

Locating Humour in Indian Buddhist Monastic Law Codes: A Comparative Approach

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Abstract It has been claimed that Indian Buddhism, as opposed to East Asian Chan/Zen traditions, was somehow against humour. In this paper I contend that humour is discernible in canonical Indian Buddhist texts, particularly in Indian Buddhist monastic law codes (*Vinaya*). I will attempt to establish that what we find in these texts sometimes is not only humorous but that it is intentionally so. I approach this topic by comparing different versions of the same narratives preserved in Indian Buddhist monastic law codes.

Keywords Humour · Indian Buddhism · *Vinaya* · *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* · *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*

Abbreviations

- BD** *The Book of the Discipline*. Translated by I. B. Horner. Sacred Books of the Buddhists. 6 vols. London: The Pali Text Society, 1938–1966 [1996–1997]
- sDe dge** *The Sde-dge Mtshal-par Bka’-’gyur: a facsimile edition of the 18th century redaction of Si-tu Chos-kyi-’byun-gnas prepared under the direction of H. H. the 16th Rgyal-dban Karma-pa*. 103 vols. Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Chodhey Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1976–1979
- T** *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎, and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡邊海旭.

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- 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai 大正一切經刊行會, 1924–1935
- sTog *The Tog Palace Manuscript of the Tibetan Kanjur*. 109 vols. Leh, Ladakh: C. Namgyal Tarusergar, 1975–1980

It has been claimed that there is no place for humour in Indian Buddhist literature in general and Buddhist monastic law codes in particular.¹ This claim is made, perhaps most explicitly, in Lee Siegel’s study of the *Comic Tradition in India*. Siegel identifies two forms of the comic vision in India: satire and humour; or as he puts it, in the language of Sanskrit literary theorists, *ātmastha* “laughing at oneself” and *parastha* “laughing at another.”² While Siegel has noted satire or polemical pokes at the brahmanical tradition in Buddhist literature,³ he seems not to have found much in the way of *ātmastha* or “humour” in Indian Buddhist texts. Indeed, Siegel’s study is premised on the assumption that Buddhist texts do not contain humour, a position that, rightly, seems odd to him given the richness of humour found in non-Buddhist Indian literature. Siegel frames his otherwise interesting survey as “a response to a startlingly simple and yet utterly disturbing rhetorical question repeatedly posed by, or attributed to, the Buddha.”⁴ The questions at the base of his enquiry are verses from the *Buddhacarita*, “How can anyone laugh who knows of old age, disease, and death?,” and the *Dhammapada* “How can there be mirth or laughter when the world is on fire?”⁵ In other words, Siegel seems to take these rhetorical questions as evidence that there is little, if any, humour in Indian Buddhist texts.

Likewise, in a paper heavily inspired by the work of Siegel, Michel Clasquin seems to come to a similar conclusion about the apparent absence of humour in Indian Buddhist texts: “Ancient Buddhism was opposed to humour and laughter.”⁶ “A very different attitude,” however, is found—or so Clasquin tells us—in later Chan/Zen Buddhism: “humour in Zen Buddhism has been changed from something to be avoided if at all possible to a teaching device in its own right.”⁷ Clasquin goes on to ask why in Zen we see such a “decisive

¹ Siegel (1987), Faure (1998), Clasquin (2001), Matthews and Hattam (2004). Humour in *Vinaya* has been recognised, however, by von Hinüber (2006, pp. 28–29), Gyatso (2005, p. 271), Schopen (2007). This very brief survey is not intended to be comprehensive. The best argument for the presence of humour in Indian Buddhist monastic codes is Schopen (2007). Schopen approaches the topic from the viewpoint of Indian literary or aesthetic theory. I adopt a comparative approach to the topic.

² Siegel (1987, pp. 50–51).

³ Siegel (1987, p. 206): “... stories making fun of the intellectual ineptitude of brahmins abound, as one might expect, in Buddhist texts.”

⁴ Siegel (1987, p. 4). Note the reviews of Siegel (1987), in particular Gerow (1989), who asks (p. 327), “should a book on humor *be* funny—or, what is worse, *try* to be funny?”

⁵ Siegel (1987, pp. 4–5).

⁶ Clasquin (2001, p. 97).

⁷ Clasquin (2001, pp. 98–99).

break with the earlier Buddhist tradition,” and “why do real Buddhas not laugh, at least not in India?”⁸ Both Siegel and Clasquin, however, seem to have conflated humour and laughter. Laughter, as I interpret it, is a physiological response to something that may or may not be humorous.⁹ Humour may excite laughter, but these need to be clearly differentiated.¹⁰ Clasquin, for instance, introduces a passage from the Pāli *Vinaya* dealing with monks’ laughing aloud whilst going amongst the houses of the laity on their alms’ rounds. On the basis of this passage he concludes not only that “[f]or a Buddhist monk in ancient India, to laugh out loud (*sic*) was an offence,” but also that this rule, which in fact is designed only to curtail indecorous laughter whilst begging for alms,¹¹ is somehow “the official [Buddhist] view on laughter and humour.”¹² Clearly this is not “the official [Buddhist] view” on laughter or humour. In fact, I doubt that such a thing exists.

Finally, in terms of outlining the problem, we might note the remarks of Bernard Faure, another scholar who seems not to find much humour in Buddhist texts, particularly in the monastic law codes or *Vinayas*:¹³

“Humor,” Faure tells us, “is more obvious in Rabelais than in Vinaya texts, but it is also at work in the latter—even if not in their authors’ minds (this quality is rather rare among lawmakers), at least in that of their audience. Pushed to its extreme, Vinaya legalism produces comic effects that must not have been lost on its readers.”

Here Faure seems to suggest that humour in Buddhist monastic law codes is to be found only in readers’ responses to the admittedly sometimes absurd

⁸ Clasquin (2001, pp. 100, 109).

⁹ The Oxford English Dictionary defines “laugh” as “To manifest the combination of bodily phenomena (spasmodic utterance of inarticulate sounds, facial distortion, shaking of the sides, etc.) which forms the instinctive expression of mirth or of sense of something ludicrous, and which can also be occasioned by certain physical sensations, esp. that produced by tickling.”

¹⁰ The Oxford English Dictionary defines “humour” as follows: a. “That quality of action, speech, or writing, which excites amusement; oddity, jocularity, facetiousness, comicality, fun.” b. “The faculty of perceiving what is ludicrous or amusing, or of expressing it in speech, writing, or other composition; jocular imagination or treatment of a subject.”

