

Abstract: The Four Assemblies and the Foundation of the Order of Nuns

by Analayo

According to the account of the foundation of the order of nuns, found with some variations in the different Vinayas preserved in Chinese, Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan, the Buddha was quite hesitant to permit women to go forth and was persuaded by his monk disciple and attendant Ananda to do so only after repeated pleading. Not only was the Buddha unwilling to institute the order of nuns, but he supposedly even made the prediction that this step would cause his teaching to last for a period of only fivehundred years.

This hesitation and prediction have had and still have a rather negative impact on the way the order of nuns is perceived and thus form one of the contributing factors that make it so difficult to establish an order of nuns in those traditions where the bhiksuni ordination does not at present exist.

A close inspection of the account of the foundation of the order of nuns brings to light several inconsistencies. As already noticed by other scholars, the eight special rules that according to this account were laid down as a pre-condition for the founding of the order of nuns presuppose an already existing bhiksuni-sangha, so that, in the form in which they have come down to us, these eight rules could only have been formulated at a time when nuns were already in existence. Some canonical passages do in fact refer to the ehi bhikkuni type of ordination for nuns, indicating that in the earliest stages of the history of the Buddhist order nuns were ordained with this simple formula, instead of the procedure referred to in the eight special rules.

Another problem is a chronological one, a problem that to my knowledge so far has not been noticed by other scholars. According to what can be gleaned from the relevant sources, the foundation of the order of nuns would have taken place in the 5th or 6th year of the Buddha's ministry. A closer examination of the canonical sources brings to light that at this early point of time Ananda still had to become the Buddha's attendant, in fact he still had to ordain. This makes it impossible for him to act as an intermediary in the way his role is depicted in the different Vinayas.

In addition to these internal inconsistencies, the account of the foundation of the order of nuns also does not concord with what can be gleaned from other canonical discourses regarding the Buddha's attitude towards the order of nuns and the role the bhiksuni-sangha played in early Buddhism. Particularly noteworthy is a passage found in the Chinese, Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the Mahaparinirvana-sutra, which makes it clear that right after his awakening the Buddha must already have decided to found the order of nuns, since according to this passage he told Mara that he would not pass away until his nun disciples were well established and trained. This passage directly contradicts the hesitancy to establish the order of nuns that the above Vinaya accounts attribute to the Buddha.

The Mahaparinirvana-sutra not the only such instance, in fact quite a number of discourses make it clear that the order of nuns, as one of the four assemblies, was an integral part of early Buddhism. The Mahavacchagotta-sutta of the Pali Canon and its Madhyama-agama parallel, for example, make a point of highlighting that the existence of accomplished

practitioners in each of these four assemblies is what makes the Buddha's teaching "complete" in every respect. These and other instances make it clear that, without an order of nuns, the transmission of the Dharma is incomplete and an essential aspect of its inner life is missing. In view of such passages, preserved by different early Buddhist schools, it becomes evident that the account of the foundation of the order of nuns does not only suffer from internal inconsistencies, but also stands in direct contradiction to other canonical passages.

Besides, the prediction given in this account, unlike several other predictions attributed to the Buddha in various sutras, did not come true. From archaeological evidence we know that even in the 3rd and 4th century nuns were active participants in Indian Buddhism, so that they, and with them the Dharma, were still flourishing far beyond the five-hundred years' period envisaged in the Vinayas.

In sum, in view of a predication that did not come true and a hesitance that is directly contradicted by other canonical sources, it seems more probable that the Buddha was positive about the foundation of the order of nuns and that the Vinaya account of the foundation of the order of nuns, due to some transmission problem, does not accurately reflect the situation.

In contrast to the negative impression created by the account of the foundation of the order of nuns in the different Vinayas, the testimony of other canonical sources indicates that for the continuation and growth of the Dharma each of the four assemblies is an essential requirement. From this it would follow that every effort should be made to ensure that by establishing of an order of nuns in each of the different Buddhist traditions the ideal conditions for the growth and spread of the Dharma in the modern world are being provided.

Abstract: The Prospects for Reviving Bhikkhunā Ordination in the Theravāda Tradition

by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi

In this paper I will discuss the legal and ethical grounds for and against a restoration of bhikkhunā ordination in the Theravāda tradition. This paper will be divided into three main sections. In Part I, I will review the arguments laid down by Theravādin traditionalists, mainly the Vinaya specialists who see a revival of bhikkhunā ordination as a legal impossibility. In the course of this discussion, I will also include a subsidiary examination of the status of the sikkhamānā and deal with the disputed question whether bhikkhunā ordination given to a candidate who has not undertaken the sikkhamānā training is invalid.

In Part II, I will offer several considerations in support of the claim that bhikkhunā ordination should be resuscitated. These considerations fall into two groups. One is based on past precedent, namely, the authorization given by the Buddha himself in the canonical texts for the creation of an order of bhikkhunās. The other is based on contemporary conditions, especially the ideals of gender equality and non-discrimination that became intrinsic to the present-day world view following the European Enlightenment of the late eighteenth century. When such ideals have become so widespread in the outlook of educated people in the secular world, I will hold, to insist on exclusionary policies based on gender discrimination in religious life is likely to have the effect of discouraging the confidence of people who might otherwise be attracted to Theravāda Buddhism.

Finally, in Part III, I will briefly consider the legal mechanics of restoring the bhikkhunā ordination to the Theravāda tradition, that is, the ways it might be restored that harmonize most smoothly with the existing legal stipulations of the Vinaya. I will contend that while no method can be found that perfectly meets the demands of strict Vinaya legalism, the higher spirit of the Dhamma warrants an attempt to soften these demands and develop an application of the Vinaya that is flexible and accommodating rather than rigid and rejecting.

Abstract: From Anila to Gelongma — Naming, Language, and Gender Equality

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Shakespeare mused that the name of a rose does not change its nature or fragrance, a sentiment most Buddhists would share. Buddhists frequently speak about the impermanence of all compounded phenomena, and names, the words we use to distinguish persons and phenomena, are especially transient and insubstantial. At the same time, naming and language are important aspects of the human experience. Human beings pay special attention to the names and titles of address they use with each other. Names are given importance universally and crossculturally, in societies and languages around the world. Parents everywhere are prudent in choosing a name for a newborn baby. In social interactions, people take care to pronounce names correctly, use correct titles, and, in many societies, use honorific language in addressing others, especially when we meet them for the first time. Names are signifiers, and titles, in particular, send specific messages. For example, in Tibetan society, adding or omitting the title "His Holiness" to the name of the Dalai Lama can convey a world of meaning.

Consciously or subconsciously, human beings recognize the significance of the names and titles they use in their respective communities on a daily basis. Language usage reflects societal assumptions and values. Languages are influenced by positive and negative valuations of people and things, but habitual speech patterns and the messages they send may also be unconscious. Even when society and its values change, incorrect or even derogatory ways of naming may persist. A case in point is the language used for Buddhist nuns, a topic that has somehow been neglected. For example, in Tibetan the word for a fully ordained nun is "*gelongma*," yet we frequently hear the words "*ani*" or "*anila*" used instead to address Buddhist nuns. Even though other more respectful terms are available, such as "*jo-mo*", "*btsun-ma*", "*chö-la*" and so forth, consciously or unconsciously many people continue to use less respectful terms. Why?

This paper discusses the issue of names and titles for Buddhist nuns from a sociolinguistic perspective. It introduces the results of the "Correct Naming Movement" in Taiwan and the sociological significance of the movement for Buddhist nuns and Buddhism more broadly. The objective is a greater understanding of the relationship between Buddhism, language, and gender, and ultimately to work toward setting standards for correctly naming nuns in Buddhist communities.

Abstract: A Tibetan Precedent for Multi-tradition Ordination Support for Giving Bhikshuni Ordination with a Dual Sangha of Mulasarvastivada Bhikshus and Dharmaguptaka Bhikshunis

by **Bhiksuni Thubten Chodron**

When I took sramaneriya ordination in Dharamsala, India, in 1977, I heard the story behind the blue cord on our monastic vest (dongka): it was a sign of appreciation for the two Chinese monks who aided the Tibetans in reestablishing the ordination lineage when it was on the verge of extinction in Tibet. "Full ordination is so precious," my teachers instructed, "that we should feel grateful to all those in the past and present who preserved the lineage, enabling us to receive the vow today." Interestingly, thirty years later, I am returning to this story of the re-establishment of the bhikshu sangha in Tibet with Lachen Gonpa Rabsel's ordination to show how it is a precedent of multi-tradition ordination that could be used to establish the bhikshuni ordination in Tibetan Buddhism.

At least five bhikshus are required to give full bhikshu ordination (upasampada). After the persecution of Buddhism by the Tibetan king Langdarma in the ninth (or possibly tenth) century, three Tibetan bhikshus requested the aid of two Chinese bhikshus in ordaining Lachen Gonpa Rabsel, thus re-establishing the bhikshu ordination in Tibet. This ordination in which Lachen Gonpa Rabsel received the Mulasarvastivadin bhikshu vow was given by a sangha composed of two Vinaya lineages, the three Tibetans being from the Mulasarvastivadin Vinaya lineage and the two Chinese bhikshus being from the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya lineage.

How is it known that the two Chinese monks were from the Dharmaguptaka lineage? The bhikshu ordination had consistently been given according to the Dharmaguptaka rite in China since the third century. Furthermore, in 709, an imperial edict issued by Emperor T'ang Chung Tzung of the T'ang Dynasty decreed that the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya was to be the only Vinaya to be used for both ordination and regulating daily life of monks in China.

Furthermore, the Mulasarvastivadin lineage was never a living ordination lineage in China. Even if the two Chinese monks had been Mulasarvastivadin, then surely other Tibetans from the Mulasarvastivadin would have also lived in the area. In that case, the three Tibetans monks would have asked them, not the Chinese monks, to make up the ordaining sangha.

Since a historical precedent of multi-traditional ordination exists in Tibetan history, it should be possible for the bhikshuni ordination lineage to be established in Tibetan Buddhism by means of the dual ordination procedure with Mulasarvastivadin bhikshus and Dharmaguptaka bhikshunis.

Abstract: Experience of being the Tibetan Buddhist Teacher to Convene and Sponsor the First Tibetan Initiated Bhikshuni Ordination Ceremony held in Canberra, Australia in October 2003

by Lama Choedak Rinpoche

Founder and Director of Sakya International Buddhist Academy and affiliated Buddhist centres, Australia

Since coming to the West in the early 1980s I have founded fifteen Buddhist centres in Australia and New Zealand. Over the years an increasing number of my students wished to be ordained as Shramanera and Shramaneras. Some went to Nepal and were ordained as novices and others were ordained in Australia when His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche visited Australia in 1997 and 2001. By early 2002, a number of Shramaneras sought my advice on how they could be ordained as Bhikshunis.

I knew that, despite His Holiness the Dalai Lama's efforts, the Tibetan Buddhist leadership and hierarchy were very resistant to allowing Bhikshuni ordination to take place. They had no wish to recognise existing Bhikshuni ordination lineages, let alone convene or sponsor an ordination ceremony. The Department of Religious Council in Dharamsala is said to have, instead, set up a team of scholars to examine the authenticity of existing Bhikshuni lineages.

Many years have passed and yet every meeting called by the Religious Council attracts more staunch monks whose medieval views only create further obstacles. Consequently, Tibetan Buddhist masters have sent their female students to Taiwan, Korea or China to be ordained as Bhikshunis, since there were none in the Tibetan leadership who were willing to emulate the past great kings of Tibet. Just as King Trisong Deutsen invited Shantarakshita and others to Tibet in 7th century and had the first seven Tibetans ordained, someone had to create the causes and conditions for Bhikshuni ordination to happen in Australia.

After obtaining blessings from His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, I decided to establish a Bhikshuni Ordination Council and invite senior monks and nuns to form a preceptor council. With the help of Ven. Thich Quang Ba, a long time friend and Abbot of the Vietnamese Buddhist temple in Canberra, we convened the Ananda Bhikshuni Ordination Council. We invited some senior Tibetan monks resident in Australia to be part of the Preceptor Council but all refused to attend, citing personal reasons. In the end we had nineteen senior Vietnamese Buddhist Bhikshus and seven Bhikshunis from Australia and abroad, who kindly agreed to officiate at the first Tibetan initiated Bhikshuni Ordination ceremony ever to be convened. It is now history that under the auspices of Ananda Bhikshuni Ordination Council, nine women (including seven Australian and NZ Tibetan Buddhists) were ordained as Bhikshunis in October 2003 at Shakyamuni Buddhist Centre and Virupa Retreat Centre in Canberra.

I do not know what will be achieved by examining the authenticity of Bhikshuni lineages or by seeking a declaration from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. All I know, from experience, is that you just have to create the causes and conditions for Bhikshuni Ordination to happen. If thousands of Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Japanese Buddhists have been initiated into Vajrayana Buddhist practices without needing to examine the authenticity of the Tibetan Buddhist lineages and without having to make a declaration about a preferred lineage or tradition, why are these procedures necessary for Tibetan Buddhists to be ordained as Bhikshunis from other traditions?

One can only hope that the 1st International Congress on Bhikshuni Vinaya and Ordination Lineages can definitely promote mutual respect and co-operation between various Vinaya traditions and that we learn to respect the traditions that have Bhikshuni lineage and learn to be their disciples without prejudicial views.

The benefit of meeting many of you here at this conference will only encourage me to take a Bhikshuni Preceptor Council to India, convene and sponsor a Bhikshuni ordination ceremony and create an opportunity for Tibetan nuns to seek Bhikshuni ordination. Anyone who is interested in helping me to do this may contact me.

Abstract: The Revival of a Dual Ordination for Korean Buddhist Nuns in the Modern Period

by Inyoung Chung (Bhiksuni Sukdham)

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My paper is concerned with the historical reinstatement of a dual ordination for Buddhist nuns in Korea in 1982. According to Kim Y•ngt'ae, there are no Korean historical records that indicate how a dual ordination for nuns was carried out in early Korean Buddhist history. Yet Japanese records on the ordination of the first Japanese bhikshunis in the kingdom of Paekche show that an authentic Korean bhikshuni lineage had already been established in Korea by the sixth century and that a dual ordination was practiced for nuns as well. Kim Y•ngmi believes that from the sixth century until the fourteenth century Korean nuns were ordained as bhikshunis under both sanghas.

Korean Buddhism, however, underwent tremendous persecution and also upheaval as Koreans adopted Neo-Confucianism as their state religion and ideology during the Chos•n period (1392-1910). So far as I have been able to research, there is no Korean record on the practice of a dual ordination for nuns during the Chos•n period. It seems that the practice of a dual ordination for Korean nuns discontinued sometime in the Chos•n period. I assume that Korean nuns were ordained as bhikshunis under bhikshu sangha alone. From 1910 to 1945, Korea was colonized by Japanese. During the tumultuous years of Japanese colonial rule, Korean Buddhism severely suffered under the influences of Japanese Buddhism, which was distinctly different from the Korean tradition in its monastic practice. After the liberation from Japanese, celibate Korean monks and nuns were anxious to restore their earlier tradition. Yet three years of Korean War (1950-53) ravaged the entire Korean peninsula. Due to the aftermaths of the war, Korean Buddhists took decades to recover from the devastating losses of their literary, architectural, and human resources. In June, 1982, the Council of the Korean Buddhist Chogye Order decided to reinstate a dual ordination for nuns and hold the ceremony once a year. In August, 1982, with the full support from the monk vinaya masters, such as Ch'aun and Il't'a, Korean nuns held the First Korean Bhikshuni Congregation at Chin'gwansa Temple in Seoul in order to prepare for the revival of a dual ordination for nuns. In October, 1982, three principal and seven witnessing bhikshuni masters were chosen by the First Korean Bhikshuni Congregation held the historic dual ordination for nuns at P•m•-sa Temple in Pusan. Since then the Korean Buddhist Chogye Order has held a dual ordination for nuns once every year.

Abstract: The Right to be Ordained as Bhiksunis

by Ven. Bhiksuni Chuehmen

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When Queen Mahaprajapati told the Buddha that she was inspired to leave the householder's life and asked his permission to lead a spiritual life in the Sangha Order, the Buddha rejected her request not only once, but three times. What was the Buddha's motive in rejecting her and why did he give her eight conditions to uphold before ordaining her.

That was the fifth year after the Buddha's enlightenment 2600 years ago.

Today, when Theravada nuns are requesting bhiksuni ordination, some groups within the Theravada Bhiksu Sangha object to the revival of the bhiksuni lineage. The Theravada Bhiksu Sangha argued that initially the Buddha had rejected women being ordained and since it had been interrupted, it could not be revived!

Later research revealed that the Vinaya Lineage, which the Chinese nuns received from the Sri Lankan bhiksunis in 429 CE is still alive today. So, responding to the request from their Theravada sisters, the Chinese nuns -- in gratitude for receiving the lineage from Sri Lankans -- were glad to return the lineage. But some members of the Theravada tradition also argued that the transmission from the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya is "Mahayana" and, therefore, it is not proper to revive it in the Theravada tradition. This is certainly not a very logical argument. By what right does anyone determine which nuns are to be ordained as bhiksunis, and by what authority can anyone disclaim the nuns' right to receive vows?

The basic inspiration for this paper is to point out that the Buddha recognized that women were as capable as men of attaining spiritual insights. Accordingly, they deserve to be treated equally in humanity and the nuns the right to receive the bhiksuni vows.

I do not want to go into excessive research as many scholars have already done so, what I wish to bring out is that the bhiksuni lineage from the Dharmaguptaka tradition followed the proper pravraīya (ordination procedure), and sharing the experience of my monastery, Fo Guang Shan ¹ who has organized a number of ordinations ² for monks and nuns according to the *Dharmaguptaka Pratimoksa*, which have been practiced by the Chinese since the Vinaya Dharma was brought to China. Here, I wish to present an account of the ordination organized by Fo Guang Shan and the record when I rallied senior monks from Theravada and Tibetan traditions to support the historic ordination of Theravada nuns in Bodhgaya in 1998.

I also wish to show the contributions of bhiksunis in the modern world, which is a fact that bhiksunis are equally capable in spiritual and social service to the world today along with their male counterparts, as the Most Venerable Tallale Dhammaloka said, *"If there were to be no nuns in the Order of the Gotama Buddha, the dispensation would necessarily be an incomplete one, and there would be no use of this doctrine to the female sector of world humanity."*

I hope this paper will give those within the Theravada and Tibetan Bhiksu Sangha the wherewithal to re-establish the bhiksuni lineage vows from the Dharmaguptaka Lineage. We

must all work together, as the Most Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda has said, *"...to discard differences and work towards the development of the EKAYANA (one way) ideal to reach the final bliss of nirvana."*

1. The Fo Guang Shan Order was established in 1967 by Venerable Master Hsing who ordained over 1200 monks and nuns (about 80 percent are nuns) and they are now actively spreading the Buddha-dharma in nearly 200 temples around the world. The Venerable Master is instrumental in helping nuns elevate their status within the society as he believed that they had equal responsibility toward society and were equally capable of spiritual attainment. It was with this inspiration that Fo Guang Shan organized the first international full ordination for Theravada and Tibetan nuns in 1988 at the Hsi Lai Temple in Los Angeles, USA.

