

Nissaggiya Pācittiya #15: Making a Sitting-Spread Entirely Out of New Materials

On this occasion the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks, I wish to be on retreat for three months. I am not to be approached by anyone except the one who brings [me] almsfood." "Yes, Bhante," those monks replied to the Blessed One; and no one approached the Blessed One except the one who brought [him] almsfood.

Furthermore, on this occasion, an agreement was made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti:

"Venerables, the Blessed One wished to be on retreat for three months. The Blessed One is not to be approached by anyone except the one who brings [him] almsfood. Whoever approaches the Blessed One is to be made to acknowledge a Pācittiya³⁴⁴." Then Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa³⁴⁵ along with his assembly approached the Blessed One; after approaching and paying respects to the Blessed One, they sat to one side. The custom was for the Buddha, the Blessed One, to exchange greetings with arriving monks. Then the Blessed One said to Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa, "Upasena, perhaps it is endurable for you, perhaps you can continue, perhaps you have come with minimal exhaustion [from] the journey?" "It is endurable, Blessed One; I can continue, Blessed One. And, Bhante, I have come with minimal exhaustion [from] the journey."

Furthermore, on this occasion, a monk who was a co-resident of Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa was seated not far from the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One said to that monk, "Monk, are [robes made from] cast-off [materials] pleasing for you?" "Bhante, [robes made from] cast-off [materials] are not pleasing for me." "Then why, monk, are you a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]?" "Bhante, my preceptor is a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]. Thus I am also a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]." Then the Blessed One said to Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa, "This assembly of yours is inspiring, Upasena. Upasena, how do you guide this assembly?" "Bhante, I say this to one who asks for ordination: 'Venerable, I am a forest-dweller, an alms-mendicant, a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]. If you will also be a forest-dweller, an alms-mendicant, and a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials], then I will ordain you.' If he agrees, I ordain [him]; if he does not agree, I do not ordain [him]. I say this to one who asks for dependence: 'Venerable, I am a forest-dweller, an alms-mendicant, a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]. If you will also be a forest-dweller, an alms-mendicant, and a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials], then I will give you dependence.' If he agrees, I give [him] dependence; if he does not agree, I do not give [him] dependence. Bhante, it is in this way that I guide [my] assembly."

"Good, good, Upasena. It is good, Upasena, that you guide [this] assembly. But, Upasena, do you know [of] the agreement made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti?" "Bhante, I do not know [of] the agreement made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti." "Upasena, the Saṅgha at Sāvatti

³⁴⁴ As this is not a Pācittiya offense assigned by the Buddha, it seems that these monks were attempting to create a new Pācittiya rule.

³⁴⁵ Lit. "Vaṅganta's son." This is to distinguish him from Ven. Sāriputta, who was also named Upasena.

made an agreement: 'Venerables, the Blessed One wished to be on retreat for three months. The Blessed One is not to be approached by anyone except the one who brings [him] almsfood. Whoever approaches the Blessed One is to be made to acknowledge a Pācittiya.'" "Bhante, the Saṅgha at Sāvatti will designate its own agreements. We will not designate what has not been designated, and we will not abolish what has been designated. We will practice with the training-rules as they have been designated." "Good, good, Upasena. One is not to designate what has not been designated, nor is one to abolish what has been designated. One is to practice with the training-rules as they have been designated. Upasena, I allow those monks who are forest-dwellers, alms-mendicants, [and/or] wearers of [robes made from] cast-off [materials] to approach and see me whenever it makes them happy."

Furthermore, on this occasion, several monks were standing outside the gate, [thinking] "We will make Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa acknowledge a Pācittiya." Then Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa and his assembly, after rising from their seats, paying respects to and venerating the Blessed One, left. Then those monks said to Venerable Upasena Vaṅgantaṭṭa, "Venerable Upasena, do you know [of] the agreement made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti?" "Venerable, the Blessed One also said to me, 'Do you know [of] the agreement made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti?' [I replied] 'Bhante, I do not know [of] the agreement made by the Saṅgha at Sāvatti.' 'Upasena, the Saṅgha at Sāvatti made an agreement: "Venerables, the Blessed One wished to be on retreat for three months. The Blessed One is not to be approached by anyone except the one who brings [him] almsfood. Whoever approaches the Blessed One is to be made to acknowledge a Pācittiya.'" 'Bhante, the Saṅgha at Sāvatti will designate its own agreements. We will not designate what has not been designated, and we will not abolish what has been designated. We will practice with the training-rules as they have been designated.' Venerable, it was allowed by the Blessed One: 'Those monks who are forest-dwellers, alms-mendicants, [and/or] wearers of [robes made from] cast-off [materials] may approach and see me whenever it makes them happy.'"

