessary deeds to bring happiness and calm to the others.

G. The way of naming as seen in monk temples of Hue City

It is necessary, I think, to make a digression to explain about the way of naming as utilised popularly among the Buddhists in Hue area. There are two ways of giving names, i.e. giving the dhamma names (法名) for the Buddhist layfollowers and giving the dhamma titles (法號) for newly-ordained *sāmaṇeras*.

I. Giving the dhamma names (法名)

Most temples in Hue City belong to the Lin-chi Sect (臨濟派) whose Vietnamese founder of this region was Ch'an Master *Liêu Quân* (了觀禪師, ?-1743). He was the 35th generation of the Lin-chi Sect which expanded its propagation not only in Hue area but also in Southern Vietnam as well. therefore a lineage under his name called *Liêu Quân Lineage* (了觀門派) has been established with a great number of his heirs, both monks and nuns and the laity. He left a successive *gāthā* as follows:

*"The great path is real,
The ocean of the bhūtatathatā⁽⁷⁸⁾ is pure and clear,
The origin of mind is wide and fertilized,
The root of virtue and the compassionate wind,
The virtue, concentration, blessedness and wisdom,
The substance and function are universally penetrating,
Which eternally surpasses the fruit of wisdom,*

*Secretely agreeing with its success,
Transmitting and holding the wonderful principles,
To expound and make clear the right teachings,
The deed and understanding are corresponding together,
Then the true emptiness is attained and enlightened.”*

(實際大道、性海清澄、心源廣潤、德本慈風、戒定福慧、體用圓通、永超智果、密契成功、傳持妙理、演暢正宗、行解相應、達悟真空。)⁽⁷⁹⁾

This *gāthā* is transliterated into Vietnamese as following:

“Thật tế đại đạo
Tánh hải thanh trừng
Tâm nguyên quảng nhuận
Đức bản tử phong
Giới định phước huệ
Thể dụng viên thông
Vĩnh siêu trí quả
Mật kế thành công
Truyền trì diệu lý
Diễn sống chánh tông
Hạnh giải tương ứng
Đạt ngộ chơn không.”

Then based on this Vietnamese pronunciation of every Chinese letter in the *gāthā*, the master will give the dhamma names (法名) to his layfollowers. He takes any next word in the *gāthā* which his dhamma name (法名) is followed. The another word is put next to that word. Normally the former is selected and thought over with the sounding and wonderful meaning. This word is mainly based on the meaning of the worldly name (俗名) of the disciple.

Here I give out the example of my late well-known master, Most Venerable Thích Mật Hiển (釋密顯), whose dhamma name is Tâm Hương (心香), was formerly

the abbot of the Trúc Lâm Temple (竹林寺) in Hue City. If Ch'an Master *Liêu Quán* (了觀禪師) is considered as the 35th generation of the Lin-chi Sect in Vietnam with the first word Thiệt (實) of the above *gāthā*, my late master will belong to the 43th generation of the Lineage with his dhamma name which begins with the word Tâm (心). Then he will give the dhamma name to his disciples beginning with the word next to the word Tâm (心), which is Nguyên (源).

For instance, if the worldly name of the disciple is Thanh (清) which means *pure* or *clear* in English, then the words which are always seen to subjoin with Thanh (清) are possible Tịnh (淨, *pure*), Lương (涼, *cool*) or Nhàn (閑 or 閒, *secluded*), etc. Thus the disciple will be given the dhamma name as either Nguyên Tịnh (源) or Nguyên Lương (源) or Nguyên Nhàn (源), etc.

II. Giving the dhamma titles (法號)

This case is a bit different with the above case. Normally the master thinks over a meaningful verse in Chinese, then gives the dhamma titles (法號) to his disciples of every generation with every word of his verse.

For example, my late master, Most Venerable Thích Mật Hiển (釋密顯), has made a verse with four words as “Lưu Tín Thanh Tâm” (流信清心), which means *flowing the faith and purifying one's mind*. Those who had the dhamma titles which begin with the word Lưu (流) are considered as his disciple of first rank. And I belong to the last rank with my dhamma title as Tâm Thuận (心順) and my dhamma name as Nguyên Tâm (源心) given by him. Thus I can understand that I belong to the 44th generation of the Lin-chi Sect in Vietnam. Afterwards, if I receive students, the word which I will give them must be the word next to the word Nguyên (源) in the above *gāthā*, Quảng (廣).

Therefore, when hearing someone's dhamma name, we can recognize that he belongs to what generation of the Lin-chi Sect as seen in Hue area. And if his dhamma title is known, his master can be understood.

Moreover, apart from the above two names, there are some names taboos as regulated present day among the Vietnamese Buddhists in general and in Hue

City in particular.

For example, a superior monk who was nominated as Venerable (上座) or Most Venerable (和尚) and especially the abbot of the temple, the the name taboo is applied in manifestation of the respect to him. The Buddhists will call him the temple name instead of his dhamma title. At this time, his dhamma name and dhamma title are almost forgotten. These two names are only repeated in his funeral. Therefore, during his lifetime my master was always called Hòa Thượng Trúc Lâm (Most Venerable Trúc Lâm).

H. Nomination of Most Venerables and Venerables regulated by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha

Based on the Article No. 37 and No. 38⁽⁸⁰⁾ of the Charter of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the regulations concerning the nomination of Venerable (上座) and Most Venerable (和尚) are recorded as follows:

Article No. 37: “*The Venerables, who are 60 years of age and 40 years of standing (vassa, 夏臘) upwards, have moral conduct and merit with the Buddhism and the nation, are nominated as Most Venerables. They are proposed by the Administrative Committee to check and then to be sent to the Permanent Committee of Justification for ratification. The nomination must be passed by the Central Congress or performed by a Nationwide Buddhist Conference along with a resolution and an instruction issued by the His Holiness Dhamma Lord (法主).*”

Article No. 38: “*The monks who are 46 years of age and 25 years of standing (vassa, 夏臘) upwards, have moral conduct and merit with the Buddhism and the nation, are nominated as Venerables. They are proposed by the Administrative Committee to check and then to be sent to the Permanent Committee of Justification for ratification. The nomination must be passed by the Central Congress or performed by a Nationwide Buddhist Conference along with a resolution and an instruction issued by the His Holiness Dhamma Lord (法主).*”

As for nuns, the regulations are the same, but the ways of calling are different. the Article No. 39⁽⁸¹⁾ reads as follows:

“The religious ranks for nuns are Nun Head (尼長) and Nun Master (尼師). The criteria and conditions to nominate religious ranks for nuns are the same as with those of monks as recorded in the Articles No. 37 and No. 38.”

I. Summary

In spite of many activities, the main and vital deed of the monk is to follow ordained precepts and practice the Buddha’s teachings as correctly as possible. Then thanks to that, he himself can attain calm and insight and then at the same time give safe spiritual refuge to the others. Beside self-practice, he must guide practice to the others by the means of doing Buddhist services.

Through such a period of training of a monk as seen in Vietnam, we can see that, for example, a person who began going forth at the age of 15, he must take 2 or 3 years of practice in the temple; then after having sent to a Basic Buddhist school, he takes more 4 to 6 years more to finish; and then he continues attending the course of 4 years at a Buddhist Institute. Thus the period of training a monk from the starting point of going forth up to graduating from the Buddhist Institute, naturally at that time he was already ordained as a *bhikkhu*, takes him from 15 to 18 years.⁽⁸²⁾

Today all over Vietnam, one can see there are many centers of social charity located right in the temples and run by monks and nuns. They are places where examine and deliver medicines without expenses like the Tuệ Tĩnh⁽⁸³⁾ Halls (慧靜堂) as seen everywhere in Vietnam, or where nourishes and educates orphans like the Đức Sơn Orphanage (德山孤兒院) run by nuns in Hue City, or which welcome disabled and homeless childrens like the Linh Quang temple (靈光淨舍) in Hochiminh City, etc.

The birth of many Buddhist schools and institutes as seen throughout the

regions of Vietnam provides good opportunity for monks and nuns to advance further their Buddhist knowledge and understandings. Some also attend the courses of public education at public universities. This is a good chance to have well-learned monks to serve Buddhism. But on the other facet, that is also a danger for those who do not know how to practice self-control with worldly lures such as money, fame and social standing. They come to close to the worldly life, neglect mind-practice and discipline, and grow intimate with the life of the laity. That is a truth which can also be seen in Sri Lanka, country of Theravāda Buddhism, through the report of Prof. K. N. O. Dharmadāsa.⁽⁸⁴⁾

No matter what has happened, nowadays, the tendency of studying Buddhist are increasing more and more in the strata of Vietnamese monks and nuns as well as Buddhist layfollowers. In order to meet the need of this situation, three *Vietnam Institutes of Buddhist Studies* (越南佛教學院)⁽⁸⁵⁾ were established in three regions of Vietnam, Hanoi City in the North, Hue City in the Middle and Hochiminh City in the South.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Naturally those who wish to attend the Institute's courses of study must pass the exam held once four years. The rest who have unfortunately failed the exam manage to attend the other Buddhist courses of the Buddhist School of Specialized Studies and Higher School of Buddhist Studies.⁽⁸⁷⁾

And those who have graduated from these Buddhist Institutes take chance to go abroad in Buddhist countries such as Japan, India, Sri Lanka, China, etc. to attend further advanced courses of Master of Art or Doctor of Philosophy, etc.⁽⁸⁸⁾

Notes:

1. The *Three Realms* (*ti-dhātu*, 三界), also called *Three Existences* (*ti-bhava*, 三有), consist of *kāma*-world connoting existence in purgatory, or as animal, or as *peta*, or as man, or as *deva* in the nearer worlds akin to earth; *rūpa*-world connoting existence in the further Brahma-, and super Brahma-world; and *ārūpa*-world referring to worlds of abstract conceptions, never in any degree concretely apprehended (Mrs. Rhys Davids: *The Book of Kindred Sayings*. Vol. II, PTS p. 3).
2. See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*. pp. 166, 167.
3. The poem in Chinese is:
一人作福千人享、獨樹開花萬樹香
4. The ceremonial days of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas are:
5. The uposatha days are often performed in lunar days of full moon and first lunar days of every month.
6. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giãi* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*). Trans. by Trí Quang. Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1996, pp. 151, 351, 352.
7. See Egaku Mayeda: *Gendai srilanka no jozabukkuyo* (現代スリランカの上座仏教, *Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka*). Sankibo-Busshorin Publishing Co. Ltd., Tokyo Japan, 1986, p. 177.
8. Mahāvagga I, PTS, 76, 1.
9. Beside the above-mentioned cases, some other ones who should not be let go forth are as followings:
 - a thief who wears an emblem (*dhajabaddha cora*).
 - a thief who has broken out of jail (*kārabbedaka cora*).
 - a thief who has been written about (*likhitaka cora*).
 - one who has been scourged as punishment (*kasāhata katadaṇḍakamma*).
 - an individual who is under twenty years of age (*ūnavīsativassa puggala*).
 - a boy of less than fifteen years of age (*ūnapannarasavassa dāraka*).
 - an eunuch (*paṇḍaka*).
 - one who has gone to another sect (*titthiyapakkantaka*).

- a seducer of a nun (*bbikkhunīdūsaka*).
- one who has no preceptor (*anupajjhāyaka*).
- one who has no bowl (*apattaka*).
- one who has no robe (*acīvaraka*).
- one who has had a part of his body such as hands (*hattha*), feet (*pāda*), ears (*kaṇṇa*), ect. cut off.
- one who is blind and deaf and dumb (*andhamūgabadhira*).
- a hunchback (*khujja*).
- a dwarf (*vāmana*).
- one who had been branded (*lakkhaṇābata*).
- one who had elephantiasis (*sīpadin*).
- one who was badly ill (*pāparogin*).
- one who disgraced an assembly (*parisadūsaka*).
- one who was purblind (*kāṇa*).
- one with a crooked limb (*kuṇi*).
- one who was lame (*khañja*).
- one paralysed down one side (*pakkhabata*).
- a cripple (*chinniriyāpatha*).

(Mahāvagga I, PTS, 39—79).

10. *Na bhikkhave ūnadasavaggena gaṇena upasampādetabbo. Yo upasampā-deyya, āpatti dukkaṭassa. Anujānāmi bhikkhave dasavaggena vā atireka-dasavaggena vā gaṇena upasampādetun ti.*
11. Mahāvagga I, PTS, 25, 1~6. Also see Egaku Mayeda: *Gendai srilanka no jozabukkyo* (現代スリランカの上座仏教, *Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka*), pp. 177, 178.
12. The fourth *pārājika* is also called *uttarimanussadhammalāpa* (p.) and *uttaramanusyadharmapralāpa* (s.), which means *chaffing as frivolous talk that gets beyond the power of men* (妄說得上人法).
13. See *Giới Đàn Tăng* (戒壇僧, *Monk Ordination*), trans. by Thích Thiện Hoa, published by the Sen Vàng Publishing House, 4th edition, 1975, p. 85.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
15. The Chinese verse, which is adapted from the *Quy Sơn Cảnh Sách* (滙山警策,

- Awaking Advices of Ch'an Master Wéi-shān*), is 紹隆聖種、宸憚魔軍.
 (See Thích Hoàn Quan: *Phật Tổ Ngũ Kinh* [佛祖五經, *Five Scriptures of the Buddha and Patriarchs*]. Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh [Hochiminh City Publishing House], 1998, p. 488)
16. See Egaku Mayeda: *Gendai srilanka no jozabukkyo* (現代スリランカの上座仏教, *Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka*), p. 178. Also in the Mahāvagga V, 13, 11, the Buddha also allows monks to be ordained by a group of 5 experts on discipline in remote or border districts. (*anujānāmi bhikkhave sabbapaccantimesu janapadesu vinayadharapañcamena gaṇena upasampadam*).
17. Following lunar anniversaries of Buddhas and Bodhisattas popularly applied in Vietnam as seen in Buddhist books and calendars are:
- a. January 1st: *Maitreya Buddha*,
 - b. February 8th: *Sakyamuni Buddha's* renunciation,
 - c. February 15th: *Sakyamuni Buddha's* entering Nirvāṇa,
 - d. February 19th: *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva's* birthday,
 - e. February 21st: *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*,
 - f. March 16th: *Cundī Bodhisattva*,
 - g. April 14th: *Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva*,
 - h. April 15th: *Sakyamuni Buddha's* birthday,
 - i. June 19th: *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva's* enlightenment,
 - j. July 13rd: *Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva*,
 - k. July 30th: *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*,
 - l. September 19th: *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva's* renunciation,
 - m. September 29th: *Bhaiṣajyaguru Buddha*,
 - n. November 17th: *Amitābha Buddha*,
 - o. December 8th: *Sakyamuni Buddha's* enlightenment.
18. See T. W. Rhys Davids & William Stede: *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*. PTS, London, 1986, pp. 150, 151.
19. Mahāvagga II, PTS, 1, 2, 3.
20. About the practice of Buddhist laymen in the Uposatha days, I would like to discuss it in the Chapter 6: *The Gia Dinh Phat Tu and Some Other Organizations of*

Buddhist Layfollowers in Vietnam Buddhism.

21. See Ñāṇamoli Thera: *The Pāṭimokkha*. The Social Science Association Press of Thailand, Bangkok, 1966, p. 7. Also see Akira Hirakawa: *Nibyaku gojukai no kenkyu* (*Study on 250 Precepts*). Shunshusha, 1993, p. 74. (平川彰、『二百五十戒の研究』、春秋社).
22. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma Bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, p. 170.
23. Mahāvagga II, 26, 9.
24. The title *kammadāna* (羯磨陀那 or 維那), *karmadāna* in Sansrit, was established in the time of the Buddha to manage and take care of all things in the Order. He also talks dhamma to the Order and make them joyful, then he is also called *yuè-zhòng* (悦衆) or *zhī-shì* (知事). Formerly, in old days in China, the post *kammadāna* of playing role as monk official was established, and among the posts of monk officials, there also appeared the title *yuè-zhòng* (悦衆). (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*]. Daishukan shoten. Japan, 1985, p. 51. 駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店)
However, in Vietnam, the title of *kammadāna* (維那) and *Yuè-zhòng* (悦衆) are utilised with different meanings especially when reciting the sūtras or performing ceremony. The *kammadāna* (維那) is one who is responsible to strike the bell, standing in the right hand and the *yuè-zhòng* (悦衆) to stike the wooden instrument, standing in the opposite. In the Uposatha ceremony, the former often on behalf of all present monks replies what the reciter asks.
25. Mahāvagga II, 22, 1.
26. Mahāvagga II, 3.
27. See Akira Hirakawa: *Nibyaku gojukai no kenkyu* (*Study on 250 Precepts*). Shunshusha, 1993, p. 74. (平川彰、『二百五十戒の研究』、春秋社).
28. *Pārisuddhīhārako ce bhikkhave dinnāya pārisuddhīyā saṅghapatto sañcicca na āroceti, āhatā hoti pārisuddhī, pārisuddhīhārakassa āpatti dukkaṭassā 'ti.* (Mahāvagga II, 22, 4).
29. The number of insence sticks is always three which symbolize the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha.
30. In case of the *Uposatha*, three times of worship are:
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the permanently existing Buddhas, Dhammas and*

Saṅghas in the Ten Directions (一心頂禮十方常住三寶).

- *We one-mindedly pay worship to Venerable Upāli, who held sangīti of the vinaya-piṭaka* (一心頂禮結集論藏優波離尊者).

- *We one-mindedly pay worship to Dhamma-guardians and bodhisattas* (一心頂禮護法諸尊菩薩摩訶薩).

31. There are many Chinese stotras or hymn (讚) used in Vietnam Buddhist ceremonies and rituals, among which the following stotra, often called *Incense Stotra* or *xiāng-zèn* (香讚), is popular:

The burner of incense has just been burnt,

Through the dhamma-dhātu is smelt its sweet odour,

By the odour the countless Buddhas come to realize from afar,

Regarding to each place, they gather in auspicious clouds,

With all our sincere mind

The Buddhas appear fully with their bodies.

We pay homage to the Bodhisatta of Fragrant-Cloud Canopy.

(爐香乍熱、法界蒙熏、諸佛海會悉遙聞、隨處結祥雲、誠意方殷、諸佛現全身。南無香雲蓋菩薩).

32. The *Opening Gāthā* (開經偈) is:

Oh, the unsurpassed, profound and mysterious dhamma,

Which it is difficult to meet [through] a hundred, a thousand, ten thousands and hundred millions of kalpas,

Now we get to see, hear and be able to maintain it,

[We] vow to master the Buddha's true meaning.

(無上甚深微妙法、百千萬億劫難遇、我今見聞得受持、願解如來真實義).

33. See Akira Hirakawa: *Nihyaku gojukai no kenkyu* (*Study on 250 Precepts*). Shunshusha, 1993, p. 74. (平川彰、『二百五十戒の研究』、春秋社).

34. This Chinese passage has the same content with the one recorded in the Pāli scripture, the Mahāvagga II, 3, 3.

35. See Mitsuo Sato: *Ritsuzo* (*Vinaya-piṭaka*). Daizo shuppan Kabushiki Gaisha, 1972, pp. 79, 80. (佐藤密雄、『律藏』、大藏出版株式会社).

36. The *Merit Transferring Gāthā* is as following:

We vow to take this merit,

To transfer to all

Both us and the living beings

Altogether to attain enlightenment.

(願以此功德、普及於一切、我等與衆生、皆共成佛道)。

37. Mahāvagga II, 3, 2.

38. There are 5 ways of reciting the *Pātimokkha*:

a. Having recited the provenance (*nidāna*), the rest may be announced as though it had been already heard. This is the first way.

b. Having recited the provenance (*nidāna*), having recited the four offences involving defeat, the rest may be announced as though it had been already heard. This is the second way.

c. Having recited the provenance (*nidāna*), having recited the four offences involving defeat, having recited the thirteen offences entailing a Formal meeting of the Order, the rest may be announced as though it had been already heard. This is the third way.

d. Having recited the provenance (*nidāna*), having recited the four offences involving defeat, having recited the thirteen offences entailing a Formal meeting of the Order, having recited the two undetermined offences, the rest may be announced as though it had been already heard. This is the fourth way.

e. Recital in full is the fifth way. (Mahāvagga II, 15, 1.)

39. See Mitsuo Sato: *Ritsuzo (Vinaya-piṭaka)*. Daizo shuppan kabushiki gaisha, 1972, p. 76. (佐藤密雄、『律藏』、大藏出版株式会社)。

40. See Thích Hoàn Quan: *Phật Tổ Ngũ Kinh* (佛祖五經, *Five Scriptures of the Buddha and Patriarchs*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1998, p. 326.

41. See Mitsuo Sato: *Ritsuzo (Vinaya-piṭaka)*. Daizo shuppan Kabushiki Gaisha, 1972, p. 76. (佐藤密雄、『律藏』、大藏出版株式会社)。

42. *Na bhikkhave vassaṃ upagantvā purinaṃ vā temāsaṃ pacchimaṃ vātemāsaṃ avasitvā cārikā pakkamitabhā. yo pakkameyya, āpatti dukkaṭassā.* (Mahāvagga III, 3, 2.)

43. See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten (Great Dictionary of Zen Studies)*.

- Daishukan shoten. Japan, 1985, p. 12. (駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店)
44. See *Nghi Lễ* (Rituals, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, p. 4.
45. Based on my field-work in Hochiminh city on June 8th, 1997.
46. See *Giới Đàn Tăng* (戒壇僧, *Monk Ordination*), trans. by Thích Thiện Hoa, published by Sen Vàng Publishing House, 4th edition, 1975, pp. 170-172.
47. See *Nghi Lễ* (Rituals, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 22, 23.
48. Ibid., p. 30.
49. See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* (*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*). Daishukan shoten. Japan, 1985, p. 1033. (駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店)
50. See *Nghi Lễ* (Rituals, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, p. 4.
51. The phrase 空劫之前 or 空劫已前 means before the existence of the Heaven and the Earth, an absolute existence before the appearance of relative phenomena like existence-and-non-existence (有無), illusion-and-enlightenment (迷悟), good-and-bad (善惡), sinners-and-saints (凡聖), etc. In Buddhism, the change of the universe is illustrated through 4 periods, viz. forming kalpa (*vivarta kalpa*, 成劫), existence kalpa (*vivarta-siddha kalpa*, 住劫), destruction kalpa (*saṃvarta kalpa*, 壞劫) and empty kalpa (*saṃvarta-siddha kalpa*, 空劫).
The *Bhīṣma-garjita-gboṣa-svara-rāja* (威音王, *King of Awe-Inspiring Voice*) is the name of the Buddha who existed in the past glorious kalpa (*alambhāraka kalpa*, 莊嚴劫) to which thousand Buddhas, one succeeding another, bring their contribution of adornment. He is referred in the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, 法華經).
The phrase 威音那伴 also has the same meaning with the above 空劫已前.
(See *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*]. Daishukan shoten. Japan, 1985, pp. 20, 242. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店])
52. See *Nghi Lễ* (Rituals, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 5, 6.
53. Based on my field-work on July 7th, 1997 in Hochiminh City. The regulation in

Vietnamese is as follows:

Nội Quy Trường Hạ Chùa Hưng Quốc

1. Thực hành sáu phép hòa kính.
2. Mỗi ngày phải giữ đúng công tác, thời khóa hành trì.
3. Không được vắng mặt ngày Bố tát, ngày sám hối, các buổi thuyết giảng sinh hoạt tại trường hạ
4. Giữ đúng giờ thọ trai tại quá đường, không được vắng mặt.
5. Nói năng nhã nhặn đối với mọi người, đúng thời đúng phép.
6. Trong chúng có người bệnh tật hỏi thăm, giúp đỡ lẫn nhau.
7. Khi có việc cần đi ra ngoài giới trường an cư:
 - a. Nếu đi trong ngày phải xin phép vị tôn túc hay ban chức sự.
 - b. Nếu đi trong một ngày một đêm cho đến bảy ngày, phải tác bạch trước đại chúng.
 - c. Nếu dự định đi Phật sự bảy ngày phải tác bạch trước đại chúng vào ngày Bố tát. Không nên quá ba mươi ngày, vì sợ mất phép an cư. Trường hợp Phật sự xong trước thời hạn, nên trở về ngay trú xứ.
 - d. Nếu đi quá một ngày 1 đêm mà không xin phép, hoặc không tác bạch đại chúng, vị đó xem như cố ý phá giới an cư.
8. Nên tôn trọng thời giờ tu tập trong ba tháng an cư. Chỉ tiếp khách tại phòng khách qua đường, không quá 30 phút.
9. Làm tròn công tác trách nhiệm của mình theo bảng phân công.
10. Luôn luôn sách tấn tu tập và học hỏi, nghiên cứu chánh pháp, trau dồi giới định tuệ.
54. *Six Points of Harmony or Unity* (六和) consist of bodily harmony in form of mutual residence (身和同住), oral harmony without argument (口和無諍), mental harmony in mutual joyfulness (意和同悅), moral harmony in observing the precepts (戒和同修), doctrinal harmony in views and explanations (見和同解), economic harmony in community of goods, deeds, studies or charity (利和同均).
55. There are three different explanations of the *Three Virtues or Powers* (三德):
 - a. The *dharmakāya* (法身), the virtue or potency of the Buddha's eternal, spiritual body; *prajñā* (智慧), wisdom or knowing all things in their reality; and *vimukti/vimokṣa* (解脫), freedom from all bonds and the attainment of sovereign liberty.

- b. The potency of his perfect knowledge (智德); the virtue of cutting of all illusion and perfecting of supreme *nirvāṇa* (斷德); and the virtue of his universal grace and salvation (恩德).
- c. The perfection of his causative or karmic works during his three great kalpas of preparation (因圓德); the perfection of the fruit, or results in his own character and wisdom (果圓德); and the perfection of his grace in the salvation of the others (恩圓德).

(See William Edward Soothhill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 64.)

56. The *Six Tastes* or *Flavours* (六味) are bitter, sour, sweet, acrid, salt and insipid.
57. See *Bonjidaikan* (梵字大鑑, *Great Book of Sanskrit Letters*). Edited by the Shuchiin Daigaku Mikkyo Gakkai (種智院大学密教学会編, The Shuchiin University's Learned Society of Tantrism). Published by the Meicho Fukyukai (名著普及会刊行), pp. 761, 762.
58. *Hāritī* (s.), also called 訶梨帝母 in Chinese, is the name of one of the Indian female god, who formerly killed other's children to eat but later converted to Buddhism and became the Buddhist Dhamma Guardian because the reason that the Buddha hid her most beloved son, *Pingala*. (Ibid., pp. 226-233.)
59. See *Nghi Lễ* (*Rituals*, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 8-12.
60. Ibid., p. 8. Also based on my field-work July 7th, 1997 in Hochiminh City.
61. See *Mahāvagga* IV, 2. 2.
62. The *Ten Evil Things* are killing, stealing, adultery, lying, double-tounge, coarse language, filthy language, covetousness, anger and perverted views.
63. The *Three Poisonous Things* are greed, anger and illusion.
64. The *Seven Concealing Offences* (七遮 [罪]) are non-confessing offences of any of the *Seven Grave Sins* (七逆罪) as matricide (*mātu-ghātaka*, 殺母者), a patricide (*pitughātaka*, 殺父者), a murderer of a perfected one (*arahantaghātaka*, 殺阿羅漢者), a schismatic (*saṅgha-bhedaka*, 破和合僧者) and a shedder of (a Truth-finder) blood (*lohi-tuppādaka*, 出 [佛身] 血者), a murderer of a monk, a murderer of a teacher.
65. See *Nghi Lễ* (*Rituals*, 行禮儀式), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968

- (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 12, 13.
66. Mahāvagga IV, 1. 14.
67. Mahāvagga II, 22. 3, 4 and IV, 3, 5.
68. The temple, situated on the Hàm Long Hill, at Báo Quốc Street, Phường Đức Quarter, Hue city, was founded by Chinese Chán Master *Jué-fēng* (覺峰, ?-?) about in 1674. A lord of the Nguyễn Dynasty (阮朝, 1600-1802) named Nguyễn Phúc Khoát (阮福闊, 1714-1765) granted the temple a gilt escutcheon with words “*Royal Recognized Bao quoc Temple*” (勅賜報國寺). There located here a well-known Buddhist Institute where gave birth to a lot of famous monks and nuns.
(See Võ Văn Tường: *Những Ngôi Chùa Nổi Tiếng Việt Nam [Vietnam’s Famous Pagodas]*. Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Thông Tin [Culture-Communication Publishing House], Hanoi, 1994, pp. 321, 322)
69. Based on my field-work on March 2nd, 1999 in Hue City.
70. Based on my field-work on July 12th, 1998 in Southern Vietnam.
71. See Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam (Vietnam’s Chán Masters)*. Thành Hội Phật Giáo Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City), 1995, pp. 226~233.
72. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giới* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*). Trans. by Trí Quang. Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1996, pp. 128, 339.
73. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giới* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*), pp. 60, 304).
74. Ibid., p. 306.
75. Ibid., p. 306.
76. Ibid., p. 326.
77. 徒消十方信施、亦乃孤負四恩。(Ibid., p. 332).
78. The all-containing, immaterial nature of the *dhammakāya* (法身, *dhamma-body*).
79. See Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam (Vietnam’s Chán Masters)*. Thành Hội Phật Giáo Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City), 1995, p. 447.
80. See Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam (Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha): *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội*

Đại Biểu Toàn Quốc Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam lần thứ IV (A Bulletin—4rd Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's Delegations). Ban Văn Hóa Trung Ương (published by the Central Cultural Department), 1999, p. 59.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

83. *Tuệ Tĩnh* (慧靜, 1330-?) was a Vietnamese famous medical master of the Trần Dynasty (陳朝, 1225-1400). His worldly name is Nguyễn Bá Tĩnh and his pseudonym is Tráng Tử Vô Dật (壯子無逸). He was born in the Nghĩa Phú Village, Cẩm Giàng District, Hải Dương Province (present-day Hải Hưng Province, Northern Vietnam). He was sent to an orphanage from the age of six and was taken care by the abbot of the Hải Triều Temple (海潮寺, also called Giám Temple) and then afterwards was sent to the Keo Temple (also called Thần Quang Temple [神光寺] located in Thái Bình Province) for mind-cultivation. In 1351, he passed the exam of Thai Hoc sinh at the age of 31, but he still kept on following his cultivation at the Nghiêm Quang Temple (嚴光寺) located at Cẩm Sơn Village, Cẩm Bình District of the same province. He concentrated his attention on studying medicine and Buddhist doctrines, served and treated the people whole-heartedly by Eastern medicine. He is considered as the pioneering founder of the national medicine studies. In 1384, he was dispatched as a messenger to the Ming Dynasty of China and gained respect of the king for his talent with medicine, who granted him the title “Great Doctor Ch’an Master” (大醫禪師) and made him stay at the *Jin-ling* (金陵), China. Later he died in *Jiāng-nán* (江南).

He was such a well-known medicine master as well as a Ch’an Master that nowadays charitable centers run by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha such as the Tuệ Tĩnh Hall (慧靜堂) carry his name.

84. See Egaku Mayeda: *Gendai sri Lanka no jozabukkyo* (現代スリランカの上座仏教, *Contemporary Buddhism in Srilanka*), pp. 193~198.

85. Formerly they were called the *Vietnam Institute of Advanced Buddhist Studies* (越南高級佛學院). Their names were changed according to the Decision No. 9 of the Government dated on June 23rd, 1997.

86. For example, according to the recent report of the *Vietnam Institute of Buddhist*

Studies in Hochiminh City, which has experienced a training sessions, each including 4 academic years, the first session consists of 59 students, the second 101, the third 234 and the fourth 290. (See Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam [Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha]: *Kỷ yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Toàn Quốc Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam lần thứ IV* [A Bulletin—4rd Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's Delegations]. Ban Văn Hóa Trung Ương [published by the Central Cultural Department], 1999, pp. 16, 17.)

87. For example, having the permission of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association opened the course of Higher Buddhist Studies in 1996 with 291 attendants of monks and nuns; but in 1997 the number of students amounts to 453. (Ibid., p. 17.)
88. The number of Vietnamese monks and nuns who are attending the Buddhist courses abroad amounts to 100 in which 60 are in India and the rest are in other countries such as Japan, China, Taiwan, Burma, Sri Lanka, etc. (Ibid., p. 18.)

Chapter II

Nuns—Life and Activities

A. An overview of Vietnamese Nuns

In Vietnam, beside the Mahāyāna Buddhist Saṅgha of monks, there also is the existence of another Saṅgha of Mahāyāna Buddhist nuns, which also acts under the same Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha. According to the most recent report, the number of nuns is 9,718 including *điêu* (beginning probationers, 2,224), *sāmaṇerīs* (female novice, 4,087), *sikkhamānās* (young women undergoing a probationary course of training in order to become nuns, 971) and *bhikkhunīs* (2,436).⁽¹⁾ In comparison with the number of Mahāyāna monks (8,893),⁽²⁾ we can see that the Saṅgha of nuns is bigger and more populer than that of the monks.

This is an essential existence that no one cannot negate or neglect. However, up to now very little attention has been paid to the mode of practice, ways of living as well as activities of nuns. And as a matter of fact, no books in Vietnamese have ever been written about this Saṅgha. That is a difficulty for the writer of this thesis as well as for those who wish to make a thorough study of Vietnamese nuns, both Mahāyāna and Theravāda.

Despite limited ability and the lack of materials, in this chapter, I will try my best to focus a real living picture about the their modes of practice, daily life, ways of living as well as activities which the Vietnamese nuns have been making a considerable contribution to the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha in general and to its lay followers nowadays in particular.

B. About the founder of the Vietnamese Nuns

Before referring to the above-mentioned study, it is necessary, I think, to present a discussion on the founder of the Vietnamese nuns through Chinese Buddhist books. While reading Chinese well-known works written on Vietnamese

Buddhism such as *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh* (禪苑集英, *A Collection of the Quintessence of the Ch'an Garden*), and *Đại Nam Thiền Uyển Truyền Đăng Tập Lục* (大南禪苑傳燈集錄, *Recorded Transmission of the Lamps in the Ch'an Garden of the Dai Nam*), etc., one can find out about the appearance of a female figure named Diệu Nhân (妙因, meaning “Wonderful Cause”), who is considered to be the first nun in Vietnam. She belongs to the 17th generation of the Vinītaruci (比尼多流支 or 毘尼多流支,⁽³⁾ ?-594, *Tỳ Ni Đa Lưu Chi* in Vietnamese)⁽⁴⁾ Ch'an School. She was an enlightened successor of this famous Ch'an School, therefore, she had a great honour to be the only nun recorded in the above-mentioned works. Hence it is necessary to refer to her biography here.

Her biography was recorded as following:

“The nun Diệu Nhân of Hương Hải Temple, Phù Đổng Village, Tiên Du Prefecture, was the eldest daughter of Lord Phung Yet.⁽⁵⁾ Her personal name was Ngọc Kiều. She was naturally endowed with great beauty, and her speech and behavior were well regulated. Emperor Lý Thánh Tông brought her up in the imperial palace. When she grew up she was married to a man named Lê who was Provincial Governor of Chân Đăng.⁽⁶⁾ When Le died she vowed to stay single and not remarry as duty prescribed. One day she lamented: ‘As I observe the world, all things are like dreams and illusions. How much more so are these fleeting glories! How can I rely on them?’ So she gave away all her personal belongings, shaved her head, and left home. She came to Chân Không⁽⁷⁾ of Phù Đổng District to receive the Bodhisattva precepts and began to investigate the essentials of mind. Chân Không gave her the sobriquet [Diệu Nhân] and appointed her head of the head of the nunnery. She followed discipline, practiced meditation and attained the samādhi. She excelled the others and became an adept expert among the nuns. Those who came to study, she urged to practice the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna), saying: ‘If you can return your nature to its origin, then you can enter [enlightened mind] freely through either sudden or gradual method.’ She always kept silent: she was averse to sound and form, words and speech. A student asked: ‘I am sick because all sentient beings are sick.⁽⁸⁾ Why should you have an aversion to sound and form?’ Diệu Nhân quoted the sūtra, replying: ‘If someone sees me through form or looks for me through sound, that person is following a wrong path and cannot see the Tathāgata.⁽⁹⁾ The student continued: ‘What is the use of sitting in

meditation ?' Diệu Nhân said: 'It is originally without going.' The student continued: 'Why don't you speak ?' Dieu Nhan said: 'The Path is fundamentally without words.' On the first day of the sixth month of the fourth year of the Hội Tường Đại Khánh era (1113),⁽¹⁰⁾ Diệu Nhân fell seriously ill and spoke a verse:

*Birth, old age, illness and death,
Have always been the same.
If you wish to escape from them,
By trying to untie your bonds, and you add to your entanglement.
It's only when you are deluded that you search for Buddha,
It's only when you are confused that you look for Zen.
I seek neither Buddha nor Zen,
I just close my mouth and keep silent.
Then she shaved her head, washed her body, sat cross-legged, and passed away. She was seventy-two years old.*^{»(11)}

Thus, through the passage "Chân Không gave her the sobriquet [Diệu Nhân] and appointed her head of the head of the nunnery", we can deduce that in her time, there could have been the existence of nuns as well as Buddhist nunneries in the North of Vietnam, but no attention was paid to this Saṅgha or their practice. However, the case of nun Diệu Nhân was so special and well-known that she was honourably recorded in such historical books of Vietnamese Buddhism.

C. Life course to be a *bhikkhunī*

Different from monks, the life course of nuns can be divided into four main periods, that is to say, woman *điều* (a newcomer or beginning practitioner), *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice), *sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那, a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training in order to become a nun) and *bhikkhunī* (比丘尼, an ordained nun).

I. *Điều*—the newcomer—first step

As referred in the part *First Step—Pabbajā Celebration for Dieu* of the above

chapter, those who vow to enter into the path of renunciation must undergo the first probationary course of *hành điệu* (practice as a newcomer or beginning practitioner). This course is short or long depending on the diligent practice of the *điệu* (beginning practitioner), however the course for woman *điệu* is normally longer than the one for *điệu*, which extends at least from 2 to 4 years or more.⁽¹²⁾

There is no certain regulations of the age of the woman *điệu* (beginning practitioners) who is received to undergo the course, but nowadays most of nun temples receive the newcomers at the age of 15 and above.⁽¹³⁾ The reason is that around that age the very person can be aware of the importance of mind practice, learn by heart regulated Buddhist scriptures and have enough qualifications to attend the Buddhist course of the Elementary Buddhist School as well. Moreover, before being accepted as a woman *điệu* (beginning practitioner), she must have the permission of her parents. Naturally there also are some exceptional and rare cases who became *điệus* (beginning practitioners) without their parents' permission. Of course, the condition of having the permission of the very person's parents is inevitable, but the consent of her master, monk or nun, from whom formerly she has been ordained the Five Precepts, is also necessary. If not, the *pabbajjā* (出家, going forth) ceremony cannot be performed. However, in reality, there are also some cases where someone has covertly escaped and come to a temple to ask for going forth without the permission of their parents. These cases mostly are not accepted by the abbots or abbesses of temples, but some rare cases have been received. Naturally although doing such may be contrary to the regulations, it has happened.

After having been accepted as a member of the temple, the woman *điệu* is ordained the Five Precepts of a *upāsikā* (優婆夷, woman layfollower) if she hasn't received ordination before. Then she will be instructed to study and memorize the *Như Thời Khóa tụng* (二時課誦, *Twice Daily Recitations*) or *Ch'an-mên-jih-sung* (禪門日通, *Temple's Daily Recitations*), the *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advice of Wéi-shān*), the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) and the *Sha-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts*

and Modes of Conduct of the *Sāmaṇerī*) and afterwards be sent to the Elementary Buddhist School.

Basically all the *điêus* (beginning practitioners), both male and female, should undergo at least 3 months of probation before being having their hair shaved. Nevertheless, in exceptional cases some have their hair cut right after entering into the temple. During this time they can wear normal clothes while going out, and wear regulated clothes for woman *điêus* (beginning practitioners) while living in the temple. So long as the abbess of the temple sees that it is the time for having the woman *điêu*'s hair shaved, she decides an auspicious day to celebrate the rite of shaving hair for the very person.

Different from other rites of ordaining precepts for *sāmaṇerīs*, *sikkhamānās* (式叉摩那, a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training in order to become a nun) and *bhikkhunīs*, the rite is often celebrated in nun temples without having the justification of monks.

The way of shaving hair for the woman *điêus* (beginning practitioner) is also the same with the male, that is to say, not completely but always with some hair left in front of their foreheads. While her hair is being shaved, a following *gāthā* is recited:

“While shaving my hair, I should pray for the sentient beings to renounce their afflictions and attain the absolute purity.”

(剃除鬚髮、當願衆生、遠離煩惱、究竟清淨。唵、悉殿都、漫多囉、跋陀耶沙婆訶)⁽¹⁴⁾

Then from now on, she becomes a member of the temple and begins a new life of a mind cultivator. All regulations and rules for a woman *điêu* (beginning practitioner) are more strict than the male *điêu* as well as than *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice), *sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那, a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training in order to become a nun) and *bhikkhunī*. The obedience to instructions or orders of the superiors, staying late at night to study and memorize scriptures and awakening early in the morning, taking part in daily recital sessions as well as in labouring hours and following regulated schedule,

earnestly serving the abbess, ect. are duties of the woman newcomer. This stage marks a turning point in her life to become a *pabbajita* (a forth-goer).

II. *Sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, female novice)—second step

Every step marks a period of strenuous struggle in mind cultivation and endurance with strict regulations of the temple which the very person experienced. The higher the step is, the more strict the rules are.

When the abbess of the temple sees that the woman *điêu* (beginning practitioner) has enough qualification to receive the *sāmaṇerī*'s Ten Precepts, the former sends the latter to an *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony in the region or some other place to be ordained. The day before the latter is ordained, she will be instructed to make confession by paying worship to the Triple Gem so that she can purify her mind and body to receive the holy precepts.

As for the process of performing the rite of ordination for *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice) is not wholly different with the one of *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, novice) at all.⁽¹⁵⁾ The main points in this process can be listed as followings:

- Precept-receivers gathering and paying worship to the Triple Gem.
- Confessing former offenses.
- Asking superior nuns for ordaining precepts.
- Paying worship to the *Four Graces* (四恩).
- Receiving Ten Precepts.
- Receiving the *sāmaṇerī*'s robe.
- Receiving the filtering bag.
- Paying worship to the Triple Gem and superior nuns of the *Upasampadā* ceremony.⁽¹⁶⁾

As for Ten Precepts which a *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice) must follow are the same with those of *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, novice).⁽¹⁷⁾ Then from now on, she really becomes a member of the saṅgha of nuns and can enjoy every rights offered by the saṅgha.

Normally after the ordination the newly-ordained *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice) will be guided together with other *sikkhamānās* and *bhikkhunīs* to the Saṅgha of monks to ask for the justification and pay homage to them.

The period of probation for a *sāmaṇerī* is regulated as 2 years before stepping to a higher stage of *sikkhamānā*. After the ordination, the Saṅgha of nuns always holds an interior class for all newly-ordained *sāmaṇerīs* in the region to study thoroughly their Ten precepts as well as modes of moral movement so that they can master these firmly and practice them as effectively as possible in their daily life.

The *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *Awaking Advice of Wéi-shān*), the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) and the *Sha-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇerī*) are considered as very basic and important books not only for the woman *điêus* but even for the *sāmaṇerīs*, *sikkhamānās* and *bhikkhunīs* as well. In the first probationary step as a woman *điêu*, she has the duty of only memorizing them; but in the second step as a *sāmaṇerī*, she must study them thoroughly and understand their meanings as well as importance in daily practice and mind cultivation. In the part No. 8: *Studying Scriptures* (習學經典第八) of the *Sha-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇerī*), the regulation of studying as followings:

“First you ought to learn Ten Precepts and modes of conduct of a *sāmaṇerī*, then after that study *sūtras* (scriptures). You must not wrongly overpass (this order).”
(宜先學沙彌尼十戒、諸威儀、後學修多羅、不得違越)⁽¹⁸⁾

This strict regulation is still kept following by *sāmaṇeras* and *sāmaṇerīs* nowadays in Vietnamese Buddhist temples of of the two saṅghas. Studying Ten Precepts and modes of moral conduct aims at following monastic discipline and at cultivating one's moral activities so that the very person can attain the followance of precepts and mind concentration. Then studying and reciting Buddhist scriptures are to understand the Buddha's teaching and to develop one's wisdom.

All actions concerning body, speech, and mind of the *sāmaṇerī* are explained

clearly in details in the *Sha-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇerī*). In harmonious combination with mindful actions recorded in the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) such as listening to great bell ringing, putting the robe on, going to the toilet, washing face or having meal, ect., the *sāmaṇerī* ought to follow instructions relating to daily activities such as how to pay worship to the Triple Gem, to serve for the master, to live in the assembly, to follow the assembly to have meal, to study the Buddha's scriptures, to do works, ect. as referred in the above text.

For example, for the case of how to serve for the master, the text reads:

“You should behave the upajjhāya and the ācariya just the same with behaving the Buddhas. You ought to respect the master and always get close to her to practice correctly with the discipline. You ought to do exactly with the master's instructions with your instant respect and obedience. You should get up early, not after the master, awaken yourself your mind, and should not let the master wake you up.”

(視和尚阿闍黎如視佛。當敬於師、常附近之、如法律行。當如師教、常應和順。常當早起、勿後師起、自警其心、勿令師呼。)⁽¹⁹⁾

Or how to live in the assembly:

“You must not compete for seat. While seated you must not call the others from afar, not speak and laugh... You must not boast your tiredness to show your accomplishments. You must not sit together with the great bhikkhus and bhikkhunis... While drinking tea or hot water, you must not pay worship with the left hand. You must not speak much, laugh much, and while yawning you should cover your open mouth with your sleeve.”

(不得爭坐處。不得於坐上遙相呼語笑... 不得伐勞、顯已之功。不得與大比丘、比丘尼共坐... 喫茶湯時、不得隻手作禮。不得多言、多笑、及呵欠當以衣袖掩口。)⁽²⁰⁾

Either doing works:

“You should know how to regret things of the assembly. You ought to follow the instructions of the kammadāna without doing wrong. While washing vegetables, you

should wash them with three times changing water. While taking water, first your hands must be cleaned. While using water, you should observe if there are any microbes or not in the water. If having, you should utilise thick filtering bag to filter them out after using the water.”

(當惜衆僧物。當隨知事者教令、不得違戾。凡洗菜、當三易水。凡汲水、先淨手。凡用水、須諦視有蟲無蟲、若有蟲、以密羅濾過方用。)⁽²¹⁾

Thus we can see that every action, every movement of the *sāmaṇerī* must be in accordance with the established regulations of the temple. That can be considered as so strict, but it is reasonable to think that the path which the person going forth into homelessness means walking against the stream of worldly life. Therefore, it is believed that living in such a strict way can help the mind cultivator to become free from all affliction and attain a mindful and tranquil life if she really practices with determination.

III. *Sikkhamānā*—third step

Different from the period of monks, another step is included for nuns from the stage of *sāmaṇerī* to *bhikkhunī*. That is the probationary step of *sikkhamānā*. It is considered as the transition to reach to the last aim—*bhikkhunī*. Normally it takes the *sikkhamānā* at least 2 years of probation.⁽²²⁾ This regulation conforms to those recorded in the sixth rule of the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八重法 or 八敬法)⁽²³⁾

After a probationary period of 2 years as a *sāmaṇerī*, when she is considered as having met the qualification to receive the *sikkhamānā*'s precepts, she has the permission of the abbess of the temple to come to the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony to be ordained.

The process of performing the rite of ordination for *sikkhamānā* is nearly the same with the one for *sāmaṇerī*. However, the precepts of the *sikkhamānā* should be ordained are different. They are:

- a. Restraint from unchastity (*abrahmacariyā veramaṇī*, 不淫戒).
- b. Restraint from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā veramaṇī*, 不盜戒).

- c. Restraint from onslaught on creatures (*pānātipātā veramaṇī*, 不殺生戒).
- d. Restraint from lying (*musāvādā veramaṇī*, 不妄語戒).
- e. Restraint from eating at wrong time (*vikālabhojanā veramaṇī*, 不非時食戒).
- f. Restraint from the occasion of sloth (induced by) fermented liquor, spirits and strong drink (*surāmerayamajjapamādatṭhānā veramaṇī*, 不飲酒戒).⁽²⁴⁾

Thus, in general, these above-mentioned six precepts of a *sikkhamānā* are included in those of a *sāmaṇerī*, but they are summed up and attached importance to the first three precepts, that is to say, *restraint from unchastity* (*abrahmacariyā veramaṇī*, 不淫戒), *restraint from taking what is not given* (*adinnādānā veramaṇī*, 不盜戒) and *restraint from onslaught on creatures* (*pānātipātā veramaṇī*, 不殺生戒). They are considered as grave offenses (*āpatti*) which can make the violator be reborn in the evil realms such as hell, hungry ghosts or animals.

In comparison with the *sāmaṇerī*'s precepts we can see that, instead of emphasizing the precept of *restraint from onslaught on creatures* which is put on the headline, the precept of *restraint from unchastity* is paid more attention for the *sikkhamānā* than the above. The form of ordaining precepts to the *sikkhamānā* is a symbol of repeating important precepts and marks a spiritual advanced higher step in the period of mind cultivation of the very person.

Naturally after the ordination the *sikkhamānā* will also be led to the saṅgha of monks to ask for justification and to pay worship to them. The *sikkhamānā* goes on following rules and regulations as recorded in the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) and the *Sha-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇerī*). Because these two scriptures still play important and decisive role in the oral and writing exam held in the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony.

Futhermore, after having been granted two years of probatary, the *sikkhamānā* ought to observe the other eighteen rules dutifully and obediently. They are:

- a. The *sikkhamānā* should take her seat below all the *bhikkhunīs* and above all the *sāmaṇerīs*.

- b. Something that is an offence for a *sikkhamānā* needs not be an offence for a *bhikkhunī*.
- c. Something that is an offence for a *bhikkhunī* is also an offence for a *sikkhamānā*.
- d. A *bhikkhunī* may stay with a *sikkhamānā* in a cell for three consecutive days.
- e. A *sikkhamānā* may stay with a *sāmaṇerī* in a cell for three consecutive days.
- f. A *sikkhamānā* may give some food to a *bhikkhunī*.
- g. A *sikkhamānā* may be given any food by a *sāmaṇerī*, but she may not boil the five kinds of vegetables, nor receive gold, silver and coins.
- h. A *sikkhamānā* should not point out to a *bhikkhunī* any of the *bhikkhunī*'s offences from the *pārārika* (波羅夷, *involving defeat*) down to the *vinayātikamma*.
- i. A *sikkhamānā* may speak to a *bhikkhunī* concerning matters of not committing sexual intercourse, not stealing, not killing, not lying.
- j. A *sikkhamānā* may not attend the *Uposatha* (自恣, *Precept Recital*) meeting of the *bhikkhunī* Order.
- k. A *sikkhamānā* may not attend the *Pavāraṇā* (布薩, *Invitation*) meeting of the *bhikkhunī* Order. On the *Uposatha* day and on the *Pavāraṇā* day, before the Order's meeting, she should say with her joined palms that 'I am so-and-so, pure and unsullied. May the Order remember that I have followed the eighteen rules for a *sikkhamānā*.' She should repeat it three times, then go out.
- l. If a *sikkhamānā* has committed one of the last four of the eight *pārājikas*, she must begin the *sikkhamānā*'s two-year course over again, and ought to start learning the disciplinary rules again on that very day.
- m. If the offence is one the nineteen which constitute a *saṅghādidesa* (僧伽婆尸沙, *formal meeting of the Order*) offence, or any other offence down to the *vinayātikamma*, she ought to make a *dukkata* (突吉羅, *wrong-doing*) confession for each of the offences which she has committed. If she violates any of the next five precepts, then her time as a *sikkhamānā* will be extended for as many days as she has broken the precepts.
- n. Taking a meal at improper time.

- o. Taking food which was left over from previous day.
- p. Accepting gold, silver and money.
- q. Drinking liquor.
- r. Decorating herself with wreaths of flowers or incense.⁽²⁵⁾

IV. *Bhikkhuni*—last step

This is the final stage of the *pabbajjā* which is the aim of each practitioner. It is also the result of a long period of at least 7 years of probationary practice in the temple. Each practitioner always looks forward to this day.

The day comes when the *sikkhamānā* is considered as having met the regulated criteria to be a *bhikkhuni*, she will be sent to a *upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony to attend an exam before being ordained.

The criteria are being full twenty years of age, fully memorizing the regulated scriptures, having experienced a probationary period as a *sāmaṇerī* of at least 2 years, performing all the good behaviours and modes of conduct (*iriyāpatha*, 威儀路) from speaking, walking, standing, sitting to lying. The criterion of being a full of twenty years of age is considered as more important than the others.

However, although she may meet the above criterion, but if being in lack of other criteria, she cannot be accepted to participate in the *upasampadā* ceremony. There are also some cases of those who cannot manage to pass the exam, and thus misses the chance. In reality, there are some cases of those who came to the ceremony, but later returned the temple without being ordained because they could not manage to pass the exam.

Of course, a period of time before that she is instructed to mindfully confess her offenses so that she can purify her mind and body to receive holy precepts. At the beginning of the section *Ritual of Ordaining Bhikkhuni's Precepts* (受比丘尼戒式) of the *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), there is a following remarkable note:

“The precepts of bhikkhu is extremely revered. Its relationship to the saṅgha's morality is not small at all. Therefore if the upajjhāya or the ācariya find those who wish to receive

the higher ordination, she should first observe them carefully according to the rules, then make them mindfully pay worship to the names of 88 Buddhas, a thousand Buddhas in the three periods, or ten thousands of Buddhas in sūtras, so that they can confess their offenses and be free from kamma-hindrance.”

(比丘之戒極尊。關係僧倫非小。故和尚阿闍黎見欲求戒者。當先一一觀察如法。教令虔誠禮八十八佛、三世三千佛、或萬佛名經、懺除業障。)⁽²⁶⁾

1. The *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony

When the *sikkhamānā*, who has completed two year of training as a probationary, eagerly wishes for higher ordination, her Bhikkhunī Preceptor should inform the saṅgha of *bbikkhunīs* for permission to perform the *Upasampadā* ceremony. The process of the *Upasampadā* ceremony for nuns which is happened almost the same as the one for monks can be listed as followings:

- a. Preliminary preparations: checking indispensable conditions, inviting a group of ten superior nuns, performing the *śīmā-kamma*.
- b. Organizing the examination.
- c. Performing the ceremony:
 - Precept-receivers gathering and paying worship to the Triple Gem.
 - Confessing former offenses.
 - Asking superior nuns to be preceptors (戒師).
 - The *anussāna-ācariya* (教授師) and the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) alternately questioning the precept-receivers about twenty-four things that are stumbling-blocks (*catuṅṅsatim antarāyike dhamme*, 二十四障礙法).
 - Performing a formal act called *ñatticatuttha kamma* (白四羯磨) which consists of a motion and a resolution put three.
 - Asking superior nuns for ordaining *bbikkhunī*'s precepts.
 - Receiving the *bbikkhunī*'s three robes: Five-Piece Robe (*antarvāsa*, 五條衣 or 安陀會), Seven-Piece Robe or Upper Robe (*uttarāsaṅga*, 鬱多羅僧 or 上衣) and Twenty-Five-Piece Robe or Great Robe (*saṅghāṭī*, 僧伽梨 or 大衣).
 - Receiving the filtering bag, bowl, ect.

- Paying worship to the Triple Gem and superior nuns of the *Upasampadā* ceremony.⁽²⁷⁾

There are some twenty-four things that are stumbling-blocks (*catuvīsatiṃ antarāyike dhamme*, 二十四障礙法) and which should be questioned of the *sikkhamānā* before the ordination are:

- (1) Are you not without sexual characteristic ? (*na 'si animittā*, 汝非是無相女不).
- (2) Are you not the woman lack of sexual organ ? (*na 'si nimittamattā*, 汝非是不全形女不).
- (3) Are you not the woman without menses ? (*na 'si alohitā*, 汝非是無經月女人不).
- (4) Are you not the woman whose blood is stagnant ? (*na 'si dhuvālohitā*, 汝非常月水女不).
- (5) Are you not the woman constantly dressed ? (*na 'si dhuvacolā*, 汝非是恒布女不).
- (6) Are you not the woman who always trickles the menses ? (*na 'si paggharantī*, 汝非是常漏月水女不).
- (7) Are you not the woman with long pudendum ? (*na 'si sikharinī*, 汝非是長陰唇女不).
- (8) Are you not a female eunuch ? (*na 'si itthipaṇḍikā*, 汝非是黃門女不).
- (9) Are you not a man-like woman ? (*na 'si vepurisikā*, 汝非是二根女不).
- (10) Are you not a woman of indistinct sexuality ? (*na 'si sambhinnā*).
- (11) Are you not a hermaphrodite (*na 'si ubhatovyañjanakā*, 汝非是兩性者不).
- (12) Have you diseases like this: leprosy, boils, eczema, consumption, epilepsy ? (*santi te evarūpā ābādā: kuṭṭham gaṇḍo kilāso soso apamāro*, 汝有如是病、癩、癰、白癩、乾瘡、顛狂不).
- (13) Are you a human being ? (*manussāsi*, 汝是非人不).
- (14) Are you a woman ? (*ittthi 'si*, 汝是女人不).

- (15) Are you a free woman ? (*bhujissāsi*, 汝非婢不).
- (16) Are you without debts ? (*anaṇāsi*, 汝不負人債不).
- (17) Are you not in royal service ? (*na 'si rājabhaṭī*, 汝非是王兵不).
- (18) Are you allowed by your mother and father ? (*anuññātāsi mātāpitū*, 父母聽汝不).
- (19) Are you allowed by your husband ? (*anuññātāsi sāmikena*, 夫主聽汝不).
- (20) Have you completed twenty years of age ? (*paripuṇṇa-vīsativassāsi*, 年滿二十不).
- (21) Are you complete as to bowl and robe ? (*paripuṇṇan te pattacīvaram*, 衣鉢具足不).
- (22) What is your name ? (*kiṇṇāmāsi*, 汝字何等).
- (23) What is the name of your woman proposer ? (*kānāmā te pavattinīti*, 和尚字誰).⁽²⁸⁾

In comparison of the above-mentioned things recorded in the *Vinaya Pitakam* with those referred in the Chinese *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集)⁽²⁹⁾ which is utilised openly in Vietnam nowadays, those concerning to the *Five Grave Sins* (五逆罪) such as matricide (*mātu-gbhātaka*, 殺母者), a parricide (*pitughātaka*, 殺父者), a murderer of a perfected one (*arabantaghātaka*, 殺阿羅漢者), a schismatic (*saṅgha-bhedaka*, 破和合僧者) and a shedder of (a Truth-finder) blood (*lobi-tuppādaka*, 出 [佛身] 血者) are not mentioned in the *Vinaya Pitakam*.

Then comparing the *Upasampadā* ceremony for monks⁽³⁰⁾ with the one for nuns as seen in the Chinese *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), the following things are not referred to:

- Ordaining the *Four Reliance Things* (*cattāro nissayā*, 四依法): reliance on coarse robes (依糞掃衣), reliance on going for alms (依乞食), reliance on sitting under tree (依樹下坐) and reliance on rotten medicines (依腐爛藥).
- Expounding the Four Things of *samaṇa* that should be done (沙門四種所應

作法): should not scold against when being scolded by the other (他罵不應返罵), should not be angry against when being angered by the other (他瞋不應返瞋), should not play back when being played by the other (他調戲不應返戲), and should not react when being hit by the other (他打不應返打).

- Passing sitting mat (*nisīdana*, 坐具), monk's staff (*khakkhara*, 錫杖).

2. Asking the saṅgha of monks for justification

Based on the sixth of *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八敬法) regulated by the Buddha when Gotamid, *Pajāpati the Great* (大愛道), came to him to ask for going forth and later she received them, after being ordained by the saṅgha of nuns, the newly-ordained *bhikkhunī* must come to the saṅgha of monks to ask for justification and seek ordination again. The rule reads:

“When, as a probationer, she has trained in the six rules for two years, she should seek ordination from both Orders.”

(*Dve vassāni chasu dhammesu sikkhitasikkhāya sikkhamānāya ubhato-saṅghe upasampadā pariyesitabbā.*)⁽³¹⁾

Therefore, after having finished the ceremony, the Order of nuns always leads newly-ordained *bhikkhunī* come to the Order of monks to ask for reordain. The observance of this rule by the saṅgha of nuns is being kept up to now in Vietnam. That is the reason that at the end of the section *Ritual of Ordaining Bhikkhunī's Precepts* (受比丘尼戒式) of the *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), there appears an additional part *Ritual of Saṅgha of Nuns Leading Precept-Receiver Coming to the Saṅgha of Monks to Ask for Ordination* (尼眾將戒子尼往大僧求受戒式).

The process of being re-ordained by the saṅgha of monks is performed in detailed as followings:⁽³²⁾

After the *Upasampadā* ceremony has been performed by the saṅgha of nuns, the *Preceptor Bhikkhunī* ought to lead her disciple to come to the saṅgha of monks

on the same day to ask for being re-ordained for the latter. After having paid respect to the saṅgha of monks and having knelt down with her joined palms, she makes the following request:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus keep in mind that I have already given the Upasampadā ordination to so-and-so in the Bhikkhunīsaṅgha. I now request that so-and-so be granted the Upasampadā ordination to be performed by the Order of bhikkhus. Because the Order of bhikkhus is merciful, it will grant the Upasampadā ordination so-and-so.”

After this has been repeated three times, the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* then ought to ask:

“Has she been found pure, and free from any obstacles to entering the bhikkhunī Order ?”

Then he goes on saying:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus listen ! So-and-so has received the Upasampadā ordination from the bhikkhunī such-and-such. She has been found pure and offers no obstructing dhammas to entering the Order of bhikkhunīs. the bhikkhunī such-and-such has requested the she be given the Upasampadā ordination by the Order of bhikkhus. If the Order of bhikkhus sees it as timely, O Order, the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so who is such-and-such wishes to request that she be granted the Upasampadā ordination by the Order of bhikkhus. Does the respected Order of bhikkhus agree that the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so, who is such-and-such, request her being granted the Upasampadā ordination or not ?”

“The order of bhikkhus is silent, therefore it is agreed. This shall be upheld.”

Then the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* instructs the precept-receiver to join her palms in obedience and says that:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus keep in mind that I am so-and-so, and have received the Upasampadā ordination from the Preceptor Bhikkhunī such-and-such. I am pure and offer no obstacles to entering the Order. I am so-and-so, and my Preceptor Bhikkhunī is such-and-such. I now request the Upasampadā ordination from the Order. If my fervent wish, O Order, that out of compassion of the Order, I be granted the Upasampadā

ordination.”

When she has said this three times, the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* should say:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus listen ! So-and-so has received the Upasampadā ordination from such-and-such, has already been found to be pure and offers no obstacles to entering the Order of bhikkhunīs, and has requested that the Order of bhikkhus grant her the Upasampadā ordination. If the Order sees it as timely, O Order, the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so will be such-and-such. I wish to ask about any obstacles to entering the Order. Does the respected Order of monks approve that the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so will be such-and-such, and that I ask her about any obstacles to entering the Order?”

“The Order agrees, for it is silent. This deed shall thus be upheld.”

Then the *Kamma Mater Bhikkhu* asks the precept-receiver once again the obstacles:

“Now it is time for you to be sincere, and a time for you to speak the truth. If you are not true to the world of devas, to the māras (evil demons), the Brahmās, to the samaṇas, to the brāhmaṇas, to the devas, to men, and to asuras, you then deceive them, as you also tell lie in the two Orders of the Tathāgata-Arhat-Saṃyaksambuddha. This is indeed a great fault. I must now ask you in the Order: ‘If you have, say you have, and if you have not, say you have not, a father and a mother, a husband...’”

Thus she is asked all questions as mentioned above. After that, the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* says to the saṅgha of bhikkhus that:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus listen ! So-and-so has received the Upasampadā ordination from such-and-such, has already been asked if she is pure and offers no obstacles to entering the Order, and has requested that she be given the Upasampadā ordination by the Order. Her mother and father, and husband, have already consented; and she has already sought out a Preceptor Bhikkhunī, has been outfitted with robes and a bowl, has completed two years of study of the sikkhamānā precepts, has finished the kamma of being taken as a disciple of the Preceptor Bhikkhunī such-and-such. She herself affirms she is pure and offers no obstacles to entering the Order. If the Order sees it as timely, O Order, the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so shall be such-and-such, and I shall explain to her the

Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法) in the Order. Does the respected Order approve that the Preceptor Bhikkhunī of so-and-so be such-and-such., and that I so explain to her the Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法) in the Order ?”

“The Order agrees, for it is silent. This deed shall thus be upheld.”

Then the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* goes on explaining the *Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法)* to the precept-receiver as follows:

“Daughter of good family, listen ! Because the Tathāgata-Arhat-Saṃyaksambuddha wanted to benefit all, the Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法) were correctly taught in the Order for the sake of the bhikkhunīs as for the sāvikās. To the daughter of good family who can endure patiently and who is straight in her heart, the Upasampadā ordination will be given; but if she cannot endure patiently, the Upasampadā ordination shall not be given. What are the Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法) ?

Clothes made of dirty rags are trifles, easy to obtain, fitting, and have nothing wrong with them: this is the way to be observed and followed by the bhikkhunīs. By doing so, one may enter the Order, receive the Upasampadā ordination, and become a bhikkhunī. Therefore, can you endure a lifetime of wearing robes of dirty rags ?”

She replies, “I can.”

“In addition, these surplus robes are permitted: the woolen robe, the cotton robe, the flaxen robe, the silk robe, the coarse hemp robe, the linen robe.”

Thus the dependence upon alms-begging and medicine of cow urine has been explained above in full. Then the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* goes on saying:

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus listen ! So-and-so has already received the Upasampadā ordination from such-and-such. She has been found to be pure and offers no obstructing dhammas in the Order of bhikkhunīs. She has already requested that she be granted the Upasampadā ordination by the Order of bhikkhus. Her mother and father, and husband have already consented, and she has already sought out a Preceptor Bhikkhunī, and has been outfitted with the robes and a bowl; she has completed a full two years of studying the sikkhamānā precepts, and has already performed the kamma of being taken as a disciple. She herself affirms that she is pure and has no obstructing dhammas,

and is able to endure the Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法). If the Order of bhikkhus seems it timely, O Order, it shall grant the Upasampadā ordination to so-and-so, and her Preceptor Bhikkhunī shall be such-and-such. This is the motion.”

“May the respected Order of bhikkhus listen ! So-and-so has received the Upasampadā ordination from such-and-such, has already been found to be pure and offers no obstructing dhammas in the Order of bhikkhunīs, and has already requested that she be granted the Upasampadā ordination by the Order of bhikkhus. Her mother and father, and husband have already agreed, and she has already sought out a Preceptor Bhikkhunī, has been outfitted with the robes and a bowl, has completed a full two years of studying the sikkhamānā precepts, and has completed the kamma of being taken as a disciple. She herself affirms that she is pure and has no obstructing dhammas, and is able to endure the Three Reliance Things (ti-nissayā, 三依法). The Order is now to grant so-and-so the Upasampadā ordination, and her Preceptor Bhikkhunī is to be such-and-such. Does the respected Order and bhikkhus agree too grant her the Upasampadā ordination to so-and-so, and that her Preceptor Bhikkhunī be such-and-such, or not ? If agreed, remain silent ? If not agreed, then explain ! This is the first kamma, and the second and the third are the same.”

“The Order has granted the Upasampadā ordination to so-and-so, and her Preceptor Bhikkhunī shall be such-and-such. The Order agrees, for it is silent. This deed shall this be upheld.”

Finally the *Kamma Master Bhikkhu* gives the followings dhamma talks:

“Daughter of good family, listen ! You have received the Upasampadā ordination, and have received the Upasampadā ordination well. There have been no objections to the one motion and the three kammās; the harmonious Order has two groups, and each section has ten members or more. You now should respect and reverence the Buddha, respect and reverence the Dhamma, respect and revere the Saṅgha, respect and reverence the Preceptor Bhikkhunī, and respect and revere the teachers.

“It is difficult to be born a human being, difficult to be born at a time when the Buddha has already appeared, difficult to hear the Buddha’s teaching, and difficult to enter the harmonious saṅgha. Yet you have accomplished all of these. Pay obeisance to the sons of the Śākya Master and all of the disciples. You have already been ordained. And thus be like the Asoka flower which is not polluted by dirty water. You should rely upon and train in Nirvāṇa and the Good Dhammas, and thus you will attain them.”

Thus is the ending of *Upasampadā* ceremony of nuns and the re-ordination ceremony performed by the saṅgha of monks. As seen in Hue City, after the ceremony, the saṅgha of nuns often holds classes of studying vinaya for newly-ordained bhikkhunīs at nun temples so that the latter can understand clearly the meaning and significance of every ordained precept, and by that way they can follow the precepts as correctly as they can.

