**An International and Intensive Program on Buddhism at INALCO (July 7-24, 2019)**

Material Culture in Buddhist Normative Texts: From India to China (Segment 1)

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Ann Heirman (Ghent University)

Introduction

In seven lectures the spread and interpretation of *vinaya* rules shifting from Indian contexts to Chinese contexts will be discussed. In order to do so, several diverse themes have been chosen: 1) Buddhist nuns and their status in *vinaya* texts; 2) Bodily care; 3) Robes and shoes; 4) Movement and sport; 5) Speech and silence; 6) Dangerous or annoying insects.

The lecture series will include both overview lectures as well as lectures where text passages will be discussed in greater depth. When possible and relevant, links to contemporary discussions will be made.

Lecture 1) The Community: Vinaya from India to China

The first lecture offers an introduction to *vinaya*, in all its various interpretations going from India to China.

*Literature*

Funayama, Tōru (2004), “The Acceptance of Buddhist Precepts by the Chinese in the fifth century,” *Journal of Asian History* 38.2, pp.97–120

Heirman, Ann (2007), “Vinaya: from India to China”, in: Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher (eds.), The Spread of Buddhism. Leiden: Brill, pp.167–202

Lecture 2) Buddhist Nuns between Past and Present

One of the most debated issues in present-day Buddhism is the question of access of women to a full ordination as a nun (*bhikṣuṇī*). Of the three extant ordination traditions — Dharmaguptaka, Theravāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda, it is only in the first one that both men and women are accepted without any dispute as fully ordained members of the monastic community (with the exception of Sri Lanka where Theravāda ordinations are largely accepted). This situation has given rise to many discussions pleading for a revival of a full ordination ceremony in all Buddhist traditions. In these revival movements, special attention goes to several technical questions of monastic discipline (*vinaya*). The lecture focuses on these questions, while also paying attention to the role played by concepts involving gender.

*Literature*

Anālayo (2018), “The Case for Reviving the Bhikkhunī Order by Single Ordination,” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 25 ( <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/category/volume-25-2018/> )

Heirman, Ann (2011), “Buddhist Nuns between Past and Present”, Numen 58, pp.603–631

Lecture 3) Bodily Care Identity in Buddhist Monastic Life of Ancient India and China

In this lecture, we will discuss bodily care in Buddhist texts between ancient India and China, with specific attention to bodily care as a marker of identity. Although bodily care practices might seem trivial, they reveal what the community stands for, at least normatively. In this lecture, we will discuss how normative ideals were transferred from India to China, taking into account the role of Buddhist monastics in the social networks to which they belong. We explore how the threshold for becoming a monk advanced over time, with purity attaining an ever more central position in Buddhist discourse on bodily care.

*Literature*

Heirman, Ann and Mathieu Torck (2012), A Pure Mind in a Clean Body, Bodily Care in the Buddhist Monasteries of Ancient India and China. Gent:  Academia Press.

<https://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=466590>

Lecture 4) Washing Robes and Wearing Shoes: Identifying Markers in Buddhist Monasteries of Ancient India and China

Among the most striking identity markers of a Buddhist monastic community are the robes worn by its members. It is therefore not surprising that *vinaya* texts contain a wealth of guidelines on robes, and that much research has been done on how to make and wear such robes. The fourth lecture focuses on a much less studied, yet equally essential, aspect: the care of monastic robes, with an extension to shoes. As we will see, disciplinary texts are similarly informative on this issue, although in this instance the guidelines are scattered throughout the various chapters of the *vinaya*s. Taking care of one’s robes involved washing and dyeing them properly, and many details are provided on exactly how to do both. The *vinaya*s offer a wealth of information on both the material culture of early Buddhist India and the monastic way to deal with the guidelines relating to robes. In sum, their rules provide an intriguing picture of how a Buddhist monastic community in India ideally took care of one of its most visible features – the monastic robe.

*Literature*

Heirman, Ann (2014), “Washing and Dyeing Buddhist Monastic Robes”, Acta Orientalia 67.4, pp.467–488

Heirman, Ann (2016), “Shoes in Buddhist Monasteries from India to China: from Practical Attire to Symbol of Respect”, Acta Orientalia 69.4, pp.411–439

Kieschnick, John (2000), “The Symbolism of the Monk’s Robe in China,” *Asia Major, Third Series*, 12.1, pp.9–32.

Lecture 5) Bodily activities and sport: A (Normative) Perspective from India to China

In this lecture we will continue our discussion on bodily care and identity markers, with a focus on what this involves for body movement and sport activities. First of all, there is the concept of ‘sport’ as a physical activity, always involving some idea of contest. Not surprisingly, as we will see, such physical activities are often discussed in the same context as competitive intellectual activities. While training of both the body and the mind regularly (but not always) receives positive attention, the idea of ‘competition’ easily attracts negative connotations, such as ‘chance’, or even worse ‘gambling.’ This is part of the concepts of games and play, activities that can be beneficial to body and mind, but at the same time, are linked to ‘idleness’ and ‘lack of seriousness.’ As we will discuss, all these concepts play an important role in the discussion on body movement and sport activities in Buddhist contexts.

Lecture 6) Speech is Silver, Silence is Golden? Speech and Silence in the Buddhist *Saṃgha*

In this lecture, we focus on acts related to speech, and more particularly speech acts in monastic guidelines as they spread from India to China. While in the one hand, speech is explicitly allowed in Indian *vinaya* texts, it is also meticulously restricted. To a certain extent this is similar in Chinese texts, but as we will see, further discussions on the motives on why speech needs to be restricted has led to very different practices.

*Literature*

Heirman, Ann (2009), “Speech is Silver, Silence is Golden? Speech and Silence in the Buddhist Saṃgha”, Eastern Buddhist 40, 1-2, pp.63–92

Lecture 7) Insects and Other Annoying or Dangerous Creatures in Buddhist Monasteries: *Vinaya* from India to China

Against the background of guidelines on non-killing and developing ideas on the release of captured or domesticated animals, this lecture focuses on how *vinaya* texts deal with dangerous and/or annoying animals, such as snakes, mosquitoes, and flies. Are there any circumstances in which they may be killed, captured, or repelled? Or should they be endured and ignored, or even protected and cherished, at all times? This lecture discusses the many guidelines relating to avoiding—and, if necessary, chasing away—dangerous and annoying animals. All of these proposals call for meticulous care to reduce the risk of harming the creature. In this sense, animals such as snakes and mosquitoes seem to be assured a better life in comparison with domesticated or hunted animals. This distinction reflects the somewhat uncomfortable balance that Buddhist monastics must achieve between respecting the life of individual sentient beings, including all animals, and adhering to social conventions in order to safeguard their position in society.

*Literature*

Heirman, Ann (2019, “How to Deal with Dangerous and Annoying Animals: A *Vinaya* Perspective,” *Religions* 10.2 ( <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/10/2/113> )

Introduction to the lecturer

Ann Heirman, Ph.D. (1998) in Oriental Languages and Cultures, is professor of Chinese Language and Culture and head of the Centre for Buddhist Studies at Ghent University in Belgium.

She has published extensively on Chinese Buddhist monasticism and the development of disciplinary rules, including *Rules for Nuns according to the Dharmaguptaka vinaya* (Motilal Banarsidass, 2002), *The Spread of* *Buddhism* (Brill, edited volume with Stephan Peter Bumbacher, 2007), *A Pure Mind in a Clean Body* (with Mathieu Torck, Academia Press, 2012), and *Buddhist Encounters and Identities Across East Asia* (Brill, edited volume with Carmen Meinert and Christoph Anderl, 2018).