¹¹ Rahula (1997, p. 51), commenting on *Dhammapada* 146 (the same verse as cited by Siegel), notes that “One is likely to come to the erroneous conclusion, if one does not know the context of this statement, that the Buddha categorically condemns all enjoyment in life.” Rahula also notes that (1997, pp. 52–53) “During the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Christian missionaries and many Western Buddhologists ... evidently assumed that Buddhist literature was always serious and gloomy, bereft of any kind of sense of humour or joy in life. Consequently they failed to notice the subtle and serene sense of humour often found in the Pāli texts. On the contrary, present-day visitors from the West to such Buddhist countries as Sri Lanka (*sic*) find there people happy, cheerful (*sic*) and light-hearted—often disconcertingly so.”

¹² Clasquin (2001, p. 97).

¹³ Faure (1998, p. 79). Note, however, *pace* Faure, Sylvain Lévi’s comments with regard to the authorship of the *Vinaya* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins (1932, p. 23): “Un écrivain dont la fougue verbale et l’imagination surabondante évoquent le souvenir de Rabelais, et du meilleur de Rabelais, a pris prétexte des récits ternes et desséchés qui se répétaient dans les couvents à l’appui des prescriptions de la discipline ecclésiastique, pour en tirer une succession de contes qui veulent être édifiants, mais qui sont surtout amusants, pittoresques ou émouvants à souhait.”

situations created by (overzealous?) monastic lawyers. While over-the-top scenarios may have been humourous to the readership—who, I should add, would themselves have been Indian Buddhist monks—Faure seems to assert that any humour in *Vinaya* texts is unintentional.

In this paper I would like to reconsider the views of Siegel, Clasquin, and Faure. I will suggest that humour is by no means solely the domain of late East Asian Chan/Zen traditions. Rather, I contend that humour is discernible in canonical Indian Buddhist texts, particularly in Indian Buddhist monastic law codes. I will attempt to establish that what we find in these texts sometimes is not only humourous but that it is intentionally so. Moreover, the passages which I will suggest are humourous are generally one-off scenarios, not Faure's "Vinaya legalism" "pushed to its extreme."¹⁴

The first passage I would like to consider in this exploratory examination deals with regulations concerning the consumption of various meats. As one might expect, the diet of Indian Buddhist monastics is somewhat restrictive. Although exceptions are sometimes made on medical grounds, there are many things that monks are generally not supposed to eat: garlic (*sgog skya*),¹⁵ elephant (*glang po che'i sha*) and horse meat (*rta'i sha*),¹⁶ dogs (*khyi sha*), falcons (*khra*), owls (*'ug pa*) and human flesh (*mi sha*),¹⁷ to mention but a few. In the following, I will provide an example from two monastic codes, those of the Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda. Both passages come from the same section of their respective monastic codes, a text or section known as the *Muktaka*.¹⁸ The passages deliver rules concerning the consumption of monkey

¹⁴ An example of "Vinaya legalism" "pushed to its extreme" might include the first *pārājika* rule concerning monastic celibacy in which a rule was first promulgated in reaction to a monk who had sex with his wife. See, for instance, T. 1442 (xxiii) 628a14–629c1. This rule later had to be amended to include female animals when another monk proclaimed his innocence, saying that he thought the rule of monastic celibacy pertained only to human females and therefore did not apply to monkeys (T. 1442 [xxiii] 629c1–28). There are a number of variations on this; see T. 1442 (xxiii) 631b4–22; 631b23–28.

¹⁵ *Kṣudrakavastu*, sTog, 'Dul ba TA 96a6–7: *bcom ldan 'das kyis dgongs pa / ... de lta bas na dge slong gis sgog skya bza' bar mi bya'o // za na 'gal tshabs can du 'gyur ro //*; cf. T. 1451 (xxiv) 230a15–19: 佛言。... 從今以往制諸苾芻。不應食蒜及葱韭類。食者得越法罪。

¹⁶ *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, sTog, 'Dul ba KA 409b3–5: *bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa / ... dge slong dag gis glang po che'i sha longs spyad par mi bya'o // longs spyad na 'gal tshabs can du 'gyur ro // glang po che'i sha ji lta ba bzhin rta'i sha yang de dang 'dra'o //*; cf. T. 1448 (xxiv) 4c25–5a1: 佛言。... 是故苾芻不應食象肉。若食者。得越法罪。象肉既爾。馬肉亦然。

¹⁷ *Uttaragrantha (Muktaka)*, sTog, 'Dul ba NA 227a6–7: *bcom ldan 'das kyis dgongs pa / gang dge slong dag gis khyi sha zos pa ni nyes pa'i dmigs su gyur te / de bas na dge slong dag khyi sha ma za zhig / dge slong dag gis khyi sha zos na 'das pa dang bcas par 'gyur ro //*; NA 227b2–3... *bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa / dge slong dag khra dang / 'ug pa dang / mi sha za ba dag gi bya'i sha ma za zhig / dge slong gis khra dang / 'ug pa dang / mi sha za ba dag gi bya'i sha zos na 'das pa dang bcas par 'gyur ro //*; cf. T. 1452 (xxiv) 439c25–27: 佛言。凡諸苾芻。不應食狗及以鷄鶩。并諸鳥獸食死屍者。咸不應食。若有食者得惡作罪。

¹⁸ On the *Muktaka*, see Clarke (2001).

meat. The main characters in the narrative are the Group-of-Six *bhikṣus*, a band of mischief-making monks found at the centre of many of the narratives in the monastic law codes.¹⁹

In the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya* the passage runs as follows:²⁰

After the [Group-of-Six] monks had eaten, they entered the *Andhavana and wandered about. Seeing a dead monkey, they said to another monk: “Take [this]; tomorrow we shall eat it.”

This monk thereupon took it.

The following day, when they were boiling it, there happened to be [monks] who practised begging. The monks asked, “Elder, what kind of meat is this?”

[He] replied, “Monkey meat.”

The monks made various criticisms of the incident: “How is that you call yourself a monk and eat monkey meat when it has not yet been allowed by the Buddha?”

They informed the Buddha of this matter.

The Buddha said, “Monkey [meat] looks like human flesh. How is it different from human flesh? If [a monk] eats [monkey meat], he incurs a *duṣkṛta* offence.”

諸比丘食後。入安陀林經行。見死獼猴。語餘比丘。持去明日當食。是比丘即取。明日有煮者。有行乞食者。諸比丘問。長老是何等肉。答獼猴肉。諸比丘種種因緣呵。云何名比丘。佛未聽噉獼猴肉而噉。是事白佛。佛言。獼猴似人肉。與人肉何異。若噉得突吉羅罪。

While one could argue that the above story is slightly amusing, I will not do so. Any amusement is, I suggest, simply a matter of reader response; that is, culturally, the thought of consuming simians may be somewhat curious to a Western readership. But I do not think that this passage is intentionally meant to be humorous. It establishes a rule in the customary legal manner, that is to say, with the introduction of a frame-story. The events of a certain monk or group of monks are criticised and subsequently reported to the Buddha, who thereupon makes a ruling. The same rule is also found, for instance, in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*. There, however, I contend that the authors or redactors of this monastic law code have embellished what is essentially the same tale with touches of humour. The humour is, I suggest, particularly

¹⁹ On the Group-of-Six, see Dhirasekera (1970), Kasuga (1971), Sarkar (1981), Gokhale (1989), Schopen (2004). Note also Tanaka (1975) and Shi Changyi (1992).