D. Daily life of nuns and their activities

When referring to the daily life of nuns, it is necessary to see that it is the daily life of all *pabbajitas* (出家者, forth-goers) living in the temple, viz. the *điêus*, *sāmaṇeras* and *bhikkhus*. In general, all members direct their efforts to one common goal, that is to say, enlightenment. However, because the period of practice and training of each person is different, viz. longer or shorter, the rank, assigned duties as well as responsibilities of each person are not the same. On the basis of this meaning, the daily life of each kind of *pabbajita* (出家者, forth-goers) is different. Moreover, in Vietnam as well as other Buddhist countries, there are two kinds of temples, viz. temples in the city and temples in the rural areas. In spite of the difference of environment, the daily schedule is generally the same. I think then that we should look at the daily schedule in the temple.

I. Daily schedules

Nowadays, the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha is an organization consisting of 3 main sects, viz. Mahāyāna, Therāvāda and Khất Sĩ (Mendicant). Because each sect possesses its own special way of training and practice as well as particular activities, the daily life of monks and nuns of each sect is different.

Here I would like to introduce the schedules applied in common Mahāyāna nun temples and Ch'an nunneries. The schedules of Khất Sĩ temples, Mahāyāna and Ch'an nunneries will be referred in chapters related directly to them.

1. Schedule in Mahāyāna nun temples in Hue city

At present, most Vietnamese nuns also belong to the Lin-Chi Sect (臨濟宗) and especially nuns are mostly the followers of the Liễu Quán Lineage (了觀派), which was founded by the Vietnamese Ch'an Master Liễu Quán (了觀禪師, ? - 1743), a successor of the 35th generation of the Lin-Chi Sect (臨濟宗). Looking at their daily practice, however, we can see that their practice does not tend purely to Ch'an, but is combined harmoniously with Tantrism and Pure Land. To understand the matter, I would like to introduce a representative daily schedule applied at the famous Hồng Ân Nun Temple (鴻恩尼寺),⁽³³⁾ where it is now considered as one of the main and famous temples of the saṅgha of nuns in Hue City.

- 3: 00: waking up, striking the great bell
- 3: 30: early morning session (reciting sūtras)
- 5: 00: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 6: 30 ~ 10h 00: labouring or studying at school
- 10: 30: noon offering rite
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 11: 30 ~ 13: 00: taking rest
- 13: 30 ~ 16: 00: self-study of sūtras or going to school
- 16: 30: afternoon session (reciting sūtras)
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 19: 00: striking the great bell
- 19: 30: the Pure Land rite
- 21: 00 ~ 22: 00: doing homework and reviewing lessons
- 21: 00: sleeping

Through this schedule, we can see that nowadays most of temples pay special attention to the study of their nuns. To develop well-learned and moral nuns is the purpose of the saṅgha. Formerly, nuns must spend much time for doing farming for self-sufficiency, but today things have changed.

The afternoon session of sūtra recitation is a main duty of nuns in the

temples. In the city, instead of being held at 16:30 in rural temples, it is often held at about 19:00 in city temples. The reason is that at that time the followers are free from work, so they can have time to take part in the rite.

If there are many nuns living in the temple, they will be divided into small groups and take turns to participate in the reciting sessions.

Nowadays, in common days most Mahāyāna temples pay little attention to the practice of sitting meditation. One can himself practice at his will, but the regulated time for the practice is not seen in their daily schedule. The tendency to popularize the way of practice of Pure Land seems superior than that of Ch'an.

Main sūtras and *mantras* or *dhāraṇīs* utilised for daily recitation in Mahāyāna nun temples are quite the same as with the ones of monks. The list of sūtras and mantras or *dhāraṇīs* recited in the early morning and afternoon sessions are as following:

1. As for the early morning session

a. The *Śūraṅgama-mantra* (楞嚴神咒), including five main chapters, is recorded in the Volume VII of the *Ta-fo-ting-ju-lai-mi-yin-hsiu-chêng-liao-i-chu-p'u-sa-wan-hsing-shou-lêng-yen-ching* (*Sarva-tathāgatasya-gubhya-siddhertha-abbisamayahetu-sarva-bodhisattvasya-carya-samuttadeśa-buddhāṣṇīṣa-śūraṅga-sūtra*, 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經).⁽³⁴⁾ This is the heart of all *dhāraṇīs* (咒心) of all Buddhas. It is thanks to it that the Tathāgatas attain Supreme Enlightenment. The latter utilise the former to subjugate (*abhicāraka*, 降伏) the demons and conquer those of other cults. Furthermore, thanks to this mantra the Tathāgatas can make salvation of sufferings of all sentient beings in any worlds of existence.⁽³⁵⁾ Therefore, those who recite this mantra gain innumerable merit and are freed from all suffering, are always blessed by the Buddhas and Dhamma guardians, satisfy ones' own wishes and live in safety and happiness. Even those who have committed grave offences will be released from those offences if they one-mindfully recite this mantra.⁽³⁶⁾

b. The *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *The Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), as

found in the *Ch'ien-shou-ch'ien-yen-kuan-shih-yin-p'u-sa-kuang-ta-yüan-man-wu-ai-ta-pei-hsin-t'o-lo-ni-ching* (千手千願觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經, *The Great Completely Full Unbindered Greatly Compassionate Heart Dhāraṇī*),⁽³⁷⁾ and in the *Ta-pei-chàn-fa* (大悲懺法, *Confession Way of the Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī*),⁽³⁸⁾ of MZ 129, pp. 28-29, is intoned by the *Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara* (觀世音菩薩). It has many titles such as *Great Completely Full* (廣大圓滿), *Unbindered Greatly Compassionate* (無礙大悲), *Suffering-Saving Dhāraṇī* (救苦陀羅尼), *Longevity Dhāraṇī* (延壽陀羅尼), *Evil Directions-Destroying Dhāraṇī* (滅惡陀羅尼), *Bad Kamma Hindrance-Breaking Dhāraṇī* (破惡業障羅尼), *Fulfilled Vow Dhāraṇī* (滿願陀羅尼), *Mind Accordingly Free Dhāraṇī* (隨心自在陀羅尼) and *Quickly-Surpassing Higher Stage Dhāraṇī* (速超上地陀羅尼).⁽³⁹⁾ Based on the meanings of these titles, the *dhāraṇī* has the efficiency to bring calm and happiness to sentient beings, to get rid of all diseases, to attain longevity and prosperity, to destroy all bad conducts and grave offences, freeing from hindrance and misfortunes, to fulfilling all good conducts, to removing fear forever, and to enable to complete all hopes and wishes.⁽⁴⁰⁾

c. Ten other *dhāraṇīs*: the *Ju-i-pao-lun-t'o-lo-ni* (如意寶輪陀羅尼, *Dhāraṇī of the Talismanis-like Precious Wheel*), the *Hsiao-tsai-chi-hsiang-shên-chou* (消災吉祥神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Calamity-Dispensing Omens*), the *Kung-tê-pao-san-shên-chou* (功德寶山神咒, *Dhāraṇī of the Meritorious Precious Mountain*), the *Fo-mu-chun-t'i-shên-chou* (佛母準提神咒, *Dhāraṇī of the Buddha Mother Cundī*), the *Sheng-wu-liang-shou-chüeh-ting-kuang-ming-wang-t'o-lo-ni* (聖無量壽決定光明王陀羅尼, *Dhāraṇī of the Infinite Longevity and Decisive Glory King Dhāraṇī*), the *Yao-shih-kuan-ting-zhên-yin* (藥師灌頂真言, *Dhāraṇī of the Bhaiṣajya-guruvaidūryaprabha Baptism*), the *Kwan-yin-ling-gan-zhên-yin* (觀音靈感真言, *Dhāraṇī of the Avalokiteśvara's Holy Efficaciousness*), the *Ch'i-fu-mié-zui-zhên-yin* (七佛滅罪真言, *Dhāraṇī of Annihilation Offences Against the Seven Buddhas*), the *Wang-shêng-ching-t'u-shên-chou* (往生淨土神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land*), and the *Shan-t'ien-nu-chou* (善天女咒, *Dhāraṇī of the Good Female Deva*).

d. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*).

Apart from these above-listed sūtras and *mantras* or *dhāraṇīs*, some names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattas are recited such as the “*We pay worship to Sakyamuni Buddha, the Original Master*” (南無釋迦牟尼佛, both reciting and walking around from 3 to 7 rounds), “*We pay worship to the Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, the Great Wisdom One*” (南無大智文殊師利菩薩, 3 times), “*We pay worship to Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, the Great-Conduct One*” (南無大行普賢菩薩, 3 times), “*We pay worship to Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, the Great Compassionate One*” (南無大悲觀世音菩薩, 3 times), “*We pay worship to the Buddhas and Bodhisattas on Vulture Peak* (南無靈山會上佛菩薩, 3 times). Besides, the Ten Vows of the *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva* (普賢菩薩) is also recited.

2. As for the afternoon session

a. The *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*).

b. Paying worship to the names of the Buddhas:

- Ten titles of a Buddha: *Namo tathāgata* (南無如來), *Namo arahant* (南無應供), *Namo sammāsambuddha* (南無正徧知), *Namo vijjācaraṇasampanna* (南無明行足), *Namo sugata* (南無善誓), *Namo lokavidū* (南無世間解), *Namo anuttara* (南無無上士), *Namo purisadammasārathi* (南無調御丈夫), *Namo satthā devamanussānam* (南無天人師), and *Namo buddha-bhagavat* (南無佛世尊).

- Other names of 53 Buddhas are seen in sūtra No. 1160, the (佛說觀藥王藥上二菩薩經, *Sūtra of Contemplating Bodhisattvas Bhēchadjya Rādja and Bhēchadjya Samudgata*).⁽⁴¹⁾ The titles of the these 53 Buddhas play a so very important role that even the seven well-known Tathāgatas, viz. *Sikhin* (尸棄), *Vessabhū* (毘舍浮), *Kasusandha* (拘留孫), *Konāgamana* (拘那含牟尼), and *Kassapa* (迦葉), also highly praise the former.⁽⁴²⁾ As the sūtra states, if someone, male or female, including all sentient beings can get to hear these 53 titles, then he or she will not fall into evil ways during innumerable kalpas. If someone invokes them, he or she will always get to see the Buddhas in the ten directions. If someone mindfully pays worship to

them, he or she will be purified thanks to the total destruction of the *Four Grave Prohibitions*⁽⁴³⁾ and *Five Deadly Sins*⁽⁴⁴⁾ and be praised by the above-mentioned Buddhas.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Based on this importance, these 53 Buddhas' names and the below-mentioned 35 others have been chosen for monks and nuns to recite and pay worship to everyday during the afternoon-recital session.

- Some more names of 35 Buddhas are found in sūtra No. 132, the *Yü-ch'ieh-chi-yao-yen-k'ou-shih-shih-ch'i-chiao-ê-nan-t'o-yüan-yu* (瑜伽集要焰口施食起教阿難陀緣由, the *Essential Collections of the Relational Reason Why Ānanda Taught the Rite of Food-Offerings to Petas*).⁽⁴⁶⁾

c. The *Méng-shān's Passage of Offering Foods [to the Petas]* (蒙山施食文) includes mainly some *dhāraṇīs* such as the *Hell-Breaking True Words* (破地獄真言), the *True Words of Universal Invitation* (普召請真言), the *Karma-Annihilating True Words of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩滅定業真言), the *Throat Opening True Words* (開咽喉信言), the *True Words of Food-Pervasion* (變食真言), the *True Words of Sweet-Dew Water* (甘露水真言), etc.

Through the sūtras and *mantras* as well as *dhāraṇīs* utilised in the two sessions of *kung-fu* in Vietnam nowadays, we can give out some remarks as following:

The early morning session is taken seriously in *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs*, in which mainly are the *Śūraṅgama-mantra* (楞嚴神咒), the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *The Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*) and other ten *dhāraṇīs*. As mentioned above, while reciting these *dhāraṇīs*, the practitioner will be guarded and protected by the Dhamma guardians, and moreover, will be freed from his or her kamma-hindrances and develop one's own wisdom thanks to the supernatural powers of these *dhāraṇīs*. However, this session does not mainly tends to reciting *dhāraṇīs* only, but also has the existence of the recital of the Buddhas' names and the *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's* ten vows.

The afternoon session pays special attention to "being reborn in the Pure Land" (往生淨土). Therefore, the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*) has been chosen for recital. Besides, the confession of one's three

kammas, viz. body, speech and mind, through the recitation of the Buddhas' names, also plays an important role in this session. The ending of this session is the passage of offering foods for the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼), which symbolises the spirit of compassion and humanity to the sentient beings. It is in this session that the praise of the *Amitābha Buddha* and the vows and wishes of being reborn in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvātī*, 極樂) can be seen.

Then we can come to a conclusion that these two sessions are the harmonious combination between the traditions of Tantrism and Pure Land.

2. Schedule in Ch'an nunneries

Along with some monasteries such as Chơn Không (眞空), Thường Chiếu (常照), Trúc Lâm (竹林), etc. founded by a contemporary Vietnamese famous monk, Most Ven. Thích Thanh Từ, there are the existence of some Ch'an nunneries such as Viên Chiếu (圓照), Linh Chiếu (靈照), Huệ Chiếu (慧照), etc. Among these, the Viên Chiếu Ch'an nunnery is considered as the most famous temple where 85 nuns including 56 *bhikkhunīs*, 12 *sikkhamānās*, 10 *sāmaṇerīs* and 7 woman *điêus* are living. Here I would like to introduce the daily schedule applied at this famous nunnery.⁽⁴⁷⁾

- 3: 00: waking up
- 3: 15 ~ 5: 00: sitting in meditation
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 6: 30 ~ 10: 00: labouring
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 12: 00 ~ 13: 00: taking noon rest
- 14: 00 ~ 16: 00: studying sūtras
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 18: 30: night confession rite
- 19: 30 ~ 20: 30: sitting and walking meditation (*caṅkamati*)
- 21: 00: sleeping

Through this schedule, we can see that the nuns in this monastery pay special attention to both meditation practice and labouring. Thus the spirit of *chán-jiāo-tóng-hàng* (禪教同行), that is to say, harmonizing the practice of meditation, the study of sūtras, the observance of vinaya and labouring, based on the famous insistence of the Chinese Ch'an master named *Bǎi-zhàng-buái-hǎi* (百丈懷海, 749-814), viz. *one day without labouring, one day without eating* (一日不作、一日不食), is applied strictly in these nunneries as well as monasteries.

Apart from the times for labouring, the Viên Chiếu Ch'an Nunnery (圓照禪院) also spends times for its nuns to study Buddhist sūtras in the afternoon such as the *Fo-i-chiao-ching* (佛遺教經, *Discourse on the Buddha's Last Teachings*), the *Pa-ta-jên-chüeh-ching* (八大人覺經, *Discourse on the Eight Enlightened Things of the Great*), the *Ssü-shih-êrh-chang-ching* (四十二章經, *Discourse on the Fourty Chapters*), the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* (圓覺經, *Discourse on the Full Enlightenment*), the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (金剛經, *Diamond Sūtra*), etc.⁽⁴⁸⁾

In a month, the first, third and fourth weeks are applied in accordance with the above schedule, but the second week, viz. from the lunar 8th to 15th days, the nuns follow the so-called "tuần tĩnh tu" (靜修旬, "*week of calm practice*"). Generally the schedule applied for this week is the same as with the above, but the difference is that based on its purpose of "*calm practice*" (靜修), instead of labouring, the nuns spend their most time on sitting in meditation and walking meditation (*caṅkamati*, 經行).

One of the outstanding characteristics, which is quite different from the tradition of practice as seen in other Mahāyāna temples of monks and nuns, is that the confession rite performed at every night at these nunneries and monasteries. Instead of paying worship to the Buddhas' names as mentioned above, the main scripture utilised for the confession rite in these temples is the *Phổ Thuyết Sắc Thân* (普說色身, *Wisely Proclaiming Rūpakāya*), written by the Vietnamese King Thánh Tông (聖宗, 1218-1277) of the Lý Dynasty (李朝, 1010-1225). The content of this scripture refers to the origin of this body, its existence and destruction and the contemplation on it to be free from the attachment to it. Right at the

beginning of the scripture, the author affirms that:

“All of you ! The body is the root of suffering and its substance is cause of kamma (action). If you yourselves consider it as true, then you admit the enemy to be your son.”
(諸人等、身爲苦本、質是業因、若自以此爲真、也是認賊爲子。)⁽⁴⁹⁾

After this scripture in Vietnamese translation has been recited, next is the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*) and then twelve times of paying worship to the Buddhas and Patriarchs of India, China and Vietnam. These 12 titles can be listed as following:

- a. The past Buddhas.
- b. The present Buddhas.
- c. The future Buddhas.
- d. The first Indian Patriarch Mahākāśyapa (摩訶迦葉).
- e. The second Indian Patriarch Ānanda (阿難陀).
- f. The first Chinese Patriarch Bodhidharma (菩提達磨).
- g. The second Chinese Patriarch Hui-kě (慧可).
- h. The sixth Chinese Patriarch Hui-neng (慧能).
- i. The first Vietnamese Patriarch of the Trúc Lâm Ch’an Lineage (竹林禪派), Trần Nhân Tông (陳仁宗).⁽⁵⁰⁾
- k. The second Vietnamese Patriarch of the Trúc Lâm Ch’an Lineage (竹林禪派), Pháp Loa (法螺).⁽⁵¹⁾
- l. The third Vietnamese Patriarch of the Trúc Lâm Ch’an Lineage (竹林禪派), Huyền Quang (玄光).⁽⁵²⁾
- m. The Ch’an Masters of India, China and Vietnam in general.⁽⁵³⁾

One of outstanding characteristics concerning to the mode of practice in Ch’an monasteries and nunneries is *nhập thất* (入室), which means entering a small hut for a long or short time depending on one’s vow without making contact with

anybody to calmly cultivate one's mind. Under the leadership of Most Ven. Thích Thanh Từ (釋清慈), the founder of the system of these monasteries and nunneries, all his disciples, monks and nuns, must enter the hut to calmly practice once during his or her life. Naturally one can enter the hut many times depending on his own vow. Moreover, except beginning practitioners, all members residing in the temple three years more must do that in turn.

There are two ways of entering the hut, viz. special and formal.

1. Special kind: is specialized for members of the Board of Duties after his or her term of duty to enter the hut three months.

2. Formal kind: is for other members of the temple who must enter the hut one month in turn.

The areas of entering the huts are located seperately from the living areas of monks or nuns. Whilst in the hut, one must follow the following regulations settled by Most Ven. Thích Thanh Từ (釋清慈):

- Not studying books.
- Not listening to recording tapes of Buddhist scriptures.
- Not reading newspapers or magazines.
- Not seeing visitors or relatives.
- Concentrating on meditation practice.
- The schedule applied during the time of entering hut is freely regulated by the very person, but in a day one hour of outdoor labouring is necessary.

When one enters the hut, he or she is often assisted by the members of the temple in supplying meals everyday. Moreover, in every 3 months Most Ven. Thích Thanh Từ (釋清慈) will come to the hut so that the cultivator can explain his or her way of practice or obstacles as well as questions during his or her time of cultivation. It is said that the mode of meditation practice while entering the hut is *quiet reflection* (默照) without utilising the koans (公案).⁽⁵⁴⁾

Naturally nowadays there are some monks and nuns of this Ch'an system

who are entering huts. Actually in 1977, when I came to the Viên Chiếu Ch'an Nunnery (圓照禪院) to do field-work, there were 8 nuns who were practicing in the huts in this temple.

3. Remarks

In comparison with the schedule applied at nun temples with Ch'an nunneries, some notable differences can be seen as following:

a. In stead of reciting some sūtras and *dhāraṇīs* such as the *Śūraṅgama-mantra* (楞嚴神咒), the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *The Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), etc. for the early morning session and the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*) for the afternoon session at nun temples, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*) is mainly utilised in the night confession rite in Ch'an nunneries as well as monasteries. Thus the recital of other sūtras and *dhāraṇīs* apart from the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *The Heart Sūtra*) has been paid no special attention in these nunneries.

b. In stead of the early morning session of reciting the sūtras and *dhāraṇīs* as seen in temples of monks and nuns, the nuns in nunneries also wake up early to concentrate on meditation practice.

c. As referred in former chapter, "*Monks—Life and Activities*", a special confession rite is only held twice a month in other temples of monks and nuns. However, the case of Ch'an monasteries and nunneries is different. They often hold the confession rite every night.

d. As mentioned above, the mode of *nhập thất* (入室, entering hut) seems very popular in Ch'an monasteries as well as nunneries and is an outstanding feature which cannot be found in other Mahāyāna temples of monks or nuns in Vietnam. Although there are some cases of monks and nuns living in the Đại Ninh Area, Đức Trọng District, Lâm Đồng Province, who also perform the mode of *nhập thất* (入室, entering hut); however, their way of practice while residing in the huts is different from the above mentioned one of monks and nuns of the Ch'an system. That is to

say, they concentrate mainly on either reciting the Buddhas' names (念佛, *nembutsu* in Japanese) or reciting sūtras or maintaining *dhāraṇīs* (陀羅尼).

II. Special schedules applied for the summer retreat

Beside the above-mentioned schedules applied for daily practice as seen in Vietnamese nun temples, there is a special schedule for the 3 months of summer retreat (*vassa*, 安居). Because of the significance and vitality of these three months, the birth of this special schedule is inevitable. Here I would like to introduce the schedule of a nun temple in Hue City, one of a Ch'an nunnery and one of a center of summer retreat for nuns in Hochiminh City.

1. Special schedule of a nun temple in Hue City

As referred to above, once more I will to introduce the special schedule for summer retreat applied at the Hồng Ân Ni Tự (鴻恩尼寺, Hồng Ân Nun Temple) of Hue City.

- 3: 00: waking up, striking the great bell
- 3: 30: early morning session (reciting sūtras)
- 5: 00: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 7: 00 ~ 10h 00: reciting sūtras
- 10: 30: noon offering rite
- 11: 00: special rite for having lunch
- 11: 30 ~ 13: 00: taking rest
- 14: 00 ~ 16: 00: reciting sūtras or making confession (freely)
- 16: 30: afternoon session (reciting sūtras)
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 19: 00: striking the great bell
- 19: 30 ~ 21: 00: the Pure Land rite, reciting the Buddhas' names
- 21: 00 ~ 22: 00: doing homework and reviewing lessons (free time)
- 21: 00: sleeping⁽⁵⁵⁾

Thus in comparison with the above normal schedule applied at this nun temple, some different points can be found as follows:

- Instead of the time for doing farming or labouring, nuns spend their most time for mind-cultivation by reciting sūtras, confessing with the mode of paying worship to the Buddhas' names.

- Instead of having lunch at the dining room as normally, during the 3 months of retreat nuns often concentrate at a special hall such as the Patriarch Hall (祖堂), etc. to perform a special rite of having lunch, which is called *quá đường* (過堂) in Vietnamese, roughly translated as the *Hall of Offences*. Therefore, the rite of having lunch during the 3 months of summer retreat is also called the *Quá Đường Rite*, which both for monks and nuns is the same and was introduced in the former Chapter I: *Monks—Daily Life and Activities*, so I will not repeat it here.

- The main sūtras utilised for recitation in the summer retreat are important Mahāyāna scriptures such as the *Flower-Adorning Sūtra* (*Mahāvaiṣṭya-buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtras*, 華嚴經), the *Nirvāṇa-Entering Sūtra* (*Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, 大般涅槃經), the *Diamond Sūtra* (*Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā*, 金剛經), the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, 法華經), etc.; and some sūtras utilised for confession such as the *Kinh Thủy Sám* (水懺經, *Shui-ch'an-ching*) or the *Kinh Lương Hoàng Sám* (梁皇懺經, *Liang-huang-ch'an-ching*), etc. by reciting each Buddha's name with one time of paying worship to the title. These two last scriptures are also utilised popularly among the layfollowers.

2. Special schedule of a Ch'an nunnery in Southern Vietnam

One famous representative of the Ch'an system in Vietnam today is the Viên Chiếu Nunnery (圓照禪院), whose special schedule for the summer retreat is as follows:

- 3: 00: waking up
- 3: 15 ~ 5: 00: sitting in meditation, then confessing after the meditation
- 6: 00: having breakfast

- 6: 30 ~ 10: 00: labouring
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 12: 00 ~ 13: 00: taking noon rest
- 13: 00 ~ 14: 00: listening to dhamma talks, reading Ch'an books
- 14: 00 ~ 16: 00: studying sūtras
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 18: 30: night confession rite
- 19: 30 ~ 20: 30: sitting and walking meditation (*caṅkamaṭi*)
- 21: 00: sleeping⁽⁵⁶⁾

Then there are 2 different points from the normal schedule:

- A confession session is added after the meditation practice in the early morning as seen in this special schedule for the summer retreat. Thus there are two sessions of confession, one in the early morning and one at night, applied in the 3 months of summer retreat.

- A program of listening to dhamma talks and reading Ch'an books is laid down especially for the summer retreat in Ch'an nunneries.

Apart from these, the rest are the same as with the normal schedule for daily practice.

3. Special schedule of a center of summer retreat in Hochiminh City

Every year together with monks, the Vietnamese nuns also enter upon the summer retreat. There are two modes of entering upon the summer retreat: at one's own temple and at concentrated centers. The latter, which cannot be seen in Hue City, is very popular in Southern Vietnam, particularly Hochiminh City, where many concentrated centers of summer retreat for nuns have been established yearly such as the Huê Lâm Ni Viện (華林尼院, Huê Lâm Nunnery), Dược Sư Ni Viện (藥師尼院, Dược Sư Nunnery), Phổ Đà Ni Tự (普陀尼寺, Phổ Đà Nun Temple), etc. Among which the Huê Lâm Ni Viện (慧林尼院, Huê Lâm Nunnery) is considered as a very big foundation of nuns with its branches such as the Huê Lâm II, the Hải Vân (海雲), the Phổ Đà (普陀) and the Quy Sơn (滙山) in

Vũng Tàu City, or the Pháp Hoa Tịnh Viện (法華淨院) in Tùng Nghĩa, Đức Trọng District. Every year this temple holds a concentrated center for nuns from anywhere coming to enter upon the summer retreat. For example, in 1997 the temple had 65 nuns officially entering the summer retreat and 45 nuns as followers of summer retreat (從夏者). Here I would like to introduce its special schedule for summer retreat.

- 3: 00: waking up
- 3: 30: early morning session (reciting sūtras)
- 5: 30: having breakfast
- 6: 30: doing assigned jobs
- 8: 00: confession rite
- 10: 30: special rite for having lunch, walking in meditation (*caṅkamati*)
- 12: 00 ~ 13: 00: taking noon rest
- 13: 30: self-study
- 16: 00: afternoon session (reciting sūtras)
- 18: 00: the Pure Land rite
- 19: 30 ~ 20: 00: sitting in meditation
- 21: 30: sleeping⁽⁵⁷⁾

Looking at this special schedule, one can see that the time for mind-cultivation through reciting sūtras, making confession, practicing meditation is taken seriously in the 3 months of summer retreat. Here some remarkable characteristics can be found out as follows:

- During these 3 months, the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association often holds preaching courses for the concentrated centers of summer retreat in Hochiminh City and other provinces. On the spirit of concentrating on practice and study during the summer retreat, the Central Board of Dhamma Propagation appoints some talented monks to come to these centers for dhamma preaching. It is on this occasion that nuns can further advance their knowledge and understanding of Buddhism beside the time of attending at Buddhist schools on the one hand, and on the other hand the Buddhist layfollowers can participate in these courses. For example, the weekly class of Buddhist teachings held at the Dược Sư Ni Viện (藥師尼院, Dược Sư Nunnery) the summer retreat of 1988

attracted nearly 200 Buddhist layfollowers coming to attend.⁽⁵⁸⁾

- The mode of sitting in meditation (座禪, *zazen* in Japanese) is paid more attention in the summer retreat than in normal days.

III. Daily life of nuns

As seen in Hue City nowadays, likened to monk temples, most nun temples live in self-sufficiency. Naturally there is some support from the Buddhist layfollowers, but this cannot cover the daily life for the members in the temple. Therefore, nuns in Hue City formerly have had to do farming, plant vegetables, produce hand-made goods such as bamboo baskets, incense sticks, etc.

However, today most Vietnamese nuns have the tendency of advancing the Buddhist knowledge as well as understanding, then young nuns have attended Buddhist schools operated by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha throughout the country. Therefore nuns have no time for doing farming or labouring. In these cases, they must depend on the permanent support of their own families. And also because of not being able to cover the daily expenses in the temple, in reality some nun temples are seen to have laid down the regulation that if those who wish to go forth should have the permanent support of their families. This is a difference with former situation which the temple covered everything for its members. This case can also be seen in some monk temples in Vietnam.

The reason for that can be understood here that different with monks, who always do Buddhist services for the Buddhist layfollowers such as the service of praying for safety and peace (求安), or the service of praying for being reborn in the Pure Land (求超), or the service of *dāna-offering rite* (施食式) for the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼), etc., then monks can gain the firm and permanent support of the layfollowers; however the Vietnamese nuns don't perform these services.

In reality, nuns in Hue City also take their parts in these above-mentioned rites only for reciting some sūtras. Apart from young nuns, as seen in nun temples nowadays, other nuns often cover their daily life by making incense sticks, Autumn full-moon cakes, or some kinds of cakes for the Vietnamese traditional Tet (New Year), etc. as in the case of the following temples: Hồng Ân Ni Tự (鴻恩尼寺, Hồng

Ân Nun Temple), the Diệu Viên Ni Tự (妙圓尼寺, Diệu Viên Nun Temple), etc. in Hue City,⁽⁵⁹⁾ or the Huê Lâm Ni Viện (華林尼院, Huê Lâm Nunnery), the Từ Thuyền Ni Tự (慈船尼寺, Từ Thuyền Nun Temple), the Dược Sư Ni Viện (藥師尼院, Dược Sư Nunnery), etc. in Hochiminh City.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Those nuns who go to Buddhist schools are freed from these jobs, but apart from the time at school, they often also help other nuns to do these jobs.

Another mode of business as seen in municipal nun temples is opening bookstores at temples for selling Buddhist books, etc., or tailoring Buddhist clothes for monks, nuns as well as layfollowers, or selling vegetarian meals, which is very popular in Hochiminh City's nun temples.

However, the case of Ch'an nunneries is different. That is to say, they lead their lives by only doing farming or labouring, not by doing any other businesses like the other nun temples do.

In paralld way of doing Buddhist services with monks, the Vietnamese nuns tend to social charitable activities such as becoming nurses or doctors at hospitals, organizing "Love" classes or kindergartens or orphanages to nourish and educate orphans at their own temples, such as the well-known Đức Sơn Orphanage (德山孤兒院) at the Đức Sơn nun temple in Hue City.

Apart from these activities run by nuns, one remarkable characteristic which should be referred to here is the followance of the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八敬法 or 八重法) of the Vietnamese nuns laid down by the Buddha in his lifetime. These rules, I think, are means for creating stability and harmony in the saṅgha, not for distinguishing among classes of monks and nuns. The followance of these rules are observed throughout Vietnam in such ways as the saṅgha of nuns often guiding their newly-ordained *bhikkhunīs* to the saṅgha of monks for justification and re-ordination, or nuns always asking for precepts at the days of *Uposatha* (布薩, *Precept Recital*), *Summer Retreat* (*vassa*, 安居), and *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *Invitation*).

E. Summary

In this chapter I have discussed some of the matters concerning the contemporary modes of practice, some representative schedules for daily life and special schedules for the summer retreat applied in the Vietnamese nun temples. Traditional modes of practice as well as the followance to the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八敬法 or 八重法) are remarkable characteristic of the Vietnamese nuns. However, in the role of propagating Buddhism, of the Vietnamese nuns are weaker than that of monks.

Nowadays, the superior nuns tend to permitting their disciples to attend secular as well as Buddhist courses at worldly schools and Buddhist schools, and furthermore, some young nuns have gone abroad to study Buddhist teachings at universities in some countries such as India, China, and others. Thus in the future, these nuns with their knowledge and understanding about Buddhism, can make considerable contributions to the propagation of the Buddha's teachings more effectively than before, and thus strenthen the role and position of nuns in the Buddhist community in Vietnam.

Note:

1. See The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kỷ yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Lần Thứ IV* (*Bulletin of the Fourth Conference of All-Nation Buddhist Representatives*). Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1999, pp. 14, 15.
2. Ibid. pp. 14, 15.
3. It is necessary to digress considerably to explain here that according to the study of an outstanding Vietnamese Buddhist scholar, Lê Mạnh Thát, in his *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh: Khảo Cứu, Phiên Dịch và Chú Thích* (*A Collection of the Quintessence of the Ch'an Garden—Study, Translation and Notes*. Tu Thủ Phật Học Vạn Hạnh [Collection Works of Buddhist Studies of the Van Hanh University], 1976), there are 3 similar works of the *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh*: one of the Trần Dynasty (?), one of the Lê Dynasty (published in 1715) and one of the Nguyễn Dynasty (published in 1858). These three similar works and the *Đại Nam Thiền Uyển Truyền Đăng Tập Lục* (大南禪苑傳燈集錄, *Recorded Transmission of the Lamps in the Ch'an Garden of the Dai Nam*), Vinītaruci's Chinese name is written as 比尼多流支, not 毘尼多流支. However, in his work “Vietnamese Buddhism” of Chintetsu Gaku (Mahāyāna Zen, No. 680, 681, 682: Vietnamese Buddhism (4), (5) & (6). Chuo bukkyosha, Showa 55 [陳徹学、「ベトナムの仏教 (4), (5), (6)」、中央仏教社、『大乘禪』第680, 683, 688号、昭和55年]), while referring to Vinītaruci, has utilised the letter 毘. I am not sure if this is a misunderstanding or not, but anyway, both letters 比 and 毘 are pronounced as “tỳ” in Vietnamese.
4. Ch'an Master Vinītaruci of the Pháp Vân Temple (法雲寺), Cổ Châu Village, Long Biên Province, belonged the Brahman family, arrived in Vietnam in 580 and settled down at the temple. He translated the *Dhāraṇī Sūtra* (總持經) in one volume and is considered as the founder of the first Vietnamese Ch'an Sect possessing 19 generations. For more his informations, see Cuong Tu Nguyen: *Zen in Medieval Vietnam—A Study and Translation of the Thiền Uyển Tập Anh*. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 1997, pp. 164-165.
5. Lord Phụng Yết (奉輓王), also called Lord Phụng Càn (奉乾王), as the title of Lý Nhật Trung, which was dominated by his father, King Lý Thái Tông (李太宗, 1000-1054 in reign) in 1035. Because of the name taboo under the Trần Dynasty (陳朝, 1225-1400), the name Càn (乾) was changed to Yết (輓). However, in the “*Thiền Sư Việt Nam*” (禪師越南) (Published by the Municipal Buddhist

Association of Hochiminh City, 1995, p. 162) of Thích Thanh Từ, he translated the word “輒” in Vietnamese way of pronunciation as “Loát” . I think this is a mispronunciation.

6. Chân Đăng Province was formerly situated in the area of Tam Nông, Hưng Hóa, nowadays Hưng Phú Province, Northern Vietnam.
7. Ch’an Master Chân Không (真空, 1045-1100) was a successor of the 16th generation of the Vinitaruci Ch’an School.
8. Its Chinese original version is 以一切衆生病、是故我病. These are well-known words of *Vimalakīrti* (維摩詰) in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* (維摩詰所說經), T 14.544b21.
9. Its original Sanskrit version is *ye māṃ rupeṇa cādrakṣur ye māṃ ghoṣeṇa cānvayub mithyā-prabhāṇa-prasṛtā na māṃ drakṣyanti te janāb* (See Edward Conze: *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*. Rome: Is. M. E. O., 1974, p. 56). And its Chinese version is 若以色見我、以音聲求我、是人行邪道、不能見如來.
10. Hội Tường Đại Khánh (會祥大慶, 1110~1119) is one of eras during the reign of King Lý Nhân Tông (李仁宗, 1072-1128 in reign) of the Lý Dynasty (李朝, 1009-1226).
11. Adapted from the English translation of Cuong Tu Nguyen in his *Zen in Medieval Vietnam: A Study and Translation of the Thiên Uyển Tập Anh* (University of Hawai’i Press, Honolulu, 1997, pp. 197, 198).

It is necessary to explain here that although I adapted the translation for my thesis, I don’t agree with his translation of the word “禪” into “Zen”. Because the tradition of practicing meditation in Vietnam was officially from China, not Japan; while the word “Zen” is another way of Japanese pronunciation of the word “禪”. Therefore, I think, it is better to use the word “Ch’an” than “Zen”.

The biography of Nun Dieu Nhan in the Chinese version is as following:

“僊遊扶董鄉。香海院。妙因尼師。諱玉。嬌奉輒王長女。天資淑靚。言行有則。李聖宗鞠於中宮。及笄。適真登州牧黎氏。黎卒。自誓孀居。義不再嫁。一日嘆曰。我觀世間。一切諸法。猶如夢如幻。况浮榮之輩。其可恃乎。於是傾奩捨施。落髮出家。就扶董真空受菩薩戒。究問心要。空爲賜號。咱於尼院住持。其修律行禪。得三摩地。傑爲尼中宗匠。有來求學。師必教習大乘。且云。但自性還源。則頓漸可隨入矣。常寂疾忌。聲色。言語。有學者問云。一切衆生病。是故我病。何爲每忌聲色。師奉教云。若以色見我。以音聲求我。是人行邪道。不能見如來。進云。何爲宴坐。師云。本來無去。進云。何爲不言。師云。道本無言。會祥大慶四年。六月初一日。疾告。說偈云。生老病死。自古常然。欲求出離。解縛添纏。迷之求佛。惑之求禪。禪佛不求。枉口

無言。乃淨髮澡身。跏坐而逝。壽七十有二。”

(See *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh* [禪苑集英, *A Collection of the Quintessence of the Ch'an Garden*]. Hanoi: The Hán Nôm Institute, Microfilm # 1267, pp. 66b-67b)

12. According to my investigation on March, 2nd 1999 at the Hồng Ân Nun Temple (鴻恩尼寺) located in Hue City, the regulated course of practice as a *điều* presently applied in this temple is 3 years.
13. The case of the Hồng Ân Nun Temple (鴻恩尼寺) is 17.
14. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giới* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*). Trans. by Trí Quang. Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1996, pp. 128, 339.
15. See part *Second Step—Celebration for Sāmaṇera* of the above chapter.
16. See *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), Chinese version preserved at the Hồng Ân Nun Temple (鴻恩尼寺), Hue City, pp. 60-84.
17. See part *Second Step—Celebration for Sāmaṇera* of the above chapter.
18. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giới* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*). Trans. by Trí Quang. Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1996, pp. 270, 415.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 402.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 257, 408.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 278, 419.
22. The case of the Hồng Ân Nun Temple (鴻恩尼寺) of Hue City is 2 years.
23. Vinaya Pitakam, Vol. II, Cullavagga X, 1. 4, P.T.S.
24. See *Sa Di và Sa Di Ni Giới* (沙彌及沙彌尼戒, *Precepts of Sāmaṇera and Sāmaṇerī*). Trans. by Trí Quang. Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1996, pp. 318, 319.
25. See Prof. Akira Hirakawa: *Monastic Discipline for the Buddhist Nuns: An English Translation of the Chinese Text of the Mahāsāṃghika Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya*. Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1982, pp. 54, 55.
26. See *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), p. 106.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-131.
28. Vinaya Pitakam, Vol. II, Cullavagga X, 17. 1, P.T.S. Also see Prof. Akira Hirakawa: *Monastic Discipline for the Buddhist Nuns: An English Translation of the Chinese Text of the Mahāsāṃghika Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya*. Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1982, pp. 60-62.

In comparison with the stumbling-blocks which should be asked before the higher ordination as listed in the *Monastic Discipline for the Buddhist Nuns: An English Translation of the Chinese Text of the Mahāsāṃghika Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya* of Prof. Akira Hirakawa, there are 32 items as follows:

- (1) Do you or do you not have a mother and a father, a husband ?
- (2) Have you already sought a *Preceptor Bhikkhunī* ?
- (3) Have you been equipped with the five robes and the bowl ?
- (4) Have you completed the two years' study in the *sikkhamānā* precepts ?
- (5) Have you already performed the kamma of being taken as a disciple of a Bhikkhunī Preceptor ?
- (6) What is your name ?
- (7) Have you or have you not killed your father and mother ?
- (8) Have you or have you not killed an Arhat ?
- (9) Have you or have you not disrupted the Order ?
- (10) Have you or have you not, with malicious mind, drawn blood from the body of the Buddha ?
- (11) Have you or have you not broken the pure precepts of the *bhikkhu* ?
- (12) Have you or have you not lived in the Order as a thief ?
- (13) Have you or have you not lived a double religious life ?
- (14) Have you or have you not received the *upasampadā* ordination by yourself ?
- (15) Have you received the *upasampadā* ordination before ?
- (16) Are you or are you not a female slave ?
- (17) Are you or are you not an adopted daughter ?
- (18) Do you or do you not beat debts to others ?
- (19) Are you or are you not a female warrior ?
- (20) Have you or have you not conspired against the family of the king ?
- (21) Are you or are you not a woman ?
- (22) Are you or are you not a barren woman ?
- (23) Have you or have you not suffered injury to your sexual organs ?
- (24) Have you or have you not joined anus and vagina ?
- (25) Have you or have you not damaged your public regions ?
- (26) Have you or have you not lost your breasts ?
- (27) Have you or have you not only one breast ?
- (28) Have you or have you not menstruation at all times ?
- (29) Have you no menstruation at all ?
- (30) Have you or have you not a regular monthly menstruation ?
- (31) Are you or are you not impotent ?
- (32) Have you any of the following diseases: scabies, malaria, leprosy,

carbuncles, hemorrhoids, uncontrollable bowel movements, yellow fever, fever and ague, coughing, tuberculosis, epilepsy, fever, swelling by gas, swelling by water, swelling in the stomach. Besides these, have you any other diseases of the body ?

29. See *An Additional Collection of Precept Ordination for Nuns* (刪補受諸戒壇尼集), pp. 118-120.
30. See above chapter.
31. Vinaya Pitakam, Vol. II, Cullavagga X, 1. 4, P.T.S.
32. See Prof. Akira Hirakawa: *Monastic Discipline for the Buddhist Nuns: An English Translation of the Chinese Text of the Mahāsāṃghika Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya*. Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1982, pp. 70-76.
33. This nun temple is located at Thủy Xuân Commune, Hue City. The schedule is based on my field-work on March 2nd, 1999.
34. See Taishō 19, pp. 133-136.
35. Ibid., p. 136.
36. Ibid., p. 137.
37. See Taishō 20, pp. 106-111.
38. See MZ 129, pp. 28-29.
39. See Taishō 20, p. 110.
40. Ibid, p. 106.
41. See Taishō 20, pp. 660-666.
42. 尸棄如來、毘舍浮如來、拘留孫如來、拘那含牟尼如來、迦葉如來、亦復讚歎是五十三佛名。(See Taishō 20, sūtra No. 1161, p. 664a)
43. The *Four Grave Prohibitions* (*cātu-pārājikāpatti*, 四波羅夷罪 or 四重罪) are killing, stealing, carnality and lying.
44. The *Five Deadly Sins* or *Five Unintermitted Offences* (*pañcānantariya-āpatti*, 五逆罪、五無間罪) are patricide, matricide, killing an arahant, shedding the blood of a Buddha, destroying the harmony of the saṅgha.
45. 若善男子善女人及餘一切衆生、得聞是五十三佛名者、是人於百千萬億阿僧祇劫不墮惡道。若復有人能至心敬禮五十三佛者、除滅四重五逆等皆悉清淨。(See Taishō 20, sūtra No. 1161, p. 664a)
46. See Taishō 21, pp. 473-485.
47. This temple is located at Phước Bình Commune, Long Thành District, Đồng Nai Province, Southern Vietnam. The number of its nuns and its daily schedule are based on my field-work on July 6th, 1997.
48. Also based on my field-work on July 6th, 1997.
49. See Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam* (禪師越南, *Vietnam's Ch'an Masters*),

published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1995, p. 226.

50. King Trần Nhân Tông (陳仁宗, 1258-1308), the third king of the Trần Dynasty (陳朝, 1225-1400), was the eldest son of King Trần Thánh Tông (陳聖宗, 1258-1278 in reign). The former ascended the throne in 1279 at the age of 21, but in 1293 he handed over the throne to his son, Trần Anh Tông (陳英宗, 1293-1314 in reign) and became a Buddhist monk practicing the mode of *dhūta* (頭陀, scrupulous practice) at Mount Yên Tử (安子山). He died in 1308 at the age of 51. He is considered as the founder of the Vietnamese Trúc Lâm-Yên Tử Ch'an Lineage (竹林安子禪派). Among his disciple, there are two famous ones, Pháp Loa (法螺, 1284-1330), the second Patriarch and Huyền Quang (玄光, 1254-1334), the third Patriarch of the lineage. (See Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam* [禪師越南, *Vietnam's Ch'an Masters*], published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1995, pp. 288-308.)
51. Ch'an Master Pháp Loa (法螺, 1284-1330) was born in 1284 and went forth at the age of 21. Dying at the age of 47, he was the remarkable heir of Trần Nhân Tông (陳仁宗, 1258-1308) and was handed down the robes and bowl by the latter to be the second Patriarch of the Trúc Lâm-Yên Tử Ch'an Lineage (竹林安子禪派). (Ibid., pp. 309-318)
52. Ch'an Master Huyền Quang (玄光, 1254-1334), the successor of Pháp Loa (法螺, 1284-1330) as the third Patriarch of the lineage, was born in 1254 and went forth in 1305 with Trần Nhân Tông (陳仁宗, 1258-1308). In 1317, he was handed down the robes and bowl of Trần Nhân Tông by Huyền Quang to be the third Patriarch and later in 1334 he died at the age of 80. (Ibid., pp. 323-325)
53. Based on my field-work on July 6th, 1997 at Long Thành District, Đồng Nai Province, Southern Vietnam.
54. Ibid.
55. Based on my field-work on March 2nd, 1999 in Hue City, Middle Area of Vietnam.
56. Based on my field-work on July 6th, 1997 at Long Thành District, Đồng Nai Province, Southern Vietnam.
57. Based on my field-work on two days, 7th and 9th of July, 1997 in Hochiminh City, Southern Vietnam.
58. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*), No. 124 (August 15th, 1988), p. 7.

59. Based on my-field work on March 2nd, 1999 in Hue City, Middle Area of Vietnam.
60. Based on my field work on two days, 7th and 9th of July, 1997 in Hochiminh City, Southern Vietnam.

CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM
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—A Focus on the Hue Area—

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(2)

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Chapter III

Traditional Buddhist Rituals & Annual Festivals in Vietnam

A. Two kinds of rites

Along with the propagation of the Buddha's Teachings by giving Dhamma talks, practicing meditation, etc., Buddhist rites also plays a very important position in propagating as effectively and concretely as possible those Teachings, presentation of which can reach to the deepest heart of the human being through the Buddhist rituals. The rites also are the essential means and need for man to be able to approach religion as well as Buddhism. In addition, Buddhist rites are also a way of expressing the worship and reverence of the Buddhists to the Buddha as well as holy ones through the modes of *tân* (讚, *melismatic chant*) and *tụng* (誦, *sūtra prayer*). In combination with annual festivals, the Buddhist rites become a spiritual meal in the lives of all Buddhists. They embody the cultural essence of a nation and Buddhist tradition in the country. There are many rites which mainly are performed by monks and are contemporarily divided into two kinds: one for forth-goers, viz. monks and nuns, and one for the laity.

I. Rites for monks and nuns

They consist of the rituals and ceremonies held at their temples such as the *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮) performed twice a month, the rites for celebrating the anniversaries of the Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. Moreover, there are special funeral rites (喪式) for the deceased monk or nun during the period of funeral up to carrying his or her coffin to put in the stupa. Such a set of funeral rites (喪式) includes the *Rite of Putting Body into the Coffin* (入殮禮), the *Rite of Receiving Funeral Clothes and "Opening" the Sūtra* (成服開經禮), the *Rite of Offering*

Foods to the Awakened Spirit (薦覺靈禮), the *Rite of Bringing the Spirit's Tablet, Picture and Incense Burner to See the Buddhas and Patriarchs* (奉靈模禮佛祖禮), the *Rite of Confessing to the Spirit on the Eve [of Moving the Coffin]* (初夜告覺靈禮), the *Rite of Moving the Coffin* (發行禮), the *Rite of Opening the Dark Path* (開冥路禮), the *Rite of Putting the Coffin into the Stupa* (入塔禮), the *Rite of Enshrining the Tablet* (安座靈禮), the *Rite of Hanging the Photo* (掛真容禮).⁽¹⁾

Besides, there are some important after-funeral rites such as the *Rite of Expressing the Gratitude to the Stupa* (謝塔禮), the *Rite of Offering [Foods] to the Master on the First Week* (初旬供尊師禮),⁽²⁾ the *Rite of Offering [Foods] to the Master on the Last Seventh Week* (終七齋旬供尊師禮), the *Rite of Offering [Food] to the Master One Year After Death* (小祥供尊師禮), the *Rite of Offering [Food] to the Master Two Year After Death* (大祥供尊師禮), the *Anniversary Rite of the Master's Passing-Away* (諱日供尊師禮).

II. Rites for the laity

As for the Buddhist services of Vietnamese monks in the mode of performing Buddhist rites and ceremonies, there are two kinds of services: Buddhist services for the dead and for the living persons.

1. Buddhist services for the dead

Often called *Lễ Cầu Siêu* (求超 or 祈超禮) in Vietnamese, meaningly *the rite of praying for being reborn in the Pure Land* (淨土) of the *Amitābha Buddha* (阿彌陀佛), these services can be classified into two groups: funeral rites and after-funeral rites.

a. Funeral rites consist of the ones which are likened to those for monks and nuns, but their names are something different. They are: the *Rite of Putting Dead Body into the Coffin* (入殮禮), the *Rite of Calling the Soul of the Dead* (復魂禮), the *Rite of "Opening" the Sūtra and Receiving Funeral Clothes* (開經成服禮), the *Breakfast-Offering Rite* (朝奠禮), the *Lunch-Offering Rite* (午供禮), the *Rite of Bringing the*

Spirit's Tablet, Picture and Incense Burner to See Ancestors (謁祖禮), the *Rite of Offering Foods to the Hungry Ghosts* (施餓鬼禮), the *Dinner-Offering Ritual* (夕奠禮), the *Great Rite of Praying* (大禮祈禱), the *Rite of Informing to the God of Roads and Paths* (告道路禮), the *Coffin-Moving Rite* (遣奠·移棺禮), the *Offering Rite in the Midway* (濟路中禮), the *Offering Rite at the Grave* (治穴禮), the *Rite of Putting the Coffin into the Grave* (下穴禮), the *Rite of Enshrining the Tablet* (安靈禮).⁽³⁾

b. After-death rites, which consist of the ones which begin with the first week from the day when the dead died until later on, are the *Offering Rite on the First Week* (初旬禮), the *Rite of Offering [Foods] on the Last Seventh Week* (終七齋旬禮), the *Offering Rite One Year After Death* (小祥禮), the *Offering Rite Two Years After Death* (大祥禮), the *Anniversary Rite* (諱日禮).

All these rites were recorded in the *Thọ Mai Gia Lễ* (壽梅家禮, *Tho Mai's Family Rituals*), a precious book referring to funeral rituals composed by a Vietnamese Buddhist layman named *Thọ Mai* (壽梅) who lived under the Late Lê Dynasty (後黎朝, 1428-1776). However, most rites performed nowadays in Vietnam have been simplified so much in accordance with the present circumstances as well as the living environment.

c. Apart from these above-mentioned rites, there are some special and holy rituals such as the *Great Rite of Offering Foods to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮), the *Rite for Release from False Charges* (解冤拔渡禮).⁽⁴⁾

2. Buddhist services for the living persons

These rites, often called *Lễ Cầu An* (求安 or 祈安禮) in Vietnamese, meaningly praying rites for safety and living in happiness, include the praying rite on the New Year, the praying rite to celebrate a new house, a new store, new restaurant, etc., the rite of praying for the sick, for a victim of an accident, the rite of praying for the wedding, the rite of enshrining the Buddha's statue or image, etc.

Here, in this chapter I would like to refer to some important rites of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition performed frequently in temples such as the *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮), and some other rites for monks and nuns as well as for the laity are seen to be very popular in Vietnam nowadays. Beside these, some other annual festivals, both national and Buddhist, such as the Tet holiday, the *Buddha Jayanti Festival* (佛誕會), the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會), etc. are Vietnamese modes of rich and multi-coloured activities which it is necessary to introduce here.

B. Buddhist rites for monks and nuns—The *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮)

I. The *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮)

This rite, also called *Lễ Chúc Tân* (祝讚禮) in Vietnamese, is considered as an important and holy ceremony in Vietnamese temples of both monks and nuns. As its title is, the rite is always performed with the purpose of celebrating an important event such as the anniversary day of the Sakyamuni Buddha's renunciation, entering Nibbāna or enlightenment, etc. and at the same time the praising of his innumerable merits.

Depending on the regulated lunar anniversary days of the Buddhas and Bodhisattas,⁽⁵⁾ the rite is often celebrated at about 4 or 5 o' clock of the early morning session of the day. Apart from these anniversary days, the Vietnamese Buddhists often hold this rite twice a month on the eve of the *Uposatha* days, aiming at paying memory and worship to the *Four Graces* (四恩), that is to say, the grace of the nation, the parents, the masters and the donors (*dānapati*, 檀越). As a monk as well as a member of the temple, one ought to participate in the rite without absence.

Here I would like to introduce the formal rite held twice a month in Vietnamese temples of Hue City. Based on the book *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), a material for teaching rituals at Vietnamese Buddhist schools, the process of the

rite is performed as follows:

After the assembly has gathered at the Main Hall, the abbot of the temple kneels down to take and offer incense sticks. Then after that the *Duty-Distributor* (*kammadāna*, 維那), or sometimes the abbot, raises a special high voice to chant a stotra or hymn (讚) called *Incense Stotra* or *xiāng-zèn* (香讚):⁽⁶⁾

*“The mind lights Five Attributes (五分),⁽⁷⁾
Universally transferring to ten directions,
The Incense-Adorning Child⁽⁸⁾ enlightens the eternal truth,
Which it is truly difficult to compare and contemplate.
The auspicious and omen bright light,
Is offered to the Dhamma Lord.
We pay homage to the Bodhisatta of Fragrant-Cloud Canopy”*
(心燃五分、普遍十方、香嚴童子悟眞常、比觀實難量、瑞愛祥光、堪獻法中王。
南無香雲蓋菩薩)

Next the *Dhāraṇī of the Infinite Longevity and Decisive Glory King* (聖無量壽決定光明王陀羅尼)⁽⁹⁾ is recited three times and the following stotra is prayed in a special voice:

*“We take refuge in the Taming-and-Controlling Master (purisadammasārathi, 調御師)
in the ten directions,
Who expounds and makes clear the pure and wonderful dhammas,
And in the enlightened assembly of the Three Vehicles (tiyāna, 三乘)⁽¹⁰⁾ and Four Fruitions
(catu-phala, 四果),⁽¹¹⁾
Be your compassionate self and pitifully receive us.”*
(皈命十方調御師、演揚清淨微妙法、三乘四果解脫僧、願賜慈悲哀納受。)

Then the *Duty-Distributor* (*kammadāna*, 維那) chants the following holy titles, each of which is replied as “*proving the merit*” (證明功德) once and then the assembly pay worship once to that title:

- *We pay homage to the innumerable frequently-existed Triple Gem of the past,*

present and future which is everywhere in the dhammadhātu of ten directions (南無盡十方遍法界過現未來無量常住三寶).

- *We pay homage to the Sakyamuni Tathāgata* (南無釋迦牟尼如來).
- *We pay homage to the Amitābha Tathāgata* (南無阿彌陀如來).
- *We pay homage to the Bhaiṣajyaguru Tathāgata* (南無藥師如來).
- *We pay homage to the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva* (南無觀世音菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Bodhisattvas of Dhamma Guardians and the Devas* (南無護法諸天菩薩).

Next the head of the rite kneels down and says that:

“I bow down my head to the Fully Awakened One who exists in India with his mind covering the universe and his numbers being everywhere like the sand realm to look down and prove this with your compassion. Now, on the lunar 15th day (or 1st day) so-and-so month, so-and-so year of the Buddhist calendar so-and-so, at the so-and-so Temple, so-and-so Hamlet, so-and-so Commune, so-and-so District, so-and-so Province, Vietnam; I, bhikkhu such-and-such, gather the assembly of monks at the precious Hall to recite the secret sūtras and chant the auspicious titles so that we collect the good causes and solemnly pray that: Above all we congratulate the sun of Buddhism to rise aloft and light, the Dhamma Wheel to turn permanently, the wind and rain to be in harmony, the nation to be prosperous and the people to live in peace. Next we pray the golden wheel to eternally move, the jade candle to be frequently enlightened, the Eight Profound Realms to live in peace with the eternity of Tao, and the Four Oceans enjoy the happiness in changes of non-doing. Now the great assembly be of one mind, with different voices but similar sounds, to recite the Śūraṅgama-mantra.”

(大圓滿覺、應蹟西乾、心包太虛、量週沙界、仰叩鴻慈、俯垂明證。佛曆...年...越南國、...省、...郡、...社、...村、...寺。比丘...、於今歲次...年、...月、...日、望[朔]旦之辰、雲集僧衆登臨寶殿、諷演秘彰、稱揚嘉號、所集鴻因、端位祝延。上祝佛日增輝、法輪常轉、風調雨順、國泰民安。伏願、金輪永振、玉燭常調、八玄安有道之長、四海樂無爲之化。仰勞大衆、異口同聲、誦楞嚴神咒。)

After the *Śūraṅgama-mantra* (楞嚴神咒), the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), the *Ten Dhāraṇīs* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*

(般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) have been recited, the great assembly walks around the Main Hall and the Patriarch Hall, from 3 or 7 rounds according to the head of the rite, reciting the following omen titles:

- *We pay homage to the Sakyamuni Tathāgata* (南無釋迦牟尼如來).
- *We pay homage to the Amitābha Tathāgata* (南無阿彌陀如來).
- *We pay homage to the Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, the Great-Wisdom One* (南無大智文殊師利菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, the Great-Conduct One* (南無大行普賢菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, the Great Compassionate One* (南無大悲觀世音菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Maḥasthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva, the Great-Power One* (南無大雄力大勢至菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva, the Great-Vow One* (南無大願地藏王菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Bodhisattvas of Dhamma Guardians and the Devas* (南無護法諸天菩薩).
- *We pay homage to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas on the Vulture Peak* (南無靈山會上佛菩薩).

When 3 or 7 rounds of walking around have been finished, the great assembly returns to the Main Hall and the head of the rite or the *Duty-Distributor* (kammadāna, 維那) begins chanting the some titles as utilised popularly in Hue City nowadays, each of which is paid worship once. Apart from these above mentioned omen titles, the names of the *Maitreya Buddha* (彌勒尊佛), the *Bhaiṣajyaguru Buddha* (藥師佛) and the following ones are also chanted in order:

- *We one-mindedly pay homage to 1250 Great-Hearer Bhikkhus who always follow the Buddha* (一心頂禮常隨佛後千二百五十大聲文僧).
- *We one-mindedly pay homage to Maḥākāśyapa, the Reverend One, who was firstly*

- banded down* (一心頂禮第一首傳摩訶迦葉尊者).
- *We one-mindedly pay homage to Ānanda, the Reverend One, who revealed the teachings* (一心頂禮啓教阿難陀尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to Upāli, the Reverend One, who held the saṅgīti of Vinaya* (一心頂禮結集論藏優波離尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to all Patriarchs and Bodhisattvas who held the saṅgīti of Tipitaka* (一心頂禮結集三藏聖教列位祖師菩薩).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the 12th Indian Patriarch Asvaghōṣa, the Reverend One* (一心頂禮第十二祖馬明尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the 14th Indian Patriarch Nagārjuna, the Reverend One* (一心頂禮第十四祖龍樹尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, two Great Commentary Masters* (一心頂禮無著世親二位大論師).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Indian successive Patriarchs through generations* (一心頂禮西天相承歷代祖師).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the first Chinese Patriarch Bodhidharma, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮東土初傳菩提達磨尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Second Chinese Patriarch Huì-kě, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮第二祖慧可尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Third Chinese Patriarch Sēng-càn, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮第三祖僧璨尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Fourth Chinese Patriarch Dào-xìn, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮第四祖道信尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Fifth Chinese Patriarch Hóng-rěn, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮第五祖弘忍尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Sixth Chinese Patriarch Huì-néng, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮第六祖慧能尊者).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Chinese successive Patriarchs through generations* (一心頂禮東土相承歷代祖師).
 - *We one-mindedly pay worship to the first Vietnamese Patriarch Vinitaruci, the Great Reverend One* (一心頂禮越南初傳毘尼多流支尊者).

- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Chinese Lín-jì-yì-xuán, the Great Patriarch (一心頂禮臨濟義玄大老祖師).*⁽¹²⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Vietnamese Patriarchs who propagated the teachings through generations (一心頂禮東土相承歷代祖師).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Yuán Sháo, whose dhamma title is Huàn-bì, Founder of the Quốc Ân Temple (一心頂禮開山國恩寺諱煥碧元韶大老祖師).*⁽¹³⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Míng-bóng, whose dhamma title is Jué-róng, Founder of the Ấn Tôn Từ Đàm Temple (一心頂禮開山印宗慈曇寺諱子融明紘大老祖師).*⁽¹⁴⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Liểu Quán, whose dhamma title is Thiệt Diệu, Founder of the Thiên Thai Thiền Tôn Temple (一心頂禮開山天台禪宗寺諱了觀實耀大老祖師).*⁽¹⁵⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Tâm Tịnh, whose dhamma title is Thanh Ninh, Founder of the Tây Thiên Di Đà Temple (一心頂禮開山西天彌陀寺諱清寧心淨大老祖師).*⁽¹⁶⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Huệ Pháp, whose dhamma title is Thanh Tú, Renovator of the Thiên Hưng Temple (一心頂禮重建天興寺諱清秀慧法大老祖師).*⁽¹⁷⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Great Patriarch Giác Tiên, whose dhamma title is Trùng Thành, Renovator of the Trúc Lâm Đại Thánh Tự Temple (一心頂禮開山竹林大聖寺諱澄誠覺先大老祖師).*⁽¹⁸⁾
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the successive Patriarchs and Most Venerables of the Thừa Thiên Buddhist Saṅgha who have founded, rebuilt and renovated patriarch temples through generations (一心頂禮承天教會開山諸祖庭並重建重興歷代祖師和尚).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the precept-ordaining Head Superior Most Venerable (一心頂禮傳戒壇頭和尚).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Dhamma-Delivering Honourable Master and*

the Original Master who cuts one's hair for going forth and teaches him (一心頂禮付法尊師剃渡本師).

- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Kamma Master (kammācariya) and the Instructor (anussāna-ācariya), the two Ācariyas (一心頂禮羯磨教授二位阿闍梨師).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Guiding Monks (一心頂禮諸位引請師).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to all precept-ordaining honourable masters of the same ceremony (一心頂禮同壇傳戒諸列位尊師).*
- *We one-mindedly pay worship to the Vietnamese saintly Venerables and Reverends who burnt themselves for the sake of Buddhism (一心頂禮越南爲法燒身諸上座大德聖僧).*
- *On behalf of the grace of being covered by the Heaven and Earth, we pay worship to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in the ten directions (代爲天地覆載之恩頂禮十方常住三寶).*
- *On behalf of the grace of the nation, the land, the mountains and rivers, the country, we pay worship to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in the ten directions (代爲國家水土山河社稷恩頂禮十方常住三寶).*
- *On behalf of the grace of teaching and advising of the Master, and the grace of the good and bad friends, we pay worship to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in the ten directions (代爲師長教誨善惡友知識恩頂禮十方常住三寶).*
- *On behalf of the grace of the dhammadhātu of multi-birth parents, the deep grace of present parents who gave birth and nourished us, we pay worship to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in the ten directions (代爲法界多生父母生成養育深恩頂禮十方常住三寶).*
- *On behalf of all spirits who have had former and latter merit, have taken refuge in and have been worshipped at this temple, we pay worship to the permanently-existing Triple Gem in the ten directions (代爲本寺前後功德皈依寄祀等諸香靈恩頂禮十方常住三寶).*
- *We pay worship to all Buddhists who have done the temple's deeds (頂禮衆衆公務禪門恩).⁽¹⁹⁾*

After having finished paid worship to these titles, the assembly kneels down and recites the Ten Vows of the *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva* (普賢菩薩) as follows:

*“We, disciples, accordingly practice
The ten kinds of great vows of the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva
Firstly, paying respect and worship to the Buddhas,
Secondly, praising the Tathāgatha,
Thirdly, widely cultivating offerings,
Fourthly, confessing all kamma-hindrances (kammavarana, 業障),
Fifthly, rejoicing the merit of aiding others,
Sixthly, inviting [the Buddha] to turn the dhamma-wheel,
Seventhly, inviting the Buddha to exist in this world,
Eighthly, always following the Buddha’s teachings,
Ninthly, frequently according with the sentient beings,
Tenthly, transferring merit to all.”*

(弟子衆等、隨順修習、普賢菩薩、十種大願。一者禮敬諸佛、二者稱讚如來、三者廣修供養、四者懺悔業障、五者隨喜功德、六者請轉法輪、七者請佛住世、八者常隨佛學、九者恒順衆生、十者普皆迴向)⁽²⁰⁾

The next are the verses praying to the *Sakyamuni Buddha* (釋迦牟尼佛):

“Now we pray and worship the Reverred Sakyamuni Buddha, the unsurpassed mighty in loving-kindness, who experienced a long-lasting mind-practice of truth, descended from Tusita to this world, giving up the precious throne of Cakkavatti-rājan, sitting on the bodhi (wisdom)-seat and destroying the māra-army with glory. When seeing the star glittering, he attained enlightenment and then pouring Dhamma-rain to our world. To the Three Vehicles we take refuge and gain the already-unborn-attainment. Now we mindfully take refuge to [the Bhagavat] and gain the quickly unborn attainment.”

(讚禮釋尊、無上能仁、僧祇久遠修真、兜率降塵、長辭寶位金輪、坐菩提坐、大破魔軍。一睹明星道成、降法林、三乘衆等歸心、無生已證、現前衆等已心、無生速證)⁽²¹⁾

Then the head of the rite says the passage called *phục nguyện* (伏願, *bowing*

down and praying) as follows:

“[We pray] for the graces of both our fathers and mothers, the offering-donors, the Masters, the good friends, and the ancestors to be soakingly blessed, for the faithful donors to surpass the world, for their present life is blessed with the abundance of merit and longevity, and after death they be reborn in the Buddha’s Realm.” (雙親父母、施主檀椰、師長良朋、九玄七祖恩霑、信施遇超昇、現世福壽增隆、沒後即生佛國)

Finally the assembly recite the *Three Refuges* (三歸)

“We ourselves take refuge to the Buddha, and to the sentient beings we vow to follow the Great Path and give out the unsurpassed mind.

We ourselves take refuge to the Dhamma, and to the sentient beings we vow to deeply understand all sūtras and our wisdom is as great as the sea.

We ourselves take refuge in the Saṅgha, and to the sentient beings we vow to universally command the great assembly and to be unhindered by all.”

(自歸依佛、當願衆生、體解大道、發無上心。自歸依法、當願衆生、深入經藏、智慧如海。自歸依僧、當願衆生、統理大衆、一切無礙)

Thus is ended the formal *Rite of Invocation and Praise* (祝讚禮).⁽²²⁾

II. Remarks

About the above-mentioned rite, we can make such remarks as follows:

- In general, this rite is similar to the early morning session, that is to say, reciting the *Śūraṅgama-mantra* (楞嚴神咒), the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), the *Ten Dhāraṇīs* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*); but the difference is that the titles to pay worship to are much more than normal.

- As for the order of titles, first of all, one ought to pay worship to the auspicious names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, then some names of Indian important and outstanding Patriarchs. After coming to the names of six outstanding Chinese Ch’an Masters, a general title of all Indian Patriarchs is included. Then before paying worship to well-known Vietnamese Ch’an Masters,

a general title of Chinese Ch'an Masters should also be recited. After some names of outstanding Vietnamese Ch'an Masters in the region where the temple is located have been chanted, then comes the part of paying worship to some persons from whom monks or nuns bear their grace such as the masters, the instructors, the precept-ordaining *ācariyas*, etc. The last is the part of "on behalf of graces to pay worship to the Triple Gem in the ten directions", such as the graces of the nation, the parents, the donors, etc.

