

BHIKKHUNI UPASAMPADĀ BODHGAYA
NOVEMBER 2022 - ORGANIZED BY:
MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA &
UNITED THERAVADA BHIKKHUNI
SANGHA INTERNATIONAL



HERITAGE OF BHIKKHUNĪ SANGHA

Introduction to
Bhikkhuni Sangha History
& Bhikkhunī Vinaya



Ācarinī Ven. Bhikkhunī Tathālokā Mahātherī
Founding Abbess & Preceptor, Dhammadharini
UTBSI Coordinator of Bhikkhuni History & Heritage

Namo Buddhāya

My best greetings to all Venerables of the Mahā Bodhi Society of India and United Theravāda Bhikkhunī Sangha International, and to all those who are dedicating their lives to the Blessed One the Buddha's Way of Life, Practice, Realization & Teaching.

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❖ I. Intro to Bhikkhuni Sangha History: HerStory

-> *The First Turning*

❖ II. The Buddhist Community

-> *Parallel Patterns*

❖ III. Intro to Bhikkhunī Vinaya

-> *Bhikkhunī Vibhanga*

-> *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka*

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Part I. Intro to Bhikkhuni
Sangha History: HerStory
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Kārtika Purnima
Pāli: Kattika Puṇṇami
Sinhala: Il Poya

4:15pm Nov 7th to 4:31pm Nov 8th
2022 CE / 2565 BE

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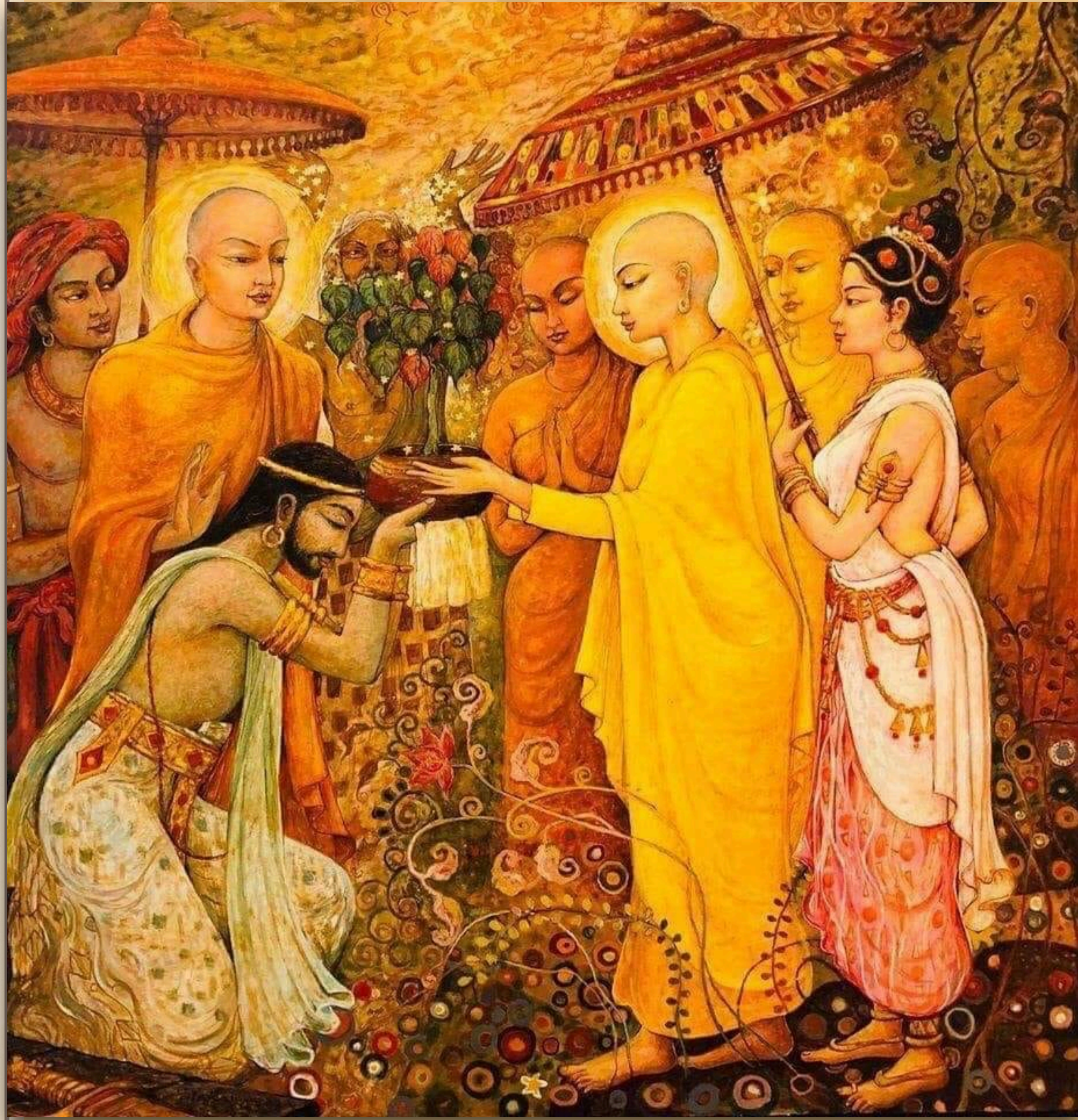


On this Kattike full moon, in 246 BCE, the Emperor Asoka held a great Bodhi Tree festival with his daughter Arahant Therī Sanghamittā and Bhikkhunī Sangha to honor their journey.

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Per all the ancient texts, the Buddhist Bhikkhunī Sangha dates back to venerable antiquity, to the early days of the Buddha himself, with Mahāpajāpati Gotamī Therī, and many great leading Arahātī Bhikkhunī Therīs.



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Early Pali-text chronicles passed down in Sri Lanka from the time of the Indian emperor Aśoka state that all previous Buddhas also had great leading Bhikkhunī disciples, as will the future Buddha Metteya (Skt. Maitreya)



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Our Buddha Siddhartha
Gotama, the Sage of the
Sakyans, also famously stated,
as part of *his founding mission
statement* — voiced even before
his very first Turning of the
Wheel of the Dhamma — that he
would have Bhikkhunī Disciples
who, just as his Bhikkhu
disciples, are:



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sāvīkā (*srāvīkā*):
true disciples (feminine)

vinītā: well-trained,
well-educated, disciplined

visāradā (*viśāradā*): assured,
confident, knowing how to
conduct oneself, skilled

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bahussutā (bahusrutā):
widely learned

dharmadhārā
(*dharmadhārā*):
bearers of the Teaching,
who have memorized the
Teaching



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ḍhammānuḍḍhamappaṭipannā:
who practice (*patipada*)
in-line with the Teaching

sāmīcippaṭipannā
(*samyak pratipadyate*):
who are correct in their
practice (*patipada*)



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anudhammacāriṇiyo:
who live perfecting in-line
with the Teaching

sakaṃ ācariyakam
uggahetvā —
and who, having learned it
and grasped it from their
Teachers —

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ācikkhissanti:
they show, tell, point out,
describe, explain
[that Dhamma]

desessanti:
they declare, set forth,
and teach
[that Dhamma]



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paññapessanti:
they reveal, impart, disclose
and help others to discover,
[the noble Truths]

paṭṭhapessanti:
they make known, furnish
with, and establish others
[in the Truths]



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vivarissanti:

having lifted the veil, and
removed the cover,
they set forth and disclose
[the Truths]

vibhajissanti:

they analyze, clearly
discerning and distinguishing
[the Dhamma] in all details
and factors

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uttānīkarissanti:

they open it up, make it clear,
and make it manifest

uppannam parappavādam

sabadhammena

suniggahitam niggahetvā:

they are able to legitimately
and completely refute false
doctrines (of others) that
have arisen

sappātibāriyam
ḍhammam desessantī'ti:
and to teach the miraculous/
wondrous teaching,
(accompanied by wonders);
substantiated, with a
demonstrable basis, well
founded.

- the Buddha
Mahāparinibbāna Sutta
Digha Nikāya

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Nov 9th-15th 2022

After the full moon, Emperor Aśoka and company set out on a weeklong journey from Pātaliputta; by land through the Vindhya Mountain range, and by the Ganga to the Tamralipti port, with Bodhi tree sapling and Bhikkhunī Sangha.

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Although some say (a) that the Bhikkhuni Sangha passed away after Mahāpajāpatī's Gotamī Therī's Parinibbana, or (b) passed away after Sanghamittā Therī, or (c) passed away after the first 500 years of the Buddha Sāsana —

In the first 1000 years of the Buddha Sāsana, we see numerous textual and epigraphical, inscriptural records of luminary bhikkhuni leaders shining in South Asia, and spreading abroad —

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In the Ashokan Period
3rd century BCE, we see:

-> Asokan daughters
Sanghamittā Therī (*to Sri Lanka*) ->
and younger half-sister Chārumatī
Therī (*to Nepal*)

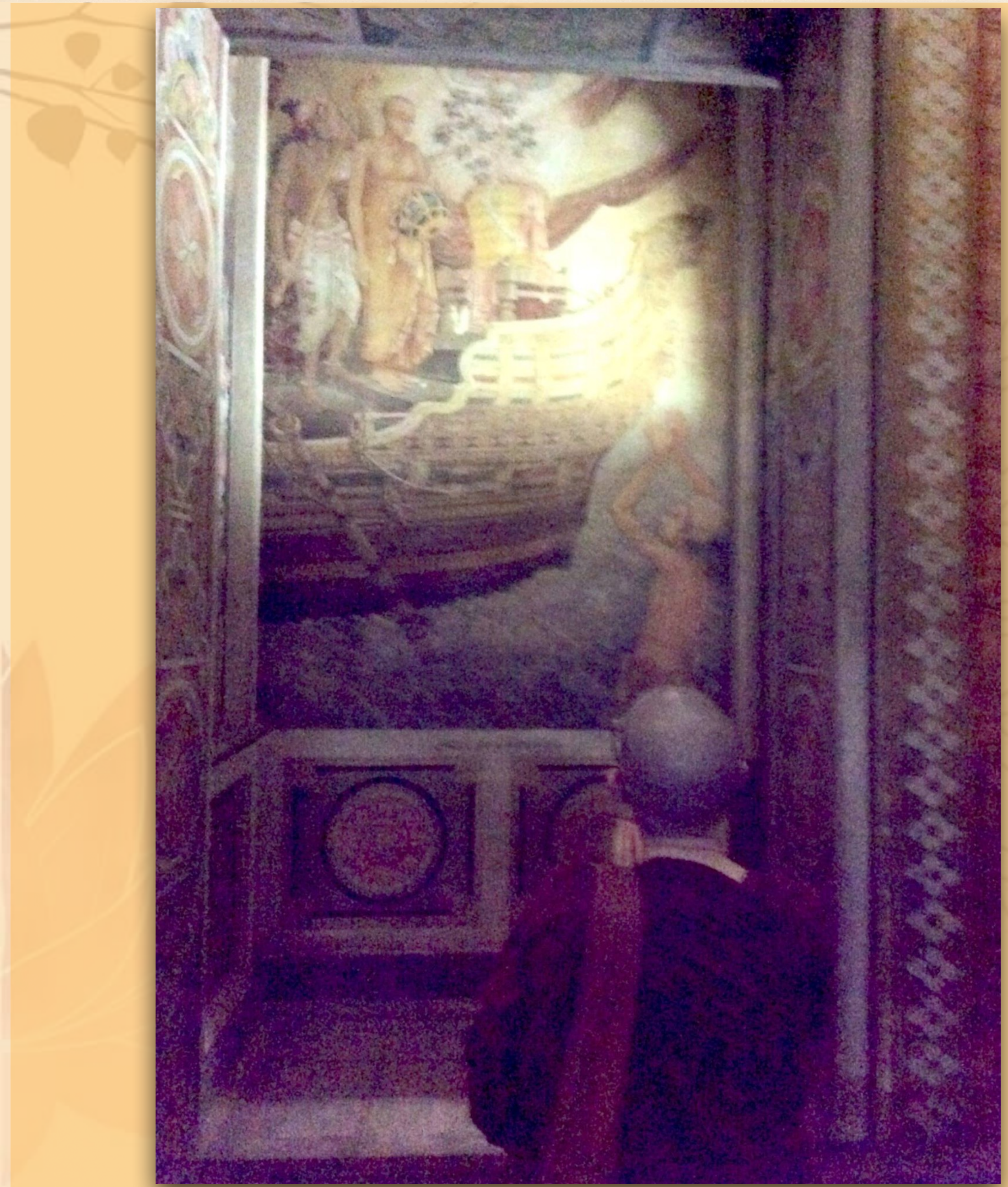
and the transmission of the lamp:

-> Anulā Tissā Therī,
the first arhatī of Sri Lanka
*together with her large following
of one thousand women
of the royal household and her retinue*

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**the transmission of the lamp:
Sanghamittā Therī ->**

**-> Anulā Tissā Therī,
the first arhatī of Sri Lanka**

*together with her large following
of one thousand women
of the royal household and her retinue*

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the transmission of the lamp

Dīpavaṃsa XVIII 11-13

tells not only of Therī Saṅghamittā;
but also of wise Uttarā, Hemā and
Pasādapālā, Aggimittā, Dāsikā, Pheggu,
Pābbatā, Mattā, Mālā, and
Dhammadāsiyā, the eleven bhikkhunis
who came from Jambudvipa (India)
and taught the Vinaya Piṭaka in
Anuradhapura, also teaching the five
Collections (of the Sutta Piṭaka) and the
Seven Treatises (of the Abhidhamma).

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the transmission of the lamp

Dīpavaṃsa verses 17-46 continue the exposition of these bhikkhunīs' illustrious tradition, with more than ten verses lauding the ongoing lineage of those bhikkhunī therīs who were outstanding Vinaya teachers on the Isle of Lanka, who were commended as:

Vinaya visāradā (vv 15, 16),

Saddhammavinaye ratā (vv 18, 23, 43)

Vinaya tāvāca (vv 27, 31, 33, 38),

Aggāvinayavādī (v 30),

and *Vinayaḍharā* (vv 42, 45).

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Eighteen further verses laud those therīs
who were of great wisdom —
mahāpaññā (vv 16, 40, 41),
“confident, knowledgeable and
skilled” — *visāradā* (vv 35, 40),
“widely learned” — *bahussutā* (vv 22, 44,
46) and *paṇḍitā* (vv 35, 40);
“holders of the sutta tradition” —
sutaḍharā (v 44),
“teachers of the Doctrine of
Discernment” — *Vibhajjavādī* (vv 42, 45),
“unexcelled teachers of the Dhamma” —
Dhammakathikam’uttamā (v 30)



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continued...

Who were:

“Teachers of the five Nikāyas of the
Sutta Piṭaka and Seven Treatises on
Abhidhamma” — *Nikāye pañcavācesuṃ
sattappakaraṇāni’ca* (vv 20, 34) and
masters of the passed down teachings of
the Therīs’ — *Theriyovāda* (v 16)
“illuminating the Saṅgha” —
Saṅghasobhaṇā (vv 42, 43)



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Five more verses reveal bhikkhunīs known for extraordinary knowledge and the six powers, who were —
abhiññātā (vv 17, 21, 42),
chaḷabhiññā (v 26),
and *mahiḍḍhikā* (v 26).

Further verses speak of bhikkhunīs of great renown in the Sāsana — *Sāsane viṣṣutā* (37), those known as “guardians of the Sāsana — *Sāsana pālakā* (v 45), and those who are “leaders of the Island” — *Dīpanāyā* (v 41).

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the transmission of the lamp

Last but not least, seven verses record those bhikkhunīs who had the very special role of *Saddhammavaṃsakovidā* (vv 17, 21, 29, 31, 36, 39, 42); “possessed of right wisdom who were the bearers and transmitters of the lineage and traditions of the True Dhamma.”

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The *Dīpavaṃsa* “Chronicle of the Island” records this great lineage of Bhikkhunī Therīs from the 3rd century BCE (the Aśokan period) up to the 1st century BCE, that is, the first 500-year period of the Buddha Sāsana, and perhaps even up to the 2nd century of the Common Era (CE). *Dīpavaṃsa* is thought by scholars to have been committed to writing in the 4th century (perhaps by Bhikkhunīs). Inscriptions on the Isle of Sri Lanka show that this Bhikkhunīs tradition lasted up into the 11th century CE, with royal and popular support.

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This completes
Part I. Intro to Bhikkhuni
Sangha History: HerStory
-> *The First Turning*

We will continue tomorrow with
Bhikkhuni Sangha History in
-> *The Second Turning*
-> *The Third Turning*

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Part II.
The Buddhist Community
-> *Parallel Patterns*

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We have learned
the Buddha Catu Parisā
Catuṣpariṣad
is Fourfold:

Bhikkhus | Bhikkhunīs
Upāsakas | Upāsikās...

bhikṣubhikṣuṇyupāsakopāsikā

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Additionally, under the monastic community, we also have:

Sāmanera | Sāmanerī
(*male and female novices*)

Plus on the Bhikkhunis' side, also **Sikkhamānās** (*female probationers*)

Actually, Bhikkhus are known to use the term **Sikkhamāna** as well,* for the time that they are in training, dedicated to the training, that is, “training-minded,” before become *arahantas*.

—
*For example, *Sekha Sutta*, Anguttara Nikāya

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Among the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis,
then we know of the **Theras** and **Therīs**

— in Sri Lanka, they say **Theranī** and
Theraniya for Bhikkhuni Theris.

In India, we find for Thera:
the Sanskrit form **Sthavira** or **Sthabir**

— for bhikkhunīs, this should be
Sthāvirī or **Sthāvirā**
(**Sthabirī**, **Sthabirā**)



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Traditionally, **Thera** and **Therī** are used after completing 10 Vassas following Bhikkhu or Bhikkhunī Upasampadā, although we can see some Sangha leaders using earlier.

In Sri Lanka, there used to be an exam to show one's knowledge and learning, as well as a recommendation of a high-level of good conduct, before a bhikkhu could use "Thera" with their monastic name.

Mahā Therā and **Mahā Therī** are used after completing 20 Vassas Upasampadā, and are also written conjoined: **Mahāthera** and **Mahātherī**.

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Traditionally, **Nāyaka** and **Mahā Nāyaka** are used for those Mahā Theras who become **leaders** of the Sangha.

We also find the word **Nāyikā** used for **bhikkhunī** leaders, or **Nāyā**, as we saw earlier in *Dīpavaṃsa*.



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Parellel Patterns

Nāyaka Thera | Nāyikā Therī

Mahāthera | Mahātherī

Thera | Therī

Bhikkhu | Bhikkhunī

Sikkhamāna* | Sikkhamānā

Sāmaṇera | Sāmaṇerī

Upāsaka | Upāsikā

Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs
we can further describe as:

new/novice (first 5 years upasampadā)

Nāva Bhikkhu | Nāvā Bhikkhunī

middle years (5-10 years upasampadā)

Majjima Bhikkhu | Majjhimā Bhikkhunī

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In this section, we should also add the Teachers: **Ācariya** and **Ācarinī**, who should have at least 10 Vassa. For bhikkhunīs, we also find the form “**Ācarī**”. So **Ācariyas** and **Ācarinīs** should be Theras or Therīs, or Mahā Theras and Mahā Therīs.

We also have the Preceptors: **Bhikkhu Upajjhāya** and **Bhikkhunī Upajjhāyā** (aka **Upajjhā** and **Pavattinī**).

Per Vinaya, the **Bhikkhu Upajjhāya** should have at least 10 Vassa, and the **Bhikkhunī Upajjhāyā** (**Pavattinī**) at least 12 Vassas.

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Parellel Patterns

Nāyaka Thera | Nāyikā Therī
Mahāthera | Mahātherī
Upajjhāya | Upajjhāyā*
Ācariya | Ācarinī
Thera | Therī
Bhikkhu | Bhikkhunī
Sikkhamāna* | Sikkhamānā
Sāmaṇera | Sāmaṇerī
Upāsaka | Upāsikā

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*To use **Upajjhāyā** or **Upajjhā** for bhikkhuni preceptors is Canonical, it is what we find in the Tipiṭaka, particularly in the Vinaya Piṭaka in the Bhikkhunī Vibhanga.

Pavattinī is the word we find in our Bhikkhunī Patimokkha, which is canonically explained in the Bhikkhunī Vibhanga as **Upajjhāyā**.

In other Indic Buddhist texts preserved in Prakrit and Sanskrit, we do not find Pavattinī, but rather **Upādhyāyinī** and **Upādhyāyikā** for Bhikkhunī preceptors, with the Bhikkhu form being **Upādhyāya**.

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*Historically, in the greater society of which Buddhism was a part, the Brahmins used the Sanskrit **Upādhyāya**, and still do so. The Jains used **Pravartana** (Pavattana) and **Pravartinī** (Pavattinī), and still do so.

—
Buddhists and Jains originally lived in the **Majjhadesa** or **Madhyadeśa**, the “Middle Land”. After the Buddha’s lifetime, many more Brahmins moved into and expanded the Brahmanized **Ariyavarta** territory into the **Madhyadeśa**, and Buddhism spread out into the **Ariyavarta** where Brahmins were much more common and well-established in society.

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*A number of the early Bhikkhunīs, like great disciple Therī Bhaddā Kuṇḍalakesā (who some call “the other first bhikkhunī”), and others who we find in the beginning of Therīgāthā on Gijjhakūta (Skt: Grdrakūta) Vulture’s Peak were likely already Bhikkhunīs following Jainism before becoming disciples of the Buddha. It is speculated by scholars that these early monastic women who converted from being Jain Bhikkhunīs to Buddhist Bhikkhunīs brought some of the Jain monastic use of language with them into the early Bhikkhuni Sangha.

