

## **Panel proposal EuroSEAS 2017**

**Name of the proposed panel:** Buddhist Nuns in Thailand and Myanmar: Renunciation and Communal Jurisdiction

**Panel organizer:** Monica Lindberg Falk, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden. E-mail: Monica.Lindberg\_Falk@ace.lu.se

### **Brief description of the panel**

In the Southern Buddhist tradition women have for centuries lived ordained lives and there are currently about 100,000 Buddhist nuns observing five, eight or ten Buddhist precepts. In contrast to the Buddhist monks' precepts, the precepts that nuns follow are normally associated with lay practice. The female monk, *bhikkhuni*, ordination is again possible for women in the Southern Buddhist tradition. The *bhikkhuni* ordination has become a widely debated issue and is not recognized by the (male) *sangas* in Southeast Asia.

This panel will focus on Buddhist nuns (*thila shin*, *mae chi* and *sikkhamat*) in Myanmar and Thailand. It will present findings from recently carried out research on Buddhist nuns at temples, nunneries and meditation centres. The panel will discuss findings on motives for women to ordain as nuns instead of receiving *bhikkhuni* ordination. It will examine how communal rules are essential in regulating nuns' religious lives, sustain communal cohesion and uphold monastic discipline. It will also address religious activities in relation to monks and laity.

### **Presenters:**

Hiroko Kawanami, Lancaster University, UK.

Marja-Leena Heikkilä-Horn, Mahidol University, Thailand.

Monica Lindberg Falk, Lund University, Sweden.

### **Discussant:**

Khin Mar Mar Kyi, University of Oxford, UK.