- By doing that, the Buddhists can fulfil the spirit of "uống nước nhớ nguồn" as the Vietnamese proverb says, or the Chinese proverb "Yìn-hé-sī-yuán" (飲河思源), which has the same meaning as "Drinking the water of the river and remembering its origin" so that they can repay such hard-to-pay graces and cannot "exhaust the [offerings] of the donors in the ten directions" (徒消十方信施) and cannot "be ungraceful to the Four Graces" (亦乃孤負四恩),⁽²³⁾ as the advice of the well-known Chinese Ch'an Master *I-shan-ling-yu* (滄山靈祐, 771-853)⁽²⁴⁾ in his *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滄山警策, *The Awakening Advices of I-shan*).⁽²⁵⁾ Therefore, the rite is also called *Lê Thù Ân Chúc Tân* (酬恩祝讚禮, *Repaying the Graces and Praising*)

- As for nuns, another title included is that the name of *Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī* (摩訶波闍波提瞿曇彌), who asked the Buddha for the allowance of going forth of women from home into homelessness.⁽²⁶⁾

- Based on the book *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), compiled by *Thích Giác Lâm*, the process of the rite is rather different with from what is really practiced in temples of Hue City. That is to say, having recited the Ten Vows of the *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva* (普賢菩薩), and the Three Refuges, there comes the part of paying worship to the above-listed titles.⁽²⁷⁾ However, in reality, the part of paying worship to these titles is performed before reciting the Ten Vows and the Three Refuges.

- Different from the temples in Hue City, a part of praising the Dhamma Guardian (護法), also called *Vì Đà Thiên Tướng* (韋馱天相, *Wéi-tuó—the Heavenly General*)⁽²⁸⁾ is included. According to the book *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), compiled by *Thích Giác Lâm*, the part is performed after reciting the *Sūrangama-*

mantra (楞嚴神咒), the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), the *Ten Dhāraṇīs* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*).

C. Buddhist rites for the laity

In Vietnam, through my field-work, more than 70 per cent of Buddhist followers began believing in Buddhism by the way of rituals.⁽²⁹⁾ Sometimes if someone in a non-Buddhist family gets a heavy sick or dies, then, his or her relatives come to a Buddhist temple to ask the monks to recite Buddhist sūtras for their sick or dead person at their own home. In some cases, if the sick person recovers, his or her family will be so happy that they vow to follow the Buddha's Teachings, and as a matter of fact, become Buddhist followers later. Otherwise, if the sick is not recovered, his or her relatives only hope that the person will quickly and easily pass away thanks to the efficacious prayers of the monks. In this case, the monk will perform the Buddhist service rituals for the dead. During the time of funeral, that is to say, from the time of putting the dead body in coffin upto the time of 49 days after the day of death (終七日); all the relatives try their best to express their filial affection to the dead as graceful sons or daughters. They heartfully listen to the sounds of monks' reciting sūtras, the meaning of the sūtras, then, right at that time they remember all precious merits which the dead parents did for them during his or her life-time as much as ever. They start vowing to follow the Buddha's Teachings. Then the Buddhist rites plays an essential role as philosophical awakening to guide man following a correct way in the light of Buddhist teachings.

I. Buddhist services for the dead

As mentioned above, the rites for the dead are called *Lễ Cầu Siêu* (求超 or 祈超禮) in Vietnamese, that is to say, the rites of praying for surpassing this world and being reborn in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvatī*, 極樂) or *Pure Land* (淨土) of the *Amitābha Buddha* (阿彌陀佛). Such rites can be divided into two kinds, viz.

funeral rites and after-funeral rites.

1. Buddhist funeral rites

These rites include the ones from the time when one person dies until putting his or her coffin into the grave and enshrining his or her tablet at his or her own home. As seen in Hue City as well as other places through out Vietnam, these rites are taken very seriously by the Vietnamese Buddhists.

Normally when there is a person who has just died in a Buddhist family, the relatives of the dead hold a meeting to decide how to celebrate the funeral ceremony for their deceased person. Before inviting monks to come to perform the praying rites, some preliminary preparations ought to be done such as washing the dead's body⁽³⁰⁾ changing the dead into new clothes, covering a white cloth or paper over the deceased's face,⁽³¹⁾ a bowl of boiled rice in which a pair of chopstick is stuck, putting three grains of glutinous rice and money in the deceased's mouth,⁽³²⁾ covering the deceased body with a cloth, which is called *mền quang minh*, the so-called "bright light" (光明) *blanket* on which there are many Sanskrit Siddham alphabets, a coffin and so on. Especially important is a knife for putting on the deceased body. It is a most necessary and important thing, because it is believed that by not having no such a metal thing, the deceased will be alive again and move when a three-footed or three-coloured black cat or so-called *holy cat* (靈貓) jumps over the dead body.⁽³³⁾

Some remarkable things that should be referred to here are that according to the Japanese funeral tradition, before putting the dead body into the coffin, one gets the deceased to carry the praying beads (數珠) in hands; and lays the head of the deceased toward the North, because it is believed that the North is the orientation toward which the Sakyamuni Buddha laid down when he passed away.⁽³⁴⁾ These interesting customs correspond to the Buddhist tradition, but are not seen in Vietnam.

When everything is prepared, some representatives go to the temple to ask the monks to come to their home to pray for the dead. Simultaneously the former also ask the monks to find a good or auspicious hour for putting the dead body in the

coffin as well as into the grave. Up to now the tradition of nominating a lunar good hour and date for doing something important to avoid from having bad influences or bad luck for one's immediate family as well as relatives—as they believe that, is still preserved in daily life of the Vietnamese people as well as the Buddhists.

As seen nowadays in Hue City, normally the mourning period lasts at least from 3 days to one week. Naturally depending on the financial condition of the deceased's family, the period can be shorter or longer than that. During this period of time, the following rites are performed. I will not introduce in details the contents of these rites, but only refer to main or pertinent parts.

a. *The Rite of Purifying the Coffin* (灑淨禮):

Before putting the deceased's body into the coffin, a Buddhist rite called *Purifying the Coffin* (灑淨) ought to be performed beforehand with the recitation of the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), the *Ten Dhāraṇīs* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*).⁽³⁵⁾

b. *The Rite of Putting the Dead Body into the Coffin* (入殮禮):

Then after the head of the rite has performed the rite of purifying the deceased's body, a *gāthā* is recited as follows:

*“The river of love with thousand-miled ripples,
The ocean of suffering with multi-layered waves,
If wishing to free from the suffering of the round of birth-and-death,
Then eagerly reciting the name of the Amitābha.”*

(愛河千尺浪、苦海萬重波、欲脫輪迴苦、汲汲念彌陀)⁽³⁶⁾

Monks continue reciting the *Amitābha Buddha's* name until the deceased's body is carried and put into the coffin. Normally the hour for putting the deceased's body into the coffin ought to be chosen strictly by Buddhist monks or those who are specialised in this field. While the body is being placed, all of his or her habitually-used things such as clothes, shoes, etc. must be put in around the body of the dead. Then a great amount of tea is often poured into the coffin so

that it can absorb the liquid excreted from the dead's body. Moreover, by doing so the coffin will be much lighter while being carried to the grave. As for a Buddhist who has taken refuge in the Triple Gem, the *Certificate of Taking Refuge* (皈依法派) should not be put into the coffin. As with the Japanese funeral customs, one also puts some kinds of fragrant flowers and dry ice covering the body to prevent the dead body from being rotten especially in the summer.⁽³⁷⁾

One remarkable custom during the time of putting the dead's body into the coffin preserved up to now in Vietnam is that those—sons and daughters or nieces and nephews—who are considered as the “*taboo with the age*” of the dead must separate from the dead to prevent bad fortunes later, because it is believed that the spirit of the dead can make them die.⁽³⁸⁾

After the lid of the coffin has been closed, a table for putting the tablet of the dead and offering things is also established, and first of all a steaming bowl of boiled rice with a pair of sticks stuck straight up is put on the table. It is explained that the bowl of boiling rice is the bowl for *inviting the God of Death* (死神). Because there are only a bowl of rice and separate sticks, then it is very difficult for the God of Death to eat, therefore he will eat it slowly and not hurry the dead's soul to go to the hell as quickly as is possible.⁽³⁹⁾

It is necessary to note here that the custom of placing the coffin is also taken seriously by the Vietnamese. The coffin ought to be put with its head—the head of the dead—outwards, so that when people come to present their condolences to the dead, they will pay respect at the head of the dead, not at his or her feet.⁽⁴⁰⁾

After the altar has been established, the Buddha altar should be prepared at the same time for monks to recite the sūtras.

c. *The Rite of Calling the Soul of the Dead* (復魂禮):

The rite aims at calling the spirit of the dead to return and stay in the tablet. The rite is performed with three times of invitation⁽⁴¹⁾ as follows:

*“With the true words I invite,
The unawakened fragrant spirit to hear and understand from afar,
Thanks to the support of the Triple Gem's force,
Today this time to come to this party.*

Listen to invitation, listen to invitation to come. Oh, the fragrant spirit.

The fragrant cloud of invitation, the fragrant cloud of invitation.”

(以此真言伸召請、香不味遙聞知、仗承三寶力加持、此日今時來赴會。香靈聞召、聞召請來臨。香雲請、香雲請。)

“I one-mindedly pay worship to and invite the Amitābha Buddha in the Western Heavens, who takes the lotus flower in hands with its bright light through which to receive the fragrant spirit so-and-so. This is the first invitation to invite the spirit to come at the spirit ensbrine and listen to the dhammas and sūtras, and then to take your seat.”

(南無一心奉請阿彌陀佛、在西方手持蓮華放毫光、願垂毫光而接度、奉爲...之香靈。聞今初伸召請、請到靈床聽法聞經、依位請座。)

“I one-mindedly pay worship to and invite the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva in the Mount Pū-tuó,⁽⁴²⁾ who takes the willow branch with its bright light through which to receive the fragrant spirit so-and-so. This is the second invitation to invite the spirit to come at the spirit ensbrine and listen to the dhammas and sūtras, and then to take your seat.”

(南無一心奉請大悲觀世音菩薩、在普陀山手持楊柳放毫光、願垂毫光而接度、奉爲...之香靈。聞今再伸召請、請到靈床聽法聞經、依位請座。)

“I one-mindedly pay worship to and invite the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva in the Cakravāḍa-parvata,⁽⁴³⁾ the Great-Vow One, the Suffering-Saving Principal Master, the Hell-Saving One, who takes the monk’s staff (khakkhara) with its bright light through which to receive the fragrant spirit so-and-so. This is the third invitation to invite the spirit to come at the spirit ensbrine and listen to the dhammas and sūtras, and then to take your seat.”

(南無一心奉請幽冥教主救苦本尊、救拔冥途、大願地藏王菩薩、在鐵圍山手持錫杖放毫光、願垂毫光而接度、奉爲...之香靈。聞今三伸召請、請到靈床聽法聞經、依位請座。)

Then after the relatives of the dead have paid respect to the dead twice and knelt down with joined palms, a “*letter of calling the dead’s spirit*” (復魂牒) is read for announcement to the dead. Next is the recitation of two *dhāraṇīs* called “*Pervading Foods*” (徧食真言) and “*Pervading Water*” (徧水真言):⁽⁴⁴⁾

- The *dhāraṇī* of “*Pervading Foods*” (徧食真言):

Namaḥ sarva-tathāgatāvalokite om saṃbhara saṃbhara hūṃ. (南無薩嚩怛他哦哆。嚩嚩枳帝。唵。三跋囉三跋囉。吽。)

“I have respect for things observed and seen by all Tathāgatas. Om ! Universally gather ! Universally gather ! Hūṃ !”

- The *dhāraṇi* of “*Pervading Water*” (徧水眞言):

Namaḥ surūpāya tathāgatāya, tad yathā, om sru sru prasru prasru svāhā. (南無蘇嚕婆耶。怛他哦多耶。怛姪他。唵。蘇嚕蘇嚕。鉢囉蘇嚕。鉢囉蘇嚕。莎婆訶。)

“*I pay respect to the Tathāgata of Wonderful Body. That is to say, om. Appear ! Appear ! Appear well ! Appear well ! Svāhā !*”

It is necessary to refer to here that, during the period of time when the coffin has not been put in the grave—the dead is believed to be alive, the relatives must pay respect to him or her twice only, not four times as usual.⁽⁴⁵⁾

d. The *Rite of “Opening” the Sūtras and Receiving Funeral Clothes* (開經成服禮):

The rite aims at “opening” the sūtras and inviting the Buddhas, the Bodhisattas, Dhamma guardians and gods to come to the funeral place for justification and blessing of the dead as well as his or her relatives. As seen in mourning families in Hue City, the layfollowers often recite some sūtras during the mourning period of time with the aim at praying for the dead’s spirit to be reborn in the Pure Land. Therefore, it is believed that if this rite is not performed, they cannot recite the sūtras. The rite cannot only be performed by monks but by the laity who are specialised in Buddhist rites as well.

After the rite has been finished, the following is the *Rite of Receiving Funeral Clothes* (成服式). According to old tradition, the rite was performed three or four days after the dead passed away. Because during these days, the dead was still considered as being alive.⁽⁴⁶⁾ However, today the rite is often performed after the rite of putting the dead body into the coffin.

As for the funeral clothes, as opposed to the Japanese tradition which often uses the black clothes for funeral, in Vietnam, the clothes of coarse white gauze or linen for mourning has been popular from the old days up to now. This is the borrowing from the Chinese tradition. It is believed that when one has lost his or her father or mother, everything is lost in this world and becomes white. Moreover, the white colour symbolizes the purity, the faithfulness and filial piety of the children to their own parents. That is the reason why the Vietnamese people utilise the white clothes for mourning in the funeral.⁽⁴⁷⁾

The sons wear the clothes of coarse white gauze, a straw hat and a straw string

wound around the body. Furthermore, he ought always to handle a bamboo stick for their dead father and a thick bamboo stick for their dead mother. The daughters also wear white clothes, a long hat with their hair hanging down. The other relatives also wear white clothes.⁽⁴⁸⁾

By comparison with the Japanese tradition, we can see that it is different. Both the mourning family as well as relatives and even those who come to participate in the funeral and express their condolence wear black clothes or traditional kimonos. Because it is thought that when coming to the funeral with the aim of expressing their condolences and praying for the repose of the deceased's soul to be happy in other world, then one should not wear splendid but black clothes.⁽⁴⁹⁾

First of all, after having paid respect to the dead, the sons and daughters both cry aloud and receive the funeral white clothes, then the next are the relatives. While they are receiving the mourning clothes, the monks recite a following *gāthā* which reminds the uncountable merit of the deceased to his or her children:

*“The merit as deep as the sea is difficult to repay,
The service as big as a mountain is hard to compare,
Wearing the coarse clothes before the spirit,
We remember them forever without cease.”*

(海德深難報、山功大莫酬、靈前被素服、憶念已時休。)⁽⁵⁰⁾

e. The *Breakfast-Offering Rite* (朝奠禮):

During the days when the coffin is laid in the mourning house, the dead is considered to be alive; therefore his or her sons and daughters often offer foods to the dead three times a day as usual. Previously in the early morning, the sons or daughters would bring a basin of water, a towel, a comb, a glass and a tray of betels and arecas to the altar, they would cry three times and then offering tea and breakfast.⁽⁵¹⁾ However, nowadays this custom has been simplified and the sons and daughters of the dead only offer tea and breakfast in combination of the recitation of sūtras of monks.

f. The *Lunch-Offering Rite* (午供禮):

Liken to the above *Breakfast-Offering Rite*, the mourning relatives also perform the rite of offering lunch for the dead with tea and flourishing vegetarian dishes. However, before performing this, a special rite for offering lunch to the Buddhas called *cúng Ngọ* (午供, *noon offering*) in Vietnamese is celebrated with only a bowl of boiled rice on the Buddha enshrine, but no dishes, pairs of sticks or spoon at all.

g. The *Rite of Bringing the Spirit's Tablet, Picture and Incense Burner to See His Ancestors* (謁祖禮):

The day before moving the coffin to the grave, an important rite, called *gặp tổ* (謁祖, *seeing the ancestors*) in Vietnamese, ought to be performed. Formerly there was a custom of carrying the dead's coffin, the tablet, picture and incense burner to go to the hall of ancestors to see them.⁽⁵²⁾ However, today the custom has been simplified and without the coffin, the above-listed items are so carried.

Normally there is a regulation that the oldest son always bring the deceased's tablet and the incense burner, the first-born nephew the picture, and the others the necessary things. The parade goes to an enshrinement hall of ancestors to see and announce about the recently-deceased person, about the date of moving the coffin and so on. This rite is considered as the announcement to the dead's ancestors and the asking for joining the realm of ancestors through generations.

h. The *Rite of Offering Foods to the Hungry Ghosts* (施餓鬼禮):

Apart from the rites recorded in the *Thọ Mai Gia Lễ* (壽梅家禮, *Tho Mai's Family Rituals*), the rite, which has the purely Buddhist color and is always performed in the afternoon, aims at offering foods to the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼), and thanks to the merit the recently-deceased person as well as the dead ancestors of the mourning family to be free from all suffering in the hell and then to be reborn in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvātī*, 極樂) of the *Amitābha Buddha*. As for the origin of the rite, I will refer to clearly later in the *Great Dāna Rite for the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮).

i. The *Dinner-Offering Ritual* (夕奠禮):

The rite is performed after the rite of offering foods to the hungry ghosts to offer dinner to the newly-deceased person with also tea and vegetarian dishes. Along with the others, it is observed up to the day of moving the coffin to the grave.

j. The *Great Rite of Praying* (大禮祈超):

The night before moving the coffin to the grave, a solemn rite called *Đại lễ kỷ niệm* (大禮祈超, *Great Rite of Praying*) in Vietnamese, is often celebrated. With the aim of praying for the dead to be reborn in the Pure Land, the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*), the *Wang-shên-ching-t'u-shên-chou* (往生淨土神咒, *Dbāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land*) are recited by monks in combination with many times of reciting the name of the Amitābha Buddha. Especially the rite of both walking around the coffin and reciting the Buddha's name and the *Pū-ān Holy Spells* (普庵神咒), written by *Pū-ān-yin-sù* Ch'an Master (普庵印肅禪師, 1115-1169),⁽⁵³⁾ are very popular in Vietnam. In addition, as seen in Hue City, the mourning family always invite a Dhamma preacher to come to the funeral to give dhamma talks to the newly-deceased person as well as the living relatives.

Furthermore, monks also perform the rite of taking refuge in the Triple Gem for the dead with the aim at reminding the latter of the ordained precepts, and for those who have never taken refuge in the Triple Gem, this is a good chance for him or her to take refuge so that the very person can be blessed by the Buddhas and Bodhisattas. Many neighbouring people come to participate the rite, which is a precious opportunity for them to listen to the dhamma talks. This is also a purely Buddhist rite which can be likened to the Japanese *tsuya* (通夜, *a wake*).

k. The *Rite of Informing to the God of Roads and Paths* (告道路禮):

The night before moving the coffin to the grave, one ought to perform a rite called *cáo đạo lộ* (告道路) in Vietnamese, with the meaning of announcing to the gods of roads and paths that tomorrow there will be a funeral parade to pass through this or that road. The rite has the same meaning of the announcement to

the traffic police.

Normally the above-mentioned rites are performed by monks, but this one is performed by the deceased's relatives or neighbouring people on behalf of the funeral family. Another difference is that for Buddhist families they always vow to take vegetarian meals and also offer the vegetarian dishes to the dead during the mourning time. Nevertheless, one ought to prepare non-vegetarian dishes for this rite. Normally, some incense sticks, flowers, wine or alcoholic drinks and some betels and arecas are necessary things for the rite, but for a rich family, apart from these, they prepare some dishes, a pig head or leg or a chicken to offer the gods of roads and paths.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Moreover, sometimes one prepares a set of *tam sinh* (三生, three beings) including boiling pork which symbolizes for the beings running on earth, the boiling eggs for the beings flying in space, and boiling crabs or shrimps for the beings swimming in the water.⁽⁵⁵⁾

All these offerings are brought to put at the beginning of the village or at a crossroad where the funeral will pass by. The head of the funeral or the oldest son is responsible for paying worship to the gods of roads and paths; and after the rite has been finished, all offering things are left at the spot without bringing any back home.

1. The *Coffin-Moving Rite* (遣奠 · 移棺禮):

The day is considered as the last day of the dead on this world before his or her coffin is put into the grave. After the sons and daughters and relatives of the dead have cried the last time and offered the last meal for the dead to see him or her off to the so-called dark world of spirits, the coffin is carried out of the house and put in a carriage called *Thuyền Bát Nhã* (般若船, *Prajñā Boat*) with the meaning of thanks to this boat of wisdom the dead will be carried to the other shore of enlightenment. The carriage is carried to the grave by a group of *âm công* (陰工, "dark" persons). In rural areas of Vietnam, the custom of carrying the coffin by these *âm công* is very popular, but for big cities such as Hochiminh City, instead of doing that, the coffin is put in a car of the Burying Company and is driven to the grave.

Normally for the funerals performed the Buddhist way, the order of the parade is regulated as following: the Buddha altar—frequently the *Amitābha Buddha* (阿彌陀佛) or the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩)—ahead, the monks, the banner (*dhaja*, 幢幡) and the long paper or cloth called *minh tinh* or *triệu* in Vietnamese—the same as with the certificate of the dead, the altar of the dead, the coffin and so on. If the coffin is carried by car, the above order is unchangeable.

As for the way of walking for the dead's oldest son while the coffin is being carried to the grave, there is a regulation which is still followed up to now that if the dead is his father, then the oldest son walks right after the coffin and cries; but if the dead is his mother, the son walks backwards in front of the coffin.⁽⁵⁶⁾

m. *The Offering Rite in the Midway* (濟路中禮):

Sometimes the distance from the mourning house to the grave is so far that the group of *âm công* (陰工, “dark” persons) become tired while carrying the coffin on their shoulders, then the rite is also a chance for them to take a break, have a drink and eat something so that they can have enough energy to continue carrying the coffin to the regulated goal. At that time, the dead's relatives also offer something to the dead and pay respect to him or her.

n. *The Offering Rite at the Grave* (治穴禮):

When the coffin of the dead has been carried to the grave, monks perform the rite purifying the grave before the coffin is laid down into the grave. At this time the *Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī* (大悲咒, *Dhāraṇī of Great Compassion*), the *Ten Dhāraṇīs* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) are recited. Normally the head monk of the rite handles a monk's staff (*khakkhara*, 錫杖) which symbolizes the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩), who can open the hell's door and release all victims in there to be reborn in other good realms.

o. *The Rite of Putting the Coffin into the Grave* (下穴禮):

After the above rite has been finished and the good time has come, the rite for laying the coffin down into the grave is performed along with the continuous recitation of the *Amitābha Buddha's* name of the monks and everybody who are

present at the rite, with all their one-mindedness to pray for the dead to be freed from the suffering in the hell and to be reborn in the Pure Land.

Naturally before putting the coffin into the grave, one often performs the rite of offering to the *God of Earth* (土神) with the purpose of asking the latter for permission to bury the dead at that place. The rite is also prepared and performed the same as with the one of offering to the god of roads and paths as mentioned above.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Before covering the grave with soil, the head of the funeral often says something to express the deep thanks to everyone who take part in the funeral. Then the grave is covered while every person takes a handful of soil throwing it into the grave as the symbol of bidding farewell forever to the dead.

p. *The Rite of Enshrining the Tablet* (安靈禮):

After the mourning family has returned back home with the tablet, the picture and the incense burner of the dead, a last rite which should be performed is the rite of enshrining the tablet, also called the *Rite of Crying Again* (返哭禮). A new altar for the newly-deceased person is established on one side of the house, not the same as with the altar of ancestors of the family. On the altar the tablet, the picture and the incenses burner are laid for the convenience of daily offering. This time, instead of paying worship to the dead only twice while the latter has been remained on earth, the mourning family does that four times. From now on, every day the sons and daughters of the dead keep the habit of offering foods to their dead father or mother as usual up to the 100th day, which is counted from the day before the dead passes away. Some places, one keeps doing this up to the 3 years later and this habit is taken seriously nowadays in rural as well as municipal areas in Vietnam.⁽⁵⁸⁾

q. Some remarks:

- All these above-listed rites are performed in Buddhist way by the mourning family with the purpose of expressing the filial duty and gratefulness of the living persons to the dead and the eager compassion to repay much or less the merit and services as great and immense as the space and the ocean which the dead granted to them during his or her lifetime. Therefore, following the teachings that *the sentient beings in the Jambudīpa* (閻浮提) *who can for the sake of their parents as well as*

relatives arrange vegetarian dishes for offerings with their one-minded praying after their parents have deceased, then such persons will be blessed with benefit while alive as well after death (閻浮衆生、若能爲其父母乃至眷屬、臨命終之後、設齋供養志心勤懇、如是之人存亡獲利), as recorded in the *Ti-ts'ang-p'u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*),⁽⁵⁹⁾ the Vietnamese Buddhist mourning families try their best to perform good deeds by vowing to take vegetarian meals during the funeral days, asking monks for reciting the sūtras every day and listening to dhamma talks, following strictly the Five Precepts such as not taking wine or alcoholic drinks, etc. All these merit done by them are transformed to the dead with the aim at praying for the latter to be reborn in the Pure Land of the *Amitābha Buddha*.

- During the funeral days, apart from the time of reciting sūtras of monks, the mourning family also invites some Buddhist followers to come their house and recite the *Ti-ts'ang-p'u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*). This mode of activity which aims at helping to pray for the dead—Buddhist or non-Buddhist—performed by the Vietnamese laity is very popular and highly appreciated around the nation.

- With the purpose of praying for the dead to be reborn in good realms, beside the above sūtra, the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*) and especially the *Wang-shên-ching-t'u-shên-chou* (往生淨土神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land*) are also recited in every rite along with many times of recitation of the *Amitābha Buddha's* name.

- For some mourning families, in reality they vow to keep on taking the vegetarian meals up to the 49th day or more all because of praying for the dead. And moreover, most take refuge in the Triple Gem and become ardent Buddhist followers after the funeral. Their filial duty is not finished at this time, but it extends to afterwards through after-funeral rites, which also play an important role the same as with the ones referred to above.

- Apart from these above-mentioned rites, three days after burying the dead, there is a rite called “*Opening the Tomb's Door*” (*mở cửa mộ* in Vietnamese) which is performed by the mourning family, not by monks.

- One thing which should also be referred to here is that different from the

Japanese custom of the newly-deceased person often getting a sounding posthumous Buddhist name (戒名)⁽⁶⁰⁾ from monks, the Vietnamese Buddhist followers have already received the dhamma name after the ceremony of ordaining the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts; therefore, this dhamma name will be referred to and read in a “special letter” called *diệp* (牒) at each rite. As for those who have not been ordained the Three Refuges and Five Precepts during their lifetime, the monks will give them dhamma names when performing the funeral rites.

- As for the concept of death, from the old times the Japanese called the newly-deceased person as *hotoke* (佛), another pronunciation of the word *butsu* (佛), which means the *Buddha* or the *Awakened One*. This is a very interesting and significant concept which has the meaning that everyone, male or female, in spite of doing any bad deeds during his or her lifetime, becomes a *hotoke*, or in other words, one who is free from all suffering and is enlightened. This word, *hotoke*, is utilised popularly in the dramas of the *Series of Old Drammas* (時代劇シリーズ) which refer to some activities in the *Edo Period* (江戸時代, 1603-1867).⁽⁶¹⁾ However, this concept is not found in Vietnam. The Vietnamese always say that *living is depositing and dying is returning* (生寄死歸). This means that living is the same as with depositing the body in this contemporary and impermanent world, and dying is likened to returning to the other eternal world.⁽⁶²⁾

- For the case in Hochiminh City, because of the situation of crowded population and scarce land, they mostly carry the deceased’s coffin to the central crematorium for cremation, then collect the ashes and put them into a bowl and lay the ashes to rest in a stupa of the temple.

- Along with the rite of enshrining the tablet of the dead, monks also perform the rite of expressing thanks to the Buddhas (謝佛) and “closing” the sūtras (還經). This is also the symbol of ending all funeral rites.

2. Buddhist after-funeral rites

After the funeral and burial ceremonies have been finished, the mourning family often pays a visit to the temple from which the monks came to perform the

funeral services during the past mourning days. The former bring flowers, fruits and so on to offer first to the Buddhas and then to these monks with all their grateful thanks; and simultenuously the former also ask the monks for doing some Buddhist services in later days up to the 49th day. This service is called *cúng tuần* in Vietnamese, meaningly *performing offerings in every week*.

The tradition has the deep Chinese influences from the Taoist and Buddhist concept which after death the dead will be descended into the hell where there exist Ten *Yama Kings* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王) who rule the hell and torture the sinners in there. The belief in these Ten *Yama Kings* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王) has deeply rooted in some Asian countries of Mahāyāna Buddhism such as Taiwan, Japan, and even Vietnam, etc. Each king corresponds with a week, thus the tenth king is revelent for up to two years after death. These kings can be listed as follows:⁽⁶³⁾

- The First Hall (第一殿): the King *Qín-guàng* (秦廣王), who takes charge of the the birth and death of human beings, and universally manages the good and bad fortune. His lunar birthday is on February 2nd.

- The Second Hall (第二殿): King *Chǔ-jiāng* (楚江王), who takes charge of the *Living Great Hell* (活大地獄), the *Robe-Tearing Arbor* (剥衣亭) and the *Cold-and-Icy Hell* (寒冰地獄). His lunar birthday is on March 3rd.

- The Third Hall (第三殿): King *Sòng-dì* (宋帝王), who takes charge of the *Black-Roped Hell* (*Kālasūtra-naraka*, 黑繩地獄). Those who have brought a suit against someone and disobeyed their superiors during their lifetime will be descended to his place after death. His lunar birthday is on February 8th.

- The Fourth Hall (第四殿): King *Wǔ-guān* (五官王), who takes charge of the *Great Combining Hell* (*Saṅghāta-naraka*, 合大地獄) and the *Blood-Lake Hell* (血池地獄). Those who have deceived will be descended to his place. His lunar birthday is on February 18th.

- The Fifth Hall (第五殿): King *Yán-mó* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王), who formerly resided at the first Hall, but because he was so sympathetic towards the sinners that he was transferred to the *Shouting-and Crying Hell* (*Raurava-naraka*, 叫喚地

獄). His lunar birthday is on January 8th.

- The Sixth Hall (第六殿): King *Biàn-chéng* (卞城王), who takes charge of the *Great Shouting-and Crying Hell* (*Mahāraurava-naraka*, 大叫喚地獄) and the *Pressingly-Dying Castle* (枉死城). Those who have had a grudge of the heaven and urinated in the North will be descended to his place. His lunar birthday is on March 8th.

- The Seventh Hall (第七殿): King *Tài-shān* (泰山王), who takes charge of the *Hot-Worrying Hell* (*Tapana-naraka*, 熱惱地獄). Those who have made medicine from the bones of the dead and alienated their relatives will be descended to this place. His lunar birthday is on March 27th.

- The Eighth Hall (第八殿): King *Dōu-shì* (都市王), who takes charge of the *Great Hot-Worrying Hell* (*Mahātapana-naraka*, 大熱惱地獄). His lunar birthday is on April 1st.

- The Ninth Hall (第九殿): King *Píng-děng* (平等王), who takes charge of the *Avicī Great Hell* (*Avicī-naraka*, 阿鼻地獄). His lunar birthday is on April 8th.

- The Tenth Hall (第十殿): King *Zhuàn-lún* (轉輪王), who takes charge of the distinction of transmigration from the reports of these above-mentioned hells. His lunar birthday is on April 17th.

Thus these *Yama Kings* rule and take charge of the hells where the dead are descended. Therefore, during the period of 49 days *the dead person does not know where he or she will be reborn, then in 49 days in every moment of thought he or she are looking forward to the blood relatives for his or her sake to make merit and thanks to its force to save his or her* (是命終人未得受生、在七七日內念念之間望諸骨肉眷屬與造福力救拔).⁽⁶⁴⁾ It is on the basis of the teachings recorded in the *Ti-ts'ang-p'u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*), the Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers always perform some important rites after the funeral with all their one-mindedness praying for their own blood deceased parents or relatives to be freed from the suffering in the hells and then to be reborn in the good realms or the Pure Land. Moreover, it is believed that during the period of time from the day the dead went to the other world up to the 49th day, every week the *Yama Kings* hold the judgement of the

sins of the dead. Therefore, in every week the living mourning family and relatives also perform these rites to pray for the dead.⁽⁶⁵⁾

After-funeral rites can be listed as follows:

a. *The Offering Rite on the First Week* (初旬禮):

This is the anniversary rite of the first week which is taken seriously among the Vietnamese Buddhists. At the rite, monks once again perform the rite of “opening” the sūtras (開經) and the rite for offering vegetarian food to the dead. From now on, monks often come to recite the sūtras every week at the mourning family home. Of course, in these days all members of the family take the vegetarian meals. There are some families who perform the rite weekly at the temple, but most do it at their own home. As seen in Hue City, at night there is also the recitation of the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*) or normally the *Ti-ts’ang-p’u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*) of some members of the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers’ Family*) or of the *Đạo Tràng Hộ Niệm* (護念道場, *Prayer-Assisting Group*) who vow to do free services for such cases.⁽⁶⁶⁾

b. *The Rite of Offering [Foods] on the Last Seventh Week* (終七齋旬禮):

Because it is believed that the last seventh week is the time when the deceased is judged where to be reborn, the mourning Buddhist family always performs this ceremony very solemnly and significantly in the Buddhist way. Normally the ceremony is held only in one day, but for rich families they hold it over two or three days or more depending on their vow. Long or short, in one day or more, some rites should be performed for this last seventh week are the *Noon-Offering to the Buddha* (午供), the *Food-Offering to the Dead* (薦靈) and the *Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (施餓鬼).

However, if holding the ceremony over two or three days, apart from these rites, there are some other rites such as the *Offering Rite to Monks and Nuns* (齋僧禮) and the *Rite of Releasing Living Beings* (放生禮). Sometimes another rite called

the *Release from False Charges* (解冤拔度) is performed in combination with the *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼).⁽⁶⁷⁾ Naturally it takes so much money to perform these rites, but the mourning family and relatives manage to cover the money and hold them as ardently and one-mindedly as possible with the only purpose of praying for the dead.

By performing these rites completely and successfully, the mourning family and their relatives believe firmly that the dead will be freed from the suffering in the hells and then be blessed by the *Amitābha Buddha* with the transmigration in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvātī*, 極樂).

From now on there are some more important rites like the *Offering Rite of One Hundred Days After Death* (百日禮), the *Offering Rite of One Year After Death* (小祥禮), the *Offering Rite of Two Years After Death* (大祥禮) and the *Anniversary Rite* (諱日禮). They are also performed the same with other normal rites, that is to say, inviting monks to come to the home and reciting the sūtras to pray for the dead. These days are also chances for the dead's family who could not manage to perform the *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮) or also called *Rite of Relieving the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮) on the 49th day, then they hold it on the occasion of these rites.

It is on the *Offering Rite of One Year After Death* (小祥禮) that the far relatives can abandon the mourning clothes not putting them on any more. The blood sons and daughters of the dead will do that on the *Offering Rite of Two Years After Death* (大祥禮).

c. Some remarks:

- The same as with the Japanese tradition, the Vietnamese also pay special attention to days of the first, the third week, the fifth, and the last seventh week.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, on these occasions, apart from vowing to take the vegetarian meals, inviting monks to recite the sūtras at their home, performing all necessary rites such as offering to the hungry ghosts, releasing the living beings, the dead's family always celebrates the rite for offering to monks and nuns at temples, donate rice or money to the poor, and especially organize the offering to ten temples in the summer retreat.

- Especially on the 49th day, most mourning Buddhist families celebrate the *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮) or also called *Rite of Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮), and the *Rite for Release from False Charges* (解冤拔渡禮). These modes of religious activities have become so popular and “effective” nowadays in everywhere of Vietnam that even poor families also try their best to perform these rites.

- While performing these rites, monks often read a special “letter” (牒) as a symbol of a report to the every *Yama King* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王), who takes charge of each hell, about some good deeds which the deceased’s family and relatives have done during the past time. The reports will be burnt and one believes that these “letters” are delivered to the *Yama Kings* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王) who will mitigate the punishment and the sins of the dead through these letters.⁽⁶⁹⁾

- In Japan, the Japanese also perform the offering rite on the last seventh week (終七齋旬), also called *shijukunichi* (四十九日), *shichishichinichi* or *nananoka* (七七 日) very solemnly, but one thing which is not seen in Vietnamese tradition is that on this day a custom of *maikotsu* (埋骨, *burying the dead’s ashes*) is often performed.⁽⁷⁰⁾

- One important taboo is that the offering foods for the dead should not feed monks and nuns, because it is believed that if doing so the dead will lose their merit.⁽⁷¹⁾

- As well as these above-mentioned rites, there are some other rites or ceremonies such as the praying ceremony for ancestors, dead compatriots and for those who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of Buddhism, especially in the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會).

3. The *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮)

The rite, also called *chấn tế cô hồn* (拯濟孤魂, *Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits*) in Vietnamese, is considered as one of the most important and holy Buddhist rites which is highly appreciated among the Vietnamese Buddhists.

It stems from the origin of the story of Ānanda, one of great disciple of the Buddha, recorded in the these scriptures such as the (佛說救拔焰口餓鬼陀羅尼經, *Discourse on the Buddha's Teachings of Dhāraṇīs for Saving the Flaming-Mouth Hungry Ghost*),⁽⁷²⁾ the (佛說救面然餓鬼陀羅尼神咒經, *Discourse on the Buddha's Teachings of Dhāraṇīs and Holy Spells for Saving the Flaming Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*),⁽⁷³⁾ the *Yü-ch'ieb-chi-yao-chiu-ê-nan-t'o-lo-ni-yen-k'ou-kuei-i-ching* (瑜伽集要救阿難陀羅尼焰口軌儀經, *Discourse on the Essential Yoga Collection of Dhāraṇīs for Saving Ānanda by Ritual of Offering to the Flaming Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*)⁽⁷⁴⁾ and the *Yü-ch'ieb-chi-yao-yen-k'ou-shih-shih-ch'i-chiao-ê-nan-t'o-yüan-yu* (瑜伽集要焰口施食起教阿難陀緣由, *An Essential Yoga Collection of the Origin Why Ānanda Expounded the Food-Offering to the Flaming-Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*).⁽⁷⁵⁾ The story says that Ānanda one night while moving in deep contemplation on the teachings he had just heard from the Buddha, on the third watch saw a horrible hungry ghost named *Flaming Mouth* (*Ulkā-mukha*, 焰口), whose body is thin and wizened, in whose mouth the fire is flaming, whose throat is as small as needle. The ghost came in front of Ānanda and said that three days later the latter's life would come to an end and immediately be reborn in the realm of hungry ghosts. On hearing that, Ānanda was very terribly surprised and scared, then he asked the ghost the way how to free from that fatal misfortune. The hungry ghost replied: "Tomorrow morning if you can offer foods and drinks to hundreds and thousands of million hungry ghosts as innumerable as the sands in the Gange River, to the uncountable Brāhmanist recluses, to the Yama Kings taking charge of hells, to the hell officials who watch over men's deeds, to the demons and gods, the formerly-deceased spirits and ancestors, using the *drona* (斛, a tub or wooden vessel) utilised by the Magadha (摩揭陀國 or 摩伽陀國) to offer them all 49 *dronas* of foods and drinks, and for our sake offer to the Triple Gem, then you will increase your longevity and at the same time make us be freed from the suffering of the hungry ghosts and be reborn in the heaven." (汝於來日晨朝、若能布施百千那由他恒河沙數餓鬼飲食、并餘無量波羅門仙、閻魔所司業道冥官、及諸鬼神先亡久遠等所食飲食、如摩伽陀國所用之斛、各施七七斛飲食、并爲我等供養三寶、汝得增壽、令我等輩離餓鬼苦得生天上。)⁽⁷⁶⁾

Therefore, on the basis of this origin, the rite of offering foods and drinks to the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼) came into existence. The ways of performing this

rite are recorded in some scriptures such as the *Yü-ch'ieh-chi-yao-chiu-ê-nan-t'o-lo-ni-yen-k'ou-kuei-i-ching* (瑜伽集要救阿難陀羅尼焰口軌儀經, *Discourse on the Essential Yoga Collection of Dhāraṇīs for Saving Ānanda by Ritual of Offering to the Flaming Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*), the *Yü-ch'ieh-chi-yao-yen-k'ou-shih-shih-i* (瑜伽集要焰口施食儀, *The Essential Yoga Collection of Ritual of Offering to the Flaming Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*),⁽⁷⁷⁾ etc. Furthermore, later a Chinese Ch'an monk named *Méng-shān-dé-yì* (蒙山德異, 1231-?)⁽⁷⁸⁾ edited the *Méng-shān-huō-shàng-liù-dào-pǔ-shuō* (蒙山和尚六道普說, *Most Venerable Méng-shān's Widely-Proclaiming Book of the Six Ways*), one volume, which explained clearly about the beginning *gāthās* in the *Passage of Offering Foods to the Hungry Ghosts* (施餓鬼文);⁽⁷⁹⁾ and nowadays the *Méng-shān's Passage of Offering Foods* (蒙山施食文) has been utilised for the afternoon session in Vietnamese temples.

At present, while performing the *Great Rite of Food-Offering to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼禮) or also called *Rite of Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮), the Vietnamese monks always use the book *Trung Khoa Du Già Tập Yếu* (中科瑜伽集要, *An Essential Yoga Collection of the Medium Class*) written in Chinese language.⁽⁸⁰⁾

As mentioned above, the Vietnamese Buddhists often perform the rite on the occasion of the 49th day, the *Ullambana* (盂蘭盆) day, or on any occasion that the Buddhists vow and have enough financial conditions to do. Normally as seen in Hue City, it lasts two or three days in which the following rites are performed:⁽⁸¹⁾

a. *The Rite of Starting and Hanging Up the Banner* (興作上幡禮):

For beginning such an important and holy rite, monks must perform this rite with the meaning of announcing to the God of Earth and other gods residing where the rite is held. Then a long banner (*dhaja*, 幢幡), on which a general name of all deceased ancestors, relatives, etc are written in Chinese characters, is hung up high above on a bamboo.

If the *Rite for Release from False Charges* (解冤拔渡禮) is performed in combination with the *Rite of Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮), then one rite called *Inviting the Gods of Mountains and Rivers* (迎山水) ought to be

performed before the *Rite of Starting and Hanging Up the Banner* (興作上幡禮).

b. The *Rite of “Opening” the Sūtras* (開經禮):

Next monks perform the rite of “opening” the sūtras and inviting the Triple Gem with the meaning of asking the Triple Gem to come into being at the rite and to justify for the good deeds which the family will do during these days.

c. The *Rite of Inviting the Flaming-Face Great Being* (焦面大士) and the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩):

This rite includes the invitation of the *Flaming-Face Great Being* (焦面大士), also called the *Flaming-Mouth Demon King* (焰口鬼王),⁽⁸²⁾ who is considered as the incarnation of the *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva* (觀世音菩薩) and asked Ānanda for performing the rite of offering foods and drinks to the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼) as referred to above, and the invitation of the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩), who vows to save all sentient beings as well as all dead souls in the hells as recorded in the *Ti-ts’ang-p’u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*).⁽⁸³⁾

d. The *Rite of Inviting the Dead Souls* (請靈禮):

After the above rite has been finished, monks perform the rite of inviting the dead souls including the souls of the deceased ancestors, the relatives of the family, especially of those who have died in accidents or died suddenly or died at very young ages and so on. The Vietnamese believe that these souls are very difficult to be reborn in other good worlds, then this is also a good chance for them to be reborn thanks to the auspicious blessing of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

e. The *Rite of Reciting the Sūtras* (誦經禮):

During these two or three days, the family and the relatives of the dead persons ought to be one-mindedly and concentrate on praying for the dead. One of the good deeds which has much uncountable merit is to recite the sūtras. Therefore, the family always asks the monks or nuns or even the Buddhist

layfollowers to do this. While the sūtras are being recited, all members kneel down with joined palms with their one-mindedness to listen and sometimes bow down when hearing a sound of bell. Normally some sūtras recited in such a rite are the *Ti-ts'ang-p'u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*), the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經, *The Amitābha Sūtra*), etc.; and besides some sūtras for confession such as the *Shui-ch'an-ching* (水懺經), the *Liang-buang-ch'an-ching* (梁皇懺經), etc. by reciting each Buddha's name once and bowing down to pay worship to the name.

f. *The Noon-Offering Rite* (午供禮):

Everyday the rite is performed to offer food to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who are believed frequently to exist at the place where the rite is held. After this rite, sometimes the family often holds the ceremony of offering things to monks and nuns.

g. *The Rite of Offering Foods to the Dead Souls* (薦靈禮):

The rite is also performed by monks day by day enough three times, because after having been invited to come to the ceremony, the dead souls should to be fed and offered.

h. *The Rite of Releasing the Living Beings* (放生禮):

By releasing the other living beings, the living family believes that thanks to the merit, the dead souls will also be released and freed from the hell, and as a matter of fact, to be reborn into another good realm. Some living beings bought for the rite are birds, fishes, shrimps, shells, etc.

i. *The Rite of Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮):

Often held in the afternoon of the last day during two or three days, the rite is considered as the main and a most important one which lasts from 3 to 6 hours of reciting the sūtras, dhāraṇīs and mantras.

Based on the book *Trung Khoa Du Già Tập Yếu* (中科瑜伽集要, *An Essential Yoga Collection of the Medium Class*), the process of performing this rite consists of

the main stages as follows:

- Inviting the Five Buddhas in five directions: the *Akṣobhya Buddha* (阿閼佛) in the East, the *Amitābha Buddha* (阿彌陀佛) in the West, the *Ratna-saṃbhava Buddha* (寶生佛) in the South, the *Amogha-siddhi* (不空成就佛) in the North, and the *Vairocana Buddha* (毘盧遮那佛) in the Centre.

- Entering the *Avalokiteśvara's* meditation (入觀音禪定).

- Inviting the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva* (請地藏王菩薩).

- Inviting the *Ten Yama Kings* (十閻魔王) who takes charge of the *Ten Halls* (十殿): the King *Qín-guàng* (秦廣王) of the First Hall (第一殿), the King *Chǔ-jiāng* (楚江王) of the Second Hall (第二殿), the King *Sòng-dì* (宋帝王) of the third Hall (第三殿), the King *Wǔ-guān* (五官王) of the Fourth Hall (第四殿), the King *Yán-mó* (*Yama-rāja*, 閻魔王) of the Fifth Hall (第五殿), the King *Biàn-chéng* (卞城王) of the Sixth Hall (第六殿), the King *Tài-shān* (泰山王) of the Seventh Hall (第七殿), the King *Dōu-shì* (都市王) of the Eighth Hall (第八殿), the King *Píng-děng* (平等王) of the Ninth Hall (第九殿), and the King *Zhuàn-lún* (轉輪王) of the Tenth Hall (第十殿).

- Inviting ten kinds of lonely spirits (十類孤魂): the emperors and kings who ruled the nation, the royal generals and ministers, the royal officials, the Confucianists, the forth-goers, the mountain recluses, the travelers and wanderers, the dead soldiers in the battlefield, those who despise the Triple Gem and disobey their parents, the women living in the royal palace, those who died from accidents and had sudden death.

- Reciting the *Méng-shān* lesser passage (小蒙山) in which the *Generally-Inviting Dhāraṇī* (普召請真言)⁽⁸⁴⁾ for assembling all hungry ghosts, the *Throat-Opening Dhāraṇī* (開咽喉真言)⁽⁸⁵⁾ for making the throats as tiny as the needles of the hungry ghosts open, two important *dhāraṇīs* as the *Dhāraṇī* of “*Pervading Foods*” (徧食真言) and the *Dhāraṇī* of “*Pervading Water*” (徧水真言)⁽⁸⁶⁾ are recited as much as possible so that the foods and drinks can be pervaded innumerable to offer to uncountable hungry ghosts. Moreover, the names of seven other Tathāgātas are also recited like the *Prabhūta-ratna* (多寶 or 寶勝), the *Surūpa* (妙色身), the *Vipula-gātra* (廣博身), the *Abhayaṃ-kara* (離布畏), the *Amṛta-rāja* (甘露

王).

- Transforming the merit.

j. Remarks:

- Normally this *Rite of Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits* (拯濟孤魂禮) is performed in combination with the *Rite for Release from False Charges* (解冤拔渡禮). Thus by doing so, the latter is always performed the night before the former is held.

- As seen in Vietnam nowadays, while performing the rite, the leader of the rite (懺主) often steps on a high stage to sit down on a holy seat called the *Lion Throne* (獅子座) and on behalf the Buddhas to preach the dhamma to the lonely spirits and hungry ghosts. While sitting on the throne, he wears a so-called *Kṣitigarbha Hat* (地藏冠), also called *Vairocana Hat* (毘盧冠), on which there are the images of the five Buddhas as mentioned above.

- As taught by the Buddha in some sūtras as referred to above, especially in the *Yü-ch'ieh-chi-yao-yen-k'ou-shih-shih-i* (瑜伽集要焰口施食儀, *The Essential Yoga Collection of Ritual of Offering to the Flaming Mouth [Hungry Ghost]*),⁽⁸⁷⁾ about the way for performing the rite of offering foods and drinks to the hungry ghosts, there are many *dhāraṇīs* (陀羅尼) are recited while the *mudrās* (印, performance of hands) are also performed at the same time such as the *Avalokiteśvara Mudrā* (觀音印), the *Hell-Breaking Mudrā* (破地獄印), the *Mudrā of Inviting the Hungry Ghosts* (召請餓鬼印), the *Mudrā of Confessing and Annihilating Offences* (懺悔滅罪印), *Throat-Opening Mudrā* (開咽喉印), the *Samaya Mudrā* (三昧耶印), etc.

- The tradition of performing the rite of offering foods and drinks to the hungry ghosts has become deeply rooted in the daily life as well as the culture of the Vietnamese Buddhists. The evidence is that at present there are two well-known Buddhist works written about the ten kinds of lonely spirits, one by King *Lê Thánh Tông* (黎聖宗, 1460-1497 in reign) called the *Thập Giới Cô Hồn Quốc Ngữ Văn* (十界孤魂國語文, *The National Language Passage of the Ten Kinds of Lonely Spirits*),⁽⁸⁸⁾ and the other by the Vietnamese famous poet, *Nguyễn Du* (1765-

1820)—the author of the *Truyện Kiều* (*The Tale of Kieu*), called the *Văn Tế Thập Loại Chúng Sinh* (文祭十類衆生, *The Passage for Offering the Ten Kinds of Sentient Beings*).⁽⁸⁹⁾

- Also as mentioned above, the food and drinks which are used for offering to the lonely spirits should not be utilised for feeding monks and nuns—the forthgoers (*pabbajita*, 出家者).

- A superstitious belief is that the coins, which are utilised in the rite as a symbol of offering travel expenses to the hungry ghosts, are believed to be sacred and miraculous in curing the baby diseases, therefore one seize together to receive the coins as much as possible from monks; and even sometimes the yellow robe of the head of the rite is also cut, because it is thought that it is the most sacred for body protection while putting it on.

- Three days after the rite has been finished, one performs the *Thanksgiving Rite*, giving thanks to which the lonely spirits who could not participate in the former rite for coming late will also be offered—as it is so believed.

II. Buddhist services for the living persons

As referred above, such a kind of Buddhist services is called *lễ cầu an* (求安 or 祈安禮) in Vietnamese, meaningly the rites praying for safety and happiness, especially for the body and mind at rest. In a family where there is a sick person or someone who has been wounded in an accident, then naturally his or her family will call for the doctor or bring the very person to the hospital for cure on the one hand, but on the other hand, one also goes to the temple to ask monks or nuns for reciting the sūtras to pray for the very person. By that way, the family will be comforted and concentrate their mind from worry and embarrassment, and as a matter of fact, they can gain the feeling of safety with their mind at rest through the deeply faithful belief in the miraculousness of the sūtras as well as the loving-kindly blessing of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This is called *lễ cầu an*.

Apart from the the case of having a sick or injured person, the Vietnamese Buddhists also perform such a kind of rite in the New Year, for the wedding, for enshrining the Buddha's image or statue, for the inauguration of a new

construction such as hotel, restaurant, home, and so on. Sometimes the rite is performed to offer the *God of Earth* (土神) also with the aim at praying for safety and happiness in the family. Among these Buddhist services, in this part, I would like to introduce some rites which play an important role in the daily spiritual life of the Vietnamese Buddhists.

1. The praying rite for the sick

The rite is performed either at temples or at the sick person's house. Normally the *Yao-shih-kuang-ju-lai-pên-yüan-kung-tê-ching* (藥師光如來本願功德經, *Discourse on the Principal Vows and Merit of the Bhaiṣajya-guru Tathāgatha*) or the *Universal Gate Sūtra* (普門經) are recited. The former tells about the *Bhaiṣajya-guru Tathāgatha* (藥師如來), the Medicine Master, who can cure all diseases of the sentient beings. The second tells about the *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva* (觀世音菩薩), the Compassionate One, who vows to save all sentient beings who are in danger or trouble. Therefore, these two scriptures are considered as the holy one for praying for the sick, the wounded, etc.

Moreover, in combination with the recitation of sūtras, some *dhāraṇīs* are also utilised in such rites as the *Fo-mu-chun-t'i-shên-chou* (佛母準提神咒, *Dhāraṇī of the Buddha Mother Cuṇḍī*),⁽⁹⁰⁾ the *Hsiao-tsai-chi-hsiang-shên-chou* (消災吉祥神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Calamity-Dispersing Omens*),⁽⁹¹⁾ the *Yao-shih-kuan-ting-zhên-yin* (藥師灌頂真言, *Dhāraṇī of the Bhaiṣajya-guruvaidūryaprabha Baptism*), etc.

2. The praying rite for the New Year

As seen in Vietnam nowadays, when the New Year comes the Vietnamese Buddhists often either come to the temples to participate in the rite performed there or invite monks to pray at their own home. Normally in the New Year, the *Yao-shih-kuang-ju-lai-pên-yüan-kung-tê-ching* (藥師光如來本願功德經, *Discourse on the Principal Vows and Merit of the Bhaiṣajya-guru Tathāgatha*) is recited and at temples the *Seven-Starred Stage* (七星壇) is also established. As well, the *Yao-shih-*

kuan-ting-zhēn-yin (藥師灌頂真言, *Dhāraṇī of the Bhaiṣajya-guruvaiḍūryaprabha Baptism*) is recited many times as follows:

Namaḥ bhagavate bhaiṣajya-guru-vaiḍūrya-prabhā-rājāya tathāgatā-yārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tad yathā. Oṃ bhaṣajye bhaṣajye bhaiṣajya-samudgate svāhā. (*I take refuge to the Medicine Master, King of Lights of Vaiḍūrya Gem, the Exalted One, the Worthy-Offering One, the Perfect Universal Wisom. Oṃ. Medicine ! Medicine ! What the things lived by the medicine. Svāha !*)⁽⁹²⁾

(南無薄伽伐帝、鞞殺社、窣嚩薛瑠璃、鉢喇婆、喝囉闍也、怛他揭多耶、阿囉喝帝、三藐三勃陀耶、怛姪他、唵、鞞殺逝、鞞殺逝、鞞殺社、三沒揭帝莎訶)

It is on this day the praying rite at the beginning of the New Year is held and becomes a festival for everybody to make a pilgrimage to old and famous temples as seen in Northern Vietnam. It is called the Festival of January 15th, which I will discuss more clearly later.

It is necessary to mention here that during this period of time, there is a collective celebration of offering to stars at temples as well as at the Buddhists' houses with the aim of praying for releasing and freeing from calamity or accidents, and for safety and prosperity.

3. The praying rite for enshrining the Buddha's image or statue

The rite is performed to enshrine a Buddha's image or statue at temples or at the Buddhist followers' house. As seen in Vietnam, according to the favourite or the faith of the family, one can enshrine any statue or image of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, but normally the *Sakyamuni Buddha*, the *Amitābha Buddha* or the especially the *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva*—*Kwan Yin* in Chinese—are popularly enshrined at private home of the Vietnamese Buddhist followers.

While performing the rite, monks always purify the image or statue by a saintly water called sweet dew (*amṛta*, 甘露)—the nectar of immortality, then invite the Triple Gem as follows:⁽⁹³⁾

“*We one-mindedly invite the innumerable permanently-existing Buddhas of the past,*

present and future in ten directions, the Mighty One in loving-kindness possessing thirty-two signs, the Great Enlightened One possessing eighty kinds of beauty, who are seated on the stage of lotus flower with hundreds of jewel lights. Would the Buddhas, with your great and universal compassion, feel pity for and think of the sentient beings and descend with lights to this place for justification of this merit.”

(南無一心奉請、蓮華臺上百寶光中、三十二相之能仁、八十種好之大覺、過現未來無量常住佛寶。唯願、佛慈廣大憫念衆生、光降道場證明功德。)

“We one-mindedly invite the innumerable permanently-existing Dhammas of the past, present and future in ten directions, the sūtras with expounding meanings of the supreme vehicle, the twelve divisions⁽⁹⁴⁾ of the Mahāyāna true and secret canon, which were brought from India to the White Horse Temple.⁽⁹⁵⁾ Would the Dhammas, without leaving the compassionate, descend with lights to this place for justification of this merit.”

(南無一心奉請、西天竹園白馬陀來、修多羅了義上承、十二部真經秘典、過現未來無量常住法寶。唯願、不捨慈悲、光降道場證明功德。)

“We one-mindedly invite the innumerable permanently-existing Saṅghas of the past, present and future in ten directions, those who have attained the Three Insights,⁽⁹⁶⁾ Eight Kinds of Emancipation,⁽⁹⁷⁾ Five Kinds of Eyes⁽⁹⁸⁾ and Six Supernatural Powers,⁽⁹⁹⁾ who transform their bodies to proclaim the teachings here and there, to be offered in this world and in the heaven. Would the Saṅghas, widely opening the means, without leaving the compassionate, descend with lights to this place for justification of this merit.”

(南無一心奉請、三明八解、五果六通、分身於此土他方、應供於人間典上、過現未來無量常住僧寶。唯願、大開方便、不捨慈悲、光降道場證明功德。)

Then a passage praying for living in peace and safety through days and nights is recited as follows:

“We pray to live in auspicious days and nights. The days and nights with six periods⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ living in auspiciousness we pray all periods to live in auspiciousness with the frequent support of the superior masters (the Triple Gem or the Dhamma Guardians).”

(願晝吉祥夜吉祥、晝夜六時恒吉祥、一切時中吉祥者、願諸上師哀攝受 [三寶哀攝受、護法常擁護])

Normally while performing this rite, a small round glass five threads of five colors are used for the so-called “opening the lights and eyes” (開光點眼) of the statue or image.

4. Remarks

- After every rite, one always holds the normal small rite of offering foods and drinks for the hungry ghosts as well as invisible spirits, because it is believed that when performing such a rite the hungry ghosts and invisible spirits will come to listen to the teachings in the sūtras, and thanks to that they will be freed from the suffering in their world and be reborn in the good worlds, and then return to protect the members and relatives of the family who performed the rite.

- In the praying rite for the sick, one often buys some living beings to release with the aim of saving and compensating the life of the sick.

- Although the *Ti-ts'ang-p'u-sa-pên-yüan-ching* (地藏菩薩本願經, *The Sūtra of Principal Vows of the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*) is often utilised for praying for the dead, but sometimes in reality it can be utilised for praying for the living.

D. Some kinds of *sā* (疏) and *diệp* (牒)

When performing these above-mentioned rites, both for *câu an* (求安, *praying for safety*) and *câu siêu* (求超, *praying for being reborn*), the Vietnamese monks always utilise a kind of letters or reports called *sā* (疏) and *diệp* (牒).

Sā (疏) is a kind of special letters or reports for offering and sending to the a superior reverend one like the Buddhas and so on. *Diệp* (牒) is also a kind of normal letter or record for offering and sending to the lowest class like the dead spirits, the hungry ghosts, etc. They are considered as the most important and holy things which cannot be missed in these rites. Naturally there is also another kind of *diệp* (牒) called the monk's certificate (戒牒) for proving that the very person has been ordained the bhikkhuship. The case is quite different from this.

I. Classification

Based on the classification of two kinds of rites—*câu an* (求安, *praying for*

safety) and *cầu siêu* (求超, *praying for being reborn*), there are also two kinds of *sơ* (疏) and *điệp* (牒) which accord with each kind of rite. Some of their main and typical kinds can be listed as follows:⁽¹⁰¹⁾

1. The case of *sơ* (疏)

- a. The *sơ* (疏) for praying rites of *cầu an* (求安, *praying for safety*) is for on normal days and in the New Year.
- b. The *sơ* (疏) for normal *cầu siêu* (求超, *praying for being reborn*) rites.
- c. The *sơ* (疏) for praying rites of offering in every week.
- d. The *sơ* (疏) for the rite of *chẩn tế cô hồn* (拯濟孤魂, *Relieving and Releasing the Lonely Spirits*).
- e. The *sơ* (疏) for noon-offering rites to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
- f. The *sơ* (疏) for praying rites of reciting sūtras.
- g. The *sơ* (疏) for praying rites of in the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會).
- h. The *sơ* (疏) for offering to the *Flaming-Face Great One* (焦面大士).
- i. The *sơ* (疏) for the rites of offering to the stars.

2. The case of *điệp* (牒)

- a. The *điệp* (牒) for the normal *cầu siêu* (求超, *praying for being reborn*) rites.
- b. The *điệp* (牒) for the praying rites of offering rites to the lonely spirits.
- c. The *điệp* (牒) for the praying rites of releasing the living beings.
- d. The *điệp* (牒) for the praying rites in the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會).
- e. The *điệp* (牒) for the praying rites of offering for each week.
- f. The *điệp* (牒) used for the funeral.

II. Some typical kinds

In order to understand more and more clearly about the contents and significance of these rites, I think, it is necessary to introduce some kinds of the *sā* (疏) and the *diệp* (牒).

1. The *sā* (疏) for *câu an* (求安)

Such a kind of *sā* (疏) is also divided into many different kinds depending on their beginning words such as the *sā* (疏) of *phật nãi* (佛乃), *nhất niệm tâm thành* (疏一念心誠), *thoại nhiều liên đài* (瑞遶蓮臺), etc., among which I would like to introduce the second one.

“We prostrate ourselves to say:

With the sincere mind in one thought, the Holy Ones with hundreds of precious lights will respond us, and in the smoke of fragrant incense twisting around, the sages and saints in ten directions of unlimited space appear. Now is the letter of such-and-such place (address of the family), Vietnam. The family obeys the teachings of the Buddhas and saints to cultivate, offer incense sticks and recite sūtras to pray for safety so as to gather merit and welcome the omens. Now today we, the disciples so-and-so, dhamma names as such-and-such, altogether with the relatives etc., with sincere minds, pay worship one-hundred times and look upon to beg:

Would the Golden-Signed Ones in the lights look down and justify for us. Thinking that we, disciples, were born in the lower stage, but our lives belong to above heaven. so we bear the grace of being covered by the heaven, and we have deep emotion of the merit of protecting us by the Buddhas and saints. We think that we did no single good deed, then worry about the spare offences. Now is the good day of this month, we arrange the incense sticks, flowers with onee-mindedness to recite the honourable sūtras of the Mahāyāna dhamma, the sūtra such-and-such, and in addition, the Hsiao-tsai-chi-hsiang-shên-chou (消災吉祥神咒, Dhāraṇī of Calamity-Dispersing Omens) with other dhāraṇī, to pay worship to the respected figures of a thousand merit and the precious looks of the Three Bodies (ti-kāya, 三身).⁽¹⁰²⁾ We collect all these good causes to pray for increasing the result of merit. Now the letter has been filled with content and then we bow down our heads and pay homage to:

*We pay homage to the permanently-existing Triple Gem—Buddhas, Dhammas, and Saṅghas—in ten directions for great proving.
 We pay homage to the Sakyamuni Buddha, the Dhamma Lord of this world—Sabā-lokadhātu, the Principal Master seated on the lotus seat for proving.
 We pay homage to the Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva.
 We pay homage to the Māra-Subjugating Great Emperor—King Guān-shèng,⁽¹⁰³⁾ the Bodhisattva, the Crowned Prince Guān-píng and the General Zhōu-cāng.
 The sanits of the Three Vehicles, Ten thousands deities in the Four Halls, the Dhamma Guardians, the dragons and devas, as well as all good gods altogether look down and shed lights for justification and bless omens.
 We bow down again and beg:
 The Buddhas to look down and protect us, the saints to support us so that our dangers are destroyed to their end, and merit and omens as uncountable as the sands of the Ganges River are gathered, then our bodies become healthy, our lives are safe. Thus we beg for and would like to send to all of you this letter.
 The Buddhist calendar such-and-such, the date so-and-so, we, disciples, so-and-so bow down and send the letter.”*

(伏以

一念心誠百寶光中無不應、片香繚繞十方賢聖盡虛空。疏爲越南國...家居佛聖修香諷經求安、集福迎祥事。今弟子...法名...合同家眷等、唯日心誠、百拜仰干願承、金相光中俯垂證鑒。
 言念、弟子等叨生下品命屬上天、荷乾坤覆載之恩、感佛聖扶持之德。思無片善慮有餘愆。茲者本月吉日、列陳香花虔誠諷誦大乘法寶尊經...加持消災諸品神咒、頂禮三身寶相、萬德金容、集此善因祈增福果。今則謹具疏文和南拜白
 南無十方常住三寶一切諸佛尊法賢聖僧作大證明
 南無娑婆教主本師釋迦牟尼佛蓮座證明
 南無大慈悲救苦難靈感觀世音菩薩
 南無伏魔大帝關聖帝君菩薩關平太子周倉將軍。延奉三乘上聖四府萬靈、護法龍天、諸位善神同垂炤鑒共降吉祥。伏願、佛垂護佑、聖德扶持等諸災難盡消除、沙數福祥皆駢集、身躬壯健命位平安。仰賴佛聖證明謹疏。
 佛曆...歲次...年...月...日時弟子衆等和南上疏)⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

2. The *sū* (疏) for *câu siêu* (求超)

This kind of *sū* (疏) is utilised for the rites of praying for being reborn in another good world or on the Pure Land of the *Amitābha Buddha*. Based on the

purpose of every rite of the *câu siêu* (求超), then there are many kinds of *sā* (疏) such as the *sā* (疏) for offering in every week, the *sā* (疏) for offering foods and drinks to the hungry ghosts, the *sā* (疏) for the normal rite of *câu siêu* (求超), and so on. Here would I like to introduce the last one.

“We prostrate ourselves to say:

The Dhamma Lord of this world, Sabā, widely opened the gate of emancipation; and the Leading Master of the Realm of Highest Joy (Sukhāvātī, 極樂) received and led to the path of being reborn. Now is the letter of such-and-such place (address of the family), Vietnam. The family obeys the teachings of the Buddhas to offer incense sticks and recite sūtras to pray for day of praying for being reborn. We bow down and beg the Great Enlightened One, the Exalted One for receiving and saving the fragrant spirit of the Buddhist layman (laywoman), the dhamma name so-and-so, etc.

We wish that thanks to the Buddhist teachings the fragrant spirits will be reborn, and based on the sūtras’ words they will be enlightened. Now is the day of so-and-so. We follow the monks to recite the honourable sūtras of the Mahāyāna dhamma, the sūtra such-and-such, and in addition, the Wang-shên-ching-t’u-shên-chou (往生淨土神咒, Dhāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land), to pay worship to the respected figures of thousand merit and the precious looks of the Three Bodies (ti-kāya, 三身). We collect all these good causes to pray for being reborn. Now the letter has been filled with content and then we bow down our heads and pay homage to:

We pay homage to the permanently-existing Triple Gem—Buddhas, Dhammas, and Saṅghas—in ten directions for great proving.

We pay homage to the Amitābha Buddha in the West, the receiving and leading Master, seated on the lotus seat for proving.

We invite Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva for leading; the Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva for upholding; the Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva, the Compassionate Revered One, for receiving and leading out of the suffering of the dark paths; the saints of the ying and yang, who altogether look down with your pitiful mind.

We bow down again and beg for:

You, with your immense loving-kindness, feel pity for the sentient beings and then receive and lead the fragrant spirits for sauntering in the Buddha land, and then bless the family and relatives to live in longevity. We look upon and beg the Buddha for proving for this letter.

The Buddhist calendar such-and-such, the date so-and-so, we, disciples, so-and-so bow down

and send the letter.”

(伏以

娑婆教主弘開解脫之門、極樂導師接引往生之路。拜疏爲越南國...家居奉
佛上香獻供諷經...之晨...今弟子...唯願

大覺世尊俯垂接度。痛念...奉爲...

佛法以超昇、全賴經文而解脫。茲臨...之晨、仗命六和之諷誦大乘法寶尊經...
加持往生淨土神咒、頂禮三身寶相萬德金容、集此良因祈求超度。今則謹具疏文
和南拜白

南無十方常住三寶一切諸佛尊法賢聖僧作大證明

南無西方教主接引導師阿彌陀佛蓮座證明、恭奉

觀音接引、勢至提攜、地藏慈尊接出幽途之苦、冥陽列聖同垂憫念之心。

伏願、慈悲無量憐憫有情、接香靈西竺逍遙、扶陽眷南山壽考。仰賴佛恩證明謹
疏。佛曆...歲次...年...月...日時弟子衆等和南上疏)⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

3. The *diep* (牒) for offering for each week

This kind of *diep* (牒) is utilised for the rite of *câu siêu* (求超, *praying for being reborn*) for each week from the day the dead was deceased.

“The necessities for being reborn with the letter of offering.

