

Buddhist Nuns Monks And Other Worldly Matters

Recent Papers On Monastic Buddhism In India

Studies In The Buddhist Traditions

'No, but we are different. Tonpa Sherab treated men and women in the same way, he passed on his teachings to both men and women and that is why we nuns are on equal footing with the monks, quite unlike the Buddhists.' The Bon religion is often seen as a part of the Tibetan Buddhism but its bond is actually far more complex and has its own origin in the history of Tibet. The role of women worshipping in Bon and Tibetan Buddhism, is quite different. And although there are studies on Buddhist nuns, there is hardly any research available on nuns in the Bon tradition. This pioneering study vividly portrays the nuns of the Redna Menling monastery in Dolanji (India), the headquarters of the Bon religion, in exile. It focuses on the developments of the Bon in exile, the specific context in which Bon nuns live and how the monastic tradition takes shape. It provides interesting insights into the monastic community in exile, the historic context of the Bon religion as well as the personal motives to become a nun. Taking a comparative approach, this fieldwork-based study explores the lives and thoughts of Buddhist nuns in present-day Taiwan and Sri Lanka. The author examines the postcolonial background and its influence on the modern situation, as well as surveying the main historical, economic, and social factors which influence the position of nuns in society. Based on original research, including interviews with nuns in both countries, the book examines their perspectives on controversial issues and in particular those concerning the status of women in Buddhism. Concerns discussed include allegedly misogynist teachings relating to women's inferior karma, that they cannot become Buddhas, and that nuns have to follow additional rules that monks do not. Bridging the gap between feminist theory and the reality of women in religion, the book makes a distinct contribution to the study of women in Buddhism by focusing on nuns from both of the main wings of Buddhism (Theravada and Mahayana) as well as furthering feminist studies of Buddhism and religion in general.

The second in a series of collected essays looking at Indian Buddhism.

"A millennium and a half ago some remarkable women cast aside the concerns of the world to devote their lives to Buddhism. Lives of the Nuns, a translation of the Pi-ch'iu-ni chuan, was compiled by Shih Pao-ch'ang in or about A.D. 516 and covers exactly that period when Buddhist monasticism for women was first being established in China. Originally written to demonstrate the efficacy of Buddhist scripture in the lives of female monastics, the sixty-five biographies are now regarded as the best source of information about women's participation in Buddhist monastic practice in premodern China." "Among the stories of the Buddhist life well lived are entertaining tales that reveal the wit and intelligence of these women in the face of unsavory officials, highway robbers, even fawning barbarians. When Ching-ch'eng and a fellow nun, renowned for their piety and strict asceticism, are taken to "the capital of the northern barbarians" and plied with delicacies, the women "besmirch their own reputation" by gobbling down the food shamelessly. Appalled by their lack of manners, the disillusioned barbarians release the nuns, who return happily to their convent." "Lives of the Nuns gives readers a glimpse into a world long vanished yet peopled with women and men who express the same aspirations and longing for spiritual enlightenment found at all times and in all places."

"Buddhologists, sinologists, historians, and those interested in religious studies and women's studies will welcome this volume, which includes annotations for readers new to the field of Chinese Buddhist history as well as for the specialist."--BOOK JACKET. Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Community of Buddhist Nuns is one of the oldest women's organizations in human

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history. In this book Dr. Wijayaratna explains how this community was started by the Buddha in the 5th century BCE, and how it developed gradually. To show the motivation and the way of life of these ordained women, the author uses the oldest texts of the Pali canon. Several chapters of this book discuss the position of Buddhist nuns in the field of the three famous monastic themes: poverty, chastity and obedience. This book describes in detail the structure of the organization of their Community, their day-to-day practices, and the virtues and mental discipline through which they strove to attain the sublime goal, Nibbana.

