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Daily Life in the Assembly

T. Griffith Foulk

Modern scholars have often presented the history of Buddhism in China in terms of “sinification”—the adaptation to the Chinese cultural milieu of a set of religious beliefs, practices, and social structures that were originally imported from India and Central Asia beginning in the first centuries of the common era. Basic Indian Buddhist beliefs in karma, rebirth, and individual salvation gradually took root in Chinese soil, but only through a process of selection and adaptation in which they were tempered by native cosmologies and beliefs in ancestral spirits. The complex, competing systems of metaphysics, psychology, and soteriology that had emerged from the Indian Buddhist scholastic tradition of analysis were even more difficult for the Chinese to grasp and accept; the process of translating, interpreting, and assimilating them eventually gave rise to new and distinctively Chinese schools of Buddhist thought. It was in the sphere of social organization and mores, however, that the Indian Buddhist model—that of a community of monks and nuns who had “gone forth from the world” to seek salvation—appeared most alien to the Chinese.

The difficulties that beset the establishment of Buddhist monastic institutions in China were formidable. In the first place, there was the problem of learning just what the “orthodox” standards of behavior were for monks and nuns. No complete recensions of the Indian vinaya, or rules of discipline for individuals and monastic communities, were translated into Chinese until the beginning of the fifth century. Well before that time a number of canonical and paracanonical vinaya texts were known to Chinese, and foreign monks had served as role models for the Buddhist monastic life in China, but the leaders of Chinese monastic communities were often forced to improvise rules. Daoan (312–385 C.E.), for example, produced a set of “Standards for Monks and Nuns” to supplement those parts of the vinaya that were not known to him.

When complete recensions of the Indian vinaya did become available in Chinese, there were many problems in interpreting and applying them. For one thing, they presented a profusion of technical terminology, which was often simply

transliterated. Some of the specific rules set forth in translations of the vinaya, moreover, were incomprehensible or inapplicable due to cultural and geographic differences between India and China. To make matters worse, different recensions of the vinaya sometimes disagreed on specific procedural points. In response to these difficulties, a number of schools of vinaya exegesis arose in China, and many commentaries were produced. The most long-lived and influential exegetical tradition was the so-called Nanshan school that was based on the *Guide to the Practice of the Four-Part Vinaya* and other commentaries by Daoxuan (596–667), who came to be regarded as the founder of the school.

Finally, the establishment and spread of Buddhist monastic institutions in China was constrained throughout history, to varying degrees, by opposition from the Confucian elite and from the imperial government. Certain features of Buddhist monastic life, such as the principle of celibacy or that of subsisting on alms donated by the laity, were bitterly attacked as inimical to native Chinese values. The conception of the Buddhist saṅgha as a sacred community essentially independent of secular rule, regulated by its own distinct body of regulations laid down by the Buddha, was also perceived as a threat to the authority of the emperor and the sanctity of the imperial state.

Despite all these difficulties, the Buddhist monastic institution did manage to take root and flourish in Chinese society, and to maintain its distinct identity as an establishment ostensibly founded and sanctioned by the Buddha Śākyamuni. Given the pressures to conform to Chinese cultural norms, it is remarkable that so many features of the Indian monastic model survived in China.

The late Tang and Five Dynasties (907–960) periods represent a watershed in the history of Chinese Buddhism. The harsh suppression of Buddhism that was carried out by imperial decree during the Huichang period of the Tang (841–846), followed by the social and political chaos associated with the breakup of the imperial state, dealt the monastic institution a severe blow that it only recovered from when relative peace and unity were restored under the Song. One of the salient features of the restored institution was its domination by monks who presented themselves as members and followers of an elite lineage of dharma transmission—known variously as the Chan lineage, Buddha Mind lineage, and the lineage of Bodhidharma—which they claimed was traceable back to the Buddha Śākyamuni in India. The Chan school was so successful in promulgating its ideology and mythology that many large, state supported monasteries were designated by imperial decree in the Song as Chan monasteries, that is, establishments where the abbacies were restricted to monks certified as dharma heirs in the Chan lineage. The Chan school's main competition was from the Tiantai school, which succeeded in having a lesser number of abbacies reserved for itself. One result of this situation was that most of the saṅgha regulations compiled in the Song and later were nominally rules for Chan monasteries, although there were also nearly identical rules compiled for use in Teachings (Tiantai) monasteries and vinaya monasteries.

One of the recurrent themes that one finds in modern as well as traditional

writings on the history of Chan Buddhism is the idea that the Chan school developed a unique, independent system of monastic training that allowed it to exist apart from the mainstream of Chinese Buddhist monastic institutions. According to the traditional account, this development was instigated by the Chan master Baizhang Huaihai (749–814), who is credited with founding the first Chan monastery and authoring the first Chan monastic rules (known generically as *qinggui* or “rules of purity”). Modern historians of Chan have generally accepted the traditional account, although some have assumed that independent Chan monasteries must have come into existence even before Baizhang, and others have argued that Baizhang was not so much an actual founder as a symbol, projected retrospectively, of the development of independent Chan institutions that took place in his day.