Subsequently, another ordination for nuns of the different traditions was conducted in Bodhgaya, India in 1998, and again in Taiwan in the year 2000.

2. Fo Guang Shan first conducted higher ordinations in 1977 (Fo Guang Shan, Taiwan), subsequently in 1988 (Los Angeles), 1991 (Fo Guang Shan), 1992 (Los Angeles), 1993 (Fo Guang Shan), 1996 (Fo Guang Shan), 1998 (Bodhgaya, India) , 2000 (Fo Guang Shan) and 2004 (Wollongong, Australia)

Abstract: Creating Nuns Out of Thin Air: Problems and Possible Solutions concerning the Ordination of Nuns according to the Tibetan Monastic Code

by Dr. Shayne Clarke

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The various attempts to establish or re-establish an Order of Buddhist Nuns in South and South-East Asia have not been entirely successful. A nun must be ordained by two Orders, or so it is said: the Order of Monks and the Order of Nuns. As an Order of Nuns does not exist, however, the ordination of nuns is impossible; so runs the circular argument that impedes the ordination of nuns and the establishment of an Order thereof.

This paper investigates a number of possibilities for establishing a monastic Order of Nuns according to the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, the Rule used in Tibet. The paper presents little-known evidence from the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* for the ordination of nuns according to the formularies for monks. As this evidence stems from the Tibetan canonical tradition itself, the monastic code used by the Orders of Monks in Tibet, at least in Tibet it is not open to questions as to its legitimacy, questions such as those that have marred attempts to re-establish an Order with nuns of the Dharmaguptaka Rule. These textual passages, then, may well provide the historical precedent needed to establish a Tibetan lineage of nuns. The paper looks specifically at the legal validity of a number of uncommon ordination scenarios and presents canonical passages in which the Buddha is expressly stated as declaring that such ordinations are valid.

Abstract: Misinterpretations of the Buddhist Texts and the Problem of Ordination of Women

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A number of Buddhist canonical texts suggest discrimination against women, such as the Buddha's reluctance to allow women to enter the sangha, the sub-ordinate status of the bhikkhunis under the eight strict conditions (attha garudhamma), the inferior terms used for the women in the canonical texts, five obstructions of a woman, her incapability to become a Buddha etc. Based on these textual sources, even today a woman renunciant cannot become a bhikkhuni and a lay woman is treated as a polluted being. How these discriminatory expressions gradually became the hindrances to the ordination of womenfolk is discussed in this paper.

Here, the possibilities of the misreading of Buddhist texts have been examined. When reading a text, we sometimes consider the subject matter just from its ostensible meaning. This ultimately leads us into a quick mire. The problem does not lie in the scriptures themselves; rather it is our misleading interpretation that often grows out of nuances in translation. What has come down to us today as the problem of bhikkhuni ordination or gender discrimination, is possibly the outcome of misinterpretations that grew out of the socially defined realities of the times and the places where the texts were written and the linguistic demands of the target languages. It has been discussed by a close examination of key passages from Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese texts.

Abstract: Tibetan Nuns and Bhikshuni Ordination

by Lobsang Dechen

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Tibetan women have always had the opportunity to lead a monastic life if they have the interest to devote their life to the practice of the dharma. There have been quite a few famous women practitioners, for example Machig Labdron, Shugsep Jetsun Rinpoche and the 16th Samding Dorjee Phagmo, who is in Tibet.

However, Tibetan nuns did not have the opportunity of dual bhikshuni ordination in Tibet because Indian bhikshunis did not cross over the mountain barrier between India and Tibet. For a brief time in the 13th century bhikshuni ordination was given by the Tibetan Bhikshu Sangha only, but this was not continued and therefore there is no existing Tibetan tradition of bhikshuni ordination.

Traditionally, the nun's tendency has been to devote their lives to meditation and liturgical practices. One of the advances for nuns in exile has been the introduction of study programmes in Buddhist philosophy into the nunneries. For the last twenty years, nuns have worked hard on their studies, so now well-educated and trained nuns in Buddhist Philosophy are emerging. As the nuns become more confident and articulate many are expressing an interest in and appreciation of the value of bhikshuni ordination.

In order for us to gain a real understanding of full ordination, we Tibetan nuns ourselves need to do research on vinaya. It is only recently that a few nuns have reached the required academic level to study vinaya, and even now they are only able to study that which relates to novices. Therefore, we are dependent on our Tibetan bhikshu vinaya masters to help us do the necessary research on how to revive a form of bhikshuni ordination that would be accepted within our own Mulasarvastivada vinaya tradition. This is the method we would feel most comfortable with if it is possible.

Abstract: Between State Control and State Neglect: Nuns in Ancient and Early Mediaeval Japan

by Prof. Dr. Florin Deleanu

It seems rather paradoxical that in contrast to the less prominent and often neglected role of nuns in the history of Japanese Buddhism, the first native of the Land of the Rising Sun to be ordained was a girl. Her lay name was Shima 島, and she took the tonsure at the age of eleven assuming the religious name of Zenshin-ni 善信尼 ('The Nun of Good Faith'). This happened in the 13th year of the reign of Emperor Bidatsu 敏達天皇 (i.e., 584 C.E.). The order of nuns kept growing steadily reaching its first apogee during the Nara 奈良 period (710-794). The lavish state patronage brought prosperity to the Buddhist order, but it also meant that the monks and nuns came under strict state control. Actually, quite a few of the *Vinaya* regulations were promulgated as official regulations (*ryō* 令) whose violation by the clerics was legally punishable.

In contradistinction to the early days of steady development, the Heian 平安 age (794-1192) marked a dramatic decline in the activities and institutions of the nuns mainly brought about by the discontinuation of the state support. Most of the convents became derelict or turned into monasteries run by monks, and the state-sponsored ordination of women came to a virtual halt. The Kamakura 鎌倉 period (1192-1336), on the other hand, saw a gradual revival of the *bhikṣu* order and increase in the number of convents. This trend was to attain a new peak in the late mediaeval times when some of the nunneries once again received official patronage and attained national prominence.

The ordination procedures in Ancient and Early Mediaeval Japan mostly followed the Dharmaguptaka 法藏部 *Fourfold Vinaya* 四部律藏 (especially for the state-sponsored ordination platforms and in the Ritsu School 律宗) or the *Fang wang jing* (Ch.)/ *Bon mō kyō* (Jp.) (**Brahmajālasūtra* 梵網經) (mainly in the Tendai 天台 tradition). After a survey of the early developments, my paper will focus upon the revival of the *bhikṣu* ordinations in the Kamakura period. Special attention will be paid to the Hokke Nunnery 法華寺 and the strategies employed by Eison 叡尊 (1201-1290), the famous reformer of the Ritsu School, in order to re-establish the order of nuns even when the *Vinaya* regulations could not be followed in all details.

Abstract: Theravada Bhikkunis

by Bhikkuni Dr. Kusuma Devendra

I congratulate the organizers for the wonderful enthusiasm to create a worldwide Bhikkuni Sangha order as was the wish of the Buddha. May you be blessed again and again.

I am the first Bhikkuni in Sri Lanka after a lapse of nearly 1000 years. I and nine others received higher ordination in 1996 from the Korean Sangha of the Chogyo Order which is a member of the World Sangha Council. We were ordained in Sarnath, India under the auspices of the Indian Mahabodhi Society, of which the President then was late Ven. Mapalgama Vipulasara Thero. Afterwards we received instruction and training in Sarnath for two years under the able guidance of Ven. Pandit Andawela Devasiri, a Sri Lankan monk in the Pali tradition of Bhikkuni Vinaya.

It is well known history that Sri Lanka received Bhikkuni ordination in the 3rd century B.C. from Bhikkuni Sanghamitta, the daughter of Emperor Asoka of India.

In the 6th century A.D. after nearly 900 years, the ordination was taken by Sri Lankan nuns headed by Devasara Bhikkuni to China. This is Chinese history. (Prof. Hema Gunatilleke did a research on this.) They traveled in sailing ships crossing dangerous seas for 3 months along the silk route in a merchant ship of a man called Nandi. Thus the Sri Lankan ordination was established in China. From China it went to Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam etc. According to Sri Lankan tradition all the Bhikkunis in the world today are descendants of Sri Lankan Bhikkunis and the lineage can be traced to Mahaprajapati through Sanghamitta, which was the Pali Magadhi tradition in India.

Our Sri Lankan Bhikkhus who attended the ceremony in India in 1996 gave us the Sri Lankan bowl and robes having recognized us as fully ordained Bhikkunis.

Three months before my ordination I was sent to Korea, Seoul, to Bo Myunsa temple to study Vinaya with Ven. Bang Joo Suk, the chief abbot of the temple who organized the ordination. I studied the Dharmagupta Vinaya ordination procedure. To my great satisfaction the ordination procedure was same as the Pali Vinaya procedure.

There is reason for this. Bhikkuni ordination was taken from Sri Lanka to China and then to Korea in the 6th century A.D. The dual ordination procedure is still extant in Korea and is the same as the Pali. The only difference is that it is in Korean language and we had to seek the help of translators. I translated the procedure into Sinhala from English while in Korea (3 months), for the use of our Sinhala nuns who obtained ordination. Thus the Sri Lankan nuns were familiar with the Pali as well as the Dharmagupta ordaining procedure before they went for ordination.

It is admitted that Sri Lanka obtained only the ordination from Korea and then the Pali tradition of Vinaya was followed.

Controversy

Today there are over 500 Bhikkunis in Sri Lanka having obtained ordination subsequently from Taiwan as well from local Bhikkunis.

I must place on record that I officiated at the 1st ordination held by Taiwan in 1998 one year later at Buddha Gaya. Since I was a Bhikkhuni already, I was invited to the platform to translate the English version of the Chinese ordination procedure to Sinhala for our local nuns. Later these nuns gave ordination to other Sri Lankan nuns with the collaboration of senior monks of Sri Lanka.

It must be pointed out that for the dual ordination ceremony only ten monks and ten nuns are needed. Hence there was no need to get the consent of all the monks in Sri Lanka.

Since the Bhikkhuni tradition was lost 1000 years ago in Sri Lanka, the traditional Theravada hierarchy could not accept the new ordination. But things are changing after 10 years now and the Government has come to see the necessity for Bhikkhunis. The President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa invited the monks of the hierarchy for a discussion and Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda of Malaysia, a Sri Lankan Bhikkhu, known as the father of Malaysian Buddhism said that "a table needs four legs, Buddhism without Bhikkhunis is unstable because the fourfold society is not complete" and the President came to accept this position.

It is good to have the Support of the Government and society for Bhikkhunis though it is not a Vinaya requirement.

Objections raised by opponents / refutation / Legal status

Most of the objections came from monks who claimed that being a Theravada country we have received a Mahayana ordination. It was argued that there was no Mahayana or Theravada during the time of the Buddha and the Buddha gave ordination to women by dual ordination which is what is being practiced all over the world. Sri Lanka received dual ordination first from nuns and then from monks.

Before dual ordination was proclaimed the Buddha invited the monks alone to give ordination (Cullavagga Pali). Later when Bhikkhunis were able to perform the ceremony alone, they were allowed to do so and as a courtesy they have to go before the monks for a second time in a similar way.

I submitted a PhD research on the subject going into detail. The manuscript is with Ven. Jampa Tsedron.

Since Bhikkhuni Vinaya was supposed to be obsolete monks did not study Bhikkhuni Vinaya and they were not interested to study either. The objections came from such persons.

I translated my theses into Sinhala and published it, thanks to the Tibetan Institute, Hamburg under the kind patronage of Gabriele Kustermann. Since then there have been no strong feelings against the establishment of Bhikkhuni Sangha in Sri Lanka.

In fact there is a trend now to support the ten precept nun who is recognised by the Government. But the nuns have no teaching centres whereas monks have Government sponsored Pirivenas. The monks have opportunities for higher education and training. They are supported by lay people and the Government. The nuns are more or less on their own,

trying to eke out an existence.

Some nuns who have taken residential meditation Courses which are free, are able to do a bit better but the economics and the war in the North for 25 years is making it difficult to even exist. No legal status for Nuns!

Future Hopes

I was greatly influenced by Ayya Khema from Germany who established the Buddha Haus and many meditation centres. In fact I have started my own centre named " Ayya Khema Meditation Centre " which will be equipped to hold residential meditation for around 15 to 20 persons - local and for foreigners. There is about 1 1/2 acres of land available that can become a flourishing Bhikkhuni Centre as well, in the future. Again I must acknowledge the kind help and good intention of Ven. Nyanabodhi and Gerhard Link of Buddha Haus, Germany for buying this land for me.

My best wishes to the H.H. Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Bhikkhunis and the German Buddhists for bringing up this Conference. It will surely be an eye opener to the world.

Abstract: The Need to look at the popular interpretations of the Tripitaka (Theravada context)

by Bhikkhuni Dhammananda (Prof. em. Dr Chatsumarn Kabilsingh)

In this paper the author attempts to reread various passages from the Tripitaka which seems to have worked against the reintroduction of the bhikkhuni ordination in contemporary Buddhism. The paper will take up the meaning of being Theravada and how serious are the Theravadins in the present day to follow the spirit of Theravada.

The obstacles to ordination of bhikkhunis are mostly cultural and patriarchal, Reading between the lines of the text, what is the true message of the Buddha. Before the Buddha passed away he suggested that we take both Dharma and Vinaya as our guideline. But the problems regarding ordination issue, it seems that the sangha tend to insist on the vinaya and also the words of the Vinaya not the spirit. The vinaya will be guided best when its coupled with Dharma.

The paper will also argue in support of the Mulasarvastivada sangha to consider starting the bhikkhuni sangha by the Theravada bhikkhuni sangha from Sri lank and the assistance of the bhikkhu sangha of Mulasarvastivada. In this way the Tibetan bhikkhuni sangha can follow the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya received from the Mulasarvastivada sangha.

Abstract: Recovery and Restoration of an Order of Theravada Bhikkhunis

by Professor Dhammavihari Thera

Sangha Nayaka (Honoris Causa)

Amarapura Dharmarakshita Sect, Sri Lanka

From the earliest instances of the delivery by the historical Buddha òàkyamuni Gotama of his message of release from Samsàra for the humans in Nirvana, there arose in the minds of the more mature listeners the awareness that the life of higher living or brahma-cariya implied therein required total eschewal of household life for its perfection : Nayidaü sukaraü agàraü ajjhàvasatà ekanta-paripuõõaü ekanta-parisuddham saïkhalikhitaü brahma-cariyaü caritun'ti. [DN.I. 63]. The earliest Buddhist suttas in the Pali Canon, like the Sàmaññaphala, declare it in no uncertain terms.

In Buddhism, this is the genesis, and that from a human to humans, of the message called the dharma. It was no divine revelation. From this resulted the dispensation of the earnest followers who came to be called renunciants or pabbajitas, i.e. those who have renounced their household life in toto in search of their spiritual goal. In theory, this renunciant life was open to all, irrespective of gender differences. But the position of the woman in Indian society of the day did not permit the full utilization of this religious freedom.

We learn from Buddhist literary sources that the monastic order of the Jainas which had already opened their doors to women much earlier, presumably without adequate safeguards, developed serious disasters from within. Sexual attraction, of men and women among the humans towards each other, is deemed nearly the most convulsive of human stimuli. Far too many acts of rustic sexual behavior, within these religious circles, resulting often in pregnancies, became seriously disturbing events of public chastisement of the day. The position of considering the admission of women into his religious order had to be for the Buddha, more or less, like that of a burnt child who had to dread fire.

The añña-garudhammà or the Eight Weighty Considerations pertaining to the establishment of the Order of Buddhist Nuns has provoked much uncalled for controversy and undue challenge of the Buddha's line of action. The Buddha's spiritual ideal with a very serious Samsaric dimension within it, had to be reckoned with. At the time he set up an order of renunciants for females in Buddhism, it was much more than a mere act of contemporary chimney sweeping for the east or the west, whether for men or for women. The socio-cultural security of the new order, together with the unhindered development of the aspirations of the truly spiritually inclined and oriented membership had to be guaranteed and safeguarded. It had to be made fool-proof, both then and now. In the aesthetically dignified and spiritually exalted world of the east or the west, on this side of the Atlantic or on the other, of the past, present or the future, the order of Buddhist nuns which the Buddha inaugurated, had to be the cynosure of all eyes.

With mutual argument and agreement, if there is going to be any endeavour for the recovery and restoration of an order of nuns in any part of the Theravada Buddhist world, with a reliable guarantee for its honourable continuance within a respected perimeter, co-operation shall always be forthcoming. The role which the male order has to play and the continuous support they would have to always lend is not to be forgotten or underestimated by either party. This has to be adequately appreciated.

Abstract: Experiences with Ordaining Bhikkhunis in Los Angeles from 1994 to 2004

by Ven. Dr. Karuna Dharma

I am not an expert on the Vinaya, although I have read it several times and I think I know it well enough to know the arguments for and against bhikkhuni ordinations. But I was not invited as an expert, but rather as someone who has been intimately involved in helping women take bhikkhuni ordination for the past twelve years. And I am going to tell you the story about how that came about.

I was the first American woman to take full bhikkhuni vows in the United States. In 1976 my master ordained me with the permission of bhikkhunis from Fo Gwang Shan, Taiwan. After his death in 1980, I became the abbess of International Buddhist Meditation Center, a position which I still hold today.

In 1994 I had a group of students who had been studying with me for a number of years, in preparation for final ordination as monks and nuns. I had already given them novice ordination and they were ready for the final step.

So, I went to Ven. Havanpola Ratanasara, the elder Singhalese monk, with whom I had been teaching courses at the College of Buddhist Studies, Los Angeles. He was highly regarded in the Theravadan community. So one morning in February, I approached him in his office and told him that I had a group of students who were ready to take final ordination. I asked him if he would act as the uppajhaya in December at a grand ordination ceremony. He said he would be happy to do so. Then, with great trepidation, I said, "There is only one thing though, Bhante. My students feel that since I am their teacher, I should ordain them,." He replied, "Let me think about this." Five minutes later, he said, "Karuna, since I am the Uppajhaya, the main duty I have is to make sure that the person leading the ceremony is qualified. And I appoint you." I replied, "Thank you very much, Bhante. I accept your generous offer.

That night I thought about Bhante Ratanasara's offer to me. The next morning, I went downstairs to his office and told him, "Bhante, I am grateful that you appointed me to lead the ordination ceremony. But I do not think I should do it alone. Why don't we share the role of the Ordaining master? Bhante thought it was a good idea, so we sat down together to split the ceremony in half. We used the same ceremony that Thich Man-Giac had translated into English twelve years earlier when we ordained the last of Dr. Thien-An's students who had not yet been ordained as bhikkhus. At that time I played the role of the representative for the monks and nuns.

