

SWIP AUSTRIA  
SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN PHILOSOPHY



SWIP Austria is pleased to announce in cooperation with IWK Institut für Wissenschaft und Kunst - Berggasse 17, 1090 Vienna the next

### SWIP Austria Lecture

**Speaker: Prof. Dr. Supakwadee Amatayakul**

The title of her talk:

**Universal Buddhist Truth and the *Bhikkhuni Sangha*:  
The Story of Mahapajapati Gotami**

Time: November 18<sup>th</sup> 2022, 4 - 6 pm

Venue: IWK, Berggasse 17, 1090 Vienna

We would like to warmly invite you to this lecture.

Due to the pandemic, Covid-19 rules, mandated by the City of Vienna at the time of the event, will apply.

**Abstract:** The lecture is part of an ongoing effort to retrieve women philosophers or women who have significantly impacted the philosophical contours of the world from a tradition that seems to have obliterated their contributions. My tradition of choice here is Early Buddhism; specifically, I will focus on Mahapajapati Gotami, the Buddha's aunt and foster mother, her role in and the events that led up to the establishment of the *bhikkhuni sangha* (the female monk order). I will argue that the Buddha's final decision to establish the *bhikkhuni* order despite his initial reluctance, together with the fact that he subordinated the *bhikkhuni* order under the *bhikkhu* order, should not be read simply as a compromise that he made with the already existing *bhikkhu* order, but should rather be understood as a confirmation of the universality of Buddhist truth over truth of convention, as convention would not have allowed the establishment of the *bhikkhuni* order. It was due to Mahapajapati Gotami's insistence and her progressive, strategic approach that the Buddha confirmed the universality of the Buddhist truth, thereby necessitating the existence of the *bhikkhuni* order.

**Biographical note:** Dr. Supakwadee Amatayakul has pioneered teaching Gender Studies at IULM University in Milan, Italy, in 2016, and currently holds the chair of Gender Theory there. She is a former professor at the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. Her interests are in the areas of Philosophy of Gender, Feminist Philosophy, and Feminist Philosophical Historiography. Her publications in English and in Thai cover new dimensions on feminist and gendered interpretations of canonical philosophical sources.