In point of fact, there is very scant historical evidence to support either the traditional account of the founding of the Chan monastic institution in the Tang dynasty or any of the modern revisions of that account. The biographies and epigraphs memorializing Baizhang that were written closest to his lifetime say nothing about the founding of an independent Chan school monastery. Nor is there mention of such monasteries, whether associated with Baizhang or not, in any other sources dating from the Tang or earlier. The oldest historical source which indicates that there were independent Chan monasteries in the Tang is a brief text known as the *Regulations of the Chan School (Chanmen guishi)*, the same work that was responsible for establishing Baizhang’s place in history as the putative founding father of the Chan monastic institution. It was written during the last quarter of the tenth century, more than 150 years after Baizhang’s death.

The oldest extant Chan monastic rule is the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries (Chanyuan qinggui)*, compiled in 1103. The text sets guidelines for many aspects of monastic life and training, including the qualifications and duties of major and minor monastic officers, ritual procedures for numerous ceremonies and religious practices, and rules concerning deportment and etiquette. The table of contents reads as follows:

Fascicle One: Receiving the Precepts; Upholding the Precepts; A Monk’s Personal Implements; Contents of a Wandering Monk’s Pack; Staying Overnight in a Monastery; Procedures for Morning and Midday Meals; Procedures for Having Tea or Hot Water; Requesting a Sermon from the Abbot; Entering the Abbot’s Room for Individual Instruction

Fascicle Two: Large Assemblies in the Dharma Hall; Recitation of Buddha Names [in the Sangha hall]; Small Assemblies [in the abbot’s quarters]; Opening the Summer Retreat; Closing the Summer Retreat; Winter Solstice and New Year’s Salutations; Inspection of the Various Quarters [by the abbot]; Entertaining Eminent Visitors; Appointing Stewards

Fascicle Three: Controller; Rector; Cook; Labor Steward; Retirement of Stewards; Appointing Prefects; Chief Seat; Scribe; Sūtra Prefect

Fascicle Four: Guest Prefect; Prior; Bath Prefect; Solicitors of Provisions; Water Chief; Charcoal Manager; Decorations Chief; Mill Chief; Garden Chief; Manager of Estate Lands; Manager of Business Cloister; Manager of Infirmary; Chief of Toilets; [Buddha] Hall Prefect; Chief of Bell Tower; Holy Monk's Attendant; Chief of Lamps; Watchman on Duty in Sangha Hall; Common Quarters Manager; Common Quarters Chief Seat; Abbot's Quarters Acolytes

Fascicle Five: Traveling Evangelist; Retirement of Prefects; Abbot's Tea Service; Tea Service in Sangha Hall; Stewards' and Prefects' Tea Service; Tea Service for Assigning Places in the Common Quarters on the Basis of Seniority; Special Tea Service Sponsored by the Great Assembly of Monks; Special Tea Service for Venerable Elders Sponsored by the Great Assembly of Monks

Fascicle Six: Special Tea Service for the Abbot Sponsored by His Disciples and Trainees; Procedure for Burning Incense in Connection with a Tea Service for the Great Assembly of Monks; Serving a Specially Sponsored Meal; Thanking the Sponsor of a Tea Service; Sūtra Reading Ceremony; Special Feasts; Going Out [for a feast at a sponsor's] and Bringing In [the sponsor of a feast held in a monastery]; Signaling Activities for the Great Assembly of Monks [with bells, drums, wooden clappers, etc.]; Formal Decrees [by the abbot]; Sending out Correspondence; Receiving Correspondence; Sick Leave and Returning to Duty

Fascicle Seven: Using the Toilet; Funeral for a Monk; Appointing Retired Officers [as advisors / assistants]; Appointing an Abbot; Installing an Abbot; The Ideal Abbot; Funeral for an Abbot; Retirement of an Abbot

Fascicle Eight: Admonition [behavior models for monastery officers]; Instructions for Sitting Meditation; Essay on Self-Discipline; 120 Questions [for testing one's spiritual progress]; Disciplining Novices

Fascicle Nine: Liturgy for Novice Ordinations; Regulating Postulants; Guiding Lay Believers; Procedure for Feasting Monks; Verse Commentary on Baizhang's Rules

Within a century of its compilation in 1103, the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries* had gained a wide circulation and become the de facto standard for all major monasteries in China. It was also an important vehicle for the spread of Song-style Buddhist institutions outside of China. For example, both Eisai (1141–1215) and Dōgen (1200–1253), famous Japanese monk pilgrims to China, quoted the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries* frequently in their writings and used it as a basis for establishing what became known as the Zen monastic institution in Japan. The text was also transmitted to Korea. It was reedited (with new material added) and reprinted a number of times, with the result that it survives today in several different recensions.

The second oldest set of Chan monastic rules that survives today is the *Daily Life in the Assembly* (*Ruzhong riyong*), also known as the *Chan Master Wuliang Shou's Short Rules of Purity for Daily Life in the Assembly* (*Wuliang shou chanshi riyong qinggui*). The text was written in 1209 by Wuliang Zongshou, who at the time held the office of chief seat in a Chan monastery. Unlike the *Rules of Purity*