Bhante Ratanasara and I had several discussions about bhikkhunis and whether or not it was good to open up the ceremony for women other than my own students. We agreed that we should open it up to women who were good candidates, but who did not have the opportunity to ordain. I trusted Bhante's view points, because I knew that he was well schooled in Vinaya matters, We looked at all the exceptions that the Buddha had laid down regarding ordination for both men and women.

We divided the Uppajhaya's role in two, assigning Bhante to read half of it and for me to read the other half. We did the same for the vice uppajhaya and the Vinaya Master, thereby, doubling the number of the ordination masters: one male and one female for each role. The next step we took was to write all of the Buddhist masters living in the Los Angeles area, who had been ordained more than ten years. In the letter I explained what we were doing and asked for their response: either I approve what you are doing and will be happy to participate; I am sorry, but I have another commitment; and I do not approve. All of the answers that returned were either the first or second option. No one returned a negative

answer. Then I visited the people that I thought would agree to be one of the six ordaining masters. The stipulation that I lay down was that they were to have received their bhikkhu/bhikkuni ordination at least 15 years ago and that they were in good stead in the community.

I came up with very good people for each of the positions: another Sri Lankan monk, (because the Thai monk we had originally selected had to be in Thailand on that date) and a Chinese monk; a Vietnamese and a Korean nun. And of course, Bhante Ratanasara, who was the second Singhalese and myself as an American. Then our planning started in earnest. Unfortunately in April, I had a serious stroke and a lot of the hands-on planning was left to my eldest daughter who was working for the center then. (I had been married for ten years before I started my Buddhist studies in earnest. But since we had discussed several times what was going to happen, she did a beautiful job of executing the plans while I was in an Aryavedic Buddhist Hospital near Colombo.

When the day of the ordination came along, we had, besides the six ordaining masters, another thirty witness masters, all ordained for at least ten years. And they came from all Buddhist countries and traditions. We had Sri Lankan and Thai bhikkhus, and bhikkhus and bhikkhunis from China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Vietnam, Europe and the United States.

In the letter I had sent to the masters, I invited them to have any students that they wanted ordained, to participate in the ceremony. So, we had quite a few more than just my students. We had several Vietnamese and Western Tibetan men and women.

The ceremony took three hours to execute. In all, we ordained 11 women as bhikkhunis: 7 in the Tibetan tradition; three Vietnamese Mahayana, one Vietnamese Theravadan; one Vietnamese man and two American men as Bhikkhus, two American men as Zen Sharma Teachers; three Vietnamese women as s'ramanerikas, one Vietnamese boy as a Sramanera, two American men as sramaneras; five Americans as atthanga s'ilas (8 vow) people and eight upsakas/upsaiikas.

Then three years later we performed a small grand ordination: this time ordaining two Theravadan women as bhikkhunis, one Nepalese, the other Sri Lankan, and several American Tibetan practitioners and an American woman in the Korean tradition. We also ordained several American sramaneras/sramanerikas.

In 2004 we held our next large Grand Ordination. It came about because one of IBMC's residents was a Tibetan practitioner. She has been ordained as a novice several years earlier and she asked me to ordain her as a bhikkhuni.

I told her, "That is impossible. First, I cannot do it for just one nun. The second reason is that it will cost us a minimum of \$10,000, which the Center cannot afford." But she asked me several more times. I knew that she was sincere and would make a good Bhikkhuni. She said, "What if I find a group of another 20 women who want to become Bhikkhunis? I told her, "All right." So Rev.Chitta went to work, writing to several American Tibetan women that she knew. She also posted a notice on the internet about the possible ordination. Soon, applicants from around the world wrote her and asked if I would ordain them as Bhikkhunis. I relented, making up a letter to be given to each of their masters, explaining that they would have to agree to train their student for another five years after her final ordination. Armed with letters from their masters, I went through each one to determine if she were a fit candidate. Altogether we had 25 women, most of them from the Tibetan tradition as bhikkhuni candidates. They came from around the globe: from France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, and both coasts of Canada and as well as Americans from Arizona, New York, Maryland, Florida, and California.

We also ordained a Theravadan woman from Germany as a bhikkhuni and a Theravadan from

Spain as a novice. But we also had men who were ordained as sramaneras and bhikkhus. In addition, we ordained both men and women as Zen Dharma teachers. These people received the same training as the bhikkhu/ bhikkhuni candidates had, but differed because they were either married or working outside of the temple.

All candidates were required to stay at the center for two weeks, preparing for their ordination. They were kept quite busy from 6 am to 10 pm every day, studying the vinaya, as well as sharing their particular chanting and service styles with the others.

We did not ordain them into a particular school. At the ordination they took on the robes of their particular tradition and the name that their own teacher gave them. We just admitted them to the Order, with the understanding that their own teachers were still their masters and that they were to remain true to their own tradition. The women were so excited by the ordination that they have asked me to give another one in ten more years, so that they can participate as masters. So, for right now, that is our plan.

Abstract: A Flawless Ordination: Some Narratives of Nuns' Ordinations in the Mūlasarvāstivādinaya

by Damchö Diana Finnegan

In exploring the possibilities for full ordination for women in the Tibetan monastic lineage, a great deal of attention has been given to ritual texts and commentarial passages concerned with ordination procedures. Yet the Mūlasarvāstivādinaya, the root textual corpus that ostensibly grounds all ordination rules and practices in the Tibetan tradition, has received far less attention.

The vinaya itself contains narratives depicting nuns' ordinations that give a richer and more complex sense of what was involved in admitting individual women to the nuns' order than emerges from the derivative procedural literature. By offering a context for the ordination practices that the Buddha authorized within his lifetime, study of these narratives can serve as a rich resource for the discussion of reinstating full nuns' ordination in the very different social context of today.

This paper will look at narratives of nuns' ordination within the Mūlasarvāstivādinaya, taken from the Sanskrit and Tibetan editions. Within one such narrative, the Buddha urges particular care in making the ordination a 'flawless' or 'perfect' one, apparently in anticipation of social resistance to that ordination.

With its concern to overcome social objections, this narrative may be particularly relevant for nuns today working for full ordination in the face of other forms of resistance. It is especially striking that in this instance, the aspects of the ordination process that the Buddha directs attention to are very different from the aspects of ordination that have gained the most attention today.

Abstract: The First Bhiksuni Ordination in East Asia – Giving Birth to a New Way of Life

by Roseanne Freese

In 434 CE, two groups of Buddhist nuns from Sri Lanka presided over the first Bhiksuni ordination in East Asia in the ancient Chinese capital of Nanjing. Sponsored by King Mahanama of Sri Lanka, Tessara and her nineteen sisters traveled over the high seas and gained access to the highest realms of Chinese society. Monk Gunavarman, their Acarya, was on personal terms with the Chinese emperor, and Sanghavarman, their Ordination Master, would lead the foreign and Chinese members of the Sangha to use the newly translated text of the Bhiksuni Vinaya to ordain 300 Chinese women. Many of these Chinese Bhiksunis would also go on to become not just spiritual leaders of their generation, but also would go on to serve as advisors to the emperor and the royal family.

A close examination of period documents reveals that Hui Guo and her Chinese sisters were already acutely aware of the challenges they would face should they persist in their goal of ordination by both assemblies of monks and nuns. Applying the Buddhist concepts of intention, word, and deed, I shall describe how the Grand Ordination was undertaken. I also shall seek to demonstrate that the basic constituents necessary for the transmission of the Buddhist lineage were all present.

I shall use the accounts of the period to reveal the unfolding of this great event. These will include the Biqiuni Zhuan or Lives of the Nuns written by Hui Jiao in roughly 516; Gao Seng Zhuan or Lives of Eminent Monks written by Bao Chang a few years earlier; the Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa historical chronicles of Sri Lanka; and, the Jin Dynasty dynastic history. I will contrast the documentation regarding the Bhiksuni ordination with what is known regarding the ordination of the first Bhiksus in China. Then relying on the great histories of early Buddhism in China by Zurcher and Tsukamoto, I hope to demonstrate that the Grand Ordination in Nanjing not only made possible the successful transmission of Buddhist cultivation from South Asia to East Asia, but also that the ordination of women made it possible for the Chinese to embrace Buddhism wholeheartedly and move it from the periphery of Chinese intellectual life to the center of Chinese social values.

Abstract: The Unbroken Lineage of the Sinhalese Bhikkhuni Sangha from 3rd century B.C. to the 11th century

by Dr. Hema Goonatilake

The Dipavamsa description of the attainment of Sotapatti by princess Anula and her attendants on listening to the first sermon by the Thera Mahinda in 250 B.C., as first such occurrence in Sri Lanka signals the impending introduction of the Bhikkhuni Sangha, even before the introduction of the Bhikkhu Sangha. The Bhikkhuni Sangha introduced by Emperor Asoka's daughter, Theri Sanghamitta, just six months after the introduction of the Bhikkhu Sangha flourished in Sri Lanka and became defunct only after the fall of the capital, Anuradhapura to the Chola invaders from South India in 1017 A.D. There is evidence that as in the Buddha's time, thousands of Bhikkhunis lived in independent nunneries in Sri Lanka with separate administrative organizations up to 1017 A.D.

The Dipavamsa gives detailed information on the continuation of the lineage introduced by Sanghamitta, not only in the capital of Anuradhapura, but also of its spread to other parts of the country. Bhikkhunis who had excelled in different parts of the canon with the study of Vinaya given the highest place, as well as those who had attained special skills during different periods of time are described in detail.

There is evidence to prove that the Bhikkhuni lineage that was inherited from Sanghamitta continued in Sri Lanka through the centuries. There is also evidence for the existence of an unbroken succession of teachers of the Vinaya among the Bhikkhunis coming down from the time of Sanghamitta. The original interpretation of the Vinaya for Bhikkhunis is retained in the Cullavagga in the Vinaya Pitaka, the earliest section of the Buddhist canon. There is also evidence to show that the succession of teachers among Bhikkhunis had no links with the line of teachers among monks as given in the Samantapasadika, a commentary on the Vinaya Pitaka written in Sri Lanka in the 5th century by Buddhaghosa, a monk from South India. The line of teachers and the interpretation of the Vinaya as contained in the Samantapasadika is a modified code of conduct for monks, developed by the commentators.

It was this unbroken lineage that was passed on by the Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis headed by Devasara when they conferred higher ordination to more than 300 Chinese nuns in Nanjing in 433 A.C. who had by then, received ordination only from monks.

Abstract: Building Bridges for Theravadin Bhikkhuni Sangha in diverse worlds

by Bhikkhuni Ayya Gunasari

This paper discusses in (four) major areas.

1. A brief overview of Buddhist women in Myanmar

A brief overview of Buddhist women in Myanmar, including lay Buddhist women, lay Buddhist women teachers, silashins (non-ordained nuns or precepts holder) fully ordained bhikkhunis in Theravada tradition and their relationship with the community of bhikkhu Sangha order. It is my personal view that there is a very critical need to build bridges to connect the gaps that seems to be widening by the passage of time, between the ancient women's tradition of Buddha's time and that of Theravada Buddhist women of today.

2. Education as a bridge

There is a commonality between the community of Sangha and the group of Theravada women in the dissemination of Buddha's teaching, to carry out the work of Buddha ministerial work in the most effective way to the lay community in to days' environment and condition. To carry out this work, in my humble opinion, we need education on the part of both the community of Bhikkhuni Sangha and the emerging women Sangha (both fully ordained and non-ordained sila shins). There are as a general rule, the dhamma teaching and learning (pariyatti) and the training practice (patipatti) work. Given the modern day conditions and the overall educational level of the lay community, it has become critically important that dhamma workers be better educated both in theory (pariyatti) and the training practices (patipatti). To disseminate the Buddha dhamma effectively, we dhamma workers must have proper divisions of work: for example, Buddhist women from diverse worlds (psychologists, lawyers, social workers, writers, artists, technologists, etc. each and every one of them has a role to play in their appropriate way according to their specialized skill to carrying out the dhamma work.

3. Applying Ten Perfections as Bridges

The modern day Theravada dhamma works must have the liberal attitude of sharing the dhamma dissemination work between both sexes – male and female dhamma workers. We both are working to fulfill the ten perfections – paramita. Our Lord Buddha taught us that to fulfill one's perfection, one has to work diligently for it. No one can fulfill it for you; and no one could take it away from fulfilling one's perfection. In keeping with this noble teaching, let us use this as the bridge between the community of male Sangha and the female Sangha and working together in unison the work left over or that he bequeathed to us, by our teacher. In keeping this as our ultimate goal, I propose to work together and reach out for our final goal of Nibbana.

4. Epilogue

- a. Mythology Vs Reality
- b. Risk Vs Benefit
- c. Liabilities Vs assets
- d. How long do we have to wait to realize our goal, Buddha bequeathed to us – the four bodies – Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni, Upasaka and Upasika.

Abstract: How Ordination Relates to Status in the Buddhist Himalaya

by Dr. Kim Gutschow and Skalzang Lhamo

Let us consider the complex set of factors, including ordination, that have and continue to constrain the position of female monastics in the rural Himalayan regions of Zangskar and Ladakh.

We begin with a brief overview of the evidence for fully ordained nuns in Buddhist Kashmir and western Tibet up to and beyond the 10th and 11th century CE. The same factors that presumably led to the decline and eventual disappearance of fully ordained nuns in this region continue to play salient roles today. Then as now, economics and environment played a crucial role in the maintenance of a monastic tradition and the requisite ordination of nuns. The history of nuns and monks has been profoundly shaped by these and other factors for at least a millennium.

Today more than ever, rapid changes in education and globalization are rapidly breaking down existing dualities---such as rural/urban, east/west, and monastic/lay, and male/female---that have traditionally constrained opportunities available to nuns in the Tibetan tradition. An exciting new set of institutions has been created from the ground up in Ladakh and Zangskar to promote the status and welfare of nuns in the region. Institutions like the Ladakh Nuns Association and the more recently formed Zangskar Nuns Association are trying to rethink the role of nuns as well as religion in their local society. What can the recent advances and ongoing difficulties faced by these institutions tell us about current prospect and ongoing position of nuns in the Indian Himalayas? It is only when we understand the practical challenges of reinventing the role of Buddhist nun that we see the way forward out of historic limitations.

Kim Gutschow is Visiting Assistant Professor at Williams College in the United States, while Skalzang Lhamo is a nun from Kachod Grubling Nunnery in Karsha, Zangskar as well as the secretary of the Zangskar Nuns' Association.

Abstract: Future Perspectives and Necessities of Bhikshuni Ordination

by Janet Gyatso

Hershey Professor of Buddhist Studies

The Divinity School, Harvard University

My talk will contrast some of the reasons for the relative lower status and decline of the bhiksuni order historically with the promise of the new bhiksuni order today. I will argue that a celibate and fully ordained female order has unprecedented potential and symbolic capital in the particular circumstances of 21st century global culture. I will also maintain that outstanding members of the new bhiksuni order will likely become leaders in world Buddhism more generally. My remarks will combine Buddhological scholarship with theoretical reflections on the category of gender in a Buddhist context.

Abstract: Korean Buddhist Bhikshuni Ordination and Vinaya – Korean Jogye Order Double Ordination

by Bhiksuni Prof. Haeju

Professor, Dongguk University, Korea

The Jogye Order is the largest and most influential of the Buddhist organizations in Korea. Since 1982 when the Order first adopted a unified ordination platform, bhiksus and bhiksunis have been ordained with the full precepts of the Dharmagupta Vinaya (Chn. Sifenlu; Kor. Sabunnyul). All candidates are gathered and ordained at the assigned platform by Jogye Order representatives. Bhiksunis are ordained at this same unified ordination platform. However, because they are required to ordain twice, they initially receive full precepts from three principal and seven witnessing bhiksuni masters at a separate bhiksuni ordination platform. They then go over to the main platform and receive the precepts again from three principal and seven witnessing bhikshu masters.

At this conference I will examine the format and procedures for a bhiksuni dual ordination which were established by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. The specific subjects that I will discuss in my presentation are:

- 1) The Korean Vinaya lineage and transmission of the Dharmagupta Vinaya in the ordination of Korean bhiksunis.
- 2) Qualifying tests and procedures for attaining suitable grades for sramanerika and siksamana ordinations, which are prerequisites for receiving the bhiksuni precepts.
- 3) Procedures for bhiksuni dual ordination and the role of three principal and seven witnessing bhiksuni masters.

Abstract: The Vinaya Between History and Modernity: Some General Reflections

by Prof. Dr. Jens-Uwe Hartmann

The paper will try to address some questions concerning the reintroduction of the ordination of nuns in forms of Buddhism from which it has disappeared.

There are various perspectives from which it is possible to view, analyze and understand any given religious work. A work of rules and regulations such as the code of the Buddhist monks and nuns is no exception. Each of those perspectives functions within a certain field of methods and premises, and each will yield a certain result. Paradoxically, all the results may be "true" within their respective fields, yet mutually exclusive. To give an example: Seen from an academic perspective, the Vinaya is an anonymous compendium of literature that was continuously changed, adapted and enlarged during many centuries by an unknown number of authors and redactors. Its nucleus is the Prātimokṣasūtra which in itself already reveals signs of historical development and consists of older and younger parts. Seen from the religious, i.e. the Buddhist, perspective, the Vinaya contains the word of the Buddha, and as such it represents a collection of rules and their respective interpretations which go back to the lifetime of the Buddha and were gathered shortly after his death. Those two views, the academic and the religious, are not really compatible, and to argue from an academic standpoint against a Buddhist view or vice versa will eventually lead to a futile dispute between positions marked by either belief or rationality.

However, a variant of this phenomenon seems to underly the present dispute between Buddhist traditions on the validity of their Vinaya lineages. From the historical point of view, the validity of any given lineage, be it Tibetan or Chinese, can be falsified, if data to this effect are available, but it is absolutely impossible to prove that validity, since historical research does not dispose of the means to convincingly exclude the possibility of a break in the lineage at some point in the past. Therefore, when some Tibetan Vinaya masters assert the unbroken validity of their own ordination lineage while casting doubt on the validity of the Chinese tradition, they employ rationality for doubting the one and belief for accepting the other. This implies a methodological problem and it invites the question whether it is reasonable to expect legally applicable results from the ongoing research on the validity of Vinaya lineages.

Apparently, the Buddha was a pragmatist. There are countless examples in the scriptures that illustrate how in each case the Buddha considered the specific situation of his audience and how he taught according to the needs and faculties of his listeners. Such pragmatism has not been limited to the Buddha himself; even without drawing attention to such concepts as upāya, it is easy to see it as a hallmark of Buddhism, and surely it has been one of the reasons for its tremendous success. This pragmatism allowed of adaptation and innovation by continuously modifying the received set of rules and regulations, and it explains, for example, why monks in Tibet wear a robe very different from that worn by Sinhalese or Chinese monks. It also explains why certain rules of the Vinaya were kept, but no longer enforced, even without the explicit consent of the Buddha. One of the better known examples would be the clear-cut prohibition against a monk accepting gold and silver, i.e. money, with his own hands. There is a notable difference between the contents of some of the rules and their implementation, between the normative and the factual, a divergency which is a time-honoured and generally accepted practice. Does the observation of such divergencies have any bearing on some of the legal problems seen as an obstacle to the reintroduction of the order of nuns?