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*There were also eminent Brahmins who entered the Bhikkhu Sangha both in the Buddha's time and later, who became great and illustrious authors in the Sangha, such as Ācariya Aśvaghoṣa who authored the *Buddhacārīta*, a Brahmanized biography of the Buddha, in the 1st or 2nd century CE, and Ācariya Buddhaghosa who authored the principle Pāli-text *Aṭṭhakathā* Commentaries in the 5th century CE, around 1000 years after the Buddha.



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Parellel Patterns

On the other side, from among the laity,
we add in the terms **Nāga** and **Nāginī**
for those who are aspirants:

Nāyaka Thera | Nāyikā Therī

Mahāthera | Mahātherī

Upajjhāya | Upajjhāyā*

Ācariya | Ācarinī

Thera | Therī

Bhikkhu | Bhikkhunī

Sikkhamāna* | Sikkhamānā

Sāmaṇera | Sāmaṇerī

Nāga | Nāginī

Upāsaka | Upāsikā

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Parellel Patterns

And we have **Dāyaka** and **Dāyikā** for those who are especially dedicated donors, benefactors, and supporters of the Bhikkhu-Bhikkhunī Sangha.

As well as **Mahā Upāsaka** and **Mahā Upāsikā** for those who really greatly dedicate their lives to Buddhism at the forefront.

Then we also find the term **Sāvaka** and **Sāvikā** for those who are disciples of the Buddha, independent of whether they are householders or monastics.

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They are the **Sāvaka Sangha**;
they are “the four pairs,” that is, “the
eight kinds of noble beings”:
esa Bhagavato Sāvaka Sangho —
the stream enterers (*sotāpattianna*),
stream winners (*sakadāgāmi*),
once returners (*anāgāmi*)
and arahantas (*arahatta*) *
— in Path and Fruits.

*note also the feminine term *arahatī*

Bhikkhu Sāvaka | Bhikkhunī Sāvikā
Upāsaka Sāvaka | Upāsikā Sāvikā

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For those disciples who were commended by the Buddha as foremost in excellent qualities to be remembered, they are called **Agga** (foremost), or the chief among them, **Etadagga** (first and foremost).

These we call the **Agga Mahā Sāvakas** and **Aggā Mahā Sāvīkās** or **Etadagga Mahā Sāvakas** and **Etadaggā Mahā Sāvīkās** — remembered as foremost among the Buddha's disciples:

Bhikkhu Etadagga Mahā Sāvaka |
Bhikkhunī Etadagga Mahā Sāvīkā

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Many of you will have learned the Lanna-
Thai Pāli Chant of the Thirteen
Bhikkhunī Agga Mahā Sāvikās:

*“Rattaññūnaṃ bhikkhunīnaṃ
Gotamī jīnamātucchā
Thapitā aggaṭṭhānamhi
sadā sotthim karotu no.*

—

Or, the Canonical
Etadagga Sāvikā Bhikkhunīs chant
from Anguttara Nikāya:

*“Etadaggaṃ, bhikkhave, mama sāvikānaṃ
bhikkhunīnaṃ rattaññūnaṃ yaḍidaṃ
Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī.*

“Bhikkhus, this is the foremost of my
bhikkhunī disciples in seniority:
Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī.”

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Let us now enter
the Bhikkhunī Vinaya

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Part III.

Intro to Bhikkhunī Vinaya

- > *Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga*
- > *Bhikkhunī Khandhaka*



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- ❖ We should note that the Bhikkhuni Sangha, per Theravāda traditions, is said to have been founded five years after the Bhikkhu Sangha.
- ❖ Pātimokkha, per Theravāda traditions, is said to have begun to be established 20 years after the Buddha began teaching. So there is a 15 year period between the time of Bhikkhunī Sangha establishment and first Pātimokkha precepts.



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- ❖ The Buddha called his own Teaching: **Dhamma-Vinaya.**
- ❖ The Sutta Piṭaka contains five collections or “Nikāyas” of Dhamma teachings.
- ❖ The Vinaya Piṭaka also contains five collections of Vinaya teachings. *(sometimes organized into three or four collections).*



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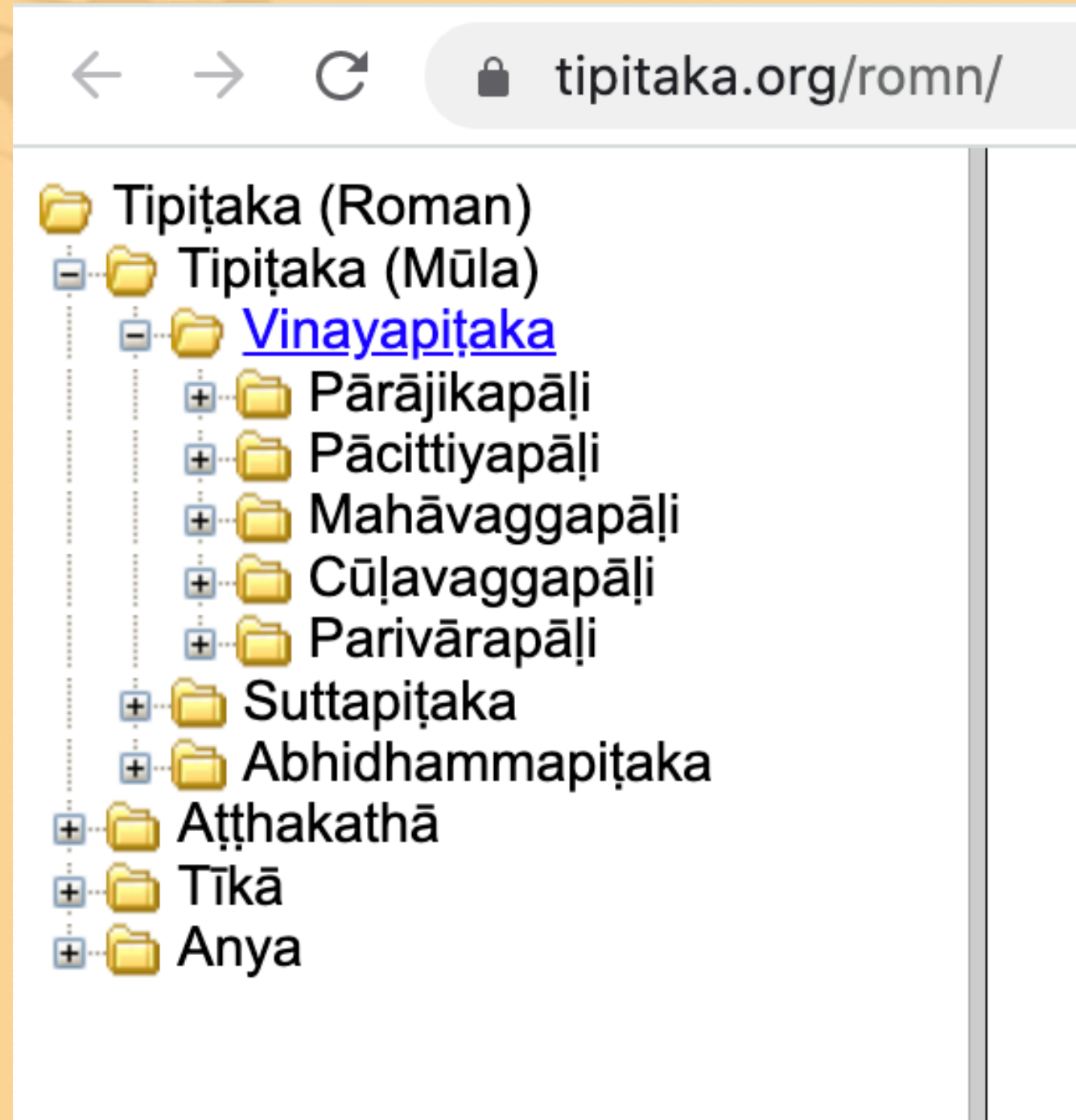
Vinaya Pitaka as five collections:

1. Mahāvibhanga *aka* Bhikkhu Vibhanga
2. Bhikkhunī Vibhanga
-
3. Mahāvagga Khandhaka
4. Cūlavagga Khandhaka
(also spelled Cullavagga)
-
5. Parivāra



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Vinaya Pitaka as five collections:



You can see that on tipitaka.org the CST Burmese 5th Council Edition of the Tipitaka also has five collections, but organized a little differently.

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Vinaya Pitaka as four collections:



The useful Sutta Central website suttacentral.net is organized into four:

1. Bhikkhu Vibhaṅga
2. Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga
3. Khandhaka (Mahāvagga + Cūlavagga)
4. Parivāra

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Vinaya Pitaka as three collections:

1. Vibhaṅga

(includes both Mahāvibhaṅga
and Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga)

2. Khandhakas

(includes both Mahāvagga
and Cūlavagga)

3. Parivāra

* This is just to give you a heads up about
these different forms of organization.

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Today, I will be speaking mainly about these two Vinaya collections:

1. Vibhaṅga
2. Khandhakas

The last, 3. Parivāra, is a study tool that works with the Vinaya discipline already set forth in the Vibhaṅga and the Khandhakas.

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There are two main places that we find
Vinaya specially for Bhikkhunis:

1. Within the Vibhaṅgas' collection:

-> **Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga**

2. Within the Khandhakas' collection:

-> **Bhikkhunī Khandhaka**

We will look at the Khandhakas first.



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It is here in the Bhikkhunī Khandhaka
(Cūlavagga 10), that we find the Buddha's
never-revoked allowance or direction to
the Bhikkhu Sangha
— “*anujanāmī bhikkhave*” —
to give higher ordination, Upasampadā,
to Bhikkhunīs:

*“Anujānāmi, bhikkhave,
bhikkhūhi bhikkhuniyo
upasampādetun”ti.*



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How do we see it for ourselves?

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SUTTA CENTRAL

Early Buddhist texts, translations, and parallels

[INTRODUCTION](#) [DONATIONS](#) [USE OFFLINE](#) [WHAT'S NEW](#)

TIPIṬAKA — *the* THREE BASKETS *of the* BUDDHIST CANON

Basket of Discourses

8466 English

SUTTAPIṬAKA

The Buddha's teachings on meditation, morality, the nature of the world, and the path to freedom. These scriptures are our primary sources for the historical Buddha's life and practice. They depict the Buddha and his students in lively conversation with a diverse range of people.

Basket of Monastic Law

925 English

Basket of Monastic Law

VINAYAPIṬAKA

The texts on Monastic Law (vinaya) detail the lifestyle, rules, and procedures for Buddhist monks and nuns. They provide the guidelines for Buddhist monastics to this day, and in addition, paint a detailed and vivid picture of everyday life in ancient India.

Basket of Systematic Treatises

401 English

ABHIDHAMMAPIṬAKA

Abhidhamma texts are systematic summaries and analyses of the teachings drawn from the earlier discourses. The Abhidhamma (spelled abhidharma in Sanskrit) is intended for advanced students who have mastered the teachings of the discourses.

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Monastic Law of the Theravāda School

924 English

PLI THERAVĀDA VINAYAPIṬAKA

The Monastic Law for the Theravāda school in Pali. This collection is followed by mendicants of the Theravāda school. It is the only Vinaya for which we have a complete collection in the original Indic.

Monastic Law of the Mahāsaṅghika School

LZH MAHĀSAṅGHKA VINAYA

The Monastic Law for the Mahāsaṅghika school in Chinese. This school originally flourished in the area of Magadha in India and is now extinct. It was created during the first schism, and therefore its Vinaya has some unique features not found in oth...

Monastic Law of the Mahāsaṅghika School

SAN MAHĀSAṅGHKA VINAYA

The Monastic Law for the Mahāsaṅghika school in Sanskrit. This school originally flourished in the area of Magadha in India and is now extinct. It was created during the first schism, and therefore its Vinaya has some unique features not found in oth...

Monastic Law of the Lokuttaravāda School

SAN LOKUTTARAVĀDA VINAYA

The Monastic Law for the Lokuttaravāda school in Sanskrit. This is a sub-school of

<https://suttacentral.net/pitaka/vinaya/pli-tv-vi> ow extinct. It is not known where the adherents of this

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suttacentral.net/pli-tv-kd?view=n...

Home > Monastic Law > Tv Vi > Kd

Khandhaka

spacing TableView

BHIKKHUNIKKHANDHAKA Kd 20 PTS 2.253-2.283

The Bhikkhunikkhandhaka, “the Chapter on nuns”, comprises all the rules outside of the Monastic Code, the Pātimokkha, that are specific to the nuns, including the ordination ceremony and ordination by messenger. The chapter begins with the ordination of Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, which marks the beginning of the Sangha of nuns.

translations in your chosen language

Bhikkhu Brahmali English & Pāli

I.B. Horner, Bhikkhu Brahmali English 1950

edition of the root text

Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2500 Pāli

translations in other modern languages (2)

parallels in ancient texts (48)

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Bhikkhunikkhandhaka—Bhikkhu Brahmali

☰ contents ⓘ info 👁 views ↔ parallels

3. Bhikkhuniupasampadānujānana

Mahāpajāpati went to the Buddha, bowed down,

Atha kho mahāpajāpati gotamī yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkami, upasaṅkamtivā bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.

and said,

Ekamantaṃ ṭhitā kho mahāpajāpati gotamī bhagavantam etadavoca—

“Venerable Sir, what should I do with these Sakyan women?”

“kathāhaṃ, bhante, imāsu sākiyānīsu paṭipajjāmi”ti?

The Buddha then instructed, inspired, and gladdened her with a teaching,

Atha kho bhagavā mahāpajāpatim gotamim dhammiyā kathāya sandassesī samādapesī samuttejesī sampahaṃsesī.

after which she bowed down, circumambulated him with her right side toward him, and left.

Atha kho mahāpajāpati gotamī bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya sandassitā samādapitā samuttejitā sampahaṃsitā bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇam katvā pakkāmi.

Soon afterwards the Buddha gave a Teaching and addressed the monks:

Atha kho bhagavā etasmim nidāne etasmim pakaraṇe dhammim katham katvā bhikkhū āmantesī—

“I allow you to give the full ordination to nuns.”

“anujānāmi, bhikkhave, bhikkhūhi bhikkhuniyo upasampādetun”ti.

