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# Buddhist Homiletics on Gambling (\**Saddharmaparikathā*, Ch. 12)

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## Abstract

The paper focuses on the 12th chapter of the \**Saddharmaparikathā*, a Buddhist homiletics' guidebook containing sample sermons, dealing with the topic of gambling (*dyūta*). I edit, translate, and discuss the chapter with an introduction that includes a short overview of gambling in Sanskrit literature at large. The anonymous author is dismissive of gambling in all its forms, whether it is practised for material gain, for mere pleasure, and even if studied as an art. In spite of its exiguity, his discussion of the topic is, as far as we are aware, the most comprehensive in classical Buddhist literature.

## Keywords

Buddhist literature – Buddhist homiletics – Sanskrit manuscripts – gambling – preaching

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‘And was there a lot in the bank?’ asked Švejk calmly. ‘Didn’t you get a chance of being Forehand very often? If the right card doesn’t come it’s very bad, but sometimes it’s awful when the cards are too good. At Zderaz there was once a tinsmith called Vejvoda ...’

JAROSLAV HAŠEK, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, tr. Cecil Parrott

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## 1 Introduction

In 2021, I published an article<sup>1</sup> introducing a theretofore completely unstudied anonymous Sanskrit work, for which I reconstructed the title \**Saddharma-parikathā*, “Sermons on the True Law”. This substantial (yet very likely unfinished) text is a Buddhist homiletics’ guidebook with sample sermons on a rich variety of topics. I argued that it dates from around the 5th century CE and that it was possibly authored in a Saṃmatīya/Sāṃmitīya environment.<sup>2</sup> I discussed the unique 11th-century manuscript transmitting the text, the structure and contents of the work, what information it can provide for the tradition of preaching, and its importance for Buddhist studies. To this introductory study I appended the edition and translation of a sample chapter (ch. 11), which discusses grief (*śoka*).

In the present paper, I discuss the subsequent chapter (ch. 12), which deals with the perils of gambling (*dyūtādīnava*). There are two chief reasons why I chose to edit this as the second sample from this important work. The problem of gambling and especially problem gambling loom large in Sanskrit literature, but it would seem that we lacked a more developed Buddhist discussion of the issue. The topic is also one of only two in the entire \**Saddharmaparikathā* which might be thought of as secular (the other being refutations of barbaric linguistic usage, ch. 10), although of course the preacher’s response is framed in religious ethics.

The chapter does not have an independent title, but from the introductory words we can extrapolate something like *dyūtādīnavapradarśana*, “A Teaching on the Perils of Gambling.” The author does not specify what kind of gambling he had in mind. Strictly speaking, he uses the word *dyūta*, but I interpret this as a meronym for gambling, since dice-play was the most prominent of such games. The Pali Canon too<sup>3</sup> thinks of *jūta* (the more common Pali equivalent of Skt. *dyūta*) as encapsulating a whole host of board games and the like.<sup>4</sup> This is consonant with Brahmanical usage, in which *dyūta* epitomises all kinds of gambling in which the objects of the wager are inanimate, whereas *samāhvaya* means betting on the animate, for example bull-fights or

1 Szántó 2021.

2 In the meantime, a short but comprehensive overview of what we know about Sāṃmitīyas has been published, see Skilling 2023.

3 E.g. DN i.6, *passim*.

4 E.g. *aṭṭhapada*, *dasapada*, etc. Cf. *Saṅghabhedavastu* (Gnoli 1977–1978, 2: 235–236): *tadyathā aṣṭapade daśapade ākarṣaṇe pare ghaṭṭike cale muṣkale akṣavaṇkānucarite śalākāhaste yathāpi vā prayojayanti eke ity apy evaṃrūpāt śramaṇo vañcakadyūtasamārambhānuyogāt prativirato bhavati*.

cock-fights.<sup>5</sup> I see no signs that the author may have intended to include the latter, but this is not impossible. Ultimately, the precise object of the discussion is immaterial, because the author focuses on the psychological and social dimensions of games of hazard. As for *ādinava*, a predominantly Buddhist word,<sup>6</sup> no single English term can mirror it appositely; it generally denotes an unfavourable karmic consequence in this life or the next, and it is usually rendered as ‘peril(/s)’ or ‘danger(/s)’. It figures prominently in *Karmavibhaṅga*-type literature, where its pair and opposite is *anuśaṃsā*.<sup>7</sup>

The chapter on gambling is comparatively short, a mere 14 stanzas and some prose passages without any explicit canonical quotations.<sup>8</sup> However, at least according to my knowledge, it is still the most extensive treatment of gambling in classical Buddhist literature. Before going into details, I will give a short overview of the sermon.

The author starts without an *exordium*, opting instead to dive straight into the *narratio* via a short opening verse ending with a rhetorical question (12.1) and then an extensive series of metaphors for gambling in two long stanzas (12.2–3). In answer to a question about how a gambler could ever find happiness, the following two verses (12.4–5) list the disadvantages he incurs.

The discussion continues with three objections and their refutation.

The first objection challenges the third item in the list: surely, it is not always the case that one loses everything in gambling, indeed, one might even win handsomely. Three characters are evoked, two from the *Mahābhārata* (Puṣkara who defeated Nala and Śakuni who defeated Yudhiṣṭhira), and one from Buddhist *jātaka* literature (the *yakṣa* Pūrṇaka). Once this is established, continues the objector, the other items on the list too are refuted. The author retorts elegantly, pointing out that a wise man can never base his profit on chance. He then describes the wretched fate of gamblers in very convincing images, also pointing out that Yudhiṣṭhira’s and Nala’s exile were the result of gambling. Moreover, “the house always wins” as it were, because the habitual gambler will stake and inevitably lose his previous gains and loss of wealth will lead to further vices. Indeed, ultimately death is preferable to ill-gotten gains (12.6–7),

5 Kane 1946: 538. For other words related to gambling, see Patkar 1963: 147–153.

6 Edgerton 1953, *sub voce*.

7 For this corpus, see Lévi 1932, Kudo 2004, and Kudo’s subsequent work, most recently 2021a and 2021b.

8 Using a term from classical homiletics, I designated these passages as *textus*. If my hypothesis is correct, these must stem from a Saṃmatīya canon, which, as we are becoming increasingly aware (e.g. Dimitrov 2020), may have been by and large similar to the Theravāda *Tipiṭaka*. As I show, the chapter uses at least one *textus* passage, but without directly evoking it. In what follows, I also adopt other terms from Western homiletics, e.g. *exordium*, *peroratio*.

for a greedy gambler will renounce many of his virtues and become capable of almost anything (12.8).

A second objection follows: what if one gambles for pleasure and not for gain? The author retorts that this kind of pleasure is that of base men; a virtuous person would not even think of it (12.9), since he prefers to find joy in virtuous deeds, as sinful pleasure inevitably leads to rebirth in the lower realms (12.10). Besides, how could one entertain any kind of pleasure whilst fully aware that death and rebirth are near (12.11)?

The objector tries his luck for a third and final time: what if one simply wishes to master the ways of gambling as an art? The author discards the argument by implying that the arts are waste of time and that one would do better seeing to something truly useful (12.12). For pleasure without any benefit is useless (12.13). One should rather see to one's religious duties, forsake sin, and cultivate virtue (12.14). With this *peroratio*, the chapter comes to an end.

The first question I wish to address is this: what kind of canonical source material could our preacher have used to construct his sermon? While gambling imagery is used in several places in the Pali Canon,<sup>9</sup> I could find only one passage which discusses its perils directly. This is, unsurprisingly, in the *Sigālaka-sutta* or *Sigālovāda-suttanta* (DN 31), a discourse widely seen as the paradigmatic teaching directed at householders and their lifestyle. This text, styled the Vinaya of Householders (*gihivinaya*) at least since Buddhaghosa, clearly existed in various sectarian versions and it was very popular.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, it would seem that our anonymous author also knew it well.

The taxonomical framework for discussing gambling in the canonical text (i.e. the *Sigālaka-sutta*) is a list of six so-called *apāyamukhas* (*cha bhogānaṃ apāyamukhāni*), that is to say “drains on wealth” or “ways in which one decreases one's substance,” namely drinking, roaming the streets an unseemly hours, frequenting festivals, gambling, the company of wicked friends, and habitual laziness.<sup>11</sup> This is at odds with the Brahmanical conceptual framework, which will be discussed below.

9 E.g. MN iii.170, 178, also see Lüders 1907: 62–63.

10 For a survey of surviving materials, see Hartmann and Wille 2006. This discourse also bears the distinction of being one of the earliest *suttas* to be translated and discussed in modern scholarly literature, see Gogerly 1846–1847 (reproduced in Grimblot 1876: 311–320) and Childers 1875–1876. It was also enormously influential in classical times: the pre-13th-century Sinhalese *Karmavibhāgaya* reproduces some of its passages word-for-word, including the one on the six *apāyas*. Incidentally, the oldest manuscript of this work (indeed, to date the oldest known Sinhala manuscript) was recovered from Tibet, see Gunawardana 1981 and Bechert et al. 1991.

11 As already noted by Lindtner (1982: 221), this *textus* (or, more precisely, one of its sectarian

Our anonymous author must have been quite aware of this passage, at least in some form, that is to say, in the version of his canon. In his discussion on the evils of drinking,<sup>12</sup> we find the following *textus*:

*cha ime grhapatiputra ādīnavā sāmḍṣṭikā dhanajyānī.*<sup>13</sup>

This is then followed by a verse listing loss of wealth and five more unfavourable outcomes: increase of quarrels, indecent exposure, infamy, loss of mental faculties, and susceptibility to illnesses.<sup>14</sup> This is a clear match with DN iii.182–183:

*Cha kho 'me, gahapati-putta, ādīnavā surā-meraya-majja-pamāda-tṭhānā-nuyoge: sandiṭṭhikā dhanajyānī, kalaha-ppavaḍḍhanī, rogānaṃ āyatanāṃ, akitti-sañjananī, kopīna-niddamsanī, paññāya dubbalī-karaṇī tv eva chaṭṭhaṃ padaṃ bhavati. Ime kho gahapati-putta cha ādīnavā surā-meraya-majja-pamāda-tṭhānānuyogo.*

relatives) is the background to Nāgārjuna's *Suḥṛllekha* st. 33; see Hahn and Dietz 2008: 16, 303–305. The Sanskrit original of this crucial text has resurfaced only very recently, see Dngos grub tse ring 2020; for the stanza in question (numerated 34 in the Sanskrit), see pp. 146–147. The editor prints the verse as follows:

*dyūtaṃ samājadarśanam ālabhyāñ ca kumitrāsevā madyaṃ |  
caryāñ caiva vikāle ṣaḍ apāyān pariharasva tān akīrtiyaṣaḥ ||*

The text is clearly in need of emendation. We should most likely constitute the text thus (I intend to deal with the philological details elsewhere):

*dyūtaṃ samājadarśanam ālasyaṃ pāpamitrāsevāṃ madyaṃ |  
caryāṃ caiva vikāle ṣaḍ apāyān pariharasva tān kīrtimuṣaḥ ||*

In st. 12.14c in our text, the *ādi* possibly alludes to this sextet. The *Ratnāvalī* too contains a verse on the evils of gambling (2.47), but it is not (yet) available in Sanskrit (for the Tibetan and the Chinese, see Hahn 1982: 59, 174): “Gambling is a source of greed, unpleasantness, hatred, treachery, trickery, restlessness, an enabler of lies, idle chatter, and harsh words. Therefore it should be avoided at all times.” For a translation from the Chinese, see Dharmamitra (2009: 76–77, 209): “Competitive gaming and other such entertainments / Generate covetousness, ill-will, distress, and deviousness. / They are causes for deceptiveness, falseness, and harsh speech. / Therefore one should always keep one’s distance from them.”

12 This is \**Saddharmaparīkathā*, the 10th and final disposition of ch. 5 (Ms 33<sup>v</sup>3–34<sup>v</sup>4), the overall topic of which is morality (*śīla*).