Finally, the paper will briefly deal with the Buddhist concept of śīlavrataparāmarśa, dogmatic

clinging to rules and observances.

Abstract: Sramaneri and siksamanas in the Dharmaguptaka tradition

by Dr. Ann Heirmann

All vinaya traditions explain how a young girl first has to become a probationer (siksamana) before she can receive the full ordination. In most traditions, this obligation is included in the eight 'fundamental rules' (gurudharma) accepted by Mahaprajapati as a condition to create a nuns' order, a bhiksunisamgha. The probationary period lasts for two years, and as a rule starts at the age of eighteen. All vinayas contain specific regulations for this probationary period, but as we will see, these regulations raise a lot of questions. In one and the same tradition, many passages can be ambiguous or even contradictory. In addition, on many rules and regulations for the probationer, the vinayas present striking differences. These differences were introduced in China at the time of the vinaya translations.

Given the fact that a full ordination tradition for nuns survived over the past centuries only in the Chinese Dharmaguptaka lineage, this paper takes as a reference point the Dharmaguptakavinaya, while comparing it to the other Chinese vinayas for all relevant information. Although the Pali vinaya never reached the Buddhist vinaya commentators, the Chinese version of the fourth or fifth century Sinhalese commentary on it, the Samantapasadika, did. In our comparative study, we therefore also pay attention to the Pali vinaya. The first part of the article traces the vinaya regulations for the probationer, and formulates possible answers to all uncertainties that appear. In the second part, we focus on the Chinese Buddhist masters and their interpretation or application of these vinaya regulations.

Abstract: Three Options: Re-establishing the Bhikshuni Lineage in the Tibetan Tradition

by Heng-ching Shih

At a conference of sixteen Tibetan Vinaya masters held in May 2006 in Dharamsala, India, three options for the re-establishment of Tibetan Bhiksuni lineage were discussed: (1) ordination by Mulasarvastivadin bhiksus alone; (2) ordination by bhiksus of the Mulasarvastivadin lineage together with bhiksunis of the Dharmagupta lineage; and (3) ordination by bhiksus and bhiksunis of the Dharmagupta lineage. Due to time limitations, the issues involved and possible solutions could not be fully discussed. Re-establishing the bhiksuni lineage in the Tibetan tradition remains an issue of vital concern in international Buddhist circles.

In my paper, I will discuss in detail the merits and demerits of each option. For the first option, I will explain the positions taken in the Vinaya sources and the views of ancient Indian and Chinese Vinaya masters in support of ordination by the Bhiksu Sangha alone. For the second option, I will address the question of whether it is possible and valid to have a bhiksuni ordination by conducted by bhiksus and bhiksunis from two different lineages. For the third option, I will address the question of the validity of the Chinese bhiksuni lineage, the main concern of the Tibetan monks, by explaining how the bhiksuni lineage came into being in China and how it continued uninterruptedly until the present day.

Abstract: The Foundation of the Bhikkunisamgha as a Model for a Revival

by Prof. Dr. Oskar von Hinüber

If it is intended to revive the ordination of nuns in the Theravada tradition, the Vinaya of this school must be scrutinized in order to trace possible obstacles or to find opportunities. The best starting point seems to be the story of foundation of order of nuns as related in the Cullavagga of the Theravada Vinaya. Beginning with the controversial LXVth Pāṭi cittiya (nuns) and investigating the meaning of the word gihigata-, an attempt will be made to demonstrate by using mostly linguistic arguments that the order of nuns originated when a group of female ascetics lead according to our sources by Mahaprajapati Gotami joined the Buddhist community.

Another result is that there is much reason to assume that the bhikkhuni sangha was founded only after the nibbana, and, consequently, that the very first nuns were ordained by monks only. Therefore, nothing prevents Theravada monks of today to act in exactly the same way, and to revive the ordination of nuns by simply following the model of the foundation of the order of nuns.

Abstract: The Eight Garudhammas

by PD Dr. Ute Hüsken

Proponents as well as opponents of the re-establishment of the Buddhist nuns' order in the Theravada tradition repeatedly refer to the legend of the establishment of the Bhikkhunisamgha as given in the Pali Vinaya-Pitaka. Both do so with good reason, for the events depicted there give no consistent picture of the events that led to the Buddha's consent to ordaining women as Bhikkhunis. In this paper will be demonstrated, on the basis of internal evidence, that diverse and at times even conflicting agenda are voiced in this canonical account.

Abstract: A Inquiry Concerning the Lineage of Bhikkhuni Ordination

by Bhiksu Huimin Shih

Professor, Taipei National University of the Arts

President, Dharma Drum Buddhist College

1. Bhiksuni ordination by the bhiksuni sangha alone, or by both the bhiksu and bhiksuni sanghas

The bhiksu ordination originates with the Buddha. This rite evolved from the Buddha's exhortation to "Come hither, bhiksu" and the triple refuge, to the later form of the "karman by threefold assent." The bhiksuni ordination is fundamentally completed by the bhiksu sangha. Ordination by the bhiksuni sangha alone may be regarded as a preliminary preparation. We may look at the bhiksuni ordination in China and India from a historical perspective. Indian Vinaya master Gunavarman states, "Bhiksunis are ordained by the bhiksu sangha. Ordination by the bhiksuni sangha is to be taken as a preliminary measure." In China, Vinaya master Daoxuan of the Tang dynasty concludes, "The Vinaya-pitaka does not explicitly state that 'failure to perform the benfa (preliminary ordination by only the bhiksuni sangha) invalidates the ordination.'" This is reasonable. During the time of the Buddha, the transmission of the bhiksuni sangha was never broken. As a result, it is impossible to find any records about the preliminary bhiksuni ordination by the bhiksuni sangha alone.

2. Siksamana and sramaneriya ordinations

Due to the background of Rahula's ordination, the Buddha required that prior to full bhiksu ordination, male candidates must first take the sramaneriya ordination. According to the Vinaya, before receiving the full bhiksuni ordination, female candidates must also take the sramaneriya ordination. The siksamana precepts are due to the possibility of pregnancy in female candidates. This training period lasts two years to ensure that the female candidate is not pregnant. Also, this time is used for training in the six dharmas (part of the bhiksuni Vinaya), and for evaluation of the candidate's suitability for full ordination. In the Sri Lankan Buddhist chronicles, there are records of sramaneriya and bhiksuni ordinations, but no records of siksamana ordination. It is clear that for some early sanghas, there may have been instances of local adaptations.

According to the Mulasarvastivada and Dharmaguptaka Vinayas, the bhiksuni ordination must be preceded by the sramaneriya and siksamana ordinations respectively (the ordination is first done in the bhiksuni sangha, and then in the bhiksu sangha).

3. Preceptors, time, location, and procedures for the bhiksu ordination

Typically, the sramaneriya, siksamana, and preliminary bhiksuni ordinations are all performed by the bhiksuni sangha. However, according to Sri Lankan Buddhist chronicles, there seem to be records of bhiksus performing the sramaneriya ordination.

The Chinese version of the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya provides guidance on full ordination: a comparatively simple procedure, the preliminary ordination by the bhiksuni sangha, a "karman by one assent," is performed in the presence of twelve bhiksunis with over twelve

years in the sangha. Subsequently, the bhiksuni sangha invites ten bhiksus with over ten years in the sangha to the ordination platform to perform the full ordination with the more complex "karman by threefold assent." According to the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, both two procedures need ten preceptors, both two procedures need "karman by threefold assent," and the bhiksunis bring the candidates for ordination to the bhiksu sangha to receive full ordination by the karman of threefold assent.

TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE WOMEN IN BUDDHIST SANGHA

By Bhikkhuni Thic Nu Hue Huong

- Deputy Head Of The Charity Committee Of The Central Vietnamese Buddhist Association,

- Deputy Head Of Dong Nai Province Buddhist Administration Committee; In Charge Of Nuns.

Addressed at

1ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE SANGHA: BHIKSHUNI VINAYA AND ORDINATION LINEAGES

To be opened in Humburg, University, Germany from 18-20/July, 2007.

We are on account of the whole Vietnamese Nun circle in general and Dong Nai province in particular, pray Buddha bless monks and nuns, senior nuns be offered peace, and address good health to every scholars, delegate especially to Board of Organization our best compliment as well as wishing the conference be best success.

Dear all the Most Venerable,

Dear Conference Participants

The honor for Vietnamese Nun circle is invited by Board of organizing to take part this conference at this time. We are sincerely thank your Board of organizing together our comments:

To mention about Buddhist religion that every Buddhist followers from all over the world are defined that: Sakiyamuni is the outstanding founder of Buddhist despite of 25 centuries passed but his theory of fair.

Loving kindness, intellectual seems as solar rays lit for mankind and this planet. He broke dark sin, suffer for hidden avidyā (ignorance in some sense) and bring happiness, joy to mankind.

Dear all the Most Venerable,

Dear Conference Participants

Once we'd like to find out profoundly Buddhist religion searching we should abandon every prejudice but loving kindness, fair, equality to study then we can master his what purpose was Buddha born for? was it revealed and entered his knowledge? It means that Buddha was born to teach living being to become enlightened, emancipated he once said: "I became Buddha, your doing too", by his words we find no difference from being enlightened, emancipated. So every one on this planet irrespective num or monk old or young, poor or rich... those who try to follow Buddha teaching, worship correct, right rule will all become Buddha, therefore there are some who do not understand Buddha's

meaning and they concluded incorrectly and they unintentionally affect his teaching.

Dear Conference

Present, the matter of Buddhist women is global concern. So there are a lot of Buddhist leaders and scholars with prestige in the world are paying attention.

Typical is today “1st International Congress on Buddhist Women’s Role in The Sangha: Bhikkhuni Vinaya and Ordination Lineages”, to be opened in Humburg, University, Germany from 18-20/july, 2007 with The Presence of 14th Dalai Lama together global Buddhist sit together to have talk Buddhist women in 21st century.

As far as we know the first *Bhikkhuni* religion association was founded in summer 5nd year¹ after Buddha succeeded his Enlightenment. *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* was the leader for *Bhikkhuni*. *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* together five hundred women belong to Sakiya and Koliya both bare head, feet took a walk from *Kapilavatthu* to *Vesali* under the assistance from Reverend *Anan* and allowed by Buddha to leave family.

So, *Gotamī* was later person named *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* (大愛道瞿曇彌). Because of religion love praying for being liberated, *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* and five hundred women accepted “Eight Chief Rules” (八敬法) quietly. They regard this as bunch of flower decoration and make beauty for *Bhikkhuni*. However the later person didn’t understand Lord’s will, this was always discussed they seem to fail the consolidation among *Sangha* association.

Thus, we ask Venerables from conference to delegate and allow us to remind this issue.

As far as all Buddhist know, *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* and five hundred women were from Kingdom and The Lord is the master of intellectual, so The Lord accepted The *Sāriputta*’s demand in publishing “Eight Chief Rules” for *Bhikkhuni*, so was he be unfair or discriminate women? We asserted that “no”, why? For ask of women The Lord once replied to Venerable *Anan* “*Are the Buddhas born in the world for the benefit for men? Assuredly it is for the benefit of females as well. When I delivered the Tirokuḍḍa-sutta, many women entered the Path as did also many devas when I delivered the abhidhamma in Tāvātimsa, have not Visākhā and many other upasikawas entered the Paths? The entrance is open for women as well as men*”² .

¹ Nārada, *THE BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS*, Buddhist Missionary Society Malaysia, 1988, p. 207

² Rhys Davids’ *The Psalms of the Early Buddhists*, XXV, Introduction.

1. What is the interest for Eight Chief Rules, and for *Bhikkhunī*? Why?

Since, Queen *Gotamī* brought up *Siddhattha* prince. The five hundred women were from rich and powerful families. On the other hand among the group of monk some came from the lowest class of Indian Society such as Venerable *Ūpali*... Therefore the Eight Chief Rules promulgation is released for what purpose? We knew being position of the Queen who ordered the officers at court strictly, if be familiar with above order for monks would be contrast *Sangha* rule.

Therefore we find one of Eight Chief Rules are meaningful and only focus on *Gotamī* and five hundred women.

Beside meaning explained above, another cause were set up, here, we look at Buddha at his post of historical Buddha, we can see the matter clearer. The Buddha hesitate, refused 3 times to allow *Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī* to leave family, he didn't respect male and not respect female. It was the proper way that he looked for female after leaving family for *Sangha* living.

Because Indian Society at that time was in semi - opened time, the followers have to leave family for living in deserted woods. The male could self defend the robber, wild animal, snake ... and female couldn't self defend so Buddha taught: "*A Bhikkhunī should not spend a Retreat (Vassa) in a place where there is no Bhikkhu*"³, and another profound reason of Eight Chief Rules that he would like a separation among integration between monk and nun. Female is weak, feeble or too close so the respect loss is easy.

Therefore one of eight rule from Eight Chief Rules enforced *Bhikkhanī* sometimes come to *Bhikkhu* for instruction and remember their almsman. Upon looking for right rule.

Now, on the post of those who is looking for deliverance way we can realize eight commands (Eight Chief Rules) is not exaggerated but must deeply understand it is that we all respect one another, for the major obstacle for rightness finder is self pride.

Moreover to be a disciple of no soul (*Anatman*), that any nun must cross out ego without cause and accept the Eight Chief Rules and any monk must find deliverance without any cause to self pride and not displacing any disagreed action among *Sangha*. This Lord wish to keep for both female and male with dirt mind if there is no rule, prestige of religious association will be void.

³ Nārada, *THE BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS*, Buddhist Missionary Society Malaysia, 1988, p. 154.

Should one maintain the Eight Chief Rules or not?

Buddha's purpose of being in the world is to bring in happiness. Well fair for mankind. So his rule is aimed at those who do wrongly or will be wrong doing then they can receive happiness, joy... Buddha's rule is An Lac flower bunch that is increasing the beauty for the bearers only.

“The perfume of flower blows not against the wind,
Nor does the fragrance of sandalwood, *tagara* and jasmine,
But the fragrance of the virtuous blows against the wind;
The virtuous man pervades every direction.”⁴

According to us, the Eight Chief Rules waged by Venerable *Sariputta* asked for The Lord Buddha allow *Pajāpati Gotamī* and Five hundred women The Buddha kept silence but also is his acceptance⁵.

After that he opened rule of fair, equality by way of nominating for women typical in *Saddharma-puṇḍrīka sūtra* (妙法蓮華經), *Dhara-varga* the 13th. In front of Phap Hoi (法會) there are over eight thousand The *Śaikṣā* and The *Aśaikṣā*, The Lord nominated (Vyākaraṇa) *Pajāpati Gotamī* to achieve Nhat Thiet Chung Sanh - Hy Kien Phat (一切眾生喜見佛) and *Yasodharā* will be great master of the law, in coming time She achieve at heaven under the name of Cu Tuc Thien Van Quang Tuong Nhu Lai (具足天萬光相如來)... So we realize the benefit for monk nun group in futurity. There is important thing is not taken Eight Chief Rules to force Nun to support those who are lacking of good virtue. We need to define that rule is like boat and raft, like compass that support us much in this travel with Buddha. So, what Buddha teach will be suitable in society we should not ignore and what is not suitable must be reviewed, not ignore. Our individual thought, *Sangha* from certain country, monk, nun know how to respect one another, so together harmonize, silently on the way spreading what Buddha taught, not need to pay attention to Eight Chief Rules. Because Buddha's law is like a boat crossing a river to enlighten and emancipate, let the successor's having it.

2. Democracy in attainment

For fairness of experience obtaining deeds Lord Buddha's teaching not only reserve for anybody, the result of liberation, enlighten not also reserve for anybody of *Devas* (諸天), mankind, male, female... those who can practice his words will obtain the same. In scripture of *Samyutta-nikāya* and *Majjhima-*

⁴ Dhammapada 54

⁵ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Lod Path White Clouds*, Full Circle, New Delhi-110003, 2004, p. 294-295

nikaaya, Buddha taught “and best woman, best man for whom the such chariot both wait, by that same can into Nibana presence shall come”⁶.

There are many scriptures and stories from time of Buddha, telling about his female followers with Holy Nun following words: “O Gotami, perform a miracle in order to dispel the wrong view of those foolish men who are in doubt with regard to us spiritual attainment of women”. It is not a meaningless words but proved of many *Bhikkhunī* when Buddha gathered with most fruitful previous thing such as Holy Monk. Those were proved in scripture *Ekottarikāgama-sūtra* as: *Mahāājāpati Gotamī, Khemā, Uppalavaṇṇā...*⁷

Through above scriptures we can show Holy Nun who could proved fruit fullness like Holy Monk. Here we only prove the typical but there are more Holy Nun attained many special achievements.

In brief, Master Buddha the first one in mankind history established women status to glorify their position. Such incredible renovation human being to respect, revere and worship him owed female to exchange with the monk group and to spread religion widely. Since then female range put effort to study, a promote their precious, noble intellectual capacity. This is a unique doing that has not been seen in religious system at that time.

3. Bhikkhunī’s dignity promotion tradition in Vietnam

To continue historical tradition that Buddha founded the *Bhikkhunī* religion association full of rule in India. Presently, there are many countries promoting dignity for *Bhikkhunī* like: China, Taiwan, Korea ... Vietnam. In Vietnam we have had dignity promotion for age. About century 11-12, Venerable nun (Ni Su) Dieu Nhan (妙仁) (1041-1113) she was the Ly Thanh Tong (李聖宗) King’s foster daughter her name was Ly Ngoc Kieu (李玉嬌), after leaving royal she was Dharma named Dieu Nhan, she was promoted as Venerable by Than Tong (神宗) King (1128-1138) she was not only a witness but also a poem writer she left behind one poem “Birth, old age, diseases, death” available poem.

⁶ Saṃyutta-nikāy I, 5; Majjhima-nikāya I,16.

⁷ 1.第一比丘尼。久出家學，國王所敬，所謂大愛道瞿曇彌比丘尼。

2. 智慧聰明，所謂識摩比丘尼是。

3. 神足第一，感致諸神，所謂優鉢華色比丘尼是。

4. 行頭陀法，十一限礙，所謂機梨舍瞿曇彌比丘尼是。

5. 天眼第一，所照無礙，所謂奢拘梨比丘尼是。

6. 坐禪入定，意不散，所謂奢摩比丘尼是。

7. 分別義趣，廣演道教，所謂波頭蘭闍那比丘尼是。

8. 奉持律教，無所加犯，所謂波羅遮那比丘尼是。

9. 得無所說，不復限退還，所謂迦旃延比丘尼是。

10. 得四辯才，不懷怯弱，所謂最勝比丘尼是...