for *Chan Monasteries*, the *Daily Life in the Assembly* was not intended to regulate all aspects of monastery life. Rather, it comprised a very detailed set of rules for the so-called “great assembly” of monks who had no administrative duties and thus were free to concentrate mainly on a daily routine of meditation, study, and devotions. As chief seat, Wuliang Zongshou was the monastic officer in charge of leading the monks of the great assembly in all of their activities. He stated deferentially in his colophon that he wrote the text for the benefit of monks first joining the great assembly, not for old hands. He also explained that he did not treat a number of activities in which the great assembly participated—including “large assemblies in the [dharma] hall, entering the [abbot’s] room, small assemblies, chanting sūtras, reciting buddha names, inspecting [monastery] offices, rituals for opening and closing retreats, packing the knapsacks and donning the bamboo hat [for pilgrimage], and sending off deceased monks and auctioning off their belongings”—because detailed rules for those activities were “already included in the *Rules of Purity*.” The *Rules of Purity* that Zongshou referred to in the colophon was almost certainly the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries*, for most of the activities mentioned are in fact the topics of sections of that text (see the table of contents above). Actually, some of the activities that the *Daily Life in the Assembly* does treat, such as procedures for taking meals on the platforms in the saṅgha hall and going to the toilet, are also covered in the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries*, but they are scattered throughout that much longer text. The virtue of the *Daily Life in the Assembly* was that it brought together, in convenient hand-book form, detailed procedures and admonitions for the activities that the monks of the great assembly engaged in most frequently. The activities that Zongshou explicitly left out, it should be cautioned, were not necessarily less important in the lives of the great assembly; indeed, they may well have been experienced as more significant. However, because they were on the order of special ceremonies rather than daily routine, the ritual procedures involved could be learned when the occasions arose, and need not have been mastered immediately by monks entering the great assembly.

Chan monasteries in Song China, following a pattern established long before the emergence of the Chan school, were organized in a way that allowed a group of monks (the so-called “great assembly”) to engage in meditation and other religious practices for a three-month long retreat without having to concern themselves with practical affairs such as the provision of food or shelter. Basically, the monasteries were divided into two sectors: a practice wing, which housed the monks of the great assembly and the officers who led them, and an administrative wing, which provided living and working places for the monk officers and lay postulants and servants who handled meals, finances, supplies, building maintenance, guests, and numerous other tasks necessary for the operation of a large institution. In order to understand the physical setting that the *Daily Life in the Assembly* takes for granted, therefore, it is only necessary for us to consider the facilities that made up the practice wing, that is, the buildings that were home base to the great assembly.

The facility mentioned most often in the *Daily Life in the Assembly* is the saṅgha

hall (sometimes translated “monks’ hall”). Saṅgha halls were large buildings divided internally into an inner and outer hall. The inner hall was further divided into an upper and lower section, one being located in front and the other to the rear of a large central altar bearing an image of the “holy monk”—the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī dressed in monk’s robes. Mañjuśrī was the tutelary deity who watched over the saṅgha hall, its occupants, and their spiritual endeavors, and was the object of regular devotional worship with offerings of incense and prostrations before his altar. The inner hall was outfitted with low, wide platforms arranged in several blocks in the middle of the floor and along the walls. Individual places on the platforms were assigned in order of seniority, based on time elapsed since ordination. It was on the platforms that the monks of the great assembly spent much of their time, sitting in meditation, taking the morning and midday meals, and lying down for a few hours of sleep at night. Their bowls were hung above their seats, their sleeping mattresses were kept on the platforms, and their other personal effects and monkish implements were stored in boxes at the rear of the platforms. The outer hall was outfitted with narrower platforms suitable for meditation and taking meals, but not for sleeping. They were mainly for use by officers of the administrative wing, novices, and other persons who did not belong to the great assembly.

Another facility referred to frequently in the *Daily Life in the Assembly* is the common quarters. Located near the saṅgha halls, common quarters were arranged internally in much the same way, with platforms on which the monks of the great assembly were seated in order of seniority, and a central altar with an image, usually Avalokiteśvara. The main difference was that the platforms in common quarters were equipped with tables for studying sūtras and writing, activities that were forbidden in the saṅgha hall. The common quarters were also used for drinking tea and medicinal potions, and for taking evening meals, which were referred to euphemistically as “medicine” (because the vinaya forbids eating after midday). Other facilities mentioned in the text are the washstands that were located behind the saṅgha hall, the toilet, bathhouse, laundry place, and hearth. All of these served the daily needs of the great assembly and thus were treated by Zongshou in his rules.

As he leads his readers through a typical day’s activities for monks of the great assembly, Zongshou frequently backs up his own formulation of particular procedures and admonitions with what appear to be legitimizing quotations from a preexisting text. The quotations, which all begin “of old it was said,” typically repeat points that Zongshou himself has just made. When this stylistic feature is coupled with the claim made by Zongshou in his preface, that he has “collected the standards produced by Baizhang, and has studied them thoroughly from beginning to end,” the reader is left with the impression that Zongshou is actually quoting a work by Baizhang himself. In point of fact, as is explained above, no such work was available to Zongshou. I have not been able to trace more than a few of the quotations, but even that is enough to show that they derive from a number of different sources, none of which is attributable directly to Baizhang. When Zongshou speaks of “Baizhang’s standards,” therefore, what he means is

the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries* and perhaps other contemporary monastic rules (now lost) that likewise claimed to preserve Baizhang's heritage.

