

Pācittiya #50: Watching Military Maneuvers While Staying With an Army

On this occasion the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Sāvatti, at Jeta's grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Furthermore, on this occasion, group-of-six monks, while staying with an army for two or three nights, went to [watch] combat practice, force evaluation, army arrangement, and troop inspection. A certain group-of-six monk, after going to [watch] combat practice, was pierced by an arrow. People mocked that monk, [saying] “Bhante, was it a good fight? How many marks⁵⁸⁷ did you get?” That monk, being mocked by those people, was ashamed. People denounced, criticized, and castigated: “How is it that Sakyan-son contemplatives will go to watch combat practice? It is not a gain for us, it is bad fortune for us, we who go to combat practice for the sake of a livelihood, in service of our wives and children!” Monks heard of those people, denouncing, criticizing, and castigating. Those monks who were of few wishes... denounced, criticized, and castigated: “How is it that group-of-six monks will go to watch combat practice?” ... “Is it true that you, monks, went to watch combat practice?” “It is true, Blessed One.” The Buddha, the Blessed One, reprimanded... “How is it that you, foolish men, will go to watch combat practice? This is not, foolish men, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training-rule:

“If a monk who is staying with an army for two or three nights goes to [watch] combat practice, force evaluation, army arrangement, or squad inspection: a Pācittiya.”

If a monk who is staying with an army for two or three nights: Staying for two or three nights.

Combat practice: Where fighting⁵⁸⁸ is seen.

Force evaluation: “This many elephants, this many horses, this many chariots, this many footmen.”

Army arrangement: “Let the elephants be here, let the horses be here, let the chariots be here, let the footmen be here.”

Squad: Elephant-squad, horse-squad, chariot-squad, footman-squad. Three elephants is the smallest elephant-squad, three horses is the smallest horse-squad, three chariots is the smallest chariot-squad, four men on foot with arrows in hand is the smallest footman-squad. One goes to watch: a Dukkaṭa offense. Standing where one sees: a Pācittiya offense. After leaving sight-range, one sees again and again: a Pācittiya offense.

⁵⁸⁷ *Lakkha*. This may be a wordplay, as *lakkha* can mean “mark” in the sense of physical characteristic (such as the number of wounds one received) or in the sense of target (such as the number of enemies one successfully hit).

⁵⁸⁸ *Sampahāra*. Lit. “striking together.”

One goes to see [it] one by one⁵⁸⁹: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Standing where one sees: a Dukkaṭa offense.

After leaving sight-range, one sees again and again: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Non-offense[s]: One sees [it] while standing in a monastery; after [an army] approaches the standing-place, sitting-place, or reclining-place of a monk, fighting is seen; one sees [it] while going the other way; after going when there is an appropriate condition, one sees; when there are misfortunes; for one who is crazy; and for the first offender.

⁵⁸⁹ Perhaps this means one squad at a time.