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MUCH ADO  
ABOUT RELIGION  
BY BHATTA JAYÁNTA



*Edited & translated by*

CSABA DEZSŐ

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First Edition 2005

The Clay Sanskrit Library is co-published by  
New York University Press  
and the JJC Foundation.

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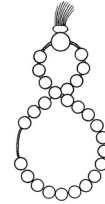
ISBN 0-8147-1979-1

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*Artwork by Robert Beer.*

*Cover design by Isabelle Onians.*

*Layout & typesetting by Somadeva Vasudeva.*

*Printed in Great Britain by St Edmundsbury Press Ltd,*

*Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on acid-free paper.*

*Bound by Hunter & Foulis Ltd, Edinburgh, Scotland.*

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS  
JJC FOUNDATION

2005

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### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, fl. 850–910.

Āgamaḍambara. English

Much ado about religion / by Jayanta Bhatta ;  
edited and translated by Csaba Dezső.

p. cm. – (The Clay Sanskrit library)

Translated from Sanskrit.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8147-1979-1 (cloth)

1. Sanskrit drama. 2. Nyāya–Drama.

I. Dezső, Csaba. II. Title. III. Series.

II. Title. III. Series.

PK3794.J3472A713 2005

891'.22–dc22 2004026265

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PRELUDE TO ACT TWO:  
LUSTFUL ASCETICS

*Tataḥ praviṣati* CETĀḤ.

CETĀḤ:

ṚNa piviyadi śīyalā śulā  
 na a dāśīi śamaṃ lamīadi,  
 śulahaṃ ca ṇa maṃśa|bhoyaṇaṃ  
 viśame bamhaṇa|vāśae ido.

ṚTā kiṃ kalīadi? ṇasti yyeva ṇiya|bhaṣṭake palihalia appaṇo  
 gabbha|dāśāṇa gadī. āṇaṃ pi tāriśaṃ bhaṣṭake aveṣkadi  
 yeśu ṇa khajjadi ṇa pijyadi. jado ajya āṇatte bhaṣṭake-  
 ṇa hage: «ale kajjalaā, gaśca pekkha khavaṇaya|vaśadiē  
 kiṃ Jiṇa|raṣkida|bhikkhū asti ṇa va» tti. ṇa a jāṇāmi ka-  
 hiṃ śā khavaṇaa|vaśadi. (parikramya vīthīm avalokayan  
 savitarkam) Ṛeśu vistinṇa|luṃcida|loma|kiṃśālu|viśala|śa-  
 validā ede paṃśu|kaṇā laṣkīaṃti. tā eśu yyeva luṣka|ga-  
 haṇe khavaṇaa|vaśadiē hodavvaṃ. (kati cit padāni gatv  
 āgrato vilokya sahaṣam) Ṛiaṃ yyeva śā khavaṇaa|vaśa-  
 dī, jado eśu ṇilaṃtala|ladā|paṃja|aṃdhayāle luṣka|mū-  
 le kuvidaṃ khavaṇiaṃ paśādeṃte eśe khavaṇae dīśadi.  
 (kṣaṇaṃ nirūpya) Ṛadi|kovaṇā khu eśā duṭṭhā khavaṇiā  
 yā calaṇa|paḍidaṃ pi edaṃ khavaṇaya|yuāṇaṃ palihalia  
 dūlaṃ gadā. eśe vi tavaśīi paluśa|vaāṇe khavaṇae dīśadi.

2.5 *Tataḥ praviṣati picchikā|hastah* KṢAPAṆAKAḤ.

*Then enters the DOGSBODY.* \*

DOGSBODY: \*

One cannot drink chilled booze, nor make love to  
 the servant girls, nor is it easy to get a meat dish,  
 in this comfortless brahmin household.