It is also worth noting that the *Daily Life in the Assembly* evinces a tremendous concern with "impurity" and "purity." It is tempting to see in this a concern for hygiene that would have made good, practical sense in any institution with communal facilities, but there is more to it than that. A number of rules speak not only of avoiding the contamination of neighbors' bowls, wash buckets, and so on, but of avoiding the communication of impurities from social juniors to their seniors. For example, one rule stipulates that the end of chopsticks and spoons that goes in one's mouth (and hence is polluted by saliva) must always point toward the right (where one's juniors sit) when the utensils are set down on the platform. In this respect, the *Daily Life in the Assembly* sounds very Indian, and even cites a passage to the effect that distinctions of senior and junior are necessary when brahmans gather (typically in a line) to take a meal together. The designation of the two smallest fingers of the left hand as "impure" because they are used in the toilet is also an Indian custom. At the time when Chan monastic rules were taking shape in the late tenth and eleventh centuries, there was in fact an upsurge of interest in Indian Buddhism. Sanskrit studies were revived in China, delegations of monks were sent to India, and a number of Indian monks were received as honored guests and scholars in residence by Chinese rulers. Although Chan rules are often held up by modern scholars as epitomizing the sinification of Buddhist monasticism, the evidence of the *Daily Life in the Assembly* suggests that there may have been considerable Indian influence on Chan monasteries in the Song.

The *Daily Life in the Assembly* was originally composed as a handbook for monks newly entered into the "great assembly," but the text proved so useful that it was later incorporated into full-scale monastic rules such as the *Zongli jiaoding qinggui Zongyao*, compiled in 1274, the *Chanlin beiyong qinggui*, compiled in 1317, and the *Chixiu baizhang qinggui*, completed in 1343. Much later, in Tokugawa-period (1603–1868) Japan, the text was widely studied and commented on by both Rinzai and Sōtō Zen monks who were striving to revive Song-style communal monastic practice. That, and the similarity of many of the rules with ones laid down by Dōgen in his *Shōbōgenzō* and *Eihei shingi*, accounts for the remarkable congruence between the procedures explained in the *Daily Life in the Assembly* and those followed in contemporary Zen monastic training.

The translation is from *Dai Nippon zokuzōkyō*, 2–16–5. 472a–474b.

Daily Life in the Assembly

Having left the dust [of the world] and separated from the vulgar, we shaven-headed and square-robed [Buddhist monks], for the most part, spend our lives in monasteries. The first requirement [of monastic life] is to understand the

rules clearly. If one has not yet memorized the regulations with regard to conduct, then one's actions will not be in accord with the ritual restraints. If even one's good friends and benevolent advisors do not have the heart to severely reprimand and harshly criticize, and if one continues on with one's bad habits, then reform is extremely difficult. In the end *ḥis* [behavior] will bring desolation upon the monasteries, and induce negligence in peoples' minds. Because I frequently see such transgressions and evils, which are commonplace before my very eyes, I have collected the standards [for behavior] produced by Baizhang, and have studied them thoroughly from beginning to end. From morning to night, to avoid every particular offense, one must straightaway obey every single provision. Only after that may one presume to say that one has investigated the self, illumined the mind, understood birth, and penetrated death. Worldly dharmas are [ultimately] identical with supramundly dharmas, but those who are on pilgrimage [monks] can nevertheless set a precedent for those who are not yet on pilgrimage [the laity]. May we not forsake the body and mind of monkhood, and may we together humbly repay the blessings of the buddhas and patriarchs.

Respectfully submitted.

RULES FOR [MONKS] IN THE ASSEMBLY

Do not go to sleep before others, or rise later than others. You should quietly get up before the bell of the fifth watch. Take your pillow and place it under your legs, but without folding it, lest the noise startle [the people at] the neighboring places [on the platform in the saṅgha hall]. Rouse your spirit, draw the blanket around your body and sit up straight, without fanning up a breeze that would cause peoples' thoughts to stir. If you feel sleepy, you may instead take the blanket and place it at your feet, turn your body, pick up your hand cloth and get down from the platform. With the cloth draped over your left hand, mentally recite the following verse:

From the wee hours of dawn straight through to dusk,
I will make way for all living beings.
If any of them should lose their bodily form under my feet,
I pray that they may immediately be born in the pure land.

Quietly push the [saṅgha hall doorway] screen aside with your hand, and exit to the wash stand. Do not drag your footwear, and do not make a noise by coughing. Of old it was said,

When pushing aside the curtain, one's rear hand should hang at one's side;
when exiting the hall, it is strictly forbidden to drag one's footwear.

Quietly take a basin in hand and wash your face, without using much water.

When using tooth powder, take a single dab with your right hand and rub the left side [of your mouth], and take a single dab with your left hand and rub the right side. Do not allow either hand to dip [into the powder] twice,

lest there be drainage from the teeth or mouth infections passed to other people. When rinsing your mouth and spitting out water, you must lower your head and use your hands to draw [the water] down. Do not stand with the waist straight and spit water, splashing it into the neighboring basins.

Do not wash the head. There are four reasons why this is harmful to self and others. First, it dirties the basin, and second, it dirties the [public] hand cloth: these are the things harmful to others. Third, it dries out the hair, and fourth, it injures the eyes: these are the things harmful to self.

Do not make sounds within one's nostrils. Do not make loud noises clearing one's throat. Of old it was said,

The fifth-watch face washing is fundamentally for the sake of religious practice. Clearing one's throat and dragging one's bowl [sic] make the hall noisy and disturb the assembly.

Having wiped your face, return to the [saṅgha] hall. If you are in the upper section, enter with your left foot first. If you are in the lower section, enter with your right foot first. When you get back to your blanket place, take your sleeping mattress, fold it in half, and sit in meditation.

If you change your outer robe, you must take the new one and put it around your body first. Do not expose yourself, and do not fan up a breeze.

Burning incense and making prostrations are suitable in the time before the bell rings. To don the *kāṣāya* [formal robe symbolic of monkhood], first recite the following verse with your palms joined and the *kāṣāya* resting on your head:

Wonderful indeed is the garment of liberation,
the robe of the signless field of merit.
I now receive it on my head;
may I be able to wear it always, in all worlds [of rebirth].

To fold the *kāṣāya*, first fold the place where it hangs on your arm, and then release the ring. Do not use your mouth to hold the *kāṣāya*. Do not use your chin to hold up the *kāṣāya*. When you have finished folding it you should bow with palms joined and proceed.

Just as when making prostrations in the various halls [such as the buddha hall or dharma hall], do not take a place in the center [of the saṅgha hall] that interferes with the abbot's coming. Do not make any sound reciting the Buddha's name. Do not walk through the area around other peoples' heads [when they are making prostrations]. Walk behind them [not between them and the image they are bowing to].

When the bell signaling the fifth watch rings, and the abbot and the chief seat are sitting in the hall, do not go out or in the front entrance.

At the preliminary signal for rising, immediately fold your blanket and gather up your pillow. The method for folding the blanket is first to find the two corners, and stretch them out with your hands. Fold it in half twice, once to

the front, and then back toward your body. Do not turn it horizontally, obstructing the neighboring places. Do not shake it out and make a noise, and do not create a breeze with the blanket.

[Next] you may return to the common quarters and drink medicinal tea, or walk about in the tea hall.

When proceeding in a line back to your bowl place [in the saṅgha hall], you must follow the person [who sits] above you [on the platform]. When turning, do not turn your back toward others. If using the front entrance, enter on the south side. Do not walk on the north side or the middle, out of respect for the abbot. After the wooden fish has sounded, do not enter the hall. Either have a postulant fetch your bowl [from your place on the platform] and sit in the outer hall [to eat], or return to the common quarters. Having entered the hall and returned to your bowl place, humble yourself and bow with palms joined to [the persons at] the upper, middle, and lower seats. If you are already seated first, when the [persons on] the upper, middle, and lower seats arrive, you should have palms joined. Of old it was said,

If one does not pay one's respects to the upper, middle, and lower seats, then there are no distinctions in a gathering of brahmans.

When you hear the long sounding of the [signal] board, take down your bowls. When raising your body, get up straight and stand still. Only then may you turn your body, making sure to follow the person above you [on the platform]. [Gesture with] palms joined and then take your bowls. One hand holds the bowls while the other hand releases the hook; the left hand holds [the bowls]. With the left hand holding [the bowls], turn your body. Lower your body in a proper crouch, and set down the bowls. Avoid bumping into others with your hips or back.

When the bell in front of the hall sounds, get down from the platform and bow with palms joined. This is for receiving the abbot. Do not wave your hands left and right. When you have gotten off the platform, step forward and bow with palms joined. Do not allow your kāṣāya to rest on the edge of the platform. Always lower it carefully.

When getting up onto the platform, do not move abruptly. Take the bowl and place it in front of your seat. When you hear the sound of the mallet, with palms joined silently recite the following verse:

The Buddha was born in Kapilavastu;
He gained enlightenment in Magadha;
He preached the dharma in Varanasi;
And entered nirvāṇa in Kuśinagara.

RULES FOR SETTING OUT BOWLS

First silently recite the following verse with palms joined:

I am now able to set out
 The Tathāgata's bowls.
 May I, together with all beings,
 Be equal in the threefold emptiness [of giving].

Having finished the verse, remove the [bowls'] wrapping cloth. Spread this pure cloth out to cover your lap. The cloth is folded back on itself so that three edges are tucked under. Do not allow it to extend beyond your place [on the platform]. Spread out the bowl mat. Using the left hand, take the bowls, and place them on the mat. Using both thumbs, remove the bowls and set them out in order, beginning with the smallest. Do not knock them together and make a noise. Always hold back your fourth and fifth fingers; as impure fingers, they are not to be used. When folding the bowl rag, make it small. Set it down horizontally in line with the spoon and chopsticks bag, near your body. When putting them in [the bag], the spoon goes first. When taking them out, the chopsticks are first. The place where your hand grasps [the utensils] is called the "pure place" and should be pointed toward the person on your left [above you on the platform]. The swab should be placed in the second gap between the bowls, sticking out just half an inch.

When gathering up the spirit rice [the offering to hungry ghosts], do not use your spoon or chopsticks to remove it [from your bowl]. The spirit rice should not exceed seven grains, but if it is too little, that is being stingy with food.

When joining the palms while the rector chants the Buddhas' names, the fingers of the hands should not be separated. You should adjust your hands to the height of your chest. Do not let your fingers touch the area around your mouth. Of old it was said,

Having unevenly joined palms, not aligning [the hands] with one's chest, intertwining the ten fingers, sticking them into one's nose, dragging one's sandals, lifting the [saṅgha hall] curtain, lacking courtesy, clearing one's throat, and sighing are disrespectful.

Lift the bowl with both hands to receive the food, and silently recite the following verse:

Upon receiving this food,
 I pray that living beings
 shall have as food the bliss of dhyāna,
 and be filled to satiation with joy in the dharma.

