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YUPHIN DUANGJUN : BUDDHIST WOMEN AND ORDINATION : A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE STATUS AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE "MAEJI" AT WAT PAKNAM, PHASICHAROEN IN BANGKOK AND AT DANMAHAMONGKOL MEDITATION CENTER IN KANCHANABURI. THESIS ADVISORS : SUMANA TANGKANASING, DOCTEUR EN SOCIOLOGIE, BOON KETUTASSA, M.A., TAVIVAT PUNTARIGVIVAT, Ph.D., 212 P. ISBN 974-662-205-6

Buddhist women who were ordained at the time of the Lord Buddha, called "BHIKKHUNI", were permitted to be one of the four prime memberships(BHORISAT 4). They were ordained traditionally. They had several reasons for and a lot of objectives in ordination, particularly attaining enlightenment. They behaved according to the Lord Buddha's teaching strictly, and were apparent in their status and the roles of benefactors for Buddhists.

The end of Bhikkhuni institution came from both inner and outer causes resulting in the disappearance of "Bhikkhuni". Nowadays ordained Buddhist women called "Maeji" are much different from Bhikkhuni. The Mae Ji ordination is simple. They just follow the eight precepts of Buddhism, while the Bhikkhuni had to observe 311 precepts.

Reasons given by the Maeji for leaving secular life are: faith in Buddhism, search for life solution, belief in superstition, opportunity to study Buddhism, search for peace by following the "Bodhipakkhiyadhamma 37".

The comparative study demonstrated that the Buddhist Mae Ji at Wat Paknam were under the administration of the monks and that their main function was to prepare food for monks. The women ordained at Danmahamongkol were independent to receive support from the believers even though their motivations to live a religious life were the same as those of the monks.