The life and work of Kim Iryŏp (1896–1971) bear witness to Korea's encounter with modernity. A prolific writer, Iryŏp reflected on identity and existential loneliness in her poems, short stories, and autobiographical essays. As a pioneering feminist intellectual, she dedicated herself to gender issues and understanding the changing role of women in Korean society. As an influential Buddhist nun, she examined religious teachings and strove to interpret modern human existence through a religious world view. Originally published in Korea when Iryŏp was in her sixties, *Reflections of a Zen Buddhist Nun* (ʔnʔ sudoin ʔi hoesang) makes available for the first time in English a rich, intimate, and unfailingly candid source of material with which to understand modern Korea, Korean women, and Korean Buddhism. Throughout her writing, Iryŏp poses such questions as: How does one come to terms with one's identity? What is the meaning of revolt and what are its limitations? How do we understand the different dimensions of love in the context of Buddhist teachings? What is Buddhist awakening? How do we attain it? How do we understand God and the relationship between good and evil? What is the meaning of religious practice in our time? We see through her thought and life experiences the co-existence of seemingly conflicting ideas and ideals—Christianity and Buddhism, sexual liberalism and religious celibacy, among others. In *Reflections of a Zen Buddhist Nun*, Iryŏp challenges readers with her creative interpretations of Buddhist doctrine and her reflections on the meaning of Buddhist practice. In the process she offers insight into a time when the ideas and contributions of women to twentieth-century Korean society and intellectual life were just beginning to emerge from the shadows, where they had been obscured in the name of modernization and nation-building.

The flourishing of the Taiwanese bhiksuni community illustrated how women's determination to pursue a formal monastic membership enables them to utilize social and conventional resources to gain ecclesiastical recognition. In return, both their ritual prestige and social independence were institutionalized in term of the religious identity of bhiksuni.

Nirmala S. Salgado offers a groundbreaking study of the politics of representation of Buddhist nuns. Challenging assumptions about writing on gender and Buddhism, Salgado raises important theoretical questions about the applicability of liberal feminist concepts and language to the practices of Buddhist nuns. Based on extensive research in Sri Lanka as well as on interviews with Theravada and Tibetan nuns from around the world, Salgado's study invites a reconsideration of female renunciation. How do scholarly narratives continue to be complicit in reinscribing colonialist and patriarchal stories about Buddhist women? In what ways have recent debates contributed to the construction of the subject of the Theravada bhikkhuni? How do key Buddhist concepts such as dukkha, samsara, and sila ground female renunciant practices? Salgado's provocative analysis of modern discourses about the supposed empowerment of nuns challenges interpretations of female renunciation articulated in terms of secular notions such as "freedom" in renunciation, and questions the idea that the higher ordination of nuns constitutes a movement in which female renunciants act as agents seeking to assert their autonomy in a struggle against patriarchal norms. Salgado argues that the concept of a global sisterhood of nuns—an idea grounded in a notion of equality as a universal ideal—promotes a discourse of dominance about the lives of non-Western women and calls for more nuanced readings of the everyday renunciant practices and lives of Buddhist nuns. *Buddhist Nuns and Gendered Practice* is essential reading for anyone interested in the

connections between religion and power, subjectivity and gender, and feminism and postcolonialism.

In this study, based on both historical evidence and ethnographic data, Paula Arai shows that nuns were central agents in the foundation of Buddhism in Japan in the sixth century. They were active participants in the Soto Zen sect, and have continued to contribute to the advancement of the sect to the present day.

Drawing on her fieldwork among the Soto nuns, Arai demonstrates that the lives of many of these women embody classical Buddhist ideals. They have chosen to lead a strictly disciplined monastic life over against successful careers and the unconstrained contemporary secular lifestyle. In this, and other respects, they can be shown to stand in stark contrast to their male counterparts.

This 1991 book describes the ideal way of life prescribed for Buddhist monks and nuns in the Pali texts of the Theravada school of Buddhism.