Raise your right hand to stop [the server] when the [desired] amount of food has been received. When you hear the hammer signaling eating, look above and below you [on the platform]. Then, looking straight at it, lift your food. Do not, when you are facing forward, swing your hands to either side. Having lifted the bowl, make five reflections and silently recite:

First, considering how much effort went into [producing] it, I reflect on where this [food] came from.

Second, I consider whether my own virtue and practice are worthy of this offering [of food I am about to eat].

Third, I take restraining the mind and forsaking my faults, such as greed and the rest, as the essential thing.

Fourth, in principle [this food] is like good medicine, to keep my body from withering away.

Fifth, I should receive this food for the sake of the work of attaining enlightenment.

Put out the spirit [rice] and chant the following verse:

You host of spirits,
I now give you an offering.
May this food reach to
all the spirits in the ten directions.

RULES FOR EATING

Bring the food to your mouth; do not bring your mouth to the food. When taking up your bowl, putting down your bowl, and the spoon and chopsticks as well, do not make any noise. Do not cough. Do not blow your nose. If you have to sneeze, you should cover your nose with the sleeve of your robe. Do not scratch your head, lest dandruff fall into your neighbor's bowl. Do not pick your teeth with your hand. Do not make noise chewing your food or slurping soup. Do not clear out rice from the center of your bowl, and do not make big balls of food. Do not extend your lips to receive food. Do not spill food. Do not use your hands to pick up scattered food. If there are inedible vegetable parts, leave them out of sight behind the bowl. Do not make a breeze that fans your neighbor's place. If you are worried about flatulence, tell the rector and sit in the outer hall. Do not rest your hands on your knees. Judge the amount when you take your food, and do not ask to throw any away. Do not fill your largest bowl with moist food. Do not use soup to clean rice out from your largest bowl. Do not wipe vegetables in your largest bowl and eat them together with the rice. During the meal, you must observe those above and below you [on the platform]. Do not be too slow, and do not swab out your bowl before seconds are offered.

Do not make any noise licking your bowl swab. When the mealtime has not yet arrived, do not give rise to greedy thoughts. Of old it was said,

To look within grumblingly and give rise to regret and anger; to think of food and salivate; to cough; to spill gruel in one's haste [to eat]; to slurp

soup; to stuff one's mouth full; to disturb those on the neighboring seats when opening up the place mat and setting out the bowls . . .

To wash your bowls, take the largest bowl and fill it with water; then wash the other bowls in order [of size]. Do not wash the spoon, chopsticks, or smaller bowls in the largest bowl. Again, bend back your fourth and fifth fingers. Do not make any noise rinsing the mouth. Do not spit water back into the bowls. Do not fill the bowls with boiled water before washing them. When the [bowl-washing] water has not yet been collected, do not put away your lap covering cloth. Do not use the lap cloth to wipe sweat. Do not pour the leftover water on the ground. Silently recite the verse for pouring off the [wash] water:

I now take this bowl-washing water,
Which has a flavor like heavenly ambrosia,
and give it to you spirits.
May all achieve satiation.
An mo xin luo xi suoke!

When putting away the bowls, use the thumbs of both hands to arrange them in order, then place them in the wrapping cloth.

When finished, with palms joined silently recite the verse following the meal:

Having finished the meal, our countenance and energy are restored. We are [like] heroes whose majesty shakes the ten directions and the three times. It reverses causes and turns around effects without conscious effort, and all living beings gain supernatural powers.

When the board in front of the [common] quarters sounds, return to the quarters and bow with palms joined. Not to return is called "insulting the great assembly." The procedures for entering the door and returning to one's place are the same as in the saṅgha hall. Stand still and wait for the quarters manager to finish burning incense; then bow with palms joined to those above and below [on the platform].

If there is tea, take your seat. Do not let your robes dangle. Do not gather together and talk and laugh. Do not bow to [greet] people with one hand. Do not hoard tea leaves. Of old it was said,

When mounting the platform and sitting in rest, it is not allowed to dangle one's robe. How could it be proper to bow with one hand [instead of with palms joined]? Privately stashing powdered tea, eliciting smiles . . .

When looking on [at a text], students who are next to each other at the tables are strictly forbidden to put their heads together and chat.

When the tea is finished, if you read sūtras, do not unfold the sūtra to a great length. That is to say, only two pages [of the accordion-folded text may be open]. Do not walk about the quarters with a sūtra in your hand. Do not

allow the sūtra cord [used to tie the text when folded up] to dangle. Do not make any noise. Of old it was said,

To make a noise holding and chanting [sūtras] is to offend people around you, and to rest one's back on the board is to be disrespectful to the great assembly.

Leave the quarters beforehand; do not wait for the board signaling sitting meditation [in the saṅgha hall] to sound.

If you need to go to the toilet, then [according to] the old custom, you wear your five-section robe. Take the pure cloth [used to cover the kāṣāya] and hang it over your left hand. [In the toilet changing room] release your sash, and tie it to the bamboo pole. Take off your short kāṣāya and outer robe, arrange them neatly, and bind them with the hand cloth. Then tie the hand cloth [to the pole so that the bundle hangs down] a foot or more. Make sure you remember [which bundle is yours]. Do not talk or laugh. Do not, from outside, importune others [to hurry and make room for you in the toilet].