²⁰ T. 1435 (xxiii) 461b21–27.

conspicuous when seen in light of the previous passage. The Mūla-sarvāstivādin parallel reads as follows:²¹

The setting is Śrāvastī.

At the Jetavana, a monkey died having fallen while going from tree-top to tree-top. The Group-of-Six put it into a small pot and cooked it.

When a certain woman, having lost [her] young son was searching for him and had come to the Jetavana, she saw the Group-of-Six cooking the monkey in a small pot.

Having seen them, she thought to herself, “Have not the Group-of-Six here cooked my son?,” and began to investigate.

As it bubbled away, the monkey’s hand emerged, and she pounded her breast, saying, “Oh no! Son! Oh no! Son!”

Its foot also emerged, and she said, “Oh no! My son! Oh no! My son!”

The Group-of-Six said, “Why do you act like that?”

She said, “This hand and foot that have emerged; this is my son.”

When the tail also emerged, and the Group-of-Six said, “Does your son have a tail?,” she became embarrassed and said, “Noble Ones, is this a monkey?”

They said, “It is a monkey.”

“Noble Ones, do you partake of monkey meat?”

They replied, “We eat it.”

After they were criticized, [other] monks reported to the Blessed One what had occurred.

The Blessed One said, “Monks, monkey [flesh] resembles human flesh. Henceforth, monks must not eat monkey meat. If monks eat monkey meat, they incur an offence.”

gleng gzhi ni mnyan du yod pa na ste / dze ta'i 'tshal bu na / spre'u zhig shing kha nas shing khar rgyu ba las lung nas dus 'das te / drug sde dag gis rdze'u zhig gi nang du bcug ste 'tshod pa dang / bud med gzhan zhig bu chung ngu zhig stor nas de 'tshol zhing dze ta'i tshal du 'ongs na / drug sde rnams rdze'u'i nang du spre'u 'chod [rd: 'tshod] pa mthong ngo // mthong nas des drug sde dag gis bdag gi bu 'dir ma btsos

²¹ *Uttaragrantha (Muktaka)*, sTog, 'Dul ba NA 228b2–229a2. Cf. the Chinese translation at T. 1452 (xxiv) 440a11–24: 時有獼猴攀條遠躑忽然墮地。因即命終。六衆見已持還住處置於釜內自煮。時有女人失其兒子。尋逐蹤緒入逝多林。察見六衆於大釜內煮彼獼猴。女人見已搥胸叫曰。嗚呼我兒於此被煮。是時六衆挑獼猴手以示女人。女人叫曰。禍哉此是兒手。次挑其腳。女人告言。禍哉是我兒腳。次舉其頭。女人復言。禍哉是我兒頭。復舉其尾告女人曰。爾之兒子亦有尾耶。女人告曰。豈復仁等食獼猴肉。答云。不是汝兒我食何過。諸人聞已便起譏嫌。以緣白佛。佛言。汝諸苾芻。獼猴之貌有類人形。是故苾芻亦不應食。若有食者得惡作罪。

*sam snyam bsams te / rtog pa la zhugs pa dang / ji tsam zhig na lung
lung khol ba dang / spre'u'i lag pa gyen du byung ba dang / des brang
brdungs te / kyi hud bu kyi hud bu zhes smras pa dang / de'i rkang pa
yang byung ste / kyi hud bu kyi hud bu zhes yang smras pa dang / drug
sde dag gis ci'i phyir de ltar byed ces smras pa dang / des rkang lag
byung ba 'di ni bdag gi bu'o zhes smras pa dang / ji tsam nas mjug ma
yang byung ngo // drug sde dag gis ci khyod kyi bu la mjug ma yod
dam zhes smras pa dang / de skyengs te smras pa / 'phags pa 'di ci
spre'u 'am / de dag gis smras pa / spre'u'o // 'phags pa dag / spre'u'i sha
yang bsnams sam / des za'o zhes smras pa dang / de dag 'phya bar gyur
nas / de ltar gyur pa dge slong dag gis / bcom ldan 'das la gsol to //
bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa / dge slong dag spre'u ni mi sha dang
'dra / de bas na dge slong dag spre'u'i sha ma za zhig / dge slong dag gis
spre'u'i sha zos na 'das pa dang bcas par 'gyur ro //*

Here we see the same basic story as before. The Group-of-Six monks are criticized for eating monkey meat. This moves the Buddha to pass a rule making it an offence to eat monkeys. However we understand the exact nature of the relationship between the Sarvāstivādins and the Mūlasarvāstivādins,²² somehow we must account for the narrative embellishments found in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* but not in the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*. Here I specifically refer to the story of the young mother who just happened to lose her son in the vicinity of the Jetavana at the precise time that the Group-of-Six were cooking a monkey that had fallen from a tree-top. The Mūlasarvāstivāda version includes a dramatic, limb-by-limb account of mistaken identity, with the mother beating her bosom, expressing her grief at the sight first of a small hand, then a foot, and finally the monkey's head. We must also explain the presence of what I consider to be the punch-line, the Group-of-Six's retort to the mother, "Does your son have a tail?" This passage, I think, verges on what we might call slapstick. Yet, at the same time, it also functions as a piece of monastic legislation, and establishes—as does the Sarvāstivādin tale—a rule deliberately designed to curtail the consumption of monkey meat in monastic circles, presumably lest the laity misconstrue the situation and think that Buddhist monks are cannibals.²³

I would now like to turn to the *Bhikṣuṇī Vibhaṅga* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*. Here we find a short tale which serves as the frame-story for a set of rules which establish that nuns must neither learn spells from, nor teach spells to, laymen. The general purport of this injunction is not difficult to grasp, and

²² See Iwamoto (1988), Enomoto (1998, 2000).

²³ If we accept that the Mūlasarvāstivādin version of this tale is intentionally humorous, then we may well be forced to conclude that the Sarvāstivādin parallel is intentionally not. Of course, it remains unclear whether these tales are based on a common source, or whether a direction of borrowing from one to the other can be established. Future case studies of the narratives in both *Vinayas* may suggest a solution.

easily could have been introduced with any number of narratives. I give the first story in full.²⁴

The setting is as before.

At that time the nun Sthūlanandā learnt from a layman who knew spells his spell technique. The spell went: **si ri si ri phu svāhā*.

Having received [instruction] once, again she once more received [instruction].

The other nuns addressed her saying, “Noble One, we previously heard that your reverence is intelligent, learned, accomplished, has a prodigious memory, and [is able to] recite the Tripiṭaka. Why [then] do you often visit this man and have him impart charms?”

Sthūlanandā replied, “[Oh.] it is not that I cannot remember [the spells he teaches me]. [It’s just that] I’m in love with that man and I want to chat with him.”

The nuns informed the monks. The monks informed the Buddha.

The Buddha asked whether it was true, and castigated her. *To be expanded in full down to:* [the Buddha] established a rule of training to be recited thus: “Whatever nun receives instruction in spell technique from a layman incurs a *pāyantikā*.”

²⁴ T. 1443 (xxiii) 1012b23–c1. For a close Tibetan parallel, see sTog, ‘*Dul ba* NYA 406a3–b3: *gleng gzhi ni mnyan yod na’o // de nas sbom dga’ mo chags pas skyes pa ‘dod nas / de spos tshong gi khye’u zhig gi drung du song ste phyin nas ‘di skad ces smras so // bzhin bzangs rig pa cung zad klog gam / des ‘di skad ces smras te klog go // sbom dga’ mos ‘di skad ces smras te thon cig dang klog go // des ‘di skad ces / si ri phu / bi si ri phu / si ri byi svāhā / zhes smras so // sbom dga’ mos ‘di skad yang dang yang du rjod cig ces smras pa dang / ji tsam na khros nas mgo reg mo ngan pa zhes spyos so // phyi bzhin ‘brang ba’i dge sbyong mas ‘di skad ces smras so // ‘di ltar khyod kyis tshig gnyis kyang mi zin na / ji ltar khyod kyis sde snod gsum bzung / des ‘di skad ces smras so // kho mos brjod pa dang mod la bzung zin mod kyi / tshig tsam rang gir byed do // phyi bzhin ‘brang ba’i dge sbyong mas ‘di skad ces / ‘phags ma khyod ‘dod chags kyis rab tu ma ‘bar ba ngo mtshar ro zhes smras pa’i skabs de dge slong ma rnam kyis / bcom ldan ‘das la gsol to // de nas bcom ldan ‘das kyis byung ba ‘di dang zhes bya ba nas / bslab pa bca’ ba’i bar du mdzad de / yang dge slong ma gang khyim pa las rig pa klog na ltung byed do //; note that the Tibetan *Bhikṣuṇī Vibhaṅga* does not correspond well with the Chinese translation or with the Tibetan *Bhikṣuṇī Prātimokṣa*; on this, see Schopen 1998, 178, n. 67, and the references cited therein; cf. Schopen 2004, 180–181. cf. sDe dge bStan ‘gyur, ‘*Dul ba’i ‘grel pa*, TSU 140a6–b2: *ston pa mnyan du yod pa na ste / sbom dga’ mo snga dro bsod snyoms la zhugs pa las / spos ‘tshong gi khye’u ‘jig rten gyi rig pa slob pa mthong ba dang de la chags par gyur nas bdag la rig pa slob shig ces smras pa dang / sbos ‘tshang gi khye’us mo la bslabs te / si ri bhu si ri bhu si ri bhu si ri svāhā / sbom dga’ mo yang lobs bzhin du da dung nga la slob shig ces yang nas yang du slob pa las spos ‘tshong gi khye’u yang khros nas / gtum mo mgo reg ma khyod dgos pa med do zhes smras shing lang te song ngo // dge slong ma gghan dag gis smras pa ci’i phyir lobs bzhin du yang slob ces dris pa dang / de la chags pas na lhan cig ‘dug na bdag dga’o zhes zer ba las ‘phya ste bcas / yang dge slong ma gang khyim pa las gtsug lag slob na ltung ba’o // dge slong mas skyes pa la chags pa’i phyir de la bdag nyid rig pa slob na ltung ba’o //.**

緣處同前。時吐羅難陀尼。從解呪俗人學其呪法。呪曰。呬里呬里普^{破忽}反莎訶。一度受已更復受。諸尼告言。聖者。我本聞上人聰明廣識博達強記諷誦三藏。何故頻向此人令授小呪。吐羅尼曰。非不記憶。我愛其人欲得共語。尼白苾芻。苾芻白佛。佛問實訶責。廣說乃至制其學處。應如是說。若復苾芻尼。從俗人受學呪法者。波逸底迦。

There is, to my knowledge, no rule in any Indian Buddhist monastic law code prohibiting nuns from falling in love with laymen. Yet this is not the purported concern of this series of rules. These rules seem to have been established in order to prevent nuns learning and teaching non-Buddhist arts and sciences such as spells.²⁵ This rule is not an attempt to dissuade nuns from associating with laymen. Rather it addresses lay/monastic boundaries of instruction and knowledge, in this case, specifically with regard to what we might call magic.²⁶ Here, I suggest that the humour is to be found in the incongruity of the nun's response. In pre-modern India, as in the modern world whether Eastern or Western, at least ideally, nuns are not supposed to fall in love with laymen and spend their time, quite literally, chatting up the menfolk. The incongruity of Sthūlanandā's reply, viz., that it is not that she cannot remember, but rather that she is in love with the layman and wants to chat with him, I suspect, would not have been lost on an Indian audience, and is, I suggest, a deliberate attempt at humour, whatever the intended purpose or function.

An almost identical story line is presented for the parallel rule about teaching spells to a layman. Here too the question is whether a nun may teach spells and other types of magic to a layman.²⁷ This is evident, for instance, in the version of the rule preserved in the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*. As we will see, this ruling contains no reference to a nun falling in love with a layman. In fact, the authors or redactors of this monastic code make it clear that what is at issue here is Buddhists' involvement in non-Buddhist systems of knowledge. The rule reads as follows:²⁸

The Buddha was in the kingdom of Śrāvastī.

At that time the [Buddhist] nun *Kālā, who had formerly been a follower of another [religious] path, abandoning and forsaking the *sūtra*, *vinaya*, and *abhidharma*, taught lay children to recite various charms.

²⁵ For parallels in other *Vinayas*, see, for convenience, Waldschmidt (1926 [1979], pp. 166–167), Hirakawa (1998, pp. 522–525).

²⁶ The Pāli parallel to this set of rules refers to *tiracchāna-vijjā* or, in Horner's (*BD* iii, pp. 337–339) translation, “worldly knowledge.” As noted by Horner (*BD* iii, 339, note 1), this is also an offence—albeit a *dukkata*, an offence of wrong-doing—for monks; see *BD* v, 195.