Soon afterwards those nuns said to Mahāpajāpati,

Atha kho tā bhikkhuniyo mahāpajāpatim gotamim etadavocum—

“We’re ordained, but you’re not,

“ayyā anupasampannā, mayaṅcamhā upasampannā;

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This is it.

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It is also here in the Bhikkhunī Khandaka that we find the Buddha's direction to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī — likely fifteen years later — as to how Bhikkhunīs are to train with regards the Pāṭimokkha Sīlā precepts that have been established for Bhikkhus.

—

Those precepts that have been set forth for bhikkhus (unless otherwise noted) are shared — **sādhāraṇa** — with Bhikkhunīs.

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UTBSI Coordinator of Bhikkhuni History & Heritage

Bhikkhunikkhandhaka—Bhikkhu Brahmali

contents info views parallels

On another occasion Mahāpajāpati went to the Buddha, bowed down,
Atha kho mahāpajāpati gotamī yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā
bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.

and said,

Ekamantaṃ ṭhitā kho mahāpajāpati gotamī bhagavantaṃ etadavoca—

“Venerable Sir, how should we practice those training rules that the nuns have in
common with the monks?”

“yāni tāni, bhante, bhikkhunīnaṃ sikkhāpadāni bhikkhūhi sādharmaṇāni, kathaṃ mayaṃ,
bhante, tesu sikkhāpadesu paṭipajjāma”ti?

“You should practice them in the same way as the monks do.”

“Yāni tāni, gotami, bhikkhunīnaṃ sikkhāpadāni bhikkhūhi sādharmaṇāni, yathā bhikkhū
sikkhanti tathā tesu sikkhāpadesu sikkhathā”ti.

“And how should we practice those training rules that the nuns don’t have in com-
mon with the monks?”

“Yāni pana tāni, bhante, bhikkhunīnaṃ sikkhāpadāni bhikkhūhi asādharmaṇāni, kathaṃ
mayaṃ, bhante, tesu sikkhāpadesu paṭipajjāma”ti?

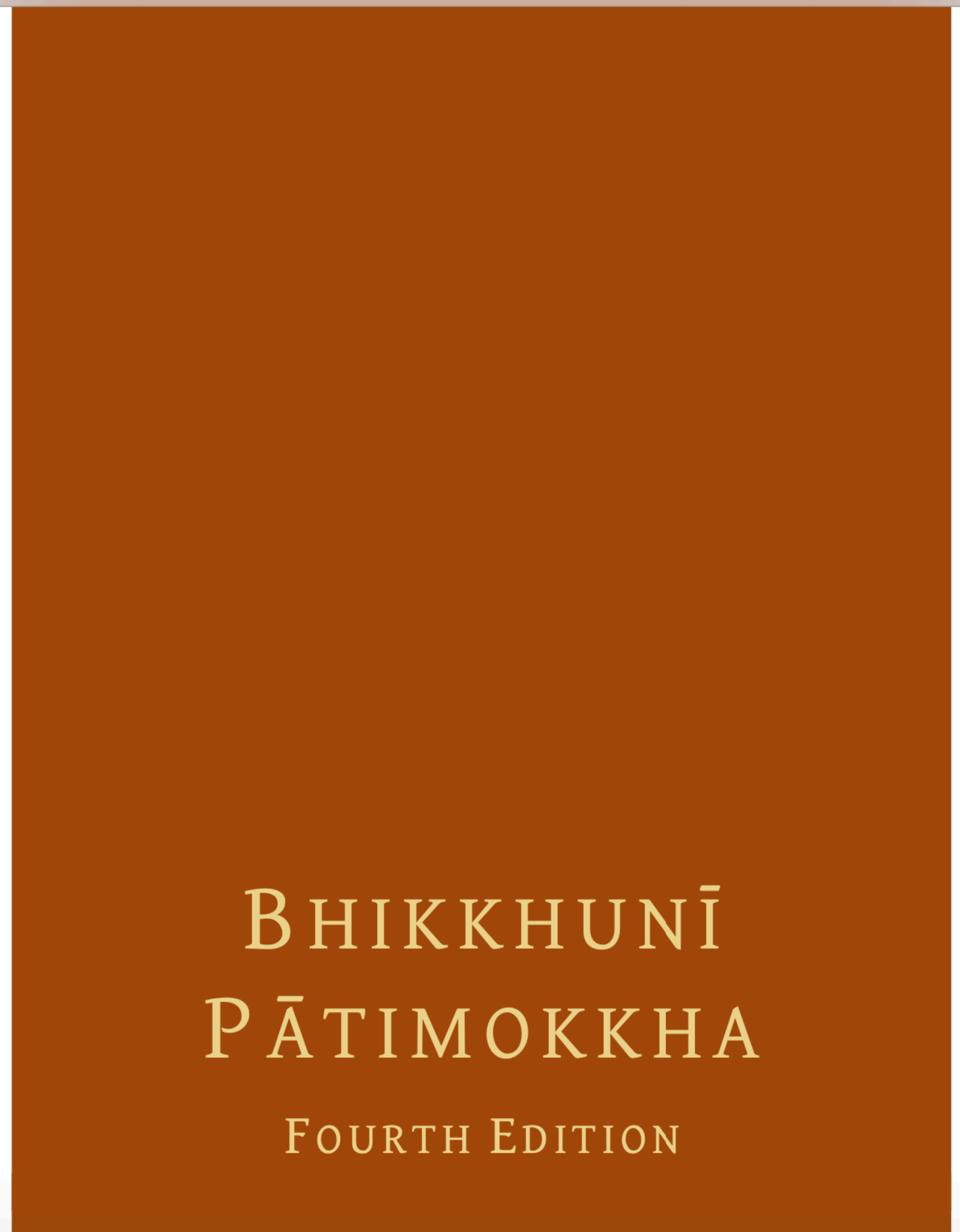
“You should practice them as they have been laid down.”

“Yāni tāni, gotami, bhikkhunīnaṃ sikkhāpadāni bhikkhūhi asādharmaṇāni,
yathāpaññattesu sikkhāpadesu sikkhathā”ti.

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The Recitation of the Section on Defeat

Herein these eight matters entailing defeat come up for recitation.

1. {The precept about -sexual intercourse} Should any bhikkhunī willingly engage in the sexual act, even with a male animal, she is defeated and no longer in communion. [See Bhikkhus' Pārājika 1]
2. {-taking what is not given} Should any bhikkhunī, in the manner of stealing, take what is not given from an inhabited area or from the wilderness—just as when, in the taking of what is not given, kings arresting the criminal would flog, imprison, or banish her, saying, “You are a robber, you are a fool, you are benighted, you are a thief”—a bhikkhunī in the same way taking what is not given is defeated and no longer in communion. [2]
3. {-killing a human being} Should any bhikkhunī intentionally deprive a human being of life, or search for an assassin for that person, or praise the advantages of death, or incite that person to die (thus): “My good man (or woman), what use is this wretched, miserable life to you? Death would be better for you than life,” or with such an idea in mind, such a purpose in mind, should in various ways praise the advantages of death or incite that person to die, she also is defeated and no longer in communion. [3]
4. {-superhuman states} Should any bhikkhunī, without direct knowledge, boast of a superior human state, a truly noble knowledge and vision as present in herself, saying, “Thus do I know; thus do I see,” such that regardless of whether or not she is cross-examined on a later occasion, she—being remorseful and desirous of purification—might say, “Venerables, not knowing, I said I know; not seeing, I said I see—vainly, falsely, idly,” unless it was from overestimation, she also is defeated and no longer in communion. [4]

Pārājikuddeso

Tatime aṭṭha pārājikā dhammā uddesaṃ āgacchanti.

1. {Methunadhammasikkhāpadam} Yā pana bhikkhunī chandaso methunaṃ dhammaṃ paṭisevessa, antamaso tiracchānagatenapi, pārājikā hoti asaṃvāsā.
2. {Adinnādānasikkhāpadam} Yā pana bhikkhunī gāmaṃ vā araṇṇā vā adinnaṃ theyyasaṅkhātaṃ ādiyeyya, yathārūpe adinnādāne rājāno coraṃ gahetvā haneyyuraṃ vā bandheyuraṃ vā pabbājeyyuraṃ vā corāsi bālāsi mūlhāsi thenāsīti, tathārūpaṃ bhikkhunī adinnaṃ ādiyamānā ayampi pārājikā hoti asaṃvāsā.
3. {Manussaviggahasikkhāpadam} Yā pana bhikkhunī sañcicca manussaviggahaṃ jīvitā voropeyya, sathahāraṃ vāssa pariyeseyya, maraṇavaṇṇaṃ vā saṃvaṇṇeyya, maraṇāya vā samādapeyya “ambho purisa, kiṃ tuyhiminā pāpakena dujjīvitena, mataṃ te jīvitā seyyo”ti, iti cittamaṇā cittasaṅkappā anekapariyāyena maraṇavaṇṇaṃ vā saṃvaṇṇeyya, maraṇāya vā samādapeyya, ayampi pārājikā hoti asaṃvāsā.
4. {Uttarimanussadhammasikkhāpadam} Yā pana bhikkhunī anabhijānaṃ uttarimanussadhammaṃ attupanāyikaṃ alamariyañānadassanaṃ samudācareyya “iti jānāmi, iti passāmi”ti, tato aparena samayena samanuggāhiyamānā vā asamanuggāhiyamānā vā āpannā visuddhāpekkhā evaṃ vadeyya “ajānamevaṃ, ayye, avacaṃ jānāmi, apassaṃ passāmi, tucchāṃ musā vilapin”ti, aññatra adhimānā, ayampi pārājikā hoti asaṃvāsā.

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For this reason, while the Bhikkhunī Pāṭimokkha contains 311 precepts; the Bhikkhunī Vibhaṅga contains only:

4 Parājika,
10 Sanghādisesa,
12 Nissaggiya Pācittiya,
86 Pācittiya, and
2 Pāṭidesanīya sikkhāpadā,
totaling 114 precepts.

Compared to 227 established for bhikkhus, about half the number.

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 Tipitaka (Mūla)
 Vinayaṭṭakā
 Pārājikapāli
 Pācittiyapāli
 5. pācittiyakaṇḍam
 6. pāṭidesanīyakaṇḍam
 7. sekhiyakaṇḍam
 8. adhikaraṇasamathā
 1. pārājikakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 2. saṅghādisesakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 3. nissaggiyakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 4. pācittiyakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 5. pāṭidesanīyakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 6. sekhiyakaṇḍam (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 7. adhikaraṇasamathā (bhikkhunīvibhaṅgo)
 Mahāvaggapāli
 Cūlavaggapāli
 Parivārapāli
 Suttapiṭaka
 Abhidhammapiṭaka
 Aṭṭhakathā
 Tikā
 Anya

natthapāse tṭhāna, apāta utullaccayassa.

Sallapeyya vāti etassa asaddhammassa paṭisevanatthāya purisassa hatthapāse tṭhāna, āpatti thullaccayassa.

Saṅketam vā gaccheyyāti etassa asaddhammassa paṭisevanatthāya purisena – “itthannāmaṃ okāsaṃ [idaṃ padaṃ aṭṭhakathāyaṃ na dissati] āgacchā”ti – vuttā gacchati. Pade pade āpatti dukkaṭassa. Purisassa hatthapāsaṃ okkantamatte āpatti thullaccayassa.

Purisassavā abbhāgamaṇaṃ sādhiyyāti etassa asaddhammassa paṭisevanatthāya purisassa abbhāgamaṇaṃ sādhiyati, āpatti dukkaṭassa. Hatthapāsaṃ okkantamatte āpatti thullaccayassa.

Channaṃ vā anupaviseyyāti etassa asaddhammassa paṭisevanatthāya yena kenaci paṭicchannaṃ okāsaṃ pavittṭhamatte āpatti thullaccayassa.

Kāyaṃ vā tadatthāya upasaṃhareyyāti etassa asaddhammassa paṭisevanatthāya purisassa hatthapāse tṭhāna kāyaṃ upasaṃharati, āpatti thullaccayassa.

Ayampīti purimāyo upādāya vuccati.

Pārājikā hotīti seyyathāpi nāma tālo matthakacchinno abhabbo puna viruḷhiyā evameva bhikkhunī aṭṭhamaṃ vatthum paripūrentī assamaṇī hoti asakyadhītā. Tena vuccati pārājikā hotīti.

Asaṃvāsāti saṃvāso nāma ekakammaṃ ekuddeso samasikkhatā. Eso saṃvāso nāma. So tāya saddhiṃ natthi. Tena vuccati asaṃvāsāti.

677. Anāpatti asaṅcicca, assatiyā, ajānantiyā, asādiyantiyā, ummattikāya, khittacittāya, vedanāṭṭāya, ādikammikāyāti.

Catutthapārājikaṃ samattaṃ.

Uddittṭhā kho, ayyāyo, aṭṭha pārājikā dhammā. Yesaṃ bhikkhunī aññataraṃ vā aññataraṃ vā āpajjitvā na labhati bhikkhunīhi saddhiṃ saṃvāsaṃ, yathā pure tathā pacchā, pārājikā hoti asaṃvāsā. Tatthāyyāyo pucchāmi – “kaccittha parisuddhā”? Dutiyampi pucchāmi – “kaccittha parisuddhā”? Tatiyampi pucchāmi – “kaccittha parisuddhā”? Parisuddhetthāyyāyo, tasmā tuṅhī, evameṭaṃ dhārayāmi.

Bhikkhunīvibhaṅge pārājikakaṇḍam niṭṭhitam.

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Bhikkhunī Vibhanga Four Pārājikas
 (Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha has eight Pārājikas,
 these 4+4 shared)


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Vipassana is a universal, scientific method towards purifying the mind. It is the practical essence of the teachings of the Buddha, who taught Dhamma - the Universal Law of Nature.

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So about 37% of our Bhikkhunīs' precepts in the Vibhanga texts were established related to the misconduct of Bhikkhunīs, while 63% are inherited from and shared —or literally “co-held” —with the Bhikkhu Sangha, that is, **sādhāraṇa**.

—
In the Khandhakas, Mahāvagga and Cūlavagga, the percentage of bhikkhu-bhikkhunī shared discipline is much higher, making for a total of around 90% of the Bhikkhunīs' Vinaya discipline shared with the Bhikkhu Sangha.

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Let us return now to the Bhikkhunī
Khandhaka (Cūlavagga 10)

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For it is here in the Bhikkhunī Khandaka that we also find the Buddha's teaching *fifteen years earlier* to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, through which she then, diligent, ardent and resolute, in no long time realized that state for which good women go forth from household life into homelessness, rending the dark veil of ignorance; and leaving all suffering forever behind, entered the ranks of the arahants.
This is very important to us.