The term "revival" has been used to describe the resurgent vitality of Buddhism in Taiwan. Particularly impressive is the quality and size of the nun's order: Taiwanese nuns today are highly educated and greatly outnumber monks. Both characteristics are unprecedented in the history of Chinese Buddhism and are evident in the Incense Light community (Xiangguang). *Passing the Light* is the first in-depth case study of the community, which was founded in 1974 and remains a small but influential order of highly educated nuns who dedicate themselves to teaching Buddhism to lay adults. The work begins with a historical survey of Buddhist nuns in China, based primarily on the sixth-century biographical collection *Lives of the Nuns* and stories of nuns in subsequent centuries. This is followed by discussions on the early history of the Incense Light community; the life of Wuyin, one of its most prominent leaders; and the crucial role played by Buddhist studies societies on college campuses, where many nuns were first introduced to Incense Light. Later chapters look at the curriculum and innovative teaching methods at the Incense Light seminary and the nuns' efforts to teach Buddhism to adults. The work ends with portraits of individual nuns, providing details on their backgrounds, motivations for becoming nuns, and the problems or setbacks they have encountered both within and without the Incense Light community. This engaging study enriches the literature on the history of Buddhist nuns, seminaries, and education, and will find an appreciative audience among scholars and students of Chinese religion, especially Buddhism, as well as those interested in questions of religion and modernity and women and religion.

This is the extended and annotated edition including * an extensive annotation of more than 10.000 words about the history and basics of Buddhism, written by Thomas William Rhys Davids * an interactive table-of-contents * perfect formatting for electronic reading devices The *Kullavagga* includes accounts of the First and Second Buddhist Councils and the establishment of the community of Buddhist nuns, as well as rules for addressing offenses within the community. The *Cullavagga* has 12 chapters:- the first deals with various procedures to be

followed in dealing with badly behaved monks- the next deals with probation for monks guilty of certain offences (see Suttavibhanga)- the next chapter deals with the case where a monk on probation commits a further offence- explanation of the seven rules for settling disputes (see Suttavibhanga)- minor matters- lodgings- schism; this chapter starts with the story of Devadatta, the Buddha's fellow clansman; he starts by inviting the elderly Buddha to retire and appoint him in his place; when this is refused he makes three attempts to assassinate the Buddha; when these fail he asks the Buddha to impose strict practices, including vegetarianism, on the monks; when this is refused he leads a schism- observances; various duties- a monk may suspend the recitation of the Patimokkha if another monk has an offence unconfessed- nuns; the Buddha, after being asked seven times, finally agrees to establish an order of nuns, but warns that it will weaken the teaching and shorten its lifetime, and imposes strict rules subordinating nuns to monks (some even more misogynistic material can be found in the Pali Canon, most notably the Kunala Jataka; for the other side see Therigatha)- shortly after the Buddha's death, Kassapa holds a council at which the teachings are recited; Upali answers questions on the vinaya and Ananda on the dhamma- a century later a dispute arises on various points, mainly on the acceptance of gold and silver; another council is held which agrees on the stricter position, after receiving advice from an aged pupil of Ananda (courtesy of wikipedia.com)

Women played major roles in the history of Buddhist China, but given the paucity of the remaining records, their voices have all but faded. In *Daughters of Emptiness*, Beata Grant renders a great service by recovering and translating the enchanting verse - by turns assertive, observant, devout - of forty-eight nuns from sixteen centuries of imperial China. This selection of poems, along with the brief biographical accounts that accompany them, affords readers a glimpse into the extraordinary diversity and sometimes startling richness of these women's lives. A sample poem for this stunning collection: The sequence of seasons naturally pushes forward, Suddenly I am startled by the ending of the year. Lifting my eyes I catch sight of the winter crows, Calling mournfully as if wanting to complain. The sunlight is cold rather than gentle, Spreading over the four corners like a cloud. A cold wind blows fitfully in from the north, Its sad whistling filling courtyards and houses. Head raised, I gaze in the direction of Spring, But Spring pays no attention to me at all. Time a galloping colt glimpsed through a crack, The tap [of Death] at the door has its predestined time. How should I not know, one who has left the world, And for whom floating clouds are already familiar? In the garden there grows a rosary-plum tree: Whose sworn friendship makes it possible to endure. - Chan Master Jingnuo

Recounts the struggles of a young Thai woman to become a Buddhist nun and the challenges and rewards of that life.

You can find an eBook version of this title on Google Play. In these talks, Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche explain the great benefits of practicing Dharma

as an ordained person, how to keep the ordination pure, the purpose of the monastic community, how to live together as monks and nuns, and much more. The necessity for the lay community to support the Sangha is also made clear, and not only monks and nuns but lay practitioners, too, will gain much by reading this booklet. This book is made possible by kind supporters of the Archive who, like you, appreciate how we make these teachings available in so many ways, including in our website for instant reading, listening or downloading, and as printed and electronic books. Our website offers immediate access to thousands of pages of teachings and hundreds of audio recordings by some of the greatest lamas of our time. Our photo gallery and our ever-popular books are also freely accessible there. Please help us increase our efforts to spread the Dharma for the happiness and benefit of all beings. You can find out more about becoming a supporter of the Archive and see all we have to offer by visiting our website. Thank you so much, and please enjoy this book.

