



## CHAPTER IV

BUDDHASASANA : THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF

THAI BUDDHISM

## C H A P T E R    I V

### Buddhasasana : The Religious System of Thai Buddhism

#### Buddhism : a Doctrinal Perspective

The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha constitute the Trinity of Buddhism in all its schools. The Dhamma or Buddhism was founded by the Buddha in the fifth century B.C. and has come down as a living tradition to our present time in late 20th century A.D. through the works and way of life of a numerous and worldwide following, especially of those that have taken to the organized monastic life, known as the Sangha. These together are known as Buddhasasana to Buddhists of all nationalities including Thailand.

Buddhism in essence is a religion of ethics and epistemology rather than just faith in a Supreme divine entity. In Buddhist ontology "man is as he has made himself, and will be as he makes himself". The individual has to strive by himself to be pure of heart and deed for his own salvation without the intervention of Godhood and other divine entities. This is the fundamental gist of Buddhism. However, the Buddhism as actually practised by people is the resultant of many accretions through the ages and thus differs in popular practice from its theoretical position.<sup>1</sup>

Buddhism was realized as insight and was proclaimed to the world by the Indian sage, Gautama Buddha in the 5th century B.C. He was born in the 6th century B.C. at Kapilavatthu, a capital of a small confederate principality, near the border of modern Nepal. His father was the confederate Chief (Rajan) of that country and his mother, Maya Devi was a daughter of another similar chief, Suprabuddha. He was a Kshatriya of the Sakya clan. His family name was Gautama and his personal name, Siddhartha. In his 29th year he renounced the pleasures of princely life and royal career and renounced the world to be a homeless ascetic in his quest for a way out of what he had already recognized as a world of suffering. After spending six years in company with various religious teachers, and in practice of fruitless self-mortification, he is said to have finally attained to supreme knowledge or Perfect Enlightenment (Sammāsambhodi) under the Bodhi Tree, or "Tree of Wisdom" at Gaya (Buddha-Gaya of today). It was thereafter that the honorific suffix, "Buddha" was adopted for him by the public at large. He commenced propagation of the new faith in the Deer Park called "Isipatana", at Saranarth near Varanasi. After forty-five years of his tireless preaching and teaching he passed away in his 80th year at Kusinara in the modern Gorakhpur district,<sup>2</sup> leaving to his disciples the following injunction, "The Dhamma-Vinaya which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let those, after I am gone, be your Teacher".<sup>3</sup>

The Buddha's teaching or Dhamma has been handed down in Pali, a dialect of the masses in North India in olden days, and preserved in Pali and in Sanskrit. The canon is called the "Tipitaka" (Three Baskets) consisting of three great collections of books. The first book called the "Vinaya Pitaka" contains the rules of the monastic Order. The second called the "Sutta Pitaka" contains discourses, dialogues, verses, stories, etc. dealing with the doctrine proper and is summarized as the Four Noble Truths. The third called the "Abhidhamma Pitaka" is a systematic treatise on his doctrine.

The fundamental doctrine of the Buddha's teaching is found in his first sermon known as the "Dhammachakkapavattana Sutta" or the Sermon of the Turning Point of the Wheel of the Law. The Buddha is said to have preached this to his first five disciples at Saranarth. This contains the "Four Noble Truths" (Ariya-Sacca), thereby including the Eightfold Noble Path (Ariya-atthangikamagga), the "Three Characteristics of the fundamental nature of the universe (Tilakkhana) and the "Conditioned Genesis" or the "Universal Law of Dependent Origination (Patticca-samuppada). All these are accepted as basic categories by all the Buddhist Schools. Following is the gist of his Dhamma expressed in the canon and the commentaries.

The Master addressed the five monks in the deer park of

Isipatana at Saranarth near Varanasi : There are two ends not to be served by a wanderer. What are those two? The pursuit of desires and of the pleasure which springs from desires leading to rebirth and the pursuit of pain and hardship, which is grievous and unprofitable. The Middle Way, which avoids both these ends is the Noble Eightfold path - Right Views, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. The eightfold path leads to emancipation from sorrow (Dukkha) that arises from each of the five components of Individuality, namely, birth, age, disease, death and unfulfilled wishes or desires.<sup>4</sup> This is the interdependent threefold training known as morality (Sila), Concentration (Samadhi) and Wisdom (Panna) for betterment if not perfection of human beings.

The Four Noble Truths (Ariya-Sacca) could be stated as follows. Firstly, existence (Khanda) constituted of corporality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness is subject to suffering. It is impermanent, impersonal and void. Secondly, all suffering of the existence is conditioned through Craving (Tanha) which produces rebirth is manifested as volitional activities, or Karma of body, speech and mind. The second truth therefore, comprises the doctrine of Karma and rebirth as well as the Law of Dependent Origination

(Patticca-samūppada) of all phenomena of existence. Thirdly, it is total extinction of the selfish Craving and the resultant Delusion that leads to Deliverance from rebirth and suffering, which is realization of Nirvana. Lastly, it is through the Eightfold Path that one attains Deliverance from suffering. Therefore, the Noble Eightfold Path (Ariya-atthangi kamagga) constitutes the Buddhist practice.<sup>5</sup>

In Buddhist ontology Patticcasamuppada or the Law of Dependent Origination or Conditioned Genesis is stated to be the law of nature which self-existent and requires no outside lawgiver. A systematic exposition of Patticca-samuppada is to be found in Buddhaghosa,<sup>6</sup> Nyanatiloka<sup>7</sup>, Murti,<sup>8</sup> and Phra Srivissuddhimoli.<sup>9</sup> The key concept to understand this doctrine is "Dukkha" or suffering. The Pali word, "Dukkha" covers a far more range of feeling than the English word. Dukkha is rooted in an individual's greed, (Lobha), hate (dosa) and delusion (Moha). It can be stopped only by overcoming Tanha or craving. This can be done by discarding the two extremes of self-indulgence (Kamasukhulikanuyoka) and ascetic mortification (Attakilamutthanuyoka) and indeed adopting a moral and well-ordered life that constitutes the Middle Way (Majjimapatipata) of Buddha Tathagata.

The beginnings of this doctrine are indeed obscure, but according to the Buddha's first sermon, human misery is ultimately due to ignorance - a sort of cosmic ignorance

about the nature of the universe which leads to the delusion of selfhood (Avijja). The universe is full of sorrow (Dukkha), transisient (Anicca) and soulless (Anatta). Buddhists do not totally disclaim happiness in the world, but that in some form or other sorrow is inevitable in every aspect of life. Sorrow can not long be avoided. Buddha is said to have taught not only the doctrine of sorrow (negative) but also means <sup>of</sup> ~~a~~ moral life by which such sorrow can be eliminated (positive). The universe is also transient. Man, who thinks himself to be eternal and individualized, is actually a compound of five psychosomatic elements - Body, Feelings, Perceptions, States of Mind and Awareness. These five vary from movement to movement. Buddhism knows no being but only becoming. Everything is resolved into momentary configurations of events called "Dharma", to use the comprehensive term in a special sense. The universe is in a continuous flux and all idea of permanence is part of the basic ignorance out of which sorrow springs. Similarly, there is no immortal soul. The universe is soulless. Even the gods are soulless and the Universal Soul of the Upanisads is an illusion. The Buddhism, therefore, is a religion without souls and without God. No Buddhist teacher is rash enough to deny the existence of gods outright, but they are thought of as beings in no way supernatural or different from man except in their greater happiness and power. In his search for salvation the true Buddhist is

to bypass them, for they can neither help nor hinder him greatly, and they will in any case do their best to assist him if he keeps to the Middle Way.<sup>10</sup>

An understanding or practice of Dharma should be regarded as a means to attain the highest wisdom leading to Nirvana, the highest peace and happiness, free from greed, hatred and delusion. The Dharma is like a raft or conveyance that will help man cross over his suffering. Nirvana has no definite location, but it may be realized anywhere and at any time while still in the flesh. Morality, concentration and wisdom are three orderly stages of training for mental perfection, which, if correctly pursued and fully developed, leads on to the fourth one - Nirvana, or complete release from the cycles of transmigration. 'Morality makes a man gentle in his words and deeds; concentration controls the mind and makes him calm, serene and steady; and wisdom enables him to overcome all defilements completely'.<sup>11</sup> The Buddha has pointed out the way, but one has got to make one's efforts.

The Sangha is the monastic Order or community of Buddhist Bhikkhus established by the Buddha about twenty-five centuries ago in order to promote his doctrines. The Buddha preached his first sermon to the very first five ascetics who were impressed by his new doctrine and became his disciples. Among the leading disciples of the Buddha were Sariputta who, second



only to the Master, possessed the profoundest insight into the Dhamma; Moggallana who had the greatest supernatural powers; Maha Kassapa who was the President of the First Buddhist Council held at Rajagriha immediately after the Buddha's death; and Anand, the devoted disciple and constant companion of the Buddha. Later, a lady, Pajabadi, was the first nun (Bhikkhuni) admitted to the Order. Barring the conspiracy stirred up by his brother-in-law, Devadatta, Buddha's mission during his long life was both peaceful and fruitful in spreading his message far and wide.

Soon after the Buddha's death rifts developed among his disciples ostensibly over small points of monastic discipline. In course of time widespread differences had developed within the Order that finally resulted in the creation of two well-known schools of Hinayana (Conservative) and Mahayana (Reformist or radical) Buddhism. With the lapse of time there further developed numerous subschools both at home and abroad. Apart from doctrinal differences Buddhism also borrowed from the popular culture of the time numerous beliefs, pieties and sentiments of the people. As a result Buddhism was time and again modified. The Buddha was raised almost to the status of divinity and worshipped through his symbols, viz., Stupa recalling his parinirvana, or the tree recalling his enlightenment. He also began to be worshipped in the form of an image. The worship consisted of circumambulation in the auspicious

clockwise direction and prostrations with offerings of flowers.

In about 500 years after the Buddha's death, the Buddhist theology was developed raising the doctrine to the status of a regular religion. It evolved the concept of Buddhist trinity which forms the basic profession of faith of Buddhism. Within a few generations all Buddhist sects took to worshipping images. Buddhism kept up with the times, and by the Middle Ages, even in the shrines of the Hinayanist Buddhism, the Buddha was worshipped with full devotion just like any other Hindu gods, with flowers, insense, waving lamps. The idea of the future Buddha as the Saviour or Messiah was perceived and put into practice in the Buddhist orthodox belief. The cult of the future Buddha, Meitreya, was widespread among all the Buddhist sects by the beginning of the Christian era, and formed the hallmark of the Mahayanist school.<sup>12</sup> The Thais of Siam inherited the above Hinayan doctrines, but modified the same in the light of their own way of living.