(佛光大藏經，阿含藏，增壹阿含經一，佛光山宗務委員會印行，p. 89-90)

In religion or in society, our female roles play a lot for father land. Long time ago there were heroic women like Ba Trung – Ba Trieu... to next are tradition of “outstanding Hero, loyalty, thoughtfulness” Vietnamese nun circle have contributed a lot thing for Buddhist religion and people from former time to present time. Such as senior, Venerable Bhikkhuni Nhu Thanh, Huyen Hoc, Giac Nhan, Nhu Hoa... especially Venerable Bhikkhuni Nhu Thanh, who was the first nun a founded Nun Pagoda. (Tu Hoa pagoda (1935) in Southern and opened Buddhist law class for a nun as well as Ni school teaching world lesson and Buddhist lesson.

On July 6th, 1956 she mobilized Nun pagoda from Eastern, Western of South Vietnam to be united and established Nun Mahāyana Association. Since then senior Venerable Bhikkhuni Nhu Thanh was voted by conference as General secretary Vietnamese Nun Mahāyana Association. At that time, Vietnamese Nun Mahāyana Association was born with ruler and private management organization not depend on Bhikkhu monk group.

In 1975, Vietnam country was quite unique from North to South and in 1981, nine system of big Buddhist from North to South central Vietnam opened unification conference for “Vietnamese Buddhist Association”.

At that time Vietnamese Buddhist Association released a chapter by this chapter, section 8, religion quality, clause 37 - 38 - 39 stated of religions quality grade and standard of promotion depend on different rank.

Through above three things we find that Buddhist has a quality religious promotion in ranking and clearly such as:

<u>Monk</u>		<u>Nun</u>
Hòa Thượng (Most venerable)	=	Ni Trưởng (Most venerable)
Thượng Tọa (Venerable)	=	Ni Sư (Venerable)
Đại Đức (Reverend)	=	Sư Cô (Reverend)

In brief through study we realize other religion, Buddhist is the most equality, equal of dignity and operation such The Six integrated things (the six points of reverent harmony or unity in a monastery or convent)... Enter and become Buddhist follower regardless rich or poor, male or female everybody attainment are the same but Buddha’s teaching must be exactly followed.

For Buddhist organization only at our country from North to South is a unique Buddhist one without other organization it is “Vietnamese Buddhist Association” only one organization system, a chapter and Monk-Nun affair regulation so what written in these two circles are applied for entire country monk - nun. We are very proud of our country for this success.

Conclusion & proposal

The purpose of this conference is to propose the following comments:

The Eight Chief Rules and Bhikshuni Vinaya, Buddha taught in order bring happiness to every body, should which country’s nun rule feel concern for the Eight Chief Rules or the Bhikshuni Vinaya rule found insufficient or unsuitable for his/her nation at the moment of different religion tradition, that official should study again - Particularly not base on the Eight Chief Rules that force nun group to be respect to those poor virtue causing prestige of Monk group.

To me, I regard the Eight Chief Rules and regulation as a boat crossing the river (as mentioned above) when the passenger cross and reach the bank to leave the boat for those who are in need of boat like us.

For promotion dignity tradition we realize that Tibet traditional promotion should open a way to socialize and allow all countries Nun circle: Chinese, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam to develop fair, loving kindness and intellectual as Buddha taught.

By this conference we are expected your senior Lord with world prestige and scholars together us to open a discuss to release a common rule of fair from two association as Buddha was at world. Because of wishing Buddhist to be promoted and survived longer in all direction *Bhikkhu*, *Bhikkhunī*, *Upāsaka*, *Upāsikā* should be united to build up a Buddhist house in the world for brighter.

HAVE CONFERENCE BE SUCCESFUL

Vietnam, October 6, 2006

BA. Bhikkhuni THICH NU HUE HUONG
(NGUYEN THANH THUY)

Abstract: Bhikkhuni restoration in Theravada Buddhism: grounds of authenticity for newly ordained bhikkhuni

by Dr. Tomomi Ito

One of the essential questions regarding the restoration of the disrupted Theravada bhikkhuni orders is where to seek the grounds for authenticating newly ordained bhikkhuni bhikkhuni. Among many concerns, the initial highlight of related discussions has been the commonality of the texts of the bhikkhuni vinaya in Mahayana traditions in East Asia and those in Theravada, which suggests that the vinaya inherited in the lineage of Korean and Taiwanese bhikkhuni could be passed on to women practicing Theravada Buddhism.

Based on this understanding, in 1996 the historical ordination ceremony for ten women from Sri Lanka was held in Sarnatha by the Korean order. In 1998 in Bodhagaya another ordination ceremony was hosted by Fo Guang Shan Monastery of Taiwan, at which time twenty Sri Lankan women were ordained. The bhikkhuni sangha has been developing steadily in Sri Lanka; at present it counts several hundred members. The ordination of Sri Lankan further stimulated Thai women in another Theravada tradition to become ordained as sramaneri and bhikkhuni. When these noteworthy events were reported in the mass media, public discussion was unavoidable. Particularly, skeptical critics liked to raise detailed questions about rules in the procedures of ordination ceremonies, such as the gender of the preceptor and the number of ordained members required to witness the ceremony, and negatively concluded that bhikkhuni ordination was no longer feasible.

In my presentation paper I would like to suggest that it is not some "right" procedure that can verify the authenticity of contemporary women's ordination as bhikkhuni, but it is rather the establishment of the consolidated bhikkhuni sangha that can formalize their new tradition and pass it on to the next generation as an "authentic" dhamma lineage.

First, I will support this argument by referring to a recent reform of ordination procedures in the Korean bhikkhuni sangha, which never undermined the nunhood of either those who ordained before or after the reform. Second, I will consider the difficulties faced by Thai bhikkhuni who are still pursuing the establishment of a consolidated saṅgha. Under these circumstances, where no formal approval is given by the authority of the Bhikkhu sangha of Thailand, individual bhikkhuni have to face many social difficulties, no matter how "correct" were the procedures they went through for their ordination. They are in need of support which leads to the development of the authority of the new tradition.

Abstract: Sakyapa Ordination Lineages: History, Special Features and Strategies for Survival

by Prof. Dr. David P. Jackson

Hamburg

The Sakyapa school may be unique among Tibetan Buddhist traditions for consciously preserving two distinct monastic ordination lineages. Both lineages were similar in that they were introduced into Tibet from India in the early thirteenth century by the same great Kashmiri abbot, Shakyashribhadra (1140s-1225). But they differed in certain other ways.

Shakyashribhadra is well known in the history of Tibetan Vinaya for his having trained a small group of Tibetan monks in Vinaya practice, thus establishing an important new monk community. This community later divided several times, ultimately resulting in four communities (tshogs pa bzhi). In recent times one was settled in central gTsang and three in southern dBus province. One of the greatest Vinaya abbots in the Sakyapa school, Ngor chen Kon dga' bzang po (1382?-1456), received full ordination in a lineage passed down through the abbots of one of these four communities.

The second Sakyapa lineage did not pass through these four usual monastic communities. Instead, it was transmitted directly from Shakyashribhadra to Sa skya Pandita (1182-1251), one of the great early founders of their school. It was thus a special and more specifically Sakyapa lineage.

With the passing of generations, several times one tradition threatened to die out, while the other nearly monopolized the whole Sakyapa monastic tradition. At that time, a master took it upon himself to revive and spread the endangered tradition. Though I am no expert in Vinaya theory or practice, I will summarize my findings as a historian, presenting, in particular, the strategies used to keep traditions alive.

Abstract: Rurality, Ordination Debates and Thai Mae Chi

by Dr Barbara Kameniar

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South Australia

In 1990/1991 I undertook a study which involved a small group of mae chi living in rural Thailand. Amongst other things we discussed the mae chi's responses to the bhikkhuni ordination debates that were occurring at the time. The majority of women expressed little concern for pursuing full ordination. Some of the mae chi saw the pursuit of bhikkhuni ordination to be the desires of an educated urban elite with little connection to their lives and some raised concerns about what might happen to their status (which was already low) if full bhikkhuni ordination was permitted.

This paper revisits some of these earlier findings and compares the findings to that of other groups of mae chi living in rural areas in April 2007. The paper will address the following questions: How do mae chi living in rural Thailand in 2007 engage with contemporary debates around bhikkhuni ordination? To what extent have the views of mae chi living in rural Thailand changed in the past 15 years and to what extent have they remained the same? What impact might bhikkhuni ordination in other Buddhist traditions have on the lives of mae chi living in rural Thailand? How might rural women within any tradition be engaged in bhikkhuni ordination debates?

Abstract: Presuppositions for a valid ordination with respect to the restoration of the bhikshuni ordination in the Mulasarvastivada tradition

by Dr. Petra Kieffer-Pülz

The four presuppositions for a valid ordination as a Buddhist monk or nun are: (1) a valid object (*vastu*): the person to be ordained has to be qualified for receiving ordination; (2) a valid formula (*karmavacana*): the succession of the parts of a *karmavacana* and its pronunciation have to be correct; (3) a valid boundary (*sima*): the determination of the boundary demarcating the space for ordination has to be in conformity with the respective rules, and (4) a valid assembly (*parsad/parisad*), i.e. the communities (*sangha*) performing the ordination have to be valid with respect to the number and qualification of its members. I will deal with these four presuppositions in the light of a possible introduction of the bhikshuni lineage from China, i.e. from the Dharmaguptaka tradition, into the Mulasarvastivada tradition.

Abstract: The Current Cultural Re-awakening and Its Impact on the Bhikkhuni Order in Sri Lanka

by Venerable Kirama Wimalajothi Thera

With the colonial domination of Sri Lanka from the 16th century by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, foundations of our Buddhist civilization, culture and social values were destroyed. Sri Lanka was known as the 'fountainhead of Buddhism' for centuries due to the fact that it was in Sri Lanka that the Buddha's dispensation was nurtured and protected by Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis from the 3rd century B.C. to the 11th century A.C., the Tripitaka was written down in the 1st century B.C. and it was from Sri Lanka that Buddhism was spread to South and South-east Asia. Even after Independence in 1948, our political leaders made little effort to bring back our cultural heritage to the fore. The Buddhist values which are at the core of this heritage had declined.

According to the Buddha, the stability and the continuation of Buddhism depend on the catuparisa, the four components of a Buddhist society: Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni, Upsaka and Upasika. Opposition to the revival of a Bhikkhuni Ordination runs counter to the spirit as well as the religious aims of Buddhism which strongly advocated the emancipation of women. In this context, Bhikkhuni Ordination should have been established decades ago. The nuns, once trained in Dhamma Vinaya and given guidance, could well be a rich resource in bringing back the values that are fast eroding in our society. They could also fill a void, especially in the rural areas. Today, the Bhikkhus are a vanishing breed with around 2,000 temples being closed down due to the lack of Bhikkhus. Even the existing Bhikkhus prefer to excel in secular education, rather than in the Dhamma Vinaya.

Currently, there is a re-awakening in social and cultural matters in Sri Lanka which will soon have a positive impact on the Bhikkhuni Ordination in Sri Lanka. A delegation from the Department of the Buddhasasana at the request of the Executive President of Sri Lanka had a consultation with me and I gathered that the President is very keen to make a lasting contribution in the religious and cultural sphere by bringing about a positive change among the Bhikkhus as well as the Bhikkhunis.

I would focus here only on the Bhikkhunis. The first higher ordination was conducted on Sri Lankan soil in 1998 at the 2,200-year old Rangiri Dambulu Temple, which was up to then used exclusively by Buddhist monks. This dual ordination ceremony was conducted, at the initiative of the Venerable Inamaluwe Sumangala Thera who had been training Samaneris at the Bhikkhuni Educational Academy set up by him. The Bhikkhunis ordained in Bodh Gaya under the sponsorship of the Fo Guan Shan Monastery conferred higher ordination on twenty two Samaneris. Since then, several teams of Samaneris have been given higher ordination by the Venerable Inamaluwe Sumangala Thera. Another Bhikkhuni Training Centre attached to the Newgala hermitage in Galigamuwa in the Kegalla district, had been established under the guidance of a senior Bhikkhu there. I also set up a Bhikkhuni Training Centre in 2001 in Dekanduwala in the Kalutara district. There are 16 resident Bhikkhunis at this centre, and several foreign female renunciants have registered their interest in receiving higher ordination there.

It is significant that the higher ordination ceremony conducted on Sri Lankan soil in 1998 did not attract any negative reactions from the Supreme Patriarchs, despite the high publicity given to the event in the media. In fact, there has been no criticism on the restoration of the Bhikkhuni Order for nearly ten years now. Supreme Patriarchs have also turned a blind eye at the ecclesiastical acts performed by the Bhikkhunis such as fortnightly Patimokkha recitation (discussion on any violation of these rules among the Bhikkhunis) at their own sima malakas

(a hall with a demarcated boundary, especially constructed for performing ecclesiastical acts), and at religious ceremonies such as all night paritta ceremony (chanting blessings for protection) in specially constructed pavilions, and officiating at funeral ceremonies, perhaps the most important of the religious functions of the sangha.

It is also most encouraging to observe that the relationship between Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis has been very cordial, especially outside the main cities and in villages. Bhikkhus increasingly invite Bhikkhunis to their temples to conduct sermons and meditation sessions and Bhikkhunis, because of their sheer competence and empathy with their audience, are becoming increasingly popular in the communities. With increased spiritual status as Bhikkhunis, they now have more social recognition.

At present, there are about 500 Bhikkhunis in Sri Lanka scattered around, and there is an urgent need to provide institutional facilities in order to put them in a firm footing. It is natural that the Bhikkhunis face different kinds of obstacles depending on the social and cultural context that they reside in. The Bhikkhuni Order being a young institution will have to discuss and resolve these issues if the Bhikkhunis are to make a real change in society. Thus, a Bhikkhuni Headquarters where they gather and discuss their problems is perhaps the most urgent. Secondly, there should be training centres at district level where the selected Bhikkhunis are given additional training in Dhamma Vinaya, meditation, and social work including counseling. Bhikkhunis and ten precept renunciants (there are around 5,000) should be provided with Dhamma Vinaya education free of charge like the monks. It goes without saying that the support of the government is required to put these measures in place.

There are signs that the government support is forth coming. Thus, it is not too long in the future that the Bhikkhuni Order would be officially accepted.

Abstract: The Acceptance of Women in Early Buddhism

by Gisela Krey

My subject is the status of women / nuns in early Buddhism.

I would like to put forward some arguments in order to show that women followers and the order of nuns were not only accepted but even held in high esteem in early Buddhism.

My method is philological, based on texts of the Pāli Canon. For this purpose I shall first deal with some results of research recently published by Liz Williams in two articles on the foundation of the bhikkhunīsaṅgha during the Buddha's lifetime and on the Buddha's prediction of the decline of the Dhamma¹ after the foundation of the order of nuns as mentioned in canonical texts. I shall refer to various Pāli texts (e.g. the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, the Dakkhināvibhanga Sutta, the Therīgāthā with Dhammapāla's commentary etc.) which are not in agreement with the account of the foundation of the bhikkhunīsaṅgha that has come down to us in the Theravāda Vinaya (Cullavagga X). These sources seem to bear out a tradition of ordained women before the account of Mahāpajāpati's ordination and the subordination of the nuns to the order of monks. On the basis of the above sources different factors can be adduced to explain the decline or non-decline of the Dhamma without special reference to women.

Besides, some of Williams' arguments can be enhanced by referring to further canonical passages. To support Williams' findings, some reasons will be given based on recent research² as to why the account of the foundation of the nuns' order should be dated later.

Finally by quoting and analyzing additional sources, especially the Cūlavaddalla Sutta (MN 44), in which the bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā teaches the Dhamma to her former husband and is praised by the Buddha, I want to give an example of the high esteem in which women / nuns were actually held in early Buddhism.

1. Whisper in the Silence: Nuns before Mahāpajāpati, in: Buddhist Studies Review 17,2 (2000), pp. 167-173 and Red Rust, Robbers and Rice Field: Women's Part in the Precipitation of the Decline of the Dhamma, in: BSR 19,1 (2002), pp. 41-47.

2. I refer to Yuichi Kajiyama, Alan Sponberg and Ute Hüsken, who all argue for a relatively late date of the Pāli version of this story.

Abstract: The Structure and Curriculum of the Bhiksuni Vinaya Institute of Pongnyōngsa Monastery in Korea

by Bhikshuni Myoom Sunim

Abbess of Pongnyongsa, Rector of the Diamond Vinaya Institute, and President of the Pongnyongsa Monastic Seminary for Nuns

Kūmgang Yurwōn (Diamond Vinaya Institute) is the only Bhiksuni Vinaya Institute for nuns in Korea. It was founded in 1999 by Myoōm, Abbess of Pongnyōngsa Monastery and President of the Pongnyōngsa Monastic Seminary. Pongnyōng-sa is one of the five traditional Korean monastic seminaries for nuns that belong to the Korean Buddhist Jogye Order. The Pongnyōngsa Monastic Seminary was established in 1974, and the Diamond Vinaya Institute is affiliated to this seminary. At present Bhiksunis who graduated from the monastic seminaries can apply for the Diamond Vinaya Institute. It takes the student nuns two years of study to complete the curriculum required by the Vinaya institute.

In order to explain the structure and curriculum of the Diamond Vinaya Institute, this paper is divided into three parts. In the first part, I will discuss the educational methods of the traditional Korean monastic seminaries and the main Buddhist texts that are taught at the institute. In the second part, I will examine the daily activities of student nuns at the institute such as their daily classes and practices, and the Bhiksuni Prātimoksa and Fan-wang ching (Book of Brahmā's Net) ceremonies that are performed on full and new moon days. The last part of my presentation will focus on the roles of these student nuns during a period of intensive monastic training of female haengjas (postulants).

Abstract: The First Council and Suppression of Bhikkhuni Order

by Mettanando Bhikkhu

The First Buddhist Council was also the origin of Buddhist canonical literature, the Tipitaka. The details of the council are described in a section in the monastic code for Buddhist monks and nuns. The nature of the First Council in Rajagaha was not what it has been claimed, i.e., to canonize the words of the Buddha for the prevention of the future corruption and decay of the Buddhist religion, but it was to suppress the nuns who were active and successful in their promotion of Buddhism.

From the council emerged a set of Eight Rules of Heavy Duty for each member of the Nun Order to follow for the rest of their lives. By following the rules, which are highly discriminatory against women, the Nun Order became weakened, finally leading to the decay and destruction of Buddhism in India. Comparing to a number of texts in Jainism and Law Books of Hindu and several sections in the Buddhist canons, it was found that the section of the Eight Rules of Heavy Duty (Garudhammas), in the myth of the origin of the Nun Order, was actually an interpolation which took place soon after the passing away after the Buddha. The members of the First Council, although honored as saints, were faithful followers of Brahmanical Laws than Buddhist mendicants who had been dissatisfied with the administration of the Buddha that women were allowed to be ordained equal to men. Thus, the real intention of the First Council was not for the preservation and protection of the Buddha's teachings as claimed by the tradition, but to marginalize the nuns.