13 Ms 34<sup>r</sup>4–5.

14 The verse (5.128, Ms 34<sup>r</sup>5) in the *śikhariṇī* metre is broken at the end:

*dhanajyāniḥ sadyaḥ kalahaparivṛddhir madavaśād  
apeto hrikavād api sadasi kaupīnavivṛtiḥ |  
akīrtir udbhūtir matiguṇavipattiḥ smṛtīvadhād  
abhiṣvaṅgān madye bhavati ca rujām āyatanam ||*

At present, I have no solution to this metrical problem.

There are, young householder, these six dangers through the being addicted to intoxicating liquors:—actual loss of wealth, increase of quarrels, susceptibility to disease, loss of good character, indecent exposure, impaired intelligence. [These are, young householder, the six dangers through the being addicted to intoxicating liquors.]<sup>15</sup>

However, the author's awareness of the canonical text is not entirely evident from the present chapter. His stt. 4 and 5 list the disadvantages incurred by the gambler, and while this series does have a canonical echo, the parallel is, somewhat curiously, not exact. Here is the relevant passage of the six *ādīnavas* of gambling in the *Sigālaka-sutta*, DN iii. 183:

*Cha kho 'me gahapati-putta ādīnavā jūta-ppamāda-ṭṭhānānuyoge: jayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, jino vittaṃ anusocati, sandiṭṭhikā dhanañjāni, sabhā-gatassa vacanaṃ na rūhati, mittāmaccānaṃ paribhūto hoti, āvāha-vivā-hakānaṃ apatthito hoti, akkha-dhutto purisa-puggalo nālaṃ dārābha-raṇāyāti. Ime kho gahapati-putta cha ādīnavā jūta-ppamāda-ṭṭhānānuyoge.*

Six, young householder, are the perils for him who is infatuated with gambling: as winner he begets hatred; when beaten he mourns his lost wealth; his actual substance is wasted; his word has no weight in a court of law; he is despised by friends and officials; he is not sought after by those who would give or take in marriage, for they would say that a man who is a gambler cannot afford to keep a wife. [These are, young householder, the six perils for him who is infatuated with gambling.]<sup>16</sup>

15 Tr. from Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 175. For another translation, see Walshe 1987: 462 or Gethin 2008: 131. The translators most sensibly omit the repetition at the end (here I restored it for the sake of consistency).

16 Tr. Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 175–176. Walshe's translation (1987: 463) differs slightly:

There are these six dangers attached to gambling: the winner makes enemies, the loser bewails his loss, one wastes one's present wealth, one's word is not trusted in the assembly, one is despised by one's friends and companions, one is not in demand for marriage, because a gambler cannot afford to maintain a wife.

Also cf. the translation by Gethin (2008: 132):

Young householder, there are these six dangers in being devoted to the recklessness of gambling: if one wins one engenders hatred, if one loses one bemoans the things lost, one's wealth diminishes, one's word has no authority in an assembly, one is despised by one's friends and companions, one is not considered a desirable marriage partner, since the gambling man does not have the means to support a wife.

The two stanzas in our chapter seem to encapsulate the same list of six, except for the fourth item, namely the gambler's word not carrying weight in a court of law. Depending on how one understands the enclitic *ca*, 5b might just be interpreted to contain both, but the phrasing in the subsequent objection disproves this. It follows then that the preacher's canon either did not contain the fourth element or—and I find this more plausible—he chose to ignore it. Perhaps he did not wish to express an opinion about whose testimony carries weight in court, as our preacher, a Buddhist in minority, is in general quite cautious not to get involved in matters of authority.

With the possible canonical background out of the way, we might now ask: why does the author place this discussion immediately after addressing grief (*śoka*) and why does he discuss gambling at all?

I cannot answer the first question conclusively. It is possible that one topic following the other is *prasaṅgāt*, for *śoka* includes not only bereavement at the death of a loved one, but also mourning material loss. If this is so, the two chapters might form some kind of conceptual pair. In any case, they do not seem to be related to the final three chapters, which do form a thematic group, inasmuch as they discuss the futility of a triad of Brahmanical acts of faith, namely bathing at sacred fords, self-immolation in fire, and fasting.<sup>17</sup>

We might perhaps fare better with the second question. Doubtless signalling the presence of an extensive social problem, gambling is a major topic in Sanskrit literature, so in some ways it was inevitable that a Buddhist author too would at some point address the issue.

Any such account must necessarily begin with the famous “Gamester's Lament” (*Rgveda* 10.34), one of the most curious and interesting hymns of the ancient corpus.<sup>18</sup> As noted by the most recent translators:

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The relevant passage in the Sinhalese *Karmavibhāṅgaya* (see n. 10 here) is practically a translation of the above. I thank Aruna Keerthi Gamage for checking an edition (Medauiyangoda Wimalakeerthi and Nahinne Sominda, eds., *Karma vibhāṅgaya*, Colombo: M.D. Gunasena, 1961: 70, ll. 19–26) and presenting me with a draft translation. The interpretation of *sabhā* as “court of law” follows Buddhaghosa's explanation (Sv III 946); the other two translations listed here prefer a more general (and perhaps indeed more plausible) “assembly”. The translations are also at odds concerning *mittāmacca*; it is more likely that we should interpret this as “friends and compatriots/housemates”. I thank Martin Straube for these two observations.

17 A rather remarkable parallel discussion can be found in Bhāvivēka's *Madhyamakahrdaya*, 9.120–131 (Lindtner 2001: 42–45; for an in-depth discussion, see Ham 2016). Many of the arguments brought forward here foreshadow Bhāvivēka's critique; I intend to deal with this in depth in a next installment.

18 The literature on this poem is rather large. I have consulted the translations of Jamison and Brereton (2014: 1429–1432) and that of Basham (1954: 405–407); also see Raghavan



The monologue form found here is almost unprecedented in the *R̥gveda*, and the shifting play of emotions—guilty excitement, tender remembrance of his past life and family, scorn for his own weakness and the disgust he arouses in others, bitter anger at the inanimate dice that brought him low, to which he ascribes agency and malign intention and for which he still longs—is psychologically convincing and very moving.<sup>19</sup>

The background and role of the hymn is obscure. Basham's guess was as follows:

Probably the poem was originally a spell to ensure success in gaming, addressed to the *vibhīdaka* nuts themselves. This was converted by an anonymous poet into a cautionary poem, which obtained a place in the *R̥g Veda* on account of its reference to the god Savitṛ as attempting to reform the gamester.<sup>20</sup>

While our author does not seem to be aware of this hymn, the motifs he addresses—the addict's misery, wailing for lost wealth, being ostracised by one's kinfolk—are remarkably similar. Otherwise, the *Atharvaveda* contains several passages related to gambling magic.<sup>21</sup>

As is well known, dice play a central part in the plot of the *Mahābhārata*, the famous game being the chief cause for the Pāṇḍavas' exile, and they were also responsible for the initial misfortunes of king Nala.<sup>22</sup> There is no need to insist on these two tales, as they are known to any student of Sanskrit and they are often invoked as a warning against the dangers of the dice.<sup>23</sup> Our author and his audience too knew these famous stories well, as they are discussed in passing.

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1979: 18–21, Patkar 1963: 141–142, as well as many others, as listed by Handelman and Shulman (1997: 7, n. 6), especially Falk 1986: 181–187. The overview I present henceforth is in some ways similar to Piovano 2010, an article I was not aware of during the time of writing, and possibly Panduranga Bhatta's monograph (*The Dice Play in Sanskrit Literature*, Delhi: Amar Prakashan, 1985) quoted by Piovano, which I could not access. I thank Martin Straube for pointing me to this paper.

19 Jamison and Brereton 2014: 1430.

20 Basham 1954: 405.

21 Whitney and Lanman 1905: 214–216, 279, 296–297, *passim*; Falk 1986: 175–181.

22 Van Buitenen 1975: 106–169, 330–333; Raghavan 1979: 42–44; for the former, also see Syed 1996.

23 E.g. *Sūktiratnahāra* ch. 50 (Śambaśiva Śāstrī 1938: 76–77).

Several *dharmaśāstra* authors discuss problems related to gambling.<sup>24</sup> The earliest such authority is possibly Āpastamba (2.25.12–13), who gives matter-of-fact injunctions for the construction of a gambling table in an assembly hall.<sup>25</sup> Gautama forbids gambling for students (2.17), states that such debts of a deceased man must be honoured by his sons (12.41), and forbids extending a charitable meal to gamblers (15.18).<sup>26</sup> Baudhāyana (2.2.15–17) prescribes expiation for gambling.<sup>27</sup> The most extreme view is that of Manu, who advocates for a complete ban and harsh punishment, even if gambling (and betting) was for harmless entertainment.<sup>28</sup> But this seems to have been a minority opinion, as noted for example by Bṛhaspati.<sup>29</sup> Judging by the epigraphical record, the ban, although the view of the paradigmatic authority, was never enforced. One possible exception I am aware of is an injunction on the early 13th-century Purshottampuri plates, which forbids gambling, but only on the land donated by the said document; in other words, the ban's range was rather limited.<sup>30</sup> Another document, the 8th- or 9th-century Sirpur stone-slab inscription, seems to suggest that the rights to continued enjoyment of a donation could be terminated if the donee's descendants were to be found addicts to gambling (and other serious vices), since they are described as *tatputrapautraih ... dyūta[ve]śyādyanāsaktair*.<sup>31</sup>

Kauṭilya, ever the pragmatist, deals with gambling in many instances.<sup>32</sup> While he saw gambling as the most serious of human vices, he prescribes that the state should draw taxes from it through the office of the Revenue Col-

24 Kane 1946: 538–542; Patkar 1963: 143–146.

25 Olivelle 1999: 69.

26 Olivelle 1999: 81, 99 (Vasiṣṭha cites what sounds like an opposing view to this rule, see 291–292), 105.

27 Olivelle 1999: 169.

28 *Manusmṛti* 9.221–228, see Olivelle 2005: 15, 201–202, 787–788. The commentaries I could consult (Dave 1982: 185–189) are surprisingly anodyne, with the possible exception of Bhāruci *ad st.* 221 (Derrett 1975: 1, 187 and 2, 224), but here the text seems to me corrupt, especially in light of the newly discovered witness (Jagannatha 2020: 439). Also see the discussion in Olivelle 2013: 24.

29 He mentions that others authorities allow it (*dyūtaṃ niśiddhaṃ Manuṇā ... abhyanu-jñātaṃ anyais tu*), as noted by Kane (1946: 539) and then again by Olivelle (2005: 331).

30 Mirashi 1938–1939: 218, 225; Bandyopadhyay 1971: 148–149.

31 St. 31 in Hiralal 1911–1912: 192, 197; also mentioned by Bandyopadhyay (1971: 148) and Bronkhorst (2008: 143 and 2011: 82–83).

32 Olivelle 2013: 89–90 (according to the teachings of the Āmbhīyas, a secret agent should entice the heir apparent with gambling, liquor, and women), 214 (gambling debts to be settled by the inheritors), 234 (a man under suspicion of being a gambling addict could be arrested), 266 (not enabling one's monarch in his addiction to dice), 437 (gambling disputes bring ruin to ruling powers), etc.

lector,<sup>33</sup> and describes the duties of the Superintendent of Gambling whose responsibility was to ensure that the practice is under state supervision.<sup>34</sup> The epigraphic record attests that the state could and did tax gambling.<sup>35</sup> The income was probably rather handsome. On the two-part Jhalrapathan stone-slab inscription (late 7th or early 8th c.),<sup>36</sup> one Voppaka, the donor of a temple dedicated to Śiva, seems to be described as a casino manager of sorts for kings with rich treasuries (*pravṛddhakośakṣitipadyūtasabhā[pa]tir*). Stt. 7–9 of the first inscription disclose that he financed the construction of the edifice in order to escape from birth and death, realising that *dharma* (in this case, its charity aspect) is one's only true friend. The text does not clearly state that the donation was made from his income as a *dyūtasabhā[pa]ti*, but I believe that it is not unreasonable to think that this was implied.<sup>37</sup>

Overall, the Brahmanical concept was that gambling was a serious vice (*vyasana*). The taxonomical framework under which this is discussed differs from the Buddhist one we saw above. According to both *dharmaśāstra* and *arthaśāstra* authors, addictive vices stem from either desire/passion (*rāga*) or wrath (*krodha*), which, at least according to a view approved by Manu, both are rooted in greed (*lobha*). The latter group (stemming from wrath) consists of eight or three vices (these are of no concern to our discussion), whereas the former consists of ten or four; in the second case, these are hunting, gambling, women, and drinking (as listed by Kauṭilya) or drinking, gambling, women, and hunting (as listed by Manu). While the shorter set is the same for both authorities, the order in which they are listed is important, because we see profuse traces of vigorous discussions concerning the relative demerits of each.<sup>38</sup> For Manu, the ultimate vice is drinking, while for Kauṭilya, it is the dice.