#### Buddhist Monasticism : The Institution of Monkhood

From the Thai point of view, the institution of monkhood undoubtedly stands related to the concept of merit which has in turn had a significant impact on the mind of the Thais from the peasants to the king. The merit-making is carried

out with its attendant purposes in view. The purposes are security, safety, and prosperity in this world and the next. The values sought are wealth, health, beauty, long life, intelligence, power and high social class. The laymen see the monk as a mediator and a vehicle in this quest. In Thailand the Sangha (Monkhood) is regarded as "Punyakhetta" (merit-field) which one sows seeds of merit and reaps a good harvest. But to achieve this end an unblemished Sangha and virtuous monks are necessary and the distinction between monk and layman need be preserved by ensuring purification and holiness as symbols of glorious merit. These are sine qua non of Thai Buddhist religion.<sup>13</sup>

The Buddha's doctrine and ethics are organized into a unitary system known as "Dhamma-Vinaya". The guardians of his Dhamma-Vinaya are instituted in the form of a social organization known as the "Sangha". The Dhamma-Vinaya and the Sangha have developed together.

What makes the Sangha live as the autonomous cohesive and coenobitical corporation supported by state and lay donors is the "Vinaya"- the codes of conducts governing the day-to-day life of the monks. The Vinaya Codes are the organizational basis of the monastic life.

It must be clearly borne in mind that there was no

systematic hagiocracy in the early Buddhist Sangha. At the very initial stage the Bhikkhu or Buddhist monk was like the Hindu Sanyasin in that he renounces the world and removes himself from society, its affiliations and its obligations. The Sanyasin is outside the social structure; his quest in the Indian context is the extreme case of an individual pursuing his own salvation.<sup>14</sup> In this context there are two observations : it is possible that the Brahmanial ascetic (Sanyasin) was the model for the Buddhist and the Jain counterparts;<sup>15</sup> or the ancient Parivrajaka (wanderer) tradition was the base which gave rise to all these wandering sects.<sup>16</sup> Other closely associated concepts are "Nigrantha" (without ties) and "Vairagi" (free from affections). All wanderers may be described as those who go away from home into a state of homelessness (Parivrajaka). But in time the different wandering sects created their traditions of contemplations and organization, came to terms in different ways with surrounding society and made contributions to the socio-religious culture of their society.<sup>17</sup>

With the cardinal principle of the Buddha's doctrine being "seek not a refuge for any but for yourself", ancient Buddhism emerged as a technology of wandering and intellectually schooled mendicant monks.<sup>18</sup> During the first two hundred years of its inception, however, ancient Buddhism was trans-

formed from its position as "anchorite School" or a "wandering sect" to a settled order.<sup>19</sup> Before the advent of Buddhism in Thailand, the Bhikkhu community had already become a self-governing organization and every unit (Sangha) had become a "body corporate".<sup>20</sup> On the basis of the Vinaya the wandering almsmen gradually become coenobitized in spite of the highly individualistic character of Buddhism. Be that as it may, this tendency towards coenobitism and obedience to certain codes of conduct was bound to lead to Schism in view of the non-authoritarian character of Buddhism.<sup>21</sup>

In regard to the institution of monkhood, at least four characteristics deserve serious attention. They are : the Upasampada - the ordination or admission to the Order of the Monks; the Patimokkha - the Codes of Conduct for those joining a monastic community; the Vassa or Pansa in Thai tongue - the Buddhist Lent or the Retreat for three months during the rainy season and the Pavarana - the ceremony marking its conclusion. Details regarding this are found in the Vinaya Texts, especially in Mahavagga and Cullavagga concerning the rules for admissions to the Sangha, ordination, dress, residence and the rules for the performance of special monastic activities.<sup>22</sup> They are discussed in the following pages.

The Upasampada : The Uapsampada connotes the ordination procedure or the recruiting of an upasampadapekkha (one desiring ordination) into the Order. The term, "Bhikkha", implying a Buddhist monk in general, was officially used by the Buddha himself. After his first sermon at the Deer Park, he officially installed his very first disciple, Anyakondhanya with his exhortation : "Ehi Bhikkha - come, monk, well taught in the Doctrine', live the holy life for the utter destruction of suffering." It was simple ceremony which marked the inception of the institution of Buddhist monkhood. This is known as "Ehibhikkhu Upasampada", the one which was directly officiated by the Buddha himself. As the following increased in course of time, the Buddha was not able to officiate an upasampada in person. Therefore, he granted a new ordination procedure known as "Tiparanagamanupasampada". This meant ordination by taking a threefold refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. This was extended to his ehibhikkhus, i.e., fully ordained followers to officiate any upasampadapekkha. Later, in order to regulate the upasampadapekkhas that were increasing with the passage of time, the ordination was vested in a chapter of five or more qualified monks who formed a quorum necessary for a valid ordination. This was called "Yatti" Catutthakammavaca consisting of two parts - Resolution (Yatti) and Proclamation of proposed act (Kammavaca). The proclamation has to be made thrice to the

quorum for being valid. The ritual of the Yatti Catutthakammavaca for a valid ordination is followed to this day by the Buddhist Orders of the Theravādist countries, especially Thailand.

The Patimokkha : The Patimokkha contains the Buddhist monastic rules consisting of 227 precepts laid in the relevant section of the Vinaya Pitaka regarded as obligatory for ordained monks. However, there is certain distinction between the Vinaya Pitaka and the Patimokkha. The latter is the manual which states the rules governing conducts of monks, whereas the former contains the same precepts but they are accompanied by detailed commentary. In this connection some scholars believe that the Patimokkha manual is the original and the Vinaya, its application.<sup>23</sup> However, the Theravāda tradition is that the vinaya regulations are in chronological sequence because they were pronounced by the Buddha himself as each incident or dispute arose in time.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed the vinaya rules are a kind of charter or constitution which governs the behaviour patterns of a monk. They are highly specific and serve to define a monastic life different from the world of ordinary affairs. They are those relating to crimes against society, sexual offenses detrimental to the monastic community life, organizational cooperative acts, congregational rites etc.

In a word, the Vinaya can be classified into major and minor rules. The major ones relate to serious crimes. The guilty are to be expelled from the Order or suspended. They are quite detrimental to the monastic community. The minor ones on the other hand, relate to dress, manner of begging, etiquette<sup>†</sup> and behaviour towards fellow monks and lay followers. They are most important and necessary to sustain and maintain the community of Buddhist coenobium. The guilty are required to make amends through expiation and confession.

All the rules include those from the Patimokkha and the rest from other sources. Those in the Patimokkha include i) the four Parajikas; ii) the thirteen Sanghadisesas; iii) the two Aniyatas; iv) the thirty Nissakiyatacittiyas; v) the ninety-two Pacittiyas; vi) the four Patidesaniyas; vii) the seventy-five Sekiyavattas. These make up together 220 precepts and the seven Adhikaranasamadhas, and thus add upto 227 precepts. They lay down the following sanctions :

- "1. Parajika : the four causes of defeats; crimes which are punished by expulsion from the Order.
2. Sanghadhisesa : thirteen cases which entail the initial and subsequent meeting of the community; that call for suspension, penance and reinstatement by an assembly of at least twenty monks.
3. Aniyata : the two indefinite cases that involve expulsion, suspension, or expiation according to circumstances.



4. Nissakiya Pacittiya : thirty cases which entail  
expiation and forfeiture of articles (which monks  
have improperly taken or used).
5. Pacittiya Dhamma : Ninety-two offences which entail  
expiation only.
6. Patidesaniya Dhamma : four cases that must be  
confessed.
7. Sekhiya : seventy-five rules concerning observations  
proprieties that must be recited.
8. Adhikaranāsamadha : the seven cases of settlement of  
litigation, that is, the rules to be observed in  
conducting judicial investigations concerning the  
conduct of monks.<sup>25</sup>

The minor monastic rules were framed mainly intended to preserve boundary of the Buddhist Bhikkhus and other parivrajaka sects. The more important of these rules emerged in the process of growth of Buddhist coenobium.<sup>26</sup>

These monastic disciplinary codes still survive and are in usage among contemporary monastic Orders of the Theravadt countries, especially Thailand, defining the basis of a monastic life and proper conduct of monks. However, they are less and less strictly followed.

The Upasatha : The Upasatha - a token of communion refers to the Patimokkha ritual or fortnightly congregational service of the Patimokkha recitation by the entire body of resident monks. The Upasatha - a fundamental institution of Buddhist Order, points back to an established custom among the religious wanderers. The Buddhists only transformed the custom, making it centre in the recital of a codified body of rules and regulations for monks called the Patimokkha. It is believed to contain the Lord's 'Thou Shalt nots'.<sup>27</sup>

The uposatha observance is by no means the Buddhist invention but it was adopted from the religious wanderers of the day and successfully transformed into established custom of the ritualistic uposatha - the observance of 'sacred days'. The Buddhist Bhikkhus adopted it their congregational life. In its changed form it became a confessional service, an instrument of monastic discipline.<sup>28</sup>

In Thailand, the uposatha service is institutionalized and strikingly followed by every school of Theravada Buddhism. It falls on the same day throughout the kingdom. It is held each lunar fortnight : on the fullmoon day and on the 14th or 15th day of waning moon. On the service day all the monks of the respective wat community with exception of novices and other non-ordained temple people assemble in the Bod (the consecrated Hall) to attend the Patimokkha recitation

rite after making a collective and generalized confession of their minor offences against the disciplinary rules. In case there is no Bod, a particular place is to be consecrated for the purpose. The attendance is made obligatory.<sup>29</sup> This monastic uposatha rite should not be confused with the lay observance of "Uposatha Day" described elsewhere.

The Pansa and the Pavarana : "The Pansa" or "Kaho Pansa" (Pali : vassa) marks the commencement of retreat for the three-month monsoon rainy season, referring to cessation from wandering, usually known as the "Buddhist Lent". It commences from the day after the fullmoon or the middle of the month of Asalaha (June) and ends up in the middle of October. During these three months the Buddhist monks are split up into separate bodies residing at different centres of the fixed residence in or next to a village, town or city. This is treated as obligatory. On the other hand, the Pansa is concluded with the Pavarana rite and ceremony and is followed by the Kathin festival of distribution of robes to monks. The Pavarana rite is solemn conference at which the monks ask for advice from one another and ask one another to pardon any offences that might have been committed during a period of the Pansa. Vassa was, according to Eliot, the time when people had most leisure time so it was naturally regarded as the appropriate season for giving instruction to the laity.<sup>30</sup> The reason behind observing the rain-retreat custom appears

to have originated presumably as an enforced necessity, for the tropical rains of India made wandering about a physical impossibility.<sup>31</sup> Over time this temporary residence changed into permanent residence and the vassa itself became a marked phase of retreatment and intensified religious activities in the routine life of monastic communities. The original settlements during the retreat were of two types - the avasa situated in the countryside, and built and maintained by the monks; and arama located in a town or city as a private enclosure within the grounds of a lay donor or patron. Later on established monasteries came to be designated as arama or vihara. The critical and essential features of monastic life as it is lived today in Thai village wat (the name for the temple complex derived from avasa), are thus contained in the original regularization and routinization of the rain retreat (Buddhist Lent) and codified in the Vinaya texts.<sup>32</sup>

Thus the Buddhist monasticism was a gradual transformation of the eremitical life of the Buddhist Bhikkhus to coenobitical one based on the institution called "Vassa". It marks off them from other wandering ascetics of the time settling down to monastic life and organization. The Vassa or Buddhist Lent seems to have been responsible for the development of the features of such collective rites and ceremonies, such as the Pavarana the Kathin and possibly the Patimokkha recital.

Around these concepts move the religious activities which significantly impinge upon the minds of not only the pious people but also of common masses.

The Sanghakamma : To transact any of monastic collective acts the Sanghakamma is required. The Uposampada, the Uposadha, the Vassa, the Pavarana, the Kathin etc., as above discussed, all become valid and effective only when and in so far as they are ratified by the quorum of duly qualified monks. There are various forms of the Sanghakamma as given in Table 4.1. However, a Sanghakamma must be in a particular form prescribed for it according to the character of the act - whether it is disciplinary and discipulations or non-disciplinary. The latter have become ritualistic and are more or less regularly performed by the Thai Buddhist Order whereas the former hardly come into use.<sup>33</sup> These aspects are classified in detail in Table 4.1.

The form of a Sanghakamma as above noted consists of two parts - the proposal of Resolution (Yatti) and the Proclamation of the proposed act (Kammavaca or Anusavana).<sup>34</sup> The inversion of this order would invalidate the proceedings at initio. The matter for decision by the Sanghakamma is defined by a Bhikkhu in the form of a resolution placed before the whole assembly, "Let it (the matter defined) be done". Then follows the proclamation. Those who are against

Table 4.1 : Sanghakamma Classification in Thailand, 1975.

+ I. Disciplinary and Disputatious	II. Non-disciplinary and Non-disputatious*	III. Anomalous
1. Parivasa <div>             a) Apaticchanna              b) paticchanna              c) Sudhanta or Mulaya              patikassana              d) Samodhana           </div>	1. Upasampada 2. Upasatha 3. Settlement of Sima	1. Tassa-papiyasikh 2. Tin-vittharaka Et Cetera.
2. Manatta 3. Tajjaniya 4. Nissaya 5. Pabbajaniya 6. Patisaraniya	4. Pavarana 5. Kathina 6. Patimokkha 7. Appointment of all officers	
(Patta-Nikkujjana (its counterpart)	8. Dedication of any part of the building establishment for any special purpose	
7. Ukkhepaniya <div>             a) Apattiya Adassane              b) Apattiya Appatikamme              c) Patikaya Dithiya              Appatinissage           </div>	9. Settlement of succession to the personal belongings of a deceased Bhikkhu	
8. Pakasaniya 9. Brahmada	10. Abbhana	

Notes : + In Class I Nos. 1, 2, and 9 are probably older than the rest. The first two forms of discipline to be imposed by the Sangha are the only ones mentioned and described in Mahavagga. No. 9 is described in the Mahaparinibana Sutta. Nos. 3 and 7 seem to have been the regular and ordinary forms. They could be resorted to without previous confession on the part of the guilty Bhikkhu (Cullavagga, iv,7,1). In Class II, No. 1 became a Sangha-kamma only later on. It passed through three formal stages : Ehi Bhikkhu, Saranagamana and Kammavaca. In Class III, Nos. 1 and 2 are called Forms of Judicial Procedures (Adhikaranasamadha), but they are all the characteristics of Sanghakamma proper.

\* In class II, almost all are in use in Thailand.

Source : Adapted from S. Dutt, Early Buddhist Monachism, op. cit., p. 122.

the resolution are called upon to speak and those that are for it to remain silent. This proclamation can be made only once when the act is called a "yattidutiya Kammavaca" or twice when it is a yatticatuttha Kammavaca. Some Sanghakammas belong to the first order and some to the second, and the observance of this distinction is essential for the validity of an act. At minimum four or more members of duly ordained monks are allowed to perform the Sanghakamma.<sup>35</sup>

All these facts indicate that the monastic institution in Thailand is basically modelled after the prototype of institutional Buddhist monasticism discussed above.

### The Phases of Thai Monastic Life-style

#### 1. The Ordination : Entry into the Monastic Order

In Thailand there are two kinds of full-time religious services that are duly recognized : the noviciate and the monkhood. They make up a monastic life-pattern in a social setting which is distinctive from the secular one. However, members for those religious services are drawn from the entire male population and instituted into an Order through a duly performed ordination. Their organized life-patterns are defined by the Dhamma-Vinaya, a kind of common internal and external codes. Women do not seem to have been ordained

for these religious services either now, nor any time before. There has been some form of approximation for women in this vocation, but it was kept peripheral to the service. So the salvation quest in Thailand is very much a male pursuit.

At one time the ordination of Thai novices and monks was organized in three stages of apprenticeship, namely, templeboy, noviciate and monkhood. During pre-modern time the templeboy institution (Dek Wat or Sisya Wat) was predominant, especially in villages, because at that time a wat was the only agency, after the family, which provided for young boys a means for secondary socialization and some learning. When public schools were run by the government in the whole country, a boy used to be kept at a wat for the purposes of learning to read and write. For those desirous of further study, ordination as a noviciate and/or as a full-fledged monk was a necessity. This kind of practice is now discontinued. Wat has now become a hostel-like accommodation for young boys attending secular education institutions. Possibly in the urban wats, ordained and non-ordained boys are equal in number.

The Samanera and the bhikkhu are two religious statuses recognized in traditional Buddhism and found in almost all Theravadi countries including Thailand. Eight years is a preferred age for a candidate for the noviciate service. To



be ordained as a monk, an age of twenty-year or over is considered as appropriate. A monk-to-be is permitted to possess eight requisite objects, namely, three robes, an alms-bowl, a girdle, a razor, a needle and a water-strainer. These are necessary for a monastic life. Not all of these eight requisites are prescribed for the would-be-novice. These are the only private property which a monk is theoretically permitted to possess. Then there are other requisites to be fulfilled, namely, permission from parents, permission for release from service to the royal government, no burden of debt, status of freeman, and not suffering from certain diseases like leprosy and epilepsy. In addition, a legal application needs to be endorsed by the candidate's parents or guardian, as well as by a monk holding the abbot status or above. Apart from these basic requirements, no other discriminations, like class, caste, clan or race, matter in this regard.

To enter the monastic life as a bhikkhu (Thai : Phra), i.e., monk or mendicant is described as Upasampada. Pabbajja (Thai : Banpaja) is entry as a samanera (Thai : Neen), i.e., a novice. In Thailand, a boy at monkhood is 20-21 years of age. This is prior to marriage. A novice is usually 12 years of age, especially after his primary education. However, no fixed age as such is theoretically prescribed for the purpose.

The noviciate precedes the monkhood, and is a preparation or apprenticeship towards it. A novice is taught literacy, fundamentals of doctrinal knowledge, chants and ritual procedures, all of which constitute the preparatory training for being a monk later on. This conventional practice of being a noviciate is getting less and less evident these days, because of availability of secondary schooling in outside institutions of learning, which are better equipped to impart secular training. However, the institution of novicehood is by no means dead but it is becoming increasingly of shorter duration. The novice service practised by the urban<sup>n-</sup>based residents during summer provides a good example of this trend. However, the novicehood provides the education for those who have no other means for higher education after primary school. Presently direct ordination to monkhood has become more popular, and novicehood is considered as a symbolic quest toward salvation.

Be that as it may, one thing remains unchanged. That is the concept of merit and merit-making. A monk and a novice are a symbol of merit. To enter monkhood or novicehood is meritorious act *par excellence*. In order to acquire merit young boys continually enter this life-situation, qualify and then go out.

The entire procedure of the ordination rite<sup>36</sup> is called

"Bun Buad" - merit by the act of ordination", in Northeast Thailand in particular and "Ngan Buad Nag" in the country in general. The procedure of ordination, as it is operative in Thailand, is mainly found in the texts as already cited. As it is, this classical rite has been elaborated in different social contexts. Prior to the actual ordination, it enjoys the colourful rituals and ceremonies based on popular Buddhism and Folk Brahmanism as Sukhwan rites as pointed out in the previous Chapter. It does enjoy the active cooperation of the people of a respective community.

The ordination to noviciate can be officiated separately as independent without the ordination rite for monkhood, but not vice versa. The noviciate rite is usually performed at the same ceremony at which ordinants are ordained. This is popularly called "Buad Hang Nag"- the novice-ordination associated with the ordination of Nag (ordinant) to a full-fledged monk with a fully performed ceremony. The admission rites for the novice are simple with the candidate having the head ceremonially shaved, being ritually dressed in the three orange robes of the Order; pronouncing thrice "Tisaranagamana" - taking threefold Refuge in Buddhist Trinity of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha - and ending up by taking the Ten Precepts to be discussed later.

In the sequence of rites at the monk's ordination the

candidate is first initiated as a novice and ordained as a monk by virtue of additional ceremonial sequences. Thus the admission ceremony for a novice is the first part of the ceremony for a monk, and for ceremonial as well as practical reasons a joint initiation rite is feasible.

