



AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF KATHINA ROBE IN THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM

**Phra Nguyen Hoang Phuc
(Bhikkhu Samāhipuñño)**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
C.E. 2017



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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis entitled “An Analytical Study of Kathina Robe in Theravāda Buddhism” as a part of education according to its curriculum of Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

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Abstract

This qualitative research has three objectives, namely: (i) to study of the origin and development of *Kathina* robe in *Theravāda* Buddhism; (ii) to study of the concept and practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism; (iii) to analyze of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism. The findings of research show the origin and development of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism, special focus on historical background of origin of *Vinaya*, the *Kathina* robe in the past. And then, it will be explored into the concept and practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddha: first of all, concept of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism: the meaning of *Kathina*, the Character of *Kathina* in different receiver and time. Regarding to practice of *Kathina*, it will be explained the procedure of *Kathina* with eight steps. The last objective, the researcher will explore the analysis of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism with special focus on three main sub-divisions: the important of *Kathina*, the benefits of *Kathina*, and the role of *Kathina* in there.

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meritorious wholesome deeds in the way of *Bhikkhu's* life without worrying.

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Phra Nguyen Hoang Phuc

(Bhikkhu Samādhipuñño)

January 20th, 2018

List of Abbreviations

I. Pāli Texts (Primary Sources)

A.	Aṅguttaranikāya
Abhidh-s	Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha
Ap.	Apadāna
BvA.	Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā (Madhuratthavilāsinī)
DA.	Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī)
Dh.	Dhammapada
DhA.	Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā
Dhs.	Dhammasaṅgaṇī
DhsA.	Dhammasaṅgaṇī-aṭṭhakathā (Atthasālinī)
JA.	Jātaka-aṭṭhavaṇṇanā
Kkh.	Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī-aṭṭhakathā
M.	Majjhimanikāya
Mhv.	Mahāvamsa
S.	Samyuttanikāya
SA.	Samyuttanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Sāratthappakāsinī)
SpT.	Sāratthadīpanī (Tīka on Samantāpāsādikā)
Vin.	Vinayapiṭaka
VinA.	Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā (Samantāpāsādikā)
Vjb.	Vajirabuddhi-ṭīka (Tīka on Samantāpāsādikā)

II. Abbreviated Books Mentioning in the Footnotes

ed(s).	editor(s), edited by
ibid.	ibidem, in the same book/article as quoted in previous note.
MCU	Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

op.cit.	opera citato, the work quoted (in the specified note)
p.	page number
pp.	pages number
PTS	Pāli Text Society
tr(s).	translator(s), translated by
Vol(s).	Volume(s) number

III. Others Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini
BCE	Before the Common Era
BE	Buddhist Era
IBSC	International Buddhist Studies College
ME	Myanmar Era
Ven.	Venerable

Note for Usage of the Abbreviations

The *Pāli* sources of reference are given according to the book name, the volume and the page number of PTS edition of scriptures, except for the *Dhammapada* and *Mahāvamsa*, for example:

A.II.74:

A means Aṅguttara Nikāya

II means Volume two

74 means Page 74

Dhp.210:

Dhp means Dhammapada

210 means Verse 210

Mhv.xliv.63:

Mhv means Mahāvamsa

xliv means Chapter 44

63 means Verse 63

The Table of contents

Approval	i
Abstract	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Abbreviations	v
The Table of contents	viii
Chapter I: Introduction	
1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems	1
1.2 Objectives of the Research	4
1.3 Statement of the Problems	4
1.4. Scope of the Research	4
1.5 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research	5
1.6 Review of Related Literature and Research Works	6
1.7 Conceptual Framework	9
1.8 Research Methodology	9
1.9 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research	10
Chapter II: The Origin and Development of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism	
2.1 The Origin of Kathina	11
2.1.1 Historical Background of the Origin in Vinaya	11
2.1.2 The Kathina in the Previous Buddhas	14
2.2 The Development of Kathina	17
2.2.1 Kathina after the Buddha's Time	17
2.2.2 Kathina in the Modern Society	21
a. Kathina in Vietnam	21
b. Kathina in Thailand	23
c. Kathina in Myanmar	26
2.3 Concluding Remarks	28
Chapter III: The Concept and Practice of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism	
3.1 The Concept of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism	30
3.1.1 The Meaning of Kathina	30
3.1.2 The Characters of Kathina	32

a. Donation to Saṅgha (Saṅghikadāna)	32
b. Donation at the Right Time (Kāladāna)	34
3.2 The Practice of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism	35
3.2.1 The Procedure of Kathina	35
a. Devotees offer Kathina to Saṅgha	36
b. Receiving the Kathina Robe	38
c. Choosing a Worthy Monk to Receive the Kathina Robe	38
d. Giving the Kathina Robe to Worthy Monk	39
e. Relinquishing the Old Robe	41
f. Making a Spot Mark on the Kathina Robe	41
g. Determining the Kathina Robe	42
h. Spreading the Kathina	43
i. Rejoicing in the Kathina	44
3.2.2 Cancellation of the Kathina	45
a. Two Impediments (Palibodha)	45
b. Two Ways of Annulling the Kathina	46
3.3 Concluding Remarks	48
Chapter IV: The Analysis Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism	
4.1 The Importance of Kathina	49
4.1.1 Sake of Monk's Life	49
4.1.2 Sake of the Laity	50
4.1.3 Sake of Buddhism	50
4.2 The Benefits of Kathina	51
4.2.1 Kathina Benefits for Monks based on Vinaya	51
a. The First Kathina Benefit	52
b. The Second Kathina Benefit	52
c. The Third Kathina Benefit	53
d. The Fourth Kathina Benefit	54
e. The Fifth Kathina Benefit	54
4.2.2 Kathina Benefits for Donors based on Suttas	55
a. Five Corresponding Benefits of Kathina	56
b. Benefits of Robe Donation	57
c. Benefits of Donation to Saṅgha	61
4.3 The Roles of Kathina	63

4.3.1 Kathina Roles towards Individual Monk	64
4.3.2 Kathina Roles on Society	67
a. Kathina's Roles in Vietnamese Society	68
b. Kathina's Roles in Thailand Society	69
c. Kathina's Roles in Myanmar Society	73
4.4 Concluding Remarks	74
Chapter V: Conclusion and Suggestion	75
5.1 Conclusion	75
5.2 Suggestions for Further Study	76
Bibliography	78
Biography of Researcher	85

Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Robes (*cīvara*) are the clothing of *Theravāda* Buddhist monks (*Bhikkhus*) and nuns (*Bhikkhunīs*). They are one of the four necessities (*catupaccaya*) of monastic life, such as robes (*cīvara*), alms food (*piṇḍapāta*), lodging (*senāsana*) and medical equipment (*bhesajja*). According to *Vinaya*, after becoming a new *Bhikkhu* (*navaka*), a senior *Bhikkhu* (*Ācāriya* or *Upajjhāyācāriya*) has to explain the four requisites or resources essential for the life of a *Bhikkhu* are known as *Nissaya*.¹ Robes are one of the four major resources. In the *Mahāvagga Pāli*, it is said:

*Paṃsukūlacīvaraṃ nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvaṃ ussāho karaṇīyo; atirekalābho - khomaṃ, kappāsikaṃ, koseyyaṃ, kambalaṃ, sāṇaṃ, bhaṅgaṃ.*²

That going forth is on account of rag-robes (*paṃsukūlacīvara*); in this respect effort is to be made by you for life. (These are) extra acquisitions: (robes made of) linen, cotton, silk, wool, coarse hemp, canvas.³

A *Bhikkhu*'s life depends on a rag-robe (*paṃsukūlacīvara*) which is made of different pieces of cloth thrown away by the people. So he should put it on and make an effort to practice *Dhamma*. However, there

¹*Nissaya* is something that we depend upon, which supplies us, a source of supply, which is an act placing someone under guidance, giving us help.

²Vin.I.58.

³I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinayapiṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: PTS, 2000), p. 75.

are special allowances: they are robes made of linen, cotton, silk, wool, hemp or a robe made of different kinds of material. In short, he can put on any allowable robe offered by devotees out of their faith in the *Dhamma*. The robes serve not just as a kind of uniform to remind the wearer that he or she is a member of a larger universal community, but is itself an object of reflection to be worn:

*Yāvadeva sītassa paṭighātāya, uṇhassa paṭighātāya,
 ḍaṃsamakasavātātapasarīṃsapasamphassānaṃ paṭighātāya,
 yāvadeva hirikopīnappaṭicchādanatthaṃ.*⁴

The robe only for protection from cold, for protection from heat, for protection from contact with gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, the sun, and creeping things, and only for the purpose of concealing the private parts.⁵

These robes had no tailoring and simply wrapped around the body. They resembled the clothing of ordinary people and therefore used distinctive colors, materials, and fabrication to distinguish the wearer as one who had left the ordinary world to embark upon the path to enlightenment. Above all, they remind the wearer that he or she has committed him or herself to high spiritual ideals to master the *Dhamma*, liberate oneself and others. In the early establishment of the order (*paṭhamabodhi*⁶), the early monks had to make their own robe by themselves using pieces of cloths mostly collected by their own effort. Later on the request of physician *Jīvaka*, monks were allowed to accept ready-made robes prepared by lay devotees (*gahapaticīvara*). The Buddha gave an allowance as follow:

*Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, gahapaticīvaraṃ. Yo icchati, paṃsukūliko hotu. Yo icchati, gahapaticīvaraṃ sādiyatu. Itarītarenapāhaṃ, bhikkhave, santuṭṭhiṃ vaṇṇemi.*⁷

⁴ M.I.10.

⁵ Bodhi, Bhikkhu (tr.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (USA: Wisdom Publication, 1995), p. 94.

⁶ *Paṭhamabodhi* that was a period of twenty years after the attainment of the Buddha.

⁷ Vin.I.280.

I allow you, monks, householder's robes. Whoever wishes may be a rag-robe wearer; whoever wishes may consent to (accept) householders' robes. And I, monks, commend satisfaction with the one or the other.⁸

As for early ceremonies too, the monks had to make the *Kathina* robe by themselves. And the early *Kathina* were simple *Vinaya* acts of the monks. Actually, the *Kathina* was allowed for the convenience of the monks in their daily monastic life. As the five *Kathina* benefits are allowed the monks are free from practicing five *Vinaya* rules. And the benefits are pertaining to offering robes and other requisites for the daily need of the monks. The *Kathina* benefits gave relaxation to the monks who could not be released from practicing the related *Vinaya* rules by no alternate means other than enjoying the *Kathina* benefits and for whom robe and robe materials were not ample.

Venerable Ṭhānissaro argues that if the Buddha just wanted to confer the privileges on monks, He could have simply, He could have simply required unbroken rains-retreat. Because the Buddha, for the *Kathina* event, required robes to be sewn, it is therefore more probable that the word *Kathina* primarily means "frame". The Buddhist tradition of last millennium however dictates that *Kathina* means "hardness" of the five privileges, and based on that premise evolved the modern *Kathina* events.⁹

However, now no special relaxation is enjoyed by most of today's monks even when they are entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits. Because, for the monks, there are lesser and lesser conditions to practice the related *Vinaya* rules and readymade robes are also available in abundance.

Regarding the issue of *Kathina*, the community of *Saṅgha* has developed very much depending on time and situations. The life style of

⁸I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinayapiṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: PTS, 2000), p. 397.

⁹Ṭhānissaro, Bhikkhu, **Buddhist Monastic Code: The Pāṭimokkha Training Rules Translated and Explained**, Vol. II, (USA: Metta Forest Monastery, 2007), p. 252.

early monks and that of today's monks are very different from one another. As a consequence, the first four benefits are not very useful for today's monks when concerned the related rules, despite being greatly beneficial and supportive to the monks. However, the fifth *Kathina* benefit is different, despite the change of times, it has been giving material support to the monastic community throughout centuries.

Fundamentally, the aim of this research refers to highlight a new perspective of *Kathina* in the Buddhist community. And the researcher refers to focus the subject of *Kathina* and related subject of the *Kathina*.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

1.2.1 To study the origin and development of *Kathina* robe in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

1.2.2 To study the concept and practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

1.2.3 To analyze *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

1.3 Statement of the Problems

1.3.1 What are the origin and development of *Kathina* robe in *Theravāda* Buddhism?

1.3.2 What are the concept and practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism?

1.3.3 What are the importance, benefits and roles of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism?

1.4. Scope of the Research

1.4.1 Scope of Sources of Data

The work mainly consults with the five *Vinaya* books of *Vinayapīṭaka*, also many *Suttas* in *Suttantapīṭaka*, *Abhidhammapīṭaka* and many books from Buddhist scholars too. The original description of

Kathina is found in the *Mahāvagga Pāli*. It describes how the *Buddha* allowed a group of monks to spread the *Kathina*. Moreover, the last four books offer this researcher more information about the *Kathina* so that the subject of *Kathina* and *Kathina* related subjects could completely be clarified. The more information of *Kathina* will be from the post-canonical literature of *Theravāda* Buddhist commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*), the sub-commentaries (*Ṭīkā*), the Buddhist scholastic books and the academic sources.

1.4.2 Scope of Content

Concerning with the scope of content, it will be covered of the *Kathina*, *Kathina* robe (*Kathinacīvara*), *Vinaya* procedure, *āpatti* related to *Kathina* and its roles on the monastic life and society.

1.5 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research

1.5.1 *Kathina* refers three meanings as follows: the wooden frame for sewing a double layered robe; firmness, stability, durability; special ceremony held by the lay Buddhist devotes for offering robes to monks after the vassa.

1.5.2 Robe means the monastic robe (*cīvara* or *kāsāva*) of the *Theravāda* monks. It also is a kind of the four necessities (*catupaccaya*) of monastic life.

1.5.3 Origin means the origin of *Kathina* starting from *Vinaya* and some Suttas.

1.5.4 Development means the development of *Kathina* and how it is evolved.

1.5.5 Concept means the meaning and characters of *Kathina*.

1.5.6 Practice means the procedure and cancellation of *Kathina*.

1.5.7 Analyze refers to an analysis on *Kathina* in the three following ways: the importance, the benefits and the roles of *Kathina*.

1.5.8 Roles mean the importance of *Kathina* robe in the two dimensions: individual and society.

1.5.9 Monastic Life means the life of Buddhist monks and nuns in the monastery who are following and practicing the teachings (*Dhamma*) and rules (*Vinaya*) of the Lord Buddha according to *Theravāda* tradition and *Mahāyāna* tradition.

1.6 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

1.6.1 Aggacitta Bhikkhu, **Kathina Then and Now**, (Malaysia: Sasanarakkha Buddhist Sanctuary, 2001).¹⁰

The *Kathina* ceremony is now an internationally established celebration where the *Saṅgha* and the laity meet to participate in mutually rewarding, meritorious activities. Throughout the centuries, the way of carrying out the ceremony has changed with local interpretations, practices and customs. This book will discuss about the difference between *Kathina* ceremony in the Buddha's time and modern time.

1.6.2 Wijayaratana Mohan, **Buddhist Monastic Life: According to the Texts of the Theravāda Tradition**, trs. by Grangier Claude and Collins Steven, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).¹¹

This book provides a vivid and detailed picture of the daily life and religious practices of *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs* in the classic period of *Theravāda* Buddhism. The author describes the way in which the *Buddha's* disciples institutionalized and ritualized his teachings about food, robes, discipleship, etc. The intention is simply to give an account of the discourses and rules that the Theravādins regard as the Doctrine (*Dhamma*) and the Discipline (*Vinaya*) of *Theravāda* tradition. The robes worn by *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs* are one of the most important symbols of the monastic life.

¹⁰ Aggacitta, Bhikkhu, **Kathina Then and Now**, (Malaysia: Sasanarakkha Buddhist Sanctuary, 2001), pp. 22-25, 34-37, 70-82.

¹¹ Wijayaratana Mohan, **Buddhist Monastic Life: According to the Texts of the Theravāda Tradition**, trs. by Grangier Claude and Collins Steven, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 32-55.

1.6.3 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, **Buddhist Monastic Code: The Pāṭimokkha Training Rules Translated and Explained**, Vol. II, (USA: Metta Forest Monastery, 2007).¹²

The author of this book tries to explain about the *Pāṭimokkha* rules and the essential rules to monastic life. This volume set attempts to give an organized, detailed account of the *Vinaya* training rules and the doctrines or traditions that related to *Kathina* from *Khandhaka*. In the 17th chapter, the author discuss about *Kathina* and draw heavily on the *Parivāra* and commentaries to fill in the gaps in the Canon's discussion, while at the same time reducing the more elaborate parts of that discussion to their essential points.

1.6.4 Ariyesako Bhikkhu, **The Bhikkhu's Rules: A Guide for Laypeople (The Theravādin Buddhist Monk's Rules)**, (Australia: Saṅghāloka Forest Hermitage, 1998).¹³

It is a guidebook for the Buddhist devotees to know the basic knowledge about the *Bhikkhu's* rules. What can be offered to the monks? Clothing, food, lodging and medicine were four necessities for life. The Buddhist clothing or robe have many related rules (*sikkhāpada*) in *Vinaya* that the Buddhist devotees should know and follow those rules to make the purification for monks.