Abstract: Buddhist Nun Ordination and Charity Work

by Thich Nu Hanh Tri (Dr. Lani Hunter)

Founder and CEO I'm for World Peace Foundation

When a Buddhist woman gets ordained as a nun, it is a big step. She needs to disconnect from her family and friends. She needs to depart from the physical world to be born into a spiritual world. She must leave behind all things to enter the monastery so that she can practice appropriately. It is as if a curtain is drawn behind her as she leaves the old life and begins the new life. (I was very fortunate because my Master allowed me, as an exception to the rule, to continue my charity work after ordination.) As the curtain to the physical world is closed behind her, she must also study and pass the ordination exams and memorize all the required daily chanting sutras and mantras, maintain Vinaya, daily 54 gestures practice, and rules of conduct and monastic orders. A woman from the Western culture has even more challenge.

American life is based on fast-paced technological changes that sweep through our lives quickly, and those who don't adapt to the changes will be out of the game. All is about getting what you desire, but don't have, like wealth and love. Even if you achieve those, you may feel that something is still not fulfilled. You live a life style in which you think and do freely. With money, you can have everything you want in this life: good education, good job, a good relationship and many good friends. You can wear Pier Cardin's designs, Kashmir outfits, carry Gucci purses, expensive shoes, jewelry, and never eat boring food. You can do everything as middle class American women do. You may grow to feel that anything can be had with money, by studying and working hard, but in reality materials and money are not the answer. There is something else you will yearn for, something that cannot be possessed by education, money or material; that invisible thing is your spiritual life. If you devote yourself to study under great masters, such as Master Thich Nhat Hanh, Master U Pandita, and Vajrayana Buddhist teachers such as His Holiness the Tibetan Lamas, or Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche, those Teachers will encourage devotees to meditate and cut off their attachments and desires such as love affairs, fame, name, and wealth, to take vows to become Sangha and devote to Dharma so they later could teach and help to alleviate others' sufferings. You will learn about Karma action and reaction consequences and you will discover that you are responsible for your Karma not only in this life but in many past lives. You will learn that, to repent sins you may do 100,000 prostrations, and then still not know for sure if that was enough, but you will exhaust yourself and move on. Bodhicita will lead you to volunteer to serve the needy, and reduce your possessions. (My charity organization, "I'm for World Peace" was born from that.) The concept of Enlightenment will push you to become a Buddha, and you will be better able to help sentient beings pass beyond Samsara. You must work hard to achieve Enlightenment, and becoming a nun will help you to achieve it.

It is not simple to cut off all of your responsibilities and relationships, to become a nun. Relatives and close-friends may think that your mind is malfunctioning. They might recommend you to seek professional help. Your mother may cry, believing that becoming a Buddhist nun will be a life of hardship. Siblings may laugh at the idea. The spouse may be the only one who is supportive. Nevertheless, you will know in your heart that you must do it, slowly and surely, and you will never regret it. With perseverance, after many years, maybe decades, family and friends may finally agree that you prefer to a spiritual life instead of a worldly life. If so, then you finally will have won. However, you will have jumped from a frying pan right into the fire! Even in the wondrous spiritual community of Buddhism, there can be conflict.

Abstract: A brief overview of the situation for nuns in the Tibetan Tradition

by Bhiksuni Tenzin Palmo

Historically the bhikshuni ordination was never formally introduced into Tibet presumably because there was never a quorum of 5 Indian bhikshunis who made the hazardous journey across the Himalayan range.

However nuns did receive the shramaneriika or novice ordination and were treated with a certain respect within society. Traditionally nuns usually devoted themselves to meditation practice, ritual or often acted as servants for the lamas or their own family members. Many nuns attained high levels of spiritual realisation but since they received little education they did not write books, teach extensively and consequently had no voice. Of course even in Tibet there were isolated cases of highly educated nuns studying under a learned Lama, but it was not the norm. So one of the advances for nuns in exile has been the introduction of a study program on a par with that received by monks. The result is now emerging of well-educated and trained nuns who are becoming more confident and articulate.

However even modern nuns are still quite diffident and shy in the presence of male monastics, especially the Rinpoches and Geshes. They will naturally not oppose any male authority figure.

The Lamas often discourage nuns from considering Bhikshuni ordination by assuring them that such an ordination is not necessary. In addition, they state, it would be extremely burdensome for the nuns to have to keep so many rules. Their viewpoint is that education is sufficient to raise the status of nuns and they should be content with that.

In answer to the Lamas' position stated above intending to undermine the idea of bhikshuni ordination by saying that this ordination is not necessary or important, I say "Oh, so Rinpoche you are still a novice?" When he immediately insists that of course he is fully ordained, I reply that he had just stated that that ordination was not important, so why had he bothered? The point about the rules being too heavy for the nuns to bear is usually countered by the observation that the nuns will surely be able to keep the rules at least as well as the monks are presently keeping theirs!

However this pervading attitude has to be faced. Let us consider a few points.

First of all, the Lord Buddha himself decreed the full ordination for nuns. He did not say that nuns should only receive a sramaneriika ordination. Whatever the controversy over his reasons for hesitating or the 8 Garudharmas, the bhikshunis were definitely bhikshunis, so we are merely following the Buddha's own intention.

For a country or nation to be considered as truly Buddhist, there must be the fourfold sangha of bhikshu, bhikshuni, upasaka, upasika.

In those countries such as China, Taiwan, Korea and Vietnam where the bhikshuni ordination is still extant the status of nuns is high and they receive the support and respect of society almost on a level with monks. They are brothers and sisters in the Dharma. However the

vinaya makes it clear the monks always enjoy a higher status so there is no cause for monks to feel concerned.

How does this concern nuns in the Tibetan tradition? One point is the question of the Geshema or Khenmo degree. Several Lamas of various traditions have stated to me that these degrees can only be given to one holding Full Ordination, since one of the subjects to be examined is the Vinaya which can only be studied by the ordained. Even if a nun received permission to study the bhikshuni vinaya (which they read when reciting the Kangyur anyway) without having herself received the bhikshuni vows, there would probably exist the stigma that she was not *really* a geshema but only allowed the title out of consideration for her scholastic efforts.

Also since they do not have bhikshuni vows, Tibetan nuns cannot take part in the monastic ceremonies such as full sojong or ordination ceremonies. They are therefore barred from important aspects of their lives as monastics.

It is my understanding that only on the **acceptance** of a novice by 10 fully ordained monastics during the Bhikshuni ordination, does the person become a part of the actual monastic sangha. In other words, as long as one remains a sramanerika one is only on the doorstep so to speak, and has not yet entered into the temple of monastic sangha. Why should a nun of 60 years ordination still be only a novice?

At our nunnery of Dongyu Gatsal Ling the nuns study philosophy with a Khenpo from the Dzongsar College and senior nuns from the Nyingma Nunnery of HH Penor Rinpoche. In addition they are instructed in ritual by senior monks of our affiliated monastery of Khampagar in nearby Tashi Jong. The nuns also learn English and perform a strict 2 month retreat every year.

Our aim is not only to produce philosophy teachers (Khenmo) but also to re-establish in India a rare lineage of yoginis or *togdenma*. These nun yoginis, who follow the Milarepa tradition, dedicate their lives to meditation practice and hence can become masters and exemplars for others. There are few qualified women teachers of meditation in the Tibetan tradition although many female practitioners.

Several of the most senior lamas in my Drukpa Kagyu lineage, including His Holiness the Gyalwa Drukpa, suggest that the future of the tradition may lie with women who have such a high level of dedication and devotion. Therefore they are urging and themselves implementing an equality between the monks and the nuns.

So this is the time for nuns to cease to be merely tight little buds of unfulfilled aspirations and to fully blossom into their great intellectual and spiritual potential.

Abstract: Key Issues Related to the Establishment of Restoration of Bhikkuni Lineage in Bangladesh Therabada Buddhist Tradition, where it Doesn't Currently Exist

by Prof. Ven. Prajna Bangsha Bhikshu (Mahathero)

Chief Abbot of World Peace Pagoda
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Introduction:

There is controversy on the issue of Attha Garu Dhamma, the eight terms and conditions that laid down by the Buddha for the full ordination of women in the Buddha's order. In Mahaparinibbana Sutta of Pali Suttanta Pitaka stanza No. 44 of Tatiya Bhanavara, we see that just after the enlightenment of the Buddha sitting at the root of Ajapala Tree Buddha himself was planning about the establishment of Bhikkhuni Sangha, saying thus ---

"..... Na tavaham papima parinibbayissami yava me Bhikkhu, na savaka, yava me Bhikkhuniyo, na savika, yava me upasaka na savaka, yava me upasika na savika bhavissanti, viyatta, vinita, visarada, vahussuta, dhammadhara, dhammanudhamma patipanna, samici patipanna, anudhamma carino, sakam acariyakam uggahetva acikkhissanti, desessanti, pannapessanti, patthapessanti, vibarissanti, vibhajissanti, utthanim karissanti, uppannam parappa vadam sahadhammena suniggahitam, nigghetva sapptihariyam dhammam desessanti ; na tavaham papima parinibbayissami."

'O Evil One ! I shall not pass away as long as my lay-disciples are not yet accomplished in learning, not yet well-schooled (in control of deed, word and thought), not yet confident, not yet endowed with right knowledge and learning, not yet able to remember or memorize the teaching (lit, to propagate the teaching, not yet able to practice fully according to the teaching, not yet endowed with correctness in practice, not yet able to live (lit, walk) in perfect conformity with righteousness and truth, not yet able to expound, to set forth, to make known, to establish, to make clear, to analyze or explain in detail, and to make manifest or to display their teacher's doctrine or teaching, not yet able to refute by means of correct or proper reasons other doctrines, views or beliefs that may arise, and are not able to expand to set forth the wonderful, sub-line teaching.'

With the reference of these sayings of the Buddha we could omit the other writings of the Text on rejection for the establishment of Bhikkhuni Sangha, that we see in Bhikkhuni Khanda of cula vagga of vinayapitaka. But about Attha Garudhamma, there are something to be discussion for understanding the reality of human nature between male and female.

Brahmacariya (total rejection of sex conduct) is a common issue in monk-hood, and in nun-hood. Close-living of male and female encourage the mind to develop sexual feeling to each other by nature. The Buddha said, "Ma te rucchi matugamassa. Tathagata appavedite dhamma vinaye agarasma anagariyam pabbajjassanti." O monk ! You should never like to ordain women in the order if you like to enjoy a pure recluse life in Buddha Sasna. Living together with male and female will cause to spoil the Buddha sasna.

However in other philosophical schools like Titthika paribrajika too had the system of woman ordination in the time of the Buddha. And there was easy to interchange among the schools too. Kundola kesi and Bhadda Kapilani had that opportunity to change their school from Titthika Pribrajika into Bhikkhuni order. In most of the Jataka, tales and in the Buddha vanga of Pali Text we see the existence of Bhikkhuni Sangha too.

Bangladesh was part of India till 1947. Historical and archeological evidence are lot of the ancient Buddhism in Bengal. But among the historians opinion differs about the root and development of Buddhism on the soil of Bangladesh. Thera vangisa was one of the eighty great disciples of Buddha during His time. Some scholars demand him a son of Bengal. In mahanipata of Theri Gatha (the songs of the great Bhikkhunies) Theri Sumedha was also expected as the daughter of Bengal during Buddha's time. Rock scripts (3rd B.C.) of the great emperor Asoka were also found in Pundravardhan of North Bengal. The great Chinese student and pilgrimage of the 7th and 8th centuries Hiu-en-Tsun and Fa-Hien noted also a lot about the practice of Buddhism in Bengal. Venerable Atisha Dipankara the golden son of Bengal was established Vajarayana Buddhism in Tibbat also. The world famous Nalanda, Bikram Sila, Sompuri and Pandita Vihara the university type of institutions were developed in Bengal from the 8th to 11th century with hundreds of years supports from the Buddhist Kings and emperors.

But what was happened in the rise and development of Bhikkhuni Sangha in that period of Buddhism in Bangladesh ? In the history of Buddhism we could see no important role of Bhikkhuni Sangha in that period. No Text has been found that was written by any Bhikkhuni, or there was not a single Bhikkhuni like Sangha Mitra, the daughter of emperor Ashuka, except Bhikkhuni Bhava Bhuti, the sister of the King of Urissa (9th century A.D.) who was famous for her super natural power. The existence of Bhikkhuni Sangha continued till 12th century on the soil of Bengal. But what they did no body knows. In the 12th century Brahmin Kings of Sen-dynasty did not support Buddhism except Brahminism and from the 13th century to 16th century Bengal was rule by the Muslim rulers. At the end of that period we could see a very few Buddhists are existing in the North Eastern corner of India Sub-continent, the Chittagong and Chittagong Hill Tracts. From 17th century to 19th century the whole part of India Sub-continent was ruled by the British Colonial Govt. In that period 1864 a famous leading monk of Arakan Dynasty reestablished Thera vada Buddhism in the Vajarayana Buddhist society of Chittagong and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

From then after now the whole Buddhist of Bangladesh are in practice of Thera vada Buddhism and culture influenced by the Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thai Buddhists. A very few women are practicing the Eight precepts in different temples. But no existence of Bhikkhuni in the Buddhist society of Bangladesh till now. The increasing amount of youth women looking for a way of serious practice in the Sangha must consider very careful before the choose for full ordination as Bhikkhunies.

In Bangladesh, there are about one million Buddhist, which are less than 1% of the total population with about 90% Muslim. In the past Indian and Bengali Muslims and Hindus were liberal to some extend due to the influence of Buddhist culture and philosophy for a few thousand years. Peaceful co-existence were admirable and that time. The Pala dynasty was called the golden age of Bengal as the historian says due to over flowed by the Buddhist culture and philosophy throughout the Bengal for four hundred years of Pala dynasty. But

now the growing population, political unrest and fundamentalism among the religious peoples making the situation cloudy day by day and this situation is not much favourable to establish Bhikkhuni Sangha in this soil of Bengal. Furthermore, not many leading monks will stimulate females to take Bhikkhuni ordination.

Venerable Bana Vhante Sadhananda Mahathero will give women higher ordination, but only after they studied the way of practice as it is described in Bhikkhuni Khandaka from Mahabagga, Bhikkhuni Bivhanga and Bhikkhuni Pati Mokka all texts from Pali Vinaya Pitaka those are translated by me in Bengali and published by Raj Bana Vihar for free distribution. In addition, should they have proper understanding about present developments of social, political and economical situation ? In future I would explain the whole real situation of present in Bangladesh.

Abstract: Bikkhuni Sangha in Vietnam and Australia: An Overview on its History and Contemporary Developments

by Most Venerable Thich Quang Ba

Not only that in this paper I will brief the audience a whole picture of how many exile Vietnamese bikkhunis (as well as hundreds of bikkhus) could survive, revive, re-establish and redevelop their thousands-year-old monastic/ordained communities after risking their life on high seas or landmines fleeing Vietnam for freedom during 70s to 90s, but I will also discuss options and manners that I believe active Sangha bodies in the West could consider to apply for establishing or re-establishing thriving Bikkhuni communities there.

Abstract: The Revival of the Theravada Nun Order in Thailand: Scriptural Authority and Cultural Resistance

by Dr. Martin Seeger and Prof. Barend Jan Terwiel

In an on-going debate in Thai society about the possibility of reviving the Theravada order of nuns (bhikkhuni), a multitude of quite diverging opinions and arguments both for and against the revival of the ordination lineage of the bhikkhuni-order has been brought forward. Amongst these are: Western influenced text-criticism that aims to identify the authentic stance of the historical Buddha towards bhikkhunis; reference to secular law; feminist hermeneutics; and considerations of the gender inequality in Thai society. These arguments have been countered by traditionalists who refer to canonical texts which in their view do not allow women to ordain in Theravada under the given circumstances (i.e. the non-existence of Theravada nuns who would be able to carry out their part of the ordination procedure). At the Same time, however, alternatives to a nun order have been suggested, such as the amelioration of the disadvantaged social position of the long-existing maechis (white-clad women who keep the eight precepts) or the introduction of para-monastic institutions which would allow women to pursue a spiritual practise similar to that of monks.

Several institutions in Thailand have established various institutions/programmes intended to give Buddhist women a better chance to practice Buddhism or gain education in a similar way as Thai monks: e.g. the Thammacarini institution in Ratburi, the Maechi Institute located at Wat Boworn in Bangkok, the Maechi college in Khorat, the dhammamata Programme initiated by Buddhadasa and located in Suan Mok, the ten precepts-keeping sikkhamatu of Santi Asok, or the maechis of Maechi Sansani's Sathianthamsathan.

It is questionable as to how far these institutions/programmes could be accepted as satisfying alternatives by those who plead for the introduction of a 'real' nun order. In fact, previous research has shown that there exists a wide spectrum of diverging opinions on the necessity of a nun order.

What are the arguments and motivations of Thai Buddhist women who want to ordain in Theravada Buddhism? And what are the arguments and views of women who prefer instead to continue to practice Buddhism in a more traditional way? It has been suggested that sexist biases and patriarchy are engrained in Thai Buddhism. Is this one reason why a large number of Thai Buddhist women do not pursue or even oppose the revival of a nun order in Thailand? Do the magico-animistic beliefs of the powerful impurity of menstrual blood as opposed to the purity of monks' robes, Buddha statues, Buddhist amulets and so forth play a role in this? Is the rather low prestige of maechis in Thai society changing, or do we have to regard highly respected maechis, like Maechi Sansani, Maechi Suphaphan na Bangchang and Maechi Can Khonnokyung, as exceptions? What lies behind the initiatives of creating para-monastic institutions for women in Thai society? Do they really provide an acceptable alternative for a 'real' Theravada nun order?, especially with regard to the possibility of religious practice and the generation of merit (punnakhetam) as a result of leading a 'holy life' (similar to that of monks who keep 227 training rules)? The presentation will address these questions.

Also, I will talk about the views of the so-called siladharas, living and practising in the UK: the British Theravada (which was "imported" from Thailand) has been, on the one hand, very conservative by preserving the traditional form but, at the Same time, also innovative when it founded the siladhara (women wearing brown robes similar to monks and following a set of rules elaborated from the Ten Precepts) as an alternative to the order of nuns.

Abstract: Implication of Mother's Virtues towards Buddhist Society

by Most Venerable Master Shi Kuang Seng

To be named as an excellent human creature, an individual was neither born with complete human organs nor born in a very rich and well-known family. Additionally, gender, nationality, race, religion and tradition are neither the qualities used in judging how excellent the man is. The excellent human creature is the one who has done something beneficial to the society and humanity.

