

Global or local or both?

On the establishment of a Tibetan nuns' order

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vinaya – Buddhist monastic discipline

bhikṣuṇī (skt) / *bikkhunī* (pāli) = nuns ordained through the ritual called *upasampadā*

Original location(s)	China, Taiwan	Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia etc	Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal
Vinaya	Dharmaguptaka	Theravāda	Mūlasarvāstivāda
Sangha	bhikṣus + bhikṣuṇīs	bhikkhus (recent ordinations of bhikkhunīs are not yet accepted by the majority of Sanghas)	bhikṣus
	bhikṣuṇī ordination was introduced to China in the 4 th cent. AD by Sri Lankan nuns (?)	bhikkhunī ordination was discontinued before 1200 AD (Sri Lanka)	bhikṣuṇī ordination never reached Tibet

“Himalayan nuns”: female novices or students in the Tibetan tradition, who look and live like nuns, but have not received full ordination; most of them live in Tibet, Nepal and India.

“Western bhikṣuṇīs”: women who have received full ordination in the Chinese Dharmaguptaka tradition, but who live and dress like Tibetan nuns, most of them in the West.

“Vinaya arguments”:

Contra: “bhikṣuṇīs are essential part of the performance of an ordination of a new bhikṣuṇī. Once the order of nuns died out, it can therefore not be revived.”

Pro: “There are ways around this problem. The first nuns’ ordination can be performed by monks alone, or by Mūlasarvāstivāda monks together with nuns of the Dharmaguptaka tradition.”

“International Congress on Buddhist Women’s Role in the Sangha: Bhikshuni Vinaya and Ordination Lineages”, held in June 2007 in Hamburg, Germany.

Participants: female and male Buddhists (lay and ordained) of all schools, scholars of Buddhism (esp. Vinaya scholars).

Śakyadhītā: “Daughters of the Buddha”, international organization of Buddhist women

saṃghabheda – “split of the sangha”, a severe breach of Vinaya rules.