

When the Buddha established his community over twenty-five centuries ago, he did so upon a foundation of unprecedented equality among women and men. And indeed, the earliest Buddhist scriptures celebrate the teachings and inspiring influence of these path-blazing female renunciants. Nonetheless, through much of the Buddhist world, the order of nuns has disappeared or was never transmitted at all.

*Dignity and Discipline* represents a watershed moment in Buddhist history, as the Dalai Lama together with scholars and monastics from around the world present powerful cases, grounded in both scripture and a profound appeal to human dignity, that the order of Buddhist nuns can and should be fully restored.

“The controversy surrounding full female ordination is one of the most pressing issues facing modern Buddhism. *Dignity and Discipline* is without a doubt the most valuable book on the subject to date, and should be required reading for anyone interested in contemporary Buddhism. As the book makes clear, the ordination of women as full-fledged monastics is not only a religious and political issue, it is an issue pertaining to a basic human right: gender equality. The seventeen papers included here are from a 2007 conference in Hamburg, the International Congress on Women’s Role in the Sangha, which was convened to fulfill a request by the Dalai Lama and brought together religious leaders from across Asia as well as Europe and North America, including leading scholars such as Janet Gyatso, Karma Lekshe Tsomo, and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Intended to effect real progress, the book begins with the assumption that full ordination is inevitable and charts a course to bring it about, investigating history and the doctrinal issues that must be settled before the Tibetan and Theravadin sanghas embrace such change.”—*Buddhadharma: The Buddhist Review*