The actual ceremony for a qualified man to be admitted to the Sangha as a full-fledged monk is performed in the bodi (the consecrated hall marked by the Sima or boundary stone located within the wat compound) by the Upajjhaya (the principal ordainer) who has been authorized by the Department of Religious Affairs as to confer the ordination.<sup>37</sup> In order to help the Upajjhaya validate the act of the ordination, it requires two qualified monks called "Acharn Ku Suad" who on behalf of the quorum administer the acts of Yatti (solution) and Kammavaca (proclamation of the proposed act) and at the same time act as the candidate's mentors. The quorum of at least five qualified monks is required to validate the act of the ordination.

Upon entry into the monastic life, all monks receive a title, "Phra" a prefix added to an individual's personal name and Pali name (Chaya) in place of the family name. All the novices are addressed "Samanera" or "Neen", a prefix added to the personal name. No Pali name is given to a novice.

As a rule, a monk has to observe the 227 precepts, as

already mentioned. Among these, celibacy poverty and inoffensiveness are ideally the most essential for monastic life. Some of these precepts especially Sekhiyavatta rules concerning proprieties and observations are applicable to a novice as much to a monk. The Ten Precepts (Pali : Dasa Sikhapadani), that are obligatory are not life-vows but only earnest resolves. These are as follows :

1. To abstain from destruction of life. 2. To abstain from taking what is not given. 3. To abstain from evil behaviour in passion, namely, sexual intercourse. 4. To abstain false speech including gossip, slander and all kinds of ill-mannered utterances. 5. To abstain from intoxicants which are the cause of care<sup>1</sup>lessness and sloth. 6. To abstain from eating at a forbidden time, i.e., after 12 noon. 7. To abstain from witnessing displays of dancing, singing, music and dramatic performances. 8. To abstain from the use of garlands, perfumes, unguents and scents. 9. To abstain from the use of high or broad bed. 10. To abstain from receiving gold and silver.<sup>38</sup>

With the exception of the third precept not being applicable to lawfully married laymen, the first five are regarded as Buddhist ethic common to ordinary Buddhist.

## 2. The Active Monastic Life : Prayer, Education and Pastoral service

There are two kinds of day-to-day activities pertaining

to monastic life. One is Gandhadhura or the obligation of scriptural studies, and the other Vipassanadhura, or the obligation of meditation or Dhamma-application. The former consists in book-learning, and the latter may be described as "Dhammic technology".

The daily life of the monks and novices is chiefly spent in studies and religious exercises including prayer to a lesser extent meditation. Novices and junior monks particularly in the rural wats of Wangchai and Nampong are expected to share in the routine work of the monastery, such as cleaning cells, monastic buildings and sweeping the wat courtyard. The senior monks act as mentors or supervisors and teachers of the former. They also render the pastoral services of various kinds, such as merit-making performances and lectures on Buddhist Dhamma to the lay followers. The Vipassana obligation, which was previously operative, now appears to be declining.

As far as the work of studies is concerned, it covers the studies of the religious scriptures and those of recently introduced courses of modern education. There are two types of study : one known as "Nakdham Studies", consisting of three grades and another known "Pali Studies" consisting of seven grades. The courses on modern education in the wats are much limited in scope.

Prayer is one of the indisputable daily concern of monastic life. Theoretically the Buddhist prayer is not a solicitation addressed to a god for securing benefits through special favour. It implies concentration upon a certain <sup>idea</sup> or subject with devotion so as to tranquilize the mind and turn it to the promotion of Buddhist perfection. As a matter of fact, there is no room for a prayer, as generally understood, in Buddhist religion. It was conceived and later institutionalized only after the Buddha's death. In Buddhist religion the Buddha is adored not only as perfect human personality but as an embodiment of universal truth, i.e., Dhammakaya. Here the practice of expressing the earnest intention of realizing Buddhahood gradually took the form of solemn vows taken to commit oneself to practise Buddhist morality assisted by encouraging assurance given by the Buddha in person or individual manifestation. Many of these vows are in reality prayers addressed to the Buddha as well as the universal truth revealed by him. These vows or prayers are called, "Panidhana", the aspiration and the determination to tranquilize the mind. Thus in its origin the Buddhist prayer is expression as well as an inspiration. It pays homage to the Buddha, to his Truth and Community.<sup>39</sup>

The Thai prayer in the monastic routine is called, "Tamwat-Suadmon" and is held usually twice a day : "Tamwat Jao" as the morning recitation and "Tamwat yen" as the evening

recitation. Timing is not absolutely fixed but suitably worked out by each wat. By and large the former is held in the early morning before six at the rural wats, such as wat Ban Wangchai and Wat Ban Nampong at 5.30 a.m. or after the morning meal at 8.30 a.m. before the morning duties and studies are taken up at the urban wats, such as Wat Dhatu in Khonkam Municipality or Wat Sraket in Bangkok. These formal prayers are considered as the institution of congregational-rite. The private devotions, however, are surely personal.

The actual prayer takes place inside the bod or at a sacred place of any monastic dormitory where the image of the Buddha and other holy objects are properly enshrined. In case of the aforesaid wats it does take place inside the bod. At the appointed time all the monks and novices assemble and sit in a row in the order of their seniority in lenten years, facing the objects of prayer. They may first call a roll and then begin the prayer conducted by the leader after the candles and joss-sticks are lit. They all simultaneously bow thrice to the image of the Buddha with palms folded in an attitude of reverence and reciting a series of Pali prayer stanzas in adoration of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha respectively. A number of such prayer formulae are recited by participants by rote. The form of the morning and evening prayers is not much different. It lasts for 20-30 minutes,



after which the monastic affairs are occasionally communicated to the wat members. And on Buddhist holidays a lecture on Buddhism is usually held after the morning meal and/or the morning prayer, and shared by the lay devotees.

Lastly in the series are the pastoral services which generally include merit-making rites, sermon services, household rites, such as weddings, birthdays housewarmings, illnesses and funeral rites to mention only a few. All these are limited to the merit-transactions which take place between the monks and the householders. They consist in essence of the monk's conferring merit upon the layman who in turn expresses his gratitude and respect by presenting offerings of money, food and other items.<sup>40</sup> Some pastoral services, namely, Sayasat (astrology, incantation and black magic) are also performed by a few monks who are magic-practitioners, specializing in magical activities or revealing horoscopes, through considered inferior to the merit-making transactions.

### 3. The Lasikkhabot : Derobing

This is the last of the phases of monkhood. A monk or novice may give up his role or lasikkhabot which literally means giving up monastic precepts and go back to the secular and family without any prejudice. There is no odium whatsoever attached to leaving the wat to resume the lay life. The practice of this kind is institutionalized in Thailand. 'The circumstances

under which monks may wish to derobe have been expressedly recognized from early times. They are : inability to remain sexually continent; impatience of restraints; a wish to enter upon worldly engagements; the love of the parents or friends; or doubts as to the truth of the system pronounced by the Buddha'.<sup>41</sup> Table 4.2 reveals how ex-monks had wished to enter upon secular engagements or a family life.

Table 4.2 : Rural and Urban Distribution of Responses by ex-monks for leaving the Order (based on empirical investigation in Thailand, 1975).

	Ex - monks		
	Number	Rural %	Urban %
1. Doubts in the Buddha's teaching or being sick and fed up with a monastic life	7	1.90	2.53
2. A wish to enter secular engagements or a family life	86	27.85	26.58
3. To look after a family	20	7.59	5.06
4. To resume the government services	38	6.33	17.72
5. Other	7	1.90	2.53
	158	46.20	53.80

Similarly, Table 4.3 indicates that those still in the robes express their desire to give up monastic life. Before de-robing, one has to take the permission from the Upajjhaya and one's parents or guardians.

Table 4.3 : Showing the Distribution of Monks and Novices who Favour De-robing (based on empirical study in Thailand, 1975).

	Number	Ordinates in rural residence %	Ordinates in urban residence %	Total %
Wish to de-robe	157	26.20	42.36	68.56
No wish to de-robe	36	5.68	10.04	15.72
Not yet decided	36	1.31	14.41	15.72
Total	229	33.19	66.81	100.00

The de-robing procedure is quite simple. A monk or a novice desirous of leaving the monastic life seeks the permission from the concerned abbot or Upajjhaya as well as one's parents. The request is rarely refused nowadays. The de-robing rite takes place at an appointed auspicious time set by an astrologer with the ritual performance by the Upajjhaya or by any monk acting as the master of ceremony and

four or more monks blessing the out-going monk or novice. The concerned party approaches the convening monk with the required ritual objects and asks in Pali for permission to leave the monastic life. Then the convener monk removes sanghati or any piece of the robes as a token of leaving, while the rest of attendant monks chant the holy blessings (Jayanto). Then changing into civil clothes the candidate again approaches the convener monk and undertakes to observe the five precepts. These steps are a precise reversal of the sequence followed in the ordination.

Immediately after his derobing he is in general addressed as "Tit" (Pundit) scholar by dropping the monastic prefixes added to his personal name, such as Phra in case of an ordinary monk or "Maha" in case he had earned his Pali study grade, and "Zieng" or "Noi" in case of a novice as commonly known in the Northeast and the North Thailand. After de-robing the ex-monk or ex-novice may stay in the wat for one to three nights and prior to leaving the wat permanently, is to clean the monk's residence (Kuti), a meeting hall (Sala), toilet etc. just as a token of removing all sins he might have committed during his monastic life.

At the actual time for his departure from the wat, the ex-monk leaves the wat in the direction determined by the astrologer. At the gate of the wat he is met and welcomed by

a "virgin" who takes his hand and leads him out. The girl is chosen by the out-going ex-monk and is usually his girl friend. As one informant put it : The girl receives him because they haven't conversed with each other for a long time and therefore, she missed him'. It is believed that the virgin will bring him good luck and prosperity.<sup>42</sup>

### The Lay Religiosity

Buddhism does not prescribe asceticism or withdrawal from the world for the laity, but does prescribe for them a special code of ethics - the orderly conduct of social life. One who leads a lay life finds it hard to attain salvation, yet he is expected to lead a life that will produce good karmic consequences and avoid bad karma or sin. Being barred from entering Nirvana by the real life of a householder, he puts off his primary religious goal of Nirvana and works for the secondary one, namely, heavens and happy rebirth. For the most of the Thai lay Buddhists, the religiosity is a means to a prosperous life here and now, and a happy rebirth on earth or in heavens. This is particularly true of almost all the Thai Buddhist peasants. They often express that they will be born as a Phraraja (king) or Chakravarti (world-ruler), a notion which epitomizes the highest of power and prestige. The wishes of this kind are couched in the form of a formulae

(Prardhana-wish) associated with acts of piety, such as alms-giving, worship in temples or observance of precepts. Most of prardhana purport to provide the worshipper with valued material rewards - health, sensuous delights, power, prestige, high status or if the devotee is a woman, the prospect of being reborn as a male. All these hopes are embodied in the wish to become a Phraraja or Chakravarti. This observation made by Obesekeyere with reference to Sri Lankan society is with some modification very much applicable to Thai situation.<sup>43</sup>

To pursue these values Buddhism inculcates a system of ethics for the laity. It refers to the Five Precepts and the Four Cardinal Virtues (Brahma-vihara) and other moral ideas as already cited. They are not commandments from the standpoint of monotheist notion of sin, but codes of conduct, a kind of suggestion basic to the ought-to-be life or right act for a happy life here and now. In this connection Buddhism speaks in praise of a lay life with reference to the social relations and obligations between parents and children, teachers and students, husbands and wives and between friends. It markedly works to mould the lay life in Thai society.