²⁷ T. 1443 (xxiii) 1012c8–17. Cf. sTog, 'Dul ba NYA 406b5–407a4; sDe dge bStan 'gyur, 'Dul ba'i 'grel pa, TSU 140b2–4.

²⁸ T. 1435 (xxiii) 337b28–c10.

Then there was a nun of little desire, sated, who engaged in ascetic practices. Hearing of this matter, she was displeased at heart. She scolded [the other nun] on various accounts, saying, “How do you call yourself a nun and yet abandon and forsake the *sūtra*, *vinaya*, and *abhidharma*, and teach the laity recitation of various charms?”

Having scolded her on various accounts, she reported this matter in full to the Buddha.

With regard to this matter, the Buddha assembled the two-fold *saṅgha*.

Although knowing [the answer], he intentionally asked the nun Kālā, “Is it true that you did this or not?”

She replied, “Truly, I did it, World-Honoured One.”

The Buddha scolded her on various accounts, saying, “How do you call yourself a nun and yet abandon and forsake the *sūtra*, *vinaya*, and *abhidharma*, and teach the laity recitation of various charms?”

Having scolded her on various accounts, he informed the monks [as follows]: “Since there are ten benefits in doing so, I will establish a rule of training for the nuns. Henceforth, this rule of training should be expounded thus: ‘Whatever nun teaches the laity recitation of various charms incurs a *pātayantikā*.’”

佛在舍衛國。爾時迦羅比丘尼。先是外道。棄捨經律阿毘曇。教白衣兒讀誦種種呪術。是中有比丘尼。少欲知足行頭陀。聞是事心不喜。種種因緣呵責言。云何名比丘尼。棄捨經律阿毘曇。教白衣讀誦種種呪術。種種因緣呵責已向佛廣說。佛以是事集二部僧。知而故問迦羅比丘尼汝實作是事不。答言。實作世尊。佛以種種因緣呵責言。云何名比丘尼。棄捨經律阿毘曇。教白衣讀誦種種呪術。種種因緣呵已語諸比丘。以十利故。與比丘尼結戒。從今是戒應如是說。若比丘尼。教白衣讀誦種種呪術。波夜提。

Clearly, there is nothing at all humorous in this telling of the rule. Again, most striking is the difference in presentation of this set of rules between the Sarvāstivādins and the Mūlasarvāstivādins, and the major difference seems to be the absence or presence of what looks conspicuously like humour.

The monastic law codes contain many minor rulings regulating proper monastic decorum. As mentioned above, part of this decorum entails not making a ruckus when heading off for alms. Likewise, when entering the house of a layman, there are various things that a monk should avoid doing: monks should not have their heads covered,²⁹ they should not go jumping

²⁹ See sTog, ‘Dul ba JA 515b6–516a4 for the frame story; the rule reads: *mgo mi g.yogs par khyim gzhan du ’gro bar bslab par bya’o ll*.

over fences,³⁰ and they should not sit down exposing themselves.³¹ The rule that concerns us here, however, is the regulation concerning the inspection of one's seat before sitting down. The rule is introduced with a frame-story featuring the Venerable Udāyin, a monk well known in this literature for his fondness of women.

During that time, [when] in a Caṇḍālī household a young woman had given birth to a baby boy, the Caṇḍālī said to that baby boy's mother, "Young woman, bathe him. Having wrapped him up in white cloth, lay him down on this Seat of the Sage,³² and nourishing him for a long time, let him live long."

That young woman bathed that baby boy, and having wrapped him up in white cloth she continually laid him down on that Seat of the Sage.

[Now] the Venerable Udāyin, on another day, having gone for alms went to where the Caṇḍālī's household was.

—*Arhats, without thinking, do not begin to know or perceive.*—³³

Thus the Venerable Udāyin accordingly sat down on that Seat of the Sage.

[When] [those of] that place of the woman (i.e., the members of her household [?]), with haste, had said, "Noble One, the baby boy! Noble One, the baby boy!," the Venerable Udāyin quickly got up and when he inspected [his seat] he saw that the baby boy was dead.

[When] the people of the household began to be overcome with grief, the Venerable Udāyin said, "Sister, you must not weep. This sentient being has performed life-shortening action[s], and also the Blessed One has said, 'All conditioned existence is impermanent.' Indeed, with regard to this it is I who should be overcome with grief. In this way, although I have attained arhatship, on account of me the Blessed One will make a rule of training in the *Vinaya* for the disciples."

³⁰ See sTog, 'Dul ba JA 517b4–518a1 for the frame story about the Group-of-Six monks who went jumping over hedges/fences (*rib mi la mchong zhing*); the rule reads: *mi mchong bar khyim gzhan du 'gro bar bslab par bya'o ll*.

³¹ This is something that, apparently in the India that our authors/redactors knew, children, drunks, *bhūtas*, and those attached to flesh-eating were wont to do: '*phags pa dag byis pa khye'u dag dang / chang gis ra ro ba dag dang / 'byung po dang sha zas brlams pa dag 'di ltar mchis pas* The monks are thus criticised by the Brahmin householder, to which they respond that it is necessary to expose themselves (*shes ldan dag 'di la dgos pa yod do / /*); this is then shot down by the Brahmin (*'phags pa dag dgos pa gang lags / je dang por khyed cag nyid mi shes pa dang bral ba dang / bslabs par gyur pa'o / /*). The criticism, response, and the Brahmin's retort are in part stock-phrases, modified depending on context. See sTog, 'Dul ba JA 526b1–6 for the frame story about the Group-of-Six monks who exposed themselves when sitting down in the house of a householder; the rule reads: *mdoms mi snang bar khyim gzhan du stan la 'dug par bslab par bya'o ll*.

³² To what this refers, I do not know.

³³ On this stock phrase, see Hiraoka (2002, p. 171).