According to the Mahayana Buddhism, Bhikkunis are not only the ladies who have received full Bhikkhuni ordination and wear monk robes. Once, we become Mahayana Bhikkunis. We must remain Bhikkunis and practise Boddhisattava's way of life until the last day of our lives. Moreover, we must be able to pass on the Lord Buddha's Dharma to those who are suffering mentally and spiritually, and lift them up from the ocean of karma. Life is so short. We normally live no longer than 100 years old. We, Bhikkunis, must devote our lives and souls for Buddhism, and help cultivate strong and peaceful Buddhist society.

Nowadays, children and ladies abuses, especially problems from breaking-families, become much severe in every corner around the world. Due to the quality of female gender, ladies and children, who are suffering from the social problems, would probably feel free to reveal their feelings and difficulties to Bhikkunis as if they were talking with their mothers. Tenderness, compassion and encouragement that they receive would probably encourage them to stand on their own and prevent them from conducting any harm towards themselves and others. Then, we will deserve to be called as "Bhikkunis" and respected from lay people. Comparing to other creatures, animals leave their hides and horns on this earth. We, human beings, leave only names either "fame" or "taint" on this earth, depending on how well we have performed when we are still alive.

We, Bhikkunis, must combine the Buddha's Dharma, together with the embedded mother virtues, i.e. loving kindness, compassion, wisdom and patience, to shift the world of violence to the world of peace and loving kindness. We must be strong rather than harsh and be gentle rather than weak, to continuously develop something worthwhile and beneficial to Buddhism, the nations and the humanity.

Abstract: Tracing the History of Nuns in South Asia

by Prof. Dr. Peter Skilling

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The study of the history of Buddhist nuns (bhiksuni) in South Asia is not easy. From a very early period, the Buddhist monastic order (samgha) developed into several different ordination lineages – lines of transmission of bhiksu and bhiksuni status, all claiming to descend from Sakyamuni Buddha himself. With the passage of time these lineages became more and more distinct, and as a result there were several orders or communities of monks and nuns, spread over a vast and diverse area, from Nepal to Sri Lanka, from Gandhara to Eastern India. At least some of the nuns' lineages were active in South Asia for nearly 1500 years. But there is no written narrative history of even one of the lineages; nor are there any histories of their male counterparts, the orders of monks.

How, then can we attempt to trace the history of nuns in South Asia? The most reliable sources we have are epigraphic records, inscriptions on stone or on metal. The earliest written records of ancient India – the inscriptions of King Asoka – contain the earliest historical mention of nuns. Asoka believed that for the Buddha's teachings to flourish, all four 'assemblies' of Buddhism – monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen – should live in harmony. It is clear that he saw nuns as an important religious and social body.

After the time of Asoka, we find inscriptions throughout South Asia which record donations to or by nuns, whether as individuals or as communities. The inscriptions give us some idea of the social and even economic status of nuns, of their religious roles and their aspirations. Inscriptions are social and often legal documents, and we must always bear in mind their specific historical contexts. Inscriptions attest to the presence of bhiksunis at certain times or certain places, but they do not furnish a continuous narrative history. The absence of inscriptions does not mean, ipso facto, an absence of nuns. This must be borne in mind when we ask one of the most difficult questions: when did the orders of nuns die out in India?

Other sources for the study of nuns' orders in South Asia include the accounts of foreign travellers, most famously the monk-pilgrims who travelled from China to India in quest of the Dharma and of scriptures and relics. Buddhist monastic and narrative literature, and Indian literature in general, are both valuable sources, as codifications and expressions of norms, ideals, and mentalities related to nuns and monasticism. The present paper focus on inscriptions as primary sources for the history of Buddhist nuns.

Abstract: Bhikshuni Ordination: Lineages and Procedures as Instruments of Power

by Prof. Dr. Jan-Ulrich Sobisch

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I want to discuss a few of the Tibetan concepts of authority in connection with their transmission. That is, looking at cases of transmission of authority by authoritative persons, and authorization of persons through authoritative transmissions, I want to show how some of the particular Tibetan forms of authority come into play in the context of bhikshuni ordination. I furthermore want to consider the question whether the vinaya-lineages are similar to other Tibetan forms of the transmission of authority, and in which way they are different. Finally I will try to show how, with a refined concept of authority, one could in fact argue in favor of reestablishing bhikshuni ordination.

Sects & Sectarianism

By Bhikkhu Sujato

One of the central questions in the revival of the bhikkhuni lineage from the Theravādin perspective is the validity of ordination lineages in other schools. The traditional Theravādin view would have it that the bhikkhunis in existence today are 'Mahāyāna'. Mahāyāna is believed to have descended from the Mahāsaṅghika school. According to the earliest Sri Lankan chronicle, the *Dīpavaṃsa*, the Mahāsaṅghikas are none other than the 'evil' Vajjiputtakas, who advocated the use of money by monks, and who were defeated at the Second Council, but who later reformed and made a new recitation. Hence the Mahāyāna is representative of a tradition whose fundamental principle was laxity in Vinaya. The *Dīpavaṃsa* states that the other 17 schools apart from the Theravāda are schismatic and 'thorns' in the *sāsana*. It is therefore impossible to accept them as part of the same communion.

But the reality is that there has never been a distinctively 'Mahāyāna' Vinaya or ordination lineage. Rather, some bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, having ordained in one of the lineages of the early schools, choose to study and practice certain texts and ethical ideals known as 'Mahāyāna'. The bhikkhus and bhikkhunis of the East Asian traditions follow the Vinaya of the Dharmaguptaka school, while the Central Asian traditions follow the Mūlasarvāstivāda. If we wish to understand the relationship between the existing Sanghas of the various schools, then we must investigate the relationships between the early schools of Buddhism from whom the Vinayas and ordination lineages derive.

One way of doing this is to examine the origins of the schools in question. Here we enter into the swirling and uncertain world of mythology, where interpretation is all, and sectarian bias is not merely expected, but is the driving motivation. Given the contradictory, incomplete, and doubtful nature of the literary sources it is unclear whether we can expect to find even a glimmer of truth. But our surest evidence derives from the happy coincidence of the historical/mythic accounts and archaeological findings, and it is here that we begin our search.

One of the fullest accounts of the origination of any school is found in the Sinhalese Vinaya Commentary, which exists in a Pali version the *Samantapāsādikā*, and an ancient Chinese translation the *Sudassanavinayavibhāsā* (善見律毘婆沙 *Shan-Jian-Lu-Pi-Po-Sha*, T 1462). This recounts several decisive events that took place in the time of Aśoka. There was a conflict in the Sangha that was resolved by the expulsion of the corrupt monks by Aśoka together with the Elder Moggaliputtatissa, following which the 'Third Council' was held to reaffirm communal identity. Subsequently Moggaliputtatissa organized the sending out of 'missionaries' to various parts of India, an event that has often been compared with Aśoka's sending out of Dhamma-ministers. The main purpose of this narrative is to establish the credentials of the Sinhalese school, which we know of as Theravāda, but which I will refer to by the more precise and historically accurate term, the Mahāvihāravāsins. This was established by Aśoka's son Mahinda and his daughter Saṅghamittā.

There are two major pieces of inscriptional evidence that derive from the early period of Indian Buddhism: the Aśokan edicts and the reliquaries at Vedisa. Strikingly, both of these

confirm the evidence found in the Sinhalese Vinaya Commentary. The Vedisa inscriptions mention the names of several monks who the Sinhalese Vinaya Commentary says were sent as missionaries to the Himalaya soon after the 'Third Council'. And Aśoka's so-called 'schism edicts' (which actually state that the Sangha is unified, not schismatic!) mention an expulsion of corrupt bhikkhus, which many scholars have identified with the events prior to the 'Third Council'. In addition, the Sinhalese archaeological record, while not as decisive, tends to support the general validity of the missions account. This correspondence between epigraphic and textual evidence encourages us to take the missions account of the Sinhalese Vinaya Commentary seriously.

In the current context, it is worth recalling the mission of Soṇa and Uttara to Suvaṇṇabhūmi. This is believed by Burmese to refer to Burma, and Thais to refer to Thailand, while scholarly opinion lacks such reassuring certainty. This mission, which to this day forms a crucial narrative of self-identity for Buddhists in these regions, was said to result in the ordination of 1500 women. Thus bhikkhuni ordination is intrinsic to South-east Asian Buddhism from the beginning.

One of the major missionaries was Yonaka Dhammarakkhita. He was, as his name indicates, a Greek monk, native of 'Alasanda' (Alexandria). He features in the Pali tradition as a master of psychic powers as well as an expert on Abhidhamma. He went to the Greek-occupied areas in the west of India. Long ago Przulski, followed by Frauwallner, suggested that Dhammarakkhita be identified with the founder of the Dharmaguptaka school, since *dhammarakkhita* and *dhammagutta* have identical meaning. Since that time two pieces of evidence have come to light that make this suggestion highly plausible. One is the positive identification of very early manuscripts belonging to the Dharmaguptakas in the Gandhāra region, exactly where we expect to find Yonaka Dhammarakkhita. The second is that the phonetic rendering of his name in the *Sudassanavinayavibhāsā* evidently renders 'Dharmagutta' rather than 'Dhammarakkhita'. We also note that several texts say that the Dharmaguptaka was founded by a certain 'Moggallāna'. While this is traditionally identified with the great disciple of that name, I think it is more likely a reference to Moggaliputtatissa, the patriarch of the Third Council, who is also regarded by the Mahāvihāravāsins as their founder. We are thus perfectly justified as seeing the Mahāvihāravāsins and the Dharmaguptakas, not as warring schismatic parties, but as long-lost brothers parted only by the accidents of history and the tyranny of distance.

With regard to the third of our schools, the Mūlasarvāstivādins, the history is even murkier. In my opinion the most persuasive theory for the origin of this school was again provided by Frauwallner, who argued that they were originally based in Mathura. This would align this school closely with the famous arahants of Mathura, Śāṇavāsin and Upagupta. Śāṇavāsin features in all the schools as a revered Elder and Vinaya master in the Vinaya accounts of the Second Council. He is said to have established a major forest monastery, which is called Urumuṇḍa in the northern sources and Ahogaṅga in the Pali. Later on, it was this very monastery that Moggaliputtatissa resorted to for retreat. The spiritual power Moggaliputtatissa derived from his time in Śāṇavāsin's forest monastery was decisive in convincing Aśoka to entrust him with the task of purifying the Saṅgha and organizing the missions. Thus the establishment of the Mahāvihāravāsins and Dharmaguptakas is closely associated with the Śāṇavāsin lineage. It is even possible that Soṇaka, the preceptor of

Moggaliputtatissa's preceptor, is simply a misspelling for Śāṅkaka (-vāsin), in which case the Mahāvihāravāsin ordination lineage would be directly descended from Śāṅkavāsin and the forest tradition of Mathura.

Finally, it should be remembered that one of the other missionaries was Majjhantika, Mahinda's ordination teacher, who went to Kaśmir and established the school later known as the Sarvāstivāda. This account agrees with the versions of the northern schools (except they generally place the date earlier). It is a point of contention whether this school has any connection as a Vinaya lineage with the Mūlsarvāstivāda, or whether they simply share some similar doctrines. In any case, this school is seen as having emerged from geographical dispersion, rather than schism. The northern accounts are contradictory in this respect, and some of them do associate the Kaśmir school with schism; but these late and fantastic accounts in any case depict a schism *from* the Mahāsaṅghika, which would place them on the side of the Mahāvihāra/Dharmaguptaka.

The topics discussed in this abstract are treated in full detail in Bhikkhu Sujato's book *Sects & Sectarianism*. For information, see: <http://sectsandsectarianism.googlepages.com/home>

Abstract: Empowerment of Buddhist Nuns in North America: Master Hsuan Hua's Vision of Bhikshuni Sangha Organization and Implementation

by Rev. Heng Sure Ph.D.

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The Founder of the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, (DRBA), the late Ven. Master Hsuan Hua (1916-1995), worked to establish the Mahayana Buddhist Sangha order in North America for thirty years. Foremost among his four primary missions (establishing the ordained Sangha on Western soil, translating the Mahayana sutras into the languages of the world, advocating educational reform and promoting interfaith exchange), was creating an opportunity for Western women and men to receive full ordination as Bhikshus and Bhikshunis. To date the traditional "Three-fold Platforms of Precepts" have been transmitted at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) eleven times since 1976, and in the process, hundreds of men and women have been ordained into the Buddha's Sangha order by Theras and Mahatheras of Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana lineages.

This presentation will describe the process at the DRBA leading to Bhikshuni Ordination. Topics discussed will include the qualifications for leaving home, as well as the requirements for full ordination. These include two years of preparation, three years in novice training and the content of the 108-day "platform" leading to final ordination. Presenters will explain the organization of the platform including the respective ceremonial and leadership roles of DRBA monks and nuns, the relationship between the Bhikshu and Bhikshuni Sangha, the constituency of transmitting masters, three-fold Transmission of Novice, Bhikshuni, Bodhisattva Precepts and further training of newly ordained nuns.

The presentation will discuss methods of sustaining the monastic vocation of women and men once they are ordained: how to maintain their continued study of precepts for five years with teachers, how to provide Sangha education & training programs educational opportunities and future vocational options. This section will report on challenges to the sustained longevity of ordained nuns, balancing ascetic rigor with physical limitations, learning skillful expedient means without compromising the spirit of the precepts, and clarifying cultural accretion from the Buddha's original intent.

The concluding section will present issues of Sangha governance and roles amid the larger four-fold community of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen; the roles of Bhikshunis in monastery management, preparation for Dharma-speaking, education, translation, and outreach to the community which can include social service, interfaith exchange and promotion of harmless eating and sustainable agriculture, among other good works.

Abstract: Mining for Gold

A Bright Vision and Exploration Into the Essential Nature and Purpose of the Bhikkhuni Sangha
In the Ancient Texts and Lives of the Noble Ones
& Brought to Life

Through Living the Pure and Perfected Holy Life in the Modern World

by **Ayya Tathaaloka Bhikkhuni**

“Heartwood & Refining Gold: *the Ancient Analogies*”

This paper will begin with a look into passages of the Dhamma-vinaya texts of the Pali Canon that have inspired a number of modern Western women to adopt the Bhikkhuni Vinaya and undertake the full and complete living of the Holy Life, contributing to the contemporary development of a Theravadan Bhikkhuni Sangha in North America.

“The Real Living of the Holy Life: *Essence and Convention*”

We will then look into some of the modern and historical factors which have furthered that inspiration through the lens of the author's practical experiences and observations living and training as a bhikkhuni in countries where there is a strong Bhikkhuni Sangha (e.g. South Korea) and countries where the Bhikkhuni Sangha has lapsed (e.g. Thailand), but there is a large Buddhist population and many renunciates both male and female, some of whom still train with the Patimokkha Precepts in their entirety, (as in the Theravadan Forest Traditions).

According to the primary emphasis of the Buddha Sasana, consideration will be given to which factors and attitudes, when institutionalized with the Sangha, engender or perpetuate suffering and which perpetuate values spoken of as wholesome and liberating.

The restoration of the Korean Monastic Sangha following Japanese Occupation and the Korean War will be taken as a practical example of reclamation of an ancient tradition and path.

We will also briefly look into the conditions surrounding the founding of Dhammadharini Vihara, the first Theravadan Bhikkhuni establishment in the Western United States.

“Looking Upon One Another With Kindly Eyes: *the Incredible Value of Sangha*”

Finally, this paper will cover the ground of the author's practical experience living as a Theravadan bhikkhuni keeping the Vinaya in present-day America. This area includes the development of four types of traditional inter-relationship:

- (1) The relationship between the Theravadan Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Sanghas (both Western and Asian, particularly Sri Lankan and Thai lineages), and their shared Sanghakamma Acts -- both formal acts required by Vinaya (such as the Ovada Request, Pavarana, and Sikkhamana & Upasampada Ordinations), as well as informal, non-mandatory interactions which contribute to positive and wholesome building of Sangha.
- (2) The development of the bhikkhunis' supportive relationships with fellow members of the Bhikkhuni Sangha, both Western and Asian, in America and Internationally.
- (3) The inspiration of the presence, practice and teaching of Fully Ordained Buddhist Women within the Western Theravadan Buddhist lay community.
- (4) The inspiration of such a presence within the greater American society, and its connection to ideals and visions of enlightenment.

In closing, we will affirm the harmonious vision of the Sangha of the author's late Ordination Master, Bhante Ratanasara Sangha Nayaka Thero, the “harmonious syncretism” of the Sangha of her Bhikkhuni teachers as propounded by Korean Jogye Order Founder Bojo Chinul, and lastly the Buddha's own words on the subject.

Ayya Tathaaloka Bhikkhuni was fully ordained by an International Convocation of the Sangha in America 10 Vassas past, with the late Venerable Havanpola Ratanasara, Sangha Nayaka Thero. Her scholarship includes work in Comparative Vinaya Studies as well as in World Bhiksuni Sangha History, with in-depth study of the Bhikkhuni Sangha and its history in South Korea, the country of her Bhikkhuni teacher, Venerable Myeong Seong Sunim. She has been involved in the foundation of the North American Bhikkhuni Association, the Dhammadharini Support Foundation and the first Theravadan Bhikkhuni Vihara in the Western United States. In 2006, she was awarded as an Outstanding Woman in Buddhism at the United Nations in Bangkok.

Abstract: On the History of Buddhist Nun Order in Vietnam

by Prof. Dr. Le Manh That

Buddhist Nun Order started in Vietnam quite early, at least from 2nd century A.D. with Man Nương (ca.175-255). She was born in a devout Buddhist family in the Bắc Ninh Province. When the Indian monk Ksudra by name came to Luy Lâu at about 189 A.D., she went to work with him and later on, became a nun. From then on, almost nothing is known about the Nun Order, until the appearance of Zen master Diệu Nhân (1042-1113) recorded in the *Thiền uyển tập anh* (Eminent Figures in the Zen Garden) written in 1134. Diệu Nhân came from the imperial family of Lý Dynasty of Vietnam. She got married and when her husband died, she decided to become a nun and later on headed the Hương Hải Zen Monastery. Her lineage is almost lost. Only one poem written at her dead-bed is left.

Passing over to the 13th and 14th century, we have the names of a number of imperial members of Trần Dynasty who were ordained to become Buddhist nuns, but we know almost nothing about their Buddhist activities.

With the arrival of the 15th and 16th century, we again have the names of a number of Bhiksuni who contributed to the construction of a few Buddhist temples in North Vietnam. And their social origin is again mostly from royal or official class.

At the first half of the 17th century, we again have a cluster of Buddhist Nuns who devoted to the work of erection the famous Bút Tháp temple in Bắc Ninh province, and one of them became an abbess of this temple, i.e., Diệu Tuệ (1615-1680). Again, Diệu Tuệ came from the imperial family of Lê Dynasty with the name Lê Thị Ngọc Duyên. When she grew up, she got married to a man who died at an early age. She decided to become a nun with the acquiescence of her Queen mother Trình Thị Ngọc Trúc.

In the 18th century, it seems that there is a great community of Buddhist Nuns in Vietnam. Their names are mostly known through the contributions they made to the construction of temples or printing of Buddhist works, such as the nun Diệu Liên who managed the edition and printing of the *Thiền tông bản hạnh* (Hagiography of the Zen lineage) of her master Chân Nguyên (1647-1726) in 1747. The special feature of this period is the codification of the rules and regulations of the Nun Ordination through the work of Pháp Chuyên Luật Truyền (1726-1798).

The famous nun of the 19th century is of course Emperor Gia Long's (1802-1820) sister who is known under the name Bhiksuni Vân Dương. When the Nguyễn House was overthrown in 1772 in Huế and her brother Gia Long had to flee South, she remained in Huế, decided to become a nun and lived at the temple of the Vân Dương village. So, she had the name Bhiksuni Vân Dương. She also played an important role in the struggle of Gia Long against the Tây Sơn Dynasty. A few decades after Gia Long won the battle and become the Emperor of a unified Vietnam, she died and remained a nun.

In the 20th century, with the modernization movement of Vietnamese Buddhism, again most of the eminent figures of Buddhist Nuns are from royal and official families. They engaged mainly in education and charity works, and some of them published books and poems such as Diệu Không (1905-1997) and Trí Hải (1937-2003).

Through the history of Buddhist Nun Order in Vietnam, we notice a special trait about the social origin of this order from the early beginning down to the present time. That is, most of them are from the upper class of the society and most of them already had a family life before becoming nuns.

Abstract: The Thai Bhikkhuni Movement and Women's Empowerment

by Dr. Emma Tomalin

This paper discusses the recent emergence of a movement in Thailand that aims to critique and transform patriarchal values supported by the Theravada Buddhist tradition through introducing female ordination (bhikkhuni ordination). The paper argues that there is a relationship between the low status of women in Thai Buddhism and the inferior status of women in Thai society. The introduction of female leadership roles in Thai Buddhism could play a role in balancing the gender hierarchies within the tradition as well as in society more broadly.

Abstract: Life and Mission of Elder Gongga (1903-1997): Bridging Dharma Traditions and beyond Gender Discrimination

by Stefania Travagnin

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Elder Gongga (1903-1997) is a remarkable Chinese Buddhist woman who engaged in spreading Tibetan Buddhism in the Chinese region, bridged Dharma traditions and deleted gender discrimination.

Native of Beiping, Shen Shuwen's (Elder Gongga's secular name) first encounter with Buddhism is dated 1922. Later on, she had the opportunity to meet, and therefore be influenced by, eminent Chinese monks such as the reformer Taixu 太虛 and the Chan master Xuyun 虛雲, and at the end espoused the Esoteric doctrine of Tibetan Buddhism.

Elder Gongga played a very important role in the Sangha, by being an active preacher in Mainland China and then in Taiwan. She undertook the mission to transmit and spread the teachings of Kargyu school into Taiwan: the Gongga Vihāra 貢噶精舍, that she established in the early sixties at Zhonghe 中和 (Taipei county), was the first Kargyu Dharma center founded in Taiwan, as well as one of the very first Tibetan Dharma centers established on the island.

In these terms, the analysis of Elder Gongga's life and works provide us with data on the state of Buddhism in China (and Taiwan) during the 20th century. Furthermore, Elder Gongga's story is especially the story of a Chinese Buddhist woman practicing and preaching Tibetan Buddhism in China first and Taiwan then, and therefore a valid portrayal of the condition of women following Tibetan Buddhism in the Chinese region during the last century. Finally, but not less important, the preservation of her body, performed according to the Tibetan tradition, was read by her followers as evidence of her attainment of Enlightenment, despite all the gender-related obstacles and doctrinal controversies.

My paper is divided into two part. The first section concerns life and practice of Elder Gongga, and the state of her legacy in the present-day Taiwan. The second segment aims to question and assess the historical and gender-related significance of her mission.

Abstract: A Summary of Research Works on Bhikshuni Ordination. Revival in Mulasarvastivada Tradition Flourishing in Tibet

by Acarya Geshe Tashi Tsering

CONCLUSION

1. The possibility of imparting bhikshuni ordination by performing the bhikshuni ceremonial rite at present.

The Minor Precepts of Vinaya states:

After that, all the bhikshus should assemble and sit, at least a minimum number of ten bhikshu companions [is required] and all the bhikshunis should assemble and sit, at least a minimum number of twelve bhikshuni companions [is required]. In front of the bhikshus who perform the act [ceremonial rite], [she] should be placed on a bunch of grasses or on a clean mat with folded hands. Then she should request the sangha of both bhikshus and bhikshunis to impart on her the bhikshuni ordination.

The Karmashatam Vinaya states:

After that, in addition to the sangha of bhikshunis, in the "central-land" a sangha of ten or more bhikshus should assemble; and in the case that the required number of bhikshunis does not exist in the "border-lands", then in addition to the vinaya-holders [of bhikshus] and five [bhikshunis], more bhikshus should be added. It should be known that the act [ceremonial rite] of imparting bhikshuni ordination done by the bhikshu sangha is the dual bhikshuni ordination [the bhikshuni ordination imparted by both bhikshus and bhikshunis].

As explained above, it is established that the bhikshuni ordination should be bestowed by the sangha of both bhikshus and bhikshunis after receiving the vows of shikshamani and brahmacharyopasthana from the bhikshuni sangha. Since the bhikshuni lineage of the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya tradition does not exist, all the Vinaya-holders agree that there is no way to impart bhikshuni ordination through the bhikshuni ceremonial rite.

2. What would be the result if bhikshuni ordination were to be imparted through the bhikshu ceremonial rite at the present time?

While the Buddha was alive, in response to the question asked by Utpali, the Buddha said: Noble one, if a man is ordained as a novice monk (shramanera) by the bhikshuni karmavidhi, is it considered being ordained? Utpali! It is called ordained. However, the performers of the ordination have infractions ('das pa). Noble one, if a woman is ordained as a novice nun (shramanerika) by bhikshuni karmavidhi, is it considered ordained? Utpali! It is called ordained. However, the performers of the ordination have infractions.

Thus, this proclamation is given in the page 240 of the Vinaya text called Questions Asked.

The Root Vinaya Sutra:

It is not an inappropriate act if the bhikshus perform the other bhikshuni karmavidhi.

As stated, it is agreed by all the Vinaya-holders that the bhikshuni vows will be generated [within a woman] if the bhikshu ceremonial rite is performed and bhikshu vows will be generated [within a man] if the bhikshuni ceremonial rite is performed. However, the performers will get infractions.

However, there are main three points on which the Vinaya-holders could not come to a common agreement:

- a. The Vinaya-holders could not reach an agreement on whether it is appropriate or not to bestow the faulty bhikshuni ordination through performing the bhikshu ceremonial rite.
- b. Vinaya-holders could not reach a common view on whether or not the brahmacharyopasthana is required before the bhikshuni ordination.
- c. Vinaya-holders also have different views on whether the vows of brahmacharyopasthana

should be bestowed exclusively by the bhikshuni sangha or whether they can be imparted by the bhikshu sangha when the bhikshuni sangha is not available.

3. How should the decisions be made?

All matters related to the sangha should be resolved in conformity with Vinaya or without contradicting the rules of the Vinaya through assembling the Vinaya-holders as stated below:

The Buddha said:

Oh Bhikshus! When I, your Teacher, pass into parinirvana and become no more available, you should not think "Our Teacher and Teaching are missing". That is why I told you to recite the Pratimoksha-sutras twice a month is from now on; it is your Teacher and Teaching. Oh Bhikshus! For all the subtle points of the fundamental precepts and minor precepts, you convene the sangha and discuss the issue and resolve it to reach a peaceful decision.

Acharya Gunaprabha, the great Vinaya-holder of India, said:

If [an act] goes against the ceremonial rite, then, the act is not acceptable. Here, the ceremonial rite is: The required number of sangha members should be complete; the act should be uttered; and the act should be performed.

Lord Atisha, the great Vinaya-holder said:

We in India, if any important or controversial issues come to light, convene an assembly of upholders of the Tripitaka. Then, we discuss whether it is disapproved in the Tripitaka or whether it contradicts the Tripitaka. In this way, we make the decision.

Je-Tsongkhapa Lobsang Dakpa:

We should take the Vinaya, which teaches the precepts to be trained, as the substitute for the Teacher after the passing of the Buddha, just as it is stated in the Scripture on Discernment:

After my passing into parinirvana
For the ordained people to respect it
In front of the bhikshu sangha
You should earnestly praise this [Vinaya] as the Teacher.
Since the Vinaya is the discernment/judge
For individual liberation,
Those who wish to be liberated [from Samsara]
Should respect and earnestly listen to it.
And so on, and at the end:
Whosoever does not have this bridle [of Vinaya]
And does not wish it forever
Will be troubled by the battle of ignorance
Wandering forever without a place to hold.

The Most Excellent Venerable Master; His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet said:

In any case, such matters related to these lineages should be discussed and decided collectively by the upholders of Tripitaka in general, and particularly by the Vinaya-holders; there is no way an individual person can make a decision.

Thus, I have presented here a short but concise article regarding bhikshuni ordination in conformity with the Vinaya scriptural citations in order to reach a final decision. I have written no deceptive words here and this article does not contain any emotional attachments.

It may contain the dual taste of sour and sweet. I seek apology for the mistakes you come across, if there are any. May the merit acquired through this effort fulfill my prayers!

May the spiritual masters who glorify the Dharma live long

May all who protect Dharma have good health

And may the Buddha Dharma, the source of happiness and wellbeing
Of all the sentient beings, prevail forever.
May all be happy!
Thank you.

Abstract: Gender Equity and Human Rights

by Prof. Dr. Karma Lekshe Tsomo

In the past fifty years, efforts to bring women into the mainstream of human society have accelerated and great advances have been made in many areas, due to the courage and conscientious efforts of women and men around the world. Unfortunately, however, the idea of equal rights remains a dream for women in most societies. Outdated attitudes about women's nature, potential, and capabilities continue to keep women at a disadvantage politically, economically, educationally, and in the religious and domestic spheres. Gender equality is a key element of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and U.N. Resolution 1325, yet gender discrimination continues in all societies, resulting in huge losses for human society.

The religious traditions that shape societal attitudes toward women and also women's attitudes toward themselves often send mixed messages. Most of the world's major world religions – Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and so on – assert that women and men have equal potential for liberation or are equal in the sight of God, but social realities reveal a stark contradiction between rhetoric and reality. Most women continue to lack equal representation in social, political, and religious institutions. For many, the failure of the world's religions to live up to their professed ideals is not only hypocritical; it also exposes religious institutions' lack of social responsiveness to the needs of human society. The human rights debate raises two important questions. The first question is political: Is the language of human rights applicable to all human beings across cultures or does it grow out of a socio-historical background that cannot cross cultures? For example, the People's Republic of China maintains that the concept of human rights was framed in a European context and is a Western imposition on non-European cultures. Others feel that human rights are universal. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, for example, believes that human rights follow naturally from concepts of compassion and interrelatedness.

The second question raised in the human rights debate is philosophical: What is the nature of human rights and to whom do they apply? In a system of thought that proposes the concept of an eternal soul, inalienable rights may be viewed as concomitant with the human person. In a system such as Buddhism that does not speak in terms of an eternal soul, however, to what do such rights adhere? Further, in systems of thought in which sentient beings are believed to take rebirth in different states of existence, do rights apply differently to human beings and other life forms or differently to women and men? This paper will explore these questions from a Buddhist feminist perspective.

Abstract: Remembering the Ordained Nuns: Models for Modern Tibetan Communities

by Dr. Ivette Maria Vargas-O'Bryan

During Sagadawa in Tibetan communities, we often expect rituals commemorating the birth, death, and parinirvana of the Buddha to be performed throughout temples and monasteries. But pass by some of the nunneries and you shall find Tibetans led by nuns and monks practicing rituals associated with and retelling the life of an early medieval ordained nun, Dge slong ma Dpal mo. Why does this nun stand above the rest during this time period of the Tibetan calendar? Why does she withstand the test of time?

Dge slong ma Dpal mo was a maverick for her time. She was an ordained nun who headed a temple and founded a fasting ritual that eventually led to the creation of lineages passed on by Rin chen bzang po, Atisha, Jo gdan Bsod nams bzang po, 'Od dpag rdo rje, Zhu chen Tshul khribs rin chen, the Dalai Lama VII, and a host of others. Her relics are kept in a medicine image of Avalokiteshvara in Zhwa lu monastery in Gtsang province, Tibet. She was also, however, a nun who suffered from leprosy and was ostracized because of it. And despite this, she became a symbol of power and transformation for Buddhists throughout the centuries. But what is the role of suffering in ordained women's lives? What role does gender play in an ordained nun's status in a community?

This paper will examine the interrelationship and dynamics of gender and suffering in an ordained nun's life story. Some brief comparisons on the historical level will be made about nuns in other Mahayana traditions and renunciate women in the Theravadin traditions.

Abstract: The Legal Procedures for the Bhiksuni Ordination

by Ven. Bhiksuni Wei-Chun

In this article, we shall discuss the legal ordination sequence for a lay woman to become a fully-ordained bhiksuni, with the emphasis on the various conditions that have to be fulfilled in the full-ordination proceedings. Upon having completed the two preliminary stages, namely, the sramaneri and siksamana, the candidate first has to be ordained in the side of the Bhiksunisamgha by a quorum of ten (or twelve) bhiksunis and then she should receive the full ordination in the Dual Samgha on the same day. While going through the proceedings, the following four conditions have to be fulfilled to constitute a legitimate ordination.

1. *The qualification of the candidate*

The candidate must have received her Going-forth from a qualified bhiksuni, have completed her two years of study in the siksamana precepts in the Bhiksunisamgha, and have observed the six rules (according to the Dharmagupta tradition) without transgression.

2. *The validity of the territory*

The ordination platform territory for holding the ordination ceremony has to be authorized by the bhiksus and bhiksunis respectively.

3. *The validity of the assembly*

The specific quorums of bhiksus and bhiksunis are needed to validate the ordination.

4. *The accurate performance of the jnapticaturtha karman in the Samgha*

The detailed explanation of each condition will be presented in accordance with the Vinaya. In the concluding part, tribute will be paid to the late Vinaya Master Kuang Hua (廣化律師) who has inspired the bhiksunis in Taiwan since 1982 to follow the legal ordination sequence prescribed by the Buddha in the Vinaya. The correct sequence is preserved and widely implemented till now. This is something we, as members of the Buddhist Bhiksunisamgha Community in Taiwan, can be proud of.

Abstract: The Noble Task for the Tibetan Buddhist Community: To Establish Its Bhikkhuni Lineage

By Ven. Bhikkhuni Wu Yin

It is a holy and noble task for the Tibetan Buddhist community to establish its Bhikkhuni lineage, regardless it is for the entirety of the Vinaya teaching, the completion of the Sangha, the spread of Buddha-dharma, or even for the consideration of equality for women.

Causes and conditions are always carefully examined when the Buddha lay down the precepts, whether it is their observations, transgressions, or exceptions. There are workable ways by which the Tibetan Buddhist community can establish its Bhikkhuni lineage. Only when all the seven groups of disciples are present is a Sangha complete. When qualified women are accepted into the Sangha, obtaining complete education on precepts, doctrine, and meditation, it surely will bring a positive effect on the transmission of the Buddha-dharma. It is also an act which expresses the genuine concern in Buddhism for the equal opportunity in education for women.

Abstract: The Ordination System of the Late Imperial China

Yu-chen Li

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Historically, political power has influenced the development of Buddhism in China in a variety of ways. The decentralization of the Chinese system of ordination, which was mandated by the Ming and Qing courts and resulted in changes in the ordination records, offers an excellent example. In this paper, I examine the changing relations between Buddhism and the Chinese state that occurred during the Ming and Qing periods, the shift in authority over the Buddhist ordination system that resulted, and the influences and implications of this shift.

Focusing on the roles and status of women in the Chinese ordination system, I seek to explain why the names of some female preceptors are missing in the ordination records as a result of the decentralization policies of the Ming and Qing governments. In contrast to previous dynasties, when Buddhist schools established ordination platforms in local temples, the Ming and Qing courts curtailed the relative independence of Sangha law, in an attempt to confine Buddhism's power under the law. From the perspective of female Buddhists, however, an officially regulated ordination system might offer a certain degree of protection. In fact, nuns found it easier to receive ordination in the official ordination system than they had in the earlier system of ordination platforms in private temples. This paper reconstructs the complicated process of bhiksuni ordination in China, knowledge that may help revive the bhiksuni lineage in Buddhist traditions that currently lack full ordination for women.

Abstract: Vicissitudes in the Order of Buddhist Nuns during Chosŏn Korea

by Dr. Hyangsoon Yi

University of Georgia

Chosŏn (1392-1910) was the last dynasty of pre-modern Korea. The military elites who toppled down the Buddhist state of Koryŏ (918-1391) and founded Chosŏn were ideologically armed with Confucianism, and so they condemned Buddhism from the outset of the new dynasty. As the Chosŏn court officially adopted Confucianism as the state religion and ideology, Buddhist monks and nuns were relegated to the lowest social class, along with butchers, courtesans, itinerant entertainers, and government slaves. Monks were banned from entering the capital, and many Buddhist temples were displaced from towns to mountains. Although these measures were implemented with varying degrees of severity by different kings, the anti-Buddhist policy remained unchanged in its core for nearly five hundred years until the end of Chosŏn.

My paper addresses the devastating impact of the anti-Buddhist policy on various aspects of the bhikshuni sangha of Chosŏn. While my main concern lies in the disruption of nuns' ordination lineage during this period, the paper also aims at demonstrating the remarkable resilience of Chosŏn nuns under the harsh government control over their monastic practice tradition.

Buddhist nuns are virtually invisible in public records from this period. Snippets of information on their lives and practice are scattered in sundry places outside the official history of Korean Buddhism. Given the deplorable paucity of historical records on Chosŏn nuns, my article makes an extensive use of private journals, literary works, monastic lore and legends, and folk history. Some of the major issues that I attempt to discuss in my paper include: specifics of the anti-Buddhist policy that were pertinent to nuns and their community; possible ordination procedures for women in the increasingly hostile Confucian social milieu; and the emergence and consolidation of "monastic families" for nuns. These families were based on a bhikshuni tutelage system rather than a dharma lineage. A bhikshuni teacher (ŭnsa) and her disciple (sangjwa) formed a kind of filial relationship akin to a mother and her daughter, and this tradition has been passed down to today's bhikshuni sangha.

Buddhist nuns of Chosŏn Korea remain an uncharted area of research. My article will show how their extraordinary struggle contributed to preserving not only the bhikshuni lineage but also the historical continuity of the Korean Buddhist tradition itself. In doing so, the article will also clarify the broad historical backgrounds of the official reinstatement of a dual ordination for nuns in Korea in 1982.