Take some water in your left hand and put it in the privy. When changing shoes [prior to entering the stall], do not allow a gap between them [that is, line up the ones you have removed neatly]. Set the pure bucket in front of you and snap your fingers three times to frighten off the feces-eating spirits. When you squat, your body must be upright. Do not make a noise exerting. Do not blow your nose. Do not chat with people on the other side of the partition. Of old it was said,

When the door is shut, just lightly snap your fingers. Even if people are concealed, who would be so bold as to shamelessly make a noise?

Upon entering the [clean-up] place, use a wiping block. Keep the used and clean ones separate. When you come out, you must have water. Do not splash water all around. Do not use water to wash both sides [of the wiping block]. Wash [the block] with your left hand, holding back the thumb and the two fingers next to it. Do not use many wiping blocks. Of old it was said,

Use but a little warm water for washing, and refrain from taking up [too many] wiping blocks.

There are those who, when they have finished using [a block] wash it with water and set it aside in some vacant place, thereby disturbing many persons in the assembly.

It is not good to linger for long [in the toilet]. The pure bucket should be put back in its original place. Using your dry hand arrange your five-section robe, and tuck it into your breeches. Use your dry hand to open the door. Use your right hand to lift the bucket, and leave. Do not use a wet hand to grasp the leaf of the door or the door frame. With the right hand, pick out [from the container] some ashes, and afterwards pick out some earth. Do not use the wet hand to pick up ashes or earth. Do not spit out saliva and mix it together with

the earth. Only after washing the hands should you use “black horn” [pod soap powder] to wash. Wash up to the elbow. You should keep your mind focused at all times on the dhāraṇī [incantation] of entering the toilet. Use water to wash the hands and rinse the mouth. In the vinaya, these purifications also apply to urinating. Next, chew on a willow twig.

Return to the [saṅgha] hall for sitting meditation before the fire board [signaling the preparation of the meal] has sounded. Do not return to the [common] quarters first.

Before the midday meal, do not wash your robes. Do not open your platform box before the morning or midday meal, or after the release from practice. If there is some pressing need, tell the officer in charge. In the [common] quarters, tell the quarters manager. In the [saṅgha] hall, tell the holy monk’s attendant.

When the midday meal is over in the saṅgha hall, do not put your heads together and chat. Do not read sūtras or [secular] books in the saṅgha hall. Do not make circumambulations between the upper and lower sections of the hall. Do not pass through the hall as a shortcut [to get somewhere else]. Do not string cash on your seat. Do not sit with your legs dangling off the front of the platform.

A space one foot wide along the front of the platform is called the “area of threefold purity,” [because it is the place for] 1. setting out bowls, 2. resting the kāṣāya, and 3. is the direction in which the head points [when sleeping]. Do not walk on the platform. Do not kneel to open the platform box. Do not step on the platform edge when climbing down to the floor. When wearing straw sandals and the five-section robe [that is, the robe for use in the toilet, bath, and manual labor] going about the monastery, do not pass through the buddha hall or dharma hall. Of old it was said,

When entering the halls with the folded kāṣāya on one’s shoulder, and when wearing straw sandals to go about the monastery, do not set foot in the dharma hall.

Make way for venerable elders [when going about the monastery]. Do not wear monkish shoes over bare feet. Do not hold hands [with another person] when walking, or discuss worldly matters. Of old it was said,

What was your purpose in separating from your parents, leaving your ordination teacher and seeking the instruction of a wise master? If you have not discussed and grasped the essential matters of our school, and if when your hair is white you still have no attainment, whose fault will it be?

Do not lean on the railings in front of the halls. Do not run about in wild haste. Of old it was said,

When going about, one should walk slowly; learn from the dignified manners of Aśvajit. When speaking, one’s voice should be low; learn from the standards set by Upāli.

Do not go for leisure to the buddha hall. Of old it was said,

One should not, for no purpose, go up into the treasure hall [buddha hall]; one must not, for leisure, go into a stūpa. If one sweeps the ground or gives perfumed water without reason, then even though there be merit as numerous as the sands of the river [Ganges], it comes to naught.

When starching garments after the midday meal, do not bare your left shoulder. Do not upset the hot water jug when dipping your robes. When you are done using the bamboo poles [for drying] and the flat-iron, put them back in their original places.

When the board signaling foot-washing sounds, do not fight to snatch the foot bucket. If you have boils or itches, then you should dip and wash [your feet] after the others have finished, or take the bucket to some screened-off place and wash. Avoid disgusting others in the assembly. Do not wait for the striking of the board signaling sitting in the [saṅgha] hall, but go back into the hall as soon as you are done and sit in meditation.

When release from practice [is signaled], take the sleeping mattress and spread it out [folded] in half. When the board in front of the [common] quarters sounds, immediately turn your body and face outward.

You must attend [the meal] with the assembly when the time arrives. While the small board is sounding, do not enter the [saṅgha] hall, and do not stand in the outer hall. When the abbot and chief seat leave the hall, open up the mattress, get down from the platform, bow with palms joined, and return to the [common] quarters.

For the evening meal, when each person is at their own table place [in the common quarters], do not be the first to rise and fill [your bowl] with food. Do not make a loud noise shouting for gruel, rice, salt, vinegar, and the like. When the meal is over and you exit the quarters, do not leave the monastery grounds, and do not go into the officers' rooms. Do not return to the saṅgha hall or walk around the corridors with your kāṣāya folded and resting on your left shoulder. Do not wait for the striking of the board to leave the quarters.