So what to do? A born slave has no recourse if he turns his  
 back on his own masters, that's for sure. Even the errands  
 my master thinks up are such that one cannot eat or drink  
 while running them. For just now my master has ordered  
 me: "Hey, Sooty, go and see if the monk Jina-rākshita  
 is in the abode of the Jain mendicants or not." And I've  
 no idea where that abode of the Jain mendicants can  
 be. (*He walks about, looks at the road, and muses:*) These  
 specks of dust here seem to be speckled by scattered tufts  
 of plucked-out, awn-like hair.\* So the abode of the Jain  
 mendicants must be right here in this forest. (*He takes a  
 few steps, looks ahead and says joyfully:*) This must be the  
 abode of the Jain mendicants, since here, under a tree, in  
 the darkness of the dense net of vines, a monk seems to  
 be appeasing an angry nun. (*He looks for a second.*) This  
 harpy nun must be furious indeed: she's shaken off the  
 young mendicant and gone away, even though he threw  
 himself at her feet. And the poor monk seems to have a  
 grim visage.

*Then enters a Jain MENDICANT, holding a broom made of 2.5  
 peacock tail feathers.*

KṢAPAṆAKAḤ: (*sāśram*) ʽHaddhī, para|loe durāsāe paḍhamaṃ khavaṇattaṇaṃ mae gahiaṃ. khalidassa tattha iṇhiṃ di-ṭṭh'ādiṭṭhā khu me ṇaṭṭhā, jado eṣā vi duṭṭhā tāvasī ca-ḷaṇa|paḍidassa vi me ṇa paṣidadi, (akṣiṇī pramṛjya) ʽāi duṭṭhā baṃdhaī, gaccha tuvaṃ! kiṃ tae visarisam kaṃ vi khavaṇiam ṇa pāvissam?ʽ

CEṬAḤ: (*vicintya*) ʽJāva eṣe khavaṇae maṃ ṇa pekkhadi tāva hage khavaṇiā|veṣam kaduya edaṃ khavaṇaam uvaha-śiśsam, (ātmānaṃ nirūpya) ʽlaṃba|kaṇṇe khu hage. ṇa āṇaṇe maśsu|lomā me ubbhīṇṇā. ṇa ya khavaṇiyāṇa ve-ṇi|baṃdhe śīse śaṃbhāvīyadi. tā śuale me khavaṇiā|veṣe, (tathā karoti. nirūpya) ʽpicchiā|metta|śuṇṇe śaṃpadaṃ me khavaṇiā|lūe vaṭṭadi, (agrato `valokya saharṣam) ʽśāhu! khavaṇiāe śaṃdhālida|paliccaīam picchiaṃ geṇhia uva-śappiśsam, (tathā kṛtvā) ʽayya, paṇamāmi. paliśsamta mhi śaṃpadaṃ. tā ācakkhaśu maṃ ajja kahim bhaṭṭake Jiṇa|rakkhida|bhikkhū vaṭṭadi,ʽ

KṢAPA°: (*sāśvāsam ātma|gatam*) ʽNa esa atta|paraṃmuho vva me devvo lakkhīyadi. aṇṇā khu eṣā taruṇa|khavaṇiā uva-ṇadā, (prakāśam) ʽāi bāla|tavassīni, kiṃ tujjha Jiṇa|rakkhida|bhikkhuṇā? parissamta khu dīsasi. tā iha yyeva ṇijjaṇe sisira|ladā|gahaṇe uvavisia vīsama muhuttaam,ʽ

CEṬAḤ: ʽKudo me ṇicca|dukkhidāe maṃda|bhaggāe vīsā-me?ʽ

MENDICANT: (*weeping*) Poor me! Because of the vain hope of a better afterlife, first I became a Jain monk. I have deviated from that, and now both the present and the future\* have come to nothing for me, for this harpy nun, too, is not appeased even if I throw myself at her feet. (*He wipes his eyes.*) Hey, you harpy bitch, get you gone! Can't I find another nun who is not like you?