1.6.5 Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao, Kroma Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa, **The Entrance to the Vinaya: Vinayamukha**, Vol. 3, 2nd ed., (Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press, 2010).¹⁴

Kathina is a type of *Saṅghakamma* (act of *Saṅgha*) which derives its name from the wooden frame on which cloth for sewing was spread or stretched out. Chapter XXVI on this book discuss and designate the

¹² Ṭhānissaro, Bhikkhu, **Buddhist Monastic Code: The Pāṭimokkha Training Rules Translated and Explained**, Vol. II, (USA: Metta Forest Monastery, 2007), pp. 257-274.

¹³ Ariyesako, Bhikkhu, **The Bhikkhus' Rules: A Guide for Laypeople (The Theravādin Buddhist Monk's Rules)**, (Australia: Saṅghāloka Forest Hermitage, 1998), pp. 108-111.

¹⁴ Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao, Kroma Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa, **The Entrance to the Vinaya: Vinayamukha**, Vol. 3, 2nd edition, (Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press, 2010), pp. 77-93.

procedure of *Kathina* robe ceremony with the *Saṅghakamma* by the formal announcements used in acts of the *Saṅgha* (*kammavācā*).

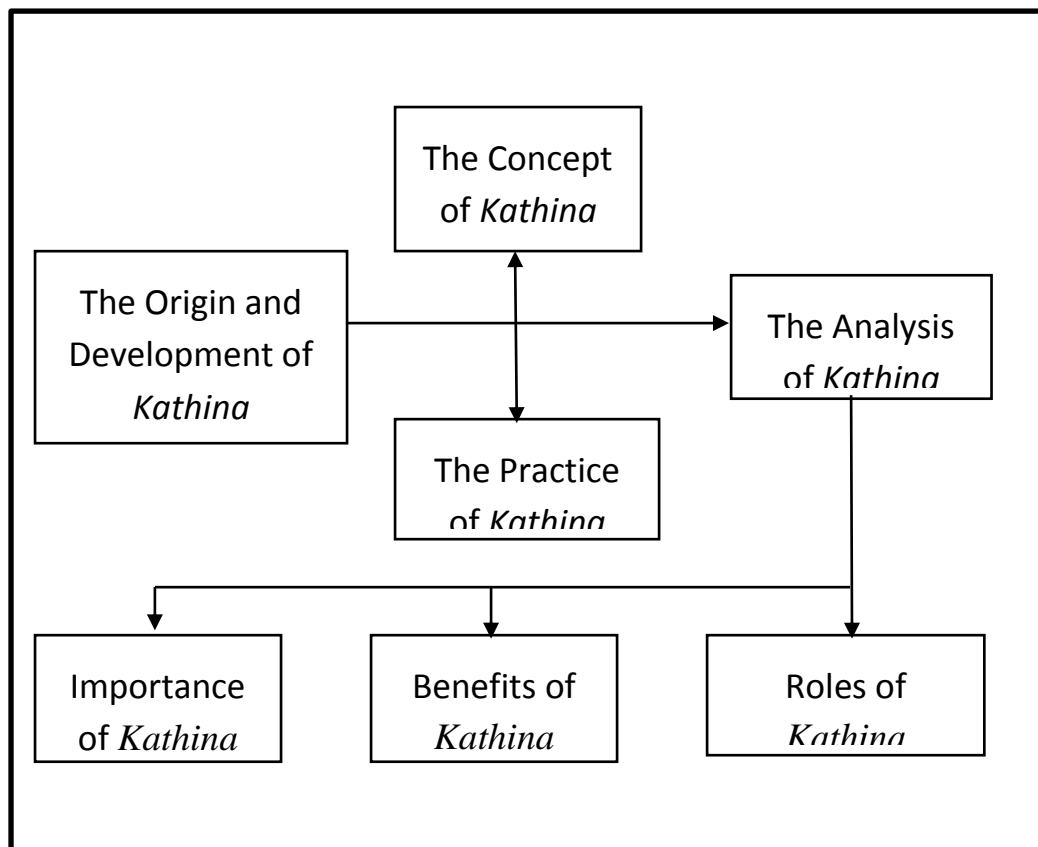
1.6.6 Sammapanno, Phramaha Somjin, “The Robe in Buddhist Scriptures: Its Development Through Social & Cultural Contexts”, in Dion Oliver Peoples (ed.), **Selected Papers on Visākhā Pūjā and Vinaya**, (Bangkok: MCU, 2550/2007).¹⁵

This short article is detailed explanation of the robes in Buddhist Scriptures. In this text, it gave out a brief background to readers an overview of robes that the Buddha allowed his disciples to use. Moreover, this text is given the basic knowledge about the color, size and style of robes.

From the above reviewed literatures, they provide us with an overview of the procedures and the importance of *Kathina*. It plays an important role in preserving the Buddha's *Vinaya* and preserving Buddhism. The *Kathina* practice was originally introduced for the convenience of the monks in their daily life.

¹⁵ Sammapanno, Phramaha Somjin, “The Robe in Buddhist Scriptures: Its Development Through Social & Cultural Contexts”, in Dion Oliver Peoples (ed.), *Selected Papers on Visākhā Pūjā and Vinaya*, (Bangkok: MCU, 2550/2007), pp. 78-89.

1.7 Conceptual Framework



1.8 Research Methodology

This is prominently a thesis of analysis and descriptive. Thus throughout the work, the method of textual analysis is applied. The research methodology will be divided into three stages as follows:

1.8.1 Collecting data and categorized from primary sources, such as the *Tipiṭaka* (Pāli Canon), *Aṭṭhakathā* (Commentaries), *Ṭīkā* (Sub-commentaries), and certain secondary sources.

1.8.2 Analyzing the raw data as well as systematizing the collected and analyzed data to arrive at a clear and interrelated picture of *Kathina*.

1.8.3 Explaining and describing the collected data from primary sources and secondary sources.

1.8.4 Conclusions, identifying significant results and suggestions were made for further study.

1.9 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research

At the end of this research, the following are expected to be achieved:

1.9.1 Obtaining knowledge of the origin and development of *Kathina* robe in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

1.9.2 Getting of knowledge of the concept and practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

1.9.3 Getting of knowledge of the importance, benefits and roles of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism.

Chapter II

The Origin and Development of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism

In this chapter, the researcher will focus on the origin and development of *Kathina* practice, the *Vinaya* of monks (*Bhikkhu*), mainly based on the Seventh chapter of the *Mahāvagga*, *Kathinakkhandha*, its commentary and the Buddhist scholastic books. The origin and development of *Kathina* will be discussed in this section.

2.1 The Origin of Kathina

Kathina is a Buddhist tradition that has been developed for centuries and the most prominent feature of the early *Kathina* is hoped to be robe making of the monks though it is difficult the early *Kathina* ceremonies. The origin of *Kathina* will discussed in this section and based on the historical story in *Vinaya* and related stories from commentary (*Aṭṭhakathā*).

2.1.1 Historical Background of the Origin in Vinaya

According to *Mahāvagga*¹⁶, the *Kathina* was allowed by *Gotama* Buddha while He was residing at *Jetavana* Great Monastery (*Jetavana Mahāvihāra*) in *Sāvatti*, referring to the thirty monks who were practicing the *Dhutaṅga* in the forest at *Sāketa*. At that time, those thirty monks were staying in *Pāvā*, a small town. They wished to see the Lord Buddha and went from *Pāvā* to *Sāvatti*. Before they got to their destination, the time to begin the rains-retreat had arrived. Therefore, they had to spend the rains-retreat *Sāketa*, a small town between *Pāvā* and *Sāvatti*. After the lapse of three months and the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*)

¹⁶ Vin.I.253; I.B. Horner (tr.), *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)*, Vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), pp. 351-352.

had been carried out, they went to *Sāvatti*. Because of heavy rain, their journey was full of flood and mud. It was very difficult to go on journey with wet, heavy and muddy robes. When they arrived at the *Jetavana Mahāvihāra*, they related what they experienced on their journey. On hearing their difficult journey, the Lord Buddha allowed the *Kathina*:

*Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, vassaṃvuṭṭhānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ kathinaṃ attharituṃ.*¹⁷

I allow you, monks, to make up *Kathina*-cloth when monks have completed the rains.¹⁸

Description of the *Kathina* ceremony is not found in this story. But from this story, it can correctly be deduced that the tradition of the *Kathina* was rooted in the Buddha's wise and kind concern for the appearance of the monks. *Kathina* was allowed for the benefit of the monks. And it is also a special occasion of robe making for the early monks who unitedly participated in the robe making process when it was an occasion for lay people to offer robe or robe materials to the monks.

Regarding the time when the *Kathina* was allowed, the historical story says that the *Kathina* was allowed while the Buddha was staying at *Jetavana* monastery. Actually, the Lord Buddha did not take a permanent residence during His early twenty years after attaining the Enlightenment (*Paṭhamabodhi*). During this long period of the first twenty years, He spent His fourteenth rains-retreat at the *Jetavana* monastery (*Cuddasamaṃ jetavanamahāvihāre*).¹⁹ Moreover, after the first twenty years had gone by, He took permanent residence. He spent almost His twenty-five rains-retreat at *Jetavana* monastery and *Pubbārāma* monastery. The Buddha divided His time between the *Anāthapiṇḍikārāma* (*Anāthapiṇḍika's* Grove) at *Jetavana* and the *Migāramātupāsāda* at *Pubbārāma*, spending the day in one place and the night in the other and vice versa as mentioned:²⁰

¹⁷ Vin.I.254.

¹⁸ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 352.

¹⁹ BuA.4.

²⁰ SA.I.336.

*Anāthapiṇḍikena kārīte jetavanamahāvihāre ekūnavīsativassāni, visākhāya sattavīsatiakoṭidhanapariccāgena kārīte pubbārāme chabbassānīti dvinnaṃ kulānaṃ guṇamahattataṃ paṭicca sāvattiṃ nissāya pañcavīsativassāni vassāvāsaṃ vasi.*²¹

*At Jetavana monastery, erected by Anāthapiṇḍika, He kept residence during nineteen rainy seasons; at Pubbārāma, erected by Visākhā at a cost of twenty-seven crores, he kept residence during six rainy seasons. Thus, by reason of the great merit of these two families, He kept residence near Sāvatti during twenty-five rainy seasons.*²²

Did the Lord Buddha allow the *Kathina* in that time? No one can give the extract answer to this question. However, the time should be estimated now.

According to *Vajirabuddhi-ṭīkā*, Venerable *Vajirabuddhi Thera* stated that *Kathina* was allowed in the later days of the Lord Buddha during the time of king *Ajātasattu* as mentioned in *Pāli Canon* that:

Atha pacchimabodhiyaṃ ajātasattukāle kathinaṃ anuññātaṃ.

Kathina was allowed during the time of king *Ajātasattu* in the later days of the Buddha.²³

That is why the researcher can say that the *Kathina* was allowed by the Lord Buddha in his late twenty years (*Pacchimabodhi*), during the time of king *Ajātasattu*. According to *Samantāpāsādikā*, Venerable *Buddhaghosa Mahāthera* said that the Lord Buddha attained *Parinibbāna* (passed away) in the eighth year of king *Ajātasattu's* ruling as the mentioned in *Samantāpāsādikā* that:

Ajātasattussa hi aṭṭhame vasse sammāsambuddho parinibbāyi.

The Lord Buddha passed away in the eighth year of king *Ajātasattu's* ruling.²⁴

²¹ DhA.I.3.

²² Eugene Watson Burlingame, (tr.), **Buddhist Legends - Translated from the Original Pāli Text of the Dhammapada Commentary**, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921), p. 80.

²³ Vjb.215.

Referring to this *Vinaya* commentary, the researcher can understand that *Ajātasattu* become the king eight years before the Lord Buddha passed away. Therefore, the researcher can conclude that *Kathina* was allowed by the Lord Buddha during the time of king *Ajātasattu* eight years before the Lord Buddha passed away.

2.1.2 The Kathina in the Previous Buddhas

Regarding the origin of *Kathina* tradition, *Buddhaghosa Mahāthera* claimed that the *Kathina* was allowed by all Buddhas (*Kathinatthāro ca nāmesa sabbabuddhehi anuññāto*).²⁵ However only four *Kathinas* allowed by four Buddhas: *Gotama* Buddha, *Paduma* Buddha, *Sumedha* Buddha and *Padumuttara* Buddha are found in following Buddhist texts.

According to *Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā*, the *Kathina* also was allowed by *Paduma* Buddha. At that time, *Paduma* Buddha was staying at *Usabhavatī* city and preached the Dhamma talk to the citizens. Many of them raised the faith in the Buddha and became monks. At the end of rains-retreat, the Lord Buddha and three hundred thousand Arahant monks observed the *Pavāraṇā* practice. After that, lay devotees offered *Kathina* cloth to the *Saṅgha* when they heard the fruit of *Kathina* robe offering. Then, the members of *Saṅgha* formally dedicated it to the *Sālāthera* who was the right hand side disciple of *Paduma* Buddha. Monks prepared to sew the robe collectively so that the sewing might be finished on the same day. As it was an act of the *Saṅgha*, the Lord Buddha himself helped them by putting the thread through the eye of a needle. After the sewing was finished the *Kathina* was spread and the *Kathina* benefits were enjoyed as mentioned in *Pāli* Canon that:

Kathinatthārasamaye, uppanne Kathinacīvare;

Dhammasenāpatitthāya, bhikkhū sibbiṃsu cīvaraṃ.

Tadā te vimalā bhikkhū, chaḷabhiññā mahiddhikā;

²⁴ VinA.I.72.

²⁵ VinA.V.1107.

*Tīni sataṣaḥassāni, samiṃsu aparājitā.*²⁶

When Kathina robe-material had accrued at the time of the formal spreading out of the Kathina cloth monks sewed a robe for the general under Dhamma.

*The those three super hundred thousand stainless monks, having the six super-knowing, of great psychic potency, unconquered, gathered together.*²⁷

Next, the *Kathina* was allowed by *Sumedha* Buddha is also mentioned in *Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā* too. When *Sumedha* Buddha was staying at a monastery on the *Devakūṭa* mountain, He celebrated the second meeting of *Ariya*-disciples (*Dutiyasannipāta*) together with ninety million Arahant monks. At the meeting, the Lord Buddha gave the *Dhamma* talk explaining how the *Kathina* was beneficial for both of monks and laity. Those laity donated *Kathina* cloth to the *Saṅgha*; and *Sumedha* Buddha and His Arahant disciples performed the *Kathina* ceremony as follows:

Punāparaṃ devakūṭe, bhikkhūnaṃ kathinatthate;

*Tadā navutikoṭīnaṃ, dutiyo āsi samāgamo.*²⁸

And again, on *Devakūṭa* at the (time of the) formal spreading out of the *Kathina* (robe-material) for monks, there was then the second gathering of ninety crores.²⁹

Moreover, according to *Mahāvagga-aṭṭhakathā*, *Padumuttara* Buddha also allowed the *Kathina*. When he was dwelling at His monastery, six million and eight hundred thousand monks gathered in the monastery. At that time, the Lord Buddha allowed the monks to celebrate the *Kathina* ceremony and to enjoy the *Kathina*'s benefits. Venerable

²⁶ BuA.180.

²⁷Buddhadatta, Thera, **The Clarifier of the Sweet Meaning (Madhurattavilāsini): Commentary on the Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddhavaṃsa)**, tr. by I.B. Horner, (London: PTS, 1978), p. 259.

²⁸ BuA.199.

²⁹Buddhadatta, Thera, **The Clarifier of the Sweet Meaning (Madhurattavilāsini): Commentary on the Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddhavaṃsa)**, tr. by I.B. Horner, (London: PTS, 1978), p. 289.

Sujātathera, the noble disciple of *Padumuttara* Buddha received the *Kathina* robe was donated by the lay devotees as saying:

Atīte padumuttaropi bhagavā kathinavattaṃ akāsi. Tassa kira aggasāvako sujātatthero nāma kathinaṃ gaṇhi. Taṃ satthā aṭṭhasatṭhiyā bhikkhusatasahasseehi saddhiṃ nisīditvā akāsi.

*In the past, the Buddha as the name Padumuttara has also served Kathina. The Blessed One along with his disciples, Sujāta Thera, took the Kathina. The Buddha had practiced Kathina with six million eight hundred thousand monks.*³⁰

The author of *Discipline – The Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapiṭaka*, John Clifford Holt who defined the early *Kathina* as “the making of new robes to be distributed among the *Bhikkhus* of a boundary residence”.³¹

According to the above mentioned stories, detailed description of the early *Kathina* is not seen, but it is seen that the *Kathina* was allowed for the benefits for monks who successfully observed their rains-retreat. And it was allowed to let the monks be free from worry about robe and burden of robe. It is supporting the relationship between the two communities of monks and lay people. And it is also seen that the *Kathina* was a special occasion of robe making for the early monks who unitedly participated in the robe making process when it was an occasion for lay people to offer robes or robe materials to the monks.

³⁰VinA.V.1109.

³¹John C. Hoit, *Discipline – The Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapiṭaka*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981), p. 135.