The first of the five precepts is intended to encourage "nonviolence" - Ahimsa, non-injury to living things and thus

discourage organized violence of militarism. The second precept asks to desist from theft, as also from sharp practice in business. For the laymen, the third precept does not ordain absolute celibacy but permits lawful marriage. It is usually interpreted as forbidding unnatural sexuality and extra-marital relations. Buddhism laid down no hard and fast rules on the question of marriage and divorce and at present in Thailand marital laws are largely influenced by local custom. The fourth precept, forbidding false speech, is taken as eschewing lying, perjury and slander while the fifth forbids alcoholic drinks which are a cause of carelessness, sloth laziness, and an inactive and disorderly life.<sup>44</sup> All these are believed to be basic principles leading to a better life here and now. Nowadays the modern Buddhists of Thailand, especially the young are at liberty in interpreting these precepts and do not authentically live upto these basic principles. However, Table 4.4 reveals that adult public opinion is quite in favour of practising Pacha Sila.

Table 4.4 : Distribution of Rural-Urban and Male-Female Respondents in regard to Agreements or Disagreement concerning Basic Buddhist Ethics or Pacha Sila amongst Lay Buddhist in Thailand, 1975.

	Rural Respondents (N = 190)		Urban Respondents (N = 229)	
	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %
Completely agree	26.84	20.53	28.38	17.90
Somewhat agree	24.74	14.74	25.33	14.41
Indifferent	2.11	0.53	5.24	2.18
Somewhat disagree	6.32	1.58	3.06	2.18
Completely disagree	2.11	0.53	0.53	0

The Buddhist Monk and the Buddhist Layman : Their Social Links

The main links between abstract Buddhism and the ordinary people are the merit-making rituals, such as alms-giving, worship in temples, ordination, etc. Gifts offered to the Buddhist monk are regarded as symbols of the most meritorious acts. These acts are expressed in the forms of daily morning and mid-day meals offered to the fully ordained monks and other various ceremonies and household rites, such as birthdays, weddings, housewarmings and funeral rites. In these are included those of ordination, Kathin (already discussed) worship in the temples, the observance of the eight precepts on Buddhist holidays and sermon-services, and the festivals of Bun Mahachati, Visakha Puja, Magha Puja etc.<sup>45</sup>

The following is an empirical illustration of social links between the monks and laymen in Ban Wangchai. The village of Ban Wangchai consists of 314 households, all of which are supposed to extend voluntary support in kind or in cash or both to their village wat named after their village as "Wat Ban Wangchai". At present (1975) the wat accommodates five monks, seven novices and two templeboys with Phra Sao, 48, as its abbot or chief monk. The wat belongs to no one but to the whole community of the village. The abbot is not the wat-owner but the one who is legally authorized with the consent of the villagers to look after the wat.



The social contacts between the monks and the villagers are visible soon after dawn by way of the daily alms-offering rite. After their collective prayer at Bod and other preliminary works mostly carried out by the novices and templeboys in their turn, all the resident monks and novices properly dressed in their saffron robes and each with the iron alms-bowl in their hands assemble at the wat gate to the south upon the stroke of the bell at seven in the morning. All in all, they come out in an orderly column, starting with the most senior monk, in the descending order of seniority. They are silently heading along the agreed path to the heart of the village, passing house after house. They are not allowed to beg for food by words; nor do they actually do it. At different points they collect the offerings (mainly cooked rice) from the pious laity who step out of their doors for merit-making. Before and after making an offering to the Ascetics one by one householders bow with their palms raised to the forehead (wai) with Prarthana or wishes for a better life in their mind. Winding their way to the wat by another route they again go on collecting the offerings from the pious one after another before entering the wat by the north wat-gate. They are back after twenty minutes approximately. This is called "Pai Bindhabat," meaning "a morning round for alms collection."

A few minutes later, by and large the pious aged villagers of both sexes, especially those having their kin

as monks in the wat, as also those voluntarily assigned to patronize the monks, are seen moving in the wat either in groups or alone, one after another, with cooked meal in their hands. They assemble at the wat meeting hall in which the dining room is kept for the purpose. The hall is also meant for common congregation prayer and public meetings concerning the village or wat affairs. At the appointed time at 8.00 a.m. when the bell strikes everyone gets together in the dining room. Then the morning meal is offered to the monks and novices who sit in a separate group, marking the novices from the monks, thereby implying that the former are inferior to the latter in all aspects. The seats of the meaningful status inferior to the aforesaid two are provided for the laity. The food is ritually offered and served by all the lay congregation while accepting Five Precepts, administered to them by the seniormost monk. At the end of the precept-ritual (about 5 minutes) everyone except for the laity starts eating (Chan). The diet is perfectly non-vegetarian. In the meantime all the laity offer a morning congregational prayer to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha similar to the morning prayer performed by the monks and novices as already pointed out but less complicated and shorter. The meal ends up after 30 minutes approximately with all the monks and novices chanting the holy formulae in Pali stanzas conferring blessings on the lay following. The blessing rite may

sometimes be performed before the actual food-taking.

In the course of the blessing ceremony, the offering-makers perform a ritual of "Kruad Nam"- a libation ritual by nonstop pouring of water from a basin or utensil at a clean place. This is a ritual act of dedicating (Udit) one's merit to accrue not only to one's deceased relatives, but generously to all other sentient beings as well. This practice is applicable to almost all kinds of offerings to the monks.

After this blessing ceremony, the laity may have their food together and have free talk and discussions with any of the wat members, after which they move out homeward, one by one, or in groups. The wat members turn to their routine, especially to scriptural studies.

The same procedure is applicable to the mid-day meal for the wat members except for the fact that there are no bindhabat, nor prayer, nor five-precept-taking rite. The mid-day meal is brought in the wat to the monks by the laity, following the drum-beating.

On Wan Phra day (Buddhist Holidays) due on every seventh day the same procedure is followed by representatives from each household of the whole village community. This is on the meritorious and voluntary basis. The distinction is only that the ritual food-offering is more meticulous and extended.

So is the morning prayer. More people of both sexes and different ages attend it. A sermon-service is held for the audience consisting of both clergy and laity, at the end of the former's morning meal. Some of them, especially the aged, undertake to observe the aforesaid eight precepts and stay overnight at the wat in the company of the monks, listening to readings from the scripture.

Here is a meeting of the minds, those of the laity who purposely accumulate their merit and those of the monastic life who are considered as symbolic merit-field. This is a kind of face-to-face contact, not only the wat members and the laity, but also among the laity themselves. This is regular feature, day after day, week after week and month after month. By means of this social contact, quite often it so happens that young girls look for qualified life-partners from the young monk group and vice versa. Quite a few, if not many, are successfully and yet conventionally matched in the course of the monastic life. This is theoretically not permissible but in practice nobody can deny these are facts of actual life.

These patterns have been considerably changed in the urban sector of human relations especially in Wat Sraket in Bangkok. The practice of the bindhabat is completely changed. Each goes his own way at his liberty. A timing is not fixed; nor is the route for taking rounds for morning alms-collection.

Things are by no means certain. The food-offering rite as above is no more in practice here; nor do the wat members share food in the same dining room. However, the social relations among the two sectors of life are reorganized even on the backdrop of urbanization. To make merit, for example, the laity make an offering to the monks and novices in cash rather in kind as is the practice in the rural sector.

Besides, the monks and novices are by no means cut off from social contact with their parents, relatives, and those of their acquaintance and intimacy. Instead, they are at liberty to keep up constant social exchanges of private and public affairs, but in keeping with the customs and disciplinary rules. They are fully supported by the people in these mutual relations. They are accessible to everyone and vice versa.

Still further, the link between the two sectors of social life is made through a committee known as the Wat Executive Committee. It consists of the wat abbot and the village heads (three according to three wards of the Wangchai village administration). These four are ex-officio members and five more members are elected from amongst the villagers. One of them is approved as the wat treasurer in the committee and is legally appointed by the District Ecclesiastic Officer and the abbot.<sup>46</sup> They are supposed to initiate and look after the wat business, such as new constructions, maintenance of the wat establishments and the wat budget relative to wat

revenues and expenditure. It is their duty to organize the annual festivals of Bun Mahachati, Asalaha Puja etc. They can even remove a monk or novice from the wat for his misconduct if proved guilty.

Finally, such household rites, such as birthdays, weddings, funeral rites and so forth occasionally provide further occasions for contact between lay folks and the monastic members. All these components of religious and social life encounter changes caused by new patterns of modern life and yet they still have their due place in Thai lives, especially in the village of Ban Wangchai.

#### The Institution of the Wat

Attractive, or rather, peculiar to foreign visitors, especially the non-Buddhist, are Thai wats as symbols of Buddhism and pious life as is still practised in Thailand. It is no exaggeration to say that no other Buddhist country can boast of such splendid wats, i.e., temples and monasteries. In Bangkok-Dhomburi Metropolis only there are more than five hundred wats which accommodate more than ten thousand monks and novices. A village hardly goes without a wat.

The term, "wat", is Thai in its origin. A wat does not belong to any private person, nor to an abbot, but to the whole community, as clearly mentioned in its licence certificate.