Then those monks, [thinking] "Venerable Upasena has spoken truthfully. One is not to designate what has not been designated, nor to abolish what has been designated. One is to practice with the training-rules as they have been designated." Monks heard, "Apparently it has been allowed by the Blessed One: 'Those monks who are forest-dwellers, alms-mendicants, [and/or] wearers of [robes made from] cast-off [materials] may approach and see me whenever it makes them happy.'" Desiring to see the Blessed One, they threw out their spreads³⁴⁶, and took up the practices of a forest-dweller, alms-mendicant, and a wearer of [robes made from] cast-off [materials]. Then the Blessed One, while visiting the sleeping and sitting places along with several monks, saw spreads thrown out here and there. After seeing this, he addressed the monks: "Monks, why are these spreads thrown out here and there?" Then those monks reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this precedent, on account of this incident, after giving a Dhamma talk, addressed the monks: "Therefore, monks, I will designate a training-rule for the monks on account of ten reasons: for the excellence of

³⁴⁶ *Santhata*. Apparently a spread was considered inappropriate for ascetic monks; perhaps the monks in question had made them from new materials rather than cast-off materials.

the Saṅgha... and for assisting the Vinaya. And thus, monks, you may recite this training-rule:

“When a monk is causing a sitting-spread³⁴⁷ to be made, [a piece of] an old spread one Sugata-span from the border is to be added for the purpose of defacing³⁴⁸ [it]. If a monk causes a new sitting-spread to be made without adding a [piece of] an old spread one Sugata-span from the border: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.”

Sitting: This refers to [a cloth with] a border.

Spread: It is made after spreading; it is not woven.

Causing to be made: Making or causing to make.

Old spread: Covered with once, wrapped with once.³⁴⁹

Adding [it] one Sugata-span from the border for the purpose of defacing: For strengthening [the spread], whether it is circular or rectangular; or, after cutting off a piece, it is to be spread; or, after unraveling, it is to be spread.

If a monk [causes a new sitting-spread to be made] without adding [a piece of] an old spread one Sugata-span from the border: Without adding [a piece of] an old spread on Sugata-span from the border, one makes a new sitting-spread or causes it to be made: a Dukkaṭa for the undertaking. When it is obtained, it [requires] relinquishment. It is to be relinquished to a Saṅgha, a group, or an individual. And, monks, it is to be relinquished in this way... “Bhante, this sitting-spread which I caused to be made without adding [a piece of] an old spread one Sugata-span from the border [requires] relinquishment. I relinquish it to the Saṅgha...”

Unfinished by oneself, completed by oneself: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

Unfinished by oneself, completed by another: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

Unfinished by another, completed by oneself: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

Unfinished by another, completed by another: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

One makes it or causes it to be made for the sake of another: a Dukkaṭa offense.

After obtaining [an item] made by another, one uses it: a Dukkaṭa offense.

³⁴⁷ *Nisīdana-santhata*. This term appears only in this rule. This may simply mean a spread that is intended for sitting, or it may refer to a monk's formal sitting-cloth (*nisīdana*) if made like a *santhata*.

³⁴⁸ *Dubbaṇṇakarāṇa*. Lit. “making it ugly” or “making it discolored.”

³⁴⁹ This clause is sometimes used to make the case that a *santhata* was used as a blanket or garment as well as a rug, as the verbs used usually refer to putting on a robe or cloak. However, it's quite possible that they are being used here to indicate the usage of a *santhata* as something that one sits or lies down on – for example, the floor is “covered with” a *santhata*, one's seat is “wrapped with” a *santhata*.

Non-offense[s]: One makes it after adding [a piece of] an old spread one Sugata-span from the border; when not able to obtain [enough of an old spread], one makes it after adding a smaller amount; when not able to obtain [a piece of an old spread], one makes it without adding [a piece of an old spread]; after obtaining [an item] made by another, one uses it; one makes a canopy, ground-sheet, screen, mattress, or pillow; for one who is crazy; for the first offender.