After he informed the monks of that matter, the monks reported it to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said, “Monks, there is no offence for the monk Udāyin, but no monk whatsoever should sit down in another house without inspecting the seat. If he sits [without first inspecting the seat], he comes to be guilty of an offence.”³⁴

de'i bar skabs su gtum mo'i khyim du bu zhig la khye'u zhig btsas nas / gtum mos khye'u de'i ma la smras pa / bu mo khye'u 'di khru gyis gos dkar pos dkris te / drang s[r]ong gi stan 'di la snyol cig dang yun ring du 'tsho bar 'gyur zhing / tshe ring du skyong bar 'gyur ro // bu mo des khye'u de khru byas te gos dkar pos dkris nas / drang s[r]ong de'i stan de la rtag tu bsnyal lo // tshe dang ldan pa 'char ka yang nyi ma gzhan zhig na bsod snyoms la zhugs nas / gtum mo'i khyim ga la ba der song ngo // dgra bcom pa dag ni ma bsams par shes pa dang mthong ba mi 'jug pas / tshe dang ldan pa 'char ka de bzhin du drang s[r]ong gi stan de la 'dug pa dang / bud med kyi yul de brtad pa dang bcas shing / 'phags pa khye'u 'phags pa khye'u zhes zer nas / tshe dang ldan pa 'char ka myur du langs te bltas na / khye'u dus la bab pa mthong ngo // khyim mi dag gis cho nges gdab par brtsams pa dang / tshe dang ldan pa 'char gas [rd: kas] smras pa / sring mo ma ngu shig / sems can 'dis tshe thung bar 'gyur ba'i las byas te / bcom ldan 'das kyis kyang 'du byed thams cad mi rtag go zhes gsungs so // de lta mod kyi 'di la kho bos dud [rd: ngud?] mos gdab par bya ba yin te / 'di lta kho bos dgra bcom pa nyid thob kyang kho bo las brten te / bcom ldan 'das kyis 'dul ba la nyan thos rnams kyis bslab pa'i gzhi 'cha' bar 'gyur ro // des skabs de dge slong rnams la brjod nas / dge slong rnams kyis / bcom ldan 'das la gsol pa dang / bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa / dge slong dag dge slong 'char ka la ni ltung ba med de / yang dge slong gis khyim gzhan du stan la ma brtags par 'dug par mi bya'o // 'dug na 'gal tshabs can du 'gyur ro //

³⁴ sTog, 'Dul ba CA 213b7–214b1; sDe dge 'Dul ba CA 149a2–7. Cf. T. 1442 (xxiii) 664b2–15. What is perhaps most interesting about this rule is that it appears in the section on murder (*pārājika* 3). The rule introduced, however, is also to be found in the *śaikṣadharmā* section along with a very similar narrative; see sTog, 'Dul ba JA 522a2–523a4 (here Udāyin says: *sring mo dag 'di la ci ngu / 'du byed thams cad kyi chos nyid 'di lta bu yin no // 'on kyang kho bo la brten te / ...*); cf. T. 1442 (xxiii) 902b10–15 (the Chinese is heavily abbreviated and contains no hint of humour). Note that the *śaikṣadharmā* rules are not numbered in either the Chinese or Tibetan. The numbering (*śaikṣa* no. 32) can be confirmed, however, with reference to the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra-paddhati* (*So sor thar pa'i mdo'i gzhung 'grel*; Peking No. 5605, bStan 'gyur, 'Dul ba'i 'grel pa, PHU 39a8–40b3, where Udāyin repeats the same: *sring mo dag 'di la ci 'du byed thams cad kyi chos nyid 'di lta bu yin no // 'on kyang kho bo la brten te / ...*). The *Prātimokṣa-sūtra-paddhati* provides a useful analysis of each *Vibhaṅga/Prātimokṣa* rule, giving details as to the place where the event leading to the promulgation of the rule is said to have occurred (*yul*), the person concerned (*gang zag*), the *kleśa* (*nyon mongs pa*), and the offence committed (*nyes pa*). Analysis of *Vinaya* rules into *kleśas*, or mental afflictions, is not, to my knowledge, common. This may, however, provide evidence for Sarkar's unsubstantiated comments (1981, p. 116): “the activities of the *Chabbhaggiya* may be explained in the light of Satripu-ideals of the Sanskrit literature. Each of the misdeeds may be found rooted in any one or two of the internal foes, viz., *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, *Harsa*, *Mana* and *Mada* of our mind.”

Here the first thing to note is the editorial insertion within the narrative forewarning the reader that even *arhats* are not omniscient. This sets the scene for Udāyin's lack of mindfulness and general care when he plunks himself down on the newly-born. An attempt at intentional humour, I would argue, is to be found in Udāyin's response to the shocked and horrified householders. First, Udāyin tells the mother not to cry, and tries to blame the infant for its own death; he states, in effect, that the baby has died due to its own former misdeeds or *karma*. As if this is not sufficiently inappropriate, Udāyin then offers another reason why the mother should not weep at the death of her child; Udāyin quotes the Buddha, stating that "All conditioned existence is impermanent" anyway. While at least doctrinally speaking Udāyin is undoubtedly correct, in light of what was—and what is clearly flagged as such by the authors/redactors of this text—his own indiscretion, it is, I suggest, the inappropriateness of this response that is intended to be humorous. Indeed, although the Buddha is here moved to deliver a rule about inspecting one's seat, this narrative is actually found in the third *pārājika* discussion of murder.³⁵ In other words, the Buddha is made to say that with regard to a possible charge of murder, there is no offence, but a monk really should be careful where he sits lest he end up killing a patron's progeny.

Moreover, it is worth noting that this kind of scriptural citation is relatively rare in *Vinaya* literature. In fact, it is probably safe to say that with few exceptions scripture is primarily quoted only by the Group-of-Six, and almost always when they are up to no good. The irony of Udāyin, a monk who seems to exist in this literature almost solely to negotiate and push the boundaries of monkish interaction with the opposite sex, quoting scripture, especially to justify his own misdeeds, surely would not have been lost on an Indian Buddhist monastic audience or readership.³⁶

There are many other passages in the monastic codes that one could argue were intentionally designed to be humorous. Here, however, I can discuss but one more. No topic is likely to elicit humour quite as much as discussions of human sexuality. This is particularly so when dealing with those we generally perceive to be above or indifferent to worldly notions of sexual desire, that is, when discussing the sexuality of celibate monks and nuns. Here I would like to introduce a passage about what are known euphemistically today as "adult toys." It may come as no surprise that most Indian Buddhist monastic codes contain rules concerning the use of such items.³⁷ Yet it is the manner of delivery of just such a rule that, I suggest, provides us with another example of intentional humour.

³⁵ For a discussion of the Pāli parallel to this story in reference to Jain reactions to Buddhist claims of ignorance as a defence for murder (*pārājika* 3), see Granoff (1992, pp. 33–34). I owe this reference to Professor Granoff.

³⁶ See Schopen (2007, pp. 204–205 and 211–213), for two more examples of the "citation of doctrine in an incongruous context meant to elicit laughter" (p. 211) by the Group-of-Six.

³⁷ This rule seems not to be found in the *Mahāsāṅghika Vinaya*. For the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, see T. 1428 (xxii) 738a16–b9, and the translation in Heirman (2002, ii, pp. 597–598). For further references, see Hirakawa (1998, pp. 440–441).

In the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* we find the following account of the nun Sthūlanandā.³⁸

The setting is the same as above.

At that time, the nun Sthūlanandā, on account of going begging for alms, went to a householder's home. She greeted his wife, saying, "May you be free of illness and live long!" Knowing that the husband was not there,³⁹ [Sthūlanandā] asked, saying, "Good lady, when your husband is away, how do you get on?"

