CHAPTER 12

Bodily Care Identity in Buddhist Monastic Life of Ancient India and China: An Advancing Purity Threshold

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1 Introduction

Monastic life is usually studied in the context of philosophical debates, monastic treatises, artistic productions, or political events. Daily life is more difficult to pin down, due to a shortage of obvious sources or even a complete lack of sources. Still, through its objects and practices, it can tell us a great deal about the values of the monastic community and how these values develop over time and from region to region. In this paper, I focus on one particular aspect of daily life—bodily practices—and more specifically on the daily issues of bodily care that a monastic community has to face. Bodily care practices are intimately linked to the ideal image to which the monastic community aspires, and thus to the way in which it wants to be perceived. This self-representation gives the community a sense of continuity across time and space. In this paper, I concentrate on one of the most far-reaching geographical and cultural transmissions: Buddhist monastic life from India to China.

The significance of a new setting, in this case along the paths leading from India to China, should not be underestimated. What is involved when practices and concepts are transferred from one society to another? According to Pierre Bourdieu, practices are generated as a result of 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions', which he defines as habitus: 'structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures'.[1] When they move through space and time, practices generated in specific conditions are reconsidered in new historical, geographical and social situations. In this sense, the past is always present in contemporary as well as in future conditions. Or, as Bourdieu puts it, 'a present past that tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices [...] is the principle of [...] continuity and regularity'.[2] Although practices are constantly adapted to suit new conditions, it is this sense of their continuity and regularity that has the

1 Bourdieu 1980: 88 (transl. 1990: 53).

2 Ibid. 1980: 91 (transl. 1990: 54).

potential to provide communities with a long-lasting identity, even when they are separated by wide cultural borders.[3] Indeed, as we will see, the notion of 'permanence in change',[4] which is linked to a Buddhist identity, remains a prominent feature of bodily practices adopted by the Buddhist communities of both India and China.

In this constant process, the body plays a most visible role. It is thus not surprising that monastic institutes tend to attach major importance to bodily behaviour. Moreover, monastics are expected to externalize what the community represents. At each moment, they should evoke the community to which they belong, if not spontaneously then at least through their monastic training. Monastic members will ideally represent Buddhist values in even their most seemingly trivial bodily practices—values that, as we will see, their masters endeavour to pass down from generation to generation. As Bourdieu says, 'the cunning of pedagogic reason lies precisely in the fact that it manages to extort what is essential while seeming to demand the insignificant'.[5] Still, the body is not a stand-alone artefact. It moves in context, within an external, physical world, and is thus inevitably forced to deviate from the ideal. It gets dirty; it needs to go to the toilet; its hair and nails continue to grow; and it falls asleep. Moreover, it often needs to communicate with other bodies in a social network.

When Buddhist monastic institutes started to develop in China as well as India, commentaries and manuals unsurprisingly established guidelines for bodily care practices. In addition to these texts, each member of the monastic community was sure to be exposed to social control as the Buddhist community struggled to establish itself as a role model in Chinese society. This is reminiscent of what Norbert Elias, in his fascinating work on changing manners in sixteenth–eighteenth-century Europe, describes as follows:

> People, forced to live with one another in a new way, become more sensitive to the impulses of others. Not abruptly, but very gradually the code of behaviour becomes stricter and the degree of consideration expected of others becomes greater. The sense of what to do in order not to offend or shock others becomes subtler, and in conjunction with the new power relations the social imperative not to offend others becomes more binding, as compared to the preceding phase.[6]

3 On adaptation and identity, see also Pinxten 2000: 241–246.

4 Bourdieu 1980: 94 (transl. 1990: 56).

5 Ibid. 1980: 117 (transl. 1990: 69).

6 Elias 1939: 103–104 (transl. 1978: 80).

Individual members of the monastic community are constantly confronted by this social aspect of their monastic life, and their behaviour is inevitably influenced by 'a continuous interplay of relationships to other people'.[7] This process becomes very visible whenever the issue of bodily care arises. This is underscored by Elias, who concludes that bodily care practices—where the 'scope for individual variation within the social standard is relatively small'—reveal a gradual transformation of behaviour and emotions that is characterized by an 'expanding threshold of aversion'.[8]

Although the European context is far removed from the one described in the present article (and one should be cautious about employing concepts that have resulted from research in a specific historical and regional framework), there was certainly an 'expanding threshold of aversion' in the Chinese monastic community as the major monasteries became more institutionalized. As we will see, though, in China, this process was strongly linked to a growing focus on purity. Hence, in the Chinese context, I prefer to adapt Elias's concept slightly to an 'advancing threshold of *purity*'. In Chinese monastic institutions, bodily care practices—which were closely associated with concepts such as cleanliness, decency, decorum and respect, as well as to karmic return—became ever more defined as aspects of purity, representing the identity of the monastic community.[9] Simultaneously, ritual practices gradually became an essential part of daily bodily care.

2 Sources

Monastic guidelines are major sources on standard bodily practices for members of the monastic community. These sources extend from Indian *vinaya*s, mostly known in Chinese translation, to Chinese commentaries, manuals, and new monastic codes, such as the so-called *qing gui* 清規, 'rules of purity'. Four full *vinaya*s were translated into Chinese in the early fifth century CE.[10] Only much later, at the beginning of the eighth century, did the monk

7 Elias 2003 [1987]: 47 (trans. 2001: 26).

8 Elias 1939: 108 (transl. 1978: 83).

9 In this sense, bodily practices belong to a 'social habitus', defined by Roger Chartier as that which each individual—no matter how different he is—shares with the other members of his society (Chartier 1991: 12).

10 In chronological order, these *vinaya*s were: *Shisong lü* 十誦律 (T.1435), *Sarvāstivādavinaya*; *Sifen lü* 四分律 (T.1428), *Dharmaguptakavinaya*; *Mohesengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律 (T.1425), *Mahāsāṃghikavinaya*; and *Mishasai bu hexi wufen lü* 彌沙塞部和醯五分律 (T.1421), *Mahīśāsakavinaya*.

Yijing 義淨 (635–713) translate large parts of the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* (*Genbenshuoyiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T.1442–T.1451),[11], as well as other *vinaya* texts belonging to the same school. In the interim, however, the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* (*Sifen lü* 四分律) had been strongly encouraged by influential Buddhist masters, and from the eighth century CE on, it became the principal reference point for monastic discipline in China.[12] Although *vinaya* texts might not always express what monastics actually did or even what they believed (so one must be careful not to interpret them as direct reflections of historical reality), 'they provide us with rich insights into how the canonical authors/redactors, the monastic lawmakers, envisaged the Indian Buddhist experience'.[13]

In China, numerous Buddhist masters made great efforts to illuminate *vinaya* regulations in the hope of using them in their monasteries. Again, their writings outline the ideal way in which they wanted practitioners to behave, so they shed light on the normative ideal imposed on members of the Chinese monastic community. The so-called 'rules of purity', *qing gui*, were developed from the eighth century CE onwards, and they proved particularly popular among Chan monks. While still relying on the earlier *vinaya* texts,[14] these new rules focus on the practical organization of the large public monasteries that emerged in the Song dynasty (960–1279).[15] The Buddhist tradition attributes

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The Chinese titles of the *vinaya* texts show considerable variety in the way they are composed. Some traditions have a specific Chinese title. This is the case of *Shisong lü* 十誦律, *Ten-Recitation Vinaya* (*vinaya* of the Sarvāstivāda school) and *Sifen lü* 四分律, *Four-Part Vinaya* (*vinaya* of the Dharmaguptaka School). The title *Mohesengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律 is based on a transliteration of the name Mahāsāṃghika followed by *lