pli-tv-bu-vb-pc50 — Seeing an army in action

English translation by Bhikkhu Brahmali.
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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on naked ascetics

Seeing an army in action

Origin story

On one occasion when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery, the monks from the group of six were staying with the army for two or three nights. They went to see battles, troop reviews, the massing of the army, and troop inspections. One of the monks who went to a battle was struck by an arrow. People teased him, "We hope you had a good battle, venerable. How many targets did you hit?" And because they teased him, he felt humiliated.

People complained and criticized those monks, "How can the Sakyan monastics go to see a battle? It's our misfortune that we must go to battles for the sake of our livelihoods and because of our wives and children."

The monks heard the complaints of those people, and the monks of few desires complained and criticized those monks, "How could the monks from the group of six go to see a battle?" … "Is it true, monks, that you did this?"

"It's true, sir."

The Buddha rebuked them … "Foolish men, how could you do this? This will affect people's confidence …" … "And, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Final ruling

'If a monk who is staying with an army for two or three nights goes to a battle, a troop review, a massing of the army, or a troop inspection, he commits an offense entailing confession.'"

Definitions

If a monk who is staying with an army for two or three nights: he is staying for two or for three nights. A battle: wherever fighting is seen. A troop review: so many elephants, so many horses, so many chariots, so much infantry. A massing of the army: the elephants

should set out from here; the horses should set out from here; the chariots should set out from here; the infantry should set out from here. A troop: an elephant troop, a horse troop, a chariot troop, an infantry troop. The smallest troop of elephants is three elephants; the smallest troop of horses is three horses; the smallest troop of chariots is three chariots; the smallest troop of infantry is four men with arrows in hand.

If he is on his way to see it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. Wherever he stands to see it, he commits an offense entailing confession. Every time he goes beyond the range of sight and then sees it again, he commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If he is on his way to see one division of a fourfold army, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. Wherever he stands to see it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. Every time he goes beyond the range of sight and then sees it again, he commits an offense of wrong conduct.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if he sees it while standing in a monastery; if the army comes to where the monk is standing, sitting, or lying down, and he then sees fighting; if he sees it while walking in the opposite direction; if he goes because there is something to be done, and he then sees it; if there is an emergency; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on seeing an army in action, the tenth, is finished.

The fifth subchapter on naked ascetics is finished.

This is the summary:

“Cookie, talking, three on Upananda,

And indeed supporting;

Mahānāma, Pasenadi,

Army, and struck: those are the ten.”