

of an august assembly, and impressive representation of a statue or a monument, or the chance photo of a mischievous little lama or a pair of them in affectionate togetherness, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama happily sprinkling benedictory water, tells a story which had appealed to the innermost sensitivity of Don Farber. The pictures speak for themselves loud and eloquent. His comments and captions are almost superfluous.

“Visions of Buddhist Life” is a remarkable contribution to the understanding of the colorful diversity and the serene depth of Buddhism. We owe a debt of gratitude to Don Farber for this excellent work.

– Ananda W.P. Guruge

**The Origins of Buddhist
Monastic Codes in China:
An Annotated Translation and
Study of *Chanyuan Qinggui***

By Venerable Dr. Yifa
**Published by University of Hawaii Press,
Kuroda Institute, Classics in East Asian
Buddhism**
Honolulu, Hawaii: 2002, 352 pp.
ISBN: 0-8248-2494-6

The author of this attractive volume, Venerable Dr. Yifa (the former Provost and currently Professor of Chinese Buddhism of Hsi Lai University) has done for her Ph.D. dissertation under the guidance of Professor Stanley Weinstein of the Department of Religious Studies, Yale University, a comprehensive analytical study of *Chanyuan Qinggui* and appended to it an annotated translation of this twelfth century treatise on Rules of Purity for the Chan Monastery. Indicative of the importance of this classic on Buddhist Vinaya and its relevance to Buddhist Studies today is the decision of the Kuroda Institute to publish it in its prestigious series of Classics in East Asian Buddhism. According to Yifa, *Chanyuan Qinggui* is “valuable to modern scholars for its wealth of information about monastic life in twelfth century Song China.” It had been

extremely influential at the time both in China and abroad. She refers to the Japanese Zen Master Eisai’s appraisal of the work’s preeminence among existing codes. She further states that Dogen, the other prominent Zen Master, was strongly influenced by *Chanyuan Qinggui*.

Yifa’s study of the classic in 116 pages is a masterful analysis of the Evolution of Monastic Regulations in China, starting Dharmakāla’s translation of a part of the *Mahāsānghika Vinaya* in the third century CE. The history of the progressive expansion of the Vinaya literature in China is presented here succinctly and incorporates how rules and regulations on monastic life evolved in China according to specific needs of the ever-expanding institutional base. Interestingly, such regulations extended to lay people who attended overnight retreats. (p. 19) Yifa provides ample evidence in support of her conclusion that the influence of Xinghu Lü is far greater than scholars have hitherto been aware. She also demonstrates correspondences between the works of Daoxuan and *Chanyuan Qinggui* and how Chan school had shared its sources with the Lü tradition. She deals in detail with the authenticity and impact of Baizhang’s monastic code and discusses the views current among scholars.

Equally enlightening are her observations on the influence of *Chanyuan Qinggui* in Japan as exemplified in the writings of Eisai. Yifa also sees the influence of this Chan code on Eihei shingi, the monastic code which Eihei Dogen developed for Soto Zen school.

Yifa studies *Chanyuan Qinggui* in depth in relation to the Buddhist Vinaya tradition, influences of Chinese culture, and influence of Confucian Rituals on monastic practices. She comes to the conclusion that this classic Chan monastic code and the Chan regulations that followed it “includes elements foreign to the original Vinaya texts, elements incorporated from Chinese governmental policies and traditional Chinese etiquette.”

(p. 98) For example, the protocol associated with the Chan tea ceremony is shown to be by and large a direct imitation of the model presented in the Confucian *Book of Rites*. Similarly physical layout of abbot's quarters and the Dharma hall and the ritual associated with the abbot's sermon "are plainly appropriated from the customs and practices of China's imperial courts." (p. 98) Her excellent analysis of the text thus enables us to gain a clear sense of both the Chan Vinaya origins and their adaptation in Chinese cultural and social practices.

The bulk of Part 2 of the volume is devoted to a lucid and readable translation of *Chanyuan Qinggui*. Its preface by the author Zongze, Master Chuanfa Cijue in 1103 merits our attention:

"The following is in regard to Chan monastic precedents. Although in principle two different sets of Vinaya should not exist, there is a particular tradition in the school of Chan that stands apart from the general, common regulations. This tradition holds that for those individuals who enjoy the fruits of Dharma on the way to enlightenment, who are extraordinarily pure and exalted, the general precepts need not apply. But for those monks who have not attained such lofty qualities, neglecting the Vinaya is much like coming up against a wall and, it can be said, this neglect will result in a loss of respect in the eyes of others. Therefore, we have consulted with virtuous and knowledgeable monks and have collected texts from all directions in order to complement what we already see and hear, listing everything in outline form with subtitles. Alas, the phenomenon of Shaolin can already be compared to the wounding of healthy flesh that grows infected. The introduction of new regulations and the establishment of Chan monasteries by the Chan Master Baizhang can be regarded similarly. Further problems have been created by the spread of monasteries to all regions, numerous even to the point of intolerability.

Regulations have expanded accordingly, causing complications and problems to increase as well. However, in order to sanctify the temple and raise the Dharma banner there should not be a lack of regulations in the monastery. Regarding the bodhisattva threefold pure precepts and the seven categories of the śrāvaka precepts, one might ask why the established laws must focus on such complicated details. The Buddha established new teachings only when a given situation required it. It is our wish that the novice pay great heed to these regulations, and as for virtuous senior monks, we hope to have the fortune to present these rules to you for your approval."

Chanyuan Qinggui turns out to be a comprehensive treatise on Buddhist Vinaya. It begins with a brief account of the importance of being a monastic: "All the Buddhas of the three ages say, 'One must leave home and join a monastic order to attain Buddhahood.'" The first subject dealt with is how a candidate for monastic status should prepare himself. The rules to be upheld by him are listed both according to the Hinayāna precepts of *Four Part Vinaya* and the Mahāyāna precepts of the Brahma Net Sūtra. Taking up residence and attendance at meals are treated in great detail and include rules similar to those in Pāli Vinaya. The detailed instructions on chanting and delivering sermons, the summer retreat or the rainy season lent, receiving senior venerables, appointing administrators, duties of officials and functionaries, fund-raising etc. reflect the rigid and systematic organization of a Chan monastery. Rules exist even for the proper use of the toilet. The treatise ends with rules to be observed by the retired abbot, among which is the requirement that he should not be taking up residence or frequenting his former monastery.

Dr. Yifa's work is by far the most insightful and comprehensive study of the Buddhist Vinaya in recent times. It is a must in the library of a Buddhist scholar.

– Ananda W.P. Guruge