Now at the so-and-so place (address of the family), Vietnam, the family obey the Buddha’s teachings to cultivate, offer incense sticks and recite the sūtras to pray for being reborn on the so-and-so week (the first, second, third week, etc.). Now the owner of the rite (the lonely son, the sad son, etc.), altogher with his family, the paternal and maternal relatives, male and female, the daughters-in-law, the sons-in-law, the nieces and nephews, etc., respectfully arrange the incense sticks, flowers, vegetarian dishes and necessary things, and look to the Buddha’s grace for looking down and receiving the fragrant spirit such-and-such, dhamma name such-and-such, who was born on date so-and-so (the birthday of the deceased), and died on date so-and-so (the death date).

We pray for the spirit, thanks to the Buddha’s forces to be blessed, and depending on the sūtras’ words to be enlightened. Now is right on the such-and-such week, the report is made in front of the Yama King such-and-such (name of the Yama King) of the Hall so-and-so (name of the Hall). Therefore, we ask the monks to recite the sūtra so-and-so of the Mahāyāna precious dhamma, and in addition, the Wang-shên-ching-t’u-shên-chou (往生

淨土神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land*). We collect all these good causes to pray for the spirit to be reborn in the Realm of Highest Joy. Now the offering rite has been finished and the letter is announced. The spirit receives this as the *prajñā* ferry across the stream and as eternal refuge for being reborn.

Thus is the letter for recommendation to the spirit who receives it. The letter is sent to the *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*, the Compassionate Revered One, who will transform it to the *Yama King* for great release the spirits in the declusive paths and then opening the awakened roads.

Now is the date such-and-such when the letter is sent.”

(資度往生、爲牒薦事。茲據越南國...家居奉佛修香諷經...之齋旬祈超度事。今...孝子...、同家孝眷男子孫婚壻姪內外大小衆等、謹以香花濟盤庶品之儀、仰望佛恩俯垂接度。奉爲...之香靈。願承佛力以弘深、全來經文而解脫。茲臨...之齋旬正值坤府第...殿...冥王案前呈過。由是虔仗六和宣揚、諷誦大乘法寶經文...加持往生淨土神咒、集此良因祈生樂國。今則法筵完滿、薦牒宣揚、香靈收執、以爲般若之津梁、永作往生之公據。須至牒者、右牒薦。香靈收執、伸呈地藏慈尊轉奏冥陽殿下大赦迷途、廣開覺路、故牒。歲次...年...月...日時請薦牒)⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

4. The funeral *diệp* (牒)

This kind of *diệp* (牒) is utilised for funeral rites such as receiving the mourning clothes, offering the breakfast, offering the dinner, etc. In comparison with the above kind of normal *diệp* (牒), which is always called the recommendation letter (薦牒), this kind is often called worshipping letter (奠牒). Here I would like to introduce the *diệp* (牒) for offering breakfast during the mourning time.

“Necessities for offering to the spirit with the letter of worship.

Now at the so-and-so place (address of the family), Vietnam, the family obey the Buddha’s teachings to cultivate, offer incense sticks and recite the *sūtras* to perform the rite of moving the coffin and offer breakfast in order to repay the merit and grace and to pray for being reborn. Now the filial son (the lonely son, the sad son, etc.), altogher with his family, the paternal and maternal relatives, male and female, the daughters-in-law, the sons-in-law, the nieces and nephews, etc., respectfully arrange the incense sticks, flowers, vegetarian

dishes and necessary things, and look upon to the Buddha's grace for looking down and receiving with lights the fragrant spirit such-and-such, dhamma name such-and-such, who was born on date so-and-so (the birthday of the deceased), and died on date so-and-so (the death date).

Alas ! My father (mother) has just deceased, then on whom can I rely ? The coming-and-going marks cannot be seen in the back hall and front yard. Then the sounds of laughing and talking cannot be heard in the east eaves and the west house. Below the fountain the moon is so cold, the dews invade through dark clouds. The night watch has passed and the bell sound finished. The tea has been poured and the wine offered. Reminding the sound of instruction behind the screen, the flowers seem falling down. Looking to the water flowing along the stream, the image in the stream faces with real face. Now we ask the monks for reciting the sūtras, relying on the dhamma gem to announce and respectfully perform the rite of offering breakfast, so as to repay a little in the uncountable merit of giving and nourishing us. Just praying that the fragrant spirit, thanks to this good profit, becomes enlightened the birth-and-death to be free from the Three Ways,⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ and based on the sūtras' words to attain the state of Nirvāṇa and step up the Nine Grades⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Thus is the letter for worship. The Ying and Yang messengers receive the spirit. Now is the date so-and-so when the letter of worship is sent."

(資度靈筵 爲牒奠事。茲據越南國... 家居奉佛諷經遷柩朝奠之禮、報德酬恩祈超度事。今... 孝子...、同家孝眷男子孫婚壻姪內外大小衆等、謹以香花濟盤庶品之儀、仰望佛恩俯垂放光接度。奉爲... 之靈柩。嗚呼... 兮將何逝子也將何依。後宇前堂不見往來之跡、東軒西舍無聞笑語之聲。泉臺月冷夜淒淒、霜侵雲暗暗。更漏鐘殘、茶酌酒斟、帳裏教聲音、昇花謝、水去望水流、影中愁影對。茲者仗六和而諷誦、依法寶以宣揚、恭行朝奠之儀、少答生成之德。惟願、承斯善利、了生死而出三途、仗此經文證涅槃而登九品。須至牒者。右牒奠。陰陽使者接靈取執。歲次... 年... 月... 日時請奠牒)⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

5. Remarks

Through the contents of the above-mentioned *sā* (疏) and *diēp* (牒), we can make such remarks as following:

- Depending on the purpose of each rite, its content is different; but in general

if for the rite of praying for safety and longevity, the *Hsiao-tsai-chi-hsiang-shên-chou* (消災吉祥神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Calamity-Dispersing Omens*) is always recited, and if for the rite of praying for being reborn in the Pure Land, the *Wang-shên-ching-t'u-shên-chou* (往生淨土神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Rebirth in the Pure Land*) is often utilised for recitation.

- In these kinds of *sô* (疏) and *tiệp* (牒), there appear some Confucianist figures such as the *Guān-shèng-dì-jūn* (關聖帝君), the *Crowned Prince Guān-píng* (關平太子) and the *General Zhōu-cāng* (周倉將軍), or the *Yama Kings* (閻魔王). Thus the Vietnamese Buddhists do not only believe in the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, but also in other holy gods and deities. As in his book, *Tên Nguông Dân Gian Huế* (*The Folklore Belief of Hue*), Trần Đại Vinh affirms that “in the minds of the common Vietnamese people, the Buddhas never stand at a separate position, but frequently appear in the relationships of Heaven-Buddha or Buddha-Saint.”⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Therefore, the interrelations can be seen through the ways of worship and enshrining in the Buddhists' houses as well as in temples. For example, the case of the Quốc Ân Temple (國恩寺), one of the oldest temple of Hue City, it is the same. Beside the statues of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are enshrined, one can see the existence of some statues such as the *Guān-shèng-dì-jūn* (關聖帝君), the *Crowned Prince Guān-píng* (關平太子), the *General Zhōu-cāng* (周倉將軍), the *Jade Emperor* (玉皇上帝), the *Yama Kings* of the *Ten Halls* (十殿冥王), etc.⁽¹¹¹⁾ The cases of the other are similar. This shows a harmoniously fascinating mixture between Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in the beliefs of the Vietnamese Buddhists.

E. Annual Festivals

Festivals are important and necessary food for the Vietnamese people. The area where there are most festivals must be considered as the North of Vietnam, where a great number of ancient Buddhist temples have remained and are preserved. During the year round, one can see many festivals, both national and Buddhist, which are held mostly at temples. The Vietnamese temples have attached their activities to the daily cultural lives of the people as a close

relationship from the day when Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam. A Vietnamese proverb says about the sacred relationship:

Mái chùa che chở hồn dân tộc

Nếp sống bao đời của tổ tiên.

(The temple's roof covers the nation's soul

And the ways of life through generations of the ancestors)

The ways of life or modes of livings of the ancestors are manifested in many facets of culture, art, ways of thinking, etc., in which the most remarkable manifestation is through traditional festivals. Here in this part I would like to focus on the main and most important festivals such as the Tet, the *Buddha Jayanti Day*, the *Ullambana Day*, the *Mid-Autumn*, and some other festivals around the country.

1. The Tet Festival

Among many festivals, the most important, most cherished and richest traditional festival in Vietnam is Tet, which is a good chance for everybody to meet together, for all members of Vietnamese families reunite, and above all, for the people to relax and enjoy the fun. The Vietnamese word *Tết* is a distortion of the word *Tiết* (節),⁽¹¹²⁾ meaning *season* or *national holiday*.⁽¹¹³⁾ No historical records are made about the date when Tet was first celebrated, but it is accepted that Tet is as old as the nation of Vietnam itself.

The Vietnamese Tet is always held according to the lunar calendar and begins a week before the New Year's Day. During these days, there are some preliminary preparations such as seeing the God of Hearth (竈君)⁽¹¹⁴⁾ off the Kingdom of Heaven, erecting a *Cây Nêu* (*Signal Tree*)—a very high bamboo with a sonorous clay tablet and a piece of yellow cloth attached to the top, in front of every house,⁽¹¹⁵⁾ arranging flowers, lamps and necessary things on the ancestors' altar. It is thought that when the New Year comes, everything becomes new. Therefore, at temples as well as the people's houses, everything should be cleaned both inside

and outside.

Some kinds of fruits for offering to the ancestors in the New Year also play decisive and important role in the daily life of the Vietnamese people wishing for happiness, longevity, richness and safety. For example, in the New Year, some kinds of fruits chosen to offer are the *papaya*, *đu đủ* in Vietnamese which means *sufficiency* or *adequacy*, which symbolises the strong wish for a year of sufficiency. Or the water melon, *dưa hấu* in Vietnamese, inside of which has the red colour, is a symbol of luck or fortune, because the Vietnamese word *đỏ* (*red* or *lucky*) has the same meaning with this.⁽¹¹⁶⁾

Then when all these precautions have been taken, the Vietnamese calmly await the arrival of Spring. On the New Year's Eve, *Giao Thừa* in Vietnamese, the transition between the old and new, at temples monks and nuns perform the ceremony of "seeing the *Giao Thừa* in" by three times striking the great bell and big drum.

It is necessary to refer here to the first sound heard in the new year is most important and everyone tries to listen to it. For example, a cock crow signals hard work and bad harvest. The lowing of a buffalo symbolises a year of sweat and toil. A dog barking signifies a year of confidence and trust. The worst of all is the cry of an owl, a warning of coming epidemic and calamity for the whole community.⁽¹¹⁷⁾

It is on the New Year's Eve, a traditional custom which has been kept following up to now by the Vietnamese people is to come to visit the Buddhist pagodas, temples, etc for prayers and gathering the *lộc* (祿), a branch of young leaves which symbolized hope and good fortune.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Moreover, it is believed that everything in the temples are holy, sacred and full of merit and fortunes; therefore, beside putting the incense sticks in the incense burners, one also put the incense sticks at the trees' roots, or anywhere else in the temples. The tradition is very popularized especially in Hochiminh City. And as a matter of fact, some trees became bare on the first day of the New Year in the consequence of the *lộc* gathering. Furthermore, the custom of lighting a long big incense stick at the temple and then bringing it home to put at the ancestors' altar can also be seen in

Hochiminh City and other places of the nation. This is also a way of begging for the *lộc*. The fire symbolises the prosperity and sufficiency around the year.

The custom of *going out*, *xuất hành* (出行) in Vietnamese, for gathering the *lộc* in the New Year and then returning home soon often has the effect of preventing from the first visitor to the home in the New Year. Because the custom of *đạp đất* or *xông đất* (being the first stepper on the soil of the home) has become a strict taboo for the Vietnamese people. Then the first visitor to the home on the New Year ought to be a happy man, a man of virtue, or at least the eldest in the village. Therefore, for sure the Vietnamese Buddhist followers often ask monks to be the first visitor.⁽¹¹⁹⁾

On the third day of the Tet, most Vietnamese families perform the rite of bidding their ancestors farewell. The *Cây Nêu* (*Signal Tree*) is taken down when the God of Hearth and all benevolent spirits have returned to earth to watch over the human race and the Vietnamese people.

From this day on, the Vietnamese Buddhist laity often go to the temples daily to recite the sūtras to pray for safety and prosperity at the beginning of the year. At the same time, they also invite monks or nuns to perform the rite at their own home. And on the lunar 15th of January there is a great ceremony of praying for safety collectively held at temples. This ceremony can be seen in the Hue area, but it has become a traditional festival in Hochiminh City and another places.

When the New Year comes, everything ought to be very new, lucky, happy and good, therefore, some taboos still remain up to now in Vietnam. Apart from some taboos I have referred above, I will introduce some others as follows:

- One should not sew as to do so would mean hardship for the whole year.
- One should not sweep the flour, as this could chase away the *Thần Tài* (財神, *God of Wealth*), who may happen to be on the premises.
- One must absolutely not curse, get angry, use vulgar words, or break glasses, because all these inharmonious acts attract the malediction of bad spirits.
- One should pay all debts in the old year to prevent from the being asked for debts in the New Year, because this can influence to whole year.
- During the mourning period of time, one should not pay a visit to any house,

because this can bring bad luck to the others.⁽¹²⁰⁾

2. The *Buddha Jayanti Festival* (佛誕會)

One of the most important and significant event for the Vietnamese Buddhists as well as the world is the anniversary of the Sakyamuni Buddha's birthday. In Vietnam, this event has become one of the main traditional Buddhist festivals. Likened to other festivals, the Buddha Jayanti Day is also celebrated on the lunar 15th day of April every year.

In order to welcome the Great Enlightened One who came into existence in this world with his wonderful and essential dhammas for saving the sentient beings out of the round of birth-and-death, before this day, the temples prepare everything just the same as with the Tet holiday. From outside to inside the temples, everything is cleaned and the Buddhist flags and lanterns are hung everywhere. Each temple becomes a exhibition hall of rich and magnificent Buddhist arts.⁽¹²¹⁾ And the most notable thing is that at temples have a so-called *stand of Buddha Birthday*, on which a statue of the newly-born Buddha is enshrined in combination with the abundance of flowers, fruits and so on.

However, at a central temple of a city or province everywhere in Vietnam, one can see big ceremonial stands of Buddha Birthday (禮臺佛誕), where all Buddhist followers will gather to celebrate the great ceremony. Three main places of three regions of Vietnam which always establish big ceremonial stands are at the Quán Sứ Temple (館使寺) in Hanoi City, the Tũ Đàm Temple (慈曇寺) in Hue City, and the Vĩnh Nghiêm Temple (永嚴寺) in Hochiminh City.⁽¹²²⁾

As seen in Hue City and in Hochiminh City, on this day there are some so-called "flower cars"—the cars on which many living scenes of the Buddha's descending from the Tusita, or the Buddha's enlightenment, etc. are decorated skilfully that remind us of the life of the Buddha. The "flower cars" become a long procession with the participation of many Buddhist followers, monks and nuns going through the main streets. Therefore, this day is also a happy, joyful day for the Vietnamese Buddhists in memory a Great Awakened One comes into being on this world.

After this day, the Vietnamese monks and nuns enter upon the summer retreat during three months.

3. The *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會, *Filial Piety Festival*)

When three months of summer retreat has been finished, there comes spiritually important and sacred event called the *Ullambana Festival* (盂蘭盆會), which, as seen in Vietnam is held on the lunar 15th day of July every year. From the story as recorded in the *Ullambana-sūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*)⁽¹²³⁾ about the *Mahāmaudgalyāyana* (牧蓮尊者) who tried his best to save his mother who was descended in the realm of hungry ghosts with much suffering, in Mahāyāna Buddhist countries such as Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam, etc., the event has become an important Buddhist deed to offer to the ancestors in combination with the Buddhist ideology of *offering* (*dāna*, 布施) and *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) and the Chinese traditional ideology of filial piety.

Up to now, no one knows when the *Ullambana Festival* was celebrated in Vietnam and the Vietnamese oldest historical records made no reference to this event, but I think that because this is a holy Buddhist event for all Buddhists, then it could have come into existence at the time when Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam, at least in the first century A.D.

At present, the festival is marked with many different expressions of the Vietnamese Buddhists toward their present parents as well as the parents in seven previous generations. Different from the Japanese tradition which has many important and interesting festivals in this national event such as the *Bonodori* (盆躍), *Bon Festival dance*, etc. and the time for celebrating this event from 13th to 16th days of July, or sometimes even during the whole of July in some places,⁽¹²⁴⁾ the Vietnamese *Ullambana Festival* is only held among the Buddhists and only on one day, the lunar July 15th.

However, one week before this day, monks and nuns often perform the rite of reciting the *Ullambana-sūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*) at temples with the participation of the Buddhist layfollowers everyday.

When the day comes, the layfollowers go to the temples to pay worship to the

Buddhas, recite the sūtras and visit monks and nuns, from whom the former receive a rose, white or pink. The pink rose symbolises a good fortune for those who still have the existence of their parents, especially mother, in this world. The white rose has the opposite meaning that those who have unluckily lost their parents. The roses are fixed on the upper clothes of the Buddhist followers by monks or nuns to remind the latter the immense and uncountable merit of their parents, and at the same time to remind the latter constantly to express the filial duties to the ones who gave birth and nourished them.

Moreover, as seen nowadays, apart from two kinds of white and pink roses, another kind of yellow pink is also utilised for fixing to monks and nuns by the Vietnamese Buddhist followers with the meaning of expressing the deep thanks and reward to the forth-goers who have taught and instructed the laity in mind-cultivation.

The event does not only aim at repaying and offering to the present parents, but also at praying for the deceased parents as well as ancestors in the family to be reborn in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvātī*, 極樂) of the *Amitābha Buddha* as well. Therefore, at private houses or even at temples, one can see the *Great Rite of Offering Foods to the Hungry Ghosts* (大施餓鬼) to be performed on this day.

4. Other Buddhist festivals throughout Vietnam

Apart from the above-mentioned main festivals, there are some other important Buddhist festivals celebrated at other regions throughout Vietnam, especially in North Vietnam, where many ancient temples are preserved up to now despite the destruction of wars. These festivals are also celebrated at Buddhist temples with the participation of a great number of people in the region and have become cultural events which cannot be missed in the daily spiritual life of the Vietnamese Buddhists. These festivals can be listed as follows:⁽¹²⁵⁾

4.1. The *Trăm Gian Temple*⁽¹²⁶⁾ *Festival*, celebrated on the lunar 4th of January, is an event with many games such as martial arts wrestling, playing chess, dancing water puppet, a traditional show which was created by Ch'an Master Tũ Đạo Hạnh

(徐道行, ?-1117),⁽¹²⁷⁾ the 12th successor of the Vinītaruci Ch'an Sect (毘尼多流支禪派).

4.2. The *Phổ Chiêu Temple*⁽¹²⁸⁾ Festival is on the lunar 4rd of January.

4.3. The *Bách Hào Temple*⁽¹²⁹⁾ Festival, celebrated on the lunar 6th of January, is the festival for competition of swimming, cooking rice and catching ducks.

4.4. The *Vua Temple*⁽¹³⁰⁾ Festival is celebrated during three days on the lunar days of 6th, 7th and 8th of January. Formerly it was a place of assembling all genius in competition of playing chess. Now it is the event for cock-fighting, lion-dancing, etc.

4.5. The *Hùng Temple Festival* is the most long-lasting event from the lunar 6th day of January up to the lunar 15th day of March. This is a traditional annual festival which attracts hundreds of thousands of people from all over Vietnam coming here to take part in and pray for good luck with multi-coloured and rich content. It is said that the *Hùng Temple* is the most famous Buddhist pilgrimage site⁽¹³¹⁾ in Vietnam.

4.6. The *Tam Sơn Temple*⁽¹³²⁾ Festival highlights during five days from the lunar 8th to 12th of January, consisting of many games such as water puppet shows, cock-fighting, ect.

4.7. The *Bãi Khê Temple*⁽¹³³⁾ Festival is celebrated during four days from the lunar 10th to 13th of January with some interesting games such as rowing boats to catch ducks, lighting firecrackers, showing sticks.

4.8. The *Lâm Temple*⁽¹³⁴⁾ Festival is held on the lunar 13th day of January with many games such as martial arts competition, cooking rice, rowing boats, etc.

4.9. The *Bà Temple*⁽¹³⁵⁾ Festival, hold on the lunar 15th day of January, is an impoatnt event with a parade on the street in combination with giraffe-and-dragon-dancing.

4.10. The *Từ Pháp Temple*⁽¹³⁶⁾ Festival on the lunar 17th day of January is a Buddhist holy event with some ceremonies of praying for the harmonization of the rain and wind and good harvest.

4.11. The *Đại Bi Temple*⁽¹³⁷⁾ Festival lasts 6 days from the lunar 18th to 23th days of January with many traditional games which are still preserved up to now.

4.12. The *Trần Temple*⁽¹³⁸⁾ *Festival* is celebrated on the lunar 2nd day of February with some joyful games such as the competition of dragon-dancing, giraffe-dancing, water pupet shows, etc.

4.13. The *Kê Temple*⁽¹³⁹⁾ *Festival* is celebrated on the lunar 16th day of February with highlights such as the competition of shooting arrows, etc.

4.14. The *Thanh Mai Temple*⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ *Festival* is celebrated on the lunar 1st day of March under many forms in memory of the deceased day of the Ch'an Master *Pháp Loa* (法螺, 1284-1330), the second patriarch of the *Trúc Lâm Yên Tử* Ch'an Sect (竹林安子).⁽¹⁴¹⁾

4.15. The *Lãng Temple*⁽¹⁴²⁾ *Festival* lasts three days from the lunar 5th to 7th days of March with some traditional games like playing chess, wrestling, etc.

4.16. The *Thầy Temple*⁽¹⁴³⁾ *Festival*, celebrated during three days from the lunar 5th to 7th days of March, is marked with the traditional pupet water shows in an historical and idyllic setting, and the pilgrimage of the three incarnations of Ch'an Master *Từ Đạo Hạnh* (徐道行, ?-1117).

4.17. The *Tây Phương Temple*⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ *Festival*, held during five days from the lunar 6th to 10th days of March with the participation of many visitors coming from everywhere to pay worship at the temple as well as to 18 famous statues of Arhats enshrined here.

4.18. The *Đông Phũ Temple*⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ *Festival* on March 15th is marked with the memory of three princess of the *Lý* Dynasty (李朝, 1010-1225), who taught the regional people how to cultivate mulberry and nourish the silkworms.

4.19. The *Độc Temple*⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ *Festival* is celebrated on the lunar 19th day of March with some interesting games such as wrestling, playing chess, water pupets, ect.

4.20. The *Đâu Temple*⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ *Festival* on the lunar 8th of April is marked with the big formal procession of the *Four Dhamma Deities*, ie. the *Dhamma Cloud* (法雲), the *Dhamma Rains* (法雨), the *Dhamma Thunder* (法雷), and the *Dhamma Lightning* (法電) in combination with some games such as lion-dancing, drum-dancing, etc.

4.21. The *Mount Sam*(148) *Festival*, held for a long time from January to April at the *Tây An* Temple (西安寺), is considered as the biggest Buddhist event in Southern Vietnam with the participation of many people coming here for pilgrimage, paying worship, etc.

4.22. The *Kwan Yin Festival*, is celebrated on the lunar 19th day of February at the Mount *Ngũ Hành Sơn*⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ with the participation of thousands of people from everywhere coming to pay worship at the sites of many holy temples here.

F. Summary

I have mentioned some Buddhist rites, ceremonies and traditional festivals as seen to be very popular in Vietnam nowadays. They represent many facets of the daily spiritual life of the Vietnamese Buddhists with the purpose of self-profit and other-profit. These events are mainly celebrated at temples, a firmly spiritual refuge and reliance for the Buddhists. So long as the rites and festivals are performed and celebrated, the permanent inter-relations and combinations between the temples and the society become more and more firmly and closely established. In other words, the temples are also socially cultural centers where these assemble many strata of people coming to participate. They come to the temple to find a restful peace of mind from business, worries and hurriedness in the outside society, and then forget themselves among the holy and interesting festivals.

No matter how the times have and will change, these rites and festivals will always play an important role as the spiritual meals for the Vietnamese Buddhists at any time. The incarnation and embodiment of Buddhism through these multi-coloured events are remarkable indicators which enable Buddhism to exist in the country where the latter was introduced. Therefore, instead of calling the Indian Pāli word Buddha, the Vietnamese called it *Bụt* as a very close image of an Exalted One among their minds and in reality the image of a close and kind-hearted *Bụt* has appeared in many Vietnamese old tales and legends.⁽¹⁵⁰⁾

Notes:

1. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, pp. 11-96. Also see *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. I, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 34-49.
2. The tradition of performing the Rite of Offering [Foods] to the deceased monk or nun, which has been transformed from China, is very popularized in Vietnam as well as in Mahāyāna Buddhist countries such as Japan, Korea, etc. The way of counting the date of each week to perform the rite as seen in Vietnam is to count from the day when the very person is still alive up to his or her death one week. This is called the first week (初旬). Then from that comes the second, the third, etc. up to the last seventh week (終七)—which is called as *shijukunichi* (四十九日, the last 49th day) in Japanese, the very important point of time when it is believed that the spirit of the dead will be reborn either in other realms or in this world or in the Pure Land. Therefore, during these 49 days, the relatives of the dead try their best to do meritorious deeds as much as possible to transfer the merit to the deceased and pray for him or her to be reborn in the Pure Land of the *Amitābha Buddha*. That is the reason why such these rites are taken seriously among the Vietnamese Buddhists, monks and nuns as well as the laity.
3. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, pp. 99-298. Also see *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 33-43.
4. Ibid. pp. 365-431.
5. For the anniversary days of the Buddhas and Bodhisattas celebrated yearly in Vietnamese Buddhist temples, see note No. 4 of Chapter II: *Monks—Life and Activities*.
6. There are many *Incense Stotras* utilised for ceremonies and rituals in Vietnamese Buddhist temples, among which the above-mentioned one and the stotra in the note No. 31 of Chapter II: *Monks—Daily Life and Activities* are the most popular.
7. *Five Attributes of the Dhammakāya* (五分法身) or *Five Attributes of the “Spiritual” Body of the Tathāgata*, are *Morality* (戒), *Concentration* (定), *Wisdom* (慧), *Enlightenment* (解脫) and *Freedom from All Knowledges* (解脫知見). These *Five Attributes* surpass all conditions of form, or the *Five Aggregates* (*pañcakkhandha*, 五蘊).
8. The one whose mind meditates on the Buddha becomes interpenetrated and

glorified by Buddha-fragrance and light. There are several deva-sons and others called Huang-yen (香煙). (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 379)

9. Based on the book *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*) the above-mentioned *dhāraṇī* is chosen to recite, but in reality some other *dhāraṇīs* in the *Ten Dhāraṇī* (十咒), which are utilised for reciting in the early morning session of the Vietnamese monks and nuns, are also recited in such a rite like the *Hsiao-tsai-chi-hsiang-shên-chou* (消災吉祥神咒, *Dhāraṇī of Calamity-Dispersing Omens*), the *Ch'i-fu-mié-zui-zhên-yin* (七佛滅罪真言, *Dhāraṇī of Annihilation Offences Against the Seven Buddhas*) or the *Shan-t'ien-nu-chou* (善天女咒, *Dhāraṇī of the Good Female Deva*).
10. The *Three Vehicles* or *Conveyances* (*tiyāna*, 三乘), which carry living beings across the round of birth-and-death (*saṃsāra*, 輪廻) to the shore of *Nibbāna* (涅槃), are the *Sāvaka-yāna* (聲聞乘)—the vehicle of hearers or obedient disciples, the *Paccekayāna* (緣覺乘)—the vehicle of fully enlightened ones for themselves, and the *Bodhisattayāna* (菩薩乘)—the vehicle of those who lead after countless ages of self-sacrifice in saving others and progressive enlightenment to ultimate Buddhahood. The first two vehicles belong to the Hīnayāna and the last one to the Mahāyāna.
11. The *Four Fruitions* (*catu-phala*, 四果) are the *Sotāpanna-phala* (須陀洹果 or 預流果)—the fruition of those who have entered the stream of holy living, or of those who goes against the stream of transmigration, *Sakadāgāmin-phala* (斯陀含果 or 一來果)—the fruition of those who ought to be reborn to this world once, the *Anāgāmin-phala* (阿那含果 or 不還果)—the fruition of those who no longer return to this world, and *Arāhant-phala* (阿羅漢果)—the fruition of those who are enlightened, saintly ones, the highest type of ideal saint in Theravāda in contrast with the bodhisatta in the Mahāyāna. The *Arāhants* are called the one worthy of worship (應供), the slayer of enemy (殺賊), or the ones who have the field of merit (福田). (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 290)
12. Because the truth is that most monks and nuns in Hue City as well as in Southern Vietnam belong to the Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), the name of Chinese Patriarch *Lín-jì-yì-xuán* (臨濟義玄, ?-866 or 867), who has founded the Ch'an Sect bearing his name, is also recited in such a rite in Vietnamese temples.
13. The Chinese Ch'an Master *Yuán Sháo* (元韶, 1648-1728), the 33th generation of the Chinese Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), is the native of Guǎng-dōng Province (廣東省) who went forth at the age of 19 and later arrived in the Middle Area of

Vietnam in 1665. He resided at *Zui Ninh* (present-day Bình Định Province) and founded the *Thập Tháp Di Đà* Temple (十塔彌陀寺). Later he came to *Thuận Hóa* (順化, present-day Hue City) and established the *Hà Trung* Temple (河中寺, Phú Lộc District, Thừa Thiên Province) and then the *Quốc Ân* Temple (國恩寺), which is located at Trường An Ward, Thủy An Commune, Hue City and is considered as the patriarch temple of the Lin-chi Sect in this area. In response to the request of the Lord *Nguyễn Phúc Thái* (1687-1691 in reign), he returned to China and invited Most Venerable *Shí-lián* (石廉) and some other famous monks to come to Vietnam. He passed away in 1729 at the age of 81 and was bestowed the title *Hạnh Đoan Thiền Sư* (行端禪師, *Righteous-Performance Ch'an Master*) by Emperor *Lê Hiến Tông* (黎顯宗, 1740-1786 in reign). (See Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam* [越南禪師, *Vietnam's Ch'an Masters*]. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1995, pp. 432-434)

14. The Chinese Ch'an Master *Jú-róng* (子融, ?-?), the 34th generation of the Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), is the native of *Guǎng-dōng* Province (廣東省) who followed Ch'an Master *Yuán Shào* (元韶) and arrived at *Thuận Hóa* (順化, present-day Hue City), Middle Area of Vietnam. He founded the *Ấn Tôn Từ Đàm* Temple (印宗慈曇寺) and became its abbot. No records show that when he passed away, but one thing can be known that he has handed down the "mind-seal" (心印) to Ch'an Master *Liêu Quán* (了觀). (Ibid., p. 442)
15. The Vietnamese Ch'an Master *Liêu Quán* (了觀, 1670-1742), the 35th generation of the Chinese Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗) and the founder of a Buddhist Ch'an sect bearing his own name, the *Liêu Quán* Lineage (了觀派), is the native of the Bạch Mã Village, Đồng Xuân District, Phú Yên Province. At the age of 6, he was sent by his father to the *Hội Tôn* Temple (會宗寺) to study the Buddhist teachings with a Chinese Most Venerable *Jǐ-yuán* (濟圓和尚). Seven years later, his master passed away and he went to *Thuận Hóa* (順化, present-day Hue City) to study with a Chinese Ch'an Master named *Jiào-fēng* (覺峯) at the *Bào Quốc* Temple (報國寺). In 1695, he was ordained as a *sāmaṇera* by a Chinese Most Venerable *Shí-lián* (石廉) and then two year later, in 1697, was ordained as a *bhikkhu* with a Chinese Most Venerable *Cí-lín* (慈林和尚) at the *Từ Lâm* Temple (慈林寺). He often returned to Phú Yên and then came back Hue City to propagate Buddhist teachings. Later he settled at the *Thuyền Tôn* Temple (禪宗寺), which is located at the Ngũ Tây Hamlet, Thủy An Commune, Hue City. He

passed away in 1743 at the temple and was bestowed the title *Chánh Giác Viên Ngộ Hòa Thượng* (正覺圓悟和尚, *The Truly Awakened and Fully Enlightened Most Venerable*) by Lord *Nguyễn Phúc Khoát* (1738-1765). He left a successive gāthā for the *Liêu Quán* Lineage (了觀派) which is very popularized nowadays in both Hue City and in Southern Vietnam. (Ibid., pp. 443-447)

16. The Ch'an Master *Tâm Tịnh* (心淨, 1880-1939), the 41th generation of the Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), was the disciple of Ch'an Master *Một Định* (一定, 1784-1847), abbot of the *Tử Hiếu* Temple (慈孝寺), which is located at the Thủy Xuân Commune, Hue City. The former went forth at the temple and became the its abbot for many years, but later in 1904 he succeeded the position to Ch'an Master *Huệ Minh* (慧明) and then came to the *Tây Thiên* Temple (西天寺) to build a small thatched hut for cultivation. He passed away at the age of 59 at the temple. Some of his disciples became well-known monks at that time such as *Giác Tiên* (覺先), *Giác Nguyên* (覺源), *Giác Nhiên* (覺然), etc. (See Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* [越南佛教史論, *Commentary Book on the History of Vietnam Buddhism III*]. Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học Hà Nội [Hanoi Literary Publishing Houses], 1994, pp. 125-128)
17. The Ch'an Master *Huệ Pháp* (慧法, 1871-1927), teacher of Ch'an Master *Giác Tiên* (覺先) and the abbot of the *Thiên Hưng* Temple (天興寺), was born at the Trung Kiên Village, Triệu Phong District, Quảng Trị Province. Gone forth at the *Tử Hiếu* Temple (慈孝寺), he was ordained as a *sāmaṇera* at the age of 21 and then in 1894 was ordained as *bhikkhu* at the *Báo Quốc* Temple (報國寺). Two years later, in 1896, monks of the *Thiên Hưng* Temple (天興寺) invited him to be the abbot of the temple. He trained himself very diligently and every year he entered upon the vassa twice in the summer and the winter. In 1911, he was granted the position of abbot of the *Diệu Đế* Temple (妙諦寺), which is located at No. 100 Bạch Đằng Street, Phú Cát Ward, Hue City, by the king of the Nguyễn Dynasty (阮朝, 1802-1945), *Khải Định* (啓定, 1916-1925). In 1926, he burnt himself at the *Thiên Hưng* Temple (天興寺) at the age of 56. (Ibid., pp. 128-132)
18. This title can be changed according to the founder's name of the temple where the rite is held. And the order must be changed in accordance with the position, junior or senior, in comparison with the above titles. The case is the founder of my temple, *Trúc Lâm* (竹林).

The Ch'an Master *Giác Tiên* (覺先, 1880-1936), the 42th generation of the Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), was born at the Giạ Lê Thượng Village, Hương Thủy District,

Thừa Thiên Province. Going forth at the age of 15 at the *Từ Hiếu* Temple (慈孝寺), he was ordained as a *sāmaṇera* at the age of 21 and became disciple of Ch'an Master *Tâm Tịnh* (心淨) and was ordained as a *bhikkhu* in 1908 at the age of 28. In about 1913, he was invited to be the abbot of the *Trúc Lâm* Temple (竹林). In 1925, he was granted the abbot of the *Diệu Đế* Temple (妙諦寺). In 1925, he opened a Buddhist school at the former temple. He made considerable contributions to the renovation movement of Buddhism at the beginning of the 20th century in the Middle Area of Vietnam. Some of his disciples are later outstanding monks such as *Mật Thể* (密體), *Mật Khế* (密契), *Mật Hiển* (密顯), *Mật Nguyên* (密願), etc. and besides especially a well-known layman, *Lê Đình Thâm*, who established the *Hội An Nam Phật Học* (安南佛學會, *Annam Buddhist Studies Association*) in the Middle Area of Vietnam. (Ibid., pp. 91-95)

19. See *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 19, 20. Also see the *Thiền Môn Nhật tụng* (禪門日誦, *Temple's Daily Recitation* or *Ch'an-mên-jih-sung*). Carved on wood on the lunar January 15th of the tenth year (1898) in reign of King *Thành Thái* (成泰, 1889-1907), pp. 59a-61a (成泰十年正月望日起鐫). Also based on my field-work on the March 2nd, 1999 in Hue City.
20. There are many reciting verses like that which can be utilised in such a rite such as the long praying verses of the Amitābha Buddha, etc. Moreover, it depends on the head of the rite who begins reciting with his favourite verses. Normally these verses referring to the Ten Vows of the *Samantabhadra Bodhisattva* is popularized.
21. One can recite the above-mentioned verses or the passage *Niệm Phật Công Đức* (念佛功德, *The Merit of Reciting the Buddhas' Names*) as followings:
 “The merit of reciting the Buddhas' names (*nembutsu*) is beyond thought and description, which can make the dhamma-realm widely glitter with lights, the Three Existences altogether rely on, and the Four Graces universally gain benefit. We invoke all sentient beings to be reborn in the Pure Land (*Sukhāvātī*), both the Four Forms of Birth and Nine Existences altogether to ascend to the Profound Gate of Lotus-Treasury, both the Eight Difficulties and Three Ways to enter into the Dhamma-realm of *Vairocana*.”
 (念佛功德不可思議、法界普光輝、三有齋資、四恩總利、上祝有情同生極樂國、普願同生極樂國。四生九有同登華藏玄門、八難三途共入毘盧性海)
22. See *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 18-21. Also based on

my field-work on the March 2nd, 1999 in Hue City.

23. See Thích Hoàn Quan: *Phật Tổ Ngũ Kinh* (佛祖五經, *Five Scriptures of the Buddha and Patriarchs*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing Houses), 1998, p. 518.
24. *Ling-yu* (靈祐, 771-853), his worldly family name *Zhào* (趙), was a native of *Fú-zhōu-zhàng-xí* (福州長溪), belonging to present *Fú-jiàn* Province (福建省). Because he lived on *I-shan* (滙山, Mount I), he was called *I-shan-ling-yu* (滙山靈祐). Going forth at the age of 15, he came to study the sūtras and the vinaya at *Lóng-xīng* Temple (龍興寺) in *Háng-zhōu* (杭州, present day *Zhè-jiāng* Province [浙江省]), and then became a disciple of *Bǎi-zhàng-huái-hǎi* (百丈懷海, 749-814). Among the disciples practising with him, there existed *Huáng-bò-xī-yùn* (黃檗希運, ?-circa 856) who accompanied him and together won fame among the Ch'an Masters of the *Táng* (唐) Dynasty. After this, *Ling-yu* came to reside on the *Dài-I-shan* (大滙山, Mount *Dai-I*) in *Tán-zhōu* (潭州, present day *Hú-nán* Province [湖南省]), starting the propagation of his school's Ch'an style and dispatching everywhere well-trained disciples. Among his 41 disciples, *Yǎng-shān-huì-jì* (仰山慧寂, 807-883) was the most excellent. Other well known monks such as *Xiāng-yán-zhì-xián* (香嚴智閑), *Tíng-qìng-fǎ-duān* (延慶法端), *Jīng-shān-hóng-yān* (徑山洪譚), *Líng-yún-zhì-qín* (靈雲志勤), *Wáng-jìng-chū-cháng-shì* (王敬初常侍) etc. were regarded as his disciples.
- He passed away on January 9th of the seventh year (853) of *Dài-zhòng* (大中) at the age of 83 with 64 years of standing (*vassa*, 夏臘), he was bestowed the title *Dài-yuán-ch'an-shī* (大圓禪師, *Great Perfected Ch'an Master*). He left two precious works, the *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *The Awakening Advices of I-shan*) and the *Tán-zhōu-I-shan-ling-yu-ch'an-shī-yù-lù* (潭州滙山靈祐禪師語錄, *The Analects of Ch'an Master I-shan-ling-yu of Tán-zhōu*). (See Taishō 47, No. 1989, the *I-shan-ling-yu-ch'an-shih-yü-lu* (滙山靈祐禪師語錄, *Analects of Ch'an Master I-shan-ling-yu*), p. 577. Also see Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], pp. 1306, 1307. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
25. As referred to in former chapters, his work, the *I-shan-ching-ts'ê* (滙山警策, *The Awakening Advices of I-shan*), is considered as the most important scripture for Vietnamese monks and nuns, and especially for the *sāmaṇeras*, *sāmaṇerīs* and *sikkhamānā* in the examination for the entrance at the *Upasampadā* ceremony.

Therefore, the latter are instructed to memorize this scripture, which is recited by heart at the ceremony. It is also a subject at the Basic Buddhist Schools in Vietnam.

26. See Vinaya-Piṭaka V, *Cullavagga* 1-3.
27. See *Ngũ Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. II, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, p. 19.
28. *Vi Đà* (韋駄), *skandha* in Sanskrit, is transliterated as *Sāi-jiàn-tuó* (塞建陀), *Sī-jiàn-tuó* (私建陀), *Jiàn-tuó* (建陀), *Sù-jiàn* (素建) and *Wéi-tuó* (韋駄). Furthermore, it is also translated as *Wéi-tuó-tiān* (違陀天, the *God Wéi-tuó*), *Wéi-tuó-zūn-tiān* (違駄尊天, the *Respected God Wéi-tuó*), *Dài-jiān* (大肩, the *Big-Shoulder One*), *Piān-chún-guǐ* (偏唇鬼, *Aside-Mouth Demon*), and *Yīn-kuáng* (陰狂). From ancient times, it was considered as the guarding god for Buddhism, especially for the temples and for food-offering vegetarian ceremonies; therefore his statues are worshipped at the store houses or kitchens of the temples. His statue is worn an armor with his joined palms in which a precious sword is held. Formerly, he was considered as the son of god Śiva (濕縛), the heavenly general of thousands of soldiers, one of Brāhmaṇist gods; but later he was said to have converted to become the Buddhist guarding god. (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 27. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
29. Based on my field-work in 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
30. This rite is taken very seriously by the deceased's relatives and is performed in the secret screen. Man washes for man and woman for woman. This tradition is still kept by the people in the rural areas, but in big cities such as Hochiminh City there have appeared the funeral groups which perform this rite without any taboo of either male or female, but the deceased's relatives always keeps careful watch on the group's deed. (See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* [*Family Rituals—Old and Now*]. Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp [Dong Thap Publishing Houses], 1996, p. 89.)
31. This tradition has the meaning that the deceased will not see his or her relatives to be sad, but in reality the meaning is contrary, that is to say, by doing that his or her relatives will not be sad while seeing the face of the dead. From this tradition it has become a taboo for children to put paper on their faces for play. Today people often utilise a silk cloth for covering the dead's face with the meaning of "auspicious happiness". (Ibid., p. 87.)
32. It is explained that for the dead the glutinous rice is used for meals, and the money for travel expenses on his or her way to the realm of the dead. (Ibid. p. 91)

33. Ibid. p. 87.
34. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, p. 364.
35. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, pp. 99-119.
36. Ibid. p. 118.
37. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, p. 368.
38. See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (Family Rituals—Old and Now). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 104.
39. Ibid., pp. 106-107.
40. Ibid., p. 107.
41. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, pp. 120-123.
42. *Potala* (普陀 or 補陀), also called *Pattala*, is an ancient port near the mouth of the Indus. It is also the Tibetan Potala in Lhasa, but in this form is the sacred island of *Pootoo*, off Ningpo, also called the *Potaraka* Monastery (普陀洛伽山). (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 379)
 Moreover, according to the *Zengaku Daijiten* (禪學大辭典), the *Pǔ-tuó-shān* (普陀山 or 補陀山), located at the *Níng-bō-fǔ* (寧波府), *Zhè-jiāng-shěng* (浙江省), is a holy place of the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva. This place, *Wǔ-tái-shān* (五臺山), *É-méi-shān* (峨眉山) and *Jiǔ-huā-shān* (九華山) are considered as the four great and holy mountains of Chinese Buddhism. (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 1079. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
43. *Cakravāḍa-parvata* (S.) or *Cakkavāḍa-pabbata* (P.) (鐵圍山、鐵輪圍山、輪圍山、金剛圍山、金剛山、輪山) is the iron enclosing mountains supposed to encircle the earth, forming the periphery of a world. Mount Meru (須彌山) is the centre and between it and the Iron Mountains are the seven metal-mountains and the eight seas. (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 485. Also see Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 884. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
44. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of*

- Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, p. 126.
45. See Phan Kế Bính: *Việt Nam Phong Tục* (越南風俗, *Vietnamese Manners and Customs*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing Houses), 1995, p. 28.
46. Ibid. p. 25. Also see Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (*Family Rituals—Old and Now*). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 111.
47. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
48. See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (*Family Rituals—Old and Now*). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 113. Also see Phan Kế Bính: *Việt Nam Phong Tục* (越南風俗, *Vietnamese Manners and Customs*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing Houses), 1995, p. 25.
49. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, p. 389.
50. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, p. 154.
51. See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (*Family Rituals—Old and Now*). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 117.
52. Ibid. p. 129.
53. Pǔ-ān-yìn-sù Ch'an Master (普庵印肅禪師, 1115-1169), a successor of the Yáng-qí Lineage (楊岐派), Lin-chi Sect (臨濟宗), his title as Pǔ-ān (普庵) and his worldly name as Xú (徐), was the native of the Yí-chūn (宜春), Yuán-zhōu (袁州, present day Zhè-jīāng Province [浙江省]). In 1134, he went forth with Master Shòu-lóng-xiàn (壽隆賢) and had his hair cut to be a monk at the age of 27. Then one year later, he was ordained at the Kāi-yuán Temple (開元寺) of Yuán-zhōu (袁州). In 1143, he called on Master Mù-ān-fǎ-zhōng (牧庵法忠) in the Mount I (潯山) and was enlightened under the latter's instructions. Then he succeeded the teachings of Master Fǎ-zhōng (法忠) and settled down at the Cí-huà Temple (慈化寺). In 1169, he passed away at the age of 55 with 28 years of standing (*vassa*, 夏臘). (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 57. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
54. See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (*Family Rituals—Old and Now*). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 130.
55. Ibid., p. 131.

56. Ibid., p. 134.
57. Ibid., p. 147.
58. Ibid., p. 158.
59. See Taishō 13, No. 412, 784b.
60. There are many kinds of *kaimyos* (戒名, *pothumous Buddhist name*) which are different according to each Japanese Buddhist sect, but some main kinds can be listed as the *Indengo* (院殿号, *His Holiness Ex-emperor*), *Ingo* (院号, *Ex-emperor*), *Shinji* (信士, *layman*), *Doji* (童子, *child*) and *Gaiji* (孩子, *newly-born baby*). (See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* [冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*]. Fujinseikatsusha [婦人生活社], 1999, pp. 400-401.)
61. This program is broadcasted on Japanese Aichi Television on channel 25 everyday from Monday to Friday, from 12:00 to 12:45 at noon.
62. See Phạm Côn Sơn: *Gia Lễ Xưa Và Nay* (*Family Rituals—Old and Now*). Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing Houses), 1996, p. 79.
63. See Noritada Kubo (窪徳忠): *Dokyo no kamigami* (道教の神々, *The Gods of Taoism*). Hirakawa Publishing Houses (平河出版社), 1986, pp. 225-226.
64. See Taishō, No. 412, 784b.
65. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, p. 496.
66. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
67. Ibid.
68. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, pp. 496-497.
69. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
70. See *Kankonsosai otsukiai jiten* (冠婚葬祭おつきあい辞典, *Wedding and Funeral: A Friendly Encyclopedia*). Fujinseikatsusha (婦人生活社), 1999, p. 497.
71. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
72. Taishō, No. 1313.
73. Taishō, No. 1314.
74. Taishō, No. 1318.
75. Taishō, No. 1319.
76. Ibid.
77. Taishō, No. 1320.
78. *Méng-shān-dé-yì* (蒙山德異, 1231-?), a successor of the *Yáng-qí* Lineage (楊岐派), *Lin-chi* Sect (臨濟宗), his title as *Méng-shān* (蒙山), often called *Bhikkhu Gǔ-yún* (古筠比丘) and his worldly name as *Lú* (廬), was the native of the *Gāo-ān* (高安,

present day *Jiāng-xī* Province [江西省]). He came to visit *Gū-chán-rú-yíng* (孤蟾如瑩) at *Chéng-tiān* (承天) of *Sū-zhōu* (蘇州), then became a disciple of *Huǎn-shān-zhēng-níng* (皖山正凝) at *Gǔ-shān* (鼓山) of *Fú-zhōu* (福州) and succeeded his master. He was well-known for his outstanding work *Méng-shān-buō-shàng-liù-dào-pǔ-shuō* (蒙山和尚六道普說, *Most Venerable Méng-shān's Widely-Proclaiming Book of the Six Ways*). (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [Great Dictionary of Zen Studies], p. 947. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)

79. Ibid., p. 1223.

80. The book was carved under the reign of the King *Đông Khánh* (同慶, 1885-1888 in reign) of the *Nguyễn* Dynasty (阮朝, 1802-1945) and is preserved at the Royally-Recognised *Báo Quốc* Temple (敕賜報國寺藏板) in Hue City.

81. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.

82. The *Flaming-Face Great One* (焦面大士), also called the *Flaming-Face Great Demon King* (焦面大鬼王) or the *Flaming-Face Demon King* (焦面大王), is the great king of the red-faced hungry ghosts. (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [Great Dictionary of Zen Studies], p. 947. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)

In Vietnamese temples, the god is enshrined face to face with the Dhamma Guardian.

83. See Taishō 13, No. 412.

84. Its Sanskrit version is *namo bhū-pūri kārī tārī tathāgatāya* (曩謨布步哩迦哩多哩但他藥多也, *I take refuge in the Exalted One who fills the Great Earth, performs acts and salvation*). (See *Bonjidaikan* [梵字大鑑, *Great Book of Sanskrit Letters*]. Edited by the Shuchiin Daigaku Mikkyo Gakkai [種智院大学密教会編]. Published by the Meicho Fukyukai [名著普及会刊行], p. 759.)

85. Its Sanskrit version is *om bhū-puteri kārī tārī tathāgatāya* (唵布步帝哩迦哩多哩恒他藥多也, *Om. [I take refuge in] the Exalted One who fills the Great Earth, performs acts and salvation*). (Ibid., p. 760)

86. Taishō, No. 1315.

87. Taishō, No. 1320. As seen in this sūtra, there are 27 different kinds of *mudrās*.

88. For the content of the work, see Thích Đức Nghiệp: *Đạo Phật Việt Nam* (*Vietnam Buddhism*). Thành Hội Phật Giáo Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City), 1995, pp. 639-651.

89. For the content of the work, see *ibid.*, pp. 653-659.

90. The *Dhāraṇī of the Buddha Mother Cundī* (佛母準提神咒) is:

I bow down my head and pay respect to Susiddhi, to the Saptakoṭibuddha with my head

and face. Now I would like to praise the Great Cundi and would that her compassion protect me.

Namaḥ saptānām samyakṣambuddha-koṭīnām tad yathā. Oṃ cale cule cuṇḍi svāhā. (*I pay respect to the Saptakoṭibuddha [the fabulous mother of seven koṭis of Buddhas] of perfect universal wisdom. That is to say, om. The one that moves about. The one that is laid upon my head. The revered Cuṇḍi. Svāhā.*)

(稽首皈依蘇悉帝、頭面頂禮七俱胝、我今稱讚大準提、唯願慈悲垂加護。娜莫颯多南、三藐三沒馱、俱胝南、怛儺也他、唵、者禮、主禮、准泥、娑嚩訶。)

The *Buddha Mother Cuṇḍī* (佛母準提), also called *Saptakoṭibuddha* (七俱胝佛母), is the typical female Respected One and was added to the family of the *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva*. Especially in the *Shingonsbu* (眞言宗, the *True Word Sect*) she is included among one of six *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattvas*. And in the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* (胎藏曼陀羅, the *Womb-Treasury Maṇḍala*), she embodies in the form of 18 hands. (See *Bonjidaikan* [梵字大鑑, *Great Book of Sanskrit Letters*]. Edited by the Shuchiin Daigaku Mikkyo Gakkai [種智院大学密教会編]. Published by the Meicho Fukyukai [名著普及会刊行], pp. 611-612.)

91. The *Dhāraṇī of the Calamity-Dispersing Omens* (消災吉祥神咒) is:

Namaḥ samanta-buddhānām, apratihataśāsanānām, tad yathā, Oṃ kha kha khāhi khāhi hūṃ hūṃ jvala jvala prajvala tiṣṭha ṣṭri ṣṭri sphuṭ sphuṭ śāntikaśrīye svāha. (*I take refuge to everywhere Buddhas whose teachings are without obstacle. That is to say, Om ! The empty space ! The empty space ! Destroy ! Destroy ! Hūṃ ! Hūṃ ! Shine ! Shine ! Well shine ! Well shine ! Stay still ! Stay still ! Star ! Star ! Appear [suddenly] ! Appear ! For the sake of causing calamity to cease with auspicious omen. Svāhā !*)

(曩謨三滿哆母馱喃、阿鉢囉底、賀多舍、娑曩喃、怛姪他、唵、佉佉、佉佉、入嚩囉、鉢囉入嚩囉、鉢囉入嚩囉、底瑟姪、底瑟姪、瑟致哩、瑟致哩、娑發吒、娑發吒、扇底迦、室哩曳、娑嚩訶。)(Ibid., pp. 541-542.)

92. See *Bonjidaikan* (梵字大鑑, *Great Book of Sanskrit Letters*). Edited by the Shuchiin Daigaku Mikkyo Gakkai (種智院大学密教会編). Published by the Meicho Fukyukai (名著普及会刊行), pp. 588-589.

93. See *Nghi Lễ* (行禮儀式, *Rituals*), Vol. I, compiled by Thích Giác Lâm, 1968 (Buddhist calendar 2512), material of inner circulation, pp. 14-15. Also see Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Cốt Tủy Nghi Lễ Phật Giáo* (骨髓儀禮佛教, *The Marrow of Buddhist Rituals*). Đại Nam Xuất Bản (Dai Nam Publishing Houses), 1983, pp. 348-349.

94. The *Twelve Divisions of the Buddhist Canon* (*dvādaśaṅga-buddhasāsana*, 十二部經 or 十二分教) are the classification of the Buddha's teachings into twelve separate divisions from the teachings's forms and contents. They are:

- a. Scriptures (*sūtra* [s.] or *sutta* [p.], 修多羅、經、契經、線經),
- b. Repeat again and again (*geya* [s.] or *geyya* [p.], 祇夜、應頌、重頌),
- d. Giving a prediction (*vyākaraṇa* [s.] or *veyyākaraṇa* [p.], 和伽羅那、授記、記別),
- e. Verses (*gāthā* [s., p.], 伽陀、諷頌、偈、孤起頌),
- f. Utterance (*udāna* [s., p.], 優陀那、自說、無問自說),
- g. Reason (*nidāna* [s., p.], 尼陀那、因緣),
- h. Stories (*avadāna* [s.], *apadāna* [p.], 阿波陀那、譬喻),
- i. Quotation (*itivṛttaka* [s.] or *itivuttaka* [p.], 伊帝目多伽、本事、如是語),
- j. Former birth-stories (*jātaka* [s., p.], 闍多伽、本生),
- k. Enlargement (*vaipulya* [s.] or *vedalla* [p.], 毘佛略、方廣、有明)
- l. Mysterious dhamma (*adbbhuta-dharma* [s.] or *abbhuta-dhamma* [p.], 阿浮陀達磨、未曾有法)
- m. Indication (*upadeśa* [s.] or *upadesa* [p.], 優婆提舍、論議).

(See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 492. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店])

95. The *White Horse Temple* (白馬寺), located in the west of the ancient city, *Luò-yáng* (洛陽), 20 miles distance from the east of *Luò-yáng* District (洛陽縣), *Hé-nán* Province (河南省), is considered as the first Chinese Buddhist temple. It is said the in A.D. 67 two Indian monks, *Mātāṅga* (迦葉摩騰) and *Gobharaṇa* (竹法蘭) loaded the *sūtras* and Buddha's statues on a white horse and came to *Luò-yáng*. The then king permitted them to stay at the *Hóng-lí* Temple (鴻臚寺)—a public office—for the *sūtra* translation, and then made a temple called *Bái-mǎ* (白馬, *White Horse*) built outside the royal city in memory of the horse. Later many Indian monks came and resided here also for *sūtra* translation. (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 1016. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店]. Also see William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 198.)
96. The *Three Insights* (*tisro vidyāḥ* [s.] or *tissovijjā* [p.], 三明) are the insight into the mortal conditions of self and others in previous lives (*pūrvā-nivāsa-jñāna-sākṣātkriyā-vidyā* [s.], 宿命明), the supernatural insight into future mortal conditions (*cyuty-upapāda-jñāna-sākṣātkriyā-vidyā* [s.], 天眼明), and the nirvāṇa insight into present mortal sufferings so as to overcome all passions or temptations (*āsrava-kṣaya-jñāna-sākṣātkriyā-vidyā* [s.], 漏盡明). (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 66.)
97. The *Eight Stages of Emancipation* (*aṣṭa-vimokṣa* [s.] or *aṭṭha-vimokkha*, 八解脫) are:

- a. The emancipation when subjective desire arise, by examination of the object, or of all things and realization of their filthiness (內有色想觀外色解脫).
- b. The emancipation when no subjective desire arise, by still mediating as above (內無色想觀外色解脫).
- c. The emancipation by concentration on the pure to the realization of a permanent state of freedom from all desires (淨身作證具足住解脫).
- d. The emancipation in realization of the infinity of space or the immaterial (空無邊處解脫).
- e. The emancipation in realization of infinite knowledge (識無邊處解脫).
- f. The emancipation realization of nothingness or nowhere-ness (無所有處解脫)
- g. The emancipation in the state of mind where there is neither thought nor absence of thought (非想非非想處解脫).
- h. The emancipation by means of a state of mind in which there is final extinction—nirvāṇa—of both sensation (*vedanā*, 受) and perception (*saññā*, 想) (滅受想定解脫).
- (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 39-40.)
98. The *Five Kinds of Eyes* or *Visions* (五眼) are human eyes (肉眼), deva eyes (天眼), wisdom eyes (慧眼), dhamma eyes (法眼), and Buddha eyes (佛眼). (See Komazawa University: *Zengaku daijiten* [*Great Dictionary of Zen Studies*], p. 331. [駒澤大學、『禪學大辭典』、大修館書店].)
99. The *Six Kinds of Supernatural Powers* (六通 or 六神通) consists of the psychic power to appear at will in any place (神足通), the psychic power of heavenly eyes (天眼通), the psychic power of heavenly ears (天耳通), the psychic power of knowing one's previous births (宿命通), the psychic power of knowing others' thoughts (他心通), and the psychic power of knowing the extinction of all āsava and certainty of emancipation already attained (漏盡通). (Ibid., p. 1318)
100. The six "hours" or periods (六時) in a day, three for night and three for day, ie. morning, noon, evening; night, midnight, and dawn. (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 135)
101. As seen in Hue City, there are some places of publishing these kinds of *đĩa* (疏) and *điệp* (牒), but the main place is the *Tường Quang* Temple (祥光寺), located at Chi Lăng Street. (Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.)
102. The *Threefold Body* (*ti-kāya*, 三身) or nature of a Buddha consisting of *dhammakāya* (法身, the body of dhamma or truth), *sambhogakāya* (報身, reward

- body) and *nirmāṇakāya* (化身 or 應身, miraculous body). (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 77-78)
103. King *Guān-shèng* (關聖帝君) is *Guān-yǔ* (關羽), whose pseudonym is *Yún-cháng* (雲長), and the saintly title is *Guān-shèng-dì-jūn* (關聖帝君), and was called for *Guān-shèng* (關聖) short. Besides, he was also called as *Guān-dì-yé* (關帝爺), *Shān-xī-fū-zǐ* (山西夫子), *Gài-tiān-gǔ-fó* (蓋天古佛), *Xié-tiān-tài-dì* (協天大帝), *Fù-mó-tài-dì* (伏魔大帝), etc. He fraternized with *Zhāng-fēi* (張飛) and *Liú-bèi* (劉備). The belief in *Guān-shèng* (關聖) became popular from the Tang Dynasty (唐代), but in the Qing Dynasty (清代) he was worshipped as the guardian deity for the royal family. Therefore, during this period of time, nowhere could *Guān-dì Miào* (關帝廟, *Guān-dì Temple*) be seen. He is also considered as the *Money Deity* (財神), the deity who helps for make money and for business prosperity. (Noritada Kubo (窪徳忠): *Dokyo no kamigami* [道教の神々, *The Gods of Taoism*]. Hirakawa Publishing Houses [平河出版社], 1986, pp. 235-236.)
104. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Thiền Môn Văn Diệp* (禪門文牒, *Temples' Passages of Records*), Chùa Viên Giác (圓覺寺, Vien Giac Temple), Germany, 1995, pp. 142-149.
105. Ibid. pp. 171-177.
106. Ibid., pp. 248-252.
107. The *Three Ways* (三途 or 三塗) are three evil paths including the hells, the hungry ghosts and the animals.
108. The *Nine Grades* or *Rewards* (九品) of the Pure Land, corresponding to the nine grades of development in the previous life, upon which depends, in the next life, one's distance from Amitābha Buddha, the consequent aeons that are needed to approach him, and whether one's lotus will open early or late. These grades are applied in many ways, i.e. the highest type of incarnate being (上品上生) to the lowest with corresponding karma (下品下生). Each grade may also be subdivided into nine, thus making a list of eighty-one grades, with similar further subdivision ad infinitum. (See William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 16)
109. See Thích Tín Nghĩa: *Thiền Môn Văn Diệp* (禪門文牒, *Temples' Passages of Records*), Chùa Viên Giác (圓覺寺, Vien Giac Temple), Germany, 1995, pp. 207-213.
110. See Trần Đại Vinh: *Tín Ngưỡng Dân Gian Huế* (*The Folklore Belief of Hue*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa (Thuan Hoa Publishing Houses), Hue City, 1995, p. 222.
111. See Trần Đại Vinh, Nguyễn Hữu Thông and Lê Văn Sách: *Danh Lam Xứ Huế*

(*Famous Temples of Hue Area*). Nhà Xuất Bản Hội Nhà Văn (Writer Association Publishing Houses), Hochiminh City, 1993, p. 152.

112. See Helen West: *Vietnam*. APA Publications Ltd., 1993, p. 109.

113. See Koide Kanju, Nishida Taiichiro, Akatsuka Tadashi (小川環樹、西田太一郎、赤塚忠): *Shinjigen* (新字源, *New Dictionary of Words' Origin*). Kadokawa Shoten (角川書店), first edition: 1968, revised edition: 1994, p. 753.

114. The *God of Hearth* (竈君), *Táo Zuān* or *Ông Táo* in Vietnamese, *Zāo-jūn* in Chinese, is the Chinese heavenly deity who watches the actions of the family and then reports them to the Heaven. Many literatures record that the day is difficult for him to go to report is on the last day of every month, but according to the materials of dated in the 10th century, A.D., the date is on the 23rd or 24th lunar days of December. While his birthday is on the lunar 3rd day of August, but nowadays as seen in China, instead of worshipping him on the birthday, the Chinese do that on the day which is difficult for him to go to report. As for the content of report, from the 3rd century to 9th century the content is concentrated on the evil deeds of the family only. However, recently the content does not only aim at all members of the family, but mainly at the words and actions of the housewives as well. (Noritada Kubo (窪徳忠): *Dokyo no kamigami* [道教の神々, *The Gods of Taoism*]. Hirakawa Publishing Houses [平河出版社], 1986, pp. 271-272.)

In Vietnam, the customs of worshipping the God of Hearth is very popularized and preserved up to now with the same meaning as above. Moreover, it is believed that he also takes charge of taking care of newly-born children, therefore, when the child got sick, caught cold or had a stomachache, the family always prays the God of Hearth for recovery. That is the reason why at the kitchen, an altar of God of Hearth can be seen in every Vietnamese family, Buddhist or non-Buddhist. (See Huỳnh Đình Kết: *Tục thờ Thần Ở Huế* [*The Customs of Worshipping Deities in Hue*]. Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa [Thuan Hoa Publishing Houses], 1998, pp. 32-33.)

The Vietnamese legend of the God of Hearth stems from a tragic story of a woodcutter and his wife. They lived happily and modestly together but lost their happiness as time went by and the marriage remained childless. The husband became so sad that he began to drink so much and mistreat his own wife, who, unable to stand him any longer, gave him up and re-married a hunter in the neighbouring village. Quite lonely and disappointed, the woodcutter one day decided to pay a visit to his former wife to apologize her; but soon after his arrival, the hunter returned home. To avoid any misunderstanding, the woman

hid her former husband in a small thatched barn near the kitchen. The hunter was smoking his game in the kitchen when a spark from the fire set the small barn ablaze. The woman raced to the barn to save her former husband; and at the same time the hunter followed in pursuit with an attempt to save his wife, but finally all three perished in the fire. Deeply touched by such devotion, the Jade Emperor in the Kingdom of Heaven made them Gods. He assigned them the duty of watching over the welfare of man on earth from the vantage point of the kitchen. (See Helen West: *Vietnam*. APA Publications Ltd., 1993, pp. 110.)

115. The origin of this custom are expounded in a story which goes back to the birth of the Vietnamese nation when the Vietnamese ancestors were frequently threatened by many malevolent spirits. This story has a deep relationship with Buddhism. The story says that the Buddha took compassion on the Vietnamese ancestors and one day descended from Nirvāṇa to visit them. He was immediately surrounded by all kinds of evils with whom he struck up a deal for a small piece of land in exchange for precious stones, gold and silver, which he laid before them. When the devils asked him the size of the piece of land he had in mind. The Buddha told them it would be as large as his gown. The devils agreed to this thinking they had struck a very good deal, but when Lord Buddha dropped his gown, it spread as far and wide as the territory of Vietnam. The devils were very furious, but the deal had been made. Then the Buddha advised the Vietnamese: “At the end of the year, when you invite your ancestors to your home for Tet, the devils may mingle with them. You must erect a bamboo pole flying my emblem on a piece of cloth on front of your house to prevent the devils from coming to disturb you while you are enjoying the Tet.” (Ibid., pp. 110-111.)
116. Based on my field-work for 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999.
117. See Helen West: *Vietnam*. APA Publications Ltd., 1993, p. 112.
118. See Toan Ánh: *Phong Tục Thờ Cúng Trong Gia Đình Việt Nam (The Customs of Worshipping and Offering in Vietnamese Families)*. Nhà Xuất Bản Đồng Tháp (Dong Thap Publishing House), 1998, pp. 119-121. Also see Phan Kế Bính: *Việt Nam Phong Tục (越南風俗, Vietnamese Customs)*. Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing Houses), 1995, p. 36.
119. Based on my field-work during 3 days in Hue City from March 1st to 3rd, 1999. Also see Helen West: *Vietnam*. APA Publications Ltd., 1993, pp. 112-113.
120. See Phan Kế Bính: *Việt Nam Phong Tục (越南風俗, Vietnamese Customs)*. Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing Houses), 1995, p. 254. Also see Helen West: *Vietnam*. APA Publications Ltd., 1993, p. 112.
121. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ (覺悟, Enlightenment)* No. 163

- (May 15th, 1999), p. 36.
122. Ibid., No. 166 (June 5th, 1999), pp. 4-5.
123. See Taishō 16, 779, No. 685.
124. See Nakamura Hajime (中村元), Fukunaga Koji (福永光司), Tamura Yoshiro (田村芳郎), Konno Itaru (今野達): *Bukkyojiten* (佛教辞典, *Buddhist Dictionary*). Iwanamishoten (岩波書店), 1989, pp. 62-63, 744-745.
125. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ* (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 181 (September 18th, 1999), pp. 10-11; and No. 182 (September 25th, 1999), pp. 11-12.
126. The *Zuǎng Nghiêm* Temple (廣嚴寺), also called *Năm Gian* Temple, is located at the Tiên Lữ Hamlet, Tiên Phương Village, Hoài Đức District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam. (See Võ Văn Tường: *Vietnam's Famous Pagodas*. Culture Publishing Houses, 1994, p. 162.)
127. About his biography, see Cuong Tu Nguyen: *Zen in Medieval Vietnam—A Study and Translation of the Truyền Uyển Tập Anh*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1997, pp. 177-181.
128. The *Phổ Chiêu* Temple (普照寺) is located at the Dũ Hàng Kênh Village, An Hải District, Hải Phòng Province, Northern Vietnam. (See Võ Văn Tường: *Vietnam's Famous Pagodas*. Culture Publishing Houses, 1994, p. 554.)
129. The *Bạch Hào* Temple (白毫寺) is located at the Thành Xá Village, Thanh Hà District, Hải Dương Province, Northern Vietnam.
130. The *Hưng Khánh* Temple (興慶寺), also called *Vua* Temple, is located at the Phố Huế Ward, Hai Bà Trưng District, Hanoi City, Northern Vietnam. (See Võ Văn Tường: *Vietnam's Famous Pagodas*. Culture Publishing Houses, 1994, p. 158.)
131. This site, located at the Đục Khê Village, Mỹ Đức District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam, consists of many temples such as the *Thiên Trù* Temple (天厨寺), the *Tiên Sơn* Temple (仙山寺), etc. (Ibid. p. 264.)
132. The *Tam Sơn* Temple (三山寺) is located at the Tam Sơn Village, Tiên Sơn District, Bắc Ninh Province, Northern Vietnam.
133. The *Đại Bi* Temple (大悲寺), also called *Bãi Khê* Temple, is located at the Tam Hùng Village, Thanh Oai District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam. (Ibid., p. 224.)
134. The *Lim* Temple is located at the Lũng Giang Village, Tiên Sơn District, Bắc Ninh Province, Northern Vietnam.
135. The *Bà* Temple is located at the Thủ Dầu Một City, Bình Dương Province,

Southern Vietnam.

136. The *Tứ Pháp* Temple is located at the Văn Lâm Village, Mỹ Văn District, Hưng Yên Province, Northern Vietnam.
137. The *Đại Bi* Temple (大悲寺), also called *Tổ* temple, is located at the Thái Bảo Village, Gia Lương District, Bắc Ninh Province, Northern Vietnam.
138. The *Long Châu* temple, also called *Trần* Temple, is located at the Phùng Châu Village, Hoài Đức District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam.
139. The *Kê* Temple is located at the Phú Vinh Village, Tân Lập District, Hòa Bình Province.
140. The *Thanh Mai* Temple is located at the Thanh Mai Village, Chí Linh District, Hải Dương Province, Northern Vietnam.
141. The founder of the Vietnamese *Trúc Lâm* Ch'an Sect is King *Trần Nhân Tông* (陳仁宗, 1258-1308). He gave up the throne and went to the Mount Yên Tử (安子山) for going forth, therefore the sect is also called the *Trúc Lâm Yên Tử* (竹林安子). For more informations about the King's biography, see Thích Thanh Từ: *Thiền Sư Việt Nam* (越南禪師, *Vietnam's Ch'an Masters*). Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1995, pp. 288-308.
142. The *Chiêu Thiên* Temple, also called *Lăng* Temple, is located at the Yên Lãng Village, Từ Liêm District, Hanoi City, Northern Vietnam.
143. The *Thiên Phúc* Temple (天福寺), also called *Thầy* Temple, is located at the Sài Sơn Village, Thạch Thất District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam.
144. The *Sông Phúc* Temple (崇福寺), also called *Tây Phương* Temple (西方寺), is located at the Thạch Xá Village, Thạch Thất District, Hà Tây Province, Northern Vietnam.
145. The *Đông Phù Liệt* Temple is located at the Nhất Village, Đông Phù Commune, Thanh Trì District, Hanoi City, Northern Vietnam.
146. The *Duyên Ứng* Temple, also called *Đọi* Temple, is located at the Đọi Sơn Village, Duy Tiên District, Hà Nam Province, Northern Vietnam.
147. The *Pháp Vân* Temple (法雲寺), also called *Diên Ứng* or *Dâu* Temple, is located at the Thanh Khương Village, Thuận Thành District, Bắc Ninh Province, Northern Vietnam.
148. Mount Sam is located in Châu Đốc City, An Giang Province.
149. Mount *Ngũ Hành Sơn* is located in Danang City, Southern Vietnam.
150. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ* (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 182 (September 25th, 1999), p. 12.

Chapter IV

Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam

Up to now, there have been no remarkable studies on Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam, and even in books written on Vietnamese Buddhism made by outstanding Vietnamese scholars such as Ven. Thích Mật Thế,⁽¹⁾ Prof. Nguyễn Lang,⁽²⁾ Prof. Nguyễn Đăng Thục,⁽³⁾ etc., there are no references made concerning this school. I think, however, Theravāda Buddhism, no matter what it is, is also a part of Vietnamese Buddhism.

Here, in this chapter I would like to make a thorough study of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism through its history of introduction, the living activities, modes of practice and way of living of its monks and finally the reason why it could not be welcome especially in Northern Vietnam.

A. Period of introduction

I. At the time of King Asoka's reign

There is an opinion that Theravāda Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam in about 3rd century B.C.⁽⁴⁾ by the propagating mission led by Sona and Uttara.⁽⁵⁾ Naturally, we cannot completely believe in this information, but there are some facts that can make us confident that this may be basically true.

1. According to the *Thủy Kinh Chú* (水經註, *Commentary Book on Waterway*), a collection commenting on the waterway system of Vietnam in the 6th century, written by Lê Đạo Nguyên (?-529), there appears a passage in Vol. 37, page 5 as followings:

“Separated from the river is Naraka castle said to have been constructed by Asoka.”⁽⁶⁾

The Pāli and Sanskrit *naraka*, which is translated into Chinese as 奈落迦、泥黎、地獄、or 冥府, means hell, prison under the earth, or prefecture of darkness.⁽⁷⁾ It is pronounced in Vietnamese as *địa ngục*. Then, why was this construction called *naraka* ? There is no satisfactory answer for this question, because no materials which explain it clearly can be found. However, based on the following information, we can understand the problem and affirm the location of *Naraka castle*.

“In the Tam Đảo mountain range,⁽⁸⁾ the three highest mountains are Thach Ban, Phu Nghia and Thien Thu. At the foot of Thach Ban, there is a village named Son Dinh, where is situated a temple called Tây Thiên which is often called Địa Ngục.”⁽⁹⁾

The Vietnamese *địa ngục* (地獄) means *naraka* in Pāli, or *hell* or *prison under earth* in English. Then is there any relationship between the so-called *Địa Ngục* of this temple and the above-mentioned *Naraka castle* ? Is it possible that the *Địa Ngục* temple was constructed on the remains of stūpas and auditoriums built by Asoka in the *Naraka castle* ? This is another interesting suggestion for us to come to a proper answer to this problem.

The information that *Naraka castle was constructed by Asoka* can make us feel contradictory because no records have been found to justify that he indeed came to Đồ Sơn district, North Vietnam, where *Naraka castle* was located. Further according to the legends recorded in the *Dīpavamsa* VIII, *Mahāvamsa* XII, etc., the mission of Sona and Uttara was dispatched by Ven. Moggaliputtatissa, not by Asoka. Then, why does the information say that the castle was built by Asoka. The answer can be inferred that because of the great patronage of Asoka and his effort to propagate the Buddha’s Teachings, the mission of Sona and Uttara widely praised his merit at the places where they came to propagate. As a matter of fact, such regional people as the Vietnamese have named constructions Asoka in memory of him.

2. According to geological investigations, *Naraka castle* is identified with a place named Đò Sơn (圖山), a district 12 km distance from Hải Phòng city, North Vietnam. In the fifth poem of the *Eight Arias of Đò Sơn* (圖山八詠), there appear first four verses referring to the presence of King Asoka and his stūpas, which can be roughly translated as followings:

*“The ancient stūpas and their remained ruins
Lie in disorder among mounds of grass.
After King Asoka passed away,
Now there remains withered smoke and their decay.
The sound of the ten-thousand-ton bell
As a precious instrument echos along the flowing waters.
And the nine-storey stūpa became eternal ashes.”*

(塔山懷古、古塔遺墟亂草堆、育王去後萎煙頹、千鐘寶器鳴流水、九給浮屠化劫灰)⁽¹⁰⁾

On the basis of this poem, stūpas under Asoka’s name had been built during his reign, about 3rd century B.C., and later became ruin. Then a Vietnamese king, Lý Thánh Tông (李聖宗, 1023-1072), had a new stūpa named Tường Long erected on the old foundation in about 11th century A.D. At present, the latter has also perished and next to the stūpa’s foundation is situated a temple under the stūpa’s name.⁽¹¹⁾

3. Based on the legends recorded in the *Dīpavaṃsa* VIII, *Mahāvāṃsa* XII, *Samantapāsādikā*, Introduction p. 61 f., in the 3rd century B.C., under the patronage of King Asoka, the Third Council was held and Ven. Moggaliputtatissa dispatched preaching missions of *bhikkhus* to remote regions to propagate the Buddha’s teachings. Among the dispatched missions, the mission of Sona and Uttara was sent to *Suvaṇṇabhūmi*, where they preached the *Brahmajāla [-suttanta]* (梵網經) and established 60,000 people enlightened with 3,500 people renouncing their worldly lives.

According to Prof. Jean Filliozat in his *Présence du Bouddhisme, Suvaṇṇabhūmi* is present day Burma, the whole Oriental peninsula, all of Indochina and a part of Malaysia. The mission of Sona and Uttara came not only to Burma, but also to Yún-nán (雲南) in China and then crossed into the valley of The Hồng River in the North of Vietnam, which actually is Hải Phòng province and Hanoi city.⁽¹²⁾

If the legends recorded in the *Dīpavaṃsa* VIII, *Mahāvamsa* XII, etc. are recognized officially as well as the above-mentioned evidence, we can come to a conclusion that:

a. It is possible that the mission of Sona and Uttara arrived in Vietnam to propagate the Buddha's teachings and that is the reason why the regional people built stūpas named Asoka, who gave great patronage to these missions.

b. If the above-mentioned facts truly happened, Buddhism must have been introduced into Vietnam in the 3rd century B.C.

c. At the time of 3rd century B.C., the Buddhism which was introduced into Vietnam must have been Theravāda Buddhism, not Mahāyāna Buddhism.

However, based on Vietnamese historical materials and documents written in Chinese language such as *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư* (大越史記全書, *A Complete Work of Historical Records of Dai Viet*), *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh* (禪苑集英, *A Collection of the Quintessence of the Ch'an Garden*), and *Đại Nam Thiền Uyển Truyền Đăng Tập Lục* (大南禪苑傳燈集錄, *Recorded Transmission of the Lamps in the Ch'an Garden of Dai Nam*), etc., we cannot find any references as to how the school developed and spread or how the situation of its transmission was, or the living nuance of Theravāda Buddhist monks at that time. Thus, though much or less, if the Theravāda Buddhism was really introduced in about the 3rd century B.C., these books may have recorded this information. No reference to this matter in these books means that Theravāda could have not appeared at that time.

Then no clear evidence let us believe that this school came into existence as long as about the 3rd century B.C. Moreover, at present no signs of Theravāda Buddhist temples or remains to prove for the above problem. The existence of its

temples in Hue City as well as in Southern Vietnam is only proofs at the beginning of the 20th century. And we can merely be based on this second stage with the clear appearance of the Theravāda Buddhism in Southern Vietnam.

II. At the beginning of the 20th century A.D.

In 1935, Doctor Lê Văn Giảng, a Vietnamese living in Cambodia, came back Vietnam from Nam Vang to visit his friend, Mr. Nguyễn Văn Hiếu. Both exchanged what they had learnt together and vowed to bring the Theravāda Buddhism of Cambodia to propagate in Vietnam. Later Doctor Giảng went back to Nam Vang to study the Pāli Tripiṭaka, founding Sùng Phước temple (崇福寺) to lead the overseas Vietnamese who were following Theravāda Buddhism there, and finally he became a monk with a Cambodian Monk Rājā with a religious name as Hộ Tông (*Vamsarakkhita*, 護宗). He was responsible for propagation Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam later.

In 1939, in response to the invitation of Mr. Nguyễn Văn Hiếu and some of his friends, Vens Hộ Tông, Thiện Luật, Huệ Nghiêm and other foreign monks (?) officially returned to South Vietnam and took up a residence at Bửu Quang temple (*Ratanaramsyārāma*, 寶光寺),⁽¹³⁾ which is considered as the first Theravāda Buddhist temple in Vietnam. Thus, Ven. Hộ Tông (*Vamsarakkhita*, 護宗) and his colleagues are considered as the founding patriarchs of Theravāda Buddhism in South Vietnam. It was also in this year when the Cambodian Rājā Monk named Chuon Nath and 30 other *bhikkhus* were respectfully invited from Cambodia to Vietnam to perform the sīma ceremony and to name a temple. In 1945, the French occupied Saigon (now Hochiminh city), Bửu Quang temple (*Ratanaramsyārāma*, 寶光寺) was also destroyed by them in 1957. Then four years later the temple was renovated and is preserved up to now.

III. The establishment of the first Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha in Vietnam

1. Establishment of the *Tổng Hội Cư Sĩ* (總會居士, *General Association of Buddhist Laity*)

In the first period of propagating Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam, monks as propagators only had an interest in practice and propagating Dhamma, but not to organizing a saṅgha. Eventually layman Nguyễn Văn Hiếu and a group of laymen held a meeting and compiled a copy of by-law regulations in 1956 and then petitioned for permission of organization from the government. One year later the permission was granted and an organization was established under the name of *Tổng Hội Cư Sĩ* (總會居士, *General Association of Buddhist Laity*). Its main office was located at Kỳ Viên temple (*Jetavana Vihāra*, 祇園寺), Saigon and later moved to Phúc Tuệ Tịnh Môn (福慧淨門).⁽¹⁴⁾ The founding board of the Association included:

- Nguyễn Văn Hiếu, retired worker,
- Trương Văn Huấn, teacher,
- Trần Văn Cầm, officer,
- Trần Văn Nhân, secretary,
- Trần Văn Nhơn, secretary,
- Huỳnh Công Tiến, secretary,
- Đặng Văn Chất, teacher,
- Đặng Văn Ngô, teacher.⁽¹⁵⁾

2. Establishment of the Vietnam Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha

Also at the end of 1957, Buddhist followers of Kỳ Viên temple invited monks from everywhere to perform the year-end confession (*patikaroti*, 懺悔) ceremony and to pray for the nation's prosperity and people's peace for one week. On this occasion, attending monks held a meeting to discuss the establishment of a Buddhist Saṅgha to be able to lead the followers as effectively as possible. They elected a temporary board of management including 7 members⁽¹⁶⁾ and then

petitioned for permission from the government. On December 18th, 1957, the permission was granted and an official Board of Management of the 1958-1961 term was established with the following members:

- Monk Supervisor: Bhikkhu Hộ Tông,
- First Vice-Supervisor: Bhikkhu Bửu Chơn,
- Second Vice-Supervisor: Bhikkhu Thiện Luật,
- General Secretary: Bhikkhu Kim Quang,
- Vice-Secretary: Bhikkhu Giới Nghiêm,
- Adviser 1: Bhikkhu Tối Thắng,
- Adviser 2: Bhikkhu Giác Quang.⁽¹⁷⁾

This was the first board of management of the Vietnam Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha which became an official member of the Vietnam Unified Buddhist Saṅgha. Through the ups-and-downs of the nation, the Theravāda Buddhism has held a firm position in spreading and propagating the Buddha's teachings throughout Southern Vietnam. After Vietnam was completely liberated and unified, the Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Mendicant Buddhist Saṅgha together united under a general organization named Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, in which the Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha became the Vietnam Theravāda School.

Beside domestic activities, the Theravāda School also performed diplomatic relationships with South East Asian Theravāda Buddhist countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Burma, etc. Her most outstanding operation in 1979 was helping to re-ordain Cambodian monks who had been made to return to the worldly life by the genocidal Pol Pot regime. In the list of 7 persons who received the renunciation (*pabbajjā*) and re-ordination ceremony on September, 19th 1979 most were formerly well-known monks, of whom Ven. Tep Vong is now one of the outstanding leaders of Cambodian Buddhism.⁽¹⁸⁾

Thus on the basis of the above-mentioned information, we can see that in the first stage Theravāda Buddhism was introduced into Northern Vietnam in around the 3rd century B.C. by the propagating mission of Sona and Uttara dispatched by

Ven. Moggaliputtatissa under the great patronage of King Asoka. Then in the second stage it was propagated again in South Vietnam, Saigon city, by overseas Vietnamese monks living in Cambodia. This has been developing its activities up to the present day.

Up to now why has Theravāda Buddhism not been referred to in books written by Buddhist scholars as well as other writers ? The possible reason for this is that because the second introduction of it into Vietnam was as late as at the beginning of the 20th century, old materials as well as recent books written on Buddhism make no references to it.

Why did the Theravāda Buddhism only develop in South Vietnam, and could not develop in North Vietnam ? Especially in Hue city, the area of my study, why has Theravāda Buddhism only experienced limited development and not on a large scale ? All these problems, I would like to discuss in the next section.

B. Social activities and modes of practice of Theravāda monks as seen in Hue city

Hue city, where nowadays we can find traditional ways of practice, is considered as cradle of Vietnamese Buddhist activities. It is also the place which gave birth to the movement of *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*), an organization which made and has been making considerable contributions to the history of Vietnam Buddhism (see last chapter). Among 110 temples and 47 Niệm Phật Đường (念佛堂, halls for reciting Buddhas' names) in Hue city, there are only 7 Theravāda Buddhist temples, 3 of which have no resident monks. In spite of a very small quantity of Theravāda temples in Hue city, they still have characteristics which are different from other Theravāda temples in Vietnam. That is the reason why I choose Hue as the center for my study of Vietnamese Buddhism and Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism as well.

Based on the most recent report of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, among the total of 28, 787 of monks and nuns and 14, 048 Buddhist temples all over Vietnam, the Theravāda monks number 7, 687 with 469 temples.⁽¹⁹⁾ However, the

amount of Theravāda monks who are actually of Vietnamese nationality is only 1/5 of that number and all the others are Khmer Theravāda monks. Compared to the other Theravāda Buddhist countries, the way of practice and lifestyle of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists is the same, but it still has a purely national color of its own and outstanding characteristics in its form of existence.

Here I will discuss some of the ways in which Theravāda has had to change and adapt to fit in within the Vietnamese context, while many fundamental principles and distinctive features have continued much as they are found in other Theravāda Buddhist societies. What makes Theravāda distinctive from Mahāyāna are wearing yellow robes in daily life as well as in recitation of sūtras, taking one meal a day, reciting the Pāli scriptures, going for alms, etc.

In contrast to such clearly distinctive features, I will focus on such areas of change and adaptation as induction rituals, the training and education for novices and monks, and finally on important festivals and ceremonies, both national and more specifically Theravāda.

I. Modes of practice

To understand the modes of practice as well as way of living of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists, first of all, I think, it is necessary to refer to the daily schedule applied daily in Vietnamese Theravāda temples. Because at present the existence of the Theravāda Buddhists can be seen only in the Middle and Southern Region of Vietnam, then my study aims mainly at Hue City and Hochiminh City, in which the latter is considered as the main area of activities of the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists.

1. Daily schedule

In Vietnam, the people living in Theravāda Buddhist temples are not only limited to *bhikkhus*, but also consist of beginning practitioners, *sāmaṇeras* and laity as well. Therefore, the daily schedule is also applied to all members of the temple.

During more than one month of investigation of Theravāda Buddhism in Hue city from August 2nd to September 22nd, 1997, I visited Tǎng Quang (*Saṅgharamṣyārāma*, 僧光寺), Thiên Lâm (*Samādhivana Vihāra*, 禪林寺), and Huyền Không temple (玄空寺), in which the first is considered as the first Theravāda Buddhist temple in Hue city. I met with the abbots and asked them about their daily schedules. In spite of some small differences, most of the temples have the same schedule as follows:

- 3: 00: waking up, washing face
- 3: 30: reciting sūtra, meditation.
- 5: 30: doing assigned works (cleaning the Main Hall, the temple's garden, etc.)
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 7: 00: going about for alms
- 8: 00 ~ 10h 30: returning to temple, meditation practice
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 12: 00 ~ 14: 00: taking a rest
- 14:00 ~ 16: 00: studying sūtras and vinaya
- 17: 30: reciting sūtras (about 30 minutes)
- 19:00: sitting and walking meditation (*caṅkamati*, 經行)
- 20: 00: sleeping

This schedule is applied to all members, from the beginning practitioners to *sāmañeras* and *bhikkhus* as well as servants of the temple. For the head monk, there is an exception which sometimes he does not go for alms or takes part in studying, etc. Basically, studying and observing discipline, getting up early in the morning, having meals, going for alms, taking part in reciting sūtras, etc. are considered as the regulated daily routine for monks while residing in the temple. Especially the beginning practitioners and *sāmañeras* must strictly observe the above-mentioned schedule. Naturally there also are some allowances made for those who have personal routines such as going home to visit sick parents, etc.

Among 4 temples in Hue city, now there only are 2 temples, Tǎng Quang and

Thiền Lâm temple, which maintain the tradition of going for alms everyday. The rest are self-sufficient. As the case of Huyền Không temple, formerly its monks had to do gardening so that they could earn money to cover daily living; and at present they continue this but allow much time for young monks to go to Buddhist school. Looking at the very small quantity of Theravāda temples in Hue city, we can understand the reason why monks can not go for alms.

Firstly, most of people in Hue city believe in Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings, thus they haven't become accustomed to the tradition of giving alms to Theravāda monks. However, monks like Most Ven. Hộ Nhãn (*Khantipālo*, 護忍), the abbot of the Thiền Lâm temple and the eldest Theravāda monk of Hue city, keep going for alms; and giving alms for monks has become usual to a few people.

The second reason is that since Theravāda followers always bring food and other resources to the temple to offer monks, monks don't need to go for alms. Most of the Theravāda temples in Hochiminh city are the same. However, especially in the winter retreat (*vassa*, 安居), monks must take turns to go for alms.

2. Some remarks of the schedules followed in Vietnam and Burma

The abbot of the Tăng Quang said that he once came to Burma to attend the Six Council held in Rangoon and that subsequently the way of practice in his temple is based upon the Burmese way. Here I would like to introduce the daily schedule of the Burmese Dhammikayon temple in the old capital Mandalay as seen in Masataka Ikeda's *Biruma Bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*:⁽²⁰⁾

- 5: 00: waking up, washing face, paying worship, *vipassanā*, doing work.
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 7: 00: going for alms
- 8: 00: studying
- 11: 00: having lunch
- 12: 00: taking rest
- 14: 00: taking bath

- 15: 00: studying
- 16: 00: sitting in meditation, dhamma talk
- 17: 00: walking meditation (*caṅkamati*, about 30 ~ 50 minutes)
- 19: 00: reciting sūtras
- 20: 00: reviewing (voice or sound of reciting)
- 21: 00: sleeping

In comparison with this, we can see that in general the daily schedules applied in Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist temples and in Burmese are the same, that is, going for alms, practising meditation (*vipassanā*), reciting sūtras and studying. However, there are some differences in actual details. They are:

- Vietnamese monks wake up earlier than Burmese and therefore, they go to sleep earlier.
- No regulated time of taking bath for Vietnamese monks.
- No regulated time of reviewing voice or sound of reciting for Vietnamese monks.
- The Burmese monks go to sleep later than Vietnamese monks. Naturally, the reason for that may be easily understood because of their waking up later.

II. Daily life of monks

As members of the temple who are leading the life of going-forth, there are 3 classes of people, viz. *điêu* (beginning practitioner), *sāmaṇera* and *bhikkhu*. Of course, their purpose is the same, that is to say, aiming at the freedom from all suffering and the attainment of enlightenment; but because of difference of the precepts which they have been ordained, and of their going forth being late or early, therefore the classification came into existence and the daily life of each member is different. Based on that meaning, here I like to refer to the life course of practice orderly from the beginning practitioner to *sāmaṇera* up to *bhikkhu*.

1. Daily life of *điêu* (beginning practitioner)

In Burma, Sri Lanka and Thailand too, the countries where Theravāda Buddhism is considered as national religion, there still remains a tradition that all young boys and men from the age of 7~15 should once in their lives become a *pabbajita* (one who goes out from home and undertakes the holy life). An auspicious day is always chosen in the period of *vassa* (winter residence) to celebrate the *sāmaṇera* ceremony at the temple.⁽²¹⁾ They need not to practise for a period of time before becoming *sāmaṇera*. However, the case in Vietnam is different. Not everyone but only those who vow to go out from the home and undertake the holy life through the permission of his parents and the acceptance of the temple's abbot, regardless of any age are allowed. Then he must practise one or two years or more as a *điêu*. This is a regulated rule and a difference from the other Theravāda Buddhist countries.

A second difference is that when celebrating the *pabbajā* ceremony, the *điêu* (beginning practitioner) will shave his head not completely but leaving part of the hair left. The reason is that after becoming a *pabbajita* (forth-goer) for a long or short time, he may return to the worldly life. The remaining hair is considered as a chance for those who do that. Furthermore, a newcomer, who enters the holy life, at first has remaining afflictions (*kilesa*, 煩惱) and craving (*tanhā*, 渴愛), which are symbolized in the remaining hair. This style is also used for both Mahāyāna and Mendicant *điêu*, male and female.

A third difference is that in Burma and Sri Lanka, as a boy he must during his lifetime go forth from his worldly home and receive the Ten Precepts of a *sāmaṇera*. He will be sent to a temple to train and get accustomed to the temple's life for a period of time. Normally, on the day of his ordination there will be a parade to the temple. The boy, who is at the age of from 7 to 15, will be adorned with royal clothes, riding a horse with a golden canopy covered above, accompanied with his relatives.⁽²¹⁾ This is a very important ceremony that cannot be seen in Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism.

The *điêu* must observe all the regulated rules and discipline of the temple,

always obey senior monks, not be lazy but often diligent (*padhāna*, 精勤) in reciting sūtras, doing work, studying and memorizing sūtras regulated for a *điêu*, etc. After one or two years or more, when the head priest sees that he is qualified to become a *sāmaṇera*, he will choose a good day to ordain him to be a *sāmaṇera*.

In Vietnam, the period of practising as a *điêu* is taken seriously, because this is the first important step for him to go forth into the holy life. During this time, if he cannot endure the hardship and strictness of practice, then he himself can return to the worldly life.

Today, most of Theravāda *điêu*s are sent to public school to attend worldly educational courses.

2. Daily life of *sāmaṇera*

After being observed to have enough qualifications to be a *sāmaṇera* by his master, the *điêu* is sent to an *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony held by the regional saṅgha in important and good days such as the *Uposatha* (布薩, *Precept Recital*), the *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *Invitation*), etc. According to the Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*),⁽²³⁾ the ceremony of ordination for *sāmaṇeras* is performed as followings:

The percept-receiver wearing the white clothes with the *sāmaṇera*'s yellow robe on his two hands followed his master to stand in the middle of the saṅgha and the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable), then to whom he pay worship and reads the following passage:

“Ukāsa⁽²⁴⁾ vandāmi bhante sabbaṃ aparādhaṃ khamathame bhante mayā kataṃ puññaṃ sāmīnā anumoditabbaṃ sāmīnākataṃ puññaṃ mayhaṃ dāttabbaṃ sādhu sādhu anumodāmi. Ukāsa karuññaṃ katvā pabbajjaṃ dettha me bhante.”

(“Ahem ! Honoured Sirs ! I pay worship to you. May you, Honoured Sirs, pardon me all offences done by me. Be pleased, the master, with my meritorious actions and share me the merit done by you. How good it is ! How good it is ! I enjoy

them. Ahem ! Ordain me, Honoured Sirs, out of compassion !”)

Then he sits down on his haunches with joined palms and goes on saying that:

“Ahaṃ bhante pabbajitaṃ yācāmi. Dutiyampi ahaṃ bhante bhante pabbajitaṃ yācāmi. Tatiyampi bhante pabbajitaṃ yācāmi.”

(I beg for, Honoured Sirs, the ordination. I beg for, Honoured Sirs, the ordination the second time. I beg for, Honoured Sirs, the ordination the third time.)

Next he recites the following passage of “*offering robe to the master*” three times:

“Sabbadukkha-nissaraṇa-nibbāna-sacchikaranatthāya, imaṃ kāsāvaṃ gabetvā pabbājethamaṃ bhante anukampaṃ upādāya.”

(“For the realization of freedom from all suffering and of [the attainment] of Nibbāna, out of compassion, hold these yellow robes and ordain me !”)

And then reciting the passage of “*asking for taking back the robe*” three times:

“Sabbadukkha-nissaraṇa-nibbāna-sacchikaranatthāya, etaṃ kāsāvaṃ datvā pabbājathamaṃ bhante anukampaṃ upādāya.”

(“For the realization of freedom from all suffering and of [the attainment] of Nibbāna, out of compassion, give me these yellow robes and ordain me !”)

When the precept-receiver has finished reciting this, the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable) passes the robe to former and gives instructions on the meditation practice as followings:

“Kesā lomā nakhā dantā taco. Taco dantā nakhā lomā kesā.”

(“[Here are] the hair, the hair of the body, the nails, the teeth and the skin. [Here are] the skin, the teeth, the nails, the hair of the body, the hair.”)

Next the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable) explains briefly something concerning to this body. After that, the precept-receiver goes out to put the robe on and while doing that he contemplates that:

“Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso cīvaram paṭisevāmi, yāvad eva sītassa paṭighātāya, uḥassa paṭighātāya dāmsa-makasa-vātātapasarīsapa-samphassānam paṭighātāya, yāvad eva hirikoṭṭinappaṭicchādattham.”⁽²⁵⁾

(I wisely reflect and accept the robe. But it is only accepted for the warding-off of cold, for the warding-off of heat, for the warding-off of the touch of gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, heat and reptiles, and only for the covering of one’s private part.)

Having put on the *sāmaṇera*’s robe, the precept-receiver returns back with a tray of lamps and incense sticks on his hands, kneeling down in front of the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable), offering to the latter and paying worship to him and then the former stands up recites the following passage with joined palms:

“Ukāsa vandāmi bhante sabbaṃ aparādhamaṃ khamatha me bhante mayā kātaṃ puññaṃ sāmīnā anumoditabbaṃ sāmīnā kataṃ puññaṃ mayamaṃ dātabbaṃ sādhu sādhu anumodāmi. Ukāsa kāruṇṇamaṃ katvā tisaraṇena sahasīlāni dettha me bhante.”

(“Ahem ! Honoured Sirs ! I pay worship to you. May you, Honoured Sirs, pardon me all offences done by me. Be pleased, the master, with my meritorious actions and share me the merit done by you. How good it is ! How good it is ! I enjoy them. Ahem ! Ordain me, Honoured Sirs, out of compassion, the Three Refuges together with precepts !”)

Next the precept-receiver sits down on his haunches with joined palms and goes on saying three times like that:

“Ahaṃ bhante saraṇasīlaṃ yācāmi. Dutiyampi ahaṃ bhante saraṇasīlaṃ yācāmi. Tatiyampi ahaṃ bhante saraṇasīlaṃ yācāmi.”

(I beg for, Honoured Sirs, the Three Refuges and precepts. I beg for, Honoured

Sirs, the Three Refuges and precepts the second time. I beg for, Honoured Sirs, the Three Refuges and precepts the third time.)

Then the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable) says that:

“Yamahaṃ vadāmitaṃ vadehi.”

(“You speak moderately from these words.”)

Having replied “*Āma bhante*” (“Yes, Reverend, Sir !”), the precept-receiver follows the *upajjhāya* to say:

“Namo tassa bhagavato arabato sammāsambuddhassa (3times)

Buddhanaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi buddhanaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Dutiyampi dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dutiyampi saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Tatīyampi buddhanaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Tatīyampi dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Tatīyampi saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.”

(“Praise to that Lord, the Perfected One, the Fully Self-Awakened One.

I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Buddha the second time. I take refuge in the Buddha the third time.

I take refuge in the Dhamma. I take refuge in the Dhamma the second time. I take refuge in the Dhamma the third time.

I take refuge in the Saṅgha. I take refuge in the Saṅgha the second time. I take refuge in the Dhamma the third time.)

Then the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable) says that:

“Tisaraṇaggahaṇaṃ pariṇṇaṃ.”

(“The acquisition of the Three Refuges has been finished.”)

Having replied “*Āma bhante*” (“*Yes, Reverend, Sir !*”), the precept-receiver goes on reciting the Ten Precepts as followings:

- a. *Pānātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from onslaught on creatures)
- b. *Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from taking what is not given)
- c. *Abramacariyā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from unchasty)
- d. *Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from lying)
- e. *Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from the occasion of sloth [induced by] fermented liquor, spirits and strong drinks)
- f. *Vikālabhojanā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from eating at wrong time)
- g. *Naccagītavāditavisūkadassanā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from seeing shows of dancing, singing and music)
- h. *Mālāgandhavilepanadhāraṇamaṇḍanavibhūsanatṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from the occasion of using garlands, scents, unguents and wearing finery)
- i. *Uccāsayanamahāsayanā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from using high beds, large beds)
- k. *Jātarūparajatapaṭiggahaṇā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi.* (I undertake the precept of restraint from accepting gold and silver)

Then having recited the sentence “*Imāni dasa sikkhāpadāni samādiyāmi*” (“*I undertake these Ten Precepts*”), the newly-ordained *sāmaṇera* must perform the act of “*asking for nissaya*” (依止, reliance) by saying that:

“*Ukāsa kārūññaṃ katvā nissayaṃ dettha me bhante.*”

“Ahem ! Give me, Honoured Sirs, out of compassion, the reliance !”)

Next he sits down on his haunches with joined palms and goes on saying three times like that:

“Ahaṃ bhante nissayaṃ yācāmi. Dutiyampi ahaṃ bhante nissayaṃ yācāmi. Tatiyampi ahaṃ bhante nissayaṃ yācāmi. Upajjhāyo me bhante hohi.”

“I, Honoured Sirs, beg for the reliance. I, Honoured Sirs, beg for the reliance the second time. I, Honoured Sirs, beg for the reliance the third time.”)

After having heard the *upajjhāya* replying “*Sādhū*” (Yes !), the newly-ordained *sāmaṇera* recites the last following sentences:

“Ukāsa sampāṭicchāmi. Sampāṭicchāmi. Sampāṭicchāmi. Ajjataggeḍāni therō mayhaṃ bhāro, ahaṃpi therassa bhāro.”

“Ahem ! I receive. I receive. I receive. From this very day on the venerable is my heavy load and I am yours, too.”)

Thus is the ending of the ordination ceremony for *sāmaṇera*.

After the ordination as a Theravāda *sāmaṇera* (*Sa di* in Vietnamese), he will be instructed to study the Pāli language and Ten Precepts⁽²⁶⁾ so that he can understand their importance and practise them as correctly as possible. At the same time the *sāmaṇeras* must study the 75 *Rules of Good Training* (*sekhyadhamma*, 衆學法),⁽²⁷⁾ the *Ten-fold Mark* (*dasāṅga-linga*, 十種相), the *Ten-fold Punishment* (*dasāṅga-dāḍa*, 十種罰), and the *Four Kinds of Consideration* (*catu-paccavekkhana*, 四種觀察).

2.1. The *Ten-fold Mark* (*dasāṅga-linga*, 十種相), also called the *Ten-fold of Expulsion* (*dasanāsanaṅga*), consists of the commitment to the *Five Precepts* (*pañca-sīla*, viz. restraints from killing sentient beings, from taking what is not given, from

unchastity and from strong drink), not insulting the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, avoiding wrong-view, and not defiling a *bhikkhunī*.⁽²⁸⁾ If a *sāmaṇera* commits one of these ten offences, he will be expelled from the temple as well as the saṅgha. The *Ten-fold of Expulsion* (*dasanāsanaṅga*) are:

- a. *Pānātipāti hoti* (the onslaught on creatures).
- b. *Adinnādāya hoti* (the taking of what is not given).
- c. *Abramacari hoti* (the unchasty).
- d. *Musāvādi hoti* (the lying).
- e. *Majjapāyi hoti* (the drinking of intoxicating liquors).
- f. *Buddhassa avaṇṇaṃ bhāsati* (the reproach upon the Buddha).
- g. *Dhammassa avaṇṇaṃ bhāsati* (the reproach upon the Dhamma).
- h. *Saṅghassa avaṇṇaṃ bhāsati* (the reproach upon the Saṅgha).
- i. *Micchā ditṭhiko hoti* (the wrong-viewer).
- k. *Bhikkhunī dūsako hoti* (one who defiles the *bhikkhunī*).⁽²⁹⁾

2.2. The *Ten-fold Punishment* (*dasāṅga-daṇḍa* or *dasadaṇḍakamma*, 十種罰) includes the commitment to the *Five Precepts* and another five more prohibitions such as trying to make the *bhikkhus* unprofitable, making the *bhikkhus* homeless, causing loss to the *bhikkhus*, cursing or slandering the *bhikkhus* and making the *bhikkhus* do wrong.⁽³⁰⁾ Anyone who commits one of these offences, will be punished by the *bhikkhu* by carrying the water.

The *Ten-fold Punishment* (*dasāṅga-daṇḍa* or *dasadaṇḍakamma*, 十種罰) can be listed as following:

- a. *Vikālabhogi hoti* (taking meals at wrong time).
- b. *Naccādivisūkadassiko hoti* (appearance at dancing, shows and so on).
- c. *Mālādidhāraṇādiko hoti* (wearing garlands and so on).
- d. *Uccāsayanādiko hoti* (using high beds and so on).
- e. *Jātarūparajatapatiggahaṇako hoti* (accepting gold and silver).
- f. *Bhikkhūnaṃ alābbhāya parisakkati* (trying to make the *bhikkhus* unprofitable).

- g. *Bhikkhūnaṃ anattāya parisakkati* (trying to make the bhikkhus homeless).
- h. *Bhikkhūnaṃ anavāsāya parisakkati* (trying to cause loss to the *bhikkhus*).
- i. *Bhikkhu akkosati paribbāsati* (insulting or slandering the *bhikkhus*).
- k. *Bhikkhūnaṃ bhikkhūhi bhedeti* (causing the disunion between the *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhus*).⁽³¹⁾

2.3. The *Four Kinds of Consideration* (*catu-paccavekkhana*, 四種觀察): as for a monk, there are four important things, that is to say, a robe (*cīvara*, 衣), alms (*piṇḍapāta*, 食事), a dwelling (*senāsana*, 住所) and the requisite of medicine for the sick (*gilānapaccayabhesajaparikkhāra*, 病藥資具). He must *wisely reflect* (*paṭisaṅkhā yoniso*, 如理觀察) on the origin of these four things so that he can use them correctly without committing offence (*āpatti*):

a. For the yellow robe:

“Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso cīvaraṃ paṭisevāmi, yāvad eva sītassa paṭighātāya, uḥhassa paṭighātāya daṃsa-makasa-vātātapasarīsapa-samphassānaṃ paṭighātāya, yāvad eva hirikopīnappaticchādattamaṃ.”⁽³²⁾

(I wisely reflect and accept the robe. But it is only accepted for the warding-off of cold, for the warding-off of heat, for the warding-off of the touch of gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, heat and reptiles, and only for the covering of one’s private part.)

b. For the alms:

“Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍapātaṃ paṭisevāmi, neva davāya na madāya na maṇḍanāya na vibhūsanāya, yāvad eva imassa kāyassa t̥hitiyā yāpanāyā, vihiṃsūparatiyā brahmacariyānuggahāya, iti purāṇaṇi ca vedanaṃ paṭibaṅkāmi, navaṇi ca vedanaṃ na uppādessāmi, yātrā ca me bhavissati anavajjatā ca phāsuvihāro ca.”⁽³³⁾

(I wisely reflect and accept the alms. It is accepted neither for sport nor for intoxication, neither for personal charm nor beautification, but only for the preservation of this body, for the allaying of the pangs of hunger, for aiding the practice of the noble life. Thus I shall subdue the old feeling and I shall cause no new feeling to arise. And maintenance shall be mine with the faultlessness and

comfort also.)

c. For the dwelling:

“Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso sesāsanam paṭisevāmi, yāvad eva sītassa paṭighātāya, uṇhassa paṭighātāya daṃsa-makasa-vātātapasarīsapa-samphassānam paṭighātāya, yāvad eva utuparissaya vinodanappaṭisallānārāmattham.”⁽³⁴⁾

(I wisely reflect and accept the dwelling. But it is only accepted for the warding-off of cold, for the warding-off of heat, for the warding-off of the touch of gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, heat and reptiles, only for the dispelling of the danger of the weather and for the purpose of delighting in solitude.)

d. For the requisite of medicine for the sick:

“Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso gilānapaccayabhesajjaparikkhāram paṭisevāmi, yāvad eva uppannānam veyyābādhikānam vedanānam paṭighātāya avyāpajjha-paramatāya.”⁽³⁵⁾

(I wisely reflect and accept the requisite of medicine for the sick. But it is accepted only for the warding-off of feelings which have arisen connected with diseases, and for the freedom from pain.)

Thus the *sāmaṇera* reflects and practices every mode of conduct (*iryāpatha*) from words to work, from body to mind with his mind concentrated and in self-awareness so that he does not commit any offence nor is ungrateful to the Buddhist followers' offerings.

Together with the other monks, the Theravāda *sāmaṇeras* are also allowed to go out in public and to Buddhist schools to earn possible knowledge and understanding of worldly as well as Buddhist education. If they do not have the graduate certificate of the Buddhist Elementary School, they cannot advance to higher level of Buddhist studies such as the Vietnam Institute of Buddhist Studies (越南佛教學院).

3. Daily life of *bhikkhu*

After a period of time of practice as a *sāmaṇera*, so long as he is full of twenty years of age and is considered as being enough qualifications to become a bhikkhu, the *sāmaṇera* will have the permission and introduction of his master to participate the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony. As seen in Hochiminh nowadays, the Theravāda *sāmaṇeras* are often sent to the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony held by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha to be ordained the *bhikkhu*'s precepts. Thus the Theravāda *sāmaṇeras* follow all regulations of the ceremony such as taking part in the examination before the ordination, being present during the days until the ceremony finishes, etc together with monks of two other sects, viz. Mahāyāna and Khất Sĩ (Mendicant). However, when performing the higher ordination, each sect does its own traditional way. The case of Hue City is different, that is to say, the Theravāda saṅgha holds the ceremony seperately.

Also based on the *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt (Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines)*,⁽³⁶⁾ the process of the Theravāda *Upasampadā* ceremony is as following:

Having gathered at Main Hall, the precept-receiver bring his bowl on his hands coming among the saṅgha and paying respect to the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable), then the *kammācariya* (羯磨師), a member of judgement, gives him a contemporary name as “*Nāgo nāma*” and asks him some following questions:

“*Tvaṃ nāgo nāma.*” (“Is your name Nāga ?”)

“*Āma bhante.*” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)

“*Tuyhaṃ upajjhāyo āyasmā tissathero nāma.*” (“Is your master’s name Venerable Tissa?”)

“*Āma bhante.*” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)

Next the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) points some things and asks:

“*Ayaṃ te patto.*” (“Is this your bowl ?”)

“*Āma bhante.*” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)

“*Ayaṃ saṅghātī.*” (“Is this your great robe ?”)

“*Āma bhante.*” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)

“*Ayaṃ antaravāsako.*” (“Is this your intermediate robe ?”)

“*Āma bhante.*” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)

“*Gaccha amumbi okāse tiṭṭhāni.*” (“Go standing there and return !”)

After the precept-receiver has gone out standing with joined palms, the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) says to the saṅgha that:

“*Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ ahaṃ nāgaṃ anusāseyyaṃ.*”

(“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes the Order for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. If it seems right to the Order, I should give advice upon him [Nāga].”)

Then he stands before the precept-receiver and instructs the latter as followings:

“*Suṇāsi nāga ayante saccakālo bhūtakālo. Yaṃ jātamaṃ taṃ saṅghamajjhe pucchante. Santaṃ atthīti vattabbaṃ asantaṃ natthīti vattabbaṃ. Mākho vitthāsi mākho maṅku ahosi. Evantaṃ pucchissanti santi te evarūpā ahosi.*”

(“Listen, Nāga ! It’s real time for you to tell the truth. These natural things should be questioned among the Order. What is pure is the usual custom, and what is not pure is the usual custom. Then do not be embarrassed and not be in red face. Just so I will question that if you have forms like this ?”)

“*Kutṭhaṃ.*” (“Do you have a leprosy ?”)

“*Natthi bhante.*” (“No, I have not, Honoured Sir.”)

“*Gaṇḍo.*” (“Do you have a boil ?”)

“*Natthi bhante.*” (“No, I have not, Honoured Sir.”)

“*Kilāso.*” (“do you have an eczema ?”)

“*Natthi bhante.*” (“No, I have not, Honoured Sir.”)

“Soso.” (“Do you have a consumption ?”)
 “Natthi bhante.” (“No, I have not, Honoured Sir.”)
 “Apamāro.” (“Do you have epilepsi ?”)
 “Natthi bhante.” (“No, I have not, Honoured Sir.”)
 “Manussosi.” (“Are you human being ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Purisasi.” (“Are you a man ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Bhujissosi.” (“Are you a freeman ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Anāṇosi.” (“Are you without debt ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Nasi rājabhato.” (“Are you not in royal service ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Anuññātosī mā tāpitohi.” (“Are you allowed by your mother and father ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Paripunnāvisativassoti.” (“Have you completed twenty years of age ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Paripunnante pattacīvaraṃ.” (Are you complete as to bowl and robe ?”)
 “Āma bhante.” (“Yes, Honoured Sir !”)
 “Kinnāmosi.” (“What’s your name ?”)
 “Ahaṃ bhante nāgonāma.” (“My name, Honoured Sir, is Nāga.”)
 “Konāmote upajjhāyo.” (“What is your preceptor’s name ?”)
 “Upajjhāyo me bhante āyasmā tissatthero nāma.” (“My preceptor’s name, Honoured Sir, is Venerable Tissa.”)⁽³⁷⁾

Then the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) comes among the saṅgha saying that:

“Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho anusitṭho so mayā
 yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ nāgo āgaccheyya āgacchāhiti vattabbo āgacchāhi.”
 (“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes for higher

ordination from the Venerable Tissa. He has been instructed by me. If it seems right to the Order, let him come. This Nāga should be told: ‘Come !’”⁽³⁸⁾

The *sāmaṇera* returns sitting among the saṅgha and in front of the *upajjhāya* (和尚, Most Venerable), to whom he pays worship and sits down upon his haunches with joined palms saying like that:

“Saṅghaṃ bhante upasampadaṃ yācāmi, ullumpatumaṃ bhante saṅgho anukampaṃ upādāya. Dutiyampi bhante saṅghaṃ upasampadaṃ yācāmi, ullumpatumaṃ bhante saṅgho anukampaṃ upādāya. Tatiyampi bhante saṅghaṃ upasampadaṃ yācāmi, ullumpatumaṃ bhante saṅgho anukampaṃ upādāya.”

(“Honoured Sirs, I beg the Order for the higher ordination. Honoured sirs, may the Order raise me up out of compassion. Honoured Sirs, I beg the Order for the higher ordination the second time. Honoured sirs, may the Order raise me up out of compassion. Honoured Sirs, I beg the Order for the higher ordination the third time. Honoured sirs, may the Order raise me up out of compassion.”)⁽³⁹⁾

When the precept-receiver has been ordained among the saṅgha, the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) recites as following:

“Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho ayaṃ nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ ahaṃ nāgaṃ antarāyike dhamme puccheyyaṃ.”

(“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga, wishes for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. If it seems right to the Order, I question him [Nāga] about stumbling-blocks.”)⁽⁴⁰⁾

Then he turns to the precept-receiver to ask the latter that:

“Yaṃ jātaṃ taṃ pucchāmi. Santaṃ atthīti vattabbaṃ asantaṃ natthīti vattabbaṃ. Santi te evarūpā ābādhā.”

(“I will question you these natural things. What is pure is the usual custom, and

what is not pure is the usual custom. Do you have diseases like this ?”)

Thus he goes on questioning the precept-receiver about the stumbling-blocks (*antarāyike dhamme*, 障礙法) once more as mentioned above such as having the diseases such as leprosy, boils, eczema, etc. Having finished the questions, he recites four times the following passages:

“Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho ayaṃ nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram nāgo saṅghaṃ upasampadam yācati āyasmatā tissena upajjhāyena yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ saṅgho nāgaṃ upasampadādeyya āyasmatā tissena upajjhāyena esā ñatti.”

(“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. He is entirely pure in regard to the things which are stumbling-blocks, he is full twenty years of age and he is complete as to bowl and robes. This Nāga is begging the Order for higher ordination by means of the Venerable Tissa. If it seems right to the Order, let the Order ordain him [Nāga] by means of the Venerable Tissa. This is the motion.”)

“Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho ayaṃ nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram nāgo saṅghaṃ upasampadam yācati āyasmatā tissena upajjhāyena yassāyasmato khamati nāgassa upasampadā āyasmatā tissena upajjhāyena so tunhassa yassa nakkhamati so bhāseyya.”

(“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. He is entirely pure in regard to the things which are stumbling-blocks, he is full twenty years of age and he is complete as to bowl and robes. This Nāga is begging the Order for higher ordination by means of the Venerable Tissa. The Order is ordaining Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa. If the ordination of Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa is pleasing to the venerable ones, let them be silent; he to whom it is not pleasing should speak.”)

“Dutiyampi etamattthaṃ vadāmi. Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho ayaṃ nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram nāgo saṅghaṃ upasampadam yācati āyasmatā tissena upajjhāyena yassāyasmato khamati

nāgassa upasampadā āyasmatā tissenā upajjhāyena so tunhassa yassa nakkhamati so bhāseyya.”

(“The second time I speak forth this matter. Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. He is entirely pure in regard to the things which are stumbling-blocks, he is full twenty years of age and he is complete as to bowl and robes. This Nāga is begging the Order for higher ordination by means of the Venerable Tissa. The Order is ordaining Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa. If the ordination of Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa is pleasing to the venerable ones, let them be silent; he to whom it is not pleasing should speak.”)

“Tatīyampi etamattham vadāmi. Sunātu me bhante saṅgho ayaṃ nāgo āyasmato tissassa upasampadāpekkho parisuddho antarāyikehi dhammehi paripuṇṇassa pattacīvaram nāgo saṅgham upasampadam yācati āyasmatā tissenā upajjhāyena yassāyasmato khamati nāgassa upasampadā āyasmatā tissenā upajjhāyena so tunhassa yassa nakkhamati so bhāseyya.”

(“The third time I speak forth this matter. Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me ! This Nāga wishes for higher ordination from the Venerable Tissa. He is entirely pure in regard to the things which are stumbling-blocks, he is full twenty years of age and he is complete as to bowl and robes. This Nāga is begging the Order for higher ordination by means of the Venerable Tissa. The Order is ordaining Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa. If the ordination of Nāga by means of the Venerable Tissa is pleasing to the venerable ones, let them be silent; he to whom it is not pleasing should speak.”)

“Upasampanno saṅghena nāgo āyasmatā tissenā upajjhāyena khamati saṅghassa tasmā tuṅhī evametam dhārayāmi.”⁽⁴¹⁾

(“Nāga is being ordained by the Order by means of the Venerable Tissa. It is pleasing to the Order, therefore it is silent. Thus do I understand this.”)

When the *kammācariya* (羯磨師) has finished reciting these words, he announces the saṅgha the time and it is the time which the precept-receiver has advanced to the bhikkhuship. Thus is the ending of the *Upasampadā* (higher

ordination) ceremony performed in accordance with the Theravāda traditional way.

Right after the ceremony, the newly-ordained *bhikkhus* are often offered by the laity followers with necessary things such as toothpastes, towels, soaps, etc.

As for studying, formerly Theravāda monks attended either Buddhist school operated by their Saṅgha or inner classes of temple. From the day of our nation's reunification, 1975, up to now, most monks are being sent to public school to attend worldly educational courses, and also to Buddhist school as well. Thus at Buddhist schools operated by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha of each region the Theravāda monks share the same course with the other sects, i.e. Mahāyāna and Mendicant. As we see in other Theravāda Buddhist countries that most monks only study the Pāli language, but the case of Vietnam is different. Apart from the Pāli, Theravāda monks also study Chinese language and some Mahāyāna scriptures as well.

To make it more clear, here I will give an example of subjects of second year applied presently in the studying program of four-year course of the Vietnam Institute of Buddhist Studies (越南佛教學院) in Hochiminh City.⁽⁴²⁾

On Buddhist subjects, they study *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Āgama Sūtra*, *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (金剛經, *Diamond Sūtra*), *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* (法華經, *Lotus Sūtra*), *Vinaya Studies*, *Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra* (華嚴經), *Sūtra of Full Awakening* (圓覺經) and *Practical Meditation*; as well as non-Buddhist subjects such as *Psychology*, *Religious Studies*, *Aesthetics*, *English*, *Pāli*, *Chinese*, and *History of Vietnam*.⁽⁴³⁾

Thus general thoughts and concepts about Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures such as *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā* (金剛經, *Diamond Sūtra*), *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* (法華經, *Lotus Sūtra*), etc., are imbued in them and it is possible, I think, that a bridge of sympathy combining the two Buddhist schools has been built in Vietnam. That is an outstanding characteristic of Vietnamese Buddhism in general and Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism in particular; and it represents the harmonious combination between the two different great traditions.

Beside studying and other facets of activities, even in the *Upasampadā* (higher

ordination) ceremony held for monks and nuns, we can see the presence of superior Theravāda monks in the members of the Assembly of *Three Masters* and *Seven Eye-witnesses* (三師七証). Formerly each sect would often hold the ceremony separately with their own rites and ordination, but in Vietnam, after the unification of the three sects had been established, the ceremony of higher ordination is always held with their participation. Precept-receivers (戒子) are members of three sects, but because the *Upasampadā* rite of each sect is different, the ordination is performed particularly in the same *sīma* (regulated boundary).⁽⁴⁴⁾ Thus in the spirit of solidarity and harmony, all sects can work toward a common goal. This is an outstanding and unique characteristic of Vietnam Buddhism in general as well as Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism in particular which cannot be seen in any other Buddhist countries.

C. Precept Recital, Summer Retreat and Invitation

As a Buddhist monk or nun, one of the most essential duties he or she must do is to participate in the important ceremonies such as the Precept Recital or *Observance* (*uposatha*, 布薩) twice a month, the *Summer Retreat* (*vassa*, 安居) and the *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) once a year. The vitality of Buddhism as well the prosperity of the saṅgha depend on the existence and presence of these holy ceremonies. Therefore, there is a tradition of giving consent (*chandam dātum*, 與欲) regulated at the Buddha-time, if someone is ill or cannot manage to participate in these ceremonies. It is a clear evidence and earnest willing for taking part in the ceremonies of the very person at which although he cannot be present. This also represents the duty and responsibility of each member of the saṅgha toward the rise and fall of Buddhism.

Here, in this part, I will refer to these traditional important ceremonies performed by the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists.

I. Precept Recital (*uposatha*, 布薩)

According to the tradition regulated before the Buddha-time, the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital) was fixed for observance upon the full moon day and upon the dark of the moon, as well as upon the quarter moon days, which are equivalent to the fifteenth of the waxing moon, the fifteenth or fourteenth of the waning moon, and the eighth of the waxing and waning moons respectively.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Then after that, when the Buddha-time came, the Buddha allowed the saṅgha of *bhikkhus* to perform the ceremony only on the full moon and the dark moon days.

In Vietnam, likened to the Mahāyāna tradition, the Theravāda Buddhists also perform the *Uposatha* ceremony twice a month on lunar days of 15th and 29th or 30th. The *Uposatha* performed on the lunar 29th days is called the *cātuddasī uposatha* (十四日布薩, the Observation on the 14th days of the waxing moons), and on the lunar 30th day the *pannarasī uposatha* (十五日布薩, the Observation on the 15th days of the waning moons). As seen at the Kỳ Viên (*Jetavana Vihāra*) temple in Hochiminh City, monks here often celebrate the *Uposatha* ceremony twice a month on above mentioned lunar days after the afternoon recital sessions.

At that time, both *sāmañeras* and *bhikkhus* gather at the Main Hall and the *sāmañeras*, after having paid respect to the saṅgha of *bhikkhus*, listen to their ordained Ten Precepts and then go out of the Main Hall. Next the assembly of *bhikkhus* performs the recitation of the *Pātimokkha*. However, as mentioned in Chapter Two: *Monks—Life and Activities*, there are 9 things which should be done before coming to the recitation of the *Pātimokkha*. They are: cleaning the *uposathāgāra* (布薩堂, hall for performing the *Uposatha*), lighting lamps, making seats, putting out drinking water and water for washing, conveying the consented absence (*chandaṃ dātum*, 與欲) of a sick *bhikkhu* if having, conveying the entire purity (*pārisuddhi*, 清淨) of the sick *bhikkhu*, informing about the reason, counting the number of *bhikkhus* and giving precepts to *bhikkhunīs*.⁽⁴⁶⁾

The first four things are called *pubbakaraṇa* (前行, things which should be done beforehand) and the last five things are *pubbakicca* (前義務, duties which should be done beforehand).

As for the duty of giving precepts to *bhikkhunīs* is not necessary to perform in the *Uposatha* ceremony of the Theravāda Buddhists, because at present no

bhikkhunīs are seen in their saṅgha.

And one more important duty that monks should do before the recitation of the *Pātimokkha* is to make confession for entire purity (*pārisuddhi*, 清淨). After having entered the *uposathāgāra* (布薩堂, hall for performing the *Uposatha*), monks divide into groups of 2 monks and perform the rite of confession (*paṭikāra*, 懺悔). The purpose of making confession before reciting the holy *Pātimokkha* is at helping one to purify entirely before listening to the holy precepts. Apart from the grave offences belonging to the *Four Offences Involving Defeat* (*cattāro pārājikā dhammā*, 四波羅夷法) and the *Thirteen Offences Entailing a Formal Meeting of the Order* (*terasa saṅghādidesā dhammā*, 十三僧伽婆尸沙法), one must confess the other offences among 227 *bhikkhu* precepts which he may have committed.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Then when these above 9 duties and the confession have been done completely, monks can recite the *Pātimokkha*.

Based on *Mahāvagga II* (大品, *Book of Discipline*), before reciting the *Pātimokkha*, the saṅgha should be informed by an experienced, competent monk the following verse:

“*Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho. Ajj’ uposatho pannaraso. Yadi saṅghassa pattakallam, saṅgho uposatham pātimokkham uddiseyya.*”⁽⁴⁸⁾

“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. Today, the fifteenth day, is an Observance day. If it seems right to the Order, the Order may carry out Observance, it may recite the *Pātimokkha*.”

In this verse there is one place to be changed. If it is the fourteenth, one should recite *ajjuposatho cātuddaso* (十四日布薩, the *Uposatha* day on the fourteenth); and if it is a day for the concord of *bhikkhus*, one should recite *ajjuposatho sāmaggī* (和合布薩, the *Uposatha* on concord day).⁽⁴⁹⁾

As for the reciter *should be selected among the clever bhikkhus who can learn the Pātimokkha by heart. Such a bhikkhu is clever at reciting and knows where to pause between phrases. He knows the values of the letters and the way to tress them clearly, and he has the ability to recite and is not a bhikkhu with a coarse, unclear voice, neither he*

caught a cold. The reciter should try to recite both clearly and loudly, enough for the assembly to hear. If he pretends to recite, mumbling the words indistinctly, he is *dukkata* (突吉羅, wrong-doing).⁽⁵⁰⁾

As for the ways of reciting the *Pātimokkha* laid down by the Buddha, there are 5 different ways,⁽⁵¹⁾ in which the second way is said to be popular among the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists, concretely as seen at the Kỳ Viên (*Jetavana Vihāra*) temple in Hochiminh City. That is having recited the *Provenance* (*nidāna*, 序) and having recited the *Four Offences Involving Defeat* (*cattāro pārājikā dhammā*, 四波羅夷法), the rest may be announced as though it had been already heard. Naturally, if monks have enough time, they will recite throughout the *Pātimokkha*.⁽⁵²⁾

II. Summer Retreat (*vassa*, 安居)

According to the Theravāda tradition of summer retreat, there are two periods of entering upon summer retreat as laid down by the Buddha:

“Monks, there are these two (periods) for beginning the rains: the earlier and the later. The earlier may be entered upon the day after the day after (the full moon of) Āsāḷhī, the later may be entered upon a month after (the full moon of) Āsāḷhī. These, monks, are the two (periods) for beginning the rains.”

(Dve ’mā bhikkhave vassupanāyikā purimikā ’ti. Aparajjugatāya āsāḷhiyā purimikā upagantabbā, māsaḡatāya āsāḷhiyā pacchimikā upagantabbā. Imā kho bhikkhave dve vassupanāyikā ’ti.)⁽⁵³⁾

The *Āsāḷhī* or *Āsāḷbā* (阿沙陀 or 頽沙荼) is the Indian name of a month which is the June-July.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Different with the Mahāyāna Buddhists who often enter upon the summer retreat on the lunar 16th day of April every year after having finished the *Jayanti* ceremony on the lunar 15th day of the same month, the Theravāda monks still follow the above tradition, that is to say, always entering upon the summer retreat on the lunar 16th day of June, the earlier period (*purimikāvassupanāyikā*, 前

安居).⁽⁵⁵⁾ Most Theravāda monks enter upon this period, but if those who cannot manage to do that must enter upon the later period (*pacchimikāvassupanāyikā*, 後安居), on the lunar 16th day of July.

The period of three months which the Theravāda monks enter upon the summer retreat is from the lunar 16th day of June to 16th day of September. Concretely there are some Theravāda temples which enter the summer retreat in Southern Vietnam such as the Kỳ Viên (Jetavana Vihāra)⁽⁵⁶⁾ with 6 monks, the Phổ Minh⁽⁵⁷⁾ with 10 monks, the Bửu Long⁽⁵⁸⁾ with 10 monks and 70 female practitioners, the Phước Sơn⁽⁵⁹⁾ with 30 monks and 100 female practitioners.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Entering upon the rains is considered as vital responsibility of monks, therefore, the Buddha laid down that whoever should not enter upon the rains, there is an offence of wrong-doing (*dukkata*, 突吉羅).⁽⁶¹⁾ Moreover, based on the Article 34 in the *Regulations of the Board of Monks' Affairs* (内規班僧事) of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the importance of entering upon the summer retreat is also emphasised as following:

“According to the disciplines laid down by the Buddha, every year monks and nuns must enter upon the summer retreat to control and observe ones' own body and mind, to make unadulterated progress in cultivation and to practice the Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.”

Before performing the ceremony of Vassa-residence, monks should prepare the preliminary duty such as sweeping clearly the temple and arranging it in order, or also called the *saṅghārāma* (僧園), setting out drinking water and water for general use, and so on. Then monks, after having meet together at the Main Hall and paid worship to the Triple Gem three times, recite together the following words of the *adhiṭṭhāna* (授持, resolution):

“Imasmim vibāre imaṃ temāsaṃ vassaṃ upemi.”

(“I enter the rains in this temple for this three months.”)⁽⁶²⁾

And naturally the boundary (*sīmā*, 界) should be necessary to lay down to mark the area where monks should stay. There are two kinds of *sīmās*, viz. small *sīmā* (小界) and great *sīmā* (大界). As regulated popularly in Vietnam nowadays, the former is always the boundary limit of the temple, and the latter the limit of the city or district where the monks reside.

Thus according to the regulations laid down by the Buddha, monks should not set out on tours or go out during three months of vassa. However, in the case of being invited or sent for by seven classes of people, viz. monk (*bhikkhu*, 比丘), nun (*bhikkhunī*, 比丘尼), novice (*sāmaṇera*, 沙彌), woman novice (*sāmaṇerī*, 沙彌尼), probationer (*sikkhamānā*, 式叉摩那), lay follower (*upāsaka*, 優婆塞) and woman layfollower (*upāsikā*, 優婆夷) and the case of the business being done in seven days (*sattāha*, 七日), monks can go out the regulated boundary and return the temple within this period of time.⁽⁶³⁾

Moreover, during this three months of vassa, monks can go for *sattāha* (七日, seven days) once or many times, but *it must be very necessary to go and it must be for some very pressing business.*⁽⁶⁴⁾

At present as seen in Vietnam, both Mahāyāna and Theravāda as well as Mendicant monks go out during the three months of vassa mainly for Buddhist deeds such as reciting sūtras for the sick or the dead, for praying the goodness at an inauguration rite of a new house or restaurant, hotel, etc., or for reciting sūtras at the *dāna*-offering rite for the hungry ghosts (*petas*, 餓鬼) or the rite for release from false charge (解冤拔渡式) and so on, at the layfollowers' houses. In this case, by facing to either one *bhikkhu* or the saṅgha or even an image of the Buddha, Theravāda monks often recite the following verse 3 times:

“*Sace me antarāyo natthi, sattāhabbhantare ahaṃ puna nivattisāmi.*”

(“If there are no obstacles, I will return back in seven days.”)⁽⁶⁵⁾

During these three months the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists pay special attention on the meditation practice of *Four-fold Application of Mindfulness* (*catusatipatṭhāna*, 四念處), referring to the body, the sensations, the mind and

phenomena. Every temple organises a class of studying Buddhist teachings for the female practitioners and laity which aims at guiding the latter to know how to recite the Pāli scriptures and to master the contents of some Buddhist scriptures such as the *Majjhima-nikāya* (中部經, *The Middle Length Sayings*), the *Saddhamma* (微妙法, *The “Doctrine of the Good”*), etc. Especially there is also a class of studying teachings for children in every Sunday as seen in the Kỳ Viễn temple.

Apart from these activities, each temple also holds rites of confession twice a month for its monks as well as for the laity. In addition, the Theravāda monks are very active in charitable activities. For example, during this time monks of the Kỳ Viễn temple has offered 2 friendly houses and donated some presents to the ethnic people in the Bombo region.⁽⁶⁶⁾

III. Invitation (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣)

After the three months of vassa have completed, the Theravāda monks also perform an important ceremony called *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) in accordance with the permission of the Buddha during his lifetime.⁽⁶⁷⁾ This ceremony aims at ending the period of vassa on one hand, and at revealing as well as confessing all possible offences (*āpatti*, 罪過) which may have been committed by someone on the other hand, so that one can remove his offences and keep following the discipline as rightly as possible.

As seen in the Vietnamese Theravāda society nowadays, those who entered on the lunar 16th day of June, the earlier period (*purimikāvassupanāyikā*, 前安居), must perform the *Invitation* ceremony on the lunar 15th day of September. And those who entered upon the later period (*pacchimikāvassupanāyikā*, 後安居), on the lunar 16th day of July, must do the ceremony on the lunar 15th day of October.

Here it should be necessary to refer to the days for performing the *Invitation* ceremony. Traditionally, there are 3 days: the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the concord day. And there are also 3 ways of doing the *Invitation*: to the saṅgha, to each other, and determining in the mind by oneself.⁽⁶⁸⁾

Normally the preliminary duties for the *Invitation* ceremony resemble those of

the *Uposatha* but in the duties which should be done beforehand there is no bringing of purity.⁽⁶⁹⁾

Then, after the *bhikkhus* have assembled at the Main Hall and paid worship 3 times to the Triple Gem, the saṅgha is informed by a superior monk with the following verse:

“Suṇātu me bhante saṅgho. Ajja pavāraṇā paṇṇarasī. Yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ saṅgho pavāreyyā ’ti.”⁽⁷⁰⁾

(“Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. Today is the fifteenth [day] of invitation. It seems right to the Order, the Order may invite.”)

Then first the head superior monk, having arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, sits down on his haunches with joined palms and recites as follows:

“Saṅghaṃ āvuso pavāremi diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisañkāya vā, vadantu maṃ āyasmanto anukampaṃ upādāya, passanto paṭikarissāmi. Dutiyampi ... Tatiyampi ...”⁽⁷¹⁾

(“Your reverences, I invite the Order in respect of what has been seen or heard or suspected. Let the venerable ones speak to me out of compassion, and seeing I will make amends. The second time ... The third time ...”)

And junior monks alternately one by one go on performing the *Invitation* ceremony by reciting the above verse but only replacing the word *āvuso* by *bhante*.

Thus is ended the *Invitation* ceremony in Theravāda traditions as seen Vietnam, Thailand, etc.

Normally after the *Invitation* ceremony has been finished, following is the solemn and holy offering rite of the *Kaṭhinas* (功德衣, meritorious robes) performed by the Theravāda Buddhist followers. It is at this time that the laity one-mindedly offer the robes and necessary things for daily use to monks so that they can gain uncountable merit.

D. Festivals and Ceremonies

Festivals and ceremonies are considered as important events which represent the particular essence of culture and tradition of each country where Buddhism exists. In Vietnam, along with the Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Theravāda Buddhism holds annual festivals on lunar days on the basis of two traditions, that is to say, its own and national traditions.

I. Festivals

1. Festival of January 15th

This event occurs after the Vietnamese traditional Tết (New Year) with two meanings: in the memory of the day when the Buddha proclaimed the Māra that he would pass away three months later,⁽⁷²⁾ the day when 1250 *bhikkhus* assembled to pay a visit to the Buddha before his great decease. It is on this day that especially in the North and South Vietnam, the Mahāyāna Buddhists also often hold rituals at temples to pray for safety and prosperity at the beginning of the new year. And it is also the time for Buddhists to go on pilgrimage to old and famous temples in Northern Vietnam.⁽⁷³⁾

2. Festival of April 15th

Apart from the meaning of memory of the Buddha's birthday which can be seen in solemn ceremony of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Theravāda Buddhists also hold an important festival with other two meanings: in memory of the days of the Bodhisatta's enlightenment and entering Nibbāna. The day after this day the Mahāyāna monks and nuns enter the summer retreat, but the Theravāda monks do that two months later.

3. Festival of June 15th

Different with the tradition of Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Theravāda Buddhist celebrate a solemn ceremony in this day in memory of the days of the Bodhisatta's descending from the Tusita Heaven, renunciation and turning the Dhamma Wheel. It is after this day Theravāda monks enter upon the *vassa* (rain-residence) for three months.