This user's guide to Buddhist basics takes the most commonly asked questions—beginning with "What is the essence of the Buddha's teachings?"—and provides simple answers in plain English. Thubten Chodron's responses to the questions that always seem to arise among people approaching Buddhism make this an exceptionally complete and accessible introduction—as well as a manual for living a more peaceful, mindful, and satisfying Life. Buddhism for Beginners is an ideal first book on the subject for anyone, but it's also a wonderful resource for seasoned students, since the question-and-answer format makes it easy to find just the topic you're looking for, such as: • What is the goal of the Buddhist path? • What is karma? • If all phenomena are empty, does that mean nothing exists? • How can we deal with fear? • How do I establish a regular meditation practice? • What are the qualities I should look for in a teacher? • What is Buddha-nature? • Why can't we remember our past lives?

Explores the milieu of Taiwan's Buddhist nuns, who have the greatest numbers in the Buddhist world and a prominent place in their own country.

In Renunciation and Empowerment of Buddhist Nuns in Myanmar-Burma, Kawanami offers a detailed account of how Buddhist nuns build their monastic community through fostering scriptural education and engaging in religious activities devoted to the dissemination of the Buddha's teaching.

It can be a surprise to find that Buddhism gives great importance to the Sangha, the spiritual community. Some may feel that their guru or teacher is all that they need. To others, the idea of sharing their inner and outer lives with others can seem a challenge or even a threat. But the spiritual community is not about unthinking conformity or belonging to a comfortable group. Rather, it is the free association of developing individuals choosing to help each other along the path.

How can people living in one of the poorest countries in the world be among the most charitable? In this book, Hiroko Kawanami examines the culture of giving in Myanmar, and explores the pivotal role that Buddhist monastic members occupy in creating a platform for civil society. Despite having at one time been listed as one of the poorest countries in the world in GNP terms, Myanmar has topped a global generosity list for the past four years with more than 90 percent of the population engaged in 'giving' activities. This book explores the close

relationship that Buddhists share with the monastic community in Myanmar, extending observations of this relationship into an understanding of wider Buddhist cultures. It then examines how deeply the reciprocal transactions of giving and receiving in society – or interdependent living – are implicated in the Buddhist faith. *The Culture of Giving in Myanmar* fills a gap in research on Buddhist offerings in Myanmar, and is an important contribution to the growing field of Myanmar studies and anthropology of Buddhism.

The Therigatha is a celebration, with many different human faces, of women's personal experiences of Nibbana. This thesis, in the field of Theravada Buddhist Studies, examines the *Therigatha* from a dharmalogical perspective. I investigate the distinguishing characteristics of these early female voices transmitting the Buddha's teachings. I examine the religious, social, and literary context in which the poems were composed, and their textual history and content. I analyze the Pali text for key words indicative of the relative dating of this text compared to others in the Pali canon, and investigate the frequencies of stock phrases in the wider context of the Sutta Pitaka. This analysis also reveals differences between the poems of the nuns compared to those of the monks in the *Theragatha*. I argue that the poems of the *Therigatha* can be used effectively by Dharma teachers today to inspire Buddhist practitioners, particularly in regard to the Third Noble Truth, the truth of freedom. This thesis explores a central message of the *Therigatha* that Nibbana, complete release, is possible in this very lifetime, and that it is just as possible for women as for men. With the variety of the testimonials of ultimate freedom found in these poems, this text can inspire, guide, and liberate practitioners regardless of their sex, culture, situation, background, or even their challenges. In exploring what the *Therigatha* depicts about how these venerable nuns train, I offer my interpretation, with illustrations from their poems, of a path of practice that can lead to liberation, and I discuss the role of insight and the goal of the training, Nibbana. I investigate: 1) the foundations of practice: ethics, renunciation, meditation, friendship, and having a teacher one can trust; 2) wise effort; 3) the application of effort to: purifying the mind, courage, letting go of afflictive states, stilling desires, contentment, concentration, and open awareness; 4) insight; and 5) letting go. The thesis concludes with reflections on the fundamental message of the *Therigatha*, its potential to elicit joy, and how it can inspire practitioners today, not least by offering us a taste of Nibbana.

