pli-tv-bu-vb-pc61 — Intentionally killing a living being

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on containing living beings

Intentionally killing a living being

Origin story

At one time the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in the Jeta Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery. At that time Venerable Udāyī was skilled in archery. And because he disliked crows, he shot them. He cut off their heads and then set them out in a row impaled on stakes. The monks asked him, "Who killed these crows?"

"I did. I don't like crows."

The monks of few desires complained and criticized him, "How can Venerable Udāyī intentionally kill living beings?" … "Is it true, Udāyī, that you do this?"

"It's true, sir."

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

Final ruling

'If a monk intentionally kills a living being, he commits an offense entailing confession.'"

Definitions

A: whoever … Monk: … The monk who has been given the full ordination by a unanimous Sangha through a legal procedure consisting of one motion and three announcements that is irreversible and fit to stand—this sort of monk is meant in this case. Intentionally: knowing, perceiving, having intended, having decided, he transgresses. A living being: an animal is what is meant. Kills: if he cuts off and makes an end of the life faculty, if he destroys its continuity, he commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If it is a living being, and he perceives it as such, and he kills it, he commits an offense entailing confession. If it is a living being, but he is unsure of it, and he kills it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it is a living being, but he does not perceive it as such, and he kills it, there is no offense.

If it is not a living being, but he perceives it as such, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it is not a living being, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it is not a living being, and he does not perceive it as such, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if it is unintentional; if he is not mindful; if he does not know; if he is not aiming at death; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on intentionally killing a living being, the first, is finished.