It is a public institution accessible to everyone regardless of his social status. Its connotation is derived from the two types of original arrangements for retreat during the rainy season : the avasa and the arama, as already pointed out. Here sacred activities are regularly conducted with appropriate ritual. A wat accommodates a community of ascetics engaged in such sacred activities as prayer, ceremonies and scriptural studies and such sacred objects as a chapel, Buddha images, pagodas (Chedi) and shrine etc. It may accommodate templeboys and chees (white-clad female devotees). The lay followers (Men-Upasakas; Women-Upasikas), also visit a wat for purposes of merit-making and/or other kinds of activities. In a word, a wat is a little community within a village, a town or a city.

The wat is generally divided into two sections : the first comprises the temple with its chapel, called "Bod" in Thai, where the monks assemble for their religious duties; and the Vihan (Vihara in both Pali and Sanskrit) where Buddha images are housed. The second consists of the monastery buildings where the monks, novices and other people live. There are also a number of stupas or pagodas of various sizes called "Phra Chedi" in Thai, and an open hall called "sala Kan Parien" (the hall of learning) where the congregation meets to hear sermons or to make merit as the occasion demands.<sup>47</sup>

The wat can be divided under three headings, namely, characteristic, status, and sect, as has been shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 The Threefold Wat Classification by Characteristic, Status, and Sect, in Thailand 1975.

The wat	Number of the wats
By characteristic :	
Visungamasime	12, 599
Bhikkhu's lodgings	13, 060
Total	25, 659
By status :	
Royal	162
Non-royal or public	25, 497
	25, 659
By sect or domination :	
Mahanikaya	24, 493
Dhammayattaniyaya	1, 166
	25, 659

Source : Adapted from Annual Report of Religious Activities (in Thai), Department of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education, (1970), p. 168.



In terms of characteristic defined by Ecclesiastic Act B. E. 2505 (1962 A. D.) the wat is subdivided into two : Vinsungamasima and Bhikkhu's lodgings.<sup>48</sup> The first refers to those which have, under state grants, a consecrated rectangular portion of land - the site of an Uposatha (bod) - within the precinct of the wat, whereas the latter are given the status of a Bhikkhu's lodging only. The wats by royal status (Wat Luang) are those built and maintained or promoted personally by the king or under his authorization or by royal members. They are classified into three hierarchical grades : First Grade (Chan Ek) numbering 22 in all; Second Grade (Chan Tho) amounting to 42; and Third Grade (Chan Tri) 98 in number.<sup>49</sup> All these wats of three grades are of the Visungamadima type.

The nonroyal or public wats (Wat Rat) are those constructed and maintained by charitable contributions from individuals and/or communities. When a new wat is to be constructed, it is necessary to obtain a building permit certificate from the government through the Department of Religious Affairs and the Mahatherasagama. Initially a wat is given the status of a Bhikkhu's lodging only. Later on it can be promoted to the status of the Visungamasima by legal procedures.<sup>50</sup>

A wat is ordinarily endowed with the following types of estates :

1. Wat or monastery estate, hereby meaning the area wherein the various structures of a wat or monastery are situated;
2. Wat or monastery land estate, referring to a piece of land belonging to a wat or monastery;
3. Wat or monastery revenue estate, referring to a piece of land, the rents or other benefits of which are dedicated to the upkeep of a wat or monastery of the Buddhist Order or the Sangha as a whole (the land itself does not belong to the wat).<sup>51</sup>

All the wats in Thailand may hold anyone type of these properties or their combination. For instance, the wats of Ban Wangchai, Nampong, Srinual and Dhatu in Khonkaen hold the combination of types (1) and (2) whereas Wat Sraket in Bangkok holds the combination of all three types. These property types are applicable to the Thai Buddhist Order only, excluding those of the Burmese, the Vietnamese as also Christian, Islamic, and others.

In 1970 the Thai wats accommodated a population of 437,752, out of whom 194,561 were monks, 116,028 novices, 117,815 templeboys and 9348 lay female white-robed nuns (Chee).<sup>52</sup> The numbers move up and down with time as shown in Table 4.6 The 1970 statistics by the Religious Affairs Department categorizes the inmates of wats by rank, grade and their specific functions, as the sequent will show.

Sangha : the Social Organization of the Ecclesiastical Order

The Buddhist social organization is constituted of four broad status groups of followers. They are, Bhikkhus inclusive of Samaneras; Bhikkhunis (nuns) inclusive of Samaneris (female novices); Upasakas (male lay followers) and Upasikas (female lay followers) in a descending order of hierarchical significance. They are all accountable for the survival of Buddhism which depends on their role commitments at different levels. The Bhikkhunis and Samaneris are not to be found in Thailand. Alternatively there are Thai Chees who are by no means comparable to the former by any standards. All the four categories are clearly defined by the institution of the precepts (Sila) which in turn define their role-performance and way of life.

The Buddhist Sangha advanced gradually from its primitive Parivrajaka (wandering) condition to the stage when each unitary sangha could function as a corporate body. The systematic organization of a corporate life followed by the rulers of the Vajjis is said to have been recommended and preferred by the Buddha himself. This is explicit in his sermon on Aparihaniya Dhamma, delivered to the monks on the eve of his departure from Rajagriha, on his last missionary tour. It refers to the Vajji custom of holding, "full and frequent assemblies," as an "insurance against adversity".

This seems to have been based on the republican model of the polity - the tribal council or confederacy (Gana or Sangha) - followed by the Vajji and other states in Northern India in the olden days. The Pali canon contains several references to the existence of the "tribal council" among the Sakyas, the Mullas, the Licchavi and the Vajji. It served as model for the Buddhist Sangha where the republican constitution was recreated. The tribal analogy, however, has been pressed further to interpret the institution of the Upasampada as "tribal adoption"; the Patimokkha, the common rules for the Sangha as corporate life; and the institution of the Sanghakamma - the act of an entire corporate body performed in accord with the set rules and procedures - as an organ for its functioning.<sup>53</sup> Sangha represented a formal group life different from the secular one and inspired the membership to be a firm and united body.

This form of the corporate life fluctuated with the lapse of time but was restored and reorganized by King Ashok in 2nd century B. C. It was imported to Siam only indirectly via obscure Khmer contact at some point in time. The Thai Buddhist Sangha is a modified version in adjustment to its own social surroundings.

In Thailand the Buddhist Sangha was at first instituted through state recognition in the days of Ramkamhaeng, the most

celebrated Thai king of the Sukkhodaya kingdom. Since then the Sangha has passed through various phases of development at different times, especially the days of King Trailok and King Songdham of the Ayudhya kingdom; King Taksin of Dhonburi; and King Rama I, King Rama IV and King Rama V of the present Chakri dynasty. The organizational basis of Thai Buddhism lies clearly in the national Sangha. The Sangha with approximately 300,000 professional membership (see Table 4.6), 29,000 or more of whom have served for ten years, or more, and having more than 110,000 novices, constitutes one of the largest national organizations and is omnipresent in Thai society. The survival of Buddhism is dependent on the perpetuation of the religious service of the monks and novices whose task is to preserve the Dhamma through study, instruction and dissemination. Further, this survival also depends on the support from the members of lay society who require merit in exchange. Religion, the Sangha and society are thus intimately interwoven.

The templeboys and chees, although they are enjoying the residential status and other privileges of a wat, are not accorded full membership of the Sangha. They are excluded from the professional religious service and given no legitimate rights to such service. As it stands now, the templeboys are not in fact interested in the religious services as such, but temporarily join a wat for the sake of

Table 4.6 : Classified Distribution of Wat Inmates during 1966-1970\*

Year	Wats	Monks	Novices	Templeboys	White-robed devotee women	Country's total population	Ratio**
1966	24,105	175,266	87,661	104,828	-	32,000,000	1 : 121
1967	24,634	185,921	96,569	108,424	10,013	-	
1968	25,116	174,873	108,504	112,956	8,666	34,000,000	1 : 119
1969	25,292	189,887	114,927	114,927	9,136	-	
1970	25,659	194,561	116,030	117,815	9,348	36,100,000	1 : 116

Notes : \* Population figures taken from Report of Religious Activities, Dept. of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education 1966, p. 129; 1967, p. 97; 1968, p. 184; 1969, p. 129; and 1970, p. 159 and J. A. Nields, Monks, Merits and Motivation (Dekalb, Ill., Northern Illinois University Press, 1973) p. 10. The figures include those of both temporary and permanent categories.

\*\* The proportional relation excludes those of the templeboys and white-robed devotee women.

their secular education mostly run by non-wat agents. The boys belong to families either of low-income group or rural background and most of them under 20 years of age are given the free-of-charge residential facilities by a wat. They are under either a monk or novice and responsible to the wat abbot. During their stay in the wat they are given ethical instruction based on Buddhism. Besides, they are to render their services, such as the works of room-cleaning, food-preparation (in urban sector) etc. As such to them a wat is a kind of the hostel accommodation.

The chees on the other hand, though they are full-time religious devotees and join the way of ascetic life, are not fully recognized by the public. Instead, they are generally mocked at with contempt. By the established precepts, their status is superior to that of the templeboys, but in practice it is rather otherwise. Wat is the last resort to any women frustrated or fed up with worldly life. With shaved head she can join a wat by a simple ritual performed by an authorized monk like the wat abbot. He administers to her the rite of taking refuge in the Buddhist Trinity and the eight precepts which she has to observe. The white-robe is the officially recognized dress for a chee. Generally chees are provided with residence in a clearly defined but not completely segregated quarters within the wat precincts. However, quite

a few wats have such provision. The main task of chees is religious devotion to the Buddhist Trinity. No proper learning process as enjoined for other wat members is extended to them. Attempts to uplift their social status have so far met with little success.

That apart, those holding statuses of the templeboys and chees are not allowed to perform any of the Sangha kamma; nor are they appointed to any decision-making body or to a post of the Sangha bureaucracy. A novice in particular can conduct certain rites but cannot take part in the assembly of monks dealing with matter of discipline and administration. He merely concentrates on the observance of ten precepts and the scriptural studies.

Monks and novices especially the former are the main members responsible for the survival of the ecclesiastical organization. Usually those with at least ten years' standing in the monkhood earn the right to be called "Thera" - elder and are eligible to prerogatives in the Buddhist Order. Second to this are the accomplishments in Buddhist scriptural studies of different grades. Together they define the multiple roles and statuses of monks. Generally a monk is addressed with a prefix "Phra", added to his personal name immediately after his ordination, and "Phramaha" if he earns a Pali study degree. If he is conferred an ecclesiastical



rank of dignity by the king, his name will be further changed to a new name, such as Phra Gru, Phra Rajagana, or the highest title "Somdej Phra Sangharaj", meaning the supreme head of the country's Buddhist Order. The titles bear Rajadinanama; i.e., a name given by the king. In case one gives up the monkhood at any level, his personal and family names are resumed, replacing all the monastic ones.

