

A Historical and Textual Study of Bhikkhuni Order in Sri Lanka

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After arriving Arahat mahinda thera to Sri Lanka with the message of Buddhism, he himself established the sangha society in Sri Lanka ordaining minister arittha. After founding sangha society, queen Anula who was the wife of king devanampiyatissa, asked to ordain from Arahat Mahinda thera. He rejected it. Because of teaching of Buddha, It could not be done by the bikkhus. So Arahat Mahinda asked his sister named sanghamitta to come and establish the bhikkhuni order in Sri Lanka. She accepted that invitation and came to Sri Lanka with the purpose of founding bhikkhuni order. Not only arahat mahinda's sister but also 18th groups of castes came to Sri Lanka with one of branch of the Bo-tree. This is the brief story, recorded in the historical compositions as samantapasadika, mahawansa, Dipawamsa, written in Sri Lanka.

Though arahat mahinda asked Sangamitta to come to Sri Lanka with the purpose of the ordination of women, Bhikkhus could have ordained the women. Because, according to the vinaya pitaka, Buddha has not prohibited bhikkhus not to ordain the women. Furthermore chullawaggapali points out that Bhikkhunies should higher ordain under the Bhikkhus for the second time. As ordain of women have not prohibited by Buddha, in that permission, Arahat Mahinda thera could have ordained queen Anula and others. But he did not do it and asked his sister to come to Sri Lanka. So it leads us to think that arriving of Sanghamitta was not only for the founding the Bhikkhuni order. Arriving Sanghamitta to Sri Lanka had other purposes too. That is what I am going to point out under this research paper with reference to the historical and textual books.

Key words: *Sanghamitta, Arahat mahinda, Buddha, Vinaya*