2.2 The Development of Kathina

The *Vinaya* act of *Kathina* has been practicing for years in all *Theravāda* Buddhist countries. The *Kathina* act of modern monks and that of ancient monks after the Buddha's time are same tradition. To see from the view point of *Vinaya*, there is no difference between the modern *Kathina* and ancient *Kathina*.

2.2.1 Kathina after the Buddha's Time

According to *Theravāda* tradition, *Gotama Bodhisatta* attained fully enlightenment in 588 BCE under *Bodhi* tree in *Bodhgaya*. At that time, He was thirty-five years old. Since then, throughout forty-five years, He preached many discourses and disciplines diligently for the welfare of all beings regardless of cold, heat, tiredness, weariness and ailment. The Lord Buddha attained *Mahāparinibbāna* in 543 BCE in *Kusinārā*. That year was counted as the first year of the Buddhist Era.³²

Three months after the Buddha's passing away, in the second month of the rainy season, the first great council (*Pathamasāṅgāyana*) was taken place in *Sattapaṇṇi* cave pavilion at mount *Vebhāra* near *Rājagaha* city, the capital of *Magadha*. King *Ajātasattu* provided this congregation with food and other requisites. All the teachings of the Buddha were presented and scrutinized carefully. Only when they were satisfied that a particular teaching was the authentic teaching of the Lord Buddha was that teaching accepted. As a sign of acceptance, the Elders recited those teachings together. That is why the Councils are known in *Pāli* as *Sāṅgāyana* or *Sāṅgīti* as saying:

In this way, Suttas and other teachings were accepted. As a sign of acceptance, the Arahants recited the teachings together. Thus at the first Buddhist Council the teachings of the Buddha, still fresh in the memory of His disciples, were

³² Chan Khoon San, **Buddhist Pilgrimage**, (Malaysia: Subang Jaya Buddhist Association, 2002), pp. 73, 96.

*collected, presented, scrutinized and then accepted as authentic.*³³

The Second Buddhist Council was held at *Vesālī* a century (100 BE or 443 BCE) after the passing of the Buddha. It is recorded in the *Cullavagga* that the monks of the *Vajjī* country were in the habit of practicing the Ten Points (*dasavatthūni*)³⁴ which were regarded as unorthodox by Venerable *Yasa*. The *Vālukārāma* was then chosen as the Venue where 700 monks met for eight months and King *Kālāsoka* patronized the council. Actually no new teaching was added and nothing was taken away from the teachings recorded at the First Buddhist Council.

The Third Buddhist Council was held in the reign of King *Asoka*. Emperor *Asoka* was crowned in the over two hundred years after the Buddha's *Mahāparinibbāna*. The Third Buddhist Council was held at *Asokārāma* monastery in the city of *Pāṭaliputta* in 235 BE (308 BCE). The reason for convening the Third Buddhist Council is reported to have been to rid the *Saṅgha* of corruption and bogus monks who held heretical views. After the council, nine religious missions³⁵ were sent to nine

³³U Sīlananda Sayadaw, **Handbook of Abhidhamma Studies**, (Malaysia: Selangor Buddhist Vipassana Meditation Society, 2012), p. 3.

³⁴The ten points at issue were as follows: storing salt in a horn (*kappati siṅgilonakappo*), eating after midday (*kappati dvaṅgulakappo*), eating once and then going again to a village for alms (*kappati gāmantarakappo*), the observance of the Uposatha in different places within the same Sīmā (*kappati āvāsakappo*), carrying out official acts when the assembly was incomplete (*kappati anumatikappo*), following a certain practice because it was done by one's tutor or teacher (*kappati āciṅṅakappo*), eating sour milk after one had his midday meal (*kappati amathitakappo*), consuming strong drink before it had been fermented (*kappati jaḷogiṃ pātum*), using a borderless seat which was not the proper size (*kappati adasakaṃ nisīdanam*), and using gold and silver (*kappati jātārūparajataṃ*). Vin.II.295; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. V (Cullavagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1963), p. 407.

³⁵King Asoka sent Majjhantika Thera to the Kasmīra - Gandhāra region, Rakkhita Thera to the Vanavāsa country, Yonaka Dhammarakkhita Thera to the Aparanta region, Mahādeva Thera to Mahisamaṇḍala, Mahādhammarakkhita Thera to Mahārāṭṭha, Mahārakkhita Thera to the Yona kingdom, Majjhima Thera to the Himalaya forest region, Soṇa Thera and Uttara Thera to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, and Mahinda Mahāthera, Itṭhiya Thera, Uttiya Thera, Sambala Thera, Bhaddasāla Thera và Sumana

different places to propagate the Buddhism. He ordered the erection of inscribed pillars to commemorate the establishment of the Buddha's *Dhamma*, or rule, in his lands. He introduced Buddhism to Sri Lanka through his prince, *Mahinda Mahāthera*, and additionally sent his princess, *Bhikkhunī Saṅghamittā*, there with a cutting from the *Bodhi* tree to plant.

Under the House of Moriya Dynasty, King *Moggallāna* III was known as *Dabba Moggallāna*³⁶ was King of *Anuradhapura* in the seventh century. He succeeded *Saṅgha Tissa* II as King of *Anuradhapura* and was succeeded by *Silameghavanna*. He did many good deeds, among them being the construction of the *Moggallāna*, *Piṭṭhigāma* and *Vaṭagāma vihāras* as mentioned:

Kārapitṭhimhi kāresi, moggallāna vihāraṃ;

Vihārā piṭṭhigāmañca, sagāmaṃ vaṭagāmaṃ.

*King Moggallāna constructed the Kārapitṭhi village and built the Mogallāna-vihāra in there; he also constructed Piṭṭhigāma and Vaṭagāma vihāra.*³⁷

He ruled for six years from 608 to 614. Under the reign of King *Moggallāna* III, he also have given the *Kathina* to all the monasteries in this island country as mentioned:

Bhikkhūnaṃ dīpavāsīnaṃ, sabbesaṃ cīvaraṃ agā;

Āvāsesu ca sabbesu, Kathinaṃ attharāpayi.

He have offered the robe to all the monks and spread the *Kathina* to all the monasteries in island.³⁸

Even today the *Kathina* ceremony is a great occasion in the religious life of the Sinhalese Buddhist.

Sāmaṇera to Laṅkādīpa. Mhv.xii.3-7; Geiger Wilhelm, **Mahāvamsa - The Great Chronicle of Ceylon**, (PTS: Oxford University Press, 1912), p. 82.

³⁶ Mhv.xliv.63.

³⁷ Mhv.xliv.50.

³⁸ Mhv.xliv.48.

Like Sri Lanka, Myanmar has a national chronicle (the *Sāsanavaṃsa*) which claims that the Buddha himself visited the country and foretold its future as a stronghold of his *Sāsana*. The tradition of *Kathina* came to Myanmar with the advent of the *Theravāda* Buddhism after the third Buddhist council (235 BCE). The earliest records of *Kathina* are found in ink and stone inscriptions of Bagan (849-1287). The religion spread throughout the country in the reign of King Anawratha in the 11th century AD. The king and his successors supported the religion with great measures. It is evidently believed that among the many religious activities, the *Kathina* ceremony was a popular in the reign of Bagan dynasty. In the Stone Inscription of Thingyi Nyaung Oke which is supposed to be inscribed between 474 and 600 ME, it is read: “Pagoda has also been build. Stupa had also been build. *Pamsukūla Kathina* has also been spread”.³⁹

In the time of Konbaung Dynasty (1752-1885), at first the *Kathina* received royal patronage of Buddhist kings and later on it has been supported by citizens. The *Kathina* ceremonies sponsored by the kings of Konbaung Dynasty are described by Thiri Uzanar, a minister of King Mondon (1853-1878) in his book named *Lokabyūha* which is also known as In-yone Paper. His record says:

*On the 8th waxing day of the Month Tawthalin (thirty-seven days before the beginning day of Kathina season), the minister of golden bank manages raw materials for twenty sets of Kathina robes to be offered in town far away: two for Bagan, two for Pakhan, two for Taung Ngu, two for Han Thar Wadi, four for Mote Ta Ma, two for Hthar Wai, two for Kyaing Thay and four for Zin Mai. He shows the robes in royal palace.*⁴⁰

The cost of *Kathina* robe and other accessory offerings like pillows and alms-bowls was paid by the kings. Those *Kathinas* were royal

³⁹ Nyein Maung, U., **Ancient Myanmar Stone Inscriptions**, Vol. I. (Yangon: Department of Archaeology, 1983), p. 72.

⁴⁰ Siri Ujana, **Lokabyūha**, (Yangon: Department of Archaeology, 1985), pp. 322-323.

ceremonies mostly participated by ministers, princes, princesses, queens and king himself. The *Kathina* robe and other offertories were sent to monasteries by deployed troops of royal entourage. Moreover, the kings tried to let their donation of *Kathina* robes be offered to as many monks as possible, who were dwelling far away from and near to the palace.⁴¹

Moreover, the *Kathina* donation of King Bodawpaya (1782-1819), the sixth king of the Konebaung Dynasty was recorded by Maung Maung Tin as follows:

*On the full moon day of Dazamone, the king ordered his followers to make Kathina robes and to offer the robe to pagodas. The king and his chief queen, pouring donation water, offered seven hundred and seventy-seven Kathina robes to the venerable monks.*⁴²

However, it is sure that in Myanmar the *Kathina* ceremonies have become public celebration since the country was colonials (1824 to 1948). The reason for this is supposed to be that the non-Buddhist rulers were not interested in making *Kathina* donations.

Therefore, the practice of *Kathina* became a public celebration based on the faith of generous and friendly Buddhist.

2.2.2 Kathina in the Modern Society

Current *Kathina* in modern time may be changed some things from the tradition but the *Vinaya* acts just keeping until today. In this section, the researcher will focus the *Kathina* ceremonies in three follows countries: Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar.

a. Kathina in Vietnam

⁴¹ Ashin Acara, "Public Kathina – Current Kathina Ceremonies in Myanmar", **Master's Degree Thesis**, (Yangon: International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, 2009), p. 182.

⁴² Maung Maung Tin, **Great Chronicle of King Konebaung Kings**, (Yangon: Ministry of Culture, 1972), p. 231.

A ceremony is one of the important factors in the religion. It presents the religion and it increases the beauty of it. *Theravāda* Buddhism is also a religion, of paying respect to the Buddha. *Theravāda* Buddhist traditional ceremonies are celebrated in accordance with historical facts in the Buddha's life. Moreover, some rituals for the *Saṅgha* were based on the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Besides the *Māghapūjā*, *Visākhapūjā*, *Asāḷhapūjā*, *Kathina* ceremony is also one of the main festivals of Buddhism in Vietnam as follows:

*Participating in the festival, Buddhist followers learnt more about Theravāda Buddhism. The festival not only helped preserve fine traditions and values of Buddhism but also helped make Buddhist followers in Vietnam become more close and friendly.*⁴³

In Vietnam, all Buddhists practice the same as in all the *Theravāda* countries in the world. *Kathina* has become a great festival of *Theravāda* Buddhism in Vietnam. People call it “*Kathina* robes offering season”. Different monasteries hold the *Kathina* ceremony on different days within this period. The main event in this ceremony is the offering of the special robes known as the *Kathina cīvara* to the *Saṅgha*. One of the monks who observed the retreat can be announced by the monastery to receive the *Kathina* robe. This is a special occasion to get merit for both the *Saṅgha* and the donating laities. All lay people belonging to the temple are invited to the donor's house to cook food to offer to the monks. They are all together happy to make merit, “*anumodana sādhu sādhu*” together with the donor.

Most Venerable Thich Thien Tam - member of the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha Standing Committee, Deputy Director of the International Buddhist Relations Department - said about the *Kathina* ceremony as thus:

Through such a traditional Theravāda ceremony, Buddhists in Vietnam and in other countries in Southeast Asia have a good opportunity to get closer to each other and learn more

⁴³ Thuc Hien, “The Kathina Festival”, Retrieved on 10th December 2016, <https://www.talkvietnam.com/2016/12/the-kathina-festival/>

*about each other's customs and habits so as to strengthen mutual understandings and to live together in peace and friendship, in accordance with the teaching of Buddha more than 2.000 years ago.*⁴⁴

The *Kathina* ceremony lasts only one day at the temples. The monks from many other temples are invited. The lay people gather in the temple. They listen to the *Dhamma*-talk; the monk will talk about the significance and meaning of the festival and wish every family happiness. They make offerings to the monks and their *Dhamma* friends with a big party. Before offering and receiving *Kathina* robes and some other things are put on their heads and they proceed going around the main *Upasatha* hall three times to express their respects to the Buddha. At the same time, they, together, recite poetry in the Vietnamese language describing the meaning of offering *Kathina* to the *Saṅgha*, sharing merit with all beings and wishing them emancipation from all suffering.

b. Kathina in Thailand

In Thailand, *Kathina* ceremony is a major observance of *Theravāda* Buddhism. It is the time for people to offer flowers and new robes for monks as well as pray for good weather and happiness. Following the end of rains-retreat new robes and offerings are made to the monkhood as part of the annual *Kathina* ceremony. This ceremony often involves a procession of lay-people walking along a pre-arranged route to their designated temple whilst carrying the new robes. The procession will sometimes be headed by monks from the temple. There is no specific day for this to happen and will depend on arrangements at individual temples, but the *Kathina* ceremonies are only allowed take place within a one-month period from the end of Buddhist Lent. During this time, it is common to see processions and ceremonies for *Kathina* donation at various temples around Thailand. The robes offering is a chance for Thai Buddhists to make merit and temple grounds become

⁴⁴Nguyen Phuc, "Thai King Offers Kathina Robe to Vietnam Pagoda", *Tuoi Tre News*, (3 November 2012), p. 15.

venues for traditional dancers, music and food stalls. In Thai tradition, it indicates the significance of the *Kathina* as follows:

The Kathina both articulates and recreates a hierarchical order within lay and monastic communities and stands as an expression of Buddhist concepts of hierarchy. During the Kathina season, for example, the Buddhist laity are implicitly ranked by the size of their ritual donations. The most generous of the Buddhist laity, the king stands at the top of this lay hierarchy. The king's Kathina gifts in turn designate a hierarchy of Buddhist temples. Royal patronage, in particular the king's personal offering of the Kathina robes, publicly designates the most pure, and the most renunciatory, monks (and temples) in the kingdom. Royal patronage implicitly designates a proper order of religious practice within the kingdom: that embodied in the practice of those monks who receive royal Kathina and the ceremony has powerful political ramification.⁴⁵

In Thailand, *Kathina* offering ceremony (ngan thot Kathin) is organized annually at every temple to donate new robes to monks. Thot in Thai means to lay down which refers to the manner which the Kathin robes are laid and presented in a ceremony in front of a congregation of monks. At the Thot Kathin ceremony not only robes are presented but also money and other necessities for monks and temple as a whole are also donated at the same time.

The purpose of the Kathin is to offer new robes, but it is also an opportunity to raise large amounts of money for a wat, often to be used for a specific purpose has been discussed with the abbot in advance. Money trees are a big feature of this ceremony. People also bring donations of pillows, requisites for the monks, fruit and other small items and place them in the Ong Kathin. People who come and make a

⁴⁵ Gray, Christine, "Thailand: The Soteriological State in the 1970s", **Doctor's Degree Thesis**, (Department of Anthropology: University of Chicago, 1986), pp. 50-51.

*donation are usually offered a meal and perhaps some sort of souvenir.*⁴⁶

That Kathin is considered a grand occasion for merit making because it can only be done once a year. Very often merit making and enjoyment are mixed together. A temple in an area where there are many tourist attractions is often chosen so that the Kathin party will have a chance to visit those places after presenting the robes. The community where the temple is located will prepare food and entertainment to welcome the Kathin party.⁴⁷

It is customary for a temple to fly a crocodile flag to signify that the temple has already been presented with a Kathin. In a proper Kathin procession at a temple, laypeople carry robes and other necessities for the monks, along with the crocodile flag and another that shows a half-woman, half-fish being holding a lotus bud in her hands. These flags will later be displayed outside the temple as thus:

*A temple hanging the flag depicting a centipede with a lotus blossom in its mouth indicates that the temple is already booked up with lay people coming to make Kathin offerings, so anyone else wishing to do the same will have to go elsewhere. Putting the flag out front thus saves them from wasting their time by going inside.*⁴⁸

According to a legend, once upon a time, there was a stingy millionaire. He never made merit. He buried money in front of his house near river. He was so stingy that did not tell his wife and son where money was. When he died, his spirit became a crocodile swimming near his money place. Time passed, river broke soil nearer where money was kept. Millionaire spirit was afraid that money would be lost by water. So, he appeared in his son dream. In the dream, a millionaire told his son that

⁴⁶ Lawrence Whiting, **Buddhism in Thailand - A Guide for Expats and Visitors**, 2nd ed., (Bangkok: Booksmango Inc., 2011), p. 149.

⁴⁷ Senawong Pornpimol, **Thai Ties – Social Customs and Cultural Traits that Tie All Thais Together**, (Bangkok: Samaphan Publishing Co., Ltd, 2006), p. 44.