Within the Sangha there are eight main historical grades ecclesiastical ranks covering more than 2500 ordained members as shown in Table 4.7. Each rank is indicated by a title's appellation and fan serving as insignia. Between the ranks of Phra Gru and the highest Somdej Phra Sangharaj are a number of the ranks of Phra Rajagana with subgrades as shown below. Phra Pariens are monks who earn the title by educational achievement. The ordinary monk - "Phra" and Samaneraj- "Neen" are by mere ordination. The ranks of Phra Gru and Phra Parien somewhat overlap, but it is of minor significance and therefore, not elaborated.

Each of ecclesiastical office in Thailand bears a name indicative of position, duties, insignia of rank, and stated income. Each title carries with it certain prerogatives and a specific number of subordinate staff members or assistants. These titles or ranks are bestowed by the king and are permanent unless revoked by a royal decree or elevated through

Table 4.7 : Distribution of Clergy by Ecclesiastical Ranks or  
Titles in Thailand, 1975.

Rank in order of significance	Title	No. of rank
1.	Somdej Phra Sangharaj (Supreme Patriarch)	1
2.	Somdej Phra Raja Gana (Somdej dignity)	6
3.	Phra Raja Gana Chan Rongsomdej (Rong Somdej dignity)	7
4.	Phra Raja Gana Chan Dham (Dhamma dignity)	23
5.	Phra Raja Gana Chan Dev (Dev dignity)	41
6.	Phra Raja Gana Chan Raj (Raj dignity)	103
7.	Phra Raja Gana Chan Saman (General dignity)	272
8.	Phra Gru dignity	3164
9.	Phra Parien dignity	5395*
10.	Ordinary monks	186,004
11.	Novices	116,028
Total		311,044

\* The number may include some in ranks higher than Phra Parien.

Source : Constructed from the statistics from the Annual Report of Religious Activities, Department of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education of Thailand, 1970, pp. 159, 166-168 (in Thai).

promotion to a new rank or the person withdraws from monastic life. This hierarchical system of the Sangha appears to have been developed within the context of the monarchical form of government.

Closely linked to these ecclesiastical ranks is the bureaucratic structure of the national Sangha, the key posts of which are occupied by those holding the Phra Gru ranks upwards. To understand the present system of the Sangha administration one has to have a look at its development. Prior to the reformation carried out by King Rama V, there was hardly any administrative structure of the Sangha which may be called "systematic". The one in use in the reign of King Ramkamhaeng seems to have been a modified version of the traditional one. It consisted of two main sections of monastic life : Gamavasi, i.e., village monks and Aranyavasi; i.e., forest or hermit monks. All the villages of different regions had this arrangement. The link between the two levels of monks in the capital and the village monks appears to be unclear. Possibly it might have been worked through the agency of the government.

A high-ranking monk with highly trained competence in Tipitaka in line with Ceylonese Buddhism was invited to Sukhodaya from Nakorn Sri Dhammaraj in the southern Thailand. He is said to belong to Aranyavasi sect and held the rank of

Phra Sangharaj; i.e., head of the country's Buddhist Order.<sup>54</sup> It is not quite clear whether both the sections shared the same supreme head of the Sangha. However, both had enjoyed a full support from the state and the people. This system was in use with some modification in the kingdoms of Ayudhya, Dhomburi. During the Bangkok period King Rama IV sought to restructure it. This scheme was successfully completed by King Rama V. King Rama IV was a Buddhist monk before his ascending the throne and had established the reformist school of Dhammayut. Soon after his reign the reformist school was led by the high-ranking of the royal blood, Prince-Monk Vajirayanavarorasa by name, who was later encouraged to launch the reformation of the traditional structure of the Sangha with the full support by the next King Rama V, who happened to be his elder brother.

Under the Royal Decree of R. S. 121 the abbreviation of Ratanakosin Sok - Bangkok Era (1902 A. D.) issued by King Rama V the Sangha administrative structure was reorganized on line of reform of the state structure which was then under way. The most important part of the decree was the creation of a centralized system under Somdej Phra Sangharaj with absolute authority assigned to the above-named Prince Palriarch as the supreme head of the Order at that time. According to the newly organized structure, the national Sangha was divided into

four main administrative departments : the Administrations of the North, the South, the Central and the Dhammayut. Accordingly the entire clergy were regionally grouped except the Dhammayut to which its clergymen across the country were subject. All these departments were directly responsible to the Supreme Patriarch. Under each of these there were subdivisions of clergymen down to a village. Mondhon (regions) Khwaeng (districts), Muad (subdistricts) and wats at the villages were parallel to the newly introduced administrative structure of the country.<sup>55</sup>

The centralized model of Sangha subsumed almost all the clergymen in the country. The Sangha and wat institutions were reinforced by written law. The clergymen especially the wandering or forest monks (Aranyavasi) who had no registration so far, were made to register themselves and were attached to a particular wat, or were dealt with by the state laws. This reformation resulted in the gradual elimination of the wandering monks. At present they are very few if not utterly extinguished.

Eventually two Buddhist academies (now Buddhist universities) of Mahamakut and Mahachula were established in Bangkok to improve the training of monkhood. The legal codification and procedure of the Sangha affairs have been complementary to Vinaya - religious precepts. In Weberian

terms, this step could be described as a "breakthrough" in Thai Buddhist Order.

This structure was replaced in 1942 by the 1932 Coup leaders. Under the 1941 Ecclesiastical Act<sup>56</sup> legislated under the Phibul government, Somdej Phra Sangharaj with curtailed powers was to be a life-time appointee by a constitutional king, who was himself now the titular head of state. Along with this newly defined post were created Sangha Sabha (the Ecclesiastical Assembly), Sangha Montri (the Ecclesiastical Cabinet) and Gana Vinayathara (the Ecclesiastical Courts), corresponding to the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary, respectively, in the secular order.

The assembly consisted of 45 members appointed by the Patriarch after consideration of the seniority and other factors of eligibility. The ecclesiastical cabinet consisted of the Sangha Nayaka, corresponding to the Premier and the ecclesiastical ministers (Sangha Montris) all appointed by the Patriarch from the members of the Sangha Sabha. The cabinet was responsible to the Assembly and acted as a decision-making and policy-making body with special reference to the Sangha affairs. The ecclesiastical cabinet comprised four departments : Administration (Ongkarn Pokkrong), Education (Ongkarn Suksa), Propagation (Ongkarn Phoeyphae),

and Public Works (Ongkarn Sathanupakarn). Under these four departments was the local ecclesiastical administration which was divided into regions (Bhag) provinces (Changwad), districts (Amphur), communes (Tambon) and villages parallel to the civil or secular administration. Each region, province and district at each level was administered by an ecclesiastical committee headed by a Chao Gana or Superintendent resembling a government-like post, while a tambon with a minimum of five wats had a Chao Gana Tambon who supervised the wats under his own jurisdiction. The smallest unit, the wat, was managed by an abbot called "Chao-a-wat".

The ecclesiastical courts of the gana vinayadharas of Chan Dika, Chan Uthon and Chan Ton, corresponded to the Supreme Court, the Courts of Appeal and the Courts of First Instance respectively of the state. All these were appointed by the Patriarch and were in charge of the trials and decisions pertaining to the Sangha affairs.

In fact, this was a democratic administrative set-up on the Western model imposed on the Buddhist Order by the Western-educated lay rulers of the land. In the beginning it seems to have worked well but ultimately became dysfunctional to the system itself and finally failed to serve the purpose like its political counterpart, namely, the parliamentary model of a secular state. The Sangha affairs continued to be

ineffective owing to dissensus in the Ecclesiastical Assembly. The government had to interfere and finally had to impose a new Ecclesiastical Act B. E. 2505 (1962 A. D.) under the Sarit government. This new Act is now in force.<sup>57</sup>

The Act B. E. 2505 consists of 46 articles, containing a few new regulations implying an authoritarian rule, which really meant no radical change. Instead, as Ishii puts it, its most important characteristics were an outright denial of the idea of democracy which had been the spirit of the previous law. In reality it has resulted in the creation of a centralized system under the Supreme Patriarch with authoritarian overtones.<sup>58</sup> The ecclesiastical assembly, cabinet and courts were abolished and were replaced by a single authoritarian body - the Supreme Council of Elders or Mahatherasamagama. Under the new arrangements the 1962 Act could be said to have duplicated the 1902 Act, whereby the Sangha can be brought under the government's undisputed control.

The Mahatherasamagama or Council of Elders is Chaired by the Patriarch who is the council's life-long-member and president ex-officio. This council is the sole executive and administrative body of the Sangha, consisting of all the high-ranking monks with Somdej Phra Raja Gana rank as ex-officio members and other four to eight nominees by the