DOGSBODY: (*pondering*) Before this monk notices me I'll dress up as a Jain nun, and make fun of him. (*He looks at himself.*) To be sure, I have long ears, there are no beginnings of a beard on my face, and no one would expect a Jain nun to wear a ponytail on her head. So I can easily assume the appearance of a Jain nun. (*He does so and looks about.*) Now all I need is a broom of peacock feathers to look like a Jain nun. (*Looking ahead, he says joyfully:*) Splendid! I'll take the nun's broom that she had been holding and then left behind,\* and go closer. (*He does so.*) Sir, I bow to you. I am very tired now, so please tell me, where is the reverend monk Jina·rākshita now?

MENDICANT: (*cheering up, to himself*) It seems my luck will not turn its back on me now. Here we have another young nun showing up. (*openly*) O my mendicant girl, what business do you have with the monk Jina·rākshita? You look very tired indeed. So sit down right here in this lonely, cool thicket of vines, and rest for a spell.

DOGSBODY: I've always been unhappy and I'm ill-fated. How could I have a rest?

2.10 KṢAPA°: (*sa/sneham*) 「Kiṃ imassim̄ bāla|bhāve vi te dukkha|kāraṇaṃ?»

CETAḤ: (*niḥśvasya*) 「Ayya, ciṭṭhadu eṣe maha ḍaḍḍha|vuttam̄te. Jiṇa|rakkhida|bhikkhu|paṭṭim̄ me ācakkhadu bhavaṃ.»

KṢAPA°: 「Bālie, eso khu Jiṇa|rakkhida|bhikkhū abbham̄tare atta|sissāṇa majjhe vakkhānaṃ kareṃto ṇiaggoha|rukka|ḥa|mūle ciṭṭhadī. tuvaṃ puṇa khaṇaṃ uvavisa vaṇṇehi dāva attaṇo ṇivvea|kāraṇaṃ.»

CETAḤ: (*upaviśya niḥśvasya*) 「Ayya, kiṃ eṣu śaṃśāla|hadāe lajjā|ṇihāṇe vaṇṇiyadi?» (*roditi.*)

KṢAPA°: (*akṣiṇī cetasy' ṭṭpumsayan*) 「Bālie, vaṇṇehi. hiaa|nivviseo khu eso jaṇo bāliāe.»

2.15 CETAḤ: 「Bāla|kumālika yeva pavvajida mhi maṃḍa|bhāṇī.»

KṢAPA°: 「Tado uṇa?»

CETAḤ: 「Tado īś' |īśi|ubbhijyaṃta|vilala|juvvaṇa|lakkhaṇāe aṇicchaṃtīe yeva me aśikkhida|maṇa|laśāe keṇa vi taluṇa|khavaṇaṇa śīla|khaṃḍaṇā kadā.»

KṢAPA°: (*sahaṣam ātma/gatam*) 「Amaa|ṇai yeva me uvaṇḍā.» (*prakāśam*) 「bālie, īrisa yeva saṃsāra|ṭṭhidī. tado uṇa?»

CETAḤ: 「Ayya, tado kāl' |aṃtale śaṇiaṃ śaṇiaṃ muṇia|maṇa|laśaṃ maṃ palihalia śe khavaṇaṇe aṇṇaśsim̄ ḍaḍḍha|muṭṭhīe vuḍḍha|khavaṇiāe paṣatte.»

MENDICANT: (*with affection*) You are just a child, but you 2.10 already have a reason to be unhappy?

DOGSBODY: (*with a sigh*) Sir, let us not waste our breath for my execrable story. Please tell me the whereabouts of the monk Jina-rákshita.

MENDICANT: Little girl, this monk Jina-rákshita is inside, delivering a lecture to his disciples, under the *nyag-rodha*-tree. But sit down for a second and tell me now the cause of your disillusion.

DOGSBODY: (*sits down and sighs*) Sir, what point is there in relating now the piled-up shame of a girl whom life has crushed? (*He cries.*)

MENDICANT: (*wiping the DOGSBODY's eyes*) Tell me, my moppet. I am no different from your heart, sweetie.

DOGSBODY: Ill-fated that I am, I turned a recluse when I 2.15 was just a little girl.

MENDICANT: And then?

DOGSBODY: Then, as the delicate signs of my youth were becoming slightly visible, but I was still not familiar with the savor of passion, some young monk offended my decency, entirely against my will.

MENDICANT: (*joyfully to himself*) I've chanced upon a river of nectar! (*openly*) C'est la vie, sweetie. And then?

DOGSBODY: Sir, then later on, as I had gradually become conversant with the savor of passion, that monk dumped me and got stuck on another firm-fisted\* old nun.

2.20 KṢAPA°: 「Teṇa hi saṃmuhādo †śīo†. paṃgula|aṃdha|ṇāmaṃ  
kareṃha.」

*Iti CETAḤ kaṇṭhe grhītvā balāc cumbati. CETAḤ kṛtaka|lajjam  
adho|mukham āste.*

KṢAPA°: 「Bālie, kiṃ maṃ ṇa pekkhasi?»

CETAḤ: 「Kahaṃ ṇu pekkhiśsaṃ? tae vi maṃ palihalia aṇṇa-  
do gaṃtavvaṃ.」

KṢAPA°: 「Bālie, mā evaṃ bhāṇa. dāsa|vattaṇiaṃ te karaīssaṃ.」  
(*ceṭasya vaksasi hastam nikṣipyā*) 「kiṃ ajja vi te thaṇā ṇa  
ubbhiṇṇā?»

2.25 CETAḤ: (*sa/lajjam*) 「Kiṃ had'āśā kaliśsaṃ?»

KṢAPA°: (*nābhi|mūle ceṭasya hastam niveśya puruṣa|lakṣaṇam  
asy'ōpalakṣya, sa|vilakṣaṃ sa|kopaṃ ca*) 「Haddhī had'āśa,  
daḍḍhaṃ tae khalīkado mhi.」 (*prabartum icchati.*)

CETAḤ: 「Ale le tāvaśa|kāmuā, jadi kiṃ pi ācaṣkaśi tā Jiṇa|ra-  
kkhida|bhikkhuṇo phukkalaīśsaṃ.」

KṢAPA°: (*kṣaṇam vimṛśya ceṭasya pādayoḥ pativā*) 「Ṅa tae eso  
parihāso kassa vi pagāsīdavvo.」

CETAḤ: 「Kiṃ me ukkocaam?»

2.30 KṢAPA° *pimchikā|mūlād uddhṛtya kim api dadāti.*

MENDICANT: †. . . †\* Let's do as the lame and the blind in 2.20  
the proverb.

*He puts his arms around the DOGSBODY'S neck and kisses him  
forcibly. The DOGSBODY feigns bashfulness and sits with  
eyes downcast.*

MENDICANT: Sweetie, why don't you look at me?

DOGSBODY: How could I look? You too will dump me and  
go to another.

MENDICANT: Sweetie, don't say such thing. I shall be your  
slave! (*He puts his hand on the DOGSBODY'S chest.*) Your  
titties haven't even come out yet?

DOGSBODY: (*bashfully*) Poor me, what should I do? 2.25

*The MENDICANT slides down his hand under the navel of the  
DOGSBODY, discovers his genitals, and says with shame and  
anger: Dammit, you wretch, you've taken me in badly!  
(He is about to slap the DOGSBODY.)*

DOGSBODY: Hey, you ascetic lecher, if you say anything I'll  
squeal on you to the monk Jina-rākshita!

MENDICANT: (*reflects for a second and throws himself at the  
DOGSBODY'S feet*) You mustn't tell anyone about our little  
joke!

DOGSBODY: What about my hush money?

*The MENDICANT pulls something out from the handle of his 2.30  
broom of peacock feathers, and gives it to the DOGSBODY.*

CETAḤ: 「Kade palihāse. pāvide kahāvaṇae. adhigayā bhiṣ-  
kuṇo paūttī. tā śaṃpadaṃ gadua bhaṣṭake viṇṇavemi.  
(*parikramy' āgrato 'valokya ca*) 「ajya diṭṭhiā vadḍhaṣi! āga-  
dā de hiaa|vallahā.