⁴⁸ Phatarawadee Phataranawik, "Flags of the Dharma Fly Again", Retrieved on 26th October 2015, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/life/Flags-of-the-dharma-fly-again-30271465.html>

he became a crocodile due to too much worry about money. He told his son to take money he buried to donate to temple for merit. With gratitude, the son took his father money to join Kathin event at the temple near river. The son made a crocodile flag as a representative of his father who donated. Deeply, crocodile image in Kathin would like to teach people to make merit during the lifetime because when we die we cannot take money with us except merit we make. Since then it has been a custom for a temple to hoist a crocodile flag after it has received the Kathin robe.

c. Kathina in Myanmar

Myanmar *Kathina* has been developed by the religious faith and social aspect of Myanmar Buddhists. The current Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies are traditional, religious and social community activities giving material support to monks and making social bonds among the Buddhists: monks and lay people. And it is viewed as an annual cultural festival of merit making celebrated throughout the country by all walks of life. In today, *Vinaya Kathina* is almost unknown to most of lay people while public *Kathina* is interesting to both sides of monks and lay people. According to *Vinaya* rules, *Kathina* season starts on the first day of the second fortnight in the seventh Myanmar month (Tha Din Kyut) when monk rains-retreat concludes and it lasts for one month. Season of *Kathina* ceremonies is only one month in every year. Most of Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies are organizers want to take more time to collect more Kathina fund while most of distinguished Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies are sponsored by public contribution as mentioned:

Myanmar Buddhists are setting up temporary stalls in every corner of the streets and junctions in cities, towns and villages. The volunteer boys and girls are collecting the money through passerby and people donate their money generously dedicating to the monks. Some volunteer groups render their services door to door collecting money with traditional folk dance attracting donors and children and this scene is common to our community annually but it makes us pleasant because we enjoying to perform religious

*festival. Every Buddhist organization such as rickshaw, taxi driving society; institution such as schools, colleges, universities, private companies and even the Union government, Regions and State government are organizing to offer Kathina ceremony. We can imagine how Buddhists' spirit prevails in people's heart and soul.*⁴⁹

Myanmar Buddhist people believe that monks and lay people are depending one another. Monks teach lay people how to live according to the *Buddhadhamma* and in turn lay people give material support to them. Here, *Kathina* donation is a kind of lay people material support to the monks. As discussed in the second chapter, early *Kathina* is robe making ceremony of monks and simple acts by them; and in today, *Kathina* ceremonies too, *Kathina* robes are essential requirements. More than this, *Kathina* robes are prominently accompanied by other offering of food and monk's requisites. Among today *Kathina* offering, what distinguished are donation of cash and that of long-term-useful supplies like pillows, beds, chairs, tables, books, bookcases, refrigerators, air-conditions, electric generators, photocopiers, printers and computers. In a word, whatever useful things for today monks may be *Kathina* offering in today Myanmar.

There are Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies sponsored by collaborative contribution of people in towns and cities. And there are also *Kathina* ceremonies sponsored by individual donors. Private *Kathina* donations are usually offered to the monks admired by the donors. Generally speaking, *Kathina* donations of well-known people are offered to famous monasteries of well-known monastic learning center. Some individual donors want to offer their *Kathina* donations to their favourite monasteries every year. As far as we have concerned, each and every Myanmar monastery, even a small village monastery in far remote area of the country, receives a *Kathina* donation every year. Some rich families

⁴⁹ Nyan Tun, Dr., "Kathina Offering and Generous Spirit of Myanmar Buddhist Community", **Global New Light of Myanmar**, Retrieved on 12 November 2016, <http://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/kathina-offering-and-generous-spirit-of-myanmar-buddhist-community/>

in towns and cities offer their Kathina donations to monasteries in their native villages or in native villages of their relatives and friends.⁵⁰

The way the Buddhists of Myanmar have gotten around this rule is that they typically form teams. These teams can be composed of residents of a single neighborhood or an entire village. The teams all construct what they call *Kathina* trees. These trees are composed of numerous articles of cloth and household items such as cleaning products. The trees are formed into elaborate shapes and each tree is considered to be a single donation. Each team takes pride in their tree. They dress in matching colorful uniforms and form a procession in the morning hours on the day of the *Kathina* Robe Ceremony and parade their trees along city streets all over Myanmar.

The mood of the parade is jubilant as the celebrants dance to music and the color and pageantry of the parade has become something that every Buddhist in Myanmar looks forward to. The destination of every parade is the local Buddhist pagoda or temple. Once they arrive at their destination, an army of volunteers is on hand to break down the *Kathina* trees into their individual donations and divide up the donations between the Buddhist monasteries. By creating these trees, the Buddhists of Myanmar are able to increase their donations, and in turn, provide enough donations to satisfy the needs of the thousands of monks all across Myanmar and all without violating the rule concerning donations in the *Vinaya*. They have successfully turned an altruistic act into a singular traditional celebration that is enjoyed by Buddhists and tourists alike and greatly appreciated by all the Buddhist monks in Myanmar.

2.3 Concluding Remarks

This chapter focus the origin and development of *Kathina*. According to above stories, the *Kathina* robe was not only allowed by *Gotama* Buddha but also by *Paduma* Buddha, *Sumedha* Buddha and *Padumuttara* Buddha. The early Kathina ceremony is not found in the

⁵⁰ Ashin Acara, “Public Kathina – Current Kathina Ceremonies in Myanmar”, **Master’s Degree Thesis**, (Yangon: International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, 2009), pp. 195-196.

Vinaya texts but from those texts, the *Kathina* can correctly be deduced that the tradition of *Kathina* was rooted in the Buddha's wise for the benefits of His disciples. Regarding the *Kathina* ceremony in modern time, current *Kathina* ceremonies are jointly participated by both monastic and laity communities. It becomes a public Buddhist festival in some Buddhist countries. The early *Kathina* was supposed to be just simple *Vinaya* acts of the monks, but current *Kathina* ceremonies various kinds of material offerings including ready-made robes are offered to the monks. So the *Kathina* tradition and *Vinaya* tradition still observe by the Buddhist monks and lay devotees.

Chapter III

The Concept and Practice of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism

In chapter one, the researcher has discussed the origin and development of *Kathina* from the Buddha's time to modern time with special *Kathina* ceremonies in Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar. In this chapter, the concept and practice of *Kathina* will be focused and the mainly based on the *Kathinakkhandha* in *Mahāvagga*, its commentary (*Aṭṭhakathā*) and sub-commentary (*Ṭīkā*).

3.1 The Concept of Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism

To understand the concept of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism, the meaning of *Kathina* should be discussed and explained. Moreover, the characters of *Kathina* will be focused as well to make the clearly understanding about the concept of *Kathina*.

3.1.1 The Meaning of Kathina

Kathina is a *Pāli* word. According to *Pāli - English Dictionary*, the word *Kathina* has three meanings: hard, firm, stiff; the cotton cloth which was annually supplied by the laity to the *Bhikkhus* for the purpose of making robes; also a wooden frame used by the *Bhikkhus* in sewing their robes.⁵¹ The *Cullavagga* says:

*Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, Kathinaṃ Kathinarajjuṃ tattha tattha obandhitvā cīvaraṃ sibbetuṃ.*⁵²

I allow you, monks, a Kathina-frame and strings for the Kathina-frame and to sew robe-material having tied it

⁵¹ T.W. Rhys Davids, William Steden (eds.), *Pāli - English Dictionary*, (London: PTS, 1952), p. 196.

⁵² Vin.II.115.

down here and there.⁵³ The *Cullavagga-aṭṭhakathā* by *Buddhaghosa Mahāthera* said that: the frame for sewing robe is called *Kathina* and the mat placed on the frame is also called *Kathina* as mentioned in *Pāli Canon* that:

*Kathinanti nisseṇimpi tattha
attharitabbakaṭasārakakilañjānaṃ aññatarampi.
Kathinarajjunti yāya dupaṭṭacīvaraṃ sībantaṃ kathine
cīvarampi bandhanti.*

Kathina is in fact a ladder, there for spreading the screw-pine stalk mats, fiber mats or even other things. *Kathinarajju* is the strings fixed in the wooden-frame in order to tie the robe when stitching.⁵⁴

In the *Vimativinodanī-ṭīkā* by *Kassapa Thera*, it is said that *Kathina* organizes the five *Kathina* benefits, not letting them go to other monasteries as saying:

Kathinan'ti pañcānisamaṃse antokaraṇasamatthatāya thiranti attho.

The *Kathina* has meaning of the hardness of ability to include the five privileges.⁵⁵

In *Concise Pāli - English Dictionary* by *Buddhadatta Mahāthera*, *Kathina* has two meanings: rough, hard, stiff; and the clothe annually supplied to the monks for making robes.⁵⁶

Grammatically, the word *Kathina* is a combination of the root *katha* (to support) and the suffix *ina* (a subjective case). In other word, the root *katha* means to live and develop earnestly.

According to the above meanings of the word, *Kathina* have many meanings. It means hard or stiff; the wooden frame for sewing robe; and also is the name of one kind of the robes what the monks who

⁵³ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. V (*Cullavagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1963), p. 158.

⁵⁴ VinA.VI.1206.

⁵⁵ Spṭ.II.193.

⁵⁶ A.P. Buddhadatta Mahāthera, **Concise Pāli - English Dictionary**, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1989), p. 74.

successfully observed their rains-retreat can be receive from the lay people.

3.1.2 The Characters of *Kathina*

The characters of *Kathina* will focused the two special characteristic follow of *Kathina*: offering to the *Saṅgha* (*Saṅghikadāna*) and the time to offer the *Kathina* (*Kāladāna*).

a. Donation to *Saṅgha* (*Saṅghikadāna*)

The donors of *Kathina* robe need to perform the right way of donation. If the way is not right, it will not be offering special robe (*Kathinacīvara*) and the *Saṅgha* cannot spread the *Kathina* with this robe. *Kathina* robe is to be offered to the *Saṅgha*, the community of the monks, not to an individual monk.

In the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta*, the Lord Buddha mentioned two kinds of *dāna*, as follows: offering to a particular person (*Pāṭipuggalikadāna*) and offering to the *Saṅgha* or community of monks as a whole (*Saṅghikadāna*).⁵⁷ One who offers *Kathina* robe must not to offer to any individual monk who he would like to offer or two or three monks who he intends. If he offers it to the *Saṅgha* contemplating to the attribute of *Saṅgha*, it can be offer special robe and it is called *Saṅghikadāna*.

The Lord Buddha also mentioned seven types of *Saṅghikadāna* as follows:

- Offering to both *Saṅgha* (*Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs*) headed by the *Buddha*.
- After the Buddha has attained *Parinibbāna*, offering to both *Saṅgha*.
- Offering to the *Saṅgha* of *Bhikkhu* only.

⁵⁷ M.III.254-257; Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu, Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (trs.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), pp. 1103-1104.

- Offering to the *Saṅgha* of *Bhikkhunī Saṅgha* only.
- Offering to selected *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs* as the *Saṅgha*'s representatives.
- Offering to selected *Bhikkhus* as the *Saṅgha*'s representatives.
- Offering to selected *Bhikkhunīs* as the *Saṅgha*'s representatives.⁵⁸

When making such offerings, one should focus one's mind on giving to the *Saṅgha*. So the Buddha classified seven kinds of *Saṅgha*. The donor should banish the idea of personal references or personal attitudes towards any individual monk, regarding the whole *Saṅgha* as the recipient. This *Saṅghikadāna* brings the greatest benefits for all as thus:

*Come now, householder, give gifts to the Saṅgha. When you give gifts to the Saṅgha, your mind will be confident. When your mind is confident, with the breakup of the body, after death, you will be reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world.*⁵⁹

The offering of the *Kathina* robe, therefore, is a rare opportunity for lay Buddhists to perform and also to pay gratitude to the *Saṅgha* for their tireless service to the society. Similarly, it is also beneficial to the *Saṅgha* in more than one ways. As the Buddha says that offering to the *Saṅgha* is always more beneficial and brings meritorious results than offering to an individual as follows:

In future times, Ānanda, there will be members of the clan who are 'yellow-necks', immoral, of evil character. People will give gifts to those immoral persons for the sake of the Saṅgha. Even then, I say, an offering made to the Saṅgha is incalculable, immeasurable. And I say that in no way is a

⁵⁸ M.III.257; Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu, Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (trs.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), p. 1104.

⁵⁹ A.III.393; Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (tr.), **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 946.

*gift to a person individually ever more fruitful than an offering made to the Saṅgha.*⁶⁰

Whenever one get a chance, therefore, should make an offering to the *Saṅgha* as a whole, which is indeed wholesome deed. Once the recipient is virtuous our offerings will bring more results, thus Buddhists belief the *Saṅgha* is a community of monks that all the monks include past, right from the time of the Buddha, present and future.

b. Donation at the Right Time (*Kāladāna*)

According to *Kāladānasutta*, there are five types of offering at the right time as follows: giving a gift to a visitor (*āgantukassa dānaṃ deti*), giving a gift to one setting out on a journey (*gamikassa dānaṃ deti*), giving a gift to a patient (*gilānassa dānaṃ deti*), giving a gift during a famine (*dubbhikkhe dānaṃ deti*), first presents the newly harvested crops and fruits to the virtuous ones (*yāni tāni navasassāni navaphalāni tāni paṭhamaṃ sīlavantesu paṭiṭṭhāpeti*).⁶¹ From this *Sutta*, the far greater than just giving is giving with discernment (*sappaññā*) and responsiveness (*vadaññū*) what is helpful and useful, and at the right time, in the proper season.

⁶⁰ M.III.257; Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu, Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (trs.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), p. 1105.

⁶¹ A.III.41; Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (tr.), **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 661.

The five types of offering at the right time in above *Sutta* just focus the persons who are giver and receiver. But for *Kathina* robe offering, the time is focused because the *Kathina* robe can be offered only during a specified period, which starts from the end of *Vassa* or full moon day of October (*Assajuyo*) to the next full moon day of November (*Kattiko*). The specified period is the last month of rainy season (*vassāna*). Outside this period (*akāla*), donors cannot offer the *Kathina* robe and that robe just will be a normal robe (*cīvara*); and this period can be called *akāladāna*.

Moreover, the *Kathina* robe can be organized once a year at one monastery. It cannot be done twice or more a year at same temple. Thus, the *Kathina* robe offering is considered as a special offering, a first Buddhist practice is generosity (*dāna*).

3.2 The Practice of *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism

The *Vinaya* act of *Kathina* has been practicing for years in all *Theravāda* countries. The act of modern monks and ancient monks are same to one another. To see from the view point of *Vinaya*, there is no difference between the modern *Kathina* and ancient *Kathina*. The relating doctrines of *Kathina* robe offering what set up mainly based on *Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga* will be discussed in this section.

3.2.1 The Procedure of *Kathina*

Referring to *Vinaya* texts and other relevant *Vinaya* books, each step of the *Kathina* ceremony procedure will be explained the procedures of *Kathina* ceremony as follows: lay people offer the robe to *Saṅgha*, after that the monks choose one worthy monk to give that robe to him and that worthy monk should relinquish his old robe and determine the *Kathina* robe, he will spread the *Kathina* and other monks should rejoice in the *Kathina* ceremony. Two impediments and two ways of annulling the *Kathina* also will be discussed in this section.

a. Devotees offer *Kathina* to *Saṅgha*

In the Buddha's time, when the monks needed the robes, they had to look for rags in the garbage on the streets or in the cemeteries. They collected rags or pieces of cloth and washed them. After that they had to sew them as a robe. It is called the robe collected from the rags (*paṃsukūlacīvara*). They did not wear the robes donated by the householders. They only used the rag-robe, probably because it was cheap and the rag was easily available anywhere and was a free good for them. Later on, on the request of physician *Jīvaka Komārabhacca*, the monks were allowed to accept householder's robe (*gahapaticīvara*) that means a robe offered by lay-people as follows:

*Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, gahapaticīvaram. Yo icchati, paṃsukūliko hotu. Yo icchati, gahapaticīvaram sādiyatu. Itarītarenapāham, bhikkhave, santuṭṭhim vaṇṇemi.*⁶²

*I allow you, monks, householders' robes. Whoever wishes may be a rag-robe wearer; whoever wishes may consent to (accept) householders' robes. And I, monks, commend satisfaction with the one or the other.*⁶³

Who is eligible to offer the *Kathina* robe? According to *Mahāvagga*, deity (*deva*) or human being (*manussa*), whether a layperson or an ordained (*Bhikkhu, Bhikkhunī, Samaṇera, Sikkhāmānā, Samaṇerī* who is not a part of the community receiving it) can become donors to offer the *Kathina* robe. The *Kathina* robe is offered to the monastic *Saṅgha* by devotees. Apart from the devotees, monks, nuns and novices also can offer to the Buddhist *Saṅgha* as mentioned in *Pāli Canon* that:

Kathinaṃ kena dinnam vaṭṭati? Yena kenaci devena vā manussena vā pañcannaṃ vā sahadhammikānaṃ aññatarena dinnam vaṭṭati.

⁶² Vin.I.280.

⁶³ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 397.

*Who is eligible to offer the Kathina? Any deity or human being, whether a layperson or an ordained who is not a part of the community receiving it can become donors to offer the Kathina.*⁶⁴

The *Kathina* robe is to be voluntarily offered by devotees with deep devotion and having faith in the Triple Gems (*Tiratana*). Monks cannot ask even their parents for *Kathina* robe. Moreover, monk should not ask lay people to offer the *Kathina* robe to the other monks. The *Kathina* robe that is sincerely acquired or voluntarily by lay people is compared to dirt free rainwater.⁶⁵ And only three robes namely lower robe (*antaravāsaka*), upper robe (*uttarasaṅga*) and double-layered robe (*saṅghāṭi*) may be offered as *Kathina* robe; out of three these robes cannot become *Kathina* robe.⁶⁶ The donors may donate a complete set of three robes or only one of them for *Kathina*. After preparing everything, the donors may bring these robes in front of the monk and recite together as saying:

*Imaṃ bhante sapaṇivāraṃ Kathinacīvaraṃ
bhikkhusaṅghassa onojayāma. Sādhu no bhante
bhikkhusaṅgho imaṃ sapaṇivāraṃ Kathinacīvaraṃ
paṭiggaṇhātu paṭiggahetvā ca iminā cīvarena Kathinaṃ
attharatu amhākaṃ dīgharattaṃ atthāya hitāya sukhāya.*

*May we, Venerable sirs, offer this Kathina-cloth to the Saṅgha together with the other requisites. Please accept this Kathina-cloth and other requisites from us for our long lasting welfare and happiness.*⁶⁷

The *Kathina* robe is offered to *Saṅgha* and after that *Saṅgha* will practice their duties by *Vinaya* act.

⁶⁴ VinA.V.1108.

⁶⁵ VinA.V.1111.

⁶⁶ Vin.I.255; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 357.

⁶⁷ Tang Dinh, Thich (ed.), **Daily Chanting For Lay-People (Kinh Nhật tụng Cư Sĩ)**, (Hanoi: Religion Press, 2009), p. 243.

b. Receiving the *Kathina* Robe

After receiving the *Kathina* robe from sponsors, monks should check if the robe is sewed up with at least five pieces of cloth. Because, today, some robes are sewed with a large cloth that is not cut into pieces by just putting-lines on them. Such robes are not suitable for spreading *Kathina*. The Buddha said in *Mahāvagga* thus:

*Na aññatra pañcakena vā atirekapañcakena vā tadaheva sañchinnena samaṇḍalīkatena atthatam hoti Kathinaṃ.*⁶⁸

*Kathina-cloth does not become made unless five parts or more than five parts (of Kathina-cloth) are cut out, are hemmed together on that same day.*⁶⁹

c. Choosing a Worthy Monk to Receive the *Kathina* Robe

After receiving the *Kathina* robe, the *Saṅgha* should choose a proper monk who is the worthy to receive the *Kathina* robe. The worthy monk must have successfully spent the first rain-retreat (*purimikā vassūpanāyikā*) and must have knowledge of eight qualities. The eight qualities of worthy monks are:

- Knowing seven kinds of prior duties (*pubbakaraṇa*) which are washing the cloth (*dhovana*), measuring the cloth (*vicāraṇa*), cutting the cloth (*chedana*), tacking or stitching the cut cloth (*bandhana*), sewing it into a robe (*sibbana*), dyeing the robe which has been sewn (*rajana*), making a mark (*kappabindu*).⁷⁰

- Knowing the relinquishing of the old robe (*paccuddhāraṇa*).
- Knowing how to determine a new robe (*adhiṭṭhāna*).
- Knowing how to spread the *Kathina* (*atthāra*).
- Knowing eight grounds in removing the *Kathina* (*mātikā*).

⁶⁸ Vin.I.255.

⁶⁹ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 356.

⁷⁰ Vin.V.175; Op. Cit.,

- Knowing two conditions for the *Kathina* benefits (*palibodha*).
- Knowing the cancellation of the *Kathina* (*uddhāra*).
- Knowing five benefits of the *Kathina* (*ānisaṃsa*).⁷¹

If there are more than two qualified monks who are worthy to receiving the *Kathina* robe, the *Saṅgha* is to give the robe to the monk has old robe (*jiṇṇacīvara*). Among monks with old robes, the *Saṅgha* should choose one with seniority; and among the senior monks, the one who is an eldest person capable of spreading the *Kathina* within that day. However, the senior monk should help senior monk in making a new robe.⁷²

d. Giving the *Kathina* Robe to Worthy Monk

After choosing a worthy monk, the *Saṅgha* gives the *Kathina* robe to him by reciting the *Kathinacīvaradānakammavācā* with reciting only *ñatti* and *kammavācā* once (*ñattidutiyakammavācā*) in a *Sīmā*. Giving the *Kathina* robe is a *Saṅghakamma* which is *Vinaya* act performed by *Saṅgha*. That is why there must be at least five monks to perform the act of *Kathina*. A group of four or more monks gives the *Kathina* robe to a worthy monk by reciting *kammavācā*. If there are not enough members of monks in monastery, some monks from the other monastery must be invited to fulfill the quorum requirement for the *Kathina* act.

And *kammavācā* is a collection of *Vinaya Pāli* texts, words of the Buddha for the performance of the *Saṅgha*'s act. This *kammavācā* is composed of two parts: proposal or motion (*ñatti*) and approval or resolution (*kammavācā*). The *Kathinacīvaradānakammavācā* is read:

Suṇātu me, bhante, saṅgho. Idaṃ saṅghassa Kathinadussaṃ uppannaṃ. Yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ, saṅgho imaṃ kathinadussaṃ itthannāmassa bhikkhuno dadeyya Kathinaṃ attharituṃ. Esā ñatti.

⁷¹ Vin.V.176; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. VI (Parivāra), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1966), p. 283.

⁷² Spṭ.II.106.

Suṇātu me, bhante, saṅgho. Idaṃ saṅghassa Kathinadussaṃ uppannaṃ. Saṅgho imaṃ Kathinadussaṃ itthannāmassa bhikkhuno deti Kathinaṃ attharituṃ. Yassāyasmato khamati imassa Kathinadussassa itthannāmassa bhikkhuno dānaṃ Kathinaṃ attharituṃ, so tuṅhassa; yassa nakkhamati, so bhāseyya. Dinnaṃ idaṃ saṅghena Kathinadussaṃ itthannāmassa bhikkhuno Kathinaṃ attharituṃ. Khamati saṅghassa, tasmā tuṅhī, evametaṃ dhārayāmi.⁷³

Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. This material for Kathina-cloth has accrued to the Order. If it seems right to the Order, the Order should give this material for Kathina-cloth to the monk so and so for making Kathina-cloth. This is the motion.

Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. This material for Kathina-cloth has accrued to the Order. The Order is giving this material for Kathina-cloth to the monk so and so for making Kathina-cloth. If the giving of this material for Kathina-cloth to the monk so and so for making Kathina-cloth is pleasing to the venerable ones, let them be silent. He to whom it is not pleasing should speak. This material for Kathina-cloth is given by the Order to the monk so and so for making Kathina-cloth. It is pleasing to the Order; therefore, they are silent. Thus do I understand this.⁷⁴

This *kammavācā* is meant for early *Kathina* when *Kathina* cloth was offered. As for today, the wording is a little bit changed the words material for *Kathina*-cloth (*Kathinadussa*) are replace with *Kathina* robe (*Kathinacīvara*).

⁷³ Vin.I.255.

⁷⁴ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), pp. 353-354.

e. Relinquishing the Old Robe

After receiving the *Kathina* robe, the worthy monk relinquishes (*paccuddhāraṇa*) his old robe. This item is not seen in the *Mahāvagga* and its commentary as parts of the *Kathina* procedure. However, in the *Parivāra*, it is included in the *Kathina* procedure. According to *Vinayamukha*, Somdet Phra Mahasamaṇa Chao Kroma Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa explained as follows:

*When a Bhikkhu wishes to change determined cloth which is limited by number, he must first give up the old ones – this is called paccuddhāraṇa or revoking the adhiṭṭhāna. For example, when the ticīvara are be changed, they must first be revoked before the new ones are determined.*⁷⁵

The method of robe-relinquishment depends on the methods of robe-determination. If the old robe was determined by not calling its name (any one of three robes), it is to be relinquished without being described its specific name. But if it was determined by calling its name, the robe-relinquishment should be made by mentioning specific name of the old robe. For example, the worthy monk should relinquish his old robe with saying: “*Imaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ paccuddharāmi* – I relinquish this double-layer robe” or “*Imaṃ uttarasaṅgaṃ paccuddharāmi* – I relinquish this upper robe” or “*Imaṃ antaravāsakaṃ paccuddharāmi* – I relinquish this lower robe”.

f. Making a Spot Mark on the *Kathina* Robe

It is a duty of worthy monk to make a spot mark on the new robe. The mark is called *kappabindu*⁷⁶ in *Pāli*. The mark is to be put in a certain edge-corner of the new robe or all of its four corners. Its size should be that of a peacock’s eye. It should be a solid spot but it should not be a circle. It is a mode of disfigurement (*dubbaṇṇakaraṇa*) or distinction of the robe. To make the spot is not only a part of the *Kathina*

⁷⁵ Mahāsamaṇa Chao, Somdet Phra, **The Entrance to the Vinaya (Vinayamukha)**, Vol. II, (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, 2009), p. 28.

⁷⁶ VinA.IV.863.

procedure but it is also s task of monk to do with any new robe. If he did not do like this, he will be offence the 58th *Pācittiya*.⁷⁷

The *Bhikkhu-Vibhaṅga* does not go into any detail on procedures for marking a robe, aside from saying that the mark may be as small as the tip of a blade of grass, and can be made with one of three colors: dark green (*nīla*) or mud-color (*kaddama*) or black (*kāḷasāma*). According to Commentary, after the robe has been dyed, one should make a round mark no smaller than the size of a bedbug's back and no larger than the iris of a peacock's eye in all four corners of the robe, three corners, two, or one, as one sees fit. Only round marks are allowable. Such things as lines or angular marks (squares, triangles, or stars) are not.⁷⁸

This procedure does not appear in the Canon or commentaries, but does not conflict with any of them. But in Thailand at present, the custom is to make three small spots in one corner of the robe, saying, “*Imaṃ bindukappaṃ karomi* - I make this properly marked” while making each dot.⁷⁹ But in Vietnam, the monks just make only one spot in four corners of the new robe and the saying is same.⁸⁰

g. Determining the *Kathina* Robe

This term of the *Kathina* procedure is not seen in the *Mahāvagga* and its commentary but according to *Parivāra*, it is included in the *Kathina* procedure.

The robe determination is of two kinds: three-robos determination (*ticīvara-adhiṭṭhāna*) and cloth-requisite determination (*parikkhāraṇa-adhiṭṭhāna*). In the first method, name of three-robos (*ticīvara*) is mentioned such as lower robe (*antaravāsaka*), upper robe (*uttarasaṅga*) and double-layered robe (*saṅghāṭi*). The monk touches the robe that is wanted to determine with any part of the body or within one *hatthapāsa*

⁷⁷ Vin.IV.121; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), pp. 406-407.

⁷⁸ VinA.IV.863.

⁷⁹ Mahāsamaṇa Chao, Somdet Phra, **The Entrance to the Vinaya (Vinayamukha)**, Vol. II, (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, 2009), p. 163.

⁸⁰ Bodhisīla, Bhikkhu, **Vinayaśāṅkhepa**, (Hanoi: Religion Press, 2003), p. 303.

(1.25 meter or two and half cubits⁸¹ or two forearms and one hand span⁸²) and the robe has to be determined by reciting *Pāli* saying: “*Imaṃ saṅghaṭṭiṃ adhiṭṭhāmi* – I determine this as a double-layered robe” or “*Imaṃ uttarasaṅgaṃ adhiṭṭhāmi* – I determine this as a upper robe” or “*Imaṃ antaravāsakaṃ adhiṭṭhāmi* – I determine this as a lower robe”. And the robes are determined by second method by saying general words: “*Imaṃ parikkhāraṇaṃ adhiṭṭhāmi* – I determine this cloth requisite”.

h. Spreading the *Kathina*

Once the robe is finished and has been made allowable, the *Kathina* may be spread. *Parivāra* states that the *Kathina* must be spread by an individual, not by a group or a *Saṅgha*.⁸³ The worthy monk can spread the *Kathina* robe anywhere in the monastery compound where he has spent his rains-retreat by reciting the formal wording. If the *Kathina* robe is double-layered, he spreads the *Kathina* by saying three times: “*Imāya saṅghāṭṭiyā Kathinaṃ attharāmi* – I spread the *Kathina* with this double-layered robe”. If upper robe is *Kathina* robe, he spreads the *Kathina* by saying three times: “*Iminā uttarāsaṅgena Kathinaṃ attharāmi* – I spread the *Kathina* with this upper robe”. And if the *Kathina* robe is a lower robe, he spreads the *Kathina* by saying three times: “*Iminā antaravāsakena Kathinaṃ attharāmi* – I spread the *Kathina* with this lower robe”.⁸⁴ According to the *Parivāra*, the general requirements for spreading and giving approval are that to spread the *Kathina*, one must break into speech.⁸⁵

⁸¹Thānissaro, Bhikkhu, **The Buddhist Monastic Code**, Vol. I, (USA: Metta Forest Monastery, 2009), p. 530.

⁸²Mahāsamaṇa Chao, Somdet Phra, **The Entrance to the Vinaya (Vinayamukha)**, Vol. III, (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, 2010), p. 372.

⁸³Vin.V.178; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. VI (Parivāra), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1966), p. 286.

⁸⁴Op. Cit.,

⁸⁵Vin.V.175; *Ibid.*, p. 283.

i. Rejoicing in the *Kathina*

The worthy monk can enjoy the five benefits of *Kathina* as soon as he has spread the *Kathina* robe. But the other monks cannot yet join those benefits. They must rejoice in the *Kathina* so that they are entitled to the *Kathina* benefits. Therefore, the worthy monk formally asks the other monks participating in the *Kathina* ceremony to rejoice in the *Kathina*. According to *Parivāra*, the worthy monk should approach the *Saṅgha*, arrange his upper robe over one shoulder, put his palms together and raise them, announcing as saying:

*Atthatam, bhante, saṅghassa kathinaṃ, dhammiko kathinatthāro, anumodatha.*⁸⁶

*Venerable sirs, the Kathina cloth of the Saṅgha is spread, the spreading of the Kathina cloth accords with Dhamma; may you all please approve.*⁸⁷

The participating members of the *Saṅgha* should arrange their upper robes over one shoulder, put their palms together and raise them, and announcing as saying:

*Atthatam, āvuso, saṅghassa kathinaṃ, dhammiko kathinatthāro, anumodāma.*⁸⁸

So, friend, the *Kathina* cloth of the *Saṅgha* is spread, the spreading of the *Kathina* cloth accords with Dhamma, this we approve.⁸⁹

Thus, the *Kathina* is spread for all the monks. By rejoicing in the spreading of *Kathina*, all monks are showing their approval and delight to the act of *Kathina*. And by this, they express their gladness to the opportunity of *Kathina* worthy monk (*muditā*). Thus social relation of the monks is encouraged by the duty of rejoicing in the spreading of *Kathina*.

⁸⁶Vin.V.178

⁸⁷Mahāsamaṇa Chao, Somdet Phra, **The Entrance to the Vinaya (Vinayamukha)**, Vol. III, (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, 2010), p. 84.

⁸⁸Vin.V.178; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. III (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1969), p. 302.

⁸⁹Mahāsamaṇa Chao, Somdet Phra, **The Entrance to the Vinaya (Vinayamukha)**, Vol. III, (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, 2010), p. 85.

3.2.2 Cancellation of the *Kathina*

The term *Kathinuddhāra* in *Pāli* means to remove the *Kathina* or cancellation of the *Kathina*. When *Kathina* is removed, the five *Kathina* benefits of monks are also nullified. A *Kathina* act may be cancelled if there is a proper reason. For example, when the *Kathina* robe offering has taken place in a monastery and there is devotee who wishes to offer robes to all monks in the monastery. The following story will explain the reason why the *Kathina* act may be cancelled.

While staying at *Jetavanamahāvihāra* in *Sāvatti*, the Lord Buddha allowed monks to withdraw the *Kathina*, with reference to a lay man who donated a monastery to the *Saṅgha*. That man wished to donate unseasonal robes (*akālacīvara*) to all *Bhikkhu* and *Bhikkhunī* in a monastery where the *Kathina* act had already been performed resulting that all the robes donated to the *Saṅgha* during that period must be seasonal robes (*kālacīvara*). According to the fifth *Kathina* benefit, all seasonal robes donated during the *Kathina* period are to be shared among the monks only who may enjoy the *Kathina*. That is why the donor asked to withdraw the act of *Kathina* so that his robes may be donated to each member of *Saṅgha* as unseasonal robes. Then, the monks reported to the Buddha who allowed them to withdraw the act of *Kathina*. Finally, all the five *Kathina* benefits were nullified and thus all the robes donated in the monastery became to be shared among all monks including the monks who were not entitled to enjoy the spreading of *Kathina*.⁹⁰

a. Two Impediments (*Palibodha*)

The five *Kathina* benefits are sustained by two impediments (*palibodha*) of robe (*cīvara*) and residence (*āvāsa*). That is the five benefits are well kept by the two impediments. When these impediments do not hold, the *Kathina* benefits are also nullified, in other words, the

⁹⁰ Vin.IV.287; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. III (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1969), p. 303.