When the evening bell sounds, with palms joined recite the following verse:

Upon hearing the bell,
Vexations are lightened;
Wisdom is strengthened,
Bodhi is produced;
We escape from hell,
Leaving the fiery pit.
May I attain buddhahood,
And save living beings.

You should first return to your place [in the saṅgha hall] and sit in meditation. Do not scratch your head when on the platform. Do not make a noise fingering your prayer beads on the platform. Do not talk with your neighbors

on the platform. If your neighbor is remiss, you should use kind words to help him; do not give rise to a resentful, bad state of mind.

When the bell signaling time for sleep has yet to ring, do not go out or in the front entrance [of the saṅgha hall]. When the time of the sounding of the fire [watchman's] bell has passed, then the chief seat may permit the "unfolding of pillows" [that is, going to sleep].

To burn incense and make prostrations [at the saṅgha hall altar], you must wait until late at night. When the members of the assembly are not yet asleep, do not be the first to sleep; but when the members of the assembly have not yet gotten up [for additional meditation or devotions], you should get up before them. When you arise and sit, do not startle and rouse the people at neighboring places.

When sleeping, you should be on your right side. Do not sleep facing upward [that is, on your back]. Facing upward is called "the sleep of a corpse," and facing downward is called "lewd sleep." [With these incorrect postures] there are many evil dreams. Use your pure cloth to wrap your kāṣāya and place it in front of your pillow. Nowadays many people place it at their feet. This is wrong.

If you have occasion to enter the bath, enter carrying your toilet articles in your right hand. When you get inside the threshold of the lower section [of the bathhouse], bow with palms joined and retire to an empty space. After you have bowed to the persons on your left and right, first take your five-section robe and hand cloth and hang them on the bamboo pole. Open up your bath cloth [used to carry bath articles], take out your [bathing] articles, and set them to one side. Open up, but do not yet completely remove, your outer robe. First, remove your undergarments. Take your leg cloth, wrap it around your body, and tie your bath wrap. Take your breeches, roll them up, and place them in your bath cloth. Next remove your outer robe and five-section robe and put them together in a bundle. Take your hand cloth and tie [the bundle] to the bamboo pole. If you do not have a hand cloth, use your sash to tie it. Of old it was said,

When the drum signaling the bath sounds three times and you enter the [bath] hall, one must separate outer and under garments as "impure" and "pure."

Proceed to remove the remainder of your garments, make them into a bundle, and set them aside turned upside down [so the "impure" garments are not exposed].

Do not go about in the bath with bare feet: you must wear [wooden] clogs. Dip water at an empty place in the lower section [of the bathhouse]. Do not take the sitting places of officers or respected elders, that is, those in the upper section. Do not splash people's bodies with hot water. Do not take the buckets onto the floor and soak your feet. Do not urinate in the bathhouse, or wash your private parts. Do not rest your feet on the buckets. Do not talk or laugh. Do not rub your feet on the [drain] trough. Do not bail out water [from the

trough]. Do not stand up, pick up a bucket, and pour water over your body, lest you splash the people to the left, right, front or back of you. You must keep your whole body covered. Do not use much bath water. Do not let the leg cloth become separated from your body.

If there are persons whose leg cloths should not get into the buckets, such as those with boils, those washing moxa blisters, or those using itch medicine, they should be the last to enter the bath. Do not use the public hand cloths that are on either side to wipe your head or face. In the bathhouse the hand cloths are there to use after donning your robes, to clean your hands before putting on your short *kāṣāya*.

When leaving the bath, bow left and right. First put on your undershirt and outer robe. When you are completely covered, then put on your lower underclothing and remove your bath wrap. Take your leg cloth and lay it inside your bath wrap, lest it moisten your bath cloth [used to carry bath articles]. The hand cloth should be held in your left hand. Do not take the wet leg cloth and drape it over your hand. Bow left and right and depart. Read the characters of the name of the donor who arranged for the bath, chant *sūtras* or *dhāraṇīs* of your choice, and dedicate the merit.

During the cold months when you face the fire, first sit above the hearth, then turn your body and enter the hearth. Bow with palms joined and then sit. If there is a place for removing shoes, leave them outside. Do not play with the incense spoon or fire tongs. Do not stir up the fire. Do not put your heads together and talk. Do not roast things for snacks. Do not make a bad smell by toasting your shoes. It is not permitted to dry such things as leggings or clothing over the fire. Do not grasp and lift your outer robe, exposing your breeches. Do not spit or throw balls of filth and grease into the hearth.

The rules of etiquette for daily activities in the assembly as collected above are not presumed as advice for old hands; they are intended for the edification of newcomers to the training. Minutely detailed rules that should be followed for assemblies in the [dharma] hall, entering the [abbot's] room, minor assemblies, chanting *sūtras*, reciting buddha names, inspecting [monastery] offices, rituals for opening and closing retreats, packing the knapsacks and donning the bamboo hat [for pilgrimage], sending off deceased monks and auctioning off their belongings, are already included in the *Rules of Purity*. Abbots each have [their own] special admonitions [for their monasteries], so I will not make any further statement.

Compiled on the Buddha's birthday [8th day of 4th month] in the second year of the Jiading era [1209]. Respectfully, the monk Zongjia of the chief seat's office at Qianguifeng (Thousand Tortoise Peak) [Monastery].