Choosing Simplicity discusses the precepts and lifestyle of fully ordained nuns within the Buddhist tradition. The ordination vows act as guidelines to promote harmony both within the individual and within the community by regulating and thereby simplifying one's relationships to other sangha members and laypeople, as well as to the needs of daily life. Observing these precepts and practicing the Buddhadharma brings incredible benefit to oneself and others. Since the nuns' precepts include those for monks and have additional rules for nuns, this book is useful for anyone interested in monastic life. As a record of women's struggle not only to achieve a life of self-discipline, but also to create harmonious independent religious communities of women, *Choosing Simplicity* is a pioneering work.

With reference to India.

Explores the exemplary legacy of Buddhist women across the centuries and across the Buddhist world. *Eminent Buddhist Women* reveals the exemplary legacy of Buddhist women through the centuries. Despite the Buddha's own egalitarian values, Buddhism as a religion has been dominated by men for more than two thousand years. With few exceptions, the achievements of Buddhist women have remained hidden or ignored. The narratives in this book call into question the criteria for "eminence" in the Buddhist tradition and how these criteria are constructed and controlled. Each chapter pays a long-overdue tribute to one woman or a group of women from across the Buddhist world, including the West. Using a variety of sources, from orally transmitted legends to firsthand ethnographic research, contributors examine the key issues women face in their practice of Buddhist ethics, contemplation, and social action. What emerges are Buddhist principles that transcend gender:

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loving kindness, compassion, wisdom, spiritual attainment, and liberation. "In her chapter 'What Is a Relevant Role Model?' Rita Gross describes the need for more stories about Buddhist women, particularly those whose feats are not so fabled as to seem out of reach for contemporary practitioners. This volume advances that objective, mapping the paths of numerous, often lesser-known women who have dedicated their lives to Buddhism and inspired their communities." — Buddhadharma "Educational and inspirational, this important collection will appeal to scholars and practitioners alike." — Hsiao-Lan Hu, author of *This-Worldly Nibbana: A Buddhist-Feminist Social Ethic for Peacemaking in the Global Community* Reflects the current state of scholarship in Buddhist Studies, its entries being written by specialists in many areas, presenting an accurate overview of Buddhist history, thought and practices, most entries having cross-referencing to others and bibliographical references. Contain around 1000 pages and 500,000 words, totalling around 1200 entries.

Myanmar-Burma has one of the largest concentrations of Buddhist nuns and monks in the world today. In *Renunciation and Empowerment of Buddhist Nuns in Myanmar-Burma*, Kawanami traces the nun's scholarly lineage in modern Myanmar history and examines their contemporary religious position in Myanmar's social and political contexts. Although their religious status may appear ambiguous from a textual viewpoint, it is argued that their large presence is a clear indication as to the important functions Buddhist nuns perform in the monastic community. Sagaing Hill where the main research was conducted, occupies an important educational centre for Myanmar nuns in consolidating their scholarly lineage and spreading the network of dhamma teachers. The book examines transactions that take place in their everyday lives and reveals the essence of their religious lives that make Buddhist nuns an essential bridge between sangha and society. Book jacket.

The life of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva / translated from the Chinese of Kumārajīva by Li Rongxi -- The life of Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva / translated from the Chinese of Kumārajīva by Li Rongxi -- Biography of Dharma Master Vasubandhu / translated from the Chinese of Paramārtha by Albert A. Dalia -- Biographies of Buddhist nuns / translated from the Chinese of Baochang by Li Rongxi -- The journey of the eminent monk Faxian / translated from the Chinese of Faxian by Li Rongxi

This book offers for the first time a comprehensive account of Buddhist nuns and Tibetan Buddhist nuns in particular... Based on historical research and an extensive period of fieldwork in an exile nunnery in India, the present study gives a detailed description of the life of Buddhist nuns past and present. Particular attention is paid to the relationship between the normative view of women in Buddhism and how in fact Tibetan nuns adjust to, or try to alter, to these norms.