Kathina is removed. There are two impediments: residence-impediment (*āvāsapalibodha*) and robes-impediment (*cīvarapalibodha*).⁹¹

A monk still living in that residence or leaving with the determination to return is said to still have residence-impediment. He continued membership in the *Saṅgha* of that residence and continued his right to share its common *Kathina* benefits. If he leaves that residence, giving up his business there and not intending to return, he said to have ended residence-impediment.

A monk who has not yet made his robe or who has not finished it or who has lost it during the making but has not given up hope of getting another robe, is said to still have robes-impediment. If when he has finished making his robes or only part-finished and then ruins, loses or burns it, and gives up hope of getting another robe, he is said to have ended robes-impediment.

While these two *palibodha* or even one of them still remain, one retains the *Kathina* benefits and the limit of the *cīvarakāla* continues for that period. If both are lacking together, the *Kathina* benefits are finished and *cīvarakāla* is ended, being called breaking up the *Kathina* or annulling the *Kathina* (*Kathinuddhāro*).

b. Two Ways of Annulling the *Kathina*

There are two ways of annulling the *Kathina*: the *Kathina* is annulled by reciting *ñattidutiyakammavācā* and annulled on the one of eight grounds (*mātikā*).

The *Kathina* may be annulled by a competent monk which saying as mentioned in *Pāli* Canon that:

*Suṇātu me, bhante, saṅgho. Yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ,
saṅgho kathinaṃ uddhareyya. Esā ñatti.*

*Suṇātu me, bhante, saṅgho. Saṅgho kathinaṃ uddharati.
Yassāyasmato khamati kathinassa uddhāro, so tuṅhassa;*

⁹¹ Vin.I.265; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 374.

*yassa nakkhamati, so bhāseyya. Ubbhatam saṅghena kathinaṃ, khamati saṅghassa, tasmā tuṅhī, evametam dhārayāmi.*⁹²

*Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. If it seems right to the Order, let the Order remove the Kathina (privileges). This is the motion. Honoured sirs, let the Order listen to me. The Order removes the Kathina (privileges). If the removal of the Kathina (privileges) is pleasing to the venerable ones, let them be silent. If it is not pleasing, they should speak. The Kathina (privileges) are removed by the Order, and it is right ... So do I understand this.*⁹³

And the second way to break up the five *Kathina* benefits is eight grounds (*mātikā*) namely: by a monk going away (*pakkamanantika*), by his robe being settled (*niṭṭhānantika*), by his resolves not to have it made up and not to come back (*sanniṭṭhānantika*), by the robe being lost (*nāsanantika*), by his hearing of the general removal of the privileges in the residence to which he has gone (*savanantika*), by the disappointment of his expectation that a special gift of a robe would be made to him (*āsāvacchedika*), by his having crossed the boundary (*sīmātikantika*), by the removal of the *Kathina* privileges together with those of the other monks (*sahubbhāra*).⁹⁴

Removing of *Kathina* was allowed for the benefit of *Saṅgha*, not for spreading *Kathina* again. In other words, to remove the *Kathina* means to withdraw the *Vinaya* act of spreading *Kathina* (*Kathinatthārakamma*) so that the five benefits of *Kathina* may be cancelled.

⁹² Vin.IV.287.

⁹³ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. III (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1969), p. 302.

⁹⁴ Vin.I.255; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. 358.

3.3 Concluding Remarks

As far as the concept of *Kathina* based on *Vinaya* and the procedures of *Kathina* have been practiced for many centuries all over the Buddhist *Theravāda* countries since the time of the Lord Buddha. Nowadays, the *Kathina* procedure has been organized with eight above items and today's procedure of the *Vinaya Kathina* is in conformity with the early *Kathina* in the Buddha's time.

Chapter IV

The Analysis Kathina in Theravāda Buddhism

In chapter three the researcher has explained the concept and the *Vinaya* act of *Kathina* based on *Vinaya* texts, its commentary and sub-commentaries. Now, it is the time to analysis *Kathina* in *Theravāda* Buddhism with three follow characters, such as: the importance, the benefits and the roles of *Kathina*.

4.1 The Importance of *Kathina*

The *Kathina* robe donation is a special robe offering to *Saṅgha* and this donation is special than more another donation. The *Kathina* robe is significant because during the three months in rainy season, Buddhist monks are required to remain fully dedicated to purifying themselves through the rigorous practice of meditation and moral conduct. The *Kathina* ceremony become important and meritorious because of the potency of the merit gathered during the period of retreat, both by the monks and the devotees. Thus, *Kathina* robe play the importance role for the sake of monastic and laity life and Buddhism as well.

4.1.1 Sake of Monk's Life

When the *Kathina* robe was offered to *Saṅgha*, the monks use that *Kathina* robe as one of the four necessities (*catupaccaya*) of monastic life as follows: robes (*cīvara*), almsfood (*piṇḍapāta*), lodging (*senāsana*), medicine (*bhesajja*)⁹⁵. For the robes, they can be able to protect monk form cold (*sītassa paṭighātāya*), protection from heat (*uṇhassa paṭighātāya*), protection from contact with gadflies (*ḍaṃsa*), mosquitoes

⁹⁵ Vin.I.58; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinayaṭṭaka)**, Vol. IV (Mahāvagga), (London: PTS, 2000), p. 75.

(*makasa*), wind (*vāta*), the sun (*tapā*), and creeping things (*sarīsapa-samphassa*), and only for the purpose of concealing the private parts (*hirikopīnappaṭicchādanattha*)⁹⁶. And this *Kathina* robe can be called special robe because a monk who has received the *Kathina* robe, only those monks who have successfully completed the rains-retreat, is not allowed to receive the *Kathina* robe a second time in the same month period.

4.1.2 Sake of the Laity

As the monks end the retreat and come back to society, they become deservedly worthy of offering and veneration as field of merit (*puññakkhetta*) to the fullest extent possible. A robe offered to such a monk who is endowed with spirituality and dedication to religious living at this time helps one to gain lots of merit or good *kamma*. The offering of the *Kathina* robe is considered immensely meritorious since it involves three months of preparation and dedication. The period of the offering is only one month, from the middle of September - October to October - November (lunar month), and contemporary *Assayuja* to *Kattika* (full moon of the Buddhist month), so this time is a special opportunity for laity to offer the special robe or *Kathina* robe to monks.

4.1.3 Sake of Buddhism

Until now, *Kathina* ceremony is one of many Buddhist festivals in the Buddhist countries. By this practice, the monks and lay people make a firmer and stronger relationship. The *Kathina* practice brings the monks and lay devotees together. Mutually benefiting relationship between the *Saṅgha* and lay devotees is formally acknowledged within the *Kathina* ceremony. This relationship is essential for the strength, unity, solidarity and longevity of the *Buddhasāsana*.

⁹⁶ M.I.11; Bodhi, Bhikkhu (tr.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (USA: Wisdom Publication, 1995), p. 94.

4.2 The Benefits of *Kathina*

According to *Mahāvagga*, the monk who spread *Kathina* and the monks who rejoice in the *Kathina* are entitled to enjoy the five *Kathina* benefits: going to families for alms without having asked for permission (*anāmantacāra*), journey without taking the three robes (*asamādānacāra*), a group-meal (*gaṇabhojana*), keeping as many *atirekacīvara* as they please (*yāvadatthacīvara*), and sharing the *Kathina* benefit robe among the particular monks who are entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits (*yo ca tattha cīvaruppādo*).⁹⁷ These five benefits will be explained in this section. Unfortunately, the *Kathina* benefits for donors were not expounded by the *Buddha*. However, it is sure that the *Kathina* donation will benefit the donors as well as other donation, according to the law of *kamma*.

4.2.1 *Kathina* Benefits for Monks based on *Vinaya*

The monk who spread the *Kathina* and who rejoice in the *Kathina* are entitled to enjoy the five *Kathina* benefits: going to families without informing another monk (*anāmantacāra*), staying away from determined three robes (*asamādānacāra*), having group meal (*gaṇabhojana*), using as many robes as one desires without determined them and without sharing them with other monks (*yāvadatthacīvara*), sharing the *Kathina* benefit robes among the particular monks who are entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits (*yo ca tattha cīvaruppāda*). In this section, these five benefits will be explained.

⁹⁷ Vin.I.254; I.B. Horner (tr.), *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)*, Vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), pp. 352-353.

a. The First *Kathina* Benefit

The first *Kathina* benefit is called *anāmantacāra* in *Pāli* and this word may be divided into two words: *anāmanta* (not informing) and *cāra* (going round here and there). Thus, the combined word means to go round about not informing. According to the forty-sixteenth *Pācittiya* rule (*Cārittasikkhāpada*), the Buddha said that:

*Whatever monk, being invited and being (provided) with a meal, not having asked (for permission) if a monk be there, should call upon families before a meal or after a meal, except at a right time, there is an offence of expiation. In this case a right time is the time of giving robes, the time of making robes; this is the right time in this case.*⁹⁸

The monks may not visit to the lay people's house before or after their meal, even in the morning without informing another monk who is present, having accepted an invitation of a meal. If they visit so they are guilty of an offence of expiation.⁹⁹ However, after they get the *Kathina* benefits, they can go to families without informing another monk who is present after accepting an invitation for alms meal.

b. The Second *Kathina* Benefit

The second *Kathina* benefit is called *anāmantacāra*, means freedom to stay apart from one's set of three robes at the break of dawn. This benefit is a chance to go round about here and there (*cāra*) not carrying (*asamādāna*) the set of determined three robes. According to the second *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule (*Udositasikkhāpada*), the Lord Buddha said:

When the robe-material is settled, when a monk's Kathina (privileges) have been removed, if this monk should be away,

⁹⁸ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), p. 365.

⁹⁹ Vin.IV.100.

*separated from the three robes, even for one night, except on the agreement of the monks, there is an offence of expiation involving forfeiture.*¹⁰⁰

This rule expressed that a monk who wears a set of three robes determined must bring his robes wherever he goes. The set of three robes must be in his arm's length, at least at daybreaks or at dawns. If he cannot practice this rule he commits the offence of expiation and his robe should be forfeitures.¹⁰¹ However, the monks who are entitled to enjoy the five *Kathina* benefits do not need to practice this rule. Their determined robes may be away from them. Particular they may go anywhere wish to without carrying their double-layered robe (*Saṅghāṭi*).

c. The Third *Kathina* Benefit

The third *Kathina* benefit is called *gaṇabhojana* means a group meal. This benefit is a chance of having a group meal. In this regard, a group meal may be one of five meals (*bhojana*) that are rice (*odana*), sour gruel (*kummāsa*), parched flour (*sattu*), fish (*maccha*), meat (*maṃsa*).¹⁰² The five kinds of food are called group meal (*gaṇabhojana*) when they are wrongly offered to a group of four or more monks. This meal are not allowable for a group of four or more monks. If the monks have the unallowable foods, they are guilty of an offence expiation, as the thirty-second *Pācittiya* rule (*Gaṇabhojanasikhāpada*)¹⁰³ said:

In a group-meal, except at a right time, there is an offence of expiation. In this case, a right time is a time of illness, a time of giving robes, a time of making robes, a time of going on a journey, a time of being embarked in a boat, when there is a

¹⁰⁰ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), p. 15.

¹⁰¹ Vin.III.200.

¹⁰² Vin.IV.86; I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), p. 337.

¹⁰³ Vin.IV.74.

*great scarcity, a meal-time of recluses; this is a right time in this case.*¹⁰⁴

However, the monks who are entitled to enjoy the five benefits of *Kathina* do not need to practice this *Gaṇabhojanasikhāpada* and may enjoy the unallowable foods (*gaṇabhojana*).

d. The Fourth *Kathina* Benefit

The fourth *Kathina* benefit is called *yāvadatthacīvara* means robes as many as one wishes. This benefit is a chance for monks to keep as many robes as they wish. According to the first *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule (*Kathinasikkhāpada*)¹⁰⁵, a monk who keeps extra robes for a limited period in excess of ten days, is guilty of an offence of expiation with forfeiture that is his extra robes are to be give up at dawn on the eleventh day.¹⁰⁶ However, the monks who entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits may keep his extra robes more than ten days without offence this *Kathinasikkhāpada*.

e. The Fifth *Kathina* Benefit

The fifth *Kathina* benefit is called *yo ca tattha cīvaruppāda* means that a certain robes accrue to a monastery. This benefit is a chance to share the *Kathina* benefit robes (*Kathinānisaṃsacīvara*) that are offered during a *Kathina* ceremony among the monks who are entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits.

Supposing there are two monks staying back after the *vassa* at their *vassa* monastery and someone comes to donate *Saṅghika* robes. At that moment when the robes are being donated to the *Saṅgha* there are other guest monks as well. For example, there are five guest monks and two resident monks during the *Saṅghika* robe offering ceremony. The *Saṅgha*

¹⁰⁴ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), p. 311.

¹⁰⁵ Vin.III.197.

¹⁰⁶ I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. II (Suttavibhaṅga), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1949), p. 4.

receives the robes but the guest monks are not entitled to them. The robes are to be exclusively shared by the two resident monks. After they have been converted to individual property, the resident monks have a choice of sharing them with the guest monks. At other times outside the *Kathina* month or *Kathina* privilege period, if *Saṅgha* robes are offered, then whether the resident monks like it or not they have to distribute the robes equally among all the monks present.

The monk who has observed the first *vassa* but does not spread the *Kathina* will still have exclusive right to the robes that are offered to the *Saṅgha* at his *vassa* monastery during the *Kathina* month only. The monk who has spread the *Kathina* will have this privilege extended for a total of five months provided the *Kathina* privileges do not expire prematurely. However, this exclusive right to *Saṅghika* robes is obtainable only at the place where the monk spent the *vassa*. If he goes elsewhere then it will no longer be valid.

4.2.2 *Kathina* Benefits for Donors based on *Suttas*

The *Kathina* donation is fruitful for monks (receivers) and lay people (givers). But the *Kathina* benefits for *Kathina* donors are not mentioned in *Pāli* texts and even in their commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) and sub-commentaries (*Ṭīkā*). The Buddha did not preach the *Kathina* benefits of the donors but He preach benefits for the donors of different donations. Anyway, in Buddhist tradition, to do good deed is go gain good result. So, good deed of *Kathina* robe donation must not be fruitless as mentioned in *Pāli* Canon that:

Puññañce puriso kayirā, kayirā naṃ punappunaṃ;

*Tamhi chandaṃ kayirātha, sukho puññaṃ uccayo.*¹⁰⁷

If a man does what is good, let him do it again;

let him delight in it: the accumulation of good is delightful.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Dh.118.

¹⁰⁸ Max Müller, Friedrich, (tr.), **The Dhammapada: A Collection of Verses**, 2nd Ed., (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1898), p. 34.

a. Five Corresponding Benefits of *Kathina*

In *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, it says that: “*Janeti sadisaṃ pākaṃ - Produces similar results*”.¹⁰⁹ So, when the devotees donate the *Kathina* robe, their action is a wholesome of the sense sphere (*kāmāvācarakusala*) and the wholesome deeds of sense sphere (*kāmāvacaravipāka*) can produce similar result. This is also the law of action (*kammaniyāma*).¹¹⁰ The good and evil deeds are similar to seeds as they beget similar results. If a mango seed is sown, mango tree will grow but not any other trees. Similarly, if a donation of food or cloth is made, its result will be something good related to food or cloth. The receivers receive food or cloth, by enjoying them, will get benefits of strength, life, beauty, happiness and wisdom; similarly, the donors will get benefits of strength, life, beauty, happiness and wisdom too as saying:

Yādisaṃ vapate bījaṃ, tādisaṃ harate phalaṃ;

Kalyāṇakārī kalyāṇaṃ, pāpakārī ca pāpakaṃ;

*Pavuttaṃ tāta te bījaṃ, phalaṃ paccaṇubhossasi.*¹¹¹

Whatever sort of seed is sown, That is the sort of fruit one reaps:

The doer of good reaps good; The doer of evil reaps evil.

*By you, dear, has the seed been sown; Thus you will experience the fruit.*¹¹²

However, according *Aggacitta Bhikkhu*, the author of *Kathina Then and Now*, in his book, the five benefits for monks and five corresponding benefits for donors are summarized and shown together in

¹⁰⁹ Abhidh-s.37.

¹¹⁰ DhsA.273.

¹¹¹ S.I.227.

¹¹² Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (tr.), **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Vol. I, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p. 328.

the following table so that the two groups of the benefits can clearly be seen compared as thus:¹¹³

	<i>Kathina</i> Benefits For <i>Bhikkhus</i>	<i>Kathina</i> Benefits For Donors
1	Freedom of movement before noon in spite of having accepted an invitation for a meal.	Go anywhere without danger, hindrances or obstructions.
2	Freedom to stay apart from one's set of three robes at the break of dawn.	Fire, water, wicked kings, thieves and ungrateful children cannot destroy their property. They can perform their tasks without difficulty.
3	Freedom to accept invitations for group meals.	They will not meet with any harm. They will not meet with any danger on account of their meals.
4	Freedom to keep as many robes as desired (without having to determine or assign them according to <i>Vinaya</i> regulation).	Their belongings will be kept safe. They can get many clothes.
5	Exclusive right to <i>Saṅghika</i> robes given at one's <i>vassa</i> monastery.	They can own many other possessions. They will be able to keep their properties.

b. Benefits of Robe Donation

The *Kathina* is spread with *Kathina* robe that is one of the important supports to the *Kathina* act. Thus *Kathina* donation is robe donation. And *Kathina* donors will also gain the benefits robe donation. And what are the benefits of robe donation?

¹¹³ Aggacitta, Bhikkhu, **Kathina Then and Now**, (Malaysia: Sasanarakkha Buddhist Sanctuary, 2001), p. 62.

According to the *Apadāna*, the Elder *Pilindavaccha* remembered his past life when he had offered the cloths to the *Paduma* Buddha. In that time, *Pilindavaccha* was a very wealthy gatekeeper (dovārika). He took many precious gifts to *Ānanda* King, *Padumuttara's* father, and won from him a boon. He asked, as his boon, that he should be allowed to entertain the Buddha. The king refused to grant this, but the *Pilindavaccha* appealed to the judges and they gave the verdict in his favor. Thereupon he held a great almsgiving of unparalleled splendor for seven days and gave away all manner of gifts. As a result, he was born one thousand times as king of the devas and one thousand times also as king of men. By the offering good cloth to the Buddha, he also received eight benefits from the cloth offerings (*dussānisam̐sa*): beauty with golden fair complexion (*suvaṇṇavaṇṇa*), clean body (*viraja*), brightness of body (*sappabhāso*), splendid body (*patāpava*), soft body (*siniddhagatta*), one hundred thousand of white clothes (*setadussasatasahassa*), one hundred thousand of yellow clothes (*pītadussasatasahassa*), one hundred thousand of red clothes (*lohitadussasatasahassa*) as mentioned in *Pāli* Canon that:

Dussāni sugate datvā, saṅghe gaṇavaruttame;
Aṭṭhānisam̐se anubhomi, kammānucchavike mama.
Suvaṇṇavaṇṇo virajo, sappabhāso patāpavā;
Siniddham̐ hoti me gattam̐, bhava saṃsarato mama.
Dussasatasahassāni, setā pītā ca lohitā;
Dhārenti matthake mayham̐, dussadānassidaṃ phalam̐.¹¹⁴
Giving clothes for the Well-Gone-One
(And) the monks of splendid virtue,
I experience eight results,
In accordance with my karma:
As I transmigrate in the world,
I have an unblemished body,

¹¹⁴ Ap.I.308.

*Golden in color, beautiful,
 Endowed with majesty, and smooth.
 A hundred thousand strips of cloth,
 White and yellow and (also) red
 Are carried up above my head:
 That is the fruit of giving cloth.¹¹⁵*

Moreover, as a result of robe donation, women may have the chance to wear *Mahālatāpasādhana* - a very costly ornament of gold like *Visākhā* in the Buddha's time. The making of *Visākhā*'s ornament took four months, with five hundred goldsmiths working day and night. In its construction were used four pint pots (*nāli*) of diamonds, eleven of pearls, twenty two of coral, thirty three of rubies, one thousand *nikkhas* of ruddy gold, and sufficient silver. The thread work was entirely of silver, the parure was fastened to the head and extended to the feet. In various places, seals of gold and dies of silver were attached to hold it in position. In the fabric itself was a peacock with five hundred feathers of gold in either wing, a coral beak, jewels for the eyes, the neck feathers and the tail. As the wearer walked the feathers moved, producing the sound of music. Only a woman possessed of the strength of five elephants could wear it.¹¹⁶ In the time of the Buddha it was possessed only by three persons: *Mallikā* (*Bandhula*'s wife), *Visākhā* and *Devadāniyacora*.¹¹⁷

For men, if they expect to be ordained by “*Ehi Bhikkhu*”, when offering the robe or eight requisites to monks, they should determine (*adhiṭṭhāna*) in their mind. With the result of robe donation, they may become “*Ehi Bhikkhu*”. That means in the future, when he meets the Lord Buddha and request permission of the Buddha to become a monk. The Buddha accept his request with “*Ehi Bhikkhu* formula” what is called

¹¹⁵ Jonathan S. Walters, (tr.), **Legends of the Buddhist Saints**, (USA: Jonathan S. Walters and Whitman College, 2017), pp. 534-535.

¹¹⁶ DhA.I.395; Burlingame, Eugene Watson, **Buddhist Legends: Translated from the Original Pāli Text of the Dhammapada Commentary**, Vol. II, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921), p. 76.

¹¹⁷ DA.II.599.

Ehibhikkhupasampadā. The complete formula is recorded in the *Mahāvagga* as follows:

*Ehi, bhikkhu, svākkhāto dhammo, cara brahmacariyaṃ sammā dukkhassa antakiriyāya.*¹¹⁸

Come, monks, well taught is *Dhamma*, fare the *Brahma*-faring for making an utter end of ill.¹¹⁹

According to the Commentary, with this call “Come, *Bhikkhu*” even lay people in their lay costumes become fully ordained monks and appeared as well-trained monks as the sixty-*vasa* monk with necessary monastic requisites.¹²⁰

In this connection, the *Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā*¹²¹ mentioned that to receive higher ordination (*Upasampadā*) by way of “*Ehi Bhikkhu*”, it is natural for a person to have met the following three conditions:

- Being a person to had offered either eight requisites (*aṭṭhaparikkhāra*) or three robes and bowl (*pattacīvara*) to either one of eight noble persons (*Ariya*) or even to a worldly person who is virtuous (*puṭhujjana sīlasampanna*) in one of his previous existences.

- Having had an expressed aspiration while he is performing good deeds, thus: “*Idaṃ parikkhāradānaṃ anāgate ehibhikkhubhāvāya paccayo hotu* – May my merit accrued from this deed be weighty support for receiving the monkhood by way of *Ehi Bhikkhu Upasampadā* in the presence of future Buddha”.

- Being the one in his last existence (before attaining *Nibbāna*).

Only when these three requirements have fulfilled, he will definitely be ordained by this *Ehi Bhikkhu Upasampadā* in the future.

¹¹⁸VinA.I.13.

¹¹⁹I.B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)**, Vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), pp. 18-19.

¹²⁰DhA.II.62; Burlingame, Eugene Watson, **Buddhist Legends: Translated from the Original Pāli Text of the Dhammapada Commentary**, Vol. II, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921), p. 136.

¹²¹Spṭ.II.52.

c. Benefits of Donation to *Saṅgha*

As mentioned above, the *Kathina* robe is to be donated to the *Saṅgha*. Thus, it is believed that *Kathina* donors will also gain the benefit donation to the *Saṅgha*, apart from the above mentioned benefits. And what are the benefits of donation (*dāna*) and donation to the *Saṅgha* (*Saṅghikadāna*)?

According to *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, there are five benefits of giving (*dānānisamsa*): one is dear and agreeable to many people (*bahunō janassa piyo hoti manāpo*), good persons resort to one (*santo sappurisa bhajanti*), one acquires a good reputation (*kalyāṇo kittisaddo abbhuggacchati*), one is not deficient in the layperson's duties (*gihidhammā anapagato hoti*), with the breakup of the body, after death one is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world (*kāyassa bheda param maraṇā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjati*).¹²² A donor is one who is happy before, during and after giving. Before giving he is happy anticipating the opportunity to exercise his generosity. While giving he is happy that he is making another happy by fulfilling a need. After giving he is satisfied that he has done a good deed.¹²³ The Buddha compares the man who righteously earns his wealth and gives of it to the needy to a man who has both eyes, whereas the one who only earns wealth but does no merit is like a one-eyed man.¹²⁴ Thus, *Kathina* donors are the people to practice the Buddha's teachings and will be get many benefits from their generosity.

The *Kathina* donation is not only normal donation but also the gift of a good man (*sappurisa dāna*). Generosity is included among the essential attributes of the *sappurisa*, the good or superior person, along with such other qualities as faith, morality, learning and wisdom. Viewed as the quality of generosity, giving has a particularly intimate connection to the entire movement of the Buddha's path. For the goal of the path is

¹²²A.III.41; Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (tr.), **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), pp. 660-661.

¹²³ A.III.336; *Ibid*, p. 899.

¹²⁴ A.I.129; *Ibid*, p. 224.

the destruction of greed, hate and delusion, and the cultivation of generosity directly debilitates greed and hate, while facilitating that pliancy of mind that allows for the eradication of delusion. So a good man or noble person will donate with eight ways: to give clean things (*suciṃ deti*), to give choice things (*pañītaṃ deti*), to give at fitting times (*kālena deti*), to give proper things (*kappiyaṃ deti*), to give with discretion (*viceyya deti*), to give repeatedly or regularly (*abhiñhaṃ deti*), to calm one's mind on giving (*dadaṃ cittaṃ pasādeti*), to be glad after giving (*datvā attamano hoti*).¹²⁵ The Kathina robe donation is called giving at fitting time (*kāladāna*). Thus, whenever the result of giving ripens, wherever he go, he will be rich with much wealth, with many possessions; And his goals are fulfilled on time.¹²⁶ More than what is given, it is the manner of giving that makes a gift valuable. One may not be able to afford a lavish gift, but one can always make the recipient feel cared for by the manner of giving.

According to the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, no one can measure the benefits of donation to the *Saṅgha*. The Blessed One said to *Sakka* that: “*Saṅghe dinnam mahapphalam* - A gift to the *Saṅgha* bears great fruit”.¹²⁷ And donation to the *Saṅgha* like the donation of *Kathina* robe is much appreciated by the Lord saying that if one donates to monks who are with bad conduct, on half of the *Saṅgha*, he might enjoy immeasurable benefits as saying:

In future times, Ānanda, there will be members of the clan who are 'yellow-necks', immoral, of evil character. People will give gifts to those immoral persons for the sake of the Saṅgha. Even then, I say, an offering made to the Saṅgha is incalculable, immeasurable. And I say that in no way is a

¹²⁵A.IV.244; *Ibid.*, p. 1172.

¹²⁶A.III.173; *Ibid.*, p. 763.

¹²⁷S.I.233; Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (tr.), **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Vol. I, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p. 333.

*gift to a person individually ever more fruitful than an offering made to the Saṅgha.*¹²⁸

In conclusion, the *Kathina* practice benefits for the both of monastic and lay community. The *Kathina* benefits for monks release them from practicing the five *Vinaya* rules and let them administer the *Kathina* offerings. And the five corresponding benefits for *Kathina* donors are also hopeful to come out for them. This is why the *Kathina* ceremony demands more determination, firmness and stability, and the sponsors, receivers, and makers accumulate immeasurable merits. The ceremony is far more special than other offerings. It is the most important and beneficial skillful deed that cultivates all that is good within us. And from that, we gain all the blessings toward the highest goal known as *Nibbāna*.

4.3 The Roles of *Kathina*

The early *Kathina* were supposed to be just simple *Vinaya* acts of the monks and lay people's participation in the early *Kathina* ceremonies was almost unknown. But today's *Kathina* are seen as Buddhist community ceremonies participated by monks and lay people. Moreover in the early *Kathina* ceremonies, material supports of lay people was hopefully just robes (*cīvara*) or cloths (*dussa*) for sewing robes. And the lay devotees would offer alms food to the monks who made *Kathina* robes. For today, monastic community is materially supports very much by lay community by performing *Kathina* ceremonies. During today's *Kathina* ceremonies various kinds of material offering including ready-made robes are offered to the monks. And although the performance of *Kathina* ceremonies relationship of the members of the Buddhist community has become closer and closer, stronger and stronger.

¹²⁸ M.III.257; Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu, Bodhi, Bhikkhu, (trs.), **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), p. 1105.

4.3.1 *Kathina* Roles towards Individual Monk

The monk who accepts the *Kathina* robe enjoys five privileges or benefits. From the date of the ceremony as saying:

- He is free to go to a meal invitation without having informed another monk.

- Usually monks use a full set of three robes, but he is allowed to go without taking a full set robes according to a specific period of time without any fault.

- He can enjoy a group meal (with four or more monks).

- He can use as many as robes as he likes.

- Finally, he can receive other robes offered to the Buddhist *Saṅgha* during the period of rainy season and on the occasion of the *Kathina* ceremony.

For the first benefit, this is a chance to go round about without informing. This privilege releases a monk who is rejoiced spreading the *Kathina* ceremony from practicing *Cārittāsikkhāpada*, one of 227 *Vinaya* rules for monks. Moreover, a monk normally inform the other monks when they want to go anywhere so that others can know where they have gone. This is a social duty and obligation of today's monk but not their practice of *Vinaya*.¹²⁹ That is why the first *Kathina* benefit is not an essential support to the most of today's monks.

The second privilege releases a monk from the practicing the *Udositasikkhāpada*. According to this *Vinaya* rule, a monk who wears a set of three robes determined must bring his robes wherever he goes. A monk who is entitled to enjoy the five *Kathina* benefits do not need to practice this rule. However, this benefit is also no very much useful for most of today's monks. Today, they determine their robes as cloth requisites (*parikkhāraṇa*). That is why even without the second *Kathina* benefit, a monk can go anywhere they wish without carrying the double-layered robe. Out of the *Kathina* benefits, this second benefit may

¹²⁹ Aggacitta, Bhikkhu, **Kathina Then and Now**, (Malaysia: Sasanarakkha Buddhist Sanctuary, 2001), p. 79.

be enjoyed by monk when the *Kathina* benefits are available.¹³⁰ However, every monk even who does not participate in *Kathina* ceremony may also enjoy the rest four *Kathina* benefits for one month at the end of rains-retreat.¹³¹

The third benefit is called *Gaṇabhojana* in *Pāli* is a chance of having a group meal. A monk who is entitled to enjoy the five *Kathina* benefits do not need to practice this rule (*Gaṇabhojanasikkhāpada*). However, most of today's alms food invitation are properly issued. Moreover, today many monks are going for alms alone, without any accompanying monk. There will not be any possibility for them to accept and have unallowable group meal. And even when they go for alms food together with others there may not be any possibility to accept unallowable group meal because they are usually keeping silent while they are going for alms food and devotees are also usually keeping silent while offering to the monks in line. That is no invitation is made at all on such occasions. Thus, the third benefit is also not an essential support to the most of today's monks. This benefit covers a similar benefit called *paramparabhojana* which means a chance to eat the five kinds of food properly offered by a second donor. This food is not allowed for monks according to the *Paramparabhojanasikkhāpada*.¹³² In this training rule, the time of giving robe is the time of *Kathina* benefits. That is why *paramparabhojana* is also a kind of *Kathina* benefit relevant to the third benefit. This relevant is also not very much useful for most of monks in today because they will not accept alms food invitation of second donor after being invited by other donor. This is just social duty and obligation of today's monks but not their *Vinaya* practice.

The fourth *Kathina* benefit releases a monk from practicing the *PaṭhamaKathinasikkhāpada*. Regarding this benefit, Venerable *Aggacitta* argues that even without this benefit, today's monk may possess many robes and thus the fourth *Kathina* benefit is questionable. He also says: "with or without *Kathina* benefits, a *Bhikkhu* nowadays is not really

¹³⁰ SpT.II.446

¹³¹ Kkh.278

¹³² Vin.IV.78

restricted to the number of robes he can possess".¹³³ And he explains that nowadays most monks determine everything as accessory cloth and put it aside. But they do not commit any offence in spite of owning many robes.

And the last *Kathina* benefit is a chance to share the *Kathina* benefit robes among the monks only who are entitled to enjoy the *Kathina* benefits.

If a monk who is entitled enjoy the *Kathina* ceremony in his monastery will be freed from some rules in 227 rules of *Pāṭimokkha*.

Today, the *Kathina* robe offering ceremony is celebrated as the largest festival among traditional Buddhists in the world. In a *Kathina* ceremony, monks usually receive a *Kathina* robe (*Kathinacīvara*) and many *Kathina* benefit robes (*Kathinānisamsacīvara*). The *Kathina* robe is also known as main robe or ñatti-robe (*ñatticīvara*) which may be one of the three robes namely double robe, upper robe and lower robe. As mentioned above in chapter two, lay devotees offer the *Kathina* robe to the *Saṅgha* and then the *Saṅgha* gives it to a worthy monk by reciting *ñattidutiyakammavācā*. Therefore, the robe is called *ñatticīvara*. The *ñatticīvara* is the ground of *Kathina* benefits because the *Kathina* is spread with it. And so it is also called *Kathina* robe. It is belonged to the worthy monk. And any other robes besides the *Kathina* robe donated in a *Kathina* ceremony are called *Kathina* benefit robes (*Kathinānisamsacīvara*). Those robes cannot provide the *Kathina* benefits. However, they can indirectly be a cause of *Kathina* benefits because the *Kathina* benefits are well kept because of clinging to those robes (*cīvarapalibodha*). They belong to all member of the *Saṅgha*. Every member of the *Saṅgha* receives those robes as a benefit of *Kathina*.

The benefits robes are to be distributed among the monks who have successfully spent their rains-retreat in the monastery where the *Kathina* is spread and who have rejoiced in the *Kathina* ceremony. They should receive their shares according to their seniority but the robes must not to be distributed by the way of lucky-draw or lot. In the monastery, if there is a tradition of distribution of requisites according to seniority of the

¹³³ Aggacitta, Bhikkhu, **Kathina Then and Now**, (Malaysia: Sasanarakkha Buddhist Sanctuary, 2001), p. 85.

monks, the distribution of shares must be a continuation of the last distribution.¹³⁴

Concerning with the fifth *Kathina* benefit, the invited monks from other monasteries may not receive the share of benefit robes. They may receive the benefit robes only if the resident monks wish to share. Other offering except the benefit robes must be shared to the invited monks too. This decision is made according to *Vinaya* rules. However, according to social grace, the resident monks should not monopolize all the robes, but they should share the proper portions of robes to invited monks.¹³⁵

Until today, Buddhist devotees have held religious ceremonies like *Kathina* with a purpose of giving material supports to the Order (*Saṅgha*). Because material needs of the monks are allowed by the Lord Buddha for the convenience of *Saṅgha*'s life and due to the will of generous devotees who wished to donate material supports to the *Saṅgha*. By receiving the support of lay people, Order of the monks has developed throughout centuries until today, establishing closer and closer relationship between the two communities of monastic and household. Particularly, lay people's robe donation or their any material supports to *Saṅgha* have become distinguished symbols of Buddhist religious occasion and Buddhist monasteries have become for lay people's occasional religious gathering. This material supports of lay people also encouraged the Buddhist *Saṅgha* to distinguish from its original community, the wanderers' society.

4.3.2 *Kathina* Roles on Society

Today in almost every *Kathina* ceremony, ready-made robe are offered. That is why today's monks do not need to make *Kathina* robe by themselves. And through the performance of *Kathina* ceremonies relationship of the members of Buddhist community has become stronger.

¹³⁴VinA.V.1110

¹³⁵Kesara, Ven., "An Analytical Study of the Robes for Buddhist Monks in the Theravāda Tradition", **Master's Degree Thesis**, (Yangon: International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, 2015), p. 151.

Now it is time to describe some significant features of *Kathina* ceremony in some Buddhist countries.

a. *Kathina's* Roles in Vietnamese Society

The *Kathina* festival not only helped preserve fine traditions and values of Buddhism but also helped make Buddhist followers in Vietnam become more close and friendly.

Sharing the meaning of the Buddhist monks' robe, Most Venerable Thich Gia Quang - Vice Chairman of the Vietnam Buddhist *Saṅgha* Executive Council said:

The *Kathina* Festival of *Theravāda* Buddhism presents fully the significance of the Buddhist rite. The Buddhist followers offer robes to monks which means they will receive a lot of luck.¹³⁶

The Superior Buddhist Monk, Most Venerable Thach Sok Xane, Vice Chairman of the Management Council of the Buddhist *Saṅgha* of Vietnam said:

With the motto “*Dhamma* - Ethnic – Socialism”, *Theravāda* Buddhist have been together with the country in the innovation, development and integration in the era of globalization and has been operating effectively, contributing positively to the overall achievement of the Buddhist *Saṅgha* of Vietnam.¹³⁷

Comrade Bui Thanh Ha, Deputy Head of Standing Committee – Religious Committee expressed his belief as follows:

The Buddhist Saṅgha of Vietnam will contribute to the Management Board of Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture & Tourism introduced to the public throughout the country and international friends of the diversity of the religious life of the people of Vietnam, and to promote the

¹³⁶ Viet Cuong, “The Kathina Festival”, **Vietnam Pictorial**, (12 October 2016): 4.

¹³⁷ Huu Huyen, “Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony in the Nave of Khmer Pagoda, Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture & Tourism”, **Giac Ngo**, (14 October 2014): 2.

*image of the country and people of Vietnam and Buddhist always be friendly, peace-loving, so that Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture & Tourism has become an interesting and meaningful destination for each visitor both at home and abroad.*¹³⁸

The *Kathina* robe offering ceremony is a priceless heritage of Buddhism, partly contributing to the cause of helping and spreading the *Dhamma*, the Buddha gives the endless joys, the unmovable trust estate with the boundless blessings.

b. *Kathina*'s Roles in Thailand Society

It is important to remember that the King of Thailand protects all Buddhist activities, it is only in the Royal *Kathina* that he takes a predominant part, a part eminently characteristic of the traditional Buddhist monarch. Indeed, the sociological value of the Royal *Kathina* for the maintenance of social integrity and the continued prosperity of the Buddhist religion in Thailand is exceeded by no other ceremony by three reasons as follows:¹³⁹

- The King, by the lavishness of his gifts and his personal profession of faith at the altar, impresses upon the people in a truly regal way his belief in the national religion, and thus the love and respect which the people have for their monarch.

- The example of the King inspires the people with a desire to emulate his generosity, and by the *Kathinas* of nobles and private persons which take place on a smaller scale all over the country, every monastery is provided for and the growth of the Buddhist religion is stimulated.

- The Royal *Kathina* processions by land and by water are almost the only occasions, other than the Coronation, on which the people can see their monarch pass by in the pomp and circumstance of Siam (former name of Thailand).

¹³⁸Op. Cit.,

¹³⁹Wales, H. G. Quaritch, **Siamese State Ceremonies: Their History and Function with Supplementary Notes**, (UK: Curzon press, 1992), pp. 200-201.

The Kathina both articulates and recreates a hierarchical order within lay and monastic communities and stands as an expression of Buddhist concepts of hierarchy. During the Kathina season, for example, the Buddhist laity are implicitly ranked by the size of their ritual donations. The most generous of the Buddhist laity, the king stands at the top of this lay hierarchy. The king's Kathina gifts in turn designate a hierarchy of Buddhist temples. Royal patronage, in particular the king's personal offering of the Kathina robes, publicly designates the most pure, and the most renunciatory, monks (and temples) in the kingdom.¹⁴⁰

So *Kathina* ceremonies were held in Thailand, they are classified to two main types of *Kathina*, such as royal *Kathina* (Kathin Luang) and public *Kathina* (Kathin Rat or Kathin Ratsadorn). Kathin Luang is Kathin cloth which His Majesty the King graciously goes to present in person or graciously has a senior member of the Royal Family go to present on his behalf. Kathin Luang offerings are presented by means of personal funds of His Majesty the King. And sometimes a great ceremony is held for a display of royal offerings by a Royal Barge Procession, pursuant to the royal intention. And Kathin Rat or public's *Kathina* is the ceremony held by any lay people at any public temple.

According to the 1960 government document, Royal *Kathina* ceremonies were divided into three kinds of royal *Kathina* ceremonies in the present as mentioned:

- Kathin Luang or Royal *Kathina* ceremony attended by members of the Thai royal family.
- Kathin Ton is the ceremony the King holds himself as he desires at royal or public temples.
- Kathin Phra Ratchathan is the ceremony some governmental organizations, business persons, merchants, or lay people hold, as

¹⁴⁰Gray, Christine, "Thailand: The Soteriological State in the 1970s", **Doctor's Degree Thesis**, (Department of Anthropology: University of Chicago, 1986), pp. 50-51.

approved by the King. In this case, the ceremony is held at royal temples using royal Kathina robes requested from the King.

Firstly, Kathin Luang or Royal *Kathina* ceremony is performed by the King and the Royal Family at the main royal temples in Bangkok. In special celebration years, the King rides to Wat Arun in a spectacular ceremonial procession of royal barges. These are under the special protection of the King, and expect to receive their *Kathina* gifts from him. These royal *Kathina* ceremonies offered personally by king at the first-class royal temples. The Department of Religious Affairs document states that there are sixteen major royal monasteries (Phra Aram Luang) included in the rule for offering royal *Kathina* cloth such as: Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklaram or Wat Pho, Wat Arunratchawararam or Wat Arun, Wat Ratcha Orasaram, Wat Rajapradit Sathitmahasimaram, Wat Benjamabopit Dusitwanaram, Wat Bowonniwet Vihara, Wat Rajabopit Sathitmahasimaram, Wat Suthat Thepwararam, Wat Rajadhipas Vihara, Wat Makutkasattriyaram, Wat Thepsirin, Wat Mahathat Yuwarajarangsarit, Wat Phra Pathom Chedi (Nakhon Pathom Province), Wat Niwet Thammaprawat (Phra Nakhorn Sri Ayutthaya Province), Wat Suwandararam (Phra Nakhorn Sri Ayutthaya Province), Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat (Phitsanulok Province).¹⁴¹

Secondly, Kathin Ton or private Kathin is the Kathin performed in a private capacity, suan tua or on King's own at commoner temples. The Kathin Ton were offered mainly in rural areas. Besides proceeding to offer Kathin cloth as a government activity, His Majesty proceeds to offer Kathin at various temples which are not Phra Aram Luang (non-royal monastery), another kind of royal charity. King Chulalongkorn was the first king who offered Kathin Ton or private Kathin as mentioned:¹⁴²

¹⁴¹Department of Religious Affairs, "History of the Royal Kathin", Retrieved on 1st May 2008, http://sys.dra.go.th/dra_katin/main.php?filename=history_katin

¹⁴²Gray, Christine, "Thailand: The Soteriological State in the 1970s", **Doctor's Degree Thesis**, (Department of Anthropology: University of Chicago, 1986), p. 166.

The king offers Kathin Ton at temples with special monks and at temples poor people respect very much.¹⁴³

Thirdly, Kathin Phra Ratchathan is performed by a state dignitary or an organization in the name of the King (Nai Nam Nai Luang). This Kathin ceremonies are offered by private citizens or government ministries at second and third-class royal temples on behalf of the king. Kathin Phra Ratchathan opens the opportunity for government servants from all ministries, departments and sections to attend the king in his work as specks of dust beneath the royal feet (Fao La Ong Thuli Phrabat).¹⁴⁴ This ceremony is conducted as prescribed by rules and regulations and supervised by the Department of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Royal Thai Government as follows: "The Kathin Phra Ratchathan established close relations between the Palace and the Buddhist *Saṅgha* and represented the king's role as head of Buddhist patronage".¹⁴⁵

Nowadays, the Royal *Kathina* Robes are offered both in Thailand and abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been graciously granted the opportunity to organize the Ceremonies overseas, such as Myanmar, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Singapore, China, India and Vietnam.

The kingdom's most splendid royal temples (wat luang) encapsulate the kingdom's history, or the Chakri Dynasty's version of that history. Thus *Kathina* performances by top royals are living history, teeming with information about the interregnum and succession. The early Chakri kings' emphasis on and development of the Buddhist conception of kingship was of crucial importance. According to Buddhism a king is to rule like a father takes care of his family. This means that the ideal ruler must exemplify the Ten Kingly Virtues (*dasarājadhamma*), such as charity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), self-sacrifice

¹⁴³Thawiwong, Thawansak, *Annual Royal Ceremonies in the Present Reign* (Phraratchaphithi Prachampi nai Ratchakan Patchuban), (Bangkok: Kasem Bannakit Press, 1967), p. 254.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 253.

¹⁴⁵Siriporn Dabphet, "The Coronation Ritual and Thai Kingship Since The Mid-Nineteenth Century", **Master's Degree Thesis**, (Department of History: National University of Singapore, 2008), p. 5.

(*pariccāga*), honesty (*ajjāva*), kindness and gentleness (*maddava*), self-control (*tapa*), non-anger (*akkodha*), non-violence (*avihiṃsā*), patience (*khanti*), non-deviation from righteousness (*avirodhana*).¹⁴⁶ In this tradition, the king must rule for the benefit and happiness of his subjects providing justice and freedom, guiding the way through his own conduct. His help to benefit his people and his moral behavior are what he should be judged on. But meritorious behavior only goes so far, his effect on the righteousness and the well-being of the people in his care are also important aspects of a Buddhist king. Buddhist rituals, ceremonies, and festivals suspend the mundane and the temporal and give meaning to existence by symbolizing the nature of the human experience and connecting it to a Buddhist narrative framework. Buddhism in turn defines social ethics for people and encourages the upholding of such virtues as generosity and loving kindness, honesty and uprightness. It is through this symbolism that many Thais venerate their king. The monarch's public relations team has intrinsically linked the monarch and Buddhist beliefs and values, making him a monk par excellence. This feeds common held conceptualizations of the role and place of the monarch in society but at the same is subject to the demands and acts held by the people. The symbolisms used in many of the formal occasions that celebrate the monarch's rule are of a Buddhist nature.

c. *Kathina's* Roles in Myanmar Society

The current Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies are traditional, religious and social community activities giving material support to monks and making social bonds among the Buddhists: monks and lay people. And it is viewed as an annual cultural festival of merit making celebrated throughout the country by all walks of life. In today, *Vinaya Kathina* is almost unknown to most of lay people while public *Kathina* is interesting to both sides of monks and lay people.

Throughout the country, many *Kathina* ceremonies are held in each and every monastery, even a small village monastery in far remote area of

¹⁴⁶JA.V.378; Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), **Dictionary of Buddhism**, 17th ed., (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2008), pp. 240-241.

the country; they receive the *Kathina* donation every year. Most of Myanmar Buddhists take part in *Kathina* ceremonies sponsored by individually or community. In their life, they want to do different kinds of merits as many as they can.

Today, the *Kathina* is attracting more and more people who are interested in participation. In today's *Kathina* ceremonies, the number of lay participants is a lot higher than that of monks. In this connection, it is easy to get the exact number of monks participating in *Kathina* ceremonies. Because number of monks invited to *Kathina* ceremonies is usually listed or recorded by *Kathina* donors or *Kathina* organizers. But number of lay people participating in the *Kathina* ceremonies is just estimated. Number of them is estimated according to the amount of food severed in the ceremonies.

Current Myanmar *Kathina* ceremonies are not only giving material supports to the monastic community but also giving social service to the lay community. Because a part of the *Kathina* fund is often used for social services.

4.4 Concluding Remarks

The importance, the benefits and the roles prominent features of *Kathina's* roles on monastic life and society have now been presented. The *Kathina* ceremonies make religious and social outcomes. Buddhists are gaining merits, establishing friendship, unity, mutual understanding and practice of cooperated work by participating in *Kathina* ceremonies.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

Herein this research is accomplished with a few words of conclusion retrospection the entire subject matter of the Buddhist monastic act, the *Kathina*, in relation with the significant donation of robe celebrated, forming a united community within every seasonal period of the year all over the Buddhist world.

As claimed in the chapter one, this research mainly aims to highlight that the *Kathina* robe was not only allowed by *Gotama* Buddha but also by previous Buddhas. The early *Kathina* ceremony is not found in the *Vinaya* texts but from those texts, the *Kathina* can correctly be deduced that the tradition of *Kathina* was rooted in the Buddha's wise for the benefits of His disciples. Regarding the *Kathina* ceremony in modern time, current *Kathina* ceremonies are jointly participated by both monastic and laity communities. It becomes a public Buddhist festival in some Buddhist countries. The early *Kathina* was supposed to be just simple *Vinaya* acts of the monks, but current *Kathina* ceremonies various kinds of material offerings including ready-made robes are offered to the monks. So the *Kathina* tradition and *Vinaya* tradition still observe by the Buddhist monks and lay devotees.

As far as the concept of *Kathina* based on *Vinaya* and the procedures of *Kathina* have been practiced for many centuries all over the Buddhist *Theravāda* countries since the time of the Lord Buddha. Nowadays, the *Kathina* procedure has been organized with eight above items and today's procedure of the *Vinaya Kathina* is in conformity with the early *Kathina* in the Buddha's time. The life style of Buddhist monks supported by generous and faithful lay devotees is shaped by *Vinaya* rules and it is changed with time and situations. Homeless wandering monks

have been settled under the shelters of monastic building by practicing *Vinaya* rules.

The *Kathina* practice was originally introduced for the convenience of the monks in their daily life. The practice releases the monks from practicing five *Vinaya* rules. In chapter three, the importance, the benefits and the roles prominent features of *Kathina's* roles on monastic life and society have now been presented. The *Kathina* ceremonies make religious and social outcomes. Buddhists are gaining merits, establishing friendship, unity, mutual understanding and practice of cooperated work by participating in *Kathina* ceremonies.

However, the practice of *Kathina* has yet never been looked downed upon but it has always due to its religious and social values. The *Kathina* was a simple *Vinaya* act of the early Buddhist monks but now it has been an internationally well-known activity participated by both of monastic and laity community. And the practice of *Kathina* provides an occasion when the laity community can display its admiration to the monastic community which is worthy of support. This practice brings the Buddhist monks and lay devotees together. Mutually benefiting relationship between the lay devotees and monastic community is formally acknowledged within the *Kathina* rite. This relationship is essential for the strength, unity, solidarity and the longevity of *Buddhasāsana*.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Study

My research work, which has been presented, is very small. It looks like a tiny spot compare with the wealth of knowledge found in the Buddhist Canonical Texts. Many other aspects of the Dhamma still wait thorough research. These include:

- An analytical study of the robes (*cīvara*) for Buddhist monks in the *Theravāda* tradition.
- An analytical study of the boundary (*Sīmā*) in *Theravāda* Buddhism and its contributions to maintain *Buddhasāsana*.

My utmost wish is that this thesis might stimulate and encourage its readers into pursuing such further aspects of the Dhamma.

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