33 Olivelle 2013: 109.

34 Olivelle 2013: 220–221.

35 See the references collected in Bandyopadhyay 1971: 149–151. Yājñavalkya and his commentators discuss the rates in some detail.

36 Bühler 1876; also mentioned in Bandyopadhyay 1971: 149 and recently discussed by Cecil (2020: 92–93). The dating is uncertain because the era is not mentioned, otherwise the year is 746.

37 However, it should also be mentioned that Bühler thought that the compound in question, which he translated as “a bank-holder during the gaming-parties of rich kings”, need not be taken literally (1876: 180, emphasis in the original): “[...] the rank of the person who built the temple is not clearly stated. I don't think that he really was the keeper of a gambling-house for rich kings. It seems to me much more likely that he was a great court-officer or general who played an important part in the *political* games of the Ṭhākurs or feudatories of Durgagaṇa. But what his office precisely was must for the present remain doubtful.” One rarely dares to disagree with Bühler, but I think that in this instance he was wrong.

38 For Kauṭilya, see Olivelle 2013: 336–339 (although some have argued that this passage is

Our author—while aware of the *Manusmṛti*, which he quotes elsewhere,<sup>39</sup> as well as some kind of *arthaśāstra*<sup>40</sup>—is silent on the lawmakers' and policymakers' views, but otherwise his argumentation clearly favours complete abstinence from gambling. He was also very likely aware of the conceptual framework of *vyasanas*,<sup>41</sup> but he chose not to adopt it. He did not have to. In his Buddhist thinking, killing, fornication, and drinking are dealt with under the heading of morality, which is dealt with in ch. 5 of his work: the hunt is subsumed under *prāṇātīpātavirati*, the topic of the 6th disposition, the vice of women is a topic for *kāma mithyācāra*, which is discussed in the 8th disposition (Ms 31<sup>v</sup>2–32<sup>r</sup>2), whereas drinking, as already mentioned, is the subject of the 10th disposition (Ms 33<sup>v</sup>3–34<sup>v</sup>3).<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the hunt was a *par excellence* a royal vice; royalty was neither our preacher's intended audience, nor would he have dared in his position to tell monarchs explicitly what pastimes not to pursue. However, not adopting the Brahmanical taxonomy does not mean that the audience here is exclusively Buddhist. Indeed, making the arguments palatable to a non-Buddhist audience might perhaps be the reason for why our author avoided direct citation of a *textus* (which would perforce have been Buddhist) in order to substantiate his points.

Let us now turn to *kāvya* and what it has to say about gambling. Sanskrit *belles-lettres* is replete with references to gambling and a comprehensive treatment would grow to the size of a monograph. Overall, poets are obliging to the lawbooks and invariably depict the gambler as an unsavoury character. This of

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an interpolation, see p. 21); for Manu and his commentators, see *Manusmṛti* 7.45–53 (Olivelle 2005: 156, 619–621), for Bhāruci, see Derrett 1975: 1, 56–59 and 2, 44–49, for the other commentators, see Dave 1985: 33–42.

39 Ms 54<sup>v</sup>5–55<sup>r</sup>1 is an unreferenced quotation of *Manusmṛti* 10.92.

40 Ms 34<sup>v</sup>1 quotes an unnamed authority who claims that among addictions related to pleasure, liquor is the worst (*vyasaneṣu pānam adhikam*). This is at odds with Kauṭilya's view (and is, in fact, Manu's), and the claim must therefore come from another work on statecraft.

41 See note above. In fact, the list of four *vyasanas* stemming from *rāga* were adopted by Buddhists. We can see this in the *Gotrapaṭala* of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*—with one modification, replacing the hunt with theatrical shows and the such (Dutt 1966: 3; Wogihara's manuscripts were somewhat lacunose at this point, so I will not cite his edition): *santi cemāni loke vyasanāni | tadyathā strīvyasanam | madyavyasanam | dyūṭavyasanam | naṭa-nartaka-hāsaka-lāsakādīsaṃdarśanavyasanam ity evaṃrūpebhyo vyasanebhyo laghu laghv eva vairāgyaṃ pratilabhate* |. In the second chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvalī* (Hahn 1982: 58–66), we can perceive the original set as an organising principle behind the block of verses 2.46–72: drink (st. 2.46), gambling (st. 2.47), women (stt. 2.48–69), and hunting (stt. 2.70–72).

42 Ms 29<sup>v</sup>5–30<sup>v</sup>2, 31<sup>v</sup>2–32<sup>r</sup>2, and 33<sup>v</sup>3–34<sup>v</sup>3 respectively.

course did not prevent them from constructing some truly amusing portrayals in their works.

The destitute gamester is in fact something of a stock character. Perhaps the most famous among such descriptions is the panoply of dice-addicts in the second act of Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakatikā*.<sup>43</sup> The text is available in an excellent translation and therefore there is no need to go into the details. It is perhaps interesting to note here that the main character among them eventually penitently (or not?) becomes a Buddhist monk.

In a passage oozing irony, in the *Daśakumāracarita*, one of Daṇḍin's characters encourages a king's vices by weaving the qualities of a sage or a *yogin* into dice-play.<sup>44</sup>

*dyūte 'pi dravyarāśes tṛṇavat tyāgād anupamānam āśayaudāryam, jaya-parājayānavasthānād dharṣaviṣādayor avidheyatvam, pauraṣaikaṇimittasyāmarśasya vṛddhiḥ, akṣahastabhūmyādigocarāṇām atyantadurupalakṣyāṇām kūtakarmanām upalakṣaṇād anantabuddhinaipunyaṃ, ekaviṣayopasaṃhārāc cittasyāticittam aikāgryam, adhyavasāyasahacareṣu sāhaseṣv atiratiḥ, atikarkaṣapuruṣapratisaṃsargād ananyadharṣaṇīyatā, mānāvadhāraṇam, akṛpaṇam ca śarīrayāpanam iti.*

It is the same with gambling: to give up a mountain of money as though it were straw requires an incomparable generosity of character. Since winning and losing are so uncertain, neither arrogance or despair can hold sway. Gambling increases that ferocity which is the only mark of manliness. One's intelligence is sharpened to the extreme, through having to catch the crooked dealings, so very tricky to spot, that are par for the course with skill at dice, board games and so on. Because one has to concentrate on a single object, gambling produces a marvelous single-pointedness of mind. It also gives one a true passion for risky undertakings with which perseverance goes hand in hand. Through coming up against extremely hard men, no one else can intimidate. Further, one learns certain self-confidence, and to hold oneself with dignity.

43 Acharya 2009: 88–127.

44 *Daśakumāracarita* 13.64, both text and translation from Onians 2005: 528–529 (minus the Clay Sanskrit Library markup, which I have also removed elsewhere). Although I disagree with some of Onians' choices, these are too trivial to discuss here.

Similarly, the hero of the *Dhūrtaviṭasaṃvāda* calls gambling *tejasvipuruṣanikaṣopala*, “the touchstone of spirited men.”<sup>45</sup> Daṇḍin’s character is clearly someone that Kauṭilya’s Āmbhīyas would have approved of, provided that they worked in the service of an inimical king.<sup>46</sup>

In a little-known monologue-comedy, the *Anaṅgasamjivana* of Kālanātha (ca. 11th century), the protagonist observes one of his friends being initiated into a Kaula order in a Kālī temple. He briefly narrates his fall from grace: Dhanadatta, now to become a *kāpālīka*, was once a rich merchant, but spent all his wealth on a courtesan, who then dismissed him for being poor, whereupon the man stole his wife’s jewelry, but was caught when these were recognised on a gambling table (*dyūtavedikā*), and he only narrowly escaped the executioner.<sup>47</sup>

A similar road to ruin is described by Jalhaṇa in the 52nd stanza of his moralising work, the *Mugdhopadeśa*:<sup>48</sup>

*veśyābhir vivaśīkṛtaḥ kupuruṣaḥ saṃjāyate durgato*  
*daurgatyena durodare nipatitaḥ svaṃ hārayaty eva saḥ |*  
*ruddho dyūtakaraḥ karoti vidhuraś cauryaṃ tatas taskaro*  
*vadhyah syān nṛpater aho nu viṣayāsakter durantā gatih ||*

Made powerless by courtesans, a wicked man is out of luck; ill-luck makes him turn to dice, where he loses his wealth; held in debt by gamesters, the poor fellow turns to thievery, and [at the end] is to be executed by the king as a robber—alas, addiction to pleasures ends bitterly.

Gambling and thievery frequently go hand in hand. Two heroes of the *Śukasaptati* turn to stealing to make good for gambling losses.<sup>49</sup> The jester of Jyotirī-

45 Dezső and Vasudeva 2009: 322–323.

46 See n. 32. Mirashi (1945) famously argued that the story immortalised by Daṇḍin here reflected historical facts, namely the downfall of the Vākātakas.

47 *Anaṅgasamjivana* (Tripathi 2001: 45–48, the cited passage is on pp. 46–47): *kaḥ punar iha siddhikāmaḥ prārthayate? [nirūpya] hanta, asmadvayasyo Dhanadattanāmā sāṃyā-trikaḥ sarvato muṇḍitamunḍa evaṃ viḍambyate! anubhavatu nāma svakarmaphalam eṣa durācārah | śrutaṃ hi—sarvasvagrāhaṃ nigrhya Madayantikāyā nirvāsitenānena corasa-hāyena svapatnyās tasyā apahr̥tāny ābharaṇāni | dyūtavedikāyām abhivyaktāni vijñāya, nāgarikasyādeśena ayaṃ vadhyavedim upānītas tayaiva viṭāntarānādaram ātmani āśa-ṅkamāyā mocita iti |*

48 Durgâprasâd and Parab 1891: 133. For more on dice in Jalhaṇa, see stt. 19, 51, and 56.

49 *Śukasaptati*, prologues to tales 27 and 62 (Schmidt 1898–1899: 354, 381 respectively): *Pratiṣṭhānapure ko 'pi dasyur nyavātsīt | sa tu dyūte sarvaṃ api dhanaṃ parāṅjyāta | tadanu yāminyāṃ kasyacid vañijo grhe bhittim vibhidhyāntaḥ praviśat | [...]* and *Sarvatobhadraṃ*

śvara's *Dhūrtasamāgama* muses thus when his friend describes the object of his desire, another man's wife:<sup>50</sup>

*bho Missa! parāṅgaṇāsasambhogādo bi paramandire saṁdhiṃ kadua jaṃ  
attho abahariadi taṃ jjeva tihuaṇasāraṃ | pekkha, pekkha,*

*kiṃ vāṇijjeṇa kajjaṃ ṇiadhanaṇavilaaṃ taṃ kkhu kāṇa dukkhaṃ  
kiṃ vā kajjaṃ kisīe pasuvasuṇīamāāsasikkajjadāe |  
kiṃ vijjāe phalaṃ vā maraṇasamasamuppaṇṇacintāulāe  
ekkaṃ tellosāraṃ paradhaṇaharaṇaṃ jūakīlāsuhaṃ ca ||*

Hey, [my friend] Miśra! Even better than enjoying another man's wife is to break and enter someone's mansion and plunder its wealth. That alone is the essence of the Triple World! For, you see:

What of commerce? You waste your money and then you suffer. What of agriculture? Useless toil yoking in beasts and tilling the land. What good can knowledge give you? Confusion of mind after you studied yourself to death. One alone is the essence of the Triple World: stealing another man's goods. Oh, and the pleasure of a good game of dice!