4. Kaṭhina-Offering Festival

After three months of diligent practice have finished, Theravāda monks hold a ceremony for ending the period of the *vassa* on the lunar 16th day of September which is called the *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣). On this occasion, Buddhist followers prepare the *Kaṭhinas* (迦絺那衣 or 功德衣, meritorious robes) and necessary suppliments to offer to the monks, through which the former believe that they will receive much more merit than doing in normal days.

II. Ceremonies

Beside the above-mentioned festivals, Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists also celebrate other ceremonies as seen to be held in Mahāyāna temples. These ceremonies, of course, play important role in lives of Vietnamese Theravāda monks as well as their followers.

1. The Tết Holiday

Influenced from Chinese tradition from the old days, the Vietnamese, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, celebrate a traditional festival for the lunar New Year which is called Tết. So do the Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhists to see the old year off and welcome a new properous year. It is on this day or on the eve of the new year the Buddhists always gather at temples to pray, offer money to monks as a symbol of wishing longevity and at the same time receive money form the monks as a symbol of good luck and best wishes in the new year.

Furthermore, the custom of picking up some flowers from the temple or lighting long incense sticks at temple then bringing them back to their own home is quite popular for Vietnamese Buddhists which can be seen in both Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhist temples in New Year days. Because it is believed that to bring back their own home holy things such as flowers or incense sticks as well being very lucky will bring happiness for their lives during one year.⁽⁷⁴⁾

2. The Filial Piety Festival (盂蘭盆會, *Ullambana Festival*)

To perform the spirit of filial duty to their parents, all Vietnamese Buddhists have the tradition of holding an important festival on the lunar 16th day of July to express their filial respect to present parents, parents of many births as well as parents of seven previous generations. Different with Theravāda tradition, it is on this day when Mahāyāna monks and nuns have just finished their 3 strenuous months of summer retreat and celebrate the *Invitation* (*pavāraṇā*, 自恣) *Day*. The laity assembles at temples to recite sūtras, practicing meditation, listening to the Dhamma talks, ect. with their whole minds to transfer all merit earned from these good deeds to their own parents and the sentient beings.

All these Buddhist festivals are chances for Theravāda monks to cultivate the mode of *dhūta* (頭陀, scrupulous practice) by practicing meditation, debating Buddhist teachings over night without sleeping.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Furthermore, they always take advantage of these occasions to ordain precepts to beginning practitioners as well as Buddhist followers. It is on these occasion that the laity can meet each other at temples, exchange Buddhist understandings and knowledge and spend much time with monks to cultivate and do Buddhist deeds.

Apart from traditional festivals such as the Festival of January 15th, Festival of April 15th or the Festival of June 15th, ect. as seen to be held in Theravāda Buddhist countries, Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists show some borrowings from Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhism through festivals like the *Filial Piety Day*. Naturally the tradition of paying filial reward to parents can be seen in Theravāda

Buddhism, but the form of expression through fixing a pink or white rose⁽⁷⁶⁾ on upper clothes of Buddhist followers which is popular nowadays in Theravāda temples comes from the tradition of Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, instead of reciting the *Ullambanasūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*) or confessing all offences (*āpatti*, 罪過) with the aim of transferring the merit to their own parents like the Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhists do, the Theravāda Buddhists spend most of their time at temples to practice meditation, listen to the Dhamma talks, etc. also with the same purpose.

Conversely the Theravāda tradition of offering the *Kaṭhinas* (迦絺那衣 or 功德衣, meritorious robes) is a strong influence in Mahāyāna temples as seen in Hochiminh city. Normally Theravāda Buddhists perform this festival on the lunar 16th day of September by bringing the robes to the temple, walking around the Main Hall three rounds with the robes and suppliments in trays putting them on their heads, and reciting the praising verses as following:

*“How imposing and virtuous is the robe,
 The pure color of the samanās,
 Who take the example of the Exalted One,
 To widely propagate eighty-four thousand teachings.
 Today we the upāsakas and upāsikās
 Celebrate solemnly the Kaṭhina festival
 And offer these robes with our heartfelt mind.
 We walk around the Buddha 3 round for prayer with our same voices,
 When monks receive these with their joy,
 We can cultivate good seeds for the future.
 We vow to free from dust of afflictions
 And practice with diligence for the sake of enlightenment.
 We pray for the Buddhist teachings lasting forever
 And deeply imbueing to all kind of beings in the world.
 Praying for all sentient beings
 To take refuge along the good path with their faithful mind,*

*And to take the example of the Compassionate One,
To renounce their worldly lives and wearing these robes to be seated next to Him.”⁽⁷⁷⁾*

After the recital of each sentence, there is a praying sentence that “*would the devas and mankind be joyful with the merit done by us today*” is loudly intoned and the followers reply three times with “*Sādhu !*” (How good is it!).

The competition of making the *anābhidosika-cīvara* (the robe which does not last overnight) and the tradition of bringing these robes walking around the Main Hall three times, which are characteristics of Burmese Theravāda Buddhism,⁽⁷⁸⁾ have become deeply rooted in Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist tradition.

The Vietnamese Mahāyāna Buddhists also prepare yellow robes for monks on the *Invitation (pavāraṇā, 自恣) Day*, July 15th, but the difference is that they do not bring the robes and supplants walking three rounds like the Theravāda Buddhists often do.

Furthermore, nowadays there are some Theravāda monks who wear Vietnamese Mahāyāna clothes while going out to study at Buddhist schools. Therefore, sometimes one cannot distinguish who is the Theravāda or Mahāyāna. The case is the same with the mode of practice of the *điều* (beginning practitioner) of the two schools, who also wear Mahāyāna clothes.

E. Some Main Scriptures Utilised By the Theravāda Buddhists

It is necessary, I think, to give some more references to some suttas as well as parittas and gāthās utilised by the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhists. To clearly understand the matter, I depend on four books, viz. *Kinh Nhật tụng Của Cư Sĩ (Daily Recitation Scriptures for the Laity)*,⁽⁷⁹⁾ *Kinh tụng (Recital Scriptures)*,⁽⁸⁰⁾ *Nghi thức tụng niệm (Rites for Chanting and Praying)*,⁽⁸¹⁾ and *Kinh tụng Pāli (Recital Pāli Scriptures)*.⁽⁸²⁾

Some main scriptures are listed in titles as follows:

1. About *suttas* (經, scriptures or discourses)

1. 1. *Maṅgalasutta* (吉祥經, *Good Omen Discourse*).
1. 2. *Ratanasutta* (寶經, [*Triple*] *Gem Discourse*).
1. 3. *Mettasutta* (慈經, *Lovingkindness Discourse*).
1. 4. *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta* (轉法輪經, *Discourse on Turning the Dhamma Wheel*).
1. 5. *Girimānandasutta* (*Discourse on Girimānanda*).
1. 6. *Anattalakkhaṇasutta* (無我相經, *Discourse on Selfless Mark*).
1. 7. *Ādittapariyāyasutta* (燃火教經, *Discourse on Teachings of the Fire*).
1. 8. *Bojjaṅgasutta* (菩提分經, *Discourse on Factors of Wisdom*).
1. 9. *Dasadisābuddhasutta* (十方佛經, *Discourse on the Buddhas in Ten Directions*).
1. 10. *Āṅgulimālasutta* (鴛掘魔羅經, *Discourse on Āṅgulimāla*).
1. 11. *Abhayaparittasutta* (無畏護持經, *Discourse on Protection of Fearlessness*).

Among these above-listed *suttas*, before coming the main content of each *sutta*, there appears some *ārambhas*, meaningly the phrases for the announcement to begin reciting the *sutta*, such as the *Maṅgalasutta* (吉祥經, *Good Omen Discourse*), the *Ratanasutta* (寶經, [*Triple*] *Gem Discourse*), the *Mettasutta* (慈經, *Lovingkindness Discourse*), the *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta* (轉法輪經, *Discourse on Turning the Dhamma Wheel*).⁽⁸³⁾

Normally while performing the Buddhist service of praying for safety and peace for the laity, the Theravāda monks always recite either of these scriptures such as the *Maṅgalasutta* (吉祥經, *Good Omen Discourse*), the *Ratanasutta* (寶經, [*Triple*] *Gem Discourse*), the *Mettasutta* (慈經, *Lovingkindness Discourse*),⁽⁸⁴⁾ which are very popular in Burmese Theravāda Buddhists.⁽⁸⁵⁾ Especially the *Girimānandasutta* (*Discourse on Girimānanda*) is utilised for reciting for the sick.⁽⁸⁶⁾

2. About *gāthās* (偈, stanzas)

1. 1. *Anumodanārambhagāthā* (隨喜努力偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing One's Effort*).

1. 2. *Sāmaññānumodanagāthā* (統一隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Conformity*).
1. 3. *Bhojanadānānumodanagāthā* (施食隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Food-Offering*).
1. 4. *Tīrokuḍḍagāthā* (垣外偈, *Without-the-Walls Stanza*).
1. 5. *Yānadānānumodanagāthā* (乘物施隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Carriage-Offering*).
1. 6. *Kāladānappakāsanagāthā* (施時說明偈, *Stanza of Explaining the Time of Offering*).
1. 7. *Vihāradānasuttagāthā* (施精舍經偈, *Stanza on the Discourse of Offering Vihāras*).
1. 8. *Devatoddissadakkhiṇānumodanagāthā* (天供養隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Offerings to the Devas*).
1. 9. *Ādiyasuttagāthā* (可食經偈, *Stanza on the Discourse of the Edible*).
1. 10. *Sanḅhāvattbugāthā* (攝事偈, *Stanza of the Objects of Sympathy*).
1. 11. *Saccapānavidhyānūrūpagāthā* (?).
1. 12. *Nidhikaṇḍagāthā* (財寶藏偈, *Treasure-Store Stanza*).
1. 13. *Krṇīyānumodanagāthā* (? , *Stanza on the Origin*).
1. 14. *Siddhiyācanagāthā* (成就乞求偈, *Stanza on the Begging for Accomplishment*).
1. 15. *Dhātucetiyanamakāragāthā* (舍利塔廟禮拜作爲偈, *Stanza on the Acts of Worship to the Cairns of Relics*).
1. 16. *Buddhajayamaṅgalagāthā* (佛勝行偈, *Stanza on the Buddha's Victory and Good Omen*).
1. 17. *Sanvejanīyagāthā* (應厭離偈, *Stanza Apt to Cause Motion*).
1. 18. *Tiratananamassakāragāthā* (三寶禮拜作爲偈, *Stanza on the Acts of Worship to the Triple Gem*).
1. 19. *Buddhapādanamakkāragāthā* (佛足禮拜作爲偈, *Stanza on the Acts of Worship to the Buddha's Feet*).
1. 20. *Tividhacetiyavandanagāthā* (三種塔廟禮拜偈, *Stanza on the Worship to Three Kinds of Cairns*).
1. 21. *Anantariyagāthā* (無邊偈, *Boundless Stanza*).

1. 22. *Dhammadesanāyācanagāthā* (說法乞求偈, *Stanza on the Begging for Dhamma Preaching*).
1. 23. *Pattidānagāthā* (獲得布施偈, *Stanza on the Transference of Merit*).
1. 24. *Tilokavijayarājapattidānagāthā* (三界征服王獲得布施偈, *Stanza on Transferring Merit to the King Who Conquers the Three Realms*).
1. 25. *Parittabhāsanāyācanagāthā* (護咒語乞求偈, *Stanza on Begging For Reciting the Paritta*).
1. 26. *Sīvaligāthā* (? , *Stanza on Sīvali*).
1. 27. *Mahājayamaṅgalagāthā* (大勝利吉祥偈, *Stanza on the Great Victory and Good Omen*).
1. 28. *Udānagāthā* (感興語偈, *Utterance Stanza*).
1. 29. *Bhaddekarattagāthā* (賢善一夜偈, *Stanza of One Night As A Reverend*).
1. 30. *Narasīhagāthā* (雄獅人偈, *Stanza on A Lion-man*).
1. 31. *Khaggavisāṇagāthā* (犀角偈, *Stanza on Rhinoceros*).
1. 32. *Jayaparittagāthā* (護持最勝偈, *Stanza on Supreme Protection*).

These above-mentioned *gāthās* such as the *Anumodanārambhagāthā* (隨喜努力偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing One's Effort*), the *Sāmaññānumodanagāthā* (統一隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Conformity*), the *Bhojanadānānumodanagāthā* (施食隨喜偈, *Stanza of Rejoicing the Food-Offering*), the *Kāladānappakāsanagāthā* (施時說明偈, *Stanza of Explaining the Time of Offering*), etc. are mainly utilised for recitation in the case of being offered by the layfollowers.⁽⁸⁷⁾

Apart from these, there are some *gāthās* recited for praying safety and peace (求安) such as the *Parittabhāsanāyācanagāthā* (護咒語乞求偈, *Stanza on Begging For Reciting the Paritta*), the *Buddhajayamaṅgalagāthā* (佛勝行偈, *Stanza on the Buddha's Victory and Good Omen*), the *Bhaddekarattagāthā* (賢善一夜偈, *Stanza of One Night As A Reverend*), the *Narasīhagāthā* (雄獅人偈, *Stanza on A Lion-man*), the *Khaggavisāṇagāthā* (犀角偈, *Stanza on Rhinoceros*), etc. as seen in the part of *Scriptures for Praying Safety* (求安經) of the *Kinh Nhật Tụng Của Cư Sĩ* (*Daily Recitation Scriptures for the Laity*).⁽⁸⁸⁾

As for the case of reciting scriptures for the dead to be reborn in auspicious

realms, the *Samvejanīyagāthā* (應厭離偈, *Stanza Apt to Cause Motion*), the *gāthās* referring to impermanence, suffering and selflessness, and the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (緣起, *dependent origination*) are recited.⁽⁸⁹⁾

3. About *paritta* (護咒, protecting spell)

3. 1. *Pakiṇṇakaparitta* (雜護咒, *Miscellaneous Protecting Spell*).
3. 2. *Dasannaṃ bojjhaṅgaparitta* (十菩提分護咒, *Protecting Spell of Ten Marks of Wisdom*).
3. 3. *Khandhaparitta* (蘊護咒, *Aggregate Protecting Spell*).
3. 4. *Moraparitta* (孔雀護咒, *Peacock Protecting Spell*).
3. 5. *Vattakāparitta* (鶉護咒, *Quail Protecting Spell*).
3. 6. *Chaddantaparitta* (六牙護咒, *Six-Tusked Protecting Spell*).
3. 7. *Aṅgulimālaparitta* (鴛掘魔羅護咒, *Aṅgulimāla Protecting Spell*).

Beside the *suttas* and *gāthās*, the *parittas* also play important role in the daily recitation as well as Buddhist services for the Vietnamese Theravāda monks' layfollowers. The *parittas* such as the *Khandhaparitta* (蘊護咒, *Aggregate Protecting Spell*), the *Moraparitta* (孔雀護咒, *Peacock Protecting Spell*), the *Vattakāparitta* (鶉護咒, *Quail Protecting Spell*), the *Chaddantaparitta* (六牙護咒, *Six-Tusked Protecting Spell*), *Aṅgulimālaparitta* (鴛掘魔羅護咒, *Aṅgulimāla Protecting Spell*), etc. are mainly utilised together with other *suttas* as well as *gāthās* for praying safety and peace.⁽⁹⁰⁾ The above *parittas* are also very popular in Burmese Theravāda Buddhists.⁽⁹¹⁾

F. Summary

In this paper I have discussed some areas of mutual interaction between the two great traditions, Mahāyāna and Theravāda, especially the influence of Mahāyāna on the Theravāda. In its period of existence in a Mahāyāna Buddhist country like Vietnam, it is true that Theravāda has had to interchange and inter-relate to exist

without losing its fundamental identity. Some monks wear Mahāyāna clothes, but in reality they are Theravāda monks and vice versa.

Either at Buddhist conferences or at Buddhist schools or at *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremonies or in offering rites held at Theravāda as well as Mahāyāna Buddhist temples in over Vietnam we can see the presence of monks of the two great schools sitting together. The mutual exchanges and sharing show us the close relationship, combination, and sympathy of the two traditions aiming at the same goal: for the sake of the existence and development of Buddhism. Therefore, this is a distinguished characteristic of Vietnamese Buddhism in general and Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism which cannot be found in other Buddhist countries.

Nowadays, Theravāda superior monks have the tendency of Vietizing the Pāli language by translating Buddhist scriptures into Vietnamese to be able to propagate Theravāda Buddhist teachings to its followers as much as possible. Moreover, the Saṅgha is also trying its best to widen its activities to the North of Vietnam. Many efforts were made to propagate the Theravāda Buddhist teachings to this area but no successful results have been seen up to now, because Mahāyāna Buddhism is too deeply rooted in Northern culture. The acceptance of the Theravāda way of thinking, its mode of practice as well as the Pāli language is a difficulty that the Saṅgha has to face to when doing that. This is also the reason why the Theravāda Buddhism could not develop in Northern Vietnam with the reality that no Theravāda temples as well as monks can be seen in this region. However, the interchange of Buddhist studies of the North and the South has been widely made from the day of our nation's liberation and the movement of studying the Theravāda Buddhist teachings as well as Pāli language is increasing more and more both in the world and in Vietnam; then, I hope that this is a good chance for the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha to perform its above-mentioned sacred mission in a near future.

Note:

1. Mật Thế: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Lược* (越南佛教史略, *A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa Huế (Thuan Hoa Publishing House), reprint, 1996.
2. Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận* (越南佛教史論, *A Commentary Book on the History of Vietnamese Buddhism*). 3 vols., Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa Hà Nội (Hanoi Literary Publishing House), 1992 (Vol. I, II), 1994 (Vol. III).
3. Nguyễn Đăng Thục: *Thiền Học Việt Nam* (禪學越南, *Vietnam's Ch'an Buddhism*). Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa Huế (Thuan Hoa Publishing House), reprint, 1996.
4. Lê Mạnh Thát: *Sơ Thảo Lịch Sử Phật Giáo Việt Nam* (初草歷史佛教越南, *A Beginning Draft on the History of Vietnamese Buddhism*), Vol. II, Roneo, 1979.
5. According to the legends recorded in the *Dīpavaṃsa* VIII, *Mahāvamsa* XII, *Samantapāsādikā*, Introduction p. 61 f., the Third Council was held in Pāṭaliputta under the patronage of King Asoka and at that time, in order to propagate the Buddha's Teachings, Ven. Moggaliputtatissa dispatched a group of clever bhikkhus to remote regions. The dispatched regions and names of bhikkhus are listed as following:
 - a. [Kasmīra], Gandhāra : Majjhantika
 - b. Mahisamaṇḍala : Mahādeva
 - c. Vanavāsa : Rakkhita
 - d. Aparantaka : Yona, Dhammarakkhita
 - e. Yonaloka [or Yonavisaya] : Mahārakkhita
 - f. Himavantapadesa : Majjhima and another four persons
 - g. Suvāṇṇabhūmi : Sona and Uttara
 - h. Laṅkādīpa : Mahinda and another five persons(See Egaku Mayeda: *Genshi bukkyo seiten no seiritsu shi kenkyu* [原始佛教聖典の成立史研究, *A History of the Formation of Original Buddhist Texts*]. Sankibobusshorin Publishing Co. Ltd., Tokyo Japan, 1964, pp. 141, 142).
6. “Cách thủy hữu Nê Lê thành ngôn A Dục Vương sở trúc giả (隔水有泥黎城言阿育王所築者)”. (*Tu Tuong Magazine 8 & 9*, Viện Đại Học Vạn Hạnh (Van Hanh University), 1973, p. 202)

7. See Ernest J. Eitel: *A Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary. With Vocabularies of Buddhist Terms in Pali, Singhalese, Siam, Burmese, Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian and Japanese.* Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1981, p. 105.
8. This mountain range is situated in the North of Vĩnh Yên Province, North Vietnam.
9. *Tu Tuong Magazine 8&9*, Viện Đại Học Vạn Hạnh (Van Hanh University), 1973, p. 197.
10. See Thích Đức Nghiệp: *Đạo Phật Việt Nam (Vietnamese Buddhism)*. Thành Hội Phật Giáo Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City), 1995, p. 30. The rest of the poem is 樵子倚柯眠石磴、牧兒驅犢下山隈、登鷹欲會山僧講、何處鍾樓扣一回。
11. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
12. Jean Filliozat: *Présence du Bouddhisme*, p. 371.
13. Tỳ Kheo Thiện Minh: *Lịch Sử Phật Giáo Nam Tông Việt Nam (History of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism)*. Ronéo thesis, 1997, pp. 36, 37.
14. Kỳ Viên temple, whose present abbot is bhikkhu Tăng Định (*Jhāyino*, 僧定), is located at 610 Nguyễn Đình Chiểu (formerly Phan Đình Phùng) Street, Ward 3, District 3, Hochiminh (formerly Saigon) city and now is considered as the central headquarters of Vietnam Theravāda Buddhism. Phúc Tuệ Tịnh Môn is located at 491/12 Phan Đình Phùng Street, Saigon city.
15. See Tỳ Kheo Thiện Minh: *Lịch Sử Phật Giáo Nam Tông Việt Nam (History of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism)*, pp. 44-46.
16. Seven members of the temporary board of management are listed as follows:
 - Monk Supervisor: Bhikkhu Bửu Chơn,
 - First Vice-Supervisor: Bhikkhu Thiện Luật,
 - Second Vice-Supervisor: Bhikkhu Hộ Tông,
 - General Secretary: Bhikkhu Kim Quang,
 - Vice-Secretary: Bhikkhu Giới Nghiêm,
 - Adviser 1: Bhikkhu Tối Thắng,
 - Adviser 2: Bhikkhu Giác Quang.
17. See Tỳ Kheo Thiện Minh: *Lịch Sử Phật Giáo Nam Tông Việt Nam (History of*

- Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhism*), pp. 50-52.
18. Ibid., pp. 56~60.
 19. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kỷ yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Lần Thứ IV (Bulletin of the Fourth Conference of All-nation Buddhist Representatives)*. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing House, 1999, pp. 14, 15.
 20. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, p. 169 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).
 21. Ibid, p. 139.
 22. Ibid., pp. 139, 140.
 23. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt (Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines)*, composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, pp. 15-26.
 24. The word “*ukāsa*” as seen in this book cannot be found in the Pāli dictionaries such as the *Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary* (Edited by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, published by the Pali Text Society, London, 1986), the *Paligo jiten* (Edited by Mizuho Kogen, published by the Shunshusha, first publication: 1968, second publication: 1995. [水野弘元、『パーリ語辞典』、春秋社]). I think this is a misprinting of the word *ukkāsa*, which is the aorist form of the verb *ukkāsati* meaning “*to abem*”, an indication of a voice made when clearing the throat, especially to get somebody’s attention. (*Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary*, p. 125).
 25. *Visuddhi-magga*, PTS. 1975, pp. 30, 31.
 26. See the *Daily Life of Sāmaṇera* in Chapter II: *Monks—Life and Activities*.
 27. *Vinaya Piṭakam* Vol. IV, pp. 185-206
 28. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, pp. 167, 168 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).
 29. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt (Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines)*, composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist

Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, p. 41.

30. Ibid. p. 168.

31. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, pp. 39, 40.

32. *Visuddhi-magga*, PTS. 1975, pp. 30, 31.

33. Ibid., pp. 31-33.

34. Ibid., p. 34.

35. Ibid., pp. 34, 35.

36. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, pp. 27-37.

37. Mahāvagga I, PTS, 76, 1.

38. Ibid., 76, 8.

39. Ibid., 76, 8.

40. Ibid., 76, 9.

41. Ibid., 76, 12.

42. At present, there are 3 Institutes of Buddhist Studies in three main areas of Vietnam, one in Hanoi City (North), one in Hue City (Central) and one in Hochiminh City (South). In Central and Southern Buddhist Institutes there is the presence of Theravāda students, but in Northern Institute no Theravāda students are seen. The reason is that there are no Theravāda temples or monks in Northern Vietnam.

43. Based on the most recent study course of the Vietnam Buddhist Institute. Also see Report of Research Results: *A Synthetic Study Relating to Southern Theravāda Buddhism's Development and Mutual Interchange* by Egaku Mayeda. Arumu Publishing Co., 1994, pp. 7, 8. (研究成果報告書、総合研究A、代表者：森祖道、『南方上座部仏教の展開と相互交流に関する総合的研究』、平成6年)

44. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn*

- Zuóc Lăn Thũ IV (Bulletin of the Fourth Conference of All-nation Buddhist Representatives)*. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing House, 1999, p. 15.
45. See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 94.
46. See Ñāṇamoli Thera: *The Pāṭimokkha*. The Social Science Association Press of Thailand, Bangkok, 1966, p. 7. Also see Akira Hirakawa: *Nibyaku gojukai no kenkyu (Study of the 250 Precepts)*. Shunshusha, 1993, p. 74. (平川彰、『二百五十戒の研究』、春秋社). And also see Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, pp. 96~101.
47. For more informations about the confession passages, see Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, pp. 171, 172 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館). Also see the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt (Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines)*, composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, pp. 264~266.
48. See Mahāvagga II, 2, 3.
49. See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 106.
50. Ibid., p. 106.
51. See Mahāvagga II, 15, 1.
52. Based on my recent field works on February 16th, 1999.
53. See Mahāvagga III, 2, 2.
54. See T. W. Rhys Davids & William Stede: *Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*, P.T.S., London, 1986, p. 115. Also see Mizuho Kogen: *Paligo jiten*. Shunshusha, first publication: 1968, second publication: 1995, p. 55. (水野弘元、『パーリ語辞典』、春秋社)
55. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ (覺悟, Enlightenment)* No. 174 (July 31th, 1999), p. 10. Ibid., No. 182 (September 25th, 1999), p. 7.

56. This temple, located at 160, Nguyễn Đình Chiểu Street, District 3, Hochiminh City, is one of the first Vietnamese Theravāda ones. Most Theravāda superior monks such as Most Venerables Hộ Tông (護宗), Thiện Luật (善律), Bửu Chơn (寶眞), Giới Nghiêm (戒嚴), etc., have resided here.
57. This temple is located at 2, Thiên Hộ Dương Street, Gò Vấp District, Hochiminh City.
58. This temple is located at District 9, Hochiminh City.
59. This temple is located at Tân Cang Hamlet, Phước Tân Commune, Đồng Nai Province, Southern Vietnam.
60. Based on the report on the summer retreat of Theravāda Buddhists in 1999 recorded in the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ* (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 182 (September 25th, 1999), p. 7.
61. See Mahāvagga III, 4, 1.
62. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, p. 271. Also see Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, pp. 86, 87. And also see Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, p. 174 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).
- In the case of those who are setting out on tours and cannot manage to return their temple when the day of the summer retreat came around, they can enter the vassa at that place by making their minds firm, then thinking or saying that: “*Idha vassam upemi.*” (“*I enter upon thee rains here.*”) (See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 88.)
63. See Mahāvagga III, 5, 4.
64. See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 90.

65. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, p. 272.
66. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ* (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 182 (September 25th, 1999), p. 7.
67. *Anujānāmi bhikkhave vassaṃ vutthūnaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ tīhi tḥānehi pavāretuṃ dīttbena vā sutena vā parisaṅkāya vā. Sā vo bhavissati aññamaññānulomatā āpattivutthānatā vinayapurekkhāratā.* (I allow, monks, monks who have kept the rains to ‘invite’ in regard to three matters: what has been seen or heard or suspected. That will be what is suitable for you in regard to one another, a removal of offences, an aiming at [grasping] the discipline.) (Mahāvagga IV, 1, 13)
68. See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 117.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
70. See Mahāvagga IV, 1, 14. Also see The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, p. 275.
71. See Mahāvagga IV, 1, 14. Also see The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Theravāda Buddhism: *Luật Xuất Gia Tóm Tắt* (*Pabbajita Vinaya Saṅkhepa, A Summarization of Forth-Going Disciplines*), composed by Vaṅsarakkhita Bhikkhu. Published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh City, 1993, pp. 275, 276.
72. In reply to the request of Māra, the Buddha spoke thus: “Trouble not thyself, O Evil One ! In no long time shall be the utter passing away of the Way-farer. At the end of three months from now the Way-farer shall pass utterly away.” (*“Apposukko tvaṃ pāpima bohi. Na ciraṃ tathāgatassa parinibbānaṃ bhavissati, ito tiṇṇaṃ mānāsaṃ accayena tathāgato parinibbāyissatī ‘ti.”* [Udāna, *Jaccandhavaggo*, p. 64.])

73. See Vietnam Airline Inflight Magazine: *HERITAGE*, No. 34, January/ February 1999, p. 24.
74. Ibid., pp. 49-51.
75. Based on my recent field works on February 16th, 1999.
76. The pink rose is a symbol of the fortune for those who have the existence of their parents in this world and the white rose as a symbol of misfortune for those who lost their parents. Besides at present there appears a kind of yellow rose which is utilised for fixing to monks and nuns representing a respect of the laity to their own masters on this day.
77. The Vietnamese version is as following:
- Ca sa oai đức chi bằng,
 Sắc vàng thanh bạch của hàng Sa môn.
 Noi gương Từ Phụ Thế Tôn,
 Hoàng khai giáo pháp tám muôn bốn ngàn.
 Ngày nay thiện tín các hàng,
 Ca sa đại lễ nghiêm trang cử hàng.
 Dâng y với tấm lòng thành,
 Ba vòng nhiều Phật đồng thanh nguyện cầu.
 Chư Tăng hoan hỷ lãnh châu,
 Căn lành gieo giống để hầu mai sau.
 Nguyên mau thoát khỏi trần lao,
 Tu hành tinh tiến tiêu dao đạo màu.
 Chúc cho Phật Pháp bền lâu,
 Thấm nhuần trăm họ năm châu thịnh hành.
 Chúc cho cả thầy chúng sanh,
 Hồi đầu hướng thiện tâm thành quy y.
 Làn theo gương đáng Từ Bi,
 Xuất gia hành đạo mang y ngồi kê.
- This version is learnt by heart by the followers and utilised in annual Kathina-offering festivals.
- (See Bửu Chơn: *Lễ Dâng Y Kathina (Kathina-Offering Festival)*, 1971, p. 12).

78. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, p. 176 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).
79. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1998.
80. Translated by Hộ Tông (*Vamsarakkhita*, 護宗), published by the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association, 1992.
81. Composed by the Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist Saṅgha, published by the Vô Ưu Publishing Houses, first revised edition: 1985, second revised edition: 1996.
82. This book belongs to the material of inner circulation, having no date of publication.
83. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kinh tụng (Recital Scriptures)*. Translated by Hộ Tông (*Vamsarakkhita*, 護宗), published by the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association, 1992, pp. 50-74, 89-110. Also see Theravāda: *Kinh Nhật tụng Của Cư Sĩ (Daily Recitation Scriptures for the Laity)*. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1998, pp. 189-220.
84. See the part of scriptures recited for praying safety and peace (求安) in the *Kinh tụng (Recital Scriptures)*, pp. 50-74; and in the *Kinh Nhật tụng Của Cư Sĩ (Daily Recitation Scriptures for the Laity)*, pp. 189-220.
85. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, pp. 181, 182 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).
86. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kinh tụng (Recital Scriptures)*. Translated by Hộ Tông (*Vamsarakkhita*, 護宗), published by the Hochiminh City Municipal Buddhist Association, 1992, pp. 112-133.
87. Ibid. pp. 3-22.
88. See Theravāda: *Kinh Nhật tụng Của Cư Sĩ (Daily Recitation Scriptures for the Laity)*. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1998, pp. 185-314.
89. Ibid., pp. 325-365.
90. Ibid. pp. 220-236.
91. See Masataka Ikeda: *Biruma bukkyo (Burmese Buddhism)*. Hozokan, 1995, p. 182 (池田正隆、『ビルマ佛教』、法藏館).

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February 15th, 2000

Chapter V

The Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect

A. Its origin

I. An overview of this Sect

Along with the existence of the two saṅghas of Mahāyāna and Theravāda throughout Vietnam, there is also the appearance of another Saṅgha often called Khất Sĩ (乞士, Mendicant), which belongs to the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha. This is a Buddhist Sect which deeply has the color of Vietnam, and embodies a skillful combination between the two great Buddhist traditions, Mahāyāna and Theravāda, with its particular way of practice and ideology.

Founded by Master Minh Đăng Quang (明燈光, 1930-?) in 1944, it is considered as the newest and youngest Buddhist sect in Vietnam, but up to now the number of its Tịnh Xás (vihāra) as well as monks and nuns is rather considerable. Based on the most recent report of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the number of monks and nuns of this sect is 1,879 including *điêus* (beginning probationers), *sāmaṇerīs* (沙彌尼, woman novice), *sikkhamānās* (式叉摩那, young women undergoing a probationary course of training in order to become nuns) and *bhikkhus* (比丘) and *bhikkhunīs* (比丘尼); and the number of its Tịnh Xás amounts to 516.⁽¹⁾ If we make a comparison with the number of monks and nuns of these two older sects, Mahāyāna (19,221) and Theravāda (7,687), and then their number of temples, Mahāyāna (14,048) and Theravāda (469),⁽²⁾ we can see that although the Khất Sĩ Sect was recently established, it has gained a firm position in the community of Vietnamese Buddhism. Especially the area of activities of this sect is mainly in the South of Vietnam, the land which gave birth to its founder.

Though the difficulty due to the lack of materials written about this sect is inevitable, in this chapter I will refer to the biography of its founder and focus a

real living picture about the their mode of practice, daily life, ways of livings as well as activities which the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect have been making contribution to the Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha and its followers nowadays. Furthermore, by this way, I also try to discuss the reason why this sect has attained the popularity particularly in the South of Vietnam, but not in the Central as well as in the North of Vietnam.

II. Master Minh Đăng Quang (明燈光)—Its Founder

In order to understand clearly and fully the way of practice of monks and nuns of this sect, first of all I think, it is necessary to make a reference to the biography of its founder as well as his activities during his lifetime.

His biography was recorded as followings:

“Master Minh Đăng Quang (明燈光, 1930-?), his worldly name as Nguyễn Thành Đạt and his personal name as Lý Hườn, was born in 1923 at Phú Hậu Village, Tam Bình District, Vĩnh Long Province (present Cửu Long), Southern Vietnam. His father’s name is Nguyễn Tồn Hiếu and his mother’s name is Phạm Thị Nhân. Of his five brothers and sisters, he was the youngest brother. His mother died ten months after his birth and then he lived with a foster mother.

As a child he had an extraordinary intelligence superior than his contemporaries, therefore he gained more love from his father and neighboring people. He loved to study materials concerning Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. At the age of 15, he left Vietnam for Campuchia without the permission of his father. At the beginning he met a Vietnamese monk living there, who was well-known for his morality and practice, and asked the monk for cultivation. After four years of studying Buddhist scriptures and practicing along with the traditional way of Buddhist path, he asked his master for permission to return to Vietnam in order to propagate the teachings.

However, when he came back Vietnam, he had to get married to a woman named Kim Hue in response to his father’s request and to fulfil his filial duty. One year later after his wife’s death, he wandered some places like Thất Sơn (Seven Mountains), Hà Tiên and then Phú Quốc, etc, practicing meditation and going for alms. His first dhamma talk as “Prajña

Boat” was delivered at Linh Bửu Temple, Mỹ Tho Province. He insisted on going for alms to “follow the True Dhamma of Sakyamuni Buddha”.

On February 1st, 1954, on the way to Vĩnh Long Province, he was kidnapped midway and was missing from that date up to now. Today, in memory of the founder of this sect, his followers always take his date of being kidnapped to be the date of his absence.

*During ten years of propagating his teachings, he ordained more than 100 monks and nuns, more than 10,000 Buddhist laity and founded about 20 Tịnh Xás (vihāras) in Eastern provinces and Cửu Long Delta of Southern Vietnam. He left for the later generation two precious books named *Chân Lý* (眞理, The Truth) and *Bồ Tát Giáo* (菩薩教, The Bodhisattva’s Teachings).⁽³⁾*

III. Remarks

Thus through his biography, we can see that first Master Minh Đăng Quang followed, to practice as a probationer with a Vietnamese monk living in Campuchia at that time. The materials written about him haven’t referred to which Buddhist sect the monk belonged to, but there are two pieces of informations which enable us to deduce that the master of Minh Đăng Quang must have been a Theravāda monk.

Firstly, the master lived in Campuchia, a Buddhist country where Theravāda Buddhism is considered as national religion.

Secondly, Master Minh Đăng Quang’s insistence was going for alms, which also is the unchangeable tradition of Theravāda Buddhism.

Then during the time of practice with his master in Campuchia, Minh Đăng Quang has deeply imbued the tradition of Theravāda Buddhism, and more or less, he went for alms there. Thus we can come to a conclusion that Minh Đăng Quang’s master was a Theravāda monk and the Buddhist teachings that Master Minh Đăng Quang followed at the beginning were the Theravāda ones.

However, when he returned to Vietnam, he didn’t follow completely the Theravāda way of practice or way of living; although at that time the Theravāda Buddhism came into existence in Vietnam.⁽⁴⁾ He may also have studied the

Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings during the period of wandering to such places as Thất Sơn (Seven Mountains), Hà Tiên, Phú Quốc, etc. About this matter, I will discuss later in the part of daily life of monks and nuns of this sect.

In reality, the founder of this sect followed completely the ways of living of neither Mahāyāna nor Theravāda, but he synthesized them skillfully and gave birth a new sect, Khất Sĩ (Mendicant), with its particular characteristics.

B. Some outstanding characteristics

Before referring to the way of practice as well as daily life of its monks and nuns, it is unavoidable, in my opinion, to discuss about some outstanding and particular characteristics which enable us to recognize that this sect is a little different from the two other sects, Mahāyāna and Theravāda.

I. Its teachings—A synthetic harmony between Mahāyāna and Theravāda teachings

To understand this matter, one must depend on the work *Chân Lý* (眞理, *The Truth*),⁽⁵⁾ which he left for the later generations of his followers and is considered as an important scripture of this sect, and furthermore, *Nghi Thức tụng Niệm* (*Rituals for Recital and Chanting*),⁽⁶⁾ an important scripture for daily recitation of monks and nuns of this sect.

1. The case of the *Chân Lý* (眞理, *The Truth*)

Based on this book, the Buddhist teachings of both Mahāyāna and Theravāda can be seen as being mixed together. Then here I will introduce shortly some parts in the content of this book relating to basic Buddhist teachings:

- 1.1. World view: the formation of the earth, its shape, its light, the evolution of mankind on the earth, what happen will after its destruction,

the sentient beings in the universe, the self in the universe.

- 1.2. The *Five Aggregates* (*pañcakhandha*, 五蘊): a discussion of five components of an intelligent being, especially a human being, viz. form (*rūpa*, 色), feeling (*vedanā*, 受), conception (*saññā*, 想), volitional impulses (*saṅkhāra*, 行) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*, 識); the relationship between the *Five Aggregates* and the *Five Realms* (*pañcagati*, 五道), viz. hells, hungry ghost, animals, human beings and devas; the freedom from the *Five Aggregates*.
- 1.3. The *Six Sense-Organs* (*cha-indriya*, 六根): a reference of the cause of giving birth these-organs, viz. eye (*cakkhu*, 眼), ear (*sota*, 耳), nose (*ghāṇa*, 鼻), tongue (*jivhā*, 舌), body (*kāya*, 身) and mind (*manas*, 意), their purification.
- 1.4. The *Twelve Relational Conditions* (*dvādasāṅga-paṭiccasamuppāda*, 十二因緣): a discussion of how these linked factors in the chain of existence, which include ignorance (*avijjā*, 無明), volitional impulses (*saṅkhāra*, 行), consciousness (*viññāṇa*, 識), name-and-shape (*nāmarūpa*, 名色), sixfold sense (*saḷāyatana*, 六入), feeling (*vedanā*, 受), craving (*tanhā*, 愛), grasping (*upādāna*, 取), becoming (*bhava*, 有), birth (*jāti*, 生) and old age and dying (*jarāmaraṇa*, 老死), rule the world and sentient beings; the classification of these relational conditions as seen in human beings.
- 1.5. The *Eightfold Noble Truth* (*ariyāṭṭhaṅgika-magga*, 有八正道): a reference to eight right paths leading the practitioners to nibbāna, viz. right view (*sammāditṭhi*, 正見), right thought (*sammāsaṅkappa*, 正思惟), right speech (*sammāvāca*, 正語), right action (*sammākammanta*, 正業), right living (*sammājīva*, 正命), right effort (*sammāvāyāma*, 正精進), right mindfulness (*sammāsati*, 正念) and right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*, 正定); the conditions relating to these eight truths.
- 1.6. Existence and non-existence: the rule of the eternal law of existence and non-existence in this world.
- 1.7. Birth and death: the concept of birth and death in Buddhist point of view.

- 1.8. *Sammāsambodhi* (正等覺, supreme Buddhahood): its definition, meaning and role in mind cultivation.
- 1.9. The mendicant: its definition and meaning.
- 1.10. Bowls (*patta*, 鉢) and robes (*cīvara*, 衣)—true handing down: their explanations and role for the practitioners.
- 1.11. Taking vegetarian diet: its definition, meaning and usefulness in the process of mind-cultivation.
- 1.12. Entering meditation: its meaning and role in mind-cultivation.
- 1.13. Lessons for the laity: including gāthās utilised for daily recitation for the laity.
- 1.14. Mind (*citta*, 心): an explanation of the meaning of mind, both secular and Buddhist.
- 1.15. True enlightenment (*sammāsambodhi*, 正等覺): a reference of the *Four Things of Reliance* (*cattāro nissayā*, 四依法), viz. reliance on coarse robe (依糞掃衣), reliance on going for alms (依乞食), reliance on sitting under tree (依樹下坐) and reliance on rotten medicines (依腐爛藥); the *Four Excessive Things*, viz. refraining from eating, nakedness, staying in sunlight and rain in open place, and not taking medicines while being ill; and *Four Things*, viz. taking too much meals and dishes, wearing clothes and dressing up, living in luxurious habitation, and storing many medicines to nourish body.
- 1.16. The three religions—Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism: a reference to the relationships among three great religions.
- 1.17. Going forth to homelessness: its meaning and role.
- 1.18. The Mahāyāna Buddhism: its discussion.
- 1.19. Heaven: its explanation.
- 1.20. The Buddhahood
- 1.21. Cultivation and kamma (業, action): a reference to the meaning and role of cultivation in the freedom from the bondage of kamma.
- 1.22. Immesurable sweet dew (*amata*, 甘露): a reference to the *Amitābha Buddha* and his *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvatī*, 極樂).

- 1.23. *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva* (觀世音菩薩)
- 1.24. *Mahāmoggallāna* (大目犍連)
- 1.25. *Kṣītigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩)
- 1.26. Contemplation of counting in-and-out breath (數息觀)
- 1.27. The Khất Sĩ Buddhism

2. The case of the *Nghi Thức Trung Niệm* (Rituals for Recital and Chanting)

This book contains rites and sūtras for daily recitation of this sect. Its contents consists of:

- 2.1. Offering rite
- 2.2. Chanting scripture for nine generations of parents
- 2.3. Rite for chanting
- 2.4. Rite for confession
- 2.5. Transferring merit
- 2.6. Chanting rite for praying for peace and safety
- 2.7. The *Universal Gate Sūtra* (普門經)
- 2.8. Chanting rite for the dead
- 2.9. The *Ullambana-sūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*)
- 2.10. *The Sūtra of Parents' Heavy Grace* (父母恩重經, *Fu-mu-ên-chung-ching*)
- 2.11. The *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經)
- 2.12. The *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*)
- 2.13. The *Lovingkindness Discourse* (*Metta-sutta*)
- 2.14. The *Selflessness Discourse* (*Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta*)
- 2.15. Chanting gāthās

Thus apart from some Theravāda scriptures such as the *Lovingkindness Discourse* (*Metta-sutta*), the *Selflessness Discourse* (*Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta*), etc., there appeared some Mahāyāna scriptures such as the *Universal Gate Sūtra* (普門經), the

Ullambana-sūtra (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*), the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經) and the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) in this book.

3. Remarks

Through the above-listed contents from these two books, we can make such remarks as following:

Most teachings such as the *Five Aggregates* (*pañcakhandha*, 五蘊), the *Six Sense-Organs* (*cha-indriya*, 六根), the *Twelve Relational Conditions* (*dvādasāṅga-ṣaṭṭiccasamuppāda*, 十二因緣), the *Eightfold Noble Truth* (*ariyāttḥaṅgika-magga*, 聖八正道), existence and non-existence, birth and death, mind (*citta*, 心), kamma (業, action), contemplation of counting in-and-out breath (數息觀), etc., in the two above-mentioned books are very basic teachings which can be found in both Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism. And the appearance of the above-listed scriptures proves a synthetic mixture and borrowings from both great schools.

However, concepts concerning the taking vegetarian diet, the Buddhahood, the Mahāyāna Buddhism, *Amitābha Buddha* and his *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvātī*, 極樂), *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva* (觀世音菩薩) and *Kṣītigarbha Bodhisattva* (地藏菩薩) are Mahāyāna teachings.

Moreover, scriptures such as the *Universal Gate Sūtra* (普門經), the *Ullambana-sūtra* (盂蘭盆經, *Yü-lan-pên-ching*), the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經) and the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) can only be found in the Treasure of Mahāyāna Holy Scriptures. Through that a conclusion can be reached out that it is unavoidable that during his lifetime Minh Đãng Quang had studied and deeply imbued these teachings.

This proves that he had skillfully combined the teachings of two great schools, Mahāyāna and Theravāda, to create a new sect for his own with his way of practice and living rather particularly, which his followers, both monks and nuns have succeeded and are practicing nowadays.

II. Vietization and poetization of scriptures

Why do I raise this matter ? The reason is most scriptures utilised by monks and nuns of the Khất Sĩ (乞士, Mendicant) Sect, as seen through some books such as *Chơn Lý* (眞理, *The Truth*), *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*),⁽⁷⁾ *Tứ Kệ Tinh Tâm* (*Fourfold Gāthā for Mind Purification*),⁽⁸⁾ *Nghi Thức Tụng Niệm* (*Rituals for Recital and Chanting*), etc., are Vietized skillfully and is easy to understand their meanings. Furthermore, if we make a comparison of these scriptures with the ones utilised by Vietnamese monks and nuns of Mahāyāna and Theravāda, some differences can be found.

1. Some examples

In order to understand the matter, I will cite some examples relating to scriptures for daily recitation.

As mentioned above, the holy book utilised for daily recitation of monks and nuns of this sect is *Nghi Thức Tụng Niệm* (*Rituals for Recital and Chanting*), which has the same title as with the one of Mahāyāna. All chanting scriptures as well as gāthā in this book are transferred into poems in the Vietnamese way, that is to say, the form of lục bát (六八, a poem with many sentences in which there are always two sentences applied according to the rule that the first contains 6 words and the second 8 words) and song thất lục bát (雙七六八, a poem with many sentences in which there are always four sentences applied according to the rule that the first and the second are 7 words, the third 6 words and the fourth 8 words), or thất ngôn tứ tuyệt (七言四絶, a poem with only four sentences each of which contains 7 words) of the Tang poems (唐詩).

For example, the *gāthā* of paying worship to the Buddha reads:

“Kính lạy Phật Từ Bi cứu thế
Đem đạo lành phổ tế chúng sanh
Trần gian biết nẻo tu hành

Nhờ đèn trí huệ quang minh soi đường.”⁽⁹⁾

*(“I pay worship to the Buddha of lovingkindness who saves the world,
And brings good teachings to universally ferry the sentient beings,
So the world knows how to practice
Thanks to the light of his lamp of wisdom to light the path.”)*

Thus this *gāthā* is written according to the form of song thất lục bát (雙七六八), one of popular poetic forms of which can be seen in the field of Vietnamese poetry.

Or some initial lines of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) as are following:

“Khi hành Bát Nhã Ba La
Ngài Quán Tự Tại soi ra tột cùng
Thấy ra năm uẩn đều không
Bao nhiêu khổ ách khốn cùng độ qua...”⁽¹⁰⁾
*(“While practicing the prajñāpāramitā
The Avalokiteśvara enlightens to the end
And sees that the Five Aggregates are empty
Then all sufferings and difficulties are overcome...”)*

As seen in this book, the whole *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (般若心經, *Heart Sūtra*) are interpreted into Vietnamese in the poetic form of lục bát (六八) in such a way. While the origin of these above verses in Chinese is as following:

“觀自在菩薩行深般若波羅蜜時、照見五蘊皆空、度一切苦厄...”
(“The Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara while moving in the deep course of Perfect Understanding, shed light on the Five Aggregates and found them empty. After this penetration, he overcame all pain...”)

And the case of the *Lovingkindness Discourse* (*Metta-sutta*) is poetized similarly:

“Người khôn có đủ đức tài
Hằng tìm lợi ích tương lai cho mình
Dọn lòng an tịnh thanh bình
Tiến vào Cực Lạc vô sinh Niết Bàn...”⁽¹¹⁾
*(“The intelligent who has enough virtue and talent
Always looks for future benefit for himself
By purifying his mind as peacefully and calmly
To attain the Highest Joy of the unborn Nibbāna.”)*

While the Pāli original source of these verses recorded in the *Khuddaka-Pāṭha* reads as following:

“Karaṇīyam atthakusalena
yaṃ taṃ santaṃ padaṃ abhisamecca
sakko ujū ca sūjū ca
suvaco c’ assa mudu anatimānī.”⁽¹²⁾
*(“What should be done by one with skill in good
The State of Peace to have attained is this
He would be able, right, upright,
And meek and gentle and not proud.”)*⁽¹³⁾

2. Some remarks

Through these above examples we can see that the insistence of Vietization as well as poetization of the founder of this sect is a creation to make the Buddhist teachings easy to understand and memorize. Although by comparison of the above-mentioned verses with their original sources, there may be some differences in meanings in but generally the contents are the same.

This is not a way of translation of scriptures as well as *gāthās* from Chinese or Pāli languages into Vietnamese, but a way of summing up their contents and then

illustrating them in a poetic form so that the practitioners enable to understand and memorize easily. This form is not only popularized in the Khất Sĩ Sect, but can be seen everywhere in the *Kinh Nhật tụng* (*Scripture for Daily Recitation*)⁽¹⁴⁾ applied for the Theravāda laity. This gives us the information that it is possible that the Khất Sĩ Sect has had some borrowings from the Theravāda School. Because as I have mentioned above, in reality, the latter came into existence in Vietnam earlier than the former.

However the distinguished difference I want to refer to here is that the scriptures as listed above are translated and recited only in Vietnamese. Meanwhile, the Theravāda monks and nuns still keep the tradition of reciting in Pāli, naturally, although they sometimes recite in Vietnamese. As for the Theravāda laity, of course, recites in Vietnamese, but Pāli passages remain along with their Vietnamese translation as seen everywhere in the *Kinh Nhật tụng* (*Scripture for Daily Recitation*) which is utilised by them.

The case of Mahāyāna School is rather the same. Most Mahāyāna scriptures were translated into Vietnamese, but its monks and nuns continue to keep the tradition of reciting Chinese scriptures in the Vietnamese way of pronunciation, but not with translation.

It is this outstanding characteristic, that is to say, the Vietization and poetization of scriptures of the Khất Sĩ Sect, gained the sympathy and belief of the people in the South of Vietnam, especially the West Region including Eastern provinces and Cửu Long Plateau of Southern Vietnam. The evidence proves that at the time of establishment of the sect, from 1944 to 1954, there appeared 20 temples with more than 100 monks and nuns and thousands of laity followers.⁽¹⁵⁾ And then up to now the number of its monks and nuns amounts to as many as 1,879 and its Tịnh Xás (vihāras) 516.⁽¹⁶⁾

III. Its robes (*cīvara*, 衣) and bowl (*patta*, 鉢)

1. One set consisting of three parts of robe (*tecīvara*, 三衣)

Apart from the two above-mentioned features, viz. the synthetic harmony of the teachings of the two great traditions, Mahāyāna and Theravāda, and the Vietization of scriptures through the poetic form, another distinguished characteristic of this sect is its robes which often called mended ones.

The same with Theravāda monks who always utilise one set consisting of three parts of robe (*tecīvara*, 三衣), monks and nuns of the Khất Sĩ Sect also have the same number of robes, viz. the one-upper hundred-pieced robe (百衲衣), the middle robe (中衣) and lower robe (下衣).

The *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*) explains how to make each robe and their sizes as following:

a. The upper hundred-pieced robe (百衲衣):

“It must be mended by old or scattered cloths. It must not sewn from scattered fragments of cloth which has image of flowers with the abundance of multi-colors. It should be sewn from fragments whose color is white, yellow or rather pale so that after having been made, it is dyed to become the dark yellow. These following things are prohibited from use: silk, wool, skins of living creatures and colors such as black, green, purple, red, etc.

The length of this robe is 2.70m, horizontal 1.80m and is wrapped when putting it on. For the case of sāmaṇera, the upper robe is simply a piece of cloth, that is, not having been mended by so many fragments like the one of the bhikkhu.

This upper robe should be worn only one and every year will be changed once on the lunar day of July, 15th. Those who want to keep the old ones during their lifetime can.”⁽¹⁷⁾

b. The middle robe (中衣):

“This robe, whose length is 2m and horizontal 0,70m, is made without folds and is fixed by a knot at each hip. Dyed with the same color of the upper robe and also washed the same time with the two other robes, it is worn with one’s right shoulder open. It is permissible that the color of this robe is either dark yellow or a little paler than those of the upper and lower robes.

This robe is also changed once a year on the lunar day of July, 15th and one can keep an old one to alternate with the other. One should put the old one on the new one so that it can be seen to be the same color as the upper robe. Or one can keep wearing the old one so long as it gets worn and then changed for the new one. It is the best for those who can wear only one middle robe.

As for nuns, they can keep for them two sets of robes for body protection and a small bag whose length is 0,60m and horizontal 0,30m. The length of the middle robe for nuns is 1m and horizontal 0,70m.”⁽¹⁸⁾

c. The lower robe:

“This robe, whose length is regulated as 2m and horizontal 1m, is sewed by combining together its borders so that it can become just 1,2m. Its upper fold is 0,10m and the lower 0,5m. Monk wears it by folding so that the robe can reach to half of his leg. But nun should wear it up to her navel and lengthen to her ankle bone.

This robe is also changed once a year on the lunar day of July, 15th and one can keep an old one to alternate with the other. When going out one should put the old one on over the new one so that it can be seen to be the same color with the upper robe. At night or when sleeping, as well as while working, one should wear the old one. Or for those who want to wear only one middle robe, it is permissible.”⁽¹⁹⁾

d. Remarks:

The upper hundred-pieced robe (百衲上衣), as it is always called by the Khất Sĩs (Mendicants) as *ý thượng bả nạp* in Vietnamese, I think, is the upper robe whose Sankrit and Pāli name is *uttarāsāṅga* (上衣). Normally this robe, also called *Seven-Striped Robe* (七條衣), includes seven stripes each of which has three rectangular squares combined together. But the robe which the Khất Sĩs are wearing nowadays is mended by a great number of fragments without following the rule of seven stripes as explained above.

Here it is necessary to give some more explanations about kinds of Buddhist

robes each of which has the different numbers of stripes. The *Intermediate Garment* or *Robe* (*antaravāsaka*, 內衣 or 下衣) has 5 stripes, while the *Great Robes* (*saṅghātī*, 大衣) include from 9 strips to 25 stripes. Beside these two kinds of robes, there is also another kind of robe named *Formless Robe* (無相衣), which is classified into three kinds: 60 stripes, 250 stripes and 84,000 stripes.⁽²⁰⁾

Thus the upper hundred-pieced robe (百衲上衣) does not belong to any kind of the above-listed robes. This is different from the Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhist robes. However, in reality, this robe utilised by monks of this sect is rather similar with the Theravāda one in appearance. And the nuns' robe is the same with the regulated one, that is to say, made from many fragments. Naturally although it is called hundred-pieced robe, but the number of fragments are more or less than that.

The middle robe, often called in Vietnamese as *y trung vãi nguyên*, is maybe the the *Upper Robe* whose Sankrit and Pāli name is *uttarāsaṅga* (上衣). According to the above regulations, this robe is made from an integral cloth, meaningly, not being combined by fragments which is different from the above-mentioned robe. And because of having no stripes, the method of making it differs from the *uttarāsaṅga* (上衣), which normally includes 7 stripes.⁽²¹⁾

And the lower robe, often called in Vietnamese as *y hạ vãi nguyên*, is maybe the *Intermediate Garment* or *Inner Robe* (*antaravāsaka*, 內衣 or 下衣), but having no stripes.

Moreover, according to the usage of these robes regulated by the Theravāda Buddhists that the *Great Robe* (*saṅghātī*, 大衣) is the robe for wearing in the winter or for putting on the outside, the *Upper Robe* (*uttarāsaṅga*, 上衣) for wearing above and the *Intermediate Garment* or *Inner Robe* (*antaravāsaka*, 內衣 or 下衣) for putting round the lower part of the body;⁽²²⁾ we can see that the way of using these robes of the Khất Sĩ monks and nuns is likened to the Theravāda Buddhists.

2. Bowl (*patta*, 鉢)

Apart from the three robes, the bowl is also considered as an important item for

Buddhist monks and nuns, without which, the monk will not be accepted to participate the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination); and it will be preserved during the monk's lifetime. Monks and nuns of the Khất Sĩ Sect also use the bowl for themselves to go for alms.

The way of making the bowl and things related to it are recorded in the *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*) as following:

“The bowl must be made from the earth, round with its diameter being 6 inches and its mouth is wide and made black-bot. Its light covering lid is made by white aluminum. Then there must be a bag with handle whose horizontal is one inch to cover the bowl. The length of the handle is so long as to one's hip when carrying the bowl. The bag should be dyed the same color with the robe.”⁽²³⁾

C. The periods of development of this sect

From the day of being founded by its founder, Master Minh Đăng Quang (明燈光), up to now, the Khất Sĩ Sect has experienced following periods:

I. The embyo period (1944-1954)

This period is connected with the life and activities of its founder through his propagation of Buddhist teachings as mentioned in his above biography. Throughout 10 years of diligently enlarging his thought and teachings, he ordained more than 100 monks and nuns, more than 10,000 Buddhist laity and founded about 20 Tịnh Xás (vihāras).⁽²⁴⁾

II. The period of development (1954-1964)

After the disappearance of its founder in 1954, five propagating commissions of wandering monks and nuns were established.

1. Commission I: also called the main saṅgha, led by Ven. Giác Chánh (覺正) and late Most Ven. Giác Như (覺如), which succeeded the founder to propagate the teachings in provinces of Southern Delta.

2. Commission II: led by late Most Ven. Giác Tính (覺性) and Ven. Giác Tịnh (覺淨) which was responsible to propagate the teachings in coastal provinces of the Middle Area.

3. Commission III: led by late Most Ven. Giác An (覺安) to propagate the teachings in some coastal and plateau provinces of the Middle Area.

4. Commission IV: led by Ven. Giác Nhiên (覺然) to propagate the teachings in Southern and Eastern provinces as well as the Delta of Cửu Long River (九龍江).

5. Commission V: led by late Most Ven. Giác Lý (覺理) who was responsible to propagate the teachings in some provinces in the Middle Area as well as the Near-Eastern and Southern plateaus.

Each commission developed from 15 to 20 Tịnh Xás (vihāras) and from 50 to 100 monks. Apart from these, some other commissions such as the one of Most Ven. Từ Huệ (慈慧) or the one of Ven. Giác Huệ (覺慧), etc. were established but their scale of activity was more limited than the above five main commissions.

Along with the foundation of monk commissions, the saṅgha of nuns was also established under the leading of two Head Nuns Huỳnh Liên (黃蓮) and Bạch Liên (白蓮) which during this period developed more than 70 Tịnh Xás (vihāras) and more than 500 nuns. At the same time there were another two nun commissions including from 30 to 50 nuns led by Nun Ngân Liên (銀蓮) in Hà Tiên Province and Nun Trí Liên (智蓮) in Tân Hiệp (Mỹ Tho City), which founded about 15 Tịnh Xás (vihāras).

III. Legalised period (1964-1974)

Under the encouragement of monks, nuns and followers of the sect, Most Ven. Giác Nhu (覺柔) and Ven. Giác Tường (覺祥) of the Commission I undertook to be the founding members to establish the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Saṅgha with the all qualifications of juridical persons and lialisation.

In the first week of May, 1966, a first general meeting was summoned to establish the Administration Board of its saṅgha in the first term (1966-1969). Then in 1971, in order to meet the needs of development, the saṅgha founded two departments: Department of Supervision including superior head monks and Department of Propagation including venerables and reverends who have enough ability for spreading the teachings. These two departments existed until the day of unification of our nation, 1975.

During this period, from 100 to 150 Tịnh Xás (vihāras) were founded and from 300 to 500 monks were ordained.

IV. Period of stable settlement and harmony (1975 up to now)

After 1975 monks and nuns of this sect stopped their wandering and lived stably in the Tịnh Xás (vihāras) founded formerly without forgetting their mission of propagation. Especially the spirit of harmony and solidarity has been being strengthened within the saṅgha.⁽²⁵⁾

As mentioned above at present the number of its monks and nuns amounts to as many as 1,879 and its Tịnh Xás (vihāras) as 516.

V. Remarks

Thus through more than 5 decades from the day of its establishment up to 1975, the Khất Sĩ (Mendicant) Sect had overspread its activities through provinces of Southern Vietnam, the Middle Area and especially the West Region, which are considered the main areas of activities of this sect. Through the ardent and restless propagation of above-listed commissions, the number of monks and nuns as well as Tịnh Xás (vihāras) have increased more and more in the course of time.

During this time, its monks and nuns are led their lives by going for alms everyday and wandering everywhere in right accordance with the tradition regulated by its founder as following:

“Everyday we go for alms once to accumulate the merit, guide the sentient beings, pay the Buddhas’ grace and propagate the right dhamma.” ⁽²⁶⁾

Therefore, there was a regulation that *monks must always wander not live more than three months in one Tịnh Xá.* ⁽²⁷⁾ And after that period of time they must leave for another new residence.

However, after 1975 all monks and nuns of this sect settled in formerly-constructed Tịnh Xás (vihāras) and the mode of going for alms was gradually decreased from that time. As a matter of fact, at present, one seldom sees a Khất Sĩ monk or nun going for alms in Vietnam.

As for the way of naming of this sect, through the outstanding activities of above-listed commissions, most of them were named with the first word as Giác (覺), meaning *enlightenment* or *awakening*, like Giác Chánh (覺正), Giác Như (覺如) or Giác Tường (覺祥). The way of naming of the sect’s founder, Master Minh Đăng Quang. That way one can understand that those who bear the dhamma names having first word as Giác (覺) are his disciples.

Up to 1969 a second generation was born with monks bearing the dhamma name having first words as Minh (明), which means *bright* or *clear*.

And then in 1998 the saṅgha agreed to name the dhamma names with the first word as above Minh (明). This regulation is still followed up to now. ⁽²⁸⁾

The nuns of this sect are named their dhamma names with the second words as Liên (蓮), meaning lotus flower, like Bạch Liên (白蓮), Ngân Liên (銀蓮) or Trí Liên (智蓮), etc.

Furthermore, the way of naming vihāras of this sect is also notable characteristic, through which one can recognize the temple is belongs to the Khất Sĩ Sect when being heard its name. Generally most temples of this sect are begun with the word Ngọc (玉, meaningly *jade* or *gem*) plus with some other word. For example, two Khất Sĩ temples in Hue City are the Ngọc Kính (玉敬) and Ngọc Kinh (玉經), or the Ngọc Phương (玉芳) in Hochiminh City is the same case like that, etc. However, there are also some exceptional cases such as the Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心) in Hochiminh City or the Pháp Viện Minh Đăng Quang (法

院明燈光) in Thủ Đức District, etc.

D. Its monks—daily life and activities

To understand more clearly the mode of practice as well as way of living of monks of this sect, first of all, I will introduce the schedule recorded in the *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), its book of disciplines. And through it we can find out some changes while comparing it with the schedule applied for present day.

I. Former schedule

This schedule is called *Niết Bàn Thời Khắc Biểu* (涅槃時刻表) in Vietnamese, meaning *Nibbāna schedule*, that is to say, those who practice it will attain the realm of Nibbāna.

- 5: 00 ~ 6: 00: meditation
- 8: 00 ~ 9: 00: going for alms
- 11: 00 ~ 12: 00: lunch-time
- 15: 00 ~ 16: 00: giving dhamma talks
- 18: 00 ~ 19: 00: meditation
- 24: 00 ~ 1: 00: meditation⁽²⁹⁾

Thus the main goals as seen through this schedule is to practice meditation three times and to go for alms once a day. Apart from these monks of this sect didn't do any thing like labouring for self-sufficiency, but concentrating on meditation practice and giving dhamma talks to their followers.

Each day they only take one meal, at lunchtime after returning from going for alms which is similar to the Theravāda mode of practice. The way to go for alms is recorded as following:

“When going for alms, it is acceptable for 1 or 2 persons to go, except the case of coming to a strange place then the first or second day one can go together with the others so that he can remember the roads. Each person walks with the distance of 2m from each other.

When going to receive boiling rice or to attend the offering rites at the laity’s houses, monks can go together with one straight line with the distance of 2m from each other. Those who are elder in vassa (years of standing) go ahead, and the probationers behind.

If it is the case that the Board of Dhamma-Supporting Laity or many people ask to give offering on any day of the month, the saṅgha, if crowded, should divide into two: half for going for alms and half for staying at the temple to receive the donation.

It is better for everyone to go for alms everyday and for the Board of Dhamma-Supporting Laity only support with some more food.

While going for alms, if those who cannot manage to return due by the lunchtime, must have lunch at deserted places, by the roots of trees, far way from crowded streets or markets.

While going for alms, one must not enter markets or stand at the market corners or hustle at crowded people. One should enter villages or roads which are far from markets.

One can go on three consecutive days, without going for more than 3,000m.

One should not receive things which are put inside his pocket, outside the bowl or on its lid.

One must not receive money, rice as well as non-vegetarian foods. While being offered, one should ask the donators if the foods are vegetarian or non-vegetarian...”⁽³⁰⁾

Thus the most notable thing is that while going for alms, monks of this sect can only receive vegetarian foods and they insist on taking vegetarian diets, which is the same as with the insistence of the Mahāyāna Buddhists. This point is a difference with the Theravāda monks, who also go for alms everyday but receive any foods, vegetarian or non-vegetarian, offered by the people with their kindness. Not receiving non-vegetarian foods shows the influence of the Mahāyāna tradition.

And through the above-mentioned schedule, one can see that there is no dinner time for monks and nuns of this sect. It means that they have practiced the Theravāda way, viz. taking one meal a day.

However, as seen nowadays monks and nuns of this sect have settled in their

own temples, doing their Buddhist deeds without wandering whereabouts; and the tradition of going for alms has not been followed strictly as formerly. To understand more clearly the reality of their activities as well as their way of living, I will introduce here the schedule applied presently in temples of this sect. -

II. Present schedule in temples of the Khat Si Sect

The present headquarters of the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect is Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra)⁽³¹⁾ of Hochiminh city, where every year a center of summer retreat is often held with about 100 monks, and where now there are 50 monks living permanently. The daily schedule applied at this famous temple is as follows:

- 3: 00: waking up, striking great bell
- 4: 00: early morning session (reciting sūtras) and practicing meditation
- 5: 30: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 7: 00 ~ 10h 00: working or studying at school
- 11: 00 ~ 12: 00: having lunch
- 13: 00 ~ 14: 00: taking noon rest
- 15: 00 ~ 16: 00: dhamma talks
- 13: 30 ~ 16: 00: self-study of sūtras or going to school
- 17: 00: having dinner
- 17: 45 ~ 18: 45: practicing meditation
- 19: 00 ~ 21: 00: self-study and cultivation
- 22: 00: sleeping⁽³²⁾

By comparison of this schedule with the previous one, we can see that nowadays monks of this sect don't go for alms but are staying at temples to concentrate on practice and studying. Meditation practice is paid special attention through their daily life, that is to say, twice a day after the early morning session

and at night before going to bed.

In the early morning session, they recite the *Universal Gate Sūtra* (普門經) and in the night session the *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經). Thus the sūtras the Khất Sĩ Sect utilises for daily recitation are the Mahāyāna ones.

Instead of the time for going for alms, they concentrate on doing works at their temples or attending courses at Buddhist schools or secular courses at other universities.

There is a *Board of Dhamma-Supporting Laity* who are responsible to cover daily foods as well as necessary things for monks and moreover, the temple has also opened a bookstore for selling Buddhist books. Thus by that way, monks of Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra) can manage to lead a peaceful life without worrying about anything else.

Another difference with the above formerly regulated schedule is that about 70 per cent of the temples of this sect began taking dinner from 1975 up to now.⁽³³⁾

III. Daily life of *chú huệ*

Similar with the *điêu* (practitioner) in Mahāyāna way of calling, the Khất Sĩ Sect calls the probationers as *chú huệ*, who are from 18 years of age downward. They are received to cultivate at temples as beginners to enter the path of enlightenment. There are no regulations of the age of these beginners, but they must have a possible level of education so that they can understand basic Buddhist teachings.

