

Egg and Killing

Dear Sayadaw,

Please help me get red of my confusing. Staying and working in Singapore, I have to cook food myself. It is very easy for me to cook egg and I eat it almost everyday. After I read a Dhamma book, I feel that I shouldn't cook egg to keep Panatipata, because the book says if you break and fry or boil or cook egg, then you violate the precept. Please clarify me whether it is Panatipata or not.

Mee Mee

Where eggs from

I remember that I asked my friend's son 7 years old Thomas, "Hey Thomas, do you know where eggs come from?", and his answer was "Eggs come from refrigerator!". I am sure that he noticed his mother taking eggs from it at home or in the market.

What is killing

To violate Panatipata, you intentionally killed a living being including fetus in the womb or egg and the being was dead by your effort. You killed a dog, but it didn't die and you just made its legs broken, still you keep the precept. But because you broke dog's legs, you sow Akusala and you will have to reap its effect.

Two types of eggs

If you saw a cobra's egg which is alive under a bush, and thinking it is dangerous you smashed it, you killed it. If the egg was already dried or dead or not alive or a little cobra cannot be born from it, never say you killed it. If you took an egg from chicken's nest at your home and fried or boiled it, you killed it, because it is hundred percent sure that the egg is alive.

Do you think that baby chickens can be born from the eggs which sellers keep in refrigerators systematically? I don't think so. They are frozen and fetus was already dead, that is, the eggs in the market are not alive.

Difference

Vegetarian means not to eat meat. Panatipata means not to kill a living being. For health reason, if researchers say eating egg is same as meat and you want to avoid meat-eating, that is your wish. But, in this issue, breaking or frying or boiling frozen eggs cannot break your Panatipata. They will be something like all kinds of frozen meat from the market.

Just to think

Yes, if a lay man sees a monk breaking or boiling or frying any kind of egg, he may think ill of monks. So, monks should avoid doing so to maintain the lay persons' devotion. □