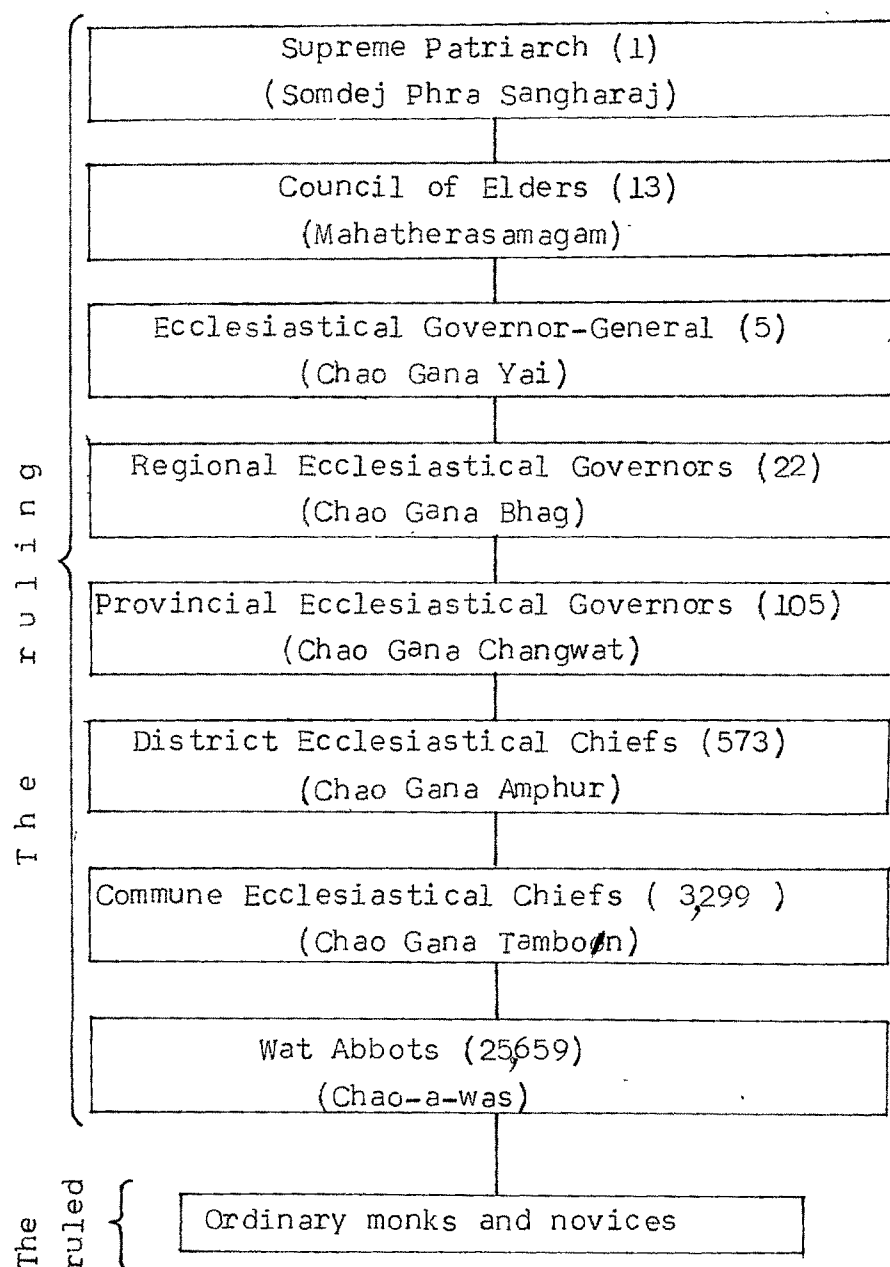
Patriarch from the senior monks with the Phra Raja Gana rank to hold the office as nominated members of a term of two years. The nominated members after the expiry of their term can be renominated. The Council of Elders serves as the consultative council to the Supreme Patriarch. The members of the council shall assume their offices as assigned to them by the Patriarch. For the purposes of constant contact and a close supervision of the Sangha by the royal government it is provided that the Director-General of the Department of Religious Affairs be the ex-officio Secretary-General to the Council of Elders.<sup>59</sup> Thus at the top level of the Sangha hierarchy the Sangha affairs are closely supervised and controlled by the Government through the good offices of ex-officio Secretary-General.<sup>60</sup>

Under this council is the Sangha bureaucracy corresponding to the civil one with a hierarchy of offices of authority. It is divided into regions (Bhag), provinces (Changwad), districts (Amphur), commune (Tambon) and villages or wats for the purpose of administration. Corresponding offices are held by the Chao Gana Yai or the Ecclesiastical Governor-General; the Chao Gana Bhag or the Ecclesiastical Governor; the Chao Gana Amphur or the Ecclesiastical District Officer; the Chao Gana Tambon or the Ecclesiastical Commune Head Monk and the Chao Avas or the Abbot. There are five Ecclesiastical

Governor -Generals, four, of whom are accountable for the Mahanikaya of four parts in the country; i.e., the central, southern, northern, and eastern; and one Governor-General for the Dhammayut. All these are appointed by the Patriarch. In turn, they appoint the 22 Ecclesiastical Regional Governors to supervise the regions assigned under their jurisdiction.<sup>61</sup> Regional Governors in their turn appoint the 105 Ecclesiastical Provincial Governors<sup>62</sup> who are accountable for all services and activities performed by ecclesiastical officials in their jurisdiction in addition to their immediate administration.<sup>63</sup> Under the provincial level are the 573 Ecclesiastical District Officers appointed to supervise the 3,299 Ecclesiastical Head Monks looking after the communes. They are responsible for the administration in their assigned jurisdictions. At the bottom of the hierarchy is the abbot or Chao Avas who is responsible for the management of his own wat.<sup>64</sup> All these appointments are life-tenures. These are summarized in Chart 1. However, all appointments are made and regulated in compliance with universalistic norms of competence, learning and piety.

The Sangha administrative structure is not only parallel to the administrative structure of the civil government but also closely integrated with it. At the higher and administrative levels the Sangha is so organized

Chart 1 : The Administrative Organization of the National Sangha in Thailand, 1975.

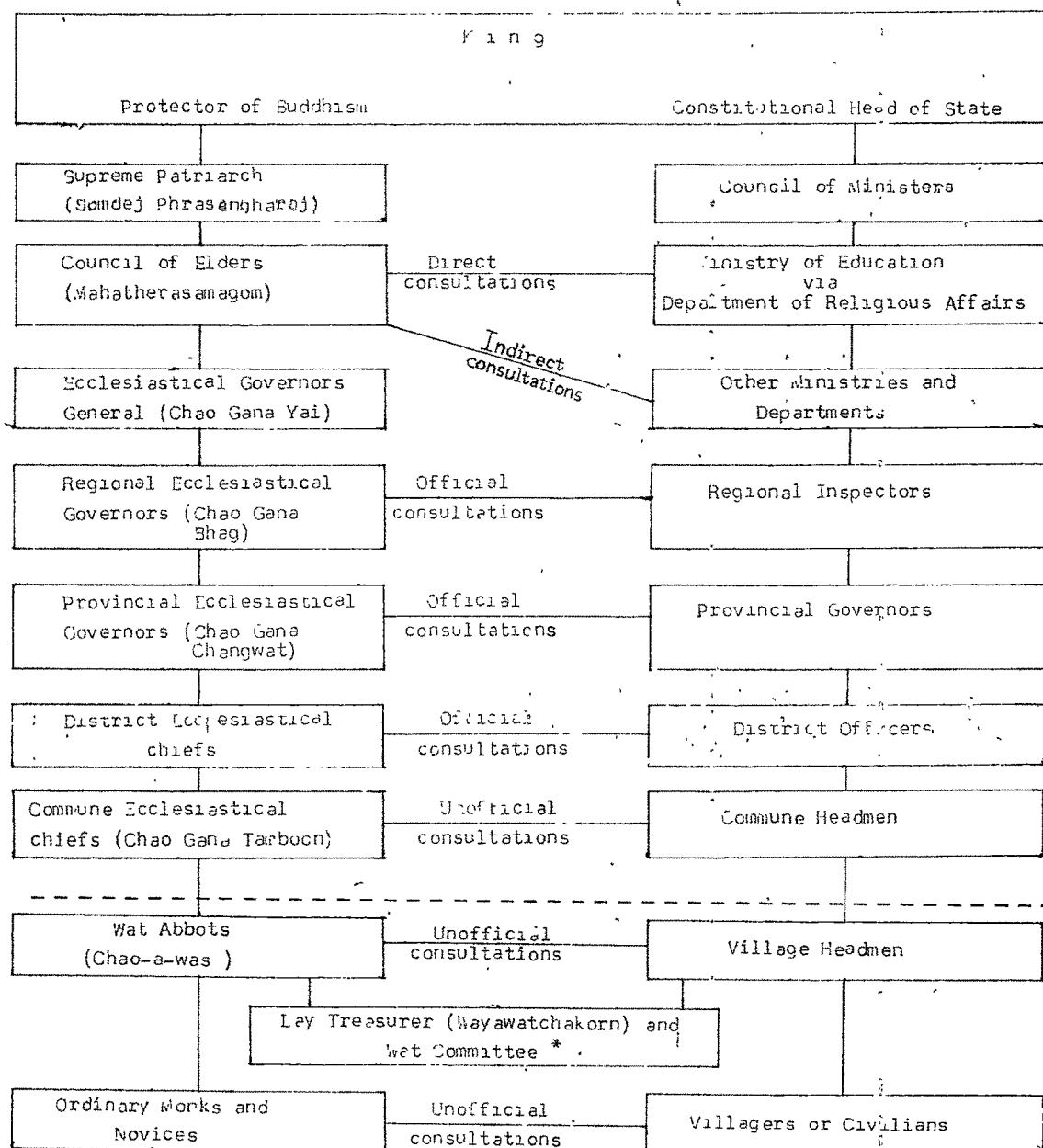


Source : Constructed on the basis of the data taken from Annual Reports of Religious Activities, Department of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education of Thailand 1970,p.164.

that the civil government can exercise effective influence over the Sangha policy and procedure and not vice versa. Through the Ministry of Education the government controls the nominations of the high-ranking monks, especially Somdej phra Sangharaj, Somdej Phra Raja Gana and Phra Raja Gana, who between them control almost all the key posts, and controls their monetary allowances commonly known, "Nittaya-bhatta". The legal set-up, again through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Interior, guarantees that the Sangha keeps in line with the governmental policy. Finally, all the organized ecclesiastical activities are promoted under financial provisions of the National Budget, through the Department of Religious Affairs. Chart 2 highlights the administrative structure of the Sangha in relation to that of the national government.

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Chart 2 : The Administrative Organization of the National Sangha in relation to that of the National Government, 1975.



Notes : - - - shows the line separating the national level from the village level where the lowest civil service level reaches the village sphere. At the commune and village levels, secular administrative units and ecclesiastical parishes do not coincide.

\* indicates that a wat committee also works at the wat level in cities and towns which hold more than one wats.

Source : Adapted from J.A. Heils Mulder : Monks, Merits and Motivation, op. cit. p.21.

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reporters, or traditions, or hearsay. Be not led by the  
authority of religious texts, or mere logic or influence,  
nor by considering appearance, nor by delight in specula-  
tive opinions, nor by seeming possibilities, nor by the  
ideas. This is our teacher'. In other words, the  
Bhikkhus were bound to neither by any vow of obedience  
to a higher supreme authority, nor by a crucial statement,  
nor by rituals. - Christmas Humphreys, A Popular  
Dictionary of Buddhism (London, 1962), p. 72; and 'The  
obedience expected of the Bhikkhu was to the Dhamma,  
and to his seniors in the Sangha he simply owned a  
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