Naturally, when being received as a *chú huệ*, he is ordained the Five Precepts if he has not been ordained before. During this time *chú huệ* must show his persistent diligence (*nikkama*, 精勤) in fulfilling all assigned jobs, spending the rest of the time for learning by heart instructed scriptures and sūtras, and participating in regulated daily schedule applied in the temple. His duty of participating in the early morning session as well as night session is inevitable as regulated in the regulation No. 46 of 114 additional regulations of this sect:

“That young probationers do not recite sūtras in the early morning session and afternoon session is prohibited.”⁽³⁴⁾

It is this period of time which he can accumulate merit by reciting the sūtras, serving the abbot, working, etc. so that later he can receive the higher holy precepts.

He will be instructed to study and learn by heart the moral modes of movement of a *sāmaṇera* as recorded in the *Sha-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇera*), Ten Precepts for a *sāmaṇera*, some chanting gāthās as recorded in the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*), the Lessons for the Mendicants in the *Chôn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*).⁽³⁵⁾ Naturally during the probationary period, the male beginning practitioner can only be allowed to wear the regulated clothes of a probationer. He spends most of his time at the temple and is not led to go for alms. Because the Regulation No. 111 among 114 additional regulations of this sect *prohibits leading a probationer to go for alms*.⁽³⁶⁾

So long as *chú huệ* reaches the age of 18, he will be examined his moral conduct and be ordained to be a *sāmaṇera*. Thus regardless of any age when he began to be a practitioner, he must wait a period of time up to 18 to enter another higher step—*sāmaṇera*. And if he is above the regulated age of 18 as a practitioner, he must also experience this period of probation at least one year or more before becoming a *sāmaṇera*.

IV. Daily life of *sāmaṇera*

Right at the age of 18, after having been checked and examined his moral conduct as well as his acts from walking, standing, lying and sitting, *chú huệ* is ordained the Ten Precepts of a *sāmaṇera*. At the same time, he is passed a *sāmaṇera* robe and a bowl. And a dhamma name is also given to him at that time.

Normally the ceremony of *sāmaṇera* ordination of this sect is often held on

memorial days such as the day in memory of the disappearance of the sect's founder, February 1st, or the lunar 15th day of April, the birthday of the Sakyamuni Buddha, etc. However, nowadays most *sāmaṇeras* of this sect have been sent to *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony held by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha of each region to be ordained the *sāmaṇera* precepts.

According to the regulations recorded in the *Chôn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), the *sāmaṇera* robe has the same length and width with the *bhikkhu* robe, but without stripes and only a cloth.⁽³⁷⁾ Moreover, the *sāmaṇera* should prepare a small bag for containing scriptures and lessons while going out.⁽³⁸⁾

As seen in the *Chôn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), the *sāmaṇera* of this sect also practise and train in accordance with the teachings recorded in the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*) and the *Sba-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇera*),⁽³⁹⁾ which are main scriptures for Mahāyāna *sāmaṇeras* to learn by heart and practice during the this period.

Moreover, the regulation No. 52 among 114 additional regulations of this sect gives us the information that if a *sāmaṇera* does not memorize the regulated sūtras, he cannot be ordained to be a *sāmaṇera*:

“That ordaining the sāmaṇeras who have not yet memorized the Four Reliance Things, Ten Precepts and the Offering Verses is prohibited.”⁽⁴⁰⁾

The *Four Reliance Things* (*cattāro nissayā*, 四依法) of this sect are recorded as followings:

1. Reliance on coarse robes (依糞掃衣): the mendicant going for alms should gather discarded fragments then combine them into robes, but if someone offers old cloths, it is possible to receive.
2. Reliance on going for alms (依乞食): the mendicant going for alms should

- only eat begging foods, but it is possible to eat at temples in days of festival, dhamma preaching, reciting the precepts.
3. Reliance on sitting under trees (依樹下坐): the mendicant going for alms should stay under tree roots, but if someone offers tent, small hut which is made by leaves and has only one door, it is possible to stay there.
 4. Reliance on rotten medicines (依腐爛藥): the mendicant going for alms should only utilise the dung of oxen as medicines for treatment illness, but if someone offers other medicines, oil and sugar, it is possible to use them.⁽⁴¹⁾

The *sāmaṇera* must wake up early to serve his master, be diligent in listening to dhamma talks and studying sūtras, fulfill his modes of movement (*iriyāpatha*, 威儀路) such as walking, standing, sitting, lying, speaking, etc.

Beside reviewing some sūtras which the *sāmaṇera* has learnt and memorized during his probationary period, he will be instructed to study some more basic Buddhist sūtras such as the *Dhammapada* (法句經), the *Ssū-shih-êrh-chang-ching* (四十二章經, *The Forty-Chapter Sūtra*), the part of Morality (*sīla*, 戒), Concentration (*samādhi*, 定) and Wisdom (*paññā*, 慧); and especially he can study beforehand the *bhikkhu*'s precepts which are prohibited to learn for Mahāyāna *sāmaṇeras*. This is an outstanding difference from the Mahāyāna tradition as applied presently in Vietnam.

Twice a month on the early mornings of the lunar 8th and 23th days, the *sāmaṇeras* of this sect also participate in the recital rite of *sāmaṇera*'s precepts at the temple after making the confession rite.

Nowadays, all *sāmaṇeras* of this sect are sent to Buddhist schools to attend Buddhist courses, therefore they can understand the teachings of the two great schools, Mahāyāna and Theravāda.

V. Daily life of *bhikkhu*

Likened to the Mahāyāna and Theravāda regulations, the *sāmaṇeras* of this sect

who are fully twenty years of age are ordained the *bhikkhu*'s 250 precepts.

Formerly the *Upasampadā* ceremony was often held on the lunar 15th day of July every year by the *saṅgha* of this sect. The regulation for ordaining the *bhikkhuship* reads as following:

“When ordaining the Khát Sī (Mendicant) precepts, there must be enough a small saṅgha including 20 monks, lacking one of them is impossible. At that time, there must be a monk who stands out to introduce the precept-receiver and ask the saṅgha for ordination, then there is a monk who ordains the precepts, and a Reverend or Thera who is responsible for giving instructions to the newly-ordained bhikkhu. All members of the saṅgha should agree and if there is anyone who disagrees, the ordination is impossible.”⁽⁴²⁾

Thus different with the assembly of ten superior monks as regulated by the Mahāyāna and Theravāda traditions in the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony, the number of the assembly in the Khát Sī Sect must be 20.⁽⁴³⁾ This is a remarkable difference.

Moreover, another difficult condition to be a *bhikkhu* as recorded in the regulation No. 53 among 114 additional regulations of this sect is as following:

“That receiving the bhikkhus who have not yet mastered the moral modes of movement, the disciplines, the mantras as well as chanting sūtras is prohibited.”⁽⁴⁴⁾

Nevertheless, today most *sāmaṇeras* of this sect are sent to the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony held by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in each region. By that way, they participate in the examination together with the other Mahāyāna and Theravāda *sāmaṇeras* and in necessary rites; but when performing the ordination ceremony, each sect often celebrates its own traditional way.

As stated above, formerly monks of this sect would lead their wandering life and go for alms, however, now mostly they don't do that but reside stably in their own temples to concentrate on study and practice. Those who reside in rural temples lead their life by labouring or doing farming for self-sufficiency. And those who

live in city temples, thanks to the frequent assistance of their laity, don't worry about daily living but spend most of their time on cultivating their mind, studying sūtras and doing Buddhist deeds such as reciting sūtras for the dead, the living, the sick, etc., doing charitable activities, giving dhamma talks to their followers, etc. These are duties of the Khất Sĩ monks as well as monks of the other two sects, Mahāyāna and Theravāda.

Especially on every Sunday morning a dhamma talk held at the Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra) is always given to the lay followers by monks of this sect. Many people come here to listen to the dhamma talks and the evidence is that in the list of preaching Buddhist teachings at Buddhist temples in Hochiminh City, carried by the Weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) on its final pages, there always appears the name of this temple.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Every year, on the occasion of the summer retreat, the temple is considered as a center for monks of this sect to enter. This tradition of “*concentration of summer retreat*”, of course, was begun for a long time ago in Hochiminh City, but this temple began in 1988. For example, the number of monks of this sect who participated in the summer retreat of 1998 is 105 including monks from everywhere coming here.⁽⁴⁶⁾

During this time monks often spend their most time on mind-cultivation, study of sūtras and diciplines, and listening to dhamma talks given by preaching masters of the saṅgha. Some Buddhist scriptures, both Mahāyāna and Theravāda, which are normally preached during 3 months of summer retreat at this temple are: the *Pa-ta-jên-chiao-ching* (八大人覺經, *Discourse on Eight Enlightened Things of the Great*), the *Majjhima-nikāya* (中部經, *Middle Length Sayings*), the *Āgama-sūtra* (阿含經), some basic teachings, the *Chân Lý* (真理, *The Truth*) written by the founder of this sect, etc.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Every month at temples monks of this sect often celebrate the cúng hội (*making festival sacrifices*) rites on the lunar days of 8th, 15th, 23rd and 30th. With the participation of many layfollowers, the rites aim at praying for the dead to be reborn in the *Realm of Highest Joy* (*Sukhāvati*, 極樂) and safety and happiness for the living as well as the sick. It is on these days which monks often deliver

dhamma talks to their laity. Besides, on every Sunday an *Organization of Eight Commandments* (*aṭṣaṣīlamādavīma*, 八齋戒) is also held for the laity to have the chance of mind-cultivation.

VI. Remarks

Through these above informations, we can see that there are some similarities and some differences in the daily life of monks of this sect in comparison with the ones of the Mahāyāna and Theravāda monks in Vietnam.

1. Some similarities

- The monks of this sect also take vegetarian diets the same as with the Mahāyāna monks.

- As for the stages of practice, this sect also classifies into 3 stages: the beginning practitioner (*chú huê*), *sāmaṇera* and *bhikkhu*, which are the same as with the ones of both Vietnamese Mahāyāna and Theravāda traditions.

- Nowadays most sūtras they recite in the early morning session as well as night session are Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Universal Gate* (普門經), the *Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經), etc.

- Most sūtras or scriptures that the beginning practitioners (*chú huê*) and *sāmaṇeras* must study and learn by heart are likened with the ones regulated for the Mahāyāna *điêus* and *sāmaṇeras* such as the *Sha-mi-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇera*), the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*), the *Ssū-shih-êrh-chang-ching* (四十二章經, *The Forty-Chapter Sūtra*), etc. This shows that this sect follows to mainly the Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings.

- Its former tradition of going for alms is the same as with the Theravāda tradition.

- Although formerly monks of this sect took one meal a day which is the same with the Theravāda tradition, but from 1975 up to now about 70 per cent of its

monks and nuns have changed to take 3 meals a day which is likened to the Mahāyāna tradition.

- Monks and nuns of this sect also perform the *Uposatha* ceremonies for reciting the bhikkhu's precepts twice a month on the lunar days of 15th and 30th, which is the same as with the Mahāyāna and Theravāda traditions.

- While studying the *Pātimokkha* (波羅提木叉 or 戒本) applied for monks of this sect,⁽⁴⁸⁾ even its preface as well as its content of 250 precepts are the same as with the ones recorded in the *Sì-fên-lù* (四分律) which the Vietnamese Mahāyāna monks and nuns utilise nowadays in their daily practice as well as for recital in *Uposatha* (布薩) days. Although there are little differences in Vietnamese translation and explanations, in all the content of the former is the same as the latter.

2. Some differences

- When ordaining the *bhikkhu's* precepts, instead of an assembly of Three Superior Monks and Seven Eye-witnesses as seen popularly in the tradition of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna traditions, the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect regulates that the assembly must be at least 20 monks.

- The robes of this sect is quite different with the ones of the other two great sects in their forms as well as way of making, although their colors are the same, yellow or orange.

- Before the precept recital in the *Uposatha* day, monks of this sect often perform the confession (*paṭikāra*, 懺悔) rites which is the same as with the Theravāda tradition, but is different from the Mahāyāna tradition, that is to say, on the nights before the *Uposatha* days. Moreover, the regulated days for reciting Ten Precepts of *sāmaṇeras* of this sect are not the same with the *Uposatha* day, meaningly, on the lunar days of 8th and 23rd.

- Another remarkable difference is that, instead of being prohibited to study or read the *bhikkhu's* precepts during the probatory period of a Mahāyāna *sāmaṇera*, the Khất Sĩ Sect has given permission for its *sāmaṇeras* to study these

precepts.

- The way of putting on robes of this sect is different from the one of the Mahāyāna, but is likened to the one of the Theravāda.

E. Its nuns—daily life and activities

Although having some influences from the Theravāda tradition through going for alms, way of wearing robes, the ways of calling its temples as Tịnh Xás (vihāras) or its superior monks as Theras (長老), the sect has some modes of activities as well as ways of living similar to the Mahāyāna tradition as mentioned above. However, one of notable characteristics I would like to refer to here is the existence of a Khất Sĩ saṅgha of nuns.

Different from the Theravāda tradition, up to now as seen in countries such as Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Campuchia, etc., where the Theravāda Buddhism is considered as national religion, no existence of a saṅgha of Theravāda *bhikkhunīs* can be seen. That is to say, although there have existed, more or less, some associations or groups of nuns who cannot be ordained the *bhikkhunī*'s precepts, wearing white robes to practice the Theravāda way in these countries. But the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect has established a saṅgha of nuns, who can be ordained the *bhikkhunī*'s precepts, along with the saṅgha of monks.

In this part, I will discuss on the modes of practice as well as the ways of living of this sect's nuns as seen in Hochiminh City.

I. Daily schedule

Beside the Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra), the central Headquarters of the Khất Sĩ Sect as well as for its monks, there is an existence of the Tịnh Xá Ngọc Phương (精舍玉芳, Ngọc Phương Vihāra), where is considered as the central temple for nuns of this sect and has about 96 nuns residing here permanently. Here I like to introduce the daily schedule applied at this temple.

- 3: 00: waking up, striking great bell
- 4: 00 ~ 5: 00: early morning session (reciting sūtras) and meditation practice
- 5: 30: doing assigned jobs
- 6: 00: having breakfast
- 7: 00 ~ 10h 00: working or studying at school
- 11: 00 ~ 12: 00: having lunch
- 13: 00 ~ 14: 00: taking noon rest
- 14: 00 ~ 16: 00: self-practice and study
- 17: 00: meditation practice
- 18: 30 ~ 19: 30: night session (reciting sūtras)
- 20: 00: self-practice and study
- 22: 00: sleeping⁽⁴⁹⁾

Looking at this schedule, we can see that it is the same as with the one applied for monks of this sect in general, that is to say, having twice a day the recitation of sūtras in the early morning and night session, meditation practice, times for self-practice and study at the temple as well as at Buddhist schools. However, some differences can be seen as following:

- The time for having dinner is not regulated publicly in this schedule. It means that having dinner is not prohibited for nuns of this temple, therefore they can have it or not depending on their own vows. The abbess of this temple said that the temple often prepares only lunch for its nuns, but those who want to have dinner have to serve themselves by the form of self-sufficiency. Moreover, according to the informations given by the abbot of the Tịnh xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra) of monks, Ven. Thích Giác Toàn, at present about 70 per cent monks and nuns of this sect have changed to take dinner from 1975 up to now. It means that there remained some nuns among this 30 per cent who are following the tradition of not having dinner due to the former tradition regulated by the sect's founder, Master Minh Đăng Quang. Naturally this tradition shows the influence of the Theravāda way of living.

- Different with the schedule of monks, the time for giving dhamma talks to Buddhist followers cannot be found in the schedule of nuns.

II. Period to become a *bbikkhunī*

Also likened to the period of practice to become a Mahāyāna *bbikkhunī*, nuns of the Khât Sī (Mendicant) Sect must undergo the same period including four stages: beginning practitioner, *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice), *sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那, a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training) and *bbikkhunī* (比丘尼, an ordained nun).

1. Beginning pratitioner

It is said that, according to the regulations of this sect applied today for nuns, there are no distinctions of ages of those who want to be a forth-goer (*pabbajita*, 出家者); but the educational level is needed for the very person to enable her to attend some secular schools.

Especially before receiving a beginning practitioner of woman probationer, the abbess of the temple or the probationer's master must *report to an assembly of at least 4 monks right at that time.*⁽⁵⁰⁾

Under the frequent patronage of her master, the beginning practitioner always takes at least 2 years to undergo the probationary period of practice in the temple with all trials and difficulties.

Naturally she will be instructed to make acquaintance with the temple's way of living through modes of movement such as walking, standing, sitting, lying, speaking, etc.; through staying late at night to learn by heart regulated scriptures and waking early to participate the morning session; or doing assigned works. During this period of time, she can only wear the regulated clothes for a woman probationer. Most of her time at temple is to study, practice and work; but she is not led to go for alms.

The sūtras that a woman probationer is instructed to study and learn by heart

are the same as with the probationer (chú huệ), viz. *Sba-mi-ni-lü-i-yao-liao* (沙彌尼律儀要略, *A Summary of Precepts and Modes of Conduct of the Sāmaṇerī*), Ten Precepts for a *sāmaṇerī*, some chanting *gāthās* in the *P'i-ni-jih-yung-ch'ieh-yao* (毘尼日用切要, *Essential Daily-Use Vinaya*), the Lessons for the Mendicants in the *Chôn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*).

These are initial preparations for her to get the second stage, *sāmaṇerī*, which is more strict than this.

2. *Sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice)

The case of *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman novice) of this sect is also the same as with the one of Mahāyāna, that is to say, she spends at least 2 years as a probationer. The ordination of a *sāmaṇerī* performed by the saṅgha of nuns must also be reported to the saṅgha of at least 4 monks to ask for permission as mentioned above.

After the ordination of Ten Precepts of a *sāmaṇerī*, she will also be instructed to study some basic Buddhist teachings just the same as with a *sāmaṇera* (沙彌, novice) does. Besides, studying important teachings recorded in the *Chôn Lý* (真理, *The Truth*) as well as the *Chôn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*) is inevitable. Simultaneously, studying and memorising the *bhikkhunī*'s precepts during her time as a *sāmaṇerī* are an outstanding characteristics which cannot be found in Mahāyāna modes of practice.

3. *Sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那) and *bhikkhunī* (比丘尼)

Likened to the modes of practice of Mahāyāna nuns as seen in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ nuns must undergo a further probationary step of practice as a *sikkhamānā* (式叉摩那, a young woman undergoing a probationary course of training) before advancing to the next step, *bhikkhunī*.

Thus after two years of practice as probationer, the *sāmaṇerī* (沙彌尼, woman

novice) is often proposed to receive the *sikkhamānā*'s 6 precepts, viz. restraint from unchastity (*abrahmacariyā veramaṇī*, 不淫戒), restraint from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā veramaṇī*, 不盜戒), restraint from onslaught on creatures (*pānātipātā veramaṇī*, 不殺生戒), restraint from lying (*musāvādā veramaṇī*, 不妄語戒), restraint from eating at the wrong time (*vikālabhojanā veramaṇī*, 不非時食戒), restraint from the occasion of sloth (induced by) fermented liquor, spirits and strong drink (*surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī*, 不飲酒戒).

According to the regulations of this sect applied nowadays at the Tịnh Xá Ngọc Phường (玉芳精舍, Ngọc Phường Vihāra), the *sikkhamānā* must undergo 4 years of probation before becoming a *bhikkhunī*.⁽⁵¹⁾ Formerly the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremony for the Khất Sĩ monks and nuns was held among the inner sect, but at present most *sāmaṇerīs*, *sikkhamānā* are sent to *Upasampadā* ceremonies held by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha around the nation to be ordained.

Naturally the precept-receivers (戒子) of the Mahāyāna, Theravāda and Khất Sĩ (Mendicant) must follow the regulations of the Organization Board of the ceremony; but when performing the ordination ceremony, each sect performs it its own way.

The Regulation No. 85 among 114 regulations made by the founder of this sect, Master Minh Đăng Quang, gives out strict instruction concerning the ordination for a nun as following:

“That to let the nuns, who have not followed correctly in accordance with the Eight Important Rules (aṭṭha garudhamme, 八重法 or 八敬法), disciplines and meditation, wear robes and use bowl is prohibited.”⁽⁵²⁾

Thus the *Eight Important Rules (aṭṭha garudhamme, 八重法 or 八敬法)* is also taken seriously by the founder of this sect and, as a matter of fact, at present nuns of this sect as well as the Mahāyāna nuns have been following them. It is said that before the *Upasampāda* ceremony, the *sikkhamānās* of this sect are always checked the *bhikkhunī*'s 348 precepts as well as for regulated scriptures. If those who cannot manage to memorize these precepts miss the chance of being ordained.

And “to let an almswoman to be ordained must have the observation of the saṅgha of monks.”⁽⁵³⁾

After the ceremony, the Khất Sĩ newly-ordained *bhikkhunīs* are led by superior nuns of this sect to come to central monk temple to be re-ordained by monks and then pay worship to them under the latter’s justification.

The Khất Sĩ nuns also perform the *Uposatha* (布薩, precept recital or Observance) ceremonies twice a month and naturally before doing that, some representative nuns must come to the monk temple to ask for instructions and justification of the saṅgha of monks as regulated in the Rule No. 6 in the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八重法 or 八敬法):

“Nuns must ask the saṅgha of monks for justification to recite the *Pātimokkha* every half a month.”⁽⁵⁴⁾

Every year the Khất Sĩ saṅgha of nuns performs the summer retreat of three months after the *Buddha Jayanti Day*, the lunar 16th of April, and an *Invitation* (*paṇvāraṇā*, 自恣) *Day* after the *Ullambana Festival*. The Tịnh xá Ngọc Phương (精舍玉芳, Ngọc Phương Vihāra) is also a center of summer retreat for the Khất Sĩ nuns coming from everywhere to enter. Concretely in 1998, the temple gathered 165 nuns for summer retreat.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Apart from the regulated time for mind-cultivation, study and going out for propagation of Buddhist teachings, today the Khất Sĩ nuns living in the rural areas do their farming, gardening and planting vegetables and fruit trees to cover their daily lives. *They bring the news and knowledge to the rural women.*⁽⁵⁶⁾

However, the case of nuns living in big cities like Hochiminh City is different. Instead of doing farming, typically the nuns of the the Tịnh xá Ngọc Phương (精舍玉芳, Ngọc Phương Vihāra) concentrate on making paste cakes for Mid-Autumn or the Tet holidays (New Year), and then making jams and marmalades in the lunar 15th day of October. This makes a good chance for the neighbouring unemployed people to have jobs to do. There is also a bookstore at this temple for selling Buddhist books and the Buddhas’ images. By doing these, the temple can stably

guarantee its daily life of self-sufficiency apart from the permanent support of its laity.

Moreover, the temple pays special attention to doing charitable deeds by organizing many visits for comforting and helping the people in remote and difficult regions as well as the people who are victims of natural calamity.

III. Remarks

Through the above-mentioned informations, we can see that the nuns of this sect also perform their modes of practice just the same as with the Mahāyāna nuns with 4 stages of cultivation, viz. beginning practitioner, *sāmaṇerī*, *sikkhamānā* and *bhikkhunī*.

The observance of the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八重法 or 八敬法) as seen through the frequent reports of nuns to the saṅgha of monks in the receptance of a beginning practitioner or ordination ceremonies for *sāmaṇerīs*, *sikkhamānā* and *bhikkhunīs* to ask for permission. Even the places where nuns of this sect come to propagate the teachings must be decided and justified by the saṅgha of monks as seen in the Regulation No. 84 that:

“That having the defects in justifying for nuns to go for propagation of teachings at every place is prohibited.”⁽⁵⁷⁾

The Khất Sĩ nuns, often called *ni Khất Sĩ áo vàng* (yellow-robe almswomen), though different from the Mahāyāna nuns wearing *áo lam* (brown clothes) in appearance, participate in activities of the saṅgha of Vietnamese nuns and make considerable contributions to propagating the Buddha’s precious teachings as effectively and practically as possible.

F. Additional regulations of this sect

Apart from 250 precepts for a *bhikkhu* and 348 precepts for a *bhikkhunī*, the

founder of the Khất Sĩ Sect, Master Minh Đăng Quang, gave out another 114 regulations as precepts for his monks and nuns to follow. They are essential things and so very important for those who go forth into the homelessness to practice that I would like to introduce in this thesis. These regulations are recorded at the end of the *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ (The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants)*. Their content is as following:

1. That all monks as well as probationers, young or old, without the permission of the saṅgha and without having emergent things, intentionally go out or covertly escape from the temple is prohibited.

2. That anyone who says that I only know my master is prohibited. All must obey the regulations of the saṅgha.

3. That talking about the affairs of king or ministers or astrology is prohibited.

4. That usurping and proudly establishing another groups to create the disunion in the saṅgha is prohibited.

5. That intentionally changing one's master is prohibited.

6. That the mendicants bringing along with robes and bowls do farming, industry, merchant business and soldier is prohibited.

7. That the mendicants bringing along with robes and bowls earn fame, profit, noble appearance, talent and beauty, carriages and horses is prohibited.

8. Receiving followers or laity to establish personal group to give treat for the sick by amulets and incantations is prohibited.

9. That rudeness and egoism is prohibited. When having anything one must ask for permission. The assembly must be in harmony and live in accordance with the schedule.

10. That all members in the saṅgha anyone speak in rude, loud and arrogant voice is prohibited.

11. That anyone speaks in pride is prohibited. When having offences, one must respectfully ask the saṅgha for confession.

12. That being undisciplined and lack of moral conduct is prohibited. One must keep the serenity and tranquility for the saṅgha.

13. That when having something with relatives without the eye-witness of the superiors is prohibited.

14. That giving dhamma talks at the layfollowers' houses without asking for permission beforehand to the superiors is prohibited.

15. That mocking at, joking and getting close to the *upāsakas* (laymen), *upāsikās* (laywomen) and nuns is prohibited.

16. That receiving students without having the responsibility to instruct them during two years is prohibited.

17. That being a master without keeping moral modes of movement is prohibited. One should not talk, laugh and stare at women or children out of the time of preaching dhamma talks.

18. That the mendicants bringing along with robes and bowls manage the finance while printing Buddhist sūtras and scriptures is prohibited.

19. That the mendicants, apart from their own robes and bowls, possess personal wealth, even Buddhist sūtras and scriptures is prohibited.

20. That anyone that does not know the biographies of the superiors is prohibited.

21. That violating the orders in the saṅgha, though the newcomers and seniors are not distinguished, is prohibited.

22. That not knowing the date of entering the temple, one's purpose, name, old age and native country is prohibited.

23. That receiving youngsters under 18 for cultivation as probationers is prohibited.

24. That ordaining robes and bowl to one who is ignorant and not knowing the national language's letters is prohibited.

25. That giving permission to someone to experience the probational period without having an instructor is prohibited.

26. That ordaining robes and bowl to one who has not enough the justification of three monks is prohibited.

27. That sitting and lying untimely is prohibited.

28. That talking untimely is prohibited.

29. That reciting the sūtras and having meals untimely is prohibited.
30. That laughing, crying and speaking in a loud voice is prohibited.
31. That dividing into intimate groups is prohibited.
32. That intentionally desiring, demanding or asking for something that is contrast to the discipline is prohibited.
33. That young probationers talk idly and make fun is prohibited.
34. That the wisdom-practitioner talks so much without the practice of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom is prohibited.
35. That those who go forth do not practice meditation is prohibited.
36. That seperating from (the saṅgha) to live alone, unless those who have enough ability and have permission from the saṅgha, is prohibited. Anyway, one must live together with the saṅgha.
37. That discussing one's affairs is prohibited.
38. That practicing untimely is prohibited.
39. That talking slanderously is prohibited.
40. That talking to hurt the superiors is prohibited.
41. That quarrelling in loud voices is prohibited.
42. That not respecting the superiors is prohibited.
43. That speaking with rude and coarse words is prohibited.
44. That speaking useless words to the master is prohibited.
45. That receiving the offerings on the spot if in normal days and it is not raining, one is not ill or not have personal affairs is prohibited.
46. That young probationers do not recite sūtras in the early morning session and afternoon session is prohibited.
47. That (young probationers) play in the vihāra and gather around the master is prohibited.
48. That putting robes on and using the bowl wrongly is prohibited.
49. That begging at the laity's house excessively is prohibited.
50. That not concentrating on cultivation and study, but tending to eating, wearing, residing is prohibited.
51. That speaking out the agreeable words to the superiors is prohibited. One

should keep silent.

52. That ordaining the *sāmaṇeras* who have not yet memorized the Four Reliance Things, Ten Precepts and the Offering Verses is prohibited.

53. That receiving the bhikkhus who have not yet mastered the moral modes of movement, the disciplines, the mantras as well as chanting sūtras is prohibited.

54. That spreading out hands to receive anything from anyone is prohibited.

55. That when being offered things without justification is prohibited.

56. That entering inside the vihāra, talking in loud voices and laughing is prohibited.

57. That going out while in a meeting is prohibited.

58. That being ambitious for things to beautify and decorate one's body is prohibited.

59. That residing in contrast with the order of the saṅgha is prohibited.

60. That having gone forth but still regretting worldly affection with friends, even monks and monks become attached to each other is prohibited.

61. That working together with the laity, doing worldly affairs, talking, laughing and seeing visitors just the same as with the laity is prohibited.

62. That talking so much more than one hour is prohibited. If everyday there is something necessary, one should talk only some sentences.

63. That having gone forth but admitting relatives, personal family is prohibited.

64. That writing letters to acquainted persons to tell something without the permission is prohibited.

65. That a monk follows his master forever is prohibited. He must change one master everyday.

66. That a newcomer get close to the master is prohibited.

67. That monks possess personal wealth apart from the three robes, bowl, sūtras and book of disciplines, spoon, toothbrush, sitting mat, razor blades, papers and mosquito net (two sets of clothes and blanket are possible for the *sāmaṇeras*) is prohibited.

68. That monks go far bringing along three bags untidily not the same as nuns

do is prohibited.

69. That the forth-goer retains sadness, joys, happiness, anger, hatredness, love, desire and laughing like children is prohibited.

70. That the forth-goer retains greed, anger and illusion is prohibited.

71. That the forth-goer has his eyes, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind unpure like the worldly persons is prohibited.

72. That hiding one's as well as other's offences before the saṅgha is prohibited.

73. That discussing one's offences secretly is prohibited.

74. That being angered when being instructed about one's own offence is prohibited.

75. That quarrelling advantage or disadvantage, right or wrong in loud voice is prohibited.

76. That monks and nuns wear coloured robes having shapes of flowers is prohibited. Those who have not fulfilled their precepts must wear the clothes of probationers. The nuns who are from 12 to 54 years of age must not go out alone, not separate from the saṅgha. That receiving those who are under 18 years of age is prohibited.

77. That reading other sūtras and scriptures that do not belong to the saṅgha, if one is not an experienced superior monk, is prohibited.

78. That not reaching the age of 30 but separating the saṅgha to propagate the teachings is prohibited.

79. That studying foreign languages is prohibited (according to some cases).

80. That ordaining robes and bowl to those who are ignorant in national language is prohibited (they wear the clothes of probationers).

81. That giving permission to wear robes and use bowl to those who cannot follow disciplines and meditation practice is prohibited.

82. That wearing robes and using bowl to go out for alms if having not yet followed correctly the disciplines is prohibited.

83. That having the defects in propagating the teachings is prohibited. Each place must have the justification of the saṅgha, and every small brand saṅgha must report once every term of three months to the central saṅgha about its practice

and study.

84. That having the defects in justifying for nuns to go for propagation of teachings at every place is prohibited.

85. That to let the nuns, who have not followed correctly in accordance with the *Eight Important Rules* (*aṭṭha garudhamme*, 八重法 or 八敬法), disciplines and meditation, wear robes and use bowl is prohibited.

96. That intentionally disharmonising when having something disharmonious is prohibited.

87. That monks ask nuns for doing something or storing something is prohibited.

88. That monks scorn, make orders and cow nuns is prohibited.

89. That monks call for nuns to a private place to talk is prohibited.

90. That monks write letters or papers sending to nuns is prohibited.

91. That monks go to nuns' vihāras, if having no orders or permission from the head master and the saṅgha, is prohibited.

92. That female probationers pay respect to male probationers is prohibited.

93. That monks as well as male probationers spend overnight inside the nuns' vihāra is prohibited.

94. That nuns as well as female probationers spend overnight inside the monks' vihāra is prohibited.

95. That monks as well as male probationers let women spend overnight inside the monks' vihāra is prohibited.

96. That nuns as well as female probationers let men spend overnight inside the nuns' vihāra is prohibited.

97. That monks discuss the affairs of nuns and women is prohibited.

98. That nuns discuss the affairs of monks and men is prohibited.

99. That monks blame, reproach or punish nuns and female probationers without having the orders of the head master or saṅgha is prohibited.

100. That nuns are impolite and unrespectful to bhikkhus is prohibited.

101. That monks and nuns visit each other while being ill is prohibited.

102. That monks come to the nuns' temples and visa versa without having the

orders of the head master or the saṅgha is prohibited.

103. That monks and nuns talk together without reporting to the head master or the saṅgha prior to and after the talk is prohibited.

104. That a monk manage to talk personal things to a nun is prohibited.

105. That monks stare at nuns and visa versa, even the laity, is prohibited.

106. That monks possess nuns' photos and visa versa is prohibited.

107. That storing nuns' photos in the monks' temples and visa versa is prohibited.

108. That under some pretence to give or send sūtras and scriptures to talk each other is prohibited.

109. That monks speak with rude and coarse words to nuns is prohibited.

110. That nuns speak with dissident, disputing and disobedient words to the instructions of the head master or the saṅgha.

111. That leading a probationer to go for alms is prohibited.

112. That asking for seperation from the saṅgha without ability is prohibited.

113. That always creating this or that to make trouble among the saṅgha is prohibited.

114. That always demanding something to make difficulties among the saṅgha is prohibited.⁽⁵⁸⁾

G. Summary

As stated above, from the time of its birth, 1944, up to now the number of its monks and nuns amounting to as many as 1,879 and its Tịnh Xás (vihāras) 516, show that the Khất Sĩ Sect has gained a firm position in the community of Vietnamese Buddhism as well as in its Buddhist followers. This shows that the Vietization (越化) and poetization (詩化) of all its scriptures has brought effeciency, more or less, in propagating the Buddhist teachings. As seen nowadays, the main regions of activities of this sect are the West Region and Cửu Long Delta in Southern Vietnam.

Furthermore, the charitable activities performed by the Khất Sĩ monks and

nuns also contribute to creating sympathy and affection of the people to follow the Buddhism.

The spirit of “*should try to live together to study and practice*” through the instruction of its founder, Master Minh Đăng Quang, is an unrelenting effort of monks and nuns of this sect in order to manifest solidarity and unification in the community of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. Therefore, at *Upasampadā* (higher ordination) ceremonies or offering rites held by either Theravāda or Mahāyāna temples and at Buddhist schools, we can see the appearance of the Khất Sĩ monks and nuns.

Nowadays, the tendency of sending the sect’s monks and nuns to attend Buddhist as well as secular schools has brought some success in advancing further knowledge and understanding in Buddhist and secular fields. The evidence is that some hundreds of monks and nuns of this sect are presently attending the courses at the Basic Schools of Buddhist Studies (基本佛學校) and Higher Schools of Buddhist Specialized Studies (高等專科佛學校), more than 50 monks and nuns studying at the Vietnam Institutes of Buddhist Studies (越南佛教學院), and some then 25 monks and nuns are studying abroad in India and China.⁽⁵⁹⁾

Nevertheless, there still remains some tosses-and-turns of this sect in the period of harmonizing with the modernized society paralleling with the preservation of the precious traditions settled by its founder. Referring to this matter, Venerable Thích Giác Toàn (釋覺全), a permanent representative of the sect, gave some following remarks on the occasion of being interviewed by the correspondent of the Weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*):

“Simultaneously, there are some remains in the traditions of robes and bowl such as that monks and nuns of the sect have no longer changed their residence once every 3 months, that more than half of monks and nuns have no longer practiced the mode of going for alms everyday, that the precepts of not eating untimely and not keeping and storing money have no longer been followed strictly as in the time of the existence of the founder. The superior monks of the sect have realised these changes and overcome them step by step in order to preserve the basic colour of the sect and to make worthier contribution to the tendency of

more and more development of the Buddhism and the nation.^{*(60)}

No matter what has happened, this sect has been making a considerable contribution to the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha as well as to its followers in propagating the Buddha's teachings and bringing happiness and welfare to people.

In all, to sum up, I would like to raise out the reason why this sect could not develop its activities widely in Hue City as well as in Northern Vietnam. Firstly, the case of Northern Vietnam is quite easy to understand. As mentioned above, this sect was established in 1944 in Southern Vietnam, but one year later, 1945, the August Revolution gained success in Northern Vietnam and then in 1954 Vietnam was separated into two parts, North and South, of which the border was Bến Hải River in Quảng Bình Province. Thus at that time this sect could not dispatch its propagating missions to Northern Vietnam. However, from the day of our nation's reunification, 1975, up to now, there are no signs showing that the propagating commissions of this sect have come to Northern Vietnam.

Secondly, the case of Hue City is different. One of 5 propagating commissions of wandering monks and nuns has reached Hue City, but the activities of this sect through its modes of practice and way of living has really not gained much affection and sympathy of Hue people. In reality, nowadays there are only 2 Khất Sĩ *vihāras* in Hue City, the Tịnh xá Ngọc Kinh (玉經精舍, Ngọc Kinh Vihāra) and Tịnh xá Ngọc Kính (玉敬精舍, Ngọc Kính Vihāra), with very few nuns. The reason why this sect cannot develop flourishingly in Hue City, not the same as with the case in the West Region and Cửu Long Delta of Southern Vietnam, is easy to understand. Because the Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings, the modes of practice as well as the way of living of the Mahāyāna monks and nuns have deeply rooted in the way of thinking, understanding and behaviours of the Hue people. Moreover, as seen nowadays, the Hue people have got acquainted with the tradition of reciting the Chinese Buddhist scriptures in Vietnamese pronunciation. Thus the Vietization and poetization of this sect may make it easy to understand the Buddhist teachings, but the modes of practice of monks and nuns of this sect are somehow difficult to develop widely and meet the hearts of Hue people. The same

case is the Theravāda Buddhism which was established in 1939 before this sect and really existed in Hue City. But up to now both the Theravāda School and the Khất Sĩ Sect have not yet made considerable development and popularized as seen in Hue City.

Time changes and things will turn out as they will. It is possible that in the future the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect will change its way to be able to develop widely its activities in Hue City as well as in the Northern Vietnam.

Note:

1. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Lần Thứ IV (Bulletin of the Fourth Conference of All-Nation Buddhist Representatives)*. Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1999, pp. 14, 15.
2. Ibid. pp. 14, 15.
3. Adapted from materials such as *Chơn Lý (眞理, The Truth)* published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1993, pp. 3-5; *Ánh Minh Quang (Bright Light)* of the same publishing houses, 1992, pp. 8-19; and the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 155 (March 20th, 1999), p. 10.
4. In 1939, the Theravāda Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam from Campuchia by Ven. Hộ Tông (*Vaṁsarakkhita, 護宗*) and his companions. (See Chapter IV: *Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam* of this thesis).
5. See *Chơn Lý (眞理, The Truth)* published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1993.
6. The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Nghi Thức tụng Niệm (Rituals for Recital and Chanting)* for the Khat Si Sect, published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1995.
7. The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ (The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants)*, published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998.
8. The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Tứ Kế Tinh Tâm (Fourfold Gāthā for Mind Purification)*, published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1994.
9. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Nghi Thức tụng Niệm (Rituals for Recital and Chanting)* for the Khat Si Sect, published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1995, p. 3.
10. Ibid., p. 131.
11. Ibid., p. 139.
12. Khuddaka-Pāṭha, PTS, 1978, p. 9.
13. Adapted from the translation of Bhikkhu Ñānamoli in his *The Minor Readings (Khuddakapāṭha)*, PTS, 1978, p. 10.
14. Theravāda: *Kinh Nhật tụng Của Cư Sĩ (Sripture for Daily Recitation for the Laity)*, Nhà Xuất Bản TP. Hồ Chí Minh (Hochiminh City Publishing House), 1998.

15. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Ánh Minh Quang* (Bright Light) published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1992, p. 15.
16. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha: *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Lần Thứ IV* (Bulletin of the Fourth Conference of All-Nation Buddhist Representatives). Published by the Hochiminh City Publishing Houses, 1999, pp. 14, 15.
17. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, pp. 42-44.
18. Ibid., pp. 43, 44.
19. Ibid., pp. 43, 44.
20. See Sawaki Kodo: *Kesa no kenkyu* (A Study on Robes), Daihorinkaku Publishing Houses, 1996, p. 64. (沢木興道、『袈裟の研究』、大法輪閣)
21. Ibid., pp. 74, 75.
22. See Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa: *The Entrance to the Vinaya*, Vol. II. Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, Bangkok, 1973, p. 12.
23. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 42.
24. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Ánh Minh Quang* (Bright Light) published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1992, p. 15.
25. This information is based on my investigation on March 15th, 1999 at the Tịnh xá Trung Tâm (精舍中心, Central Vihāra) whose abbot is Ven. Thích Giác Toàn (釋覺全), a superior monk of the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect, Secretary General of the Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Vice-Rector of the Vietnam Buddhist Institute in Hochiminh City. He told me this information during a personal interview.
26. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý* (眞理, The Truth) published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1993, p. 173.
27. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 56.
28. Based on my investigation on March 15th, 1999 at the Tịnh xá Trung Tâm (Central Vihāra).
29. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ*

- (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 51.
30. Ibid., pp. 63-66.
 31. This vihāra is located at 7 Nguyễn Trung Trực Street, Bình Thạnh District, Hochiminh City.
 32. Based on my investigation on March 15th, 1999 at the Tịnh Xá Trung Tâm (Central Vihāra)
 33. Based on the information given by Ven. Thích Giác Toàn (釋覺全), a superior monk of the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect, Secretary General of the Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Vice-Rector of the Vietnam Buddhist Institute in Hochiminh City.
 34. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chân Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 299.
 35. Ibid., pp. 7-41.
 36. Ibid., pp. 305, 306.
 37. Ibid., p. 42.
 38. Ibid., p. 45.
 39. Ibid., pp. 76-102.
 40. Ibid., p. 300.
 41. Ibid. p. 48. These four things can be found in the *Visuddhi-magga* (PTS. 1975, pp. 30-35, 62-79)
 42. Ibid. pp. 53, 54.
 43. It is necessary to explain further here that the Vietnamese Khất Sĩ Sect has regulated that there are 4 kinds of saṅgha: an assembly including 4 monks, a small saṅgha with 20 monks, a intermediate saṅgha with up to 100 monks, and a great saṅgha with up to 500 monks (Ibid., p. 52)
 44. Ibid., p. 300.
 45. Some examples of recent publications of the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) are: No. 134 (October 10th, 1998), p. 34; No. 139 (November 28th, 1998), p. 34; No. 157 (April 3rd, 1999), p. 34; No. 171 (July 10th, 1999), p. 34; No. 176 (August 14th 1999), p. 66, etc.
 46. See the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 125 (August 22nd, 1998), p. 35.
 47. Ibid., p. 35.

48. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, pp. 193-220.
49. Based on my investigation on March 15th, 1999 at the Tịnh xá Ngọc Phương (精舍玉芳, Ngọc Phương Vihāra) which is located at Lê Quang Định Street, Gò Vấp District, Hochiminh City.
50. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 54.
51. Based on my investigation on March 15th, 1999 at the Tịnh xá Ngọc Phương (精舍玉芳, Ngọc Phương Vihāra).
52. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 303.
53. Ibid., p. 54.
54. Ibid., p. 193. The content and order of this rule is somewhat different from its original texts in content. The order as found in its original belongs to No. 3, not No. 6. And its Pāli content is *anvaddhamāsaṃ bhikkhuniyā bhikkhusaṃghato dve dhammā paccāsiṃsitabbā uposathapucchakaṅ ca ovādūpasamkamaṇā ca* (Every half month a nun should desire two things from the Order of monks: the asking [as to the date] of the Observance day, and the coming for the exhortation). (Vinaya Pitakam, Vol. II, Cullavagga X, 1. 4, P.T.S.)
55. See the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 125 (August 22nd, 1998), p. 35.
56. See the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 155 (March 20th, 1999), p. 15.
57. See the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha—Khat Si Sect: *Chơn Lý—Luật Nghi Khất Sĩ* (*The Truth—The Disciplines and Ceremonies of Mendicants*), published by the Hochiminh Municipal Buddhist Association, 1998, p. 303.
58. Ibid., pp. 296-306.
59. See the weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 155

(March 20th, 1999), p. 14.

60. Ibid., p. 32.

Chapter VI

The Gia Đình Phật Tử and Some Other Organizations of Buddhist Layfollowers in Vietnam Buddhism

In Vietnam, there are many Buddhist organizations for propagating the Buddha's Dhamma. However, the *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (GDPT), which is a member of the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha, is considered as the main and most effective of these after the Saṅgha itself.

The GDPT can be roughly translated in English as “*Buddhist Followers' Family*” or “*Buddhist Followers' Association*” and in Chinese as “佛子家庭”. Here, I would like to use its original name. This organization plays very important role in supporting the saṅgha and is also a firm foundation for the birth of monks and nuns. However, up to now few books written about the history of this organization can be seen. Through many its ups-and-downs, the GDPT still holds a firm and reliable position in the hearts of the Vietnamese Buddhists as well as the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

In this chapter I would like to refer to its periods of development of embryo organizations from the *Đoàn Đồng Ấu Phật Tử* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*), the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*) to the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*), and then the birth of the present-day *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*). Moreover, it is necessary to introduce its programme of Buddhist teachings for its members, its mode of organization as well as activities and its contributions to the Vietnamese as well as to the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

Besides, there are also some other organizations of Buddhist layfollowers such as the *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trại* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng Pháp Hoa* (法華道場, *Lotus Flower Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng*

Đông Niệm (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*), the *Hội Từ Thiện* (慈善會, *Charitable Association*), etc. as seen very popular and well-known in Hue City as well as in other regions of Vietnam. Therefore, I would also like to introduce these organizations in this chapter with their mode of practice, activities and contributions to the prosperity of Buddhism in Vietnam as well as their bringing welfare and happiness to the others.

A. The *Gia Đình Phật Tử* (佛子家庭, *Buddhist Followers' Family*)

I. Its former organizations

The fundamental aim of the GDPT is *training true Buddhists and establishing family happiness on the basis of Buddhist ethics*⁽¹⁾ and *making a contribution to building society in the Buddhist spirit.*⁽²⁾

The GDPT was founded in 1935 but up to now there are no basic books written about its history, only some materials for internal circulation.

1. Its first embryo period—the *Đoàn Đông Ấu Phật Tử* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*)

On May 15th, 1935 (April 8th, 1935 of the lunar year) a Buddha Jayanti Day was solemnly celebrated at *Tử Đạm* temple (慈曇寺), Hue city in order to proclaim support for the movement of Buddhist promotion all over Vietnam. On this occasion, the *Đoàn Đông Ấu Phật Tử* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*) was established with only 52 members both male and female. Its purpose was merely to guide children to sing Buddhist and non-Buddhist songs such as *Hải Triều Âm* (海潮音, *The Sound of Sea Waves*) which later changed its title to *Trầm Hương Đốt* (燒沈香, *Burning Incense Sticks*), and some old-style court songs.⁽³⁾ The latter is still today the most popular of in GDPT.

Conditions for joining the group can be listed as follows:

1. A son or daughter of a Buddhist family, as well as any teenager who is from

12 to 18 years old and has the educational level of elementary school upwards, can join the group.

2. Always participating in all activities of the group.
3. Clearly understanding the regulated rite of reciting sūtras and *nembutsu* (念佛, reciting the Buddhas' names), and understanding basic doctrines regulated for a Buddhist follower.⁽⁴⁾

Although its name is the Buddhist Children Commission, we can see that it is a group which consists of not only children but teenagers as well. This organization is considered as the first embryo of the present GDPT. However, it had no clear regulations or methods of activity, no correct methods of education, and poor leadership and organization.

2. The second period—the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*)

In 1940, Professor Dr. Lê Đình Thám, an enthusiastic Buddhist follower and a well-known scholar who made great contributions to the Buddhist promotion movement of Vietnam Buddhism in modern times, gathered together some intellectual youngsters, most of whom were descendants of lay-followers who had taken part in activities of the *Hội An Nam Phật Học* (安南佛學會, *Annam Buddhist Studies Association*)⁽⁵⁾, and then founded the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*).⁽⁶⁾ Dr. Lê Đình Thám himself led and taught the Buddhist teachings for the commission. The youngsters did not study Buddhist teachings by Chinese texts, but were taught in Vietnamese by a new way of study, by which they could understand the teachings as quickly as possible. Beside Buddhist teachings, Confucianism and Taoism were also introduced into the teaching program.⁽⁷⁾

The birth of this organization marked a new step for Buddhism. The temporary youth generation could become aware that Buddhism was something which is up-to-date and not old-fashioned. Their formal song, written in French

and later translated into Vietnamese as *Hoa Sen Trắng* (*White Lotus*)⁽⁸⁾, is still used by the GDPT today. Members of this organization helped to guide and train members of the *Đoàn Đông Ấu Phật Tử* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*). Basically, the first Buddhist book for educating the youngsters at that time was *Elementary Buddhist Studies* (佛教初學) compiled and published by the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*) in 1942.⁽⁹⁾

Afterwards, Dr. Lê Đình Thám handed over to editing of the Buddhist magazine *Viên Âm* (圓音, *Full Sound*)⁽¹⁰⁾ which was used as a means to build up a new generation of Buddhists. Therefore, the content of the *Viên Âm* was completely changed from issue No. 48⁽¹¹⁾ thanks to the eager contribution of the organization's members. Some years later, classes of Buddhist studies led by Dr. Lê Đình Thám were opened for newly-studying youngsters during their summer vacation.

Thus, the appearance of such a Buddhist organization is a very important step to make the Buddhist teachings as up-to-day as possible in the first stage of the 20th century, with its scientific and technological progress. However, it still was not an organizational part of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha at that time. In order to meet the urgent need of contemporary youngsters in studying and understanding the Buddha's teachings, giving birth to another organization became an inevitable necessity.

3. The third period—the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*)

On March 14rd, 1943,⁽¹²⁾ an assembly of Buddhist youngsters was held at Quảng Tế Hill, Hue City through which a new organization, the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*, GDPHP), was founded. A first managing board⁽¹³⁾ was elected and a first copy of its purpose and regulated rules was issued as following:

- a. Purpose: to train true Buddhists and build up family happiness on the basis of Buddhist ethics.
- b. Conditions of joining:
- Children from 8 ~ 12 years old.
 - Boys and girls from 12 ~ 18 years old.
 - Youngsters above 18 years old.
 - Educational level: from elementary level above.
 - Clear understanding of the regulated rite of reciting sutras and the Buddha's names (nembutsu, 念佛).
 - Clothes: brown or black dress (áo dài).
- c. Program of practice and study:
- Buddhist doctrine: including 3 levels, that is, primary, intermediate and high level.
 - Literature and art: songs and dance performance at solemn religious festivals.
 - Youth activities: group activities such as camping, etc.
 - Social activities: helping the poor, the unfortunate.

d. The central managing board: 1 head of commission, 2 vice-heads of commission (for male and female branches). Heads of sections including section of literature and art, youth activities and social relief. An adviser of Buddhist doctrine assigned by the *An Nam Phật Học Hội* (安南佛學會, *Annam Buddhist Studies Association*).⁽¹⁴⁾

In the first stage, the organization founded 12 groups each of which consisted of about 40 persons.

This event made such a big impact on the nation at that time that the Magazine *Viên Âm* No. 59 (April 1943) gave a favourable comment that *the Quảng Tế Assembly marked a launching of the movement of Buddhist youngsters in Vietnam*.⁽¹⁵⁾

Two months later, on May 16th 1943, the First Assembly was held also at

Quảng Tế Hill with 412 participants to issue its regulations, rules and ways of acting reformed and amended by the *An Nam Phật Học Hội* (安南佛學會, *Annam Buddhist Studies Association*), to properly establish the structure of central leadership, and to debate effective methods for enlarging the development of the GDPHP in localities including rural areas.

During three years (1943~1946) the organization made considerable developments in establishing *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*) in Hue city and its suburbs⁽¹⁶⁾, and in opening a training campaign and a friend-meeting camp at Tây Thiên Temple (西天寺). The first established GDPHPs in Hue city were Tâm Minh, Thanh Tịnh, Tâm Lạc and Sum Đoàn.⁽¹⁷⁾ The first Leading Board of Thừa Thiên province was founded by the nomination of the *Hội Phật Học Trung Việt* (中越佛學會, *Buddhist Studies Association in Central Vietnam*).

At the same time, in South Vietnam, a GDPHP named Chánh Giác (正覺) was born in 1949. Then in the North, a group of Buddhist followers also established a GDPHP named Liên Hoa (蓮華), and the *Northern Vietnam Buddhist Studies Association* (北分越南佛教會) also founded another GDPHP named Minh Tâm (明心), which frequently convened at Quán Sứ temple (館使寺) in the capital of Hanoi.

Nevertheless, due to the many political events during that time such as the French rule over Vietnam,⁽¹⁸⁾ the Japanese coup d'état,⁽¹⁹⁾ the August Revolution in the North,⁽²⁰⁾ the long decade of anti-French war,⁽²¹⁾ etc., this organization became defunct in 1947 and could not develop on a large scale.

4. Remarks

We can see that the period of 12 years from 1935 up to 1947, was one of highly developed movements of Buddhist promotion in Vietnam, especially in Hue city, with the appearance of Buddhist youth organizations such as the *Đoàn Phật Tử Đông Ấu* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*), *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De*

Perfectionnement Moral) and *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*). These were urgently needed to modernize and popularize Buddhism as effectively as possible, especially from the point of view of the young generation.

Along with many youth-and-children organizations such as the *French Ducoroy Movement*, *Hội Hướng Đạo Việt Nam* (越南向道會, the *Vietnam Boy Scout Association*),⁽²²⁾ *Đội Thiếu Niên Tiên Phong* (先驅少年隊, the *Young Pioneers Troop*),⁽²³⁾ *Tổng Hội Sinh Viên Việt Nam* (越南生員總會, the *General Association of Vietnam Students*),⁽²⁴⁾ etc., the birth of the above-mentioned Buddhist organizations met the need of studying and understanding Buddhist teachings in the first half of the twentieth century in Vietnam.

The appearance of the word *Gia Đình* (家庭, family) in the GDPHP in place of the word *Đoàn* (團, Commission or Group) in the *Đoàn Phật Tử Đồng Ấu* (童幼佛子團, *The Buddhist Children Commission*) and *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*) marks a great progress in recognizing that the organization must be one which embraces family community of all ages and that each member in the organization must live in harmony and behave towards each other like blood brothers and sisters under the leadership of a spiritual father, Lord Buddha.

Thus the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*) is considered as a pioneer in establishing the idea of social *Gia Đình* (家庭, family) and is also a firm foundation for the construction of the GDPT later.

II. The birth of the *Gia Đình Phật Tử*

1. Its establishment

Over three days 24, 25 and 26 of April, 1951, an historical meeting was held at Từ Đàm temple, Hue city, with participants of provincial associations⁽²⁵⁾ changing the name GDPHP into GDPT and passing a set of Rules and Regulations for the

organization. At this time the organization was also for the first time considered a member of the Vietnamese Buddhist Association in Central Vietnam as stated in its By-law Regulations that:

In accordance with Articles 2 and 21 of the Rules and with Item 54 of the By-law Regulations of the Buddhist Association of South Vietnam (南越佛教會), we hereby found an organization named Gia Dinh Phat Tu with the aim of training children and youngsters in the basis of Buddhist spirit.⁽²⁶⁾

2. Its purpose and rules

As stated in Item 2 of the By-law Regulations of the Vietnamese Buddhist Association in Central Vietnam, its purpose was to train Buddhist youth and children so that they can become true Buddhists and worthy members of the Association.⁽²⁷⁾ Based on this purpose, the GDPT also emphasized the aphorisms as *Compassion* (*karuṇā*, 悲), *Wisdom* (*paññā*, 智) and *Courage* (勇) to youngsters, and *Harmony* (和), *Belief* (信) and *Joyfulness* (喜) to children.

Rules regulated for youngsters and children were as follows:

a. For youngsters:

- Taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, and strictly following the ordained precepts.
- Expanding one's compassion and respect for living beings.
- Cultivating one's *paññā* (wisdom) and respect for truth.
- Purifying one's body and spirit, one's words and actions.
- Living in joyful giving (*prīti-upekṣā*, 喜捨) so that one can go forward bravely on one's way.

b. For children:

- Memorizing the Buddha.
- Loving and paying respect to parents, and living in harmony with brothers

and sisters.

- Spreading love to human beings and animals.⁽²⁸⁾

Furthermore, if someone wishes to join the organization, he or she must have the permission of parents and the introduction of two members (over age 18).⁽²⁹⁾

Then, to become a true Buddhist, first of all, one must vow to take the Three Refuges (*trīṣarāna-gaṃana*, 三歸) and Five Precepts (*pañca veramaṇī*, 五戒) and to eat a vegetarian diet on regulated days.⁽³⁰⁾ These are considered as basic training steps for a Buddhist. Its rules and aphorisms were adapted in accordance with common psychology and kind of ages. Everyone should live in harmonious spirit and behave towards each other as blood brothers and sisters. Therefore, the elders, regardless of any age, are called elder brothers or elder sisters; the youngers are called younger brothers or sisters. Sister Hoàng Thị Kim Cúc, a well-known elder sister of the GDPT, gave a reasonable remark on the organization:

“The Gia Đình Phật Tử is a place where all relatives, brothers, sisters, children and grandchildren live together from the age of 7, 8 up to 70, 80. The elders of the family have the responsibility to the youngers to live in cordial and joyful harmony... The more Buddhism is believed, the more the Gia Đình Phật Tử needs to be reformed and widened to welcome those who are looking forward to a true orientation to follow...”⁽³¹⁾

Up to now the above-mentioned purpose, aphorisms and rules are preserved and performed during up-and-downs of the nation.

3. About its badge

The regulated badge of the GDPT is a round badge of a white lotus with eight petals on the basis of green color.⁽³²⁾

- The circle symbolizes the perfect harmony of Buddhism among all its differences, of unhinderedness (*apratihata*, 無礙).

- The white lotus symbolizes the Buddha's light of perfectly enlightened wisdom.
- The eight petals: the lower three petals symbolize the Buddha (middle), the Dhamma (left) and the Sangha (right); the remaining five petals symbolize diligence (*vīrya*, 精進, middle), joyful giving (*prīti-upekṣā*, 喜捨, left), purification (*viśuddhi*, 清淨, right), wisdom (*paññā*, 智慧, left outwards) and pity-compassion (*maitrī-karuṇā*, 慈悲, right outwards).

Vīrya symbolizes *Sakyamuni Buddha*, *prīti-upekṣā Maitreya Buddha*, *viśuddhi Amitābha Buddha*, *paññā Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva* and *maitrī-karuṇā Avalokiteśvara* (Kwan Yin) *Bodhisattva*.

- Green symbolizes the colour of the future, of hope and of Buddhist youngsters and childrens.

4. About its song

The song *Hoa Sen Trắng* (*White Lotus*) was chosen as the main one of the organization. This song is always sung after the sūtra recitation and before the beginning of activities of the organization every Sunday afternoon.⁽³³⁾ It was translated into Vietnamese from French when the *Đoàn Thanh Niên Phật Học Đức Dục* (青年佛學德育團, *Commission d'Etudes Bouddhiques Et De Perfectionnement Moral*) was founded and the Vietnamese translation remains popular up to now. The French words of the song, of course, at that time aimed at propagating Buddhist teachings in accordance with the period when France ruled Vietnam. It can be translated into English as follows:⁽³⁴⁾

*“Oh, look at the fragrant white lotus !
Thousands of radiant lights shining on the mud.
And the image of our Master,
With compassionate heart, wisdom and awakening are infinite.
Altogether let's vow to follow the Buddha heartfully,*

*And vow to cultivate ourselves as purified as everyday.
Until whenever the fragrant lotus is pinned
It will spread its perfume of compassion as endlessly as ever.”*

Thus the white lotus is considered as the supreme symbol for one to wish for and as the sacred goal to aim at. The image of the white lotus with *thousands of radiant lights shining on the mud* is also an outstanding suggestion of a fully awakened Buddha who attains enlightenment from the sufferings, cravings and attachment in this world. In spite of growing in such dirty stinking mud, it selects and absorbs quintessences of mud and then delivers its perfume to the world. So it is a symbol of purity and uninfectedness. All Buddhists should in this way strive to deliver the perfume of happiness and peace to himself and everyone by the way of training and cultivating himself in the Buddha’s teachings.

Therefore, as for a member of the GDPT, to have a white lotus badge pinned a badge to one’s chest is considered a supreme honour and pride. It also symbolizes the sacred mission to be a true Buddhist.

5. About the way of greeting

When two members meet each other, they often greet by making the mudrā of *Laṣkmī* (吉祥, auspicious) with the right hand. Legend says that the Buddha became enlightened while sitting on a mat of *kuśa*, auspicious grass, offered and spread by a child named *Laṣkmī*.⁽³⁵⁾ Thus *Laṣkmī* means enlightenment, happiness. The mudrā of *Laṣkmī* used to greet each other in the organization aims at wishing the others auspiciousness and happiness and at awakening the Buddhahood in the others. This way of greeting is used everywhere and at any time when a member wears clothes of the GDPT. Normally, a junior must first greet a senior. It is also used to greet in the case of meeting a monk or a nun in the street, but when in the temple, the way of joining one’s hands is used.

6. About the color of clothes

Light Grey is the official colour of the organization. Used only for shirts and dresses, it is considered as the color of mildness and harmony—the harmony of man and the universe, and of all pairs of contradictions. As a symbol of an open heart, it represents the harmony of all ideologies of the Vietnamese nation. It also symbolizes the spirit of the Six Points of Harmony (六和).⁽³⁶⁾ So the GDPT is always called the Áo Lam (Grey Shirt) Commission. This color is the same as with the one which the Vietnamese nuns often utilise for their formal clothes, and also for the beginning practitioners as well as *sāmaṇeras*'s formal clothes. Especially the formal clothes regulated for the Vietnamese layfollowers to wear while reciting sūtras or participating Buddhist ceremonies have the same color with the one of the GDPT's members.

7. About the organization of a GDPT

Based on Item 6 of the By-law Regulations of the Vietnam Buddhist Association of the Central Vietnam in 1957, members of the Leading Board of a GDPT are regulated as one family head, one chief of league, one secretary and one cashier. Members of troops consist of *Oanh Vũ*⁽³⁷⁾ (children, from 8~12), *Ngành Thiểu* (boys and girls, from 12~17) and *Ngành Thành* (young men and women and including seniors, from 18 upward), in which each troop includes 2 or 4 groups and each group 8 persons. In the six troops, which are managed by the chief of league, a head troop and vice-head troop will be responsible for each troop.⁽³⁸⁾ Further, the regional saṅgha appoints a monk who is responsible as an adviser of Buddhist teachings for each GDPT.

Rank titles of each troop are listed as followings:

- a. *Oanh Vũ* (children):
 - Mở Mắt (Opening Eyes)
 - Cánh Mềm (Soft Wing)
 - Chân Cứng (Solid Feet)

- Tung Bay (Flying)

b. *Ngành Thiểu* (boys and girls):

- Hướng Thiện (向善, Towards Kuśala)
- Sơ Thiện (初善, Beginning Kuśala)
- Trung Thiện (中善, Midway Kuśala)
- Chánh Thiện (正善, Right Kuśala)

c. *Ngành Thanh* (young men and women):

- Hòa (和, Harmony)
- Trực (直, Righteousness)

The main places of doing activities of the GDPT are temples, Khuôn Hội (匡會) or Niệm Phật Đường (念佛堂, place for Buddhist laity to recite the Buddhas' names and sutras, NPD). As seen in Hue city, most Khuôn Hội or NPDs and some temples have the existence of active GDPTs.

III. Its program of Buddhist teachings

According to the classification into three kinds of age groups as stated above, the program of studying Buddhist doctrine was also classified into 3 levels in accordance with different ages.

1. *Oanh Vũ* (children)

- Building up faith by concrete actions such as paying respect to the Buddha, reciting the Buddhas' names (念佛) before going to bed, reciting the prose of confession (*āpatti-pratidesānā*, 懺悔), visiting temples and monks and nuns, greeting them when meeting, creating a notebook of good deeds, etc.
- Building up faith by love such as expressing love to trees and grass, to animals and to all people through listening to Jātaka and Buddhist stories.

2. Ngành Thiện (boys and girls)

The *Ngành Thiện* is classified into 4 ranks, that is, Rank of *Hướng Thiện* (向善, Towards Kuśala), *Sơ Thiện* (初善, Beginning Kuśala), *Trung Thiện* (中善, Midway Kuśala) and *Chánh Thiện* (正善, Right Kuśala). Therefore, its studying program also consists of 4 levels.

a. Rank of *Hướng Thiện* (向善, Towards Kuśala):

- Understanding the life of Śākyamuni Buddha from his birth to renunciation.
- Understanding two Jātaka or Buddhist stories.
- Understanding and memorizing the prose of confession (*āpatti-pratidesanā*, 懺悔).
- Understanding the aphorisms and five rules of the organization.

b. Rank of *Sơ Thiện* (初善, Beginning Kuśala):

- Understanding the life of Śākyamuni Buddha from renunciation to attaining enlightenment.
- Understanding the story of *Amitābha Buddha* and *Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva*.
- Understanding three Jātaka or Buddhist stories.
- Understanding the meaning of the Three Jewels (*triratna*, 三寶), Three Refuges (*trīṣaṇa*, 三歸) and Six Points of Harmony (六和).
- Understanding the meaning of taking vegetarian principles and reciting the Buddha's names (nembutsu, 念佛).
- Understanding and memorizing normal rites.

c. Rank of *Trung Thiện* (中善, Midway Kuśala):

- Story of *Maitreya Buddha*.
- Story of *Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva*.

- History of Quốc Ân Temple (國恩寺).⁽³⁹⁾
- History of Thuyền Tôn Temple (禪宗寺).⁽⁴⁰⁾
- Meaning of Relational Conditions (*hetu-pratyaya*, 因緣).
- Meaning of Cause-and-Result (*hetu-phala*, 因果).
- Meaning of Transmigration (*samsāra*, 輪迴).
- Five Precepts (*pañca veramaṇī*, 五戒).
- Ten Good Virtues (十善).
- Four Graces (四恩).
- Four All-Embracing Virtues (*catuḥ-saṃgraha-vastu*, 四攝法).
- Sūtra of the Eight Enlightenment of A Great Person (八大人覺經).
- About summer retreat (*vassa*, 安居).
- History of Vietnam Buddhism from the time of Buddhist introduction to the Lý Dynasty (李朝).
- Understand five Buddhist stories.

d. Rank of *Chánh Thiện* (正善, *Right Kuśala*):

- Biography of *Mahākāśyapa* (摩訶迦葉).
- Biography of *Ānanda* (阿難陀).
- Biography of Ch'an Master Yuan Shao (元韶禪師).
- Biography of Ch'an Master Liễu Quán (了觀禪師).
- Morality (*sīla*, 戒), Concentration (*dhyāna*, 定) and Wisdom (*paññā*, 慧).
- Ten ox-herding pictures (十牧牛圖).
- Four Noble Truths (*catvāri ārya-satyāni*, 四聖諦).
- Twelve Linked Factors of Dependent Co-Arising (*dvādaśāṅga pratīyasamutpāda*, 十二因緣).
- Noble Eightfold Path (*āryāṣṭāṅga-mārga*, 八正道).
- Sūtra of Ten Good Characteristics (十善經).
- Meaning of good and bad deeds and their karmic retributions (善惡業報).
- Six Things or Pāramitās (*ṣaḍ-pāramitā*, 六度 or 六波羅蜜).
- Contemplating the Buddha in mind and reciting the Buddhas' names (觀想念佛).

- Eight Prohibitory Commandments (*aṣṭāṅga-samanvāgata-upavāsa*, 八關齋).
- History of Vietnam Buddhism from the Trần Dynasty (陳朝) to modern times.⁽⁴¹⁾

3. *Ngành Thanh* (young men and women)

a. *Rank Hòa* (和, *Harmony*) reviews the program of the *Ngành Thiếu* and studies some more problems as:

- Buddhism with human kind.
- Distinction among sūtras (經), mantras (咒) and gāthās (偈).
- Conceptions of friendship, of gratitude and rancour, of the good and the bad, of the good and the evil.

b. *Rank Trục* (直, *Righteousness*) reviews the program of the *Ngành Thiếu* and studies some more issues such as:

- Principles which can improve technics and occupation.
- Relationship among Buddhist teachings, philosophy and science.
- Great religions in the world.
- Buddhist conception of human beings, of the world and of love.⁽⁴²⁾

In addition, they are taught how to use first aid kits to perform medical aid in emergency cases, to make knots, to communicate news by Morse codes and semaphores, and to set up tents.