Provides the first English translation of the Tibetan and Chinese texts on monastic discipline for Buddhist nuns and presents a comparative study of the two texts. An important contribution for studies of women's history, feminist philosophy, women's studies, women in religion, and feminist ethics.

For young women in early South Asia, marriage was probably the most important event in their lives, as it largely determined their socioeconomic and religious future. Yet there has been little in the way of systematic examinations of the evidence on marriage customs among Buddhists of this time, and our understanding of the lives of early Buddhist women is still quite limited. This study uses ten stories from the *Avadānaśataka*, the collection of Buddhist narratives compiled from the second to fifth

centuries CE, to examine the social landscape of early India. The author analyzes marital customs and the development of nuns' hagiographies, while revealing regional variations of Buddhism in South Asia during this period.

When the Buddha established his community over twenty-five centuries ago, he did so upon a foundation of radical equality among women and men. And indeed, the earliest Buddhist scriptures celebrate the teachings and inspiring influence of these path-blazing female renunciants. Nonetheless, through much of the Buddhist world, the order of nuns has disappeared or was never transmitted at all. *Dignity & Discipline* represents a watershed moment in Buddhist history, as the Dalai Lama together with scholars and monastics from around the world, present powerful cases, grounded in both scripture and a profound appeal to human dignity, that the order of Buddhist nuns can and should be fully restored.

Explores the roles of Korean Buddhist nuns and laywomen from the fourth century to the present. Uncovering hidden histories, this book focuses on Korean Buddhist nuns and laywomen from the fourth century to the present. Today, South Korea's Buddhist nuns have a thriving monastic community under their own control, and they are well known as meditation teachers and social service providers. However, little is known of the women who preceded them. Using primary sources to reveal that which has been lost, forgotten, or willfully ignored, this work reveals various figures, milieux, and activities of female adherents, clerical and lay. Contributors consider examples from the early days of Buddhism in Korea during the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla periods (first millennium CE); the Koryŏ period (982–1392), when Buddhism flourished as the state religion; the Chosŏn period (1392–1910), when Buddhism was actively suppressed by the Neo-Confucian Court; and the contemporary resurgence of female monasticism that began in the latter part of the twentieth century. "...this work is a great success, and is an important first step in opening an area of research that will hopefully see continued expansion in the years to come." — *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*

In recent years Buddhist nuns from Asia and the West have met together to become more active in improving their status in the female sangha. At "Life As A Buddhist Nun," the 1996 conference in Dharamsala, His Holiness the Dalai Lama supported this effort of Buddhist nuns to clarify their purpose in taking vows, widening their context, broadening community beyond their own abbeys, and supporting one another on their quest to achieve greater equality. This book gathers some of the presentations and teaching at this conference. Coming from many different countries and backgrounds, these women show ways they have found to embrace group practice in an era when most societies extol individualism. Their passion for earned wisdom should inspire lay practitioners and other nuns seeking the essence of Buddhist practice.

Buddhist Nuns, Monks, and Other Worldly Matters: Recent Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India is the fourth in a series of collected essays by one of today's most distinguished scholars of Indian Buddhism. In these articles Gregory Schopen once again displays the erudition and originality that have contributed to a major shift in the way that Indian Buddhism is perceived, understood, and studied.

They may shave their heads, don simple robes, and renounce materialism and worldly desires. But the women seeking enlightenment in a Buddhist nunnery high in the folds of Himalayan Kashmir invariably find themselves subject to the tyrannies of subsistence, subordination, and sexuality. Ultimately, Buddhist monasticism reflects the

very world it is supposed to renounce. Butter and barley prove to be as critical to monastic life as merit and meditation. Kim Gutschow lived for more than three years among these women, collecting their stories, observing their ways, studying their lives. Her book offers the first ethnography of Tibetan Buddhist society from the perspective of its nuns. Gutschow depicts a gender hierarchy where nuns serve and monks direct, where monks bless the fields and kitchens while nuns toil in them. Monasteries may retain historical endowments and significant political and social power, yet global flows of capitalism, tourism, and feminism have begun to erode the balance of power between monks and nuns. Despite the obstacles of being considered impure and inferior, nuns engage in everyday forms of resistance to pursue their ascetic and personal goals. A richly textured picture of the little known culture of a Buddhist nunnery, the book offers moving narratives of nuns struggling with the Buddhist discipline of detachment. Its analysis of the way in which gender and sexuality construct ritual and social power provides valuable insight into the relationship between women and religion in South Asia today.