She [the wife] thereupon became embarrassed and silent, not replying.

The nun then lowered her head and left. Arriving at the king's harem, she greeted queen Mallikā, saying, "May you be free of illness and live long!"

After inquiring as to each other's health, she surreptitiously asked the queen, saying, "When the king leaves on a distant sojourn, how do you satisfy your desires?"

The queen replied, "Noble One, you have left home for the religious life; why do you discuss worldly matters?"

The nun replied, saying, "O Noble Lady,⁴⁰ for a free-and-easy youth [like myself], without a mate it is truly difficult to pass the days. I am extremely woeful."

The queen replied, "Noble One, if the king is away, I take tree resin and have that craftsman make it into a dildo. Using it, I assuage my desires."

The nun, having heard these words, thereupon went to the craftsman's wife and informed her, saying, "You must make a dildo for me with tree resin like the one crafted for Lady Mallikā."

That craftsman's wife asked, saying, "Noble One, what use does a renunciant have for such a thing?"

The nun replied, "I have a need for it."

The wife replied, "If that is so, I will have it made."

Thereupon she said to her husband, "Please make a dildo."

The husband replied, "Is it that I can no longer satisfy you and so you ask for such a thing?"

³⁸ The earliest modern discussion of this passage to my knowledge is that of the noted folklorist Minakata Kumagusu (1867–1941) in 1913 (see Minakata [1971, ii, pp. 329–330]). Note that Minakata drew extensively on the Buddhist canon in Chinese for Indian parallels to East Asian tales, practices, and legends. For an index to Minakata's canonical citations, see Iikura (2001).

³⁹ The Tibetan parallel states that Sthūlanandā went to see a woman whose husband was abroad (sTog, 'Dul ba NYA 365a3: *khyim thab byes su song ba'i chung ma zhig gi drung du song nas ...*).

⁴⁰ Why an honorific—if that is what this is—is used here, the third time Sthūlanandā addresses the queen, is not clear. The Tibetan is of little help as this part of the conversation is not included.

The wife replied, “I have a friend who came specifically to order it. It is not for my use.”

The craftsman made it and gave it to his wife.

The wife thereupon sent it to the nun.

Then, Sthūlanandā, having finished eating, thereupon entered her cell. Then she strapped the tree-resin dildo on to her heel.⁴¹ Placing it inside her body, she pleased herself, and on account of this she fell asleep.

Then, in the nunnery, suddenly a fire broke out. There was a great clamour.

The nun was thereby startled and awoke. Forgetting to untie the dildo, she left her cell.

When everyone saw her, they burst out in great scorn and laughter.

Then young children saw her and called out asking, “Noble One, what is that on your foot?”

The nun heard these words and became extremely embarrassed.

The nuns reported [the matter] to the monks.

The monks reported [the matter] to the Buddha.

The Buddha asked [her whether it was true or not], and castigated her.

To be expanded in full down to: [the Buddha] established a rule of training to be recited thus: “Whatever nun makes a dildo with tree resin [incurs] a *pāyantikā*.”⁴²

緣處同前。時吐羅難陀苾芻尼。因行乞食往長者家。告其妻曰。無病長壽。知夫不在問曰。賢首。夫既不在云何存濟。彼便羞恥默而不答。尼乃低頭而出。至王宮內告勝鬘妃曰。無病長壽。復相慰問竊語妃曰。王出遠行如何適意。妃言。聖者既是出家何論俗法。尼曰。貴勝自在少年無偶實難度日。我甚為憂。妃曰聖者。若王不在。我取樹膠令彼巧人而作生支。用以暢意。尼聞是語。便往巧匠妻所報言。為我當以樹膠作一生支。如與勝鬘夫人造者相似。其巧匠妻報言。聖者。出家之人何用斯物。尼曰。我有所須。妻曰。若爾我當遣作。即便告夫可作一生支。夫曰。豈我不足更復求斯。妻曰。我有知識故來相憑。非我自須。匠作與妻。妻便付尼。時吐羅難陀。飯食既了便入內房。即以樹膠生支繫腳跟上。內於身中而受欲樂。因此睡眠時尼寺中。忽然火起。有大喧聲。尼便驚起。忘解生支從房而出。衆人見時生大譏笑。時諸小兒見唱言。聖者。腳上何物。尼聞斯言極生羞恥。尼白苾芻。苾芻白佛。佛問訶責。

⁴¹ That this is how dildos were used in India seems to be confirmed in part by Yaśodhara’s commentary to the *Kāmasūtra*; see the translation in Doniger and Kakar (2002, p. 126, n. 4): “They [women of the harem] strap on an artificial instrument made of wood to achieve their satisfaction. This is known as the technique for the harem.”

⁴² T. 1443 (xxiii) 1001b5–27. For the Tibetan parallel, see sTog, ‘*Dul ba* NYA 365a3–b4. Cf. sDe dge bStan ‘gyur, ‘*Dul ba*’i ‘*grel pa*, TSU 127b6–128a3.

廣說乃至制其學處。應如是說。若復苾芻尼。以樹膠作生支者。波逸底迦。

There are, I suggest, a number of intentional attempts at humour within this passage. The first is perhaps to be found in the dialogues between Sthūlanandā and the householder's wife and queen Mallikā. Sthūlanandā asks how they get on, that is, how do they manage their sexual desire when their respective husbands are away. As we will recall from the passage about nuns' learning spells and so forth, in this *Vinaya*, Sthūlanandā is presented as being a very knowledgeable nun; she is a master of the Tripitaka. Here both the householder's wife and queen Mallikā are made to suggest that, at least in the eyes of the laity, sexual desire and so forth should be things that a renunciant has left behind. This criticism is repeated a third time when the craftsman's wife asks Sthūlanandā what use she has for a dildo. If this is meant to be humorous, the humour is to be found, I suggest, in the perceived incongruity of a very learned nun overcome by sexual desire. That this part is intentionally humorous, however, is far from clear.

Much more compelling, I think, is the dialogue between the craftsman and his wife. When the wife asks her husband to make a dildo, his response is to take this as a slight on his own sexual prowess. The craftsman asks his wife if she needs a dildo because he can no longer satisfy her. The wife dispels what may well be, *pace* Edwardes and Masters, a universal male anxiety,⁴³ stating that it is not for her but for a friend. Assured that his own masculinity is not in question, the craftsman then sets to work on the commissioned item. What should be noted, however, is that, at least as far as I can see, this dialogue seems to serve no purpose in the telling of this rule other than to elicit laughter. The same is also true, I suggest, of the episode in which Sthūlanandā, having satisfied herself, falls asleep, only to be awakened by the clamour of a fire in the nunnery. Perhaps only naturally, she runs out to investigate. Unfortunately, however, she had forgotten to remove the dildo strapped to her ankle. Not only is Sthūlanandā embarrassed in front of her co-religionists, who burst out in scorn and laughter, but the authors/redactors seem to get one final laugh at the Venerable Sthūlanandā's expense by using the innocence of children to whom, presumably, the adult toy is just some strange, foreign object. Sthūlanandā is once again embarrassed when the children in the nunnery ask her what it is that she has strapped to her foot.

Rules about dildos are found in most *Vinayas*.⁴⁴ Not all of them, however, are humorous. The Pāli *Vinaya*, for instance, offers little, in my opinion, that could be considered humorous in its version of the above rule. Once a few minor corrections have been made to Horner's translation, the version of this rule in the Pāli *Vinaya* reads as follows:

⁴³ Edwardes and Masters (1963, pp. 283–284).

⁴⁴ Dildos may also have been an issue in texts concerned with the actions of Jain nuns; for a brief discussion of the use of *pralamba* as a dildo in the commentarial tradition of the *Bṛhatkalpasūtra*, see Granoff (2005, p. 4, note 4). I thank Professor Granoff for bringing this reference to my attention.

... at Sāvattḥī in the Jeta Grove in Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Now at that time a certain woman who had formerly been a king's concubine, had gone forth among the nuns. A certain nun, tormented by dissatisfaction, approached this nun, and having approached, she spoke thus to this nun: "The king, lady, seldom⁴⁵ came to see you. How did you manage?"

"By means of a dildo,⁴⁶ lady."

"What is this dildo, lady?"

Then this nun showed a dildo to that nun. Then that nun, having taken the dildo, having forgotten to wash it, put it to one side. The nuns, having seen it surrounded by flies, spoke thus: "Whose doing is this?" She spoke thus: "It is my doing." Those who were modest nuns ... spread it about, saying: "How can a nun take a dildo?"...

"Is it true, as is said, monks, that a nun took a dildo?"

"It is true, lord."

The enlightened one, the lord, rebuked them, saying: "How, monks, can a nun take a dildo? It is not, monks, for pleasing those who are not (yet) pleased ... this rule of training: In a dildo, there is an offence of expiation."⁴⁷

Clearly, there is little, if anything, approaching humour in this passage, although some may wish to argue that the repulsive is also humourous. Yet, from the point of view of Buddhist monastic law, this rule fulfils exactly the same purpose as its humourous Mūlasarvāstivādin counterpart: both rules equally address a concern, either real or perceived, about nuns and the possession of seemingly inappropriate implements. Here, however, the Pāli

⁴⁵ The Pāli reads *cirāciraṃ gacchati* (VP iv, p. 261). Horner translates "constantly," but this makes no sense here. von Hinüber (1968, p. 95) gives "selten" and translates this sentence as "Der König, Herrin, kam selten zu Euch, wie ertrugt Ihr das?" (noted in Hüsken 1997, p. 154). Ueda Tenzui translates (Takakusu ed. 1936–1940 [1970], ii, p. 423): 尊姉、王は汝等に時々來るのみ、汝等如何にして堪ゆるや。

⁴⁶ I have replaced Horner's "application of lac" with "dildo" throughout. Pruitt and Norman (2001, p. 165) give "In a smeared [stick made] with lac" Note, however, that Norman had himself earlier noted in his review (2000) of Hüsken (1997) that Horner's translation should be emended (2007, p. 322). Hüsken (1997, p. 153): "Bei einem künstlichen Penis (handelt es sich um)" Waldschmidt (1926 [1979], p. 182) notes the Chinese and Tibetan parallels. He translates the Tibetan as "ein membrum virile aus Lack einführt." For the Pāli he translates "Einen Reiber aus Lack zu benutzen." See also von Hinüber (1968, p. 97): "Die Nonne legte den künstlichen Penis zur Seite." Perera's (1993, p. 236) conclusion that Pāli *jatumaṭṭhaka* refers to a "contraceptive method involving the use of a vaginal device" must be rejected. Likewise, Gamage's (1998, p. 131; cf. pp. 63–64) observations that "it is obvious that the nun had used some contraceptive method to prevent unwanted pregnancy." Hendriksen's "preventive" (1944, p. 103) must also be corrected. Derrett (2006, p. 7) recognises that the *jatumaṭṭhaka* is a dildo, but refers to this rule as a "precept to wash dildos after use." I must disagree; this is a rule designed to curtail the ownership and/or use of dildos.

⁴⁷ BD iii, 249. Hüsken (1997, pp. 153–155).

Vinaya seems to do little but reinforce popular conceptions about the misogynistic nature of Buddhist monasticism.⁴⁸ Indeed, while both the authors or redactors of the Pāli and Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayas* clearly made a rule, albeit a minor one, against nuns' use of dildos, the monastic lawyers of these respective schools seem to have had very different approaches to the creation of these rules. It is interesting to consider, for instance, how these approaches may have played out in monastic communities. Would they have resulted in somewhat different views of sex and sexuality, and by extension, religious praxis, one relatively light-hearted and easy-going, the other prudish and/or puritanical? These, of course, are questions that cannot be answered, at least not here. Here we must limit ourselves to the question in hand, viz., whether there is humour in Indian Buddhist monastic law codes.

Whether we accept that some or any of the above narratives are intentionally embellished with humour depends in part on whether we accept the narratives of the monastic law codes as accurate retellings of historical events. While I am ready to accept that there may be a kernel of fact behind some of these stories, on the whole they cannot be accepted as historical accounts. But if we accept that they are not historically accurate reflections of real events, then this would seem to make them fabrications. And if they are fabrications, why should we think that they would not be embellished with humour? I suspect that the reluctance to accept that there might be a place for humour in Indian Buddhist texts reveals more about ourselves than its presence or absence might do about Indian Buddhism. Moreover, is not humour an effective pedagogical device?⁴⁹ While I suspect few readers would be able to recite dry *prātimokṣa* rules after just one hearing, the narratives discussed above—monks' munching on monkey meat, nuns' love charms, monks' baby-sitting, and nuns and their adult toys—are, I suggest, far more memorable, and arguably, effective than their non-humorous counterparts. This, of course, does not mean that they do not address very real concerns of Indian Buddhist jurists. Yet it is with a dash of humour that some Indian Buddhists seem to have chosen to transmit their monastic law codes, and we disregard this at our peril. We now must seriously start to consider the function of the narrative embellishments, burlesques, witty retorts, puns, and comedies-of-errors found in the extant Buddhist monastic law codes.

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⁴⁸ Wilson (1996).

⁴⁹ For a brief survey of the use of humour in education and two experiments to establish the effect of humour with empirical data, see Ziv (1988).

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