*Tataḥ praviśati yath'ārtha|KṢAPAṆIKĀ. kṣapaṇikā|veṣaṃ CE-  
ṬAṀ nirīkṣya serṣyā|kopam:*

KṢAPAṆIKĀ: 「Aī duṭṭha|tāvasi, edaṃ pārakkaṃ piṃchiaṃ  
geṇhia kaḥiṃ gamīadi?

CETAḤ: 「Ayye, geṇha edaṃ piṃchiyāṃ. hage uṇa aṇicchaṃ-  
ti yyeva edaśsiṃ ladā|gahaṇe ediṇā khavaṇaṇa khalī|ka-  
dā. ṇa me doṣe. (iti niṣkrāntaḥ.)

2.35 KṢAPAṆIKĀ: (*kṣapaṇaka|nikāṭam upaśrtya*) 「Are duṭṭha|kā-  
mua tāvasi|lampaṭa! piṃchiā me viṣumarida tti jāva paḍi-  
ṇivadā āgada mhi tāva edassiṃ aṃtare khaṇa|mettaṇa  
yyeva edassiṃ ladā|gahaṇe <aṇṇā khavaṇiā ā>limgidā. tā  
saṃpadaṃ aṇuhavasū attaṇo viṇaassa phalaṃ. (iti piṃ-  
chikā|daṇḍena praharati.)

KṢAPAḶ: 「Mā evaṃ saṃbhāvedu bhodī. ceḍao khu eso itthiā|  
vesaṃ kadua maṃ uvahasidum āgado. teṇa had'|āseṇa  
kovidā bhodī. jaṃ saccaṃ, kosaṃ te pivāmi. (iti kṣapa-  
ṇikāyāḥ pādayoḥ patati.)

KṢAPAṆIKĀ: 「Kudo de muhe saccaṃ, jassa eso uvasamo?

DOGSBODY: I've made my jest, I've got a coin, I've learned  
the whereabouts of the monk. So I go now and report  
to my master. (*He walks about and looks ahead.*) You've  
hit the jackpot today! Your sweetheart has arrived.

*Then enters the real NUN. She perceives DOGSBODY, disguised  
as a Jain nun, and says full of jealousy and anger:*

NUN: Hey, you ascetic wench, where are you going with  
someone else's broom in your hand?

DOGSBODY: Take it, ma'am. As for me, I've been deceived  
by the mendicant in this thicket of vines, entirely against  
my will. It's not my fault. (*He exits.*)

NUN: (*goes close to the MENDICANT*) Hey, you wretched 2.35  
lecher, who leers after ascetic women! While I was on  
my way back, because I'd left behind my broom, in the  
meantime, in a matter of seconds, you were embracing  
<another nun>. So now reap the fruit of your discipline!  
(*She hits him with the stick of the broom.*)

MENDICANT: Do not think so, milady. Can't you see that  
he was a servant who came here disguised as a woman  
to make fun of me? That wretch has made you angry.  
This is the sober truth, I swear it. (*He throws himself at  
the NUN'S feet.*)

NUN: How could the truth come from your mouth, when  
such is your self-restraint?

κṢAPA°: ᳚Aṇṇaṃ pi kheḍḍaam duṭṭha|ceḍḍao eso karedi. tā edu  
bhodī aṇṇato gacchamha, (sasambhramam)᳚ eso khu ba-  
mhaṇo ko vi ido āgacchaṃto dīsadi. tā tuvaradu bhodī,

*Niṣkrāntau.*

MENDICANT: This wretched servant will make yet another  
jest, so come, my lady, let's go somewhere else. (*with  
bewilderment*) I see a brahmin coming in our direction,  
so hurry up, my lady.

*Exeunt ambo.*

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Unique in Sanskrit literature, Bhatta Jayānta's play, *MUCH ADO ABOUT RELIGION*, is a curious mixture of fiction and history, of scathing satire and intriguing philosophical argumentation.

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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Washington Square  
New York, NY 10003  
[www.nyupress.org](http://www.nyupress.org)

ISBN 0-8147-1979-1



90000>



9 780814 719794