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Scholarly and popular consensus has painted a picture of Indian Buddhist monasticism in which monks and nuns severed all ties with their families when they left home for the religious life. In this view, monks and nuns remained celibate, and those who faltered in their "vows" of monastic celibacy were immediately and irrevocably expelled from the Buddhist Order. This romanticized image is based largely on the ascetic rhetoric of texts such as the Rhinoceros Horn Sutra. Through a study of Indian Buddhist law codes (vinaya), Shayne Clarke dehornes the rhinoceros, revealing that in their own legal narratives, far from renouncing familial ties, Indian Buddhist writers take for granted the fact that monks and nuns would remain in contact with their families. The vision of the monastic life that emerges from Clarke's close reading of monastic law codes challenges some of our most basic scholarly notions of what it meant to be a Buddhist monk or nun in India around the turn of the Common Era. Not only do we see thick narratives depicting monks and nuns continuing to interact and associate with their families, but some are described as leaving home for the religious life with their children, and some as married monastic couples. Clarke argues that renunciation with or as a family is tightly woven into the very fabric of Indian Buddhist renunciation and monasticisms. Surveying the still largely uncharted terrain of Indian Buddhist monastic law codes preserved in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, Clarke provides a comprehensive, pan-Indian picture of Buddhist monastic attitudes toward family. Whereas scholars have often assumed that monastic Buddhism must be anti-familial, he demonstrates that these assumptions were clearly not shared by the authors/redactors of Indian Buddhist monastic law codes. In challenging us to reconsider some of our most cherished assumptions concerning Indian Buddhist monasticisms, he provides a basis to rethink later forms of Buddhist monasticism such as those found in Central Asia, Ka?m?r, Nepal, and Tibet not in terms of corruption and decline but of continuity and development of a monastic or renunciant ideal that we have yet to understand fully.

Twelve years ago, the Sager Family Foundation, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, and the Dalai Lama's private office began a groundbreaking program called

Science for Monks to teach Western science to Tibetan monks and nuns. Recently, Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama announced a decision by the leaders of the monasteries to make the study of Western science part of the core curriculum required of all monastic scholars in the Gelug tradition. Beyond the Robe tells the story of the decade long development of the Science for Monks program and what it reveals about the larger role Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns can play in their monasteries, in their communities, and in the world at large. Beyond the Robe is a collection of essays from the monks and scientists containing the first insights that have come out of this historic effort. Beyond the Robe follows the monks' study of science, but it is not a science book. The real story here is what the study of science has revealed about who these remarkable men and woman really are and the much bigger role that they seem so suited to fill. "I hope that Beyond the Robe helps you to feel closer to the monks and nuns and to better understand their immense potential to provide leadership in their world and further insight into ours. Instead of simply admiring them from afar, let's all get close enough to really listen." —Bobby Sager "Bobby Sager has been not only a most generous and dedicated benefactor of the Science for Monks program since it was launched 12 years ago, but also he is a direct witness to its flourishing. His testimony and insight are key to an in-depth understanding of this unique encounter between two major traditions of knowledge, Buddhist contemplative science and modern Western science. His account provides a welcome encouragement to this wonderful meeting of minds and hearts at the service of humanity." —Matthieu Ricard "Beyond the Robe has many fascinating dimensions and makes a critical contribution to Tibet, to Buddhism, and to our world today. The space it opens is the world of the Tibetan Buddhist monastic universities, still thriving in Indian exile. Within that world, we encounter, in beautiful and thought provoking ways, the living tradition of Buddhist monastics, their realms of study, debate, prayer, and meditation, and their living intellectual and experiential encounter with the modern worldview, with its discoveries, technologies, and anxieties." —Robert Thurman

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