



Lecture Series:

Comparative Studies on Buddhism in Taiwan and Mainland China

The Vinaya Practices in Contemporary Chinese Buddhism: A
Cross-Strait Perspective on Buddhist Nunneries

Dr. Tzu-Lung Chiu

(Research Fellow, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen)

Monday, 16th December 2019, 18.15-19.45

Universität Hamburg, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, Room 121 ESA Ost (East Wing)

The lecture explores the contemporary revival of Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism, and includes the Cross-Straits comparative typological study of Buddhist institutions and monastic religious practices. Dr. Chiu's approach links theory, e.g., the Vinaya Piṭaka, with practice as observed via ethnographic fieldwork, with the aim of deepening our understanding of how Buddhist traditions are practised in modern society. It is important to bear in mind that the Vinaya were compiled in Ancient India, a context dramatically different from contemporary Chinese conditions – even monastic ones. It is therefore eminently worth investigating how Vinaya rules are being adapted to specific local Chinese contexts and/or a Chinese cultural ethos by contemporary Buddhist institutions, and perhaps more importantly, what difficulties Chinese nuns experience in observing particular precepts due to socio-cultural factors, and the extent to which they adapt their behaviour (or the rules themselves) to deal with such difficulties.



Tzu-Lung Chiu is a postdoctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity. In 2016 she received a Ph.D. at Ghent University, Belgium. In her dissertation (*Contemporary Buddhist Nunneries in Taiwan and Mainland China: A Study of Vinaya Practices*), she explored Chinese Mahāyāna nuns' perceptions of how they interpret and practice vinaya rules in the contemporary contexts of Taiwan and Mainland China. Previously, Chiu was a Postdoctoral Fellow in Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley (2016-2017). She obtained her MA in Women's Studies at Lancaster University, UK. Her research interests include India *vinaya* rules, Chinese Buddhism, gender, the Bodhisattva rules, the *qinggui* (rules of purity), Humanistic Buddhism, and Contemporary Chinese Buddhism in Southeast Asia (especially Bangkok, Yangon and Mandalay).