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Bhikkhunikkhandhaka—Bhikkhu Brahmali

contents info views parallels

On another occasion Mahāpajāpati went to the Buddha, bowed down,
Atha kho mahāpajāpati gotamī yena bhagavā tenupasānkami, upasānkamitvā bhagavantam
abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.

and said,

Ekamantaṃ ṭhitā kho mahāpajāpati gotamī bhagavantam etadavoca—

“It would be good, Venerable Sir, if you would give me a teaching in brief. I could then stay
by myself, secluded, heedful, energetic, and diligent.”

“sādhu me, bhante, bhagavā saṅkhittena dhammaṃ desetu, yamaṃ bhagavato dhammaṃ
sutvā ekā vūpakaṭṭhā appamattā ātāpinī pahitattā vihareyyan”ti.

“Those things, Gotami, that you know

“Ye kho tvaṃ, gotami, dhamme jāneyyāsi—

lead to passion, not to dispassion; to bondage, not to freedom from bondage; to an increase
in things, not to a reduction in things; to great desires, not to fewness of wishes; to discon-
tent, not to contentment; to socializing, not to seclusion; to laziness, not to being energetic;
to being difficult to support, not to being easy to support—

ime dhammā sarāgāya saṃvattanti no virāgāya, saññogāya saṃvattanti no visaññogāya,
ācayāya saṃvattanti no apacayāya, mahicchātāya saṃvattanti no appicchātāya, asantuṭṭhiyā
saṃvattanti no santuṭṭhiyā, saṅgaṇikāya saṃvattanti no pavivekāya, kosajjāya saṃvattanti no
vīriyārambhāya, dubbharatāya saṃvattanti no subharatāya;

you should definitely regard them

ekaṃsena, gotami, dhāreyyāsi—

as not the Teaching, not the training, not the Teacher’s instruction.

neso dhammo, neso vinayo, netam satthusāsananti.

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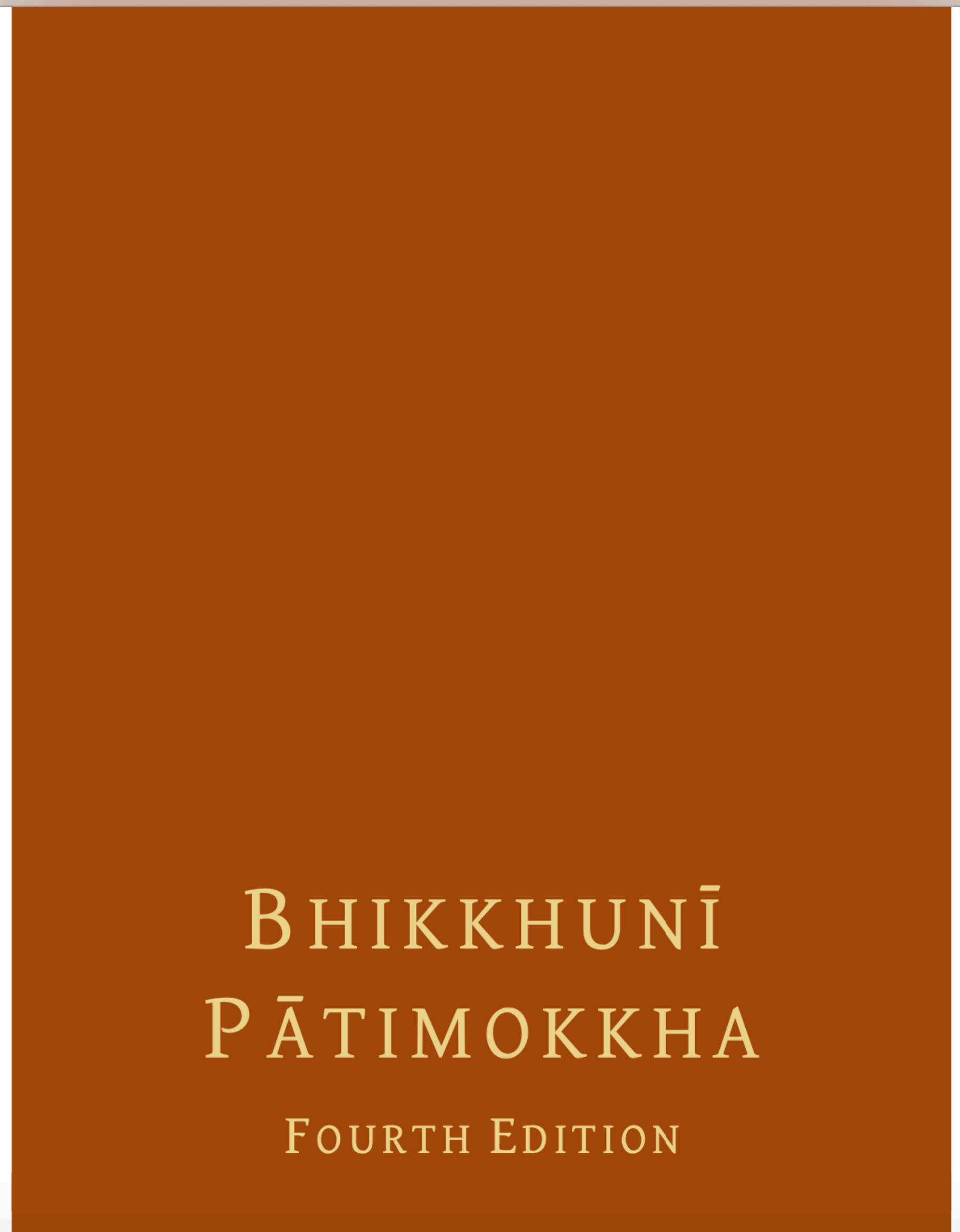
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Gotamī, those qualities of which you would know:

“These qualities lead to dispassion,
not passion;
to being unfettered,
not fettered;
to getting rid of,
not heaping up;
to few wishes,
not many wishes;
to contentment,
not discontentment;
to seclusion,
not socializing;
to arousal of energy,
not laziness;
to being easy to support,
not hard to support,”

You may definitely hold:

“This is the Dhamma.
This is the Vinaya.
This is the teaching of the Buddha.”

AN 8.53 Gotamī Sutta

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Sāḍhu! Sāḍhu! Sāḍhu!



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Summary of Day One

- ✓ **Intro to the History of the Bhikkhuni Sangha: The First Turning (the first 500-year period of the Sāsana).** Next time we will cover more Bhikkhuni Sangha History from the Second and Third Turnings (the 2nd and 3rd 500 year periods)
- ✓ **Intro to the Buddhist Community: Parallel Patterns in Roles within the Monastic and Lay Community**
- ✓ **Intro to Bhikkhuni Vinaya** and where it is located within the Buddhist Monastic Discipline

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HERITAGE OF BHIKKHUNĪ SANGHA

The End of our Class Today

on Introduction to
Bhikkhuni Sangha History
& Bhikkhunī Vinaya

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May all beings be at ease.
May the radiant wishes of teachers
and students bear the most
excellent fruits.

Ciram Tittathatu Buddha Sāsanam

Namo Buddhāya
Namo Dhammāya
Namo Sanghāya!

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