Through the above-listed program, we can see that the higher the rank is, the more difficult and complex the Buddhist doctrines are. This is the program of basic studies for Buddhists in which we can see that there are some similarities to the studies of monks and nuns. As normal lay Buddhists, they always study the meanings of The Three Refuges, Five Precepts and some very basic teachings as taking a vegetarian diet, reciting the Buddhas' names, worshipping, etc. Then this is also considered as a special program of studies for members of the GDPT. As stated in the purpose of the GDPT, in becoming a true Buddhist so as to make effective contributions to Buddhism, a member of the GDPT must be fully

equipped with basic knowledge so that he or she can train and practise himself or herself and propagate Buddhist teachings to the others.

IV. Roles and contributions of the GDPT to the nation as well as to the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha

As a member of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and a faithful messenger to bring the Buddha's teachings to life as closely as ever, the GDPT has been sharing ups-and-downs with the Saṅgha and is carrying out its sacred mission. It is the place where gathers together all kinds of ages, all levels of knowledge and understandings, but there are no distinctions among ages as well as knowledge. Therefore, Buddhists and non-Buddhists can become members of the organization. Parents are proud that their sons and daughters are its member. A member of the GDPT is trained to be a good citizen of society and to make contributions to bringing happiness to himself and to others.

Formerly, the Buddhist Association had a shortcoming that only the seniors and elders took part in the Association and that no attention was paid to the youngsters and children. The GDPT was born to fill this gap. From young to old, from rich to poor, they can unite in one family, the GDPT, to practise and study the Buddha's teachings in the spirit of love, sympathy, sharing and harmony.

In rural or municipal areas, the GDPT's members always take part in funeral ceremonies to pray for the dead. Especially in remote rural areas where one cannot manage to invite the monks or nuns to the ceremony, then the members usually take their place. The members do their duties as follows:

- Presenting gifts to other poor children in the area during the Tét (New Lunar Year) Festival, in the Buddha Jayanti Day or during the Vu Lan (盂蘭) Festival.
- Helping to teach and nourish children at orphanages and disabled centers.
- Helping the farmers to plough, to harvest and anything concerning farming.
- Organizing rescue groups to help people in case of flood, fire or natural

disaster.

- Establishing medical stations to deliver medicine to the sick.
- Urging people in the area on injecting vaccine to prevent and protect from infectious diseases. ⁽⁴³⁾

Further, especially during the Mid-Autumn Festival, the GDPT always organizes giraffe (麒麟)-dancing groups to serve people in rural and municipal areas as well.

The GDPT is not an organization with the aim of political activities, but a good place for everyone of all ages to train and practice the Buddha's teachings. However, during the more than 60 years since its establishment, through many political and historical events, its members together with the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha has had to take part in the struggles for religious freedom. Ten senior members of the GDPT were killed or injured as a symbolic sacrifice for the sake of Buddhism, and hundred of them have been exiled or imprisoned. ⁽⁴⁴⁾ Especially 1963 mentioned the highest peak of the Buddhist struggle for religious freedom and justice against the dictatorship of Ngô Đình Diệm. The centre for launching the movement of struggle was Hue city. Members who sacrificed their lives such as Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Lan, Huyền Tôn Nữ Tuyết Hoa, Dương Văn Đạt, Mai Tuyết An, Quách Thị Trang, Nguyễn Thìn, etc. are still honoured and remembered in Vietnam Buddhism. ⁽⁴⁵⁾

V. To sum up

The birth of the GDPT was a necessity to meet the need of pro-pagating the Buddha's teachings to the young generation as effectively as possible. This young generation has needed to be equipped with Buddhist foundation of education so that they can be good citizens of society and true Buddhist followers. They have made and are making considerable contributions and support to the Saṅgha to develop and preserve Buddhist activities.

Many members of the organization have become Buddhist monks and nuns, in

which Most Ven. Thích Minh Châu, present General Secretary of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha is an example. Hue city, where the GDPT was born, is considered as the cradle of the movement as well as Vietnamese Buddhism.

Though its forms of activities show some borrowing from the Boy Scout organization such as making knots, communicating news by Morse codes and semaphores, or forms of organizing tents;⁽⁴⁶⁾ its purpose is different. The original aims of the Boy Scout organization's founder, Robert Stéphenon Smith Baden Powell (1857-1941) was to educate boys to endure hardship cheerfully, to understand self-respect,⁽⁴⁷⁾ to lead ethical and spiritual lives and to serve the community.⁽⁴⁸⁾ However, as stated above, the GDPT aims at training Buddhist youth and children to become true Buddhists and worthy members of the Association in the spirit of Buddhist ethics.

Nowadays, the GDPT has developed its activities all over the nation from the rural areas to cities and is the gaining heartfelt support and sympathy of everyone. According to the report at the Fourth Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha held in Hanoi during two days, 22th and 23rd of November, 1997, at present there are about 650 GDPTs throughout the nation with 44,407 members and 5,409 senior brothers and sisters.⁽⁴⁹⁾

There have been some training courses for senior brothers and sisters, and many summer and traditional camps have been held under the leadership and assistance of the Buddhist Saṅgha of each region such as Hochiminh, Hue, Quảng Nam, Đà Nẵng, Đà Lạt, Khánh Hòa, Phú Yên, etc.⁽⁵⁰⁾ We can see the fresh color of the Áo Lam (Grey Shirt) here and there all over Vietnam. In spite of many changes of through the years, I think, it can adapt itself to industrial conditions to make firm steps to development.

B. Some other organizations of Buddhist layfollowers

Apart from the existence of the GDPT, some other organizations of Buddhist followers such as the *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trại* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng Pháp Hoa* (法華道場, *Lotus Flower Organization*),

The *Hội Từ Thiện* (慈善會, *Charitable Association*), The *Đạo Tràng Đồng Niệm* (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*), etc. also have close relationships with the activities of the Vietnamese Buddhist monks and nuns. These organizations act with no color of politics, but purely with the aim of practicing the Buddha's teachings. In order to understand their aims, modes of activities as well as practice and their contribution to the Vietnamese Buddhism and the national community, here in this part I would like to introduce some of the remarkable organizations as mentioned above.

Some difficulties are inevitable for the writer to refer to these organizations, because up to now no books or even articles in Vietnamese have been written about them, but the Weekly Buddhist Magazine *Giác Ngộ* (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) has made mention with only some short news items about their activities with monks and nuns. Therefore, to introduce these organizations, beside this magazine I must depend on my field-work, mainly in Hue area.

I. The *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trai* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*)

In Vietnam, most temples of monks or nuns have the presence of the *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trai* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*), which gathers mainly Buddhist layfollowers, among whom some have been ordained in the Five Precepts (五戒), some in the Bodhisattva Precepts (菩薩戒), some in the Ten Good Virtues (十善戒), and some are members of the GDPT as well. The organization exists to meet the need of mind-cultivation of the layfollowers with the aim of following the steps of monks and nuns to practice one day and night as a *pabbajita* (出家者, forth-goer).

As seen in Hue City, the *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trai* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*) is often held at the Từ Đàm Temple (慈曇寺), central place for performing important annual ceremonies such as the *Buddha Jayanti* (佛誕), the *Ullambana* (盂蘭盆, *Filial Piety*), the *Uposatha* (布薩, *Precept Recital*), the *Pavāraṇā* (自恣, *Invitation*), etc.

Normally the layfollowers always assemble about 100 at the temple in the early mornings of the lunar days of 14th and 30th to receive the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭasīlamādavīma*, 八齋戒), stay there one day and night for diligent practice as a *pabbajita* (出家者, forth-goer); and then the next days of 15th or 1st, they return to their normal lives.⁽⁵¹⁾

Based on the *Essential Collections of Great Learning Book* (大學之書要集), the collections of rites for ordaining the *sāmaṇera*'s precepts, the *Upasampadā* (higher ordination), etc., the rite for ordaining the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭasīlamādavīma*, 八齋戒)⁽⁵²⁾ is recorded as follows:

After the layfollowers have assembled at the proper place for performing the rite, the guiding monk (引請師) guides the layfollowers to pay worship to the Triple Gem three times and after the latter have knelt down with joined palms, then the master instructs that:

“The sea of suffering is immense, without the compassionate boat of prajñā (般若, wisdom), one cannot get to the other shore. And if you wish to free from the round of saṃsāra (輪迴, rebirth), you must certainly follow the precepts. It is the Buddhas who on the basis of these precepts have attained the True Enlightenment. The Mahāyānists or Hinayānists all receive these; the forth goers or laity follow these together. Because the laity with many bondages cannot control themselves, then the Tathāgata laid down the rule of means which enables the laity to receive and follow these Eight Commandments (aṭasīlamādavīma, 八齋戒). Thanks to that, you can pass over the Three Existences (ti-bhava, 三有)⁽⁵³⁾ and directly attain the bodhi. You, from the time without beginning up to now, have created uncountable and immense evil deeds, now you should heartfully beg for confession so that your bodies and minds can be purified and clear; then after that receive these precepts. If you cannot do it by yourselves, then follow my instructions.”

(苦海無邊、非般若之慈航、莫能超登彼岸。輪迴欲免必須戒法。稟持諸佛因斯而成正覺。大乘小乘同受、出世在世共持。以在家塵累不能克念終身、是故如來方便教令一日一夜受持此八關法、功超三有直趣菩提。汝從無始以來、造諸惡業無量無邊、汝今至誠懇求懺悔、使身心淨潔、然後受持。汝若不能、今隨我道。)

Then the guiding monk guides the layfollowers to make confession as follows:

“I (name), from the time without beginning up to this day, have created offences such as the Three Kammas (ti-kamma, 三業),⁽⁵⁴⁾ the Ten Evil Things (dasākusala, 十惡),⁽⁵⁵⁾ and wrong views (micchāditthi, 邪見), etc.; now I face to the Triple Gem in ten directions to beg for confession and wish for the extinction of them all. Formerly I had made bad acts, all because of my greed, hatred and illusion in the old times; and also because of my body, words and mind; I now reveal and confess them all.”

(我從無始以來至于今日、所造三業十惡邪見等罪、今向十方三寶乞求懺悔、願悉除滅。我昔所造諸惡業、皆由無始貪瞋癡、從身語意之所生、一切我今皆懺悔。)

After the layfollowers having paid worship three time, knelt down with joined palms, the master goes on saying:

“The Buddhists, you have confessed already, then all your Three Kammas are purified. From today to tomorrow, you should study the Buddhas’ Eight Commandments. What are the eight? They are restraint from onslaught on creatures, restraint from taking what is not given, restraint from unchastity, restraint from lying, restraint from strong drink, restraint from using garlands, scents, unguents and wearing finery, restraint from dancing, singing and music, restraint from using high beds, large beds, and restraint from eating at wrong times. You should raise your mind in specialized sense to attain the supreme precepts. I will instruct and you should follow me.

I (name) take refuge in the Buddha, take refuge in the Dhamma, take refuge in the Saṅgha to be a purified layfollower (or woman layfollower). The Tathāgata, the Truly Enlightened One, is my Lord.”

(佛子上來懺悔已竟、三業皆悉清淨、從於今日至明日、學習諸佛八關齋法。云何爲八。謂不殺生、不偷盜、不婬欲、不妄語、不飲酒、不著香華及諸飾服、不歌舞伎觀聽、不坐高廣大床、不非辰食。汝等應發上心、得最上戒。我今教汝當隨我道。我皈依佛、皈依法、皈依僧、一日一夜爲淨行優婆塞 [優婆夷]、如來至真等正覺是我世尊。)

Next the master goes on ordaining the *Three Summaries* (三結):

“I so-and-so have already taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha to be a purified layfollower (or woman layfollower). The Tathāgata, the Truly Enlightened One, is my Lord.”

(我皈依佛法僧竟、一日一夜爲淨行優婆塞 [優婆夷]、如來至真等正覺是我世尊。)

Then the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭṣaṣamādaṅṅa*, 八齋戒) are ordained to the layfollowers as following:

“Likened to the Buddhas who during their lifetime restrained from onslaught on creatures, I will also restrain from onslaught on creatures for one day and night.

Likened to the Buddhas who during their lifetime restrained from taking what is not given, I will also restrain from taking what is not given for one day and night.

Likened to the Buddhas who during their lifetime restrained from unchastity, I will also restrain from unchastity for one day and night...”

(如諸佛盡壽不殺生、我一日一夜不殺生。如諸佛盡壽不偷盜、我一日一夜不偷盜。如諸佛盡壽不姪欲、我一日一夜不姪欲...)

The other precepts are also ordained with the same content as that. Then the layfollowers are guided to pay worship to the Triple Gem in ten directions, to the Sakyamuni Buddha and to the precept-ordaining master each 3 times. Thus is ending the rite for ordaining the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭṣaṣamādaṅṅa*, 八齋戒).

From this time on during one day and night, the ordained layfollowers lead a life the same as with monks and nuns. That is to say, living in the temple not the worldly home with their purified Three Kammās, reciting the sūtras at the afternoon as well as early morning sessions of the temple, listening to the Dhamma peaching, having lunch with special rite called *Zuā Dưỡng*, which is likened to the one utilised by monks and nuns during the three months of summer retreat. One notable thing is that because the layfollowers have received the

training rule of *not eating at the wrong time* (不非時食), therefore according to the rule they cannot have dinner; but in reality a so-called “*medicine*” meal (藥食) has been laid down, then they often have dinner with rice gruel only.

The next morning after the precept recital of monks has finished, they gather to listen again to their ordained Five Precepts. After the rite for release of the *Eight Commandments* (*aṭṣilamādavīma*, 八齋戒) has been performed, they return their own houses and to normal life.⁽⁵⁶⁾

The *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trại* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*) is popularised all over in Vietnamese temples. It can help the laity to improve their spiritual life through the practice the Buddha’s teachings and consolidate their faith in the Triple Gem as firmly as possible on one hand. On the other hand, the organization is also a force of strenuous support for temples, especially the rural temples, to cover partly the daily life of monks and nuns residing where the organization exists.

II. The *Đạo Tràng Pháp Hoa* (法華道場, *Lotus Flower Organization*)

Along with the presence of the above-mentioned *Đạo Tràng Bát Quan Trại* (八關齋道場, *Eight Commandment Organization*), some Vietnamese temples also hold another organization named the *Đạo Tràng Pháp Hoa* (法華道場, *Lotus Flower Organization*). As its name is, the organization is established on the basis of reciting the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, 法華經) only. Among Vietnamese translations of this sūtra, which includes 7 volumes with 27 chapters and was translated from Sanskrit to Chinese by *Kumārajīva* (鳩摩羅什, 350-409), the best and most popular one belongs to Most Ven. Thích Trí Tịnh (釋智淨), present Vice-Dhamma Lord (副法主) and Vinaya Supervisor (鑑律) of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

According to the conditions of each temple, the regulated dates and times for reciting the sūtra are different. However, as seen in Hue City, the organization always gathers at the Từ Đàm Temple (慈曇寺) with about 50 layfollowers or more

with all ages including members of the GDPT on Sunday mornings, when everybody is completely free from work to recite the sūtra. Among 27 chapters of the sūtra, each Sunday a chapter is recited in turn beginning with the foreword chapter called the *Anantanirdeśapraṭiṣṭhāna-samādhi* (無量義處三昧, *Innumerable Meaning*). Thus basically it takes 4 months to finish reciting the sūtra in this way.

Occasionally before or after reciting the sūtra, there is a Dhamma preaching for the Buddhist laity about the content, meaning of the sūtra or about the chapter that they have just recited.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The organization has also made remarkable contributions in helping the monks and nuns to stabilize their daily life on normal days as well as in 3 months of summer retreat by offering money and foods as well as other necessary things. It is also a meeting place for those of all ages to exchange understanding and knowledge about Buddhist teachings as well as practical experiences.

III. The *Hội Từ Thiện* (慈善會, *Charitable Association*)

Based on the spirit of manifesting compassion and saving other from suffering, the activities of social charity are taken seriously by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. It is considered as one of the most active and clear activity playing an important role in propagating the Buddha's teachings. One of the most outstanding organizations is the Tuệ Tĩnh Hall (慧靜堂), a well-known model of social charity under the name of a famous Vietnamese medical master, Tuệ Tĩnh (慧靜, 1330-?), living in the Trần Dynasty (陳朝, 1225-1400).⁽⁵⁸⁾ These organizations develop their activities around the nation, typically in cities such as Hochiminh, Hue, Đồng Nai, Bà Rịa-Vũng Tàu, etc. with 655 halls of traditional medicines for examining and curing in accordance with the spirit of national medicine.⁽⁵⁹⁾

Parallel to the outstanding activities of social charity performed by monks and nuns of the Social Charity Board of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, there exists some groups or associations of the same name run by the laity, mostly the Buddhists layfollowers who have been ordained in the Bodhisattva precepts (菩薩戒) or the Ten Good Virtues (十善戒) with the vows for the welfare and happiness

of the others. Sometimes these groups combine with monks and nuns to do charitable activities, but sometimes they act separately.

Normally there is the presence of a group with a few kind-hearted layfollowers at some temples under the leadership of monks or nuns. As for the case of a large area like a province, district, city, etc. there exists an association of social charity. Generally the purpose of these groups or associations aims at helping in rural and remote regions the poor, the disabled, or the victims in natural disasters such as storm, flood, etc.

Particularly in Hue area nowadays there is an association of social charity under the name of a Buddhist layman named Uncle Siêu, who has devoted all his life and wealth for this noble and human activity. As seen through its activities up to now in Hue area and neighbouring regions, its members often come to every family, who vowed to donate rice—or sometimes money—every month, to collect these things then deliver them to poor families. Furthermore, the association also is a frequent donator for temples in remote rural areas by offering rice, foods or money monthly.⁽⁶⁰⁾ These are essential Buddhist activities that the association always perform with the kind-heartedness and generosity of its members, who act without the attachment to what they have done and leave behind them nothing but a warm affection and deep faith of the people to Buddhism through their precious deeds.

However, their mind-cultivation is not neglected. The evidence is that its members often take part in reciting sūtras at funeral rites, or rites of praying for safety and peace for the sick, etc. for any family which needs their help. Especially when there are some families which cannot manage to invite monks to come for praying, then the members of this association will replace the role of monks. This mode of activity is very popular and highly appreciated by the Buddhists as well as non-Buddhists.

IV. The *Đạo Tràng Đồng Niệm* (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*)

Another representative organization of Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers I would like to introduce here is the *Đạo Tràng Đồng Niệm* (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*), a newly-born group of eager Buddhists in Hue City. Formerly it was the *Đạo Tràng Liên Trì* (蓮池道場, *Lotus Pond Organization*) of the Phú Lâu Temple, but now it has recently changed its above name and moved its place of practice to the Phổ Quang Temple (普光寺), located at the Phước Vĩnh Ward, Hue City.

Including all strata of laity and under the spiritual leadership of Ven. Thích Huệ Ấn (釋慧印), the abbot of the temple, the organization also aims at concentrating on pure mind-cultivation, but its mode of practice and the regulated dates are different from the above mentioned organizations. Members of the *Đạo Tràng Đồng Niệm* (同念道場, *Mutual Nembutsu Organization*) often assemble during one day on the lunar 17th of every month, the anniversary of the *Amitābha Buddha*, to recite the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經) and auspicious name of the *Amitābha Buddha*, listen to the Dhamma preaching and have lunch at the temple with the special rite called *quả đường*.⁽⁶¹⁾

This is an organization of practitioners which tends to the practice of Pure Land, that is to say, reciting together the *Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* (佛說阿彌陀經), and mainly the *Amitābha Buddha's* name with many times.

V. Remarks

Thus I have referred to some notable representative organizations of Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers which one can see their existence in most temples in Vietnam, typically in Hue City. Apart from these above-mentioned, there are many other organizations or groups established with the purpose of mind-cultivation such as the *Chàng Tịnh Độ* (淨土衆, *Pure Land Group*), the *Đạo Tràng Tịnh Nghiệp* (淨業道場, *Pure Kamma Organization*), the *Đạo Tràng Dược Sư* (藥師道場, *Bhaiṣajyaguru Organization*), *Đạo Tràng Thập Thiện* (十善道場, *Ten Good Virtue Organization*), each with a separate mode of practice as their names reveal; however, one common and unified aim that can be found out through

these organizations is that of practicing the Buddha's teachings as much and effectively as possible. Under the supervision and leadership of monks or nuns, these organizations act with order and discipline and enable the activities of the temples to become more and more active and lively. Usually every organization possesses from 100 to 500 layfollowers participating in the mind-cultivation such as listening to the Dhamma preaching, reciting the sūtras, practicing the mode of *dhūta* (頭陀, *scrupulous practice*), studying the Buddhist teachings, doing social charity, etc.⁽⁶²⁾

C. Summary

As the remarks recorded in the report concerning to the activities of the Vietnamese Buddhist layfollowers delivered at the Fourth Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in Hanoi in November, 1997, the GDPT as well as the above-mentioned organizations are *the spiritual meal that cannot be deficient in the daily life of the Buddhist laity*.⁽⁶³⁾

The GDPT are considered as the main centers for training and nourishing the younger generations to be eager and faithful Buddhists so that they can understand basic Buddhist teachings to make contributions to the development and prosperity of the Saṅgha, to be good and useful citizens and be filial sons and daughters toward their own parents, just the same as with the title which the Weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 185 has given to it, that of the *Gia Đình Phật Tử—an activity useful for Buddhism and essential for life*.⁽⁶⁴⁾ The members of this organization are strong buds in the garden of Vietnam Buddhism to supply the vitality and liveliness for the old generation, and are reliable and promising successors in the cause of propagating the Buddha's teaching to this world under the name of "*love and understanding*".

Along with the many-sided activities of the GDPT, the existence of the other organizations or groups of Buddhist lay followers plays an important and vital role in propagating the Buddhist teachings to the world beside the saṅgha of monks and nuns. They are reliable supporting forces providing a firm foundation for the

development of Buddhism, and also places for giving birth to religious spiritual leaders as Buddhist monks and nuns of any generation. As seen in Vietnam and in other Buddhist countries, although times change, their frequent practice and firm faith in Buddhism are unchangeable and immortal.

Notes:

1. See Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam: *Nội Quy - Quy Chế Huynh Trưởng*. Unknown publishing year, p.36, 37 (The Vietnam Gia Dinh Phat Tu: *By-law Regulations for Senior Elders*. Material for internal circulation)
2. Ibid, p. 40.
3. See Kiêm Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam*. Phật Học Viện Quốc Tế Xuất Bản, California, 1981, p. 46. (Kiem Dat: *History of the Vietnam Gia Dinh Phat Tu*, published by the International Buddhist Institute).
Also see Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* (越南佛教史論, *A Commentary on Vietnam Buddhism III*). Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học Hà Nội (Hanoi Literary Publishing Houses), 1994, pp. 48, 49.
4. See Kiêm Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* (*History of the Vietnam Gia Dinh Phat Tu*), p. 46.
5. Hội An Nam Phật Học (安南佛學會, Annam Buddhist Studies Association), a Buddhist organization in the Central Vietnam, which was founded in 1932 under the leadership of Most Ven. Thích Giác Tiên, founder of the Trúc Lâm Temple (竹林寺) in Hue city and a pioneer in the Buddhist promotion movement in Central Vietnam. Its main office was located at the leadership's temple. (Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* [越南佛教史論, *A Commentary Book on the History of the Vietnamese Buddhism 3*], pp. 91, 92)
6. See Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* (越南佛教史論, *A Commentary Book on the History of the Vietnamese Buddhism III*), p. 114.
The French title was named by Dr. Lê Đình Thám.
7. Ibid., p. 114.
8. The song *Hoa Sen Trang* in the French language is as follows:
*Rangeons nous, mes amis
pour chanter gaiement en chœur
Portons tous vers Bouddha
notre foi et notre ardeur
Engageons-nous à tout prix
sur la route qui monte brille*

Et ce chant s'élevé

pour unir nos jeunes cœurs

This song was composed by musician Bửu Bác and included 4 more passages, but after being translated into Vietnamese with the title as *Hoa Sen Trắng* (White Lotus), it remained as the above passage only. (See Nguyễn Lang: *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* [越南佛教史論, *A Commentary Book on the History of the Vietnamese Buddhism III*], pp. 156, 157.)

9. Ibid., p. 115.

10. A monthly Buddhist magazine which was established on December 1st, 1933.

11. The *Viên Âm* No. 48 was published in May, 1942.

12. According to Nguyễn Lang in his *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Sử Luận III* (越南佛教史論, *A Commentary Book on the History of the Vietnamese Buddhism III*, p. 116), the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*) was founded in 1944. I think this is not correct because the Magazine *Viên Âm* No. 59, which gave favourable comment on the assembly at the Quảng Tế Hill, was published in April 1943. Then the *Viên Âm* No. 59 must have been published at least after the assembly happened. Thus the year when the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*) was born must be 1943, which is in accordance with the remark of Kiên Đạt in his *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* (*History of the Vietnam Gia Đình Phật Tử*, California, 1981, p. 49).

13. The managing board consisted of:

- Phạm Hữu Bình in charge of general affairs.
 - Tráng Thông in charge of the activities of youngsters.
 - Đình Văn Vinh in charge of information and external works.
 - Đình Văn Nam in charge of Buddhist doctrine on the elementary level.
 - Lê Bối in charge of music and dance.
 - Nguyễn Hữu Quán in charge of organizing team formation, tenting and ceremony.
- Đình Văn Nam who later became a Buddhist monk with the religious name as Thích Minh Châu and now is a well-known monk both inside the country and internationally.

14. See Kiên Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* (*History of the Vietnam Gia*

Dinh Phat Tu), pp. 49, 50.

15. Ibid., p. 51.

16. In 1944, the *Gia Đình Phật Hóa Phổ* (佛化普家庭, *Family of Buddhist Popularization*) expanded its activities and established its organizations in some places in Hue City and its suburbs such as Thành Nội, Gia Hội, Vỹ Dạ, Nguyệt Biều, Thiên Mụ, etc. (See Kiên Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* [History of the Vietnam Gia Đình Phat Tu], p. 51)

17. Nguyễn Văn Thục: *Lược Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* (A Brief History of the Gia Đình Phat Tu). Internally circulated material, unknown publishing year, p. 2.

18. The landing of a French party at the port of Tourane (present-day Danang city) in August 1858, heralded the beginning of the colonial occupation which was to last almost a century.

19. On March 9th, 1945 realizing the allied victory was inevitable, Japan overthrew the French authorities in Indochina, imprisoned their civil servants and rendered Vietnam *independent* under Japanese *protection*, with King Bảo Đại as Chief of State.

20. The August Revolution began on the August 16th, 1945 when the Viet Minh announced the formation of a *National Committee of Liberation of Vietnam*. Three days later, Ho Chi Minh's guerilla forces took Hanoi and then turned to Hue city four days later. On September 2nd, 1945, Ho Chi Minh proclaimed himself president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at Ba Đình Square, Hanoi, North Vietnam.

21. On December 19, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh ordered a general offensive against the French in Hanoi plus the French garrisons in the South and Center. The decade long war for independence had begun and a confused period of contemporary Vietnamese history followed.

22. This organization was established on September 1931.

23. The Boy Scout movement arrived to Vietnam in 1930. One year later, in 1931, there appeared some official Boy Scout groups in Hải Phòng, Lạng Sơn, Na Cầm, North Vietnam and then in 1932 the first Boy Scout group was founded in South Vietnam; and up to 1934 the movement spread to Central Vietnam, specifically Hue city.

- (See Huỳnh Đức Linh: *Hướng Đạo Hàng Nhất (First Class Boy Scout)*. Văn Phòng Trung Ương Ấn Hành (published by the Central Office), 1972, pp. 45, 46.)
24. This group was also founded in Hanoi, North Vietnam.
25. Provincial associations which took part in the meeting were:
- Association Branches of the Central: Thừa Thiên, Lâm Viên, Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị, Quảng Nam, Đà Nẵng, Đồng Nai Thượng, Di Linh, Bình Thuận, Cam Ranh.
 - Association Branches of the North: Hà Nội, Hải Phòng.
26. See Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam: *Nội Quy, Quy Chế Huynh Trưởng (The Vietnam GDPT: By-law Regulations for Senior Elders)*. Unknown publishing year, material for internal circulation, p. 35.
- In Item 1 of the Rules and Regulations of the Vietnam Buddhist Association in the Central also reads:
- “In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of the Vietnam Buddhist Association in the Central, we have a Buddhist organization of youth and children under the name of Gia Đình Phật Tử.”* (See Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam tại Trung Phần: *Nội Quy-Chế* [Vietnam Buddhist Association in the Central: *Rules and Regulations*]. Unknown publishing year, material for internal circulation, p. 20)
27. Ibid., p. 20.
28. Ibid, p. 20.
29. See Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam: *Nội Quy, Quy Chế Huynh Trưởng (The Vietnam GDPT: By-law Regulations for Senior Elders)*, pp. 85, 86.
30. The regulated days of taking vegetarian diet for a Buddhist are the 15th and 30th of the lunar month. Beside these days, the anniversary days of *Sakyamuni*'s birth, enlightenment and passing-away as well as the anniversary days of the other Buddhas such as *Maitreya*, *Amitābha*, etc., of Bodhisattvas such as *Mañjuśrī*, *Samantabhadra*, *Avalokiteśvara*, *Kṣitigarbha*, etc. are regulated for those who have ordained in the Bodhisatva Precepts (*bodhisatva-sīla*, 菩薩戒). Naturally, those who have been ordained in the Five Precept (*pañca veramaṇī*, 五戒) can take vegetarian diet in these days as well due to their vow.
31. See Magazine *Vien Am* No. 109, 110 (1951).
32. See Kiêm Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam (History of the Vietnam Gia*

- Dinh Phat Tu*), p. 79. Also see Như Tâm: *Đại Trưởng (Troop Head)*. Unknown publishing year, material for internal circulation, pp. 19, 20.
33. As seen in Hue city, Hochiminh city and also in Hanoi city, the organization's activities are now performed every sunday afternoon, when one can have spare time to participate.
34. The song's Vietnamese words as following:
 “Kìa xem đóa sen trắng thơm !
 Nghìn hào quang chiếu sáng trên bùn !
 Hình dung Bốn Sư chúng ta
 Lòng từ bi, trí giác vô cùng...
 Đồng thề nguyện một dạ theo Phật !
 Nguyện sửa mình ngày càng thêm tinh khiết
 Đến bao giờ được tày sen ngát
 Tỏa hương thơm từ bi tận cùng...”
- (See Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam: *Nội Quy, Quy Chế Huynh Trưởng* [The Vietnam GDPT: *By-law Regulations for Senior Elders*], p. 51. Also see Kiêm Đạt: *Lịch Sử Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam* [History of the Vietnam Gia Dinh Phat Tu], p. 98)
35. See Nakamura Hajime, Fukunaga Mitsuji, Tamura Yoshiro, Konno Toru: *Bukkyo jiten (Buddhist Dictionary)*. Iwanami Shoten, 1989, p. 163. (中村元、福永光司、田村芳朗、今野達：「仏教辞典」岩波書店). This kind of grass is always used at religious ceremonials. Its scientific name is *Poa cynosuroides*. (See William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous: *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 204)
36. See Như Tâm: *Đại Trưởng (Troop Head)*. Unknown publishing year, material for internal circulation, p. 23.
37. *Oanh Vũ (suka, 鸚鵡)* is name of a parrot who was previous incarnation of the Buddha as told in the Jātaka.
38. See Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam tại Trung Phần: *Nội-Quy-Chế* (Vietnam Buddhist Association in the Central: *Rules and Regulations*). 1957, p. 22. Also see Tổng Vụ Thanh Niên Phật Tử: *Nội Quy Chương Trình Tu Học Các Cấp* (General Department of Buddhist Youth: *Bylaws of Studying Program of Ranks*). Ban Hướng Dẫn Thừa Thiên Ấn Hành (published by the Thua Thien Leading Board), 1972, pp. 2~4.

39. Quốc Ân Temple (國恩寺), located in Hue city, was founded by the Chinese Ch'an Master Yuan Shao (元韶禪師, ?-1728, in Vitenamese Nguyên Thiệu) in the late 17th century. It is considered as the patriarch temple of the Lin Chi (臨濟) Sect in Hue city.
40. Thuyền Tôn Temple (禪宗寺), also located in Hue city, was founded by Ch'an Master Liễu Quán (了觀禪師, 1670-1742) in the early 18th century. It is the patriarch temple of the Liễu Quán Sect in Hue city.
- Since these two temples play a very important role in the Buddhism of Hue city, their histories are a necessary part of the GDPT's studying program.
41. See Minh Châu, Thiên Ân, Chơn Trí, Đức Tâm: *Phật Pháp* (佛法, *Buddhist Teachings*). Thành Hội Phật Giáo Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (published by the Municipal Buddhist Association of Hochiminh city), 1997, pp. 7, 8, 9.
42. See Tổng Vụ Thanh Niên Phật Tử: *Nội Quy Chương Trình Tu Học Các Cấp* (General Department of Buddhist Youth: *By-laws of Studying Program of Ranks*), pp. 15~23.
43. Ibid., pp. 55~60.
44. See Gia Đình Phật Tử Việt Nam: *Nội Quy, Quy Chế Huynh Trưởng* (The Vietnam GDPT: *By-law Regulations for Senior Elders*), p. 124.
45. See Quốc Tuệ: *Công Cuộc Tranh Đấu của Phật Giáo Việt Nam* (*Struggles of Vietnamese Buddhism*). 1964, pp. 45, 337, 425, 473.
46. See Huỳnh Đức Linh: *Hướng Đạo Hàng Nhứt* (*First Class Boy Scout*). Văn Phòng Trung Ương Ấn Hành (published by the Central Office), 1972, pp. 61~63, 113~124, 149~155.
47. Ibid, p. 12.
48. See *Hướng Đạo Cho Trẻ Em* (*Scouting for Boys*). Trans. by Mai Liệu, Văn Thái Ấn Quán (Van Thai Publishing House), 1965, pp. 2, 3.
49. See Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam (Vietnam Buddhist Sangha): *Kỷ yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam lần thứ IV* (*Bulletin —4th Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha's Delegations*). Ban Văn Hóa Trung Ương (published by the Central Cultural Department), 1999, p. 23.
50. Ibid., p. 23.

51. Based on my field-works on March 2nd, 1999 at Hue City.
52. See *Essential Collection of Great Learning Book* (大學之書要集), republished in the beginning summer of the seventh year (1895) of King Thành Thái (成泰, 1889-1907)'s reign (成泰七年孟春新刊), the original is preserved at the Viên Thông Temple (圓通寺藏板), Hue City, pp. 9-11.
53. See note No. 1 of Chapter I: *Monks—Daily Life and Activities*.
54. The *Three Kammās* or *Conditions* (三業) are deed (*kāya*, 身), words (*mukha*, 口) and thought (*manas*, 意).
55. The *Ten Evil Things* (*dasākusala*, 十惡) consist of killing, stealing, adultery, lying, double-tongue, coarse language, filthy language, covetousness, anger, perverted views.
55. Based on my field-works on March 2nd, 1999 at Hue City.
57. Ibid.
58. About the biography of Master Tuệ Tĩnh, see note No. 83 of Chapter I: *Monks—Daily Life and Activities*.
59. See Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam (Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha): *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam lần thứ IV* (Bulletin—4th Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's Delegations). Ban Văn Hóa Trung Ương (published by the Central Cultural Department), 1999, p. 24.
60. Based on my field-works on March 4th, 1999 at Hue City.
61. Based on my field-works on March 31st, 1999 at Hue City.
62. See See Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam (Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha): *Kỷ Yếu Đại Hội Đại Biểu Phật Giáo Toàn Quốc Giáo Hội Phật Giáo Việt Nam lần thứ IV* (Bulletin—4th Nationwide Conference of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's Delegations). Ban Văn Hóa Trung Ương (published by the Central Cultural Department), 1999, p. 23.
63. Ibid., p. 23.
64. See the Weekly Buddhist Magazine Giác Ngộ (覺悟, *Enlightenment*) No. 185 (October 16th, 1999), pp. 11, 30.

Conclusion

Thus I have discussed many facets of contemporary Buddhism in Vietnam and presented multi-coloured picture of the modes of practice, ways of living, social activities of the Vietnamese monks, nuns and layfollowers of the three Buddhist sects, Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Khất Sĩ (Mendicant). My only goal was to introduce the traditional essence, values and characteristics of the Vietnamese Buddhism in English to the world in general.

As seen nowadays in Vietnam, the monks and nuns of these Buddhist sects unite to look forward together to one goal, that is to say, to construct a prosperous Vietnamese Buddhist community. To unite in one saṅgha for mutual study, for inter-exchange, understanding and sympathy each to the other shares the tradition of Vietnamese Buddhism through the glass of King Trần Nhân Tông (陳仁宗, 1279-1293 in reign) with the unification of the three former sects, viz. *Vinītaruci* (比尼多流支), Vô Ngôn Thông (無言通) and Thảo Đường (草堂) under the Trần Dynasty (陳朝, 1225-1400).

During a few decades at the end of the 20th century, Vietnamese Buddhism have made progressive and successful achievements in the field of training and educating its monks and nuns. The evidence is that apart from two Buddhist Institutes in Hochiminh City of the South and in Hanoi of the North, another institute has been born recently in Hue City of Central Vietnam. Besides, in parallel with these, a system of many Basic Schools of Buddhist Studies have also been established throughout the nation to meet the need of studying the Buddhist teachings for monks and nuns. The harmonious combination between education of ethics at temples and the education of knowledge at Buddhist schools is one of the vital and important duties the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha has to perform as effectively as possible on the threshold of this new two millennium. By doing so, on the one hand, the Vietnamese monks and nuns can be the worthy spiritual leader of the people, and can make valuable contributions to the Buddhist studies to the world.

Buddhism has deeply rooted in the heart of the nation of Vietnam through

many generations and always plays a necessary role as a spiritually religious meal for the Vietnamese people through the existence of its ngôi chùa (temples) and its monks and nuns. Many annual festivals are performed at the temples, where the culture of Chinese characters are preserved up to now, although the Vietnamese language has been romanized for a long time ago. Therefore, the Vietnamese chùa also are the places to store the national traditions as well as styles of living.

To strengthen and improve the position and the values of the chùa are also the responsibility of the Vietnamese monks and nuns in their cause of propagating the teachings of loving-kindness and emancipation of the people. With all my wishes, I hope that no matter how the times have and will change, the Vietnamese Buddhism always preserves its precious essence and traditions.

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論文提出者：ホアン・トロン・ソー
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この論文は、『現代ベトナムの仏教—フエ市を中心として—』 (Contemporary Buddhism in Vietnam—A Focus on the Hue Area—) という題目であるが、その要旨をここに紹介する前に、この題目を選んだ理由の説明が必要と思われる。

私は、前田恵學教授の著『現代スリランカ上座仏教』(山喜房仏書林、1986)を読んで、深い興味を持ち、大変に貴重な研究であることを知った。やはり、ある国の仏教を知ろうとする時、その仏教の歴史的側面だけを研究しても、不十分だろうと考えた。「パーリ語の聖典だけを読んで、それだけで、南方の仏教が分かったように考える時代は、すでに終わっている。」(p. 4)とその「まえがき」にあるように、現代の仏教の姿を研究する必要がある。ベトナムでもそのような研究は、今まで全くない。勿論ベトナムの仏教について書かれた研究書としては、ベトナム語ならびに外国語のものが多少見られるものの、現代ベトナムの仏教については、外国語のものではなく、ベトナム語のものも全く見られない。そこでベトナム仏教における僧侶と尼僧たちの生活や生き方の特徴とその価値を世界に紹介したいと考えた。以上の理由で、現代ベトナム仏教を取り上げた。

まだ誰も研究していない分野であったので、この論文を書くことは、当初私には困難な仕事であった。しかしながら、逆に研究している間に本当に面白いテーマだと感じるようになった。この論文が完全に出来上がるまでには今までの文献資料を当ると共にベトナムにおける現地調査を何度も繰り返した。

現在ベトナム仏教は、大乘と上座仏教の他にベトナム独自の「乞士」という三つの宗派がある。この論文は、六章から成っている。第一章は「僧侶—生活と活動」(Monks—Life and Activities)であり、第二章は「尼僧—生活と活動」(Nuns—Life and Activities)、第三章は「ベトナムにおける仏教の伝統儀礼と年中行事」(Buddhist Traditional Rituals & Annual Festivals in Vietnam)であり、第四章は「ベトナムにおける上座仏教」(Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam)、第五章は「ベトナムの乞士派」(The Vietnamese Khat Si Sect)、第六章は「ベトナム仏教における佛子家庭と他の仏教徒達の協会」(The Gia Dinh Phat Tu and Some Other Organizations in Vietnam Buddhism)である。

1、第一章には、ベトナムの大乘仏教の僧侶の日常生活と活動を中心して論じた。まず、本来のベトナムの仏教の本格的な修行をする比丘になる前の三つの段階を紹介した。その三つの段階とは、ディエウ(初心者、beginning practitioner)と沙彌(sāmaṇera)と比丘(bhikkhu)である。

修行に入ると、誰しもこの三つの段階を越えなくてはならない。その中でディエウという修行の段階が一番大事だと考えられている。ベトナムでは、年齢を限定されず「発心」で出家するディエウは、まだ五戒を受けていない場合であれば、その戒律を授けられ、見習い僧の修行に入る。当然ながら、この見習い僧であるディエウ(dieu)は、出家者と考えられず、その髪を剃らせない。少なくともおよそ一年の見習いの修行をさせる。その後、本人が出家の決意が堅ければ、出家式を行い、中国の初心者のように剃髪し、頂上に少しの髪を残させる。髪を残す理由は、出家したあと本人が世俗に戻る可能性のあることを意味している。また本人にもその機会を与えるものである。それと同時に、その髪は初心者の煩惱と渴愛を表すシンボルであるとも考える。見習い中にディエウは、漢文で戒律を述べた『毘尼日用切要』や『禪門日用』などの諸経を学び覚えて、禪門の作務や毎日の勤行や事師など

に努力して参加しなければならないということを学ぶ。

ディエウの一年ぐらいの見習いの期間が終わると、沙彌の第二段階に入る。初心者は、師から許可を得て、沙彌の十戒の受戒に参加し、以前残していた頂上の髪を剃る。沙彌になったあと、本人は教団のメンバーの中の一人になって、教団の権利を享受することが出来る。現在ベトナムで、沙彌の授戒式は、自分の寺で行う場合もあるが、他の場所で行われる授戒式に参加して受ける場合も多く見られる。十戒を受けたあと、その沙彌は、師の教えに従って漢文の『沙彌律儀要略』・『瀉山警策』さらに『毘尼日用切要』など重要な諸経典を勉強し、覚えなくてはならない。それらの経典は、将来の比丘の授戒式に関ることがあるからである。現在ベトナムの大乗・上座・乞士の殆どの沙彌たちは、ベトナム仏教教会が創立した「基本仏教学校」で教理を学んでいる。

その沙彌は、戒律に書かれているように二十才になると、師の許可を得て、比丘の授戒式に参加する。しかし、実際には、二十才になっても比丘の受戒をさせない場合も多々ある。なぜならば、本人の心構えと威儀がまだ成熟していないことがあるからである。ベトナムでは、比丘になると、尊敬や供養などを得て、人々の模範となり精神的な師となると考えるので、比丘の授戒式に参加する前には、本格的に口頭の試験を行う。それまでに勉強し覚えた諸経典、特に『瀉山警策』を誦読させる。合格すれば、新比丘になる。もし本人が、試験に失格し、或はその『瀉山警策』を覚えていなければ、もはやその沙彌は授戒式に参加する許可を与えられないであろう。このような厳しいルールはベトナムでよく見られるところである。

しかし一方普段に希望をする信者たちのために、ベトナム仏教教会は、授戒式を菩薩戒だけを伝授する場も開いている。その菩薩戒だけを受戒する仏教の信者たちは、授戒式が終わったあと供養式を行って、新比丘に比丘の日用品を布施する。さて新比丘たちは、教団から『四分律』を頂戴する。地方の仏教教会も新比丘のために戒律を学ぶ場を設ける。現在殆どベトナムの大乗の比丘たちは、「基本仏教学校」

や「仏教学院」に入り、仏教の教えを勉強するが、また一般の大学で学ぶ場合もある。以上のような三つの修行の段階を、ベトナム仏教がもっとも重要だと考えていることを明らかにした。

比丘になった後、様々な義務や責任がある。毎月布薩 (uposatha) に二回参加し、毎年一回の安居 (vassa) と自恣 (pavāraṇā) に参加しなければならない。まず、布薩は、地方の中心寺院で毎月二回で行われる。フェ市の場合、有名な「慈曇寺」に僧侶たちが集まって布薩式を行っている。しかし、ホー・チ・ミン市の場合、僧侶の人数と寺院がフェ市より多いので、僧侶たちは近くにある有名で大きな寺院に集合して布薩式を行うことが普通である。しかし、どこで布薩を行ってもベトナム僧侶は、布薩式で行う内容は同じである。その式の次第を述べると、式の前日に発露と懺悔を行って、当日には『四分律』の戒本 (Prātimokṣa) を読むための戒師を選ぶこと、病気の比丘からの與欲と清浄を教団に報告すること、比丘尼に対する説教をすることなどが行わなければならない。本番の布薩式に入ると、戒本の序が読まれ、「四波羅夷法」 (: P. cattāro pārājikā dhammā) と「十三僧伽婆尸沙法」 (: P. terasa saṅghādisesa dhammā) と「二不定法」 (: P. dve aniyattā dhammā) を読み聞かせる。その他の戒律は略として読む場合が多い。そのようにベトナムのどこでもよく見られる例をこの論文で明らかにした。また、僧伽が布薩を行うときに、在家の信者は、この善き機会を利用して「八閔齋戒」 (aṣṭāṅga-samanvāgata-upavāsa) を受け、その布薩を行う寺で一日一夜という出家の修行に参加することが普通である。

続いて、安居についてであるが、地方によっては安居に入る時期が少し異なる。大方ベトナムの大乗仏教の僧侶たちは毎年旧暦の4月16日から7月15日までの三ヶ月間安居に入る。ベトナムのフェ市の場合、僧侶たちは、自分の寺で安居を過ごす。ホー・チ・ミン市では、フェ市と同じ場合もあるし、また安居センターも多くあり、そのセンターに約百人の僧侶が集まるようなことも見られる。これは、ベト

ナムの仏教の安居の特徴の一つである。

この章では、安居に入る式を紹介した。安居に入ると、特別の日課生活のスケジュールが設定されるが、それは、僧侶たちが三ヶ月間の修行と学習に集中することを目指すのである。その例として「興國寺」という有名な安居センターの特別の日常生活のスケジュールについてとくに紹介した。このスケジュールを取り上げることによって、特にホー・チ・ミン市にある安居センターで安居の様々な活動、すなわち、毎日の説法の時間が設定されていること、特別の「過堂」という昼食の式が行われていること、夕方に「浄土課礼」が終わった後座禅や経行に専念していることなどを明らかにした。特に、安居の間に、ベトナム大乘の僧侶たちが一番大切にするのは、読経と懺悔であるが、普段と違って安居の中で常に読むべき諸経典でもっとも重要な経典は『華嚴經』(Mahāvaiṣṭya-buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra)や『大般涅槃經』(Mahāpari-nirvāṇasūtra)や『法華經』(Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra)などである。従って、懺悔のために読むべき諸経典には、『水懺經』や『梁皇懺經』などが使われる。そして、「盂蘭盆會」になる旧暦の7月15日のおよそ一週間前に、ベトナムの僧侶たちが、『盂蘭盆經』(Ullambanasūtra)や『父母恩重經』を読み始め、在家の信者も参加することなど、ベトナムの仏教の安居の豊かな修行を明らかにして来た。現在ベトナムでは、三ヶ月間の安居、或は三ヶ月間の禁足といっても、やはり、僧侶たちは普段よりこの間がもっとも忙しい時期である。なぜならば、在家の信者たちは、この三ヶ月間に僧侶たちが一所懸命専念し、懺悔し、修行しているから、この時こそ僧侶たちには功德力があると考えて、僧侶たちに「大施餓鬼」や「解怨拔度」などという聖なる重要な仏事を依頼するからである。

三ヶ月間の安居を終りには、僧侶たちは必ず自恣(pavāraṇā)の式を行う。その三ヶ月間になしたかもしれない罪過を告白し、その罪過を懺悔する。特に、ホー・チ・ミン市における諸寺院と安居センターでは、この自恣式と共に「謝法」という式をも同時に行うが、在家の信者は、この機会を利用して、供養をしたりや祝いの

儀式を行うことが、ベトナムの各地でよく見られる。

次には、ベトナムの僧侶たちが日々どういう風に生活し、活動するかについて、フエ市でいつも授戒式が行われることで有名な「報國寺」と座禅の修行でよく知られる諸禅院の中で「常照禅院」、との両者の日課表を取り上げて、比較しながら、代表的な僧侶の活動を紹介した。これらを見れば、寺院によって異同のあることが明らかになった。やはり、殆どのベトナムの大乗仏教僧たちは、基本的に禅宗「臨済宗」であるが、修行法で見れば、純粹な禅宗ではなく、「密宗」と「浄土宗」との深い関りがあることが分かった。普段僧侶たちが参加する主な「朝時課誦」や「暮時課誦」との二つの日課勤行で分かるし、また、「大施餓鬼」や「解怨拔度」などという重要な仏教行事で僧侶たちが読誦する聖なる諸神咒でもその姿が理解できる。

最後に、現在ベトナムでは多くの僧侶が「臨済宗」に属するが、僧侶たちにどんな風に法名や法号を付けるか。また、在家の信者たちにどんな風に法名を僧侶が与えるかについて、フエの地方におけるベトナムの「臨済宗」に属する典型的な「了觀派」の偈を取り上げて解説した。

2、第二章では、現在ベトナムの尼僧の生活、修行、活動について紹介した。その前に、まずベトナムの尼僧の創立者とされる「妙仁尼師」の生涯に言及した。この妙仁尼師以前すでに尼僧がいたかもしれないが、ベトナムの歴史の資料と仏教の文献では、この「妙仁尼師」の記録が最初であることを明らかにした。この妙仁尼師は、漢文で書かれたベトナムの仏教史『禪苑集英』の文献に現れるたった一人の尼僧である。

現在ベトナムの尼僧の人数(9,718)は僧侶の数(8,893)より多いが、しかし尼僧たちの生活や活動などについての研究は、ベトナムではあまり関心がもたれていないようである。ベトナム語でこの研究について論文が書かれていない事からも判

る。しかし私はこの論文の第二章で、特にベトナムの尼僧について紹介した。

まず、ベトナムの尼僧の修行の段階を見た。尼僧になるためにディエウと沙彌尼 (sāmaṇerī) と式叉摩那 (sikkhamānā) と比丘尼 (bhikkhunī) になる四つの段階がある。ベトナムの大乗仏教の女性のディエウ (初心者) は、二から四年の見習い期間を過ごさなければならないが、沙彌尼 (sāmaṇerī) の場合で、二年ぐらいで、比丘尼になる前の式叉摩那 (sikkhamānā) も二年程度の修行しなければならないのである。こうすることで、比丘尼になるまでに、ベトナムの女性の修行者は少なくとも六年間ぐらいかかることが判った。尼僧たちは、僧侶と同じように、見習いの間に『滄山警策』・『毘尼日用切要』・『沙彌尼律儀要略』などの諸經典を学んで覚えることが課せられる。

特に、比丘尼が受戒したあと、必ず比丘尼の教団へ赴いて比丘の教団に礼拝し、再び受戒を比丘の教団から求めることや、布薩・安居・自恣のとき必ず比丘の教団へ行って教誡を求めることなどは、ベトナムの比丘尼の教団が世尊によって規定された「八敬法」 (aṭṭha-garudhammā) を厳しく守っていることと言えるのであろう。

さてベトナムの尼僧たちには、一般の寺院に住む場合と禅院に修行する場合とがある。フェ市における有名な「鴻恩尼寺」とベトナムの南部にある、170人の尼僧が住んでいる巨大な「圓照禅院」の二の日課生活のスケジュールのケースを比較、言及しながらその違いを論述した。

一般の諸寺院の尼僧は、僧侶と同様に「浄土」への往生を求める修行をする傾向がある。尼僧の諸寺院では、僧侶の諸寺院と同じように、「朝時課誦」と「暮時課誦」があり、更に毎月二回の「発露」と二回の「懺悔」と二回の「祝讚」があり、寺院に属する尼僧は必ず参加しなくてはならない。その「二時課誦」にベトナムの僧侶と尼僧達が誦読する諸經典は『楞嚴神咒』 (Śūraṅgama-mantra) ・『大悲咒』 (Mahākaruṇā-dhāraṇī) ・『佛說阿彌陀經』 (Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra) ・『蒙

山施食文』などである。近年昔と違って若い尼僧たちに学習するための時間が用意されている。彼女等の生活は殆ど自給自足であることは、供養によって生活する男性の僧侶と違う特徴である。

一方、尼僧の諸禅院で、尼僧の生活は一般の尼僧の諸寺院と同様に自給自足であるが、座禅と経行と入室と日用懺悔という禅宗の修行法を重視する。更にこの尼僧の諸禅院では、「朝時課誦」と「暮時課誦」で毎日懺悔を行うこととや、「般若心経」(Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra) だけしか読まないことは、上記の一般の尼僧の諸寺院の修行と異なる点である。

ベトナムの尼僧たちが、どういう風に安居に入るかについて、以上述べた二つの尼僧の寺院と他にホー・チ・ミン市にある大きな集中安居センターである「慧林尼院」の三つの特別の安居スケジュールを取り上げて紹介した。これらのスケジュールを見ると、僧侶の場合と同じように安居の間は誦経や懺悔や座禅を重視することが分かった。

もう一つ言及したのは、ベトナムで僧侶たちは、仏教の儀式や行事、或は在家の信者たちのための喪式などという仏事を行う時大きな役割を演ずるが、尼僧たちは慈善の活動しかを行えないことについてである。ベトナムの尼僧たちは、僧侶の教団に隷属し、社会へ出て活動することがあまりないというのが現実である。

3、第三章では、現在ベトナムの大乗仏教の僧侶たちが行っている様々な仏教の儀式と仏教的な年中行事を紹介した。

まず、仏教の儀礼と言えば、これは仏教を伝道する一つの方法であり、この儀礼によって信仰が深くなるというものである。儀礼は仏教徒の日常生活の中でおおきな役割を演じていると考えるのである。また、出家者のための儀礼と在家のための儀礼という二つのものがある。出家者のための儀礼の中に、寺院で僧侶と尼僧たちが行っている儀礼と、更に亡くなった出家者の喪式もある。この中の色々な儀礼

で、毎月出家者が行う「祝讃」という重要な儀式を取り上げ、紹介した。この儀式によって、ベトナムの出家者たちがどういう風に報恩の精神を表現するかを明らかにした。

そして、在家のための儀礼には、ベトナム語でいう「求超」と「求安」という二種類の儀礼があるが、「求超」とは、阿弥陀仏の極樂、或は浄土へ超入するために願い求めることであり、また「求安」とは、生きている者のために安泰や安樂を願って求めることである。この二つの仏事は現在ベトナムの僧侶たちが在家の信者の依頼で毎日行っているものである。

まず、「求超」という様々な諸儀礼の種類の中で、「入棺礼」・「復魂礼」・「開経成服礼」・「朝奠礼」・「午供礼」・「謁祖礼」・「施餓鬼礼」・「夕奠礼」・「祈超大礼」・「告道路礼」・「遺棺・移棺礼」・「済路中礼」・「治穴礼」・「下穴礼」・「安靈礼」というベトナムの喪中の仏教的な儀礼と、「初七齋旬礼」・「終七齋旬礼」・「百日齋旬礼」・「小祥礼」・「大祥礼」・「大施餓鬼礼」という喪式の後の重要な諸儀礼を取り上げ、紹介した。

次は、「求安」という儀礼では、病人のための儀礼や「安位仏礼」などを紹介した。

これらの儀礼を見れば、ベトナムの仏教徒がどういう風に仏教に深い信仰をもつか、また仏教の他の宗教である道教や儒教にどんな影響を与えたかについて言及した。ともかくベトナムの僧侶たちがいかに忙しいかをここで記述し明らかにした。

続いて、現在ベトナムの寺院で、仏教の伝統としての年中行事については、旧正月の「テット」(Tet)・旧4月15日の「仏誕礼」(Buddha Jayanti Festival)・旧7月15日の「盂蘭盆礼」(Ullambana Festival)という重要な行事を解説した。また、地方で行われる行事を取り上げて紹介した。

これらの年中行事を見ると、ベトナムの仏教の寺院がどんな社会的役割を果たしているか、また在家の信者の日々の生活の中にどんな意味を持っているか、この章

で論じた。

4、この第四章では、これまで殆ど研究されてもおらず世界にほとんど紹介されていないベトナムの上座仏教の僧侶の修行法や日課生活、活動などについて紹介した。

まず、ベトナムの上座仏教が何時ベトナムに伝わったか、何処から伝承されたかについて明らかにした。

一説では、上座仏教はアショーカ (Asoka) 王から派遣されたソーナ (Sona) とウッタラ (Uttara) の指導した伝教の派遣団によって、紀元前の3世紀ごろベトナムの北の地域に伝わったという。しかしこの説は信用が出来ない。なぜなら現在上座仏教の寺院、或はその遺跡が北部のほうに全く残っていないこと、あるいはベトナムの仏教と国の歴史的な文献である『禪苑集英』や『大南禪苑傳燈集録』や『大越史記全書』などにも、こうした上座仏教について触れられていないからである。

従って、現在のベトナムの上座仏教は、1939年にカンボジアに修行したベトナムの僧侶である「護宗」によってベトナムの南部にあるサイ・ゴン市 (現在ホーチ・ミン市) に伝えられたことを明らかにした。

すなわちベトナムの上座仏教の修業法は、カンボジア仏教から影響を深く受けていることが推察されるが、実際にはそうばかりではない。この問題を解明するために、フェ市に初めて創立された上座仏教の寺院僧光寺のスケジュールを取り上げて説明した。このスケジュールを見、ビルマの上座仏教の僧侶のスケジュールと比較すると、ベトナムの上座仏教の僧侶たちの日課生活は、ビルマの修行法にむしろ近いことが判る。しかし、このことだけで結論することは不十分だと思われる。さらにもう一つ、現在ベトナムの上座仏教の僧侶たちと在家の信者たちが使っている「経誦」や「儀式誦念」や「パーリ経誦」などを見ると、ビルマの上座仏教の僧侶たちが読誦する経 (sutta) ・偈 (gāthā) ・護咒 (paritta) を引用していることが明

白である。すなわちベトナムの上座仏教の修行法が、ビルマの上座仏教にも近いと言える。しかし私が現地で調査していると、ある寺院で、タイの修行法を学んで実行しているという返答をえた。ベトナムの上座仏教は、ビルマとタイの影響をも受けているともいえるのである。

しかし、一般の上座仏教と比較してベトナムの上座仏教をみると、また独特の幾つかの異なる特徴をも持っている。ひとつは比丘になる段階であり、特に「盂蘭盆会」などという年中行事である。

まず、比丘になる段階と言えば、他の上座仏教の国々と違って、ベトナムでは三つの階段があり、ディエウ (dieu) と沙彌と比丘がある。こう見れば、ベトナムの上座仏教が、大乘仏教の修行の段階の影響を受けていることが判る。次に、ベトナムの大乘仏教と同じように、ベトナムの上座仏教も毎年の旧暦で7月15日に「盂蘭盆会」を行っている。その時に大乘仏教が使う「赤いバラ」と「白いバラ」をベトナムの上座仏教も取り入れて使うことは、どこでも見られる。大乘仏教の一つの影響と言えるのであろう。

他には、全国の授戒式で大乘仏教と上座仏教と乞士派との僧侶たちと尼僧たちが同時に参加し、また、授戒式の「三師七証」の中でも、この三つの宗派の僧侶たちが一緒に参加する。また現在ベトナムの「仏教基本学校」や「越南仏教学院」でも、この三つの宗派の学徒が通っている。このような事情は、他の国ではなく、ベトナムでしか見られないと言えるのであろう。

続いて、ベトナムの上座仏教の僧侶たちは、毎年伝統的な安居をおこなうが、大乘仏教と違って、旧暦の6月16日に安居に入って、三ヶ月間の安居が終わると、「自恣」 (pavāraṇā) を行う。この間に、説法や頭陀 (dhūta) の修習や座禅という様々な修行を行う。「自恣」の日に、ベトナムの上座仏教の在家の信者たちは、功德衣 (kaṭhina) の本格的な供養式を行って僧侶たちに供養をする。このような供養式は、現在ベトナムの大乘仏教と上座仏教の両者で見られるものである。現在ベトナム

ムの上座仏教の僧侶たちは、仏教学校で大乘仏教の僧侶たちと一緒に教理を学んで、様々な慈善の活動を行っている。しかしベトナムで上座仏教の僧侶たちの役割はあまり大きくないことを明らかにした。

5、第五章には、ベトナムの上座仏教よりあとに成立した「乞士派」という独特な仏教宗派とその僧侶、尼僧の修行法や日課生活や活動などについて記述した。

この宗派は、1944年に明燈光というベトナムの僧侶が創立した。それでまずこの宗派の創立者の生涯を言及する必要があると思われた。彼は、カンボジアで15才で出家し、四年間修行したあと、ベトナムに帰って自分の独自の道を取りベトナムの南部で伝道した。彼の主張は、乞食（托鉢）を中心としたので、宗派の名をその主張を基づいて「乞士」にしたと考えられる。

この宗派から得られた情報によれば、彼はカンボジアで出家した時の師について記録されていないが、カンボジアが上座仏教の国であるから、彼の師が上座仏教の僧侶であったことは当然である。更に、彼の主張を見れば、やはり「乞食」というのは、元々は上座仏教の修行法なのである。さらに現在、彼の継承者たちが着ている袈裟を見れば、上座仏教と同じものだ。

このような論点で、彼が最初に学んだ教理が上座仏教のものだと判明した。当時ベトナムで既に大乘仏教と上座仏教は伝っていたが、彼は、この二つの宗派に従わず、自分の独自の宗派を創立したのである。現在のこの宗派の修行法と生活を見ると、純粹の上座仏教のものではなく、また、大乘仏教のものでもないのである。

この問題を明らかにするために、この宗派の創立者が書いた『眞理』とその僧侶と尼僧たちが使っている『儀式誦念』に基づいて論じてみた。この二つの資料には、上座仏教の様々な教理が載っているが、同時に大乘仏教の教理もある。それらは、観世音菩薩 (Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva) や地蔵菩薩 (Kṣītigarbha Bodhisattva) への信仰と、阿弥陀仏 (Amitābha Buddha) の極楽 (Sukhāvati) の思想などである。

更に、この宗派の僧侶と尼僧たちが読誦する『普門経』・『阿弥陀経』（Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra）・『般若心経』（Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra）・『盂蘭盆経』（Ullambana-sūtra）・『父母恩重経』などという大乘仏教の諸経典が見られることによっても、この宗派が上座仏教と大乘仏教とが混成したものであることを明らかになった。そして、この宗派のもう一つの特徴について、この宗派の「越化」（Vietization 現代ベトナム語化）と「詩化」（poetization ベトナム語詩化）された『儀式誦念』という経典を見た。僧侶と尼僧たち着ている袈裟とその袈裟の作り方についてもこの章にその全体を紹介したものである。

続いて、現在この宗派の僧侶たちと尼僧たちが、どういう風に生活し、修業し、社会的活動するかについて、以前この宗派の創立者が設けた「涅槃時刻表」と、現在この宗派の本部であるホー・チ・ミン市にある「中心精舎」の日課の時刻表と、この宗派の尼僧の本部である「玉芳精舎」の時刻表を比較しながら、この宗派の特徴を紹介した。

以前に設けられた涅槃時刻表と現在この宗派の僧侶と尼僧たちが使っている二つの時刻表と比較してみると、やはり、異同があるであろう。以前この宗派の創立者の時代には、僧侶と尼僧たちは殆ど座禅や托鉢を中心にしたので、毎日一食だけで過ごしていた。しかし現在僧侶と尼僧たちが使っている二つの時刻表を見れば、座禅の他に、「朝時課誦」と「暮時課誦」が設定されており、毎日三食があることは、創立時と現在の修行法では、だいぶ変化していることが明らかになった。今この宗派の僧侶と尼僧たちが、殆ど托鉢しないで、大乘と上座の教理の勉強に集中するようになってきていることも分かってきた。ベトナムの仏教学校には乞士派の多くの僧侶と尼僧たちが通っている。また、中国とインドにもこの宗派から留学して学んでいる僧侶と尼僧もいるのである。ベトナムの乞士派は、最近に成立したものであるけれども、現在1879人の僧侶と尼僧のがあって、全国に寺院が516箇所があるということから、この宗派に大変人気ある事が判り、民衆に信頼されていることが

見られる。しかしこの宗派の活動の領域は、ベトナムの南部にしか見られない。中部のフェ市と北部のハノイ市では、その寺院と僧侶と尼僧の姿は見れない。北部と中部では大乘仏教の信仰が根深く、乞士派でも、また上座仏教の修行法でも、この二つの地方では信仰を得られないようである。その理由を典型的な例としてフェ市の場合で見ると、この乞士派と上座仏教との托鉢という修行法が、フェ市の民衆にとってあやしいものと映っているということ、上座仏教のパーリ語の経典と乞士派の「越化」の経典は、いつも漢文の経典を使っているフェ市の仏教徒が慣れていないということなどであることを明らかにした。

次は、乞士派の僧侶と尼僧たちが守っている比丘戒250条、比丘尼戒348条の他に、その創立者によって設定された114箇条を紹介した。

6、第六章では、在家の信者たちがどのように修行し、活動し、また仏教と社会に対して役割をどういう風に演じているかについて、有名な「仏子家庭」(Gia Dinh Phat Tu) という組織と、「八関斎」・「法華」・「同念」という諸道場を取り上げ、紹介した。

「仏子家庭」(Gia Dinh Phat Tu) の歴史をまず見た。初めにその前身である「童幼仏子団」・「青年仏学徳育団」・「仏化普家庭」の目的や方向や仏教の教えの普及などの活動を取り上げ、説明した。1951年になって、この三団体から「仏子家庭」がフェ市で生まれた。このように三つの団体が一つになった結果として、仏教の活動が個別的分野の小さい活動から大きな活動に広がったことと、すなわち児童とか青年だけに教育を施すのではなく、在家の信者の家庭全体を対象にするようになったことを明らかにした。

この「仏子家庭」が生まれたあと、どういう活動をしたかということ、そのメンバーに対するどんな道徳の訓練や仏教の教えの学習のプログラム、現在この組織がどういう風に存在しているかということ、また社会や仏教教会にどんな役割を演

じ、貢献しているかということについてこの章で解明した。

続いて、この「仏子家庭」の他で、フエ地方にある在家の信者の組織「八関齋」・「法華」・「同念」という諸道場と「慈善会」をも取り上げて紹介した。

「八関齋道場」というグループは、毎月二回メンバーが集まって、「八関齋戒」(aṣṭāṅga-samanvāgata-upavāsa)を受け、一日一夜の出家の修行を寺院で行わせる会である。「法華道場」というグループは、毎週一回フエ市の中心寺院である「慈曇寺」で『法華経』(Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra)を読誦する会である。「同念」というグループは、旧暦で毎月の17日にフエ市の「普光寺」で『阿弥陀経』(Smaller Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra)を読誦しながら、念仏をする会である。そして、「慈善会」は、貧乏や天災に当り被災している人々を救済する目的で設立された会である。

これらのグループは別々の目的で活躍をするが、同時に在家信者の色々な階層の集まりであって、社会的な活動ばかりではなく、精神的な修行も目指すのである。こうしたベトナムの在家の信者の生活と修行の事実を紹介し、それらが民衆を仏教に皈依させる重要な役割を演じていることを解明した。実際的にこの「仏子家庭」や他の修行の道場から出身したベトナム僧侶と尼僧が沢山いるということはこの最後の章で明らかにした。

<総括>

さまざまな特徴を持つ現代ベトナムの仏教は、世界でまだ知られていないので、この博士の論文を通して世界へ紹介するという意図があった。この六章の論文を通して、現代ベトナムの仏教の現実の姿を捉えて論述した。まず大乘仏教・上座仏教・乞士派という三宗派の僧侶と尼僧たちの生活、修行、社会的活躍について、次に在家の信者たちがどんな形式で精神的な生活と修行をしているかについて、さらに僧侶たちがどんな儀礼を行って信者に対して仏教の意味をどのように伝えているかについて、寺院ではどんな年中行事が行われているかについて、以上論述した。そ

してベトナムの仏教徒が戒律を厳しく守り仏教に深い信仰心を持っていること、国家と仏教との関りが深くあること、大乘仏教と上座仏教の他にベトナム独特の乞士派があること、また現在ベトナム語がローマ字で表記されているが、ベトナムの僧侶と尼僧たちが漢文の仏教文化を維持していることなどは、ベトナムの仏教の精華であると結論した。

CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM IN VIETNAM

—A Focus on the Hue Area—

(現代ベトナム仏教—フエ市を中心として)

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By
HOANG TRONG SO

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