Other bedfellows are quarrelling, prostitutes, and drinking. As Kauṭilya pointed out, gambling disputes can bring ruin to ruling houses,<sup>51</sup> and Manu cites examples from former ages.<sup>52</sup> In a less lofty instance, the hero of the already mentioned *Anaṅgasamjīvanī* witnesses a great hullabaloo while strolling through the red-light district, sounds of a quarrel between a working girl and her client, where the cause is eventually determined as a dispute over dice.<sup>53</sup> The indomitable heroine of Kṣemendra's *Samayamāṭṛkā* bags one of her first vic-

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*nāma nagaram | tatra Bhukkuṇḍanāmā kitavo nīvasati sa ca sarvadā dyūtena dīvyati (em.,  
dīpyati Ed.) | ekasmīn dīne dīvaṇ pratikitavaiḥ parājitaḥ | teṣāṃ aṅgikṛtapaṇāraṇāya na  
kim apy asti | tadānīṃ cauryāya prīyatata | [...].* For translations, see Schmidt 1899: 82,  
140–141 respectively.

50 *Dhūrtasamāgama* 2.38 and introductory prose; I read the edition by Jhā (1983: 65), for some variants, see Cappeller 1885: 13.

51 See once again n. 32.

52 Olivelle 2005: 332, who adduces Yudhiṣṭhira and Nala. Commentators do indeed mention these two, but also gods such as Balabhadra.

53 *Anaṅgasamjīvana* (Tripathi 2001: 38–39): *katham iyaṃ kalahavārtāṃ ivāvartayet? [vimṛśya] āḥ, jñātam | MandāramālāMakarandayor dyūtanimittaḥ kalaho 'ṅkuritaḥ |*

tims in a gambling hall,<sup>54</sup> and later on, during the less fortunate part of her exploits, she is seen in front of another casino surreptitiously selling ‘loaded’ dice.<sup>55</sup> In the *Pādatāḍitaka*, the protagonist observes the crowd on the market-street and sees that:<sup>56</sup>

*dyūtād āhṛtamāśakāś ca kitavā veśāya gacchanty amī saṃprāptāḥ paricā-rakaiḥ sakusumaiḥ sāpūpamāṃsāsavaiḥ*

[t]hese gamblers here have won some coins at dice and now they are making their way to the courtesans’ quarter, accompanied by servants carrying flowers, cakes, meat and liquor.

In the *Dhūrtaviṭasaṃvāda*, there are really only two choices where an old *viṭa* can go:<sup>57</sup>

*tat kva nu khalv idam autsukyaṃ vinodayeyam? kiṃ nu dyūtasabhāyām āhosvid veśavāṭe? (vicārya) namo ’stu dyūtāya. ekaśāṭikāmātrāvaśiṣṭo hi naḥ paricchadaḥ, akṣāś ca nāmānabhijñāteśvarā iva na sarvakālasumu-khā bhavanti. tato veśam eva yāsyāmaḥ.*

So where now can I quell this saudade? In the casino or in the brothel quarter? (*after some reflection*) With all due respect to gambling, but I’m down to this last piece of cloth to cover me. And dice, like parvenus, are not always benign. So off to the bordello!

Among cheats, the gambler ranks highly, and it is perhaps solely Kṣemendra who thought that only government officials were worse. In his *Kalāvīlāsa*, a *kāyastha* is incarnated as one of Śiva’s skulls who stops his master mid-sentence while granting a boon to a penitent gambler.<sup>58</sup> No doubt much to his audience’s relief, the gambler comes out on top and Śiva punishes the wicked ex-scribe.

54 *Samayamāṭṛkā* 2.9 ff. (Rāghavācārya and Padhye 1961: 356). The modern commentator notes that “courtesans are also fond of gambling” (*Samayamāṭṛkāvyākhyā* Ms 10<sup>v</sup>–11<sup>r</sup>: *veśyā hi dyūtapriyā api santi*). Also see the spirited (and unfortunately only partial) translation by Siegel 1987 [1989]: 110–115.

55 *Samayamāṭṛkā* 2.80cd (Rāghavācārya and Padhya 1961: 363): *kapaṭākṣaśalākānām akarod gūḍhavikrayam*; cf. *Samayamāṭṛkāvyākhyā* Ms 22<sup>v</sup>.

56 Dezső and Vasudeva 2009: 36–37.

57 Dezső and Vasudeva 2009: 316–317.

58 *Kalāvīlāsa* 5.20–47, Vasudeva 2005: 216–225.



In fact, not even the great god Śiva is said to be immune to the lure of the dice: the motif of losing his possessions to Pārvatī is a beloved theme of many poets and sculptors. Since this topic has already been dealt with in a monograph,<sup>59</sup> a few textual examples should suffice. In Kṣemīśvara's *Naiṣadhānanda*, in the second verse of the prologue,<sup>60</sup> Pārvatī teases Śiva about his losses—the bone ornaments, the snake, the ashes, and his leather robe—and questions why the Ganges is not being wagered (possibly implying an affair). This *maṅgala*-verse is particularly fitting, since the plot is the story of Nala, therefore the goddess' question might also be an allusion to Nala not staking Damayantī.<sup>61</sup> In a masterful verse attributed to Abhinanda, the poet describes a great commotion in Śiva's retinue as the bull, Śiva's trustworthy vehicle, lost at dice, looks back helplessly at his (now former) master as it is being led to Pārvatī's feet.<sup>62</sup>

All the above motifs can also be traced in the less-ornate narrative literature, for example Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara*, for which we now have a very fine index to browse.<sup>63</sup>

Regarding historical literature, for an example where gambling and other vices caused an evil reign, see Kalhaṇa's description of Kṣemagupta and his

59 Handelman and Shulman 1997, who also included fine images of the relevant statuary.

60 Warder and Raja 1986: 1:

*asthi hy asthi phaṇī phaṇī kim aparaṃ bhasmāpi bhasmaiva tac  
carmaitat khalu carma kiṃ tava jitaṃ yenaivam uttāmyasi |  
naināṃ dhūrta paṇīkaroṣi satataṃ mūrdhni sthītāṃ Jāhnavīm  
ity evaṃ Śivayā sanarma gadito dyūte Haraḥ pātu vaḥ ||*

61 This observation was made by Warder (1988: 561–562).

62 *Subhāṣitaratnakoṣa* 77, text from Kosambi and Gokhale (1957: 15), tr. from Ingalls (1965: 88):

*śṛṅgaṃ Bhṛṅgin vimuñca tyaja Gajavadana tvaṃ ca lāṅgūlamūlaṃ  
mandānando 'sti Nandinṃ alam abala Mahākāla kaṇthagraheṇa |  
ity uktvā nīyamānaḥ sukhayatu vṛṣabhaḥ Pārvatīpādāmūle  
paśyann akṣair vilakṣaṃ valitaḡalacalatkaṃbalaṃ Tryambakaṃ vaḥ ||*

[“]Let go his horn, Bhṛṅgin, / and Gaṇeśa, drop his tail. / Ah, but you are sad, Nandin! / Poor Mahākāla! Clasp not his neck.” / With such words being led to the feet of Pārvatī / may the bull with turning neck and dewlap swaying, / still looking at his three-eyed master who has lost at dice, / bring you to happiness.

A small note to this verse: Ingalls (1965: 86) claims that “[a]gain, it is in his animal form that Nandin is lost to Pārvatī at dice (77).” This seems to be a misunderstanding of the verse: Nandin is part of the retinue (in his human form) and is distinct from the bull; indeed, he is sad at his friend's departure. I thank Harunaga Isaacson for this observation. The article which addresses this widespread confusion is Bhattacharya 1977.

63 Bollée 2015, see under ‘dice’, ‘gambler’, ‘gambling’, ‘gambling-den’, *passim* (see Silk 2020 for a thorough review). Also see Törzsök 2007: 134–135, 418–419, 666–671 for the *Hitopadeśa* and the *Vikramacarita*.

times (950–958 CE).<sup>64</sup> The poet, evidently not an admirer of said monarch, expresses feigned marvel that the king's wicked company could initially not rob him of his entire wealth in dice-play. However, later on they did succeed, at least to a large extent. Here too gambling is accompanied by the other well-known vices: in his youth, the king was quite a drinker; later on, vile courtiers shamelessly brought their wives into his bed; finally, during one of his jackal(!)-hunts, the king saw a flame issuing from the mouth of a howling she-jackal and this caused an ultimately fatal illness.

When moralising about the evils of gambling, our author would have found a kindred spirit in the Jaina Amitagati (ca. 10th century), who dedicated an entire chapter to the topic in his *Subhāṣitaratnasamudoha*.<sup>65</sup> As will be shown in the notes to the translation below, there are many parallels between this text and the *\*Saddharmaparikathā*, but this is perhaps the result of treating the same topic against the background of similar ethical principles and not that of a genetic link, which is of course not at all impossible, as Jainas were keen readers of Buddhist literature and I could find parallels between the two works on the topic of grief as well.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps a more in-depth study of other chapters will bring more clarity to this question.

Finally, a few notes about what our author does *not* address; in parallel, I will use this opportunity to discuss some further Buddhist literature on the topic. The preacher's argument against gambling is strictly within a moral and pragmatic framework. The divinatory,<sup>67</sup> ritual,<sup>68</sup> and erotic aspects<sup>69</sup> of dice-play are not addressed. As for gambling for pleasure and/or to learn its craft, as voiced by our author's objectors, Raghavan notes a passage in Someśvara's *Mānasollāsa* (first half of 12th century), which—adding due warnings evoking the stories of Yudhiṣṭhira, Nala, and Balarāma—enjoins that the king “should learn

64 *Rājataranigīṇī* 6.150–187, especially stt. 153–154 and 163 (Stein 1892: 96–98, 1900: 1, 104, 247–251). In addition to all this, during this reign good men were shunned and abused. In what seems to be described as his paramount act of cruelty, the king denied the sanctuary offered by the *Jayendravahāra* to one of his opponents, had the famous Buddhist monastery burnt to the ground, and confiscated its endowment. Kalhaṇa was clearly not impressed by the fact that the stones were re-used to construct a Śaiva temple and that the thirty-six villages once in the monastery's possession were given into the tenure of a Khaśa ruler.

65 Schmidt 1908: 305–310. Just as in Buddhism, in spite of the mainstream opinion, the tantric incarnation of the religion provides techniques for winning in dice; see here n. 82.

66 Szántó 2021: 306, n. 32.

67 See e.g. Michon 2015: 152–200.

68 See e.g. Syed 1997, Falk 1986: 73–174.

69 See e.g. *Śārngadharaṣṭakāśī* 3661–3664 (Peterson 1888: 545–546), *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* 1066–1070 (Banerji 1965: 285–287), Handelman and Shulman 1997: 26, *passim*.

to play the game well and play for diversion and with one's dependents and those near and dear, and with stakes made in fun and sport; and not become an addict to it."<sup>70</sup> Apparently, as also noted by Raghavan, kings were bound to accept a gambling challenge,<sup>71</sup> therefore it was imperative for them to learn the art.<sup>72</sup> Another group of people for whom study of gambling was recommended were poets.<sup>73</sup> Our author does not address this issue, either because he was not aware of this custom, or, perhaps more likely, because royalty (or, for that matter, the *kavi*) was not his primary target audience. When it comes to the objections advocating for harmless entertainment and/or learning gambling as an art, to which the background is most likely the well-known list of 64 arts,<sup>74</sup> he is curtly dismissive and instructs the audience to cultivate something more useful.

His argumentation also contradicts the Mahāyāna ideal of the *bodhisattva* having to learn everything he possibly can in order to convert or train fellow sentient beings,<sup>75</sup> including therefore all kinds of sciences and arts.<sup>76</sup> One might recall that at the beginning of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, the protagonist is described as being seen "in all the gaming houses, where he brought to spiritual maturity living beings addicted to the pleasures of gambling, yet he remained constantly vigilant."<sup>77</sup>

70 *Mānasollāsa* 5.13.706–711 (Shrigondekar 1961: 242–243), the quoted synopsis is Raghavan 1979: 44.

71 *Mānasollāsa* 5.13.707ab (Shrigondekar 1961: 242): *āhūto na nivarteta dyūtād api raṇād api*, "Challenged, [the king] should not turn back from dice or battle." The principle is surely much older and may have even been part of the *Mahābhārata*, at least for some readers (see 2.\*448.1). Also see the much earlier so-called *Bālabhārata* of Rājaśekhara 2.7, 2.13, and before 2.17 (Durgāprasāda and Paraba 1887: 22, 24, 25). I thank Harunaga Isaacson for this observation.

72 Generally there was a tendency among mediaeval authors to make royal activities (e.g. hunting) more salubrious and safe, so that the monarch could practise these in a controlled environment. For hunting, see Singh 2010, where one finds a discussion of precisely such an environment in the *Kāmandakīyanītiśāstra*.

73 See e.g. Vasudeva 2005: 24.

74 See e.g. *Kāmasūtra* 1.3.15, item no. 59 (Durgāprasāda 1900: 32–41).

75 E.g. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 5.100 (La Vallée Poussin 1901–1914: 155–156 and 1907: 47 [84]):

*na hi tad vidyate kiṃcid yan na śikṣyaṃ jīnātmajaiḥ |*

*na tad asti na yat puṇyam evaṃ viharataḥ sataḥ ||*

Car il n'est rien que ne doive apprendre et pratiquer le fils du Vainqueur [pour réaliser le bonheur de tous les êtres]; il n'est rien qui ne soit méritoire s'il agit ainsi.

Judging by the wording of the *Pañjikā*, the reading might be *vicarataḥ* for *viharataḥ*, but this is immaterial here.

76 For how Śāntideva's verse was used as an argument for the study of *kāṇya* in Tibet, a topic some monastics thought of as frivolous, see Szántó 2007.

77 *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* 11.3 (Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature 2006: 16): *sarvadyū-*

However, in general, all forms of Buddhism are dismissive of gambling, even the Vajrayāna. The *Kālacakrat Tantra* explicitly forbids it, the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary designating it as one of the five lesser sins (*upapāpaka*), yet ranking it on the same level with apostasy.<sup>78</sup> The *Mahāmudrātilaka*, a *yoginītantra* of the Hevajra cycle, includes dice-play as one of the activities when describing an initiate undergoing the post-initiatory observance (*caryā*) in which he is supposed to act in all kinds of seemingly deranged ways; therefore the underlying supposition is that gambling is insalubrious if not outright antinomian.<sup>79</sup> In a similarly phrased passage, but in a slightly different context, the *yoginī* Cintā states that the practitioner may engage in any kind of activity—including gambling—but only as long as he maintains a state of non-conceptual bliss.<sup>80</sup> The *Vajramālābhīdhāna*, a supplementary *tantra* of the Guhyasamāja cycle with a complex history, states that a student should never gamble in front of his teacher.<sup>81</sup> However, the ever-diverse tantric literature also prescribes magical rituals to gain the upper hand in dice-play.<sup>82</sup> Moving to the realm of *siddha*

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*takaraśālāsu ca saṃdrśyate, dyūtakrīḍāsaktacittāṃś ca sattvān paripācayati, sadā cāpramādacārī.* Tr. from Gómez and Harrison 2022: 18. Vimalakīrti is clearly exceptional. The *Mahāvastu* lists fourteen causes that hinder a third-level *bodhisattvas* from progress, the first of these being gambling (Senart 1882: 96, Jones 1949: 75–76): *akṣavaṃkadyūtakrīḍānuyogam anuyuktāś ca bhavanti*, “They become addicted to dishonest gambling with the dice.” Jones’ translation is of course just as ambiguous as the Sanskrit: are we to understand that dishonest gambling is the problem or that gambling is inherently dishonest? I should think the latter in the author’s mind.

78 *Kālacakrat Tantra* 3.94ab (Dwivedi and Bahulkar 1994: 88–89): *dyūtaṃ sāvadyabhojyaṃ kuvacanapaṭhanaṃ bhūtadaityendradharmaṃ [...] na kuryāt* | The other four are not entirely clear, but according to the commentary, they are consuming forbidden foods, the practice of ancestor worship/*śrāddha* rites, vedic sacrifice, and undertaking barbaric (here, Islamic) observances (*Vimalaprabhā* ad loc.: *tatra dyūtaṃ sāvadyabhojyaṃ pūrvoktaṃ kuvacanapaṭhanaṃ bhūtadharmaṃ pīṭṛkāryaṃ yāgakāryaṃ vedoktaṃ | daityadharmaṃ mleccadharmāṃ na kuryād ity upapāpakāni pañca* |). Also see Sferra 2000: 249–250, n. 45.

79 *Mahāmudrātilaka* 20.13d (Ms 40<sup>v</sup>; for the Tibetan, see D 420: 83<sup>r</sup>): *kvacid dyūtakrīḍāṃ anucarati nṛtyaṃ kvacid api* ||.

80 *Vyaktabhāvānugatattvasiddhi* stt. 9–17 and preceding prose (Rinpoche and Dwivedi 1987: 177–178). I find Shaw’s analysis of this passage (1994: 190) misleading; had she bothered to check the Sanskrit, it would have become evident that the subject is masculine.

81 *Vajramālābhīdhāna*, D 445: 272<sup>r</sup>. *rgyan la sogs pa bltab* [recte: *bstab*] *pa dang* | [...] *de la sogs pa skyon gyi tshogs* | *bla ma’i mdun rnam par spangs* |. Pace Kittay (2011: 202, 752), who translates as “watching gambling”, probably mistaking *bltab* for *blta*.

82 See e.g. the *Kurukullākālpa* 4.31 (Pandey 2001: 21), where the desired outcome is *dyūteṣu jayo bhavati*. The *Kalyāṇakāmadhenu* and its *Vivaraṇa* (Ms 4<sup>r</sup>; for the Tibetan, see D 3067: 134<sup>r</sup>) also promises victory in dice in the context of propitiating a miniature statue of

hagiographies, \**Thiṇṭhāpā*<sup>83</sup> is said to have started out as a destitute problem gambler. After losing all he had, he dejectedly took to a charnel ground, where he met a *yogin* who instructed him to sublimate his passion for dice into a kind of meditation. The beginning of the *upadeśa* is particularly fitting: “Meditate on the three worlds being emptied just as your purse is emptied when you play dice.”<sup>84</sup>

Neither does the author address the issue of mitigating the evils of gambling by offering ill-gotten gains to auspicious purposes. The *Avadānaśataka* for example has two instances, where gamblers forsook their winning (one

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Gaṇapati (I will not cite the prose commentary here, but I will translate making use of it):

*aṅguṣṭhamitasitārkaṇapātipratimāpavitṛitaśikhānām |*  
*na bhavati durodaraṃ prati caramākṣarajāpinām bhaṅgaḥ ||*

Those whose top-knot is graced by a thumb-sized statue of Gaṇapati made of [the root of] *sitārka* [and] who recite [over it 100,000 times] the last syllable [of this stanza with the customary additions, thus *oṃ gaḥ svāhā*,] will never lose in gambling.

The *Herukābhīdhāna* 43.26 (Gray 2012: 210 and 2007: 348) too had a ritual for the same outcome, but the text is not very well preserved and the reference to gambling is missing in some recensions. Interestingly, winning in battle is mentioned in the same breath, cf. n. 71 above. A parallel is offered by the famous Jaina tantric text, the *Bhairavapadmāvatikaḥ* (9.23, Gaṃgavāl n.d.: 161–162):

*mūlaṃ śvetāpamārgasya kuberadiśi saṃsthitam |*  
*uttarātritayaṃ grāhyaṃ śrīṣasthaṃ dyūtavādajit ||*

On should collect the root of the *śvetāpamārga* that grows in the direction of Kubera during the three [asterisms marked by the word] *uttarā*; kept on the head, it bestows victory in gambling and debate.

Jainas would of course never engage in warfare, so ‘battle’ (of the *Herukābhīdhāna* etc.) was here replaced with ‘debate’.

83 This is the most plausible reconstruction of the name. The word *thiṇṭhā/ṭiṇṭhā* is rare, but it occurs frequently in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (see Bollée 2014, ‘gambling-den’). Richard Salomon kindly informs me of two occurrences of the form *ṭeṇṭā*<sup>o</sup> in compound with *°ka-rālā* in the *Karpūramañjarī* (Konow and Lanman 1901: 13 [i.18<sup>8</sup>], 20 [i.20<sup>28</sup>], 135 [glossary], 229 [tr. of i.18<sup>8</sup>], 233 [tr. of i.20<sup>28</sup>]), where the interpretation is uncertain (‘terrible in the gambling-places’, ‘a Durgā of the gambling-places’ in the glossary, ‘terror of the gambling-hells’ [sic for ‘halls’?] in the translation). At any rate, the compound is clearly a term of abuse. For other forms of the *siddha*’s name, see Schroeder 2006: 110–111. Schroeder also reproduces a fine mural depiction of the *siddha*, but here he is without gambling accoutrements, as for example seen on the Mongolian print published by Egyed (1984: 48–49).

84 Robinson 1979: 127 (whence the translation); also see Grünwedel 1916: 179, Dowman 1985: 195–198. All are translations of a work that supposedly existed in Sanskrit, \**Abhayadattaśrī*’s \**Caturaśītisiddhapravṛtti*, but this is somewhat doubtful; see Szántó 2019: 445. The *Caryāgūṭikośa* transmits as no. 12 a song which the commentator Munidatta introduces as a meditation on dice-play or gambling (*dyūtakṛīḍādhyanena*), but otherwise the song seems to be about chess (Kværne 1977: 122–127).

valuable, a jewel called *Sūryāabhāsa*, and one meagre, two denarii) to *stūpas*, thereby securing favourable circumstances in a next life.<sup>85</sup>

Our text is also silent on Buddhist monastics being prohibited to gamble, but this is only natural, because the audience of the preacher is the laity. Most *Vinayas* consider gambling an offence. In the *Kṣudrakavastu*, the Buddha forbids gambling in order to ward off censure by Brahmins and householders.<sup>86</sup> Similar rulings can be found in the *Vinayasamgraha* and the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya*.<sup>87</sup> While dice have been found at archaeological digs of Buddhist monasteries, e.g. Nālandā, the reason for their presence is not entirely clear.<sup>88</sup> Wearers of the ochre robe were also expected by society at large to refrain from such activities. This can be inferred for example from a marvellously crafted satirical verse, where, as the monk's unruly character gradually unfolds, the questioner's expectations are precisely the source of comedy. The stanza circulated in several versions, the *Subhāṣitāvali* of Vallabhadeva transmits it as follows:

*bhikṣo kanthā ślathā te nanu śapharavadhe jālikaiṣātsi matsyāṃs  
te 'mī madyāvadaṃśāḥ pibasi madhu samaṃ veśyayā yāsi veśyāṃ |  
dattvārīṇāṃ gale 'ñghriṃ kimu tava ripavo bhittibhettāsmi yeṣāṃ  
cauras tvaṃ dyūtahetoḥ katham asi kitavo yena dāsīsuto 'smi ||*<sup>89</sup>

85 *Avadānaśataka* no. 69 and 83 (Speyer 1902–1906, 1: 383, 2: 76). The above-mentioned Jhalrapathan inscription may be a parallel from real life; see, however, n. 37.

86 D 6: 261r; T 1451: 296a. I am grateful to Shayne Clark for this reference, as well as the those in the next note. Also see the quotation from the *Saṅghabhedavastu* in n. 4 here.

87 T 1458: 536c and T 1421: 184a.

88 Hinüber 2006: 26–27, who maintains the possibility that they may have been used by laymen. Also see the reference in n. 67.

89 No. 2402 (Peterson 1886: 412). Another version can be found in Jayaratha's commentary on Ruyyaka's *Alaṃkārasarvasva*, the *Alaṃkāravimarśinī* (Durgāprasād and Parab 1893: 172):  
*bhikṣo kanthā ślathā kiṃ nanu śapharavadhe jālikaiṣātsi matsyāṃ  
madhye madyāvadaṃśāḥ pibasi madhu samaṃ veśyayā yāsi veśyāṃ |  
hatvārīṇ kiṃ kariṣye kati tava ripavaḥ saṃdhibhettāsmi yeṣāṃ  
coras tvaṃ dyūtahetoḥ katham asi kitavo yena bhikṣur namas te ||*

"Monk, how come your robes are so loose?" "Surely, it is a net to catch carp." "Do you eat fish?" "While snacking with liquor." "Do you drink liquor?" "Together with my whore." "Do you frequent whores?" "What else to do after giving my enemies a good thrashing." "How many enemies do you have?" "The people whose houses I've burgled." "You are a thief?" "Because I gamble." "How come you gamble?" "For I am monk. Farewell!"

However, the commentator is well-aware of the punchline of the above version and thinks of it as a better reading: "yena dāsīsuto 'smi" *iti punaḥ pāṭho grāhyaḥ*. For other *loci*, see Dezső 2004: 136. Unfortunately, the name of the poet was lost. The verse translated by

One could hardly do better than citing the rendering by Siegel:<sup>90</sup> “Why,” he is asked, are his “robes so long and so loose?”

“Because I use them as a net for the catching of fish.”

“You eat fish?”

“Yes, for fish with my liquor is a most savory dish.”

“You drink booze?”

“Yes, but just when I’m out with whores pursuing my pleasure.”

“You go to whores?”

“Yes, after thrashing my enemies, just for good measure.”

“You have enemies?”

“Yes, but only those whose homes I have robbed of their treasure.”

“You steal?”

“Yes, to pay off the debts I’ve incurred with my gambling itch.”

“You gamble?”

“Yes, yes, yes! I am, as you see, a real son of a bitch.”

Besides enjoying the literary and rhetorical merits of the text I am about to present, one might remember that gambling is still a serious issue in Buddhist societies,<sup>91</sup> but also that Buddhist ‘philosophy’ is being used with some success

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Siegel (1987 [1989]: 210–211) just before the one given above is yet another incarnation. This is an unattributed quotation in Dhanika’s *Avalokā* commentary to Dhanan̄jaya’s *Daśarūpaka* (Parab 1897: 137):

*bhikṣo māṃsaniṣevanaṃ prakuruṣe kiṃ tena madyaṃ vinā  
kiṃ te madyaṃ api priyaṃ priyaṃ aho vārāṅganābhiḥ saha |  
veśyā dravyaruciḥ kutas tava dhanam dyūtena cauryeṇa vā  
cauryadyūtaparigraho 'pi bhavato dāsasya kānyā gatiḥ ||*

O most venerable monk with a fondness for meat, / Don’t you like wine with the delicious food that you eat? / And what goes better with wine than a loving coquette? / But whores like money and what can a Buddhist monk net? / Where do you get your riches, where do you come by wealth? / By gambling or by thieving or by what acts of stealth? / Sir, you are depraved, and that is really appalling—/ Tell me, what other practices make up your calling?

This verse is also found in the *Śāṅgadharaṇapaddhati* (no. 4061; Peterson 1888: 620) with some variants.

90 Siegel 1987 [1989]: 211.

91 E.g. for Tibet, see Murakami 2014; for Thailand, see Warren 2013; for Korea, see Kaplan 2016. Also see Harvey 2000: 70–71, 213, *passim*. Perhaps the most famous historical case of gambling losses in Tibet is that of Mar pa’s son, who squandered away the Acacia-wood *caitya* containing the best part of his father’s relics, as recorded in the *Blue Annals* (Roerich 1949–1953: 406–407).

in clinical treatment of problem gambling.<sup>92</sup> I hope that my paper will make a small contribution to the multifaceted study of this potentially important topic.

## 2 Edition and Translation of Ch. 12

The following abbreviations are employed in the apparatus:

*em.* emendation

*conj.* conjecture

Ms<sup>pc</sup> manuscript's reading after correction (scribal or a lector's)

Ms<sup>ac</sup> manuscript's reading before correction

The formatting, verse numeration, and punctuation are entirely mine and divergences from the scribe's usage of *daṇḍas* (and resulting *sandhi*) have not been noted separately. Banal scribal or lector's/lectors' corrections have not been noted. Homorganic nasals, sibilants, *m-virāma* type *anusvāras*, *s* for *vi-sarga*, geminations under *repha*, and degemination of *tva* have been silently standardised. *Avagrahas* were added where appropriate. The author's instructions to the preachers are typeset in bold italics.

*dyūtādīnavapradarśane vācyam |*

When explaining the perils of gambling, one should say:

*anekadoṣāyatane  
praśrayaśrīpramāthini*<sup>93</sup> |  
*dyūte kiṃ nāma tad dṛṣṭvā  
matir yat syāt sacetasah || [1]*

<sup>92</sup> See Shonin et al. 2013.

<sup>93</sup> praśrayaśrīpramāthini] *conj.*, pramāthini Ms.



What, pray, can there be in gambling, the abode of many a vice,<sup>94</sup> the destroyer of the splendour of civility,<sup>95</sup> that intelligent people might see and develop an inclination for it?<sup>96</sup> [1]

*tatra doṣagaṇaprabhavatvād*<sup>97</sup> *anekadoṣāyatanaṃ dyūtaṃ pratyavaganta-  
vyam | tad dhi |*

Now, gambling should be understood to be the abode of many a vice, for it is the source for a whole host of vices. For—

*ānandaḥ sūtravāṇāṃ paribhavabhavanaṃ vairakarmāntaśālā  
māyāśāthyapratīṣṭhā kalikaluṣavidhiḥ pāpasamkārādhānam |  
mohasyākriḍābhūmir guṇadhanadahanāḥ praśrayaśrīpramāthi  
dyūtaṃ kīrtipravāsaḥ paradhanaharaṇaprārthanānarthabījāṃ || [2]*

94 Although a perfectly natural expression, the compound *anekadoṣāyatana* is surprisingly rare. The only parallel seems to be Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*, prose after 21.1 (Kern 1891: 122, tr. Speyer 1895: 173): *sa kāmān [...] anekadoṣāyatanatvāc ca [...] parityajya [...]* “He understood that worldly pleasures are the abode of many evils and sins [...] Accordingly, shunning them [...]”

95 The conjecture was inspired by the last compound in 2c and positing an eye-skip from *pra*<sup>o</sup> to *pra*<sup>o</sup>. However, I do feel a certain unease about it, since it makes the composition somewhat loose, as we would expect the author to discuss this not in the same breath as *anekadoṣāyatana* (for one might interpret the *tatra* in the prose immediately following *nīrdhāraṇe* and not *vākyopanyāse*). Alternatively, understand this compound not as a *karmadhāraya* or as a *ṣaṣṭhī-tatpuruṣa*, but as a *dvandva*, despite the rule of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.2.34 (which requires the shorter element to be the first one, but this can be broken if a decreasing order of importance is implied, see Bhandare 1995: 91), thus “the destroyer of civility, but also wealth”.

96 The sub-chapter on abstinence begins in a similar fashion (5.119, Ms 33<sup>v</sup>3–4):

*loke parasmīn iha caiva doṣān  
madyaprasaṅgāśrayiṇaḥ samīkṣya |  
kiṃ nāma tat kāraṇam asti yena  
madyaṃ budho draṣṭum api vyavasyet ||*

Having observed the evils both in this life and the next that an addict to drink incurs, what, pray, could cause any sensible person to even look at it?

97 <sup>o</sup>prabhavatvād] *em.*, <sup>o</sup>prabhāvatvad Ms.

Gambling: the delight of foes, a home for humiliation,<sup>98</sup> a workshop<sup>99</sup> for enmity, the fundament of fraud and trickery, a way [sure to lead] to the foulness of discord,<sup>100</sup> a collecting bin for the scrap of sin, the playground for delusion, a conflagration for the wealth of virtues, a destroyer of the splendour of civility,<sup>101</sup> the exile of fame, the seed for the misfortune of wishing to take away the wealth of others. [2]

*kiṃ ca bhūyaḥ* |

What is more:

*dhairyaśyāpanayaḥ śamasya vilayaḥ sadvṛttaśasyāśaniḥ  
saṃrambhoddhavalobhadoṣarajasām utkarṣaṇo mārutaḥ |  
dyūtaṃ nāma guṇoparāgasamayaḥ pāpānalasyendhanaṃ  
pāruṣyādyaśubhapralāpamukharo ghorah pramādagrahaḥ || [3]*

Gambling: the disappearance of steadfastness, the evaporation of contentment, a hailstorm for the crop of good conduct, a wind to draw up the dust that are the vices of reckless abandon<sup>102</sup> and avarice, a time of

98 The compound *paribhāvabhavanam* again emulates Āryaśūra's usage, see *Jātakamālā* 12.4 (Kern 1891: 77, Hanisch 2005: 1, 110, a metaphor for poverty; "a home of disregard" according to Speyer 1895: 110), 17.20 (Kern 1891: 103, a metaphor for drinking; "object of contempt" according to Speyer 1895: 146).

99 The compound *karmāntasālā* seems to be exceedingly rare. The only other example I can find in Buddhist literature is (where else!) Āryaśūra's *Pāramitāsamāsa*, 3.8c (Ferrari 1946: 33; Meadows 1986: 196–197; Saito 2005: 169, 361). Here forbearance (*kṣānti*) is described as a workshop for fashioning the body of the Buddha. In Māgha's *Śiśupālavadha* 18.79 (at least in the version read by Mallinātha, Durgāprasād and S'ivadatta 1905: 466), we have a battlefield described as the Creator's workshop (*sṛṣṭikarmāntasālā*). However, Vallabhadeva here has another reading (Kak and Harabhatta Shastri 1935: 241–242): *sṛṣṭaye karmaśālā*. I thank Harunaga Isaacson for pointing out this possible parallel usage. Martin Straube kindly provided several usages of *kammantasālā* in Pali: Sp 376, Spk I 247, Pj II 140, Mhv 76:45.

100 There might be small joke hidden in this compound, as the weakest throw in dice is also called *kali* (Lüders 1907: 40–44), whence the name of the Kali age, which is characterised by discord. Cf. *kalipaddhati* in Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā* 17.24c (Kern 1891: 103; "road of sin" according to Speyer 1895: 146).

101 See n. 95.

102 In this meaning, *uddhava* is apparently to be found predominantly in Buddhist usage (see Edgerton 1953, *sub voce*). In 7.45 (Ms 39<sup>v</sup>1), it is contrasted with *yama*, restraint. A slightly different shade of meaning is used in 4a below. However, it is also possible that this word might mean the same as Pali *uddhacca* or Buddhist Sanskrit *auddhatya*, 'over-excitement'

eclipse for virtues, fuel for the fire of sin, garrulous with the inauspicious prattle of hurtful and other [kinds of sinful speech], a dreadful demon<sup>103</sup> of carelessness. [3]

*api ca | kadā nāma tatprasaktamateḥ svasti syāt | dyūtaparo hi |*

Moreover: how could a person mentally addicted to it ever find happiness? For a gambling fanatic—

*jītvoddhavākulamātir na śamaṃ paraiti  
tṛṣṇāṃ vivardhayati caiva hi doṣadhātrīm |  
duḥkhaṃ paraṃ samupayāti jitaś ca yasmān  
na dyūtam arhati tato 'pi budhaḥ prapattum || [4]*

If he wins, his mind is overcome by conceit and he finds no peace. On the contrary, this only makes his thirst, the wet-nurse of vice, all the more intense. If he loses, he suffers terribly. So, for this reason too, a wise man should not give himself over to gambling. [4]

*nindaty api svajana enaṃ  
lāghavam abhyupaiti suhrdām ca |  
na prārthyate svajanabhāve  
yāti<sup>104</sup> parikṣayaṃ ca dhanam aśya || [5]*

Even his kinfolk scold him, and his friends no longer take him seriously; he is not invited to become anyone's relative [by marriage], and all his wealth is lost. [5]

*tatraitat syāt | anaikāntaḥ khalv atra yad uta dyūta<sup>105</sup>prasaktamateḥ dhana-  
parikṣayaḥ syāt | Nalaṃ hi rājānaṃ dyūte parājitya tadrājyaṃ avāpa Puṣkaro  
rājā | Śakunī<sup>106</sup> Yaudhiṣṭhiraṃ dhanam Viduram amātyaṃ ca<sup>106</sup> lebhe | bhā-*

or 'exaltation'. Moreover, it might also be the case that the first three words of the string, *saṃrambhoddhavalobha*, have to be interpreted as a tripartite *dvandva*, in spite of the rule that vowel-initial words should head such a compound. I thank Martin Straube for his thought-provoking comments on this issue.

103 Once more we find a playful allusion, as *graha/grabha/glaḥa* means a throw in the dice-game and became a synonym of gambling (Raghavan 1979: 19, Lüders 1907: 26–28).

104 *yāti*] *em.*, *ti Ms.*

105 *dyūta*°] *conj.*, *omitted Ms.* However, the reading is meaningful on its own, too.

106 *amātyaṃ ca*] *em.*, *amātyaṃ Ms<sup>pc</sup>*, *amā Ms<sup>ac</sup>*.

*ryāṃ śulūkārthaṃ Pūrṇako yakṣaḥ prāptaḥ | vijayaśrīr dyūte | tasmād anekānta eṣa yad uta dyūtaprasaktamater dhanaparikṣayaḥ syāt | ataś ca prārthanīya eva svajanabhāve syān na ca lāghavam upeyāt suhr̥dāṃ svajananindālakṣatām*<sup>107</sup> ca |

**Someone might object to this as follows:** surely, concerning this matter it is inconclusive that a man mentally addicted to gambling will lose all his wealth. For king Puṣkara obtained king Nala's kingdom after having defeated him at dice.<sup>108</sup> Śakuni obtained Yudhiṣṭhira's wealth and Vidura as counsellor.<sup>109</sup> The *yakṣa* Pūrṇaka gained a wife as his winnings.<sup>110</sup> The fortune of victory [can be found] in dice! Therefore what you said is inconclusive, namely that a man mentally addicted to gambling would lose all his wealth. For this reason he may indeed be worthy of being invited to become someone's relative, and he would not become untrustworthy for his friends, nor would he be the butt of scolding by his kinfolk.

*ity atra*<sup>111</sup> *brūmahe* | *nālaṃ yadṛcchayā siddhyā vipadbhūyaskaram arthaṃ prapattum | yadṛcchayā hi kaścit kvacid dyūte kāmcid arthalavamātrām anuprāpnoti | prāyeṇa tu dyūte 'nuraktamatayas tatropayuktasarvasvāḥ kaupīnapracchādane 'pi. aparyāptaprakṣīṇamalinavasanaḥ kṣutparikṣāmavivarṇadīnavapuṣaḥ śokavaktavyaḥṛdayā rajaḥsaṃprktā*<sup>112</sup> *rūkṣadarśanaḥ*<sup>113</sup> *suhṛdāṃ apyaviśvāsyā jagadavajñābhājanabhūtās tattadakāryamatayaḥ paribhramantaḥ pṛthivīm dr̥śyante, Nalavad Yudhiṣṭhiravac ca saṃrodhaduḥkhitāḥ, parilupta-karacaraṇāṅguliparvāṇas ca kecit | tasmād bāhulyatayā*<sup>114</sup> *prasiddham etat | bhogās cāsya parikṣayaṃ yāntīti | tataś cāśeṣadoṣotpattiḥ |*

107 svajananindālakṣatām] *em.* (Isaacson), svajane nindālakṣatām Ms<sup>PC</sup>, omitted Ms<sup>ac</sup>.

108 *Locus classicus* in the *Vanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*; van Buitenen 1975: 330–333.

109 *Locus classicus* in the *Sabhāparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*; van Buitenen 1975: 106–169.

110 *Locus classicus* in the *Vidhurapaṇḍitajātaka* (Jā no. 545, vi.255–329), tr. Cowell and Rouse 1907: 126–156. Also see Lüders 1907: 4–7, *passim*, and above all Alsdorf 1971 (especially pp. 39–41 for the gambling scene). The tale is depicted at Kanaganahalli (Zin 2018: 35–40), Ajanta (Schlingloff 2000, 1: 165–173), and, as discussed by Schlingloff, many other places (Bharhut, Amaravati, etc.); also see Bock-Raming 2000.

111 *ity atra*] *em.* (Acharya), *iti* Ms. The collocation *iti brūmahe* occurs in the \**Saddharma-parikathā* only once (Ms 43<sup>r2</sup>), but there it does not introduce a *siddhānta* after a *pūrvapakṣa*. There are three occurrences of *ity atra brūmahe*: two in the present chapter and one in the sixth disposition of the 10th chapter (Ms 48<sup>r4</sup>).

112 °saṃprktā] *em.*, °saṃprktaḥ | Ms.

113 °darśanaḥ] *em.*, °darśana Ms<sup>PC</sup>, °darśanād dhi Ms<sup>ac</sup>.

114 kecit | tasmād bāhulyatayā] *conj.* (Isaacson), kecid adbāhulyatayā (sic?) Ms<sup>PC</sup>, kecid asma-dbāhulyatayālaṃ (sic?) Ms<sup>ac</sup>. It is not entirely clear what the scribe's intended reading

**To this we reply:** It is not fitting to pursue wealth bringing even more harm based on the mere chance of winning. For by mere chance only some people and only in a rare game<sup>115</sup> will gain some sort of small measure of wealth. However, in general, those mentally drawn to gambling dedicate all their possessions to it, even if it is the last shirt on their backs.<sup>116</sup> We see them roaming the earth in scanty, tattered, and dirty clothing, with bodies emaciated by hunger, colourless, and tormented,<sup>117</sup> with hearts made vile by grieving losses,<sup>118</sup> cov-

is. My initial conjecture was \**kecit* | *asmadbāhulyatayālam* |, “some [...] But enough of our prolixity!”, but that seems to be an unparalleled expression. In any case, the double abstract *bāhulyatā* is an infelicity, therefore it is perfectly possible that the corruption is even worse than the one posited here.

115 Alternatively, one might construe *kvacid dyūte* as *vyadhikaraṇa*: “only occasionally [...] in gambling.”

116 Lit. “[down to] the small piece of cloth to cover their private parts”. Raghavan (1979: 43) notes: “[...] part and parcel of the accepted procedure of the play that those who lose everything in the stake should shake or throw off their garments, sit on the floor or go out bare-bodied to show that they have nothing left on their person and have submitted completely to the victor.” Amitagati goes one step further: a gambler will wager even his mother’s clothing (*mātrvastram api*); see *Subhāṣitaratnasamḍoha* st. 632 (Schmidt 1908: 308).

117 Cf. Amitagati’s *Subhāṣitaratnasamḍoha* st. 636 (Schmidt 1908: 308):

*dyūtanāśitasamastabhūtiko*  
*bambhramīti sakalāṃ bhuvam naraḥ* |  
*jīrṇavastrakṛtadehasaṃvṛtir*  
*mastakāhitabharāḥ kṣudhāturaḥ* ||

Der Mann, der all seinen Besitz im Spiele durchgebracht hat, irrt krank vor Hunger auf der ganzen Erde hin und her, indem er seinen Leib mit einem alten Gewande bedeckt und eine Last auf dem Kopfe trägt.

Other psychological and physiological disadvantages are given by Haribhaṭṭa in his *Jātakamālā*<sup>11</sup> 34.6 (Straube 2019: 418, tr. Khoroch 2017: 218):

*yad dīvyann ayathātatham nigadati krodhena saṃsprśyate*  
*nidrāṇ naiti jito ’ham ity anuśayāj jetuṇ punar lubhyati* |  
*gāḍhaṇ mūtrapuriṣarodhasulabhair adhyāsyate vyādhibhis*  
*tad dyūtaṇ bahudoṣajālamalinam ko nāma dīvyet pumān* ||

What man would gamble, when, doing so, he tells lies, is affected by anger, loses sleep, wants to win again after the disappointment of being beaten and becomes prone to illnesses that commonly involve the retention of urine and feces? Gambling is tainted with a whole mass of harmful consequences.

This verse is somewhat similar to the woes that befall a gambler listed by Bhārucci *ad Manusmṛti* 7.52 (see n. 38), which includes *mūtrapuriṣavegadhāraṇāc ca śarīratantraśaithilyam*.

118 The expression [state of mind]+*vaktavya*+ [mind/heart] is not very common, cf. Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā*, prose after 21.8 (Kern 1891: 124, tr. Speyer 1895: 176): *yady ayam asyāṇi saṃprāgavaktavyamatir vyaktam asmin na tapaḥprabhāvo* ’sti, “If his mind is ruled by passionate affection for her, surely, he has no power gained by penance.”

ered in dust, weary-eyed,<sup>119</sup> not to be trusted even by friends, receptacles for the disdain of the world, mulling over all kinds of reproachable schemes, or—indeed, as it was with Nala and Yudhiṣṭhira—pained by exile, and yet others with lost fingers, toes, and joints.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, this being the usual order of things, it is well-known that “and all his possessions become lost.”<sup>121</sup> And thence the rise of all kinds of vices.

119 Alternatively, “disagreeable to behold”. However, the above interpretation is more likely, because gamblers are frequently said to spend all night playing (see the Haribhaṭṭa passage in n. 117), even if their mother died, so Bhāruci *ad Manusmṛti* 7.52 (*mātary api ca mṛtāyāṃ dīvyaty eva kitavaḥ*; see n. 38 for the references) A possibly similar usage is seen in Gopadatta's *Kaṇḍikāśāstra* st. 14b (Hahn 2007: 55, 65): *svadaurātmyavirūḥṣadrṣṭayaḥ*, “their views being cruel because of their own wickedness”. The translation is of course possible and even probable, but perhaps here a cruel gaze was meant, which might be applicable to our gambler, too.

120 Cf. *Mahāsubhāṣitasamgraha* 8803, from various recensions of the *Cāṇakyanīti* (Sternbach and Sarma 1981: 2288–2289, *pace* translator, as I do not think that *dyūtakāra* here means the keeper of the gambling hall, but the gambler himself; I also find the reading *paraiḥ* unconvincing):

*karkaṣaṃ duḥsahavākyaṃ jalpanti vañcitāḥ paraiḥ |*  
*kurvanti dyūtakārasya kaṇḍanāsādichedanam ||*

Those deceived by others will utter harsh and unbearable words, and the gambler will have his ears, nose, etc. chopped off!

These are very likely not traces of royal punishment (cf. the case of *kuṭṭanīs*), but wounds incurred from enraged opponents; cf. Amitagati's *Subhāṣitaratnasandoha* st. 638 (Schmidt 1908: 310):

*rudhyate 'nyakitavair niṣedhyati*  
*badhyate vacanam ucyate kaṭu |*  
*nodyate 'tra paribhūṭaye nara*  
*haryate ca kitavo vinindyate ||*

Der Spieler wird von den anderen Spielern eingesperrt, abgewehrt, gefesselt, bekommt bittere Reden zu hören, wird dabei gestoßen, gedemütigt, geschlagen und getadelt.

Amitagati too mentions loss of limb as one of the dangers of gambling, see st. 633 (Schmidt 1908: 308):

*ghrāṇakarkākarapādakarttanam*  
*yadvāśena labhate śarīravān |*  
*tat samastasukhadharmanāśanam*  
*dyūtam āśrayati kaḥ sacetanah ||*

Welcher Verständige wendet sich dem Spiele zu, dem Vernichter jeglicher Wohlfahrt und Religion, in dessen Banne der Körperliche Abschnitten von Nase, Ohren, Händen und Füßen erlebt?

121 Untraced, if a quotation. Alternatively, this might be a paraphrase of 5d, but then why the *ca* and why not repeat the original wording as is the author's custom? The text might therefore be problematic here.

*yo 'pi ca dyūtāt kām̐cid dravyamātrām adhigacchati kadācit so 'pi tadāsvādada-  
rśanāt samutthāpyamānaviṣamalobhaḥ pratāryamāṇo jayāśayā punar dyūte  
pravṛttas tām̐ ca dhanamātrām taduttarām̐ ca nāśayatīty upapadyamānam  
evaitat |*

As for the [gamester] who obtains some small measure of wealth from gambling—observing the enjoyment he got out of that [gain], roused by dangerous greed,<sup>122</sup> fooled by the hope of winning—at some point he takes to gambling again and loses not only that small measure of wealth, but even more. This is simply bound to happen.

*aikāntikī yady api ca prasiddhir  
dyūtaprasaṅgena bhaved dhanasya |  
mīmāṃsyam etad viduṣā tathāpi  
guṇānurakṣāpravaṇātmakeḥ syāt || [6]*

But even if it were a matter of certainty that by taking to dice one would acquire wealth, a wise man should nevertheless ponder on this and dedicate himself to preserving virtues: [6]

*dyūtād dhanam̐ nidhanam̐ eva vinā ca tena  
śreyo bhavet kim anayor iti cintyamāne |  
śreyo bhaven nidhanam̐ akṣatadharmabuddher  
na dyūtadoṣamalinasya dhanasya rāśiḥ || [7]*

Wealth from gambling or even death without it—which one is the better of the two? Upon careful consideration, for a man whose mind is unfailingly dedicated to the Dharma/duty, death is better, and not the heap of wealth tainted by the vice of gambling. [7]

*api ca |*

*tyaktvā hriyam̐ viśadam̐ eva sadharmacintām̐  
pāpaiḥ sametya nirayasya vivṛtya mārgam̐ |  
śocyatvam̐ etya viduṣām̐ svayaśaḥ pramṛdya  
dyūtād ya icchati dhanam̐ kim asau na kuryāt || [8]*

122 Again, the author might be emulating Āryaśūra's usage, cf. *Jātakamālā*, prose before 26.8 (Kern 1891: 168, tr. Speyer 1895: 236): [...] *tayā cāśya rūpaśobhayā samutthāpyamānavi-smayamānaḥ* [...], "the beautiful shape of the *ruru*-deer roused his admiration and respect."

What is there that a man who desires wealth from gambling would not do after having quite openly forsaken shame along with care for duty/the Dharma,<sup>123</sup> colluding with sins/sinful men, opening wide the highway to hell, being lamented by the wise, [and] destroying his own fame?<sup>124</sup> [8]

*tatraitat syāt | ratinimittā<sup>125</sup> dyūte pravṛttir na dravyādānalobhāt |*

To this some might object: one might engage in gambling for pleasure and not out of greed to obtain wealth.

*ity atra brūmahe |*

To this we reply:

*ratir api ca bhaved anena [54<sup>r</sup>] yā  
bahuvidhadoṣamalīmasātmanām |  
guṇagaṇasadayah katham nu tām  
paravanitām iva cintayed api || [9]*

Even if there were pleasure by [gambling] for those whose minds are soiled with various kinds of vices, how indeed could a man with an inclination for all virtues even think of that [pleasure], any more than he would of another man's wife? [9]

*ratim ca dharmārthagauṇopasaṃhitām  
uśanti santo na tu tadvirodhinīm |*

123 I have also considered understanding *viśada* in the meaning used in the Buddhist soci-  
olect: "abundant, extensive" (see Edgerton 1953, *sub voce*), but that would require emend-  
ing *sadharmacintām* to *sadharmavittam* and construing the former word not as an adverb  
but as an adjective, thus: "and much legitimately obtained wealth."

124 Cf. Amitagati's *Subhāṣitaratnaśaṃdoha* st. 623 (Schmidt 1908: 306):

*satyaśaucaśamaśarmavarjitā  
dharmakāmadhanato bahiṣkṛtāḥ |  
dyūtadoṣamalinā vicetanāḥ  
kaṃ na doṣam upacīnvate janāḥ ||*

Welche Schuld häufen nicht die Menschen an, wenn sie, von der Schuld des Spiels  
befleckt, des Schutzes der Wahrheit, Lauterkeit und Seelenruhe entbehren, außerhalb  
der Tugend, der Liebe, und des Erwerbes stehen und sinnlos sind!

125 Jens-Uwe Hartmann suggested a possible amelioration: *ratinimittād*. Here I retain the  
reading of the Ms.



*ratim hi pāpām anubhūya bhūyasīm*  
*apāyadurgeṣu ratim vigāhate* || [10]

Moreover, the good strive for<sup>126</sup> pleasure which is furnished with the virtues related to [fulfilling] duty/the Dharma and [gaining] wealth,<sup>127</sup> not the opposite kind. For after having experienced sinful pleasure, one plunges into the even more abundant ‘pleasures’ of the lower realms.<sup>128</sup> [10]

*sthite tu mṛtyau hi jarorukārmuke*  
*samudyatavyādhiṣare kuto ratih |*  
*svakarmadoṣagrathite sthite 'grataḥ*  
*punarbhave ca vyasanaśramāśraye*<sup>129</sup> || [11]

And indeed, when death lurks with the mighty bow of old age with arrows of illness ready to fire<sup>130</sup> and when rebirth, the abode of weariness from distress,<sup>131</sup> fashioned by the vices of one's own deeds, is just ahead—whence can there be any pleasure? [11]

126 Alternatively, “enjoin” and related meanings. Our author uses this verb in both senses: 1) *punyocchritā hi yad uśanti tad āpnuvanti* (3.32d, Ms 12<sup>r</sup>2), “For those made exalted by merit achieve whatever they wish for.” 2) *sautrāmaṇau prāśyam uśanti madyam* (7.21a, Ms 37<sup>v</sup>1), “[Brahmins] enjoin liquor to be consumed in the Sautrāmaṇi sacrifice.” and *sat kāraṇe kāryam uśanti sāmṅhyās* (7.30a, Ms 38<sup>v</sup>1), “Followers of the Sāmṅhya posit that the effect exists in the cause.”

127 The order of the *dvandva* is against *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.2.33 due to the principle of order of importance (*abhyarhitatvāt*), or at least this is the point of discussion in the *Jayamaṅgalā ad Kāmasūtra* 1.1 (Durgāprasāda 1900: 2). However, a special supplement also rules that the *puruṣārthas* etc. can float freely (Bhandare 1995: 92).

128 Amitagati explicitly states that gambling leads to low rebirth; see *Subhāṣitaratnasamdoha* stt. 626–628 (Schmidt 1908: 306–307).

129 *vyasanaśramāśraye*] *em.*, *vyasanāśramāśraye* Ms.

130 Cf. \**Saddharmaparikathā* 5.62 (Ms 26<sup>v</sup>3–4):

*vegena mṛtyāv abhivartamāne*  
*vadhārtham abhyudyatarogaśastre |*  
*sarvair upāyair anivāryavīrye*  
*dharmāt paraṃ nāparam asti kṛtyam* (*em.*, *kṛtyam* Ms) ||

The same verse is found in the *Tridaṇḍamālā* (Ms 108<sup>v</sup>5) with a vocative (or possibly a corruption) *anivāryavīrya* in *pāda c*.

131 Cf. Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā* 8.54d (Kern 1891: 50, Hanisch 2005: 1, 72, tr. Speyer 1895: 68): *prasaktatīvrayasanaśramātūrān*, “distressed by toil and sufferings because of the violent calamities and vices to which they are liable.” The compound is analysed thus in the *Jātakamālāṭīkā* (Basu 1989: 360): *prasaktam anubaddham tīvraṃ yad vyasanaṃ duḥkham tasmin śramaḥ khedaś tenātūrāṃś tāt ity arthaḥ*.

*yad api syāt kaleyam iti, tatparijñānārtham atra pravartamānasya ka iva doṣaḥ syāt |*

One might have the idea that it [i.e., gambling] is an art, so what is the vice, if any, were one to become engaged in it for the sake of mastering its ways?

*ity atra brūmahe |*

To this we reply:

*anekadoṣodayasaṃkalā kalā  
vimohitatvāc ca guṇakriyā na ca |  
yad eva tu syād guṇapakṣasiddhaye  
yateta tenaiva yaśo'rthasiddhaye || [12]*

Art is a storehouse for the rise of many a vice and because of its beguiling ways it is not a virtuous activity. Rather, one should strive for gaining fame and wealth by means of those things that are there for the victory of the side of virtue. [12]

*priyam api ca na tan niṣevitavyaṃ  
svahitapathād apavṛttilakṣaṇaṃ<sup>132</sup> yat |  
nihatam iva hitaṃ tu yatra tasmīn  
arucim apāsya bhajed yathauṣadhaṃ tat || [13]*

Moreover, even if something is pleasurable, one should not practise it if it bears the mark of turning away from the path to one's benefit. Conversely, where there is benefit to be found, one should take that, suppressing one's dislike, just like [one does] with [bitter] medicine. [13]

*dharmāśrayaṃ svahitasāadhanam uttamaṃ tu  
pretyeha cārthasukhamānayaśaḥphalatvāt |  
dyūtādikād iti mano vinivartya pāpān  
maṅgalyadānadamasanyamabhūṣaṇaḥ syāt || [14]*

<sup>132</sup> apavṛttilakṣaṇaṃ] *em.* (Isaacson), apavṛttalakṣaṇaṃ Ms. Diwakar Acharya suggested that the original reading might also work along the same lines.

Now, achieving one's own benefit rooted in duty/Dharma is the best, because it brings about the fruits of wealth, comfort, honour, and fame both here and in the thereafter. Turning thus one's back to the sin of gambling and the like, one should adorn oneself with pious charity, self-control, and restraint. [14]

*iti* |

So much [for gambling].

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### Appendix 1: List of Metres Employed in ch. 12

Note: the metre in bold occurs only in this chapter.

- *anuṣṭubh*: 1 (*pāda a = bha-vipulā*)
- *aparavaktra/vaitālīya*: 9
- *upajāti* (*indravajrā+upendravajrā*): 6
- *gūti*: 5
- *puṣpitāgrā*: 13
- *vasantatilakā*: 4, 7–8, 14
- *vaṃśasthāvila*: 10–12
- *śārdūlavikrīḍita*: 3
- *sragdharā*: 2

## Appendix 2: Location of Folios in the Tucci Archive

- 53<sup>r</sup> BBB090001.jpg folio 8  
 53<sup>v</sup> CCC040001.jpg folio 16  
 54<sup>r</sup> BBB090001.jpg folio 9

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- D The Derge (sde dge) print of the Tibetan Canon, with nos. according to Hakuju Ui, Munetada Suzuki, Yenshō Kanakura and Tôkan Tada. 1934. *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons (Bkaḥ-ḥgyur and Bstan-ḥgyur)*. Sendai: Tôhoku Imperial University.
- T The Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/>)

In case of Pali, all references are to the Pali Text Society editions with the standard abbreviations (thus DN = *Dīghanikāya*, etc.; cf. [https://cpd.uni-koeln.de/intro/vol1\\_epileg\\_abbrev\\_texts](https://cpd.uni-koeln.de/intro/vol1_epileg_abbrev_texts)).

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Manuscript National Archives Kathmandu No. 3–363 vi. *jātaka* 1 = Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, reel no. A 38/13, once complete in 11 palm-leaf folios (the first two are now missing), Old Newar script, dated *Nepālasamvat* 224 = 1104 CE.

*Kāmasūtra* by Vātsyāyana:

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Manuscript (probably) not extant, 115 palm-leaf folio (no. 107 skipped), Māgadhi script, ca. 11th century. Read from scans of b/w photographs taken on behalf of Giuseppe Tucci.

*Dhūrtaviṣaṣaṇvāda* by Īśvaradatta: see Dezső and Vasudeva 2009.

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