

Abstract

At the present, an attempt to become a Buddhist nun (Bhikkhuni) is widely criticized as a social matter of Thailand, especially becoming a Buddhist nun against the Discipline of Theravada Buddhism. Since there were the Thai women going to abroad to ordinate as a Buddhist nun and come back to play a social roles.

This thesis is made to study status and roles of the Thai Buddhist nuns and Thai Buddhists's attitude to status and roles of the Buddhist nuns. This study is divided into two parts as follows: the documentary research and the field research.

The documentary research shows that in the past, the Buddhist nuns have had an importance as one of the four assemblies of the Buddhist devouts playing roles of spread of Buddhism. After the death of the Buddha, the Buddhist nuns were lost without the historical evidence. Although it was noted that the lineage of the Buddhist nuns was continuously inherited in the countries close to India such as China, Taiwan, and Srilanka. But the mentioned note was not accepted by the early Theravada Buddhists. So the Thai Buddhist nuns were refused by them, especially the Sangha. However, the roles of the Thai Buddhist nuns has been accepted by Thai society. Because, it was expected that becoming a Buddhist nun could solve the problems of Thai women.

The field research, that focuses the three groups of Buddhists in the three regions namely: the meditationers, the scholars, the students and the general, shows that the most of Thai Buddhists accepts less the status of the Buddhist nuns than the roles of the Buddhist nuns. It refers to Thai's good attitude to the roles of the Buddhist nuns. This is a main factor of remainder of the Buddhist nuns in Thai society. However, the future of the Buddhist nuns in Thai society is changeable, so it should be continued.