

Pācittiya #26: Sewing a Robe for an Unrelated Nun

On this occasion the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Furthermore, on this occasion, Venerable Udāyin was outstanding in the work of making robes. A certain nun approached Venerable Udāyin; after approaching, she said to Venerable Udāyin: "It would be excellent, Bhante, if the gentleman sewed a robe for me." After sewing a robe for that nun, when it was well dyed and well prepared, Venerable Udāyin embroidered a complex⁵⁰⁷ image in the middle, folded it and set it aside. Then that nun approached Venerable Udāyin; after approaching, she said to Venerable Udāyin, "Bhante, where is that robe?" "Come, Sister, after taking this robe as it is folded, set it aside; when the community of nuns comes to the exhortation, then put this robe on and come at the back of the community of nuns." Then that nun, after taking the robe as it was folded, set it aside; and when the community of nuns came to the exhortation, after putting on the robe, she came at the back of the community of nuns. People denounced, criticized, and castigated: "These nuns are sly, corrupt, shameless; in that they will embroider a complex image on a robe!"

The nuns said, "Whose work is this?" "Sir Udāyin's." "Such a thing would not be attractive even for those who are sly, corrupt, and shameless; so what of Sir Udāyin!" Then those nuns reported this matter to the monks. Those monks who were of few wishes... "How is that Venerable Udāyin will sew a robe for a nun?" ... "Is it true that you, Udāyin, sewed a robe for a nun?" "It is true, Blessed One." "A relative of yours, Udāyin, [or] a non-relative?" "A non-relative, Blessed One." "A non-relative, foolish man, does not know what is proper or improper, inspiring⁵⁰⁸ or uninspiring, for a non-relative. How is it that you, foolish man, will sew a robe for an unrelated nun! This is not, foolish man, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

"If any monk sews a robe for an unrelated nun, or causes one to be sewn: a Pācittiya."

Any monk: ...

Unrelated: Not connected, by mother or by father, as far as the seventh grandfather's generation.

Nun: Ordained by both communities.

Robe: Any particular robe of the six kinds of robe[-cloth].

Sews: One sews it oneself – for each stitch: a Pācittiya offense.

⁵⁰⁷ *Paṭibhāna*. This is a decidedly unusual application of this adjective, which usually denotes a praiseworthy quality of eloquence and profound wit.

⁵⁰⁸ *Pāsādika*. From *pasāda* – "serene joy," "clarity," "purity." Thus "inspiring" is here meant in the sense of instilling the aforementioned qualities.

Causes to be sewn: One commands another: a Pācittiya offense. Someone who is commanded once sews many times: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving an unrelated woman as unrelated, one sews a robe or causes one to be sewn: a Pācittiya offense.

In doubt about an unrelated woman, one sews a robe or causes one to be sewn: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving an unrelated woman as related, one sews a robe or causes one to be sewn: a Pācittiya offense.

One sews a robe for a one-side-ordained [nun], or causes one to be sewn: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Perceiving a related woman as unrelated: a Dukkaṭa offense.

In doubt about a related woman: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Perceiving a related woman as related: non-offense.

Non-offense[s]: For a relative; one sews or causes to be sewn other property besides a robe; for a female trainee; for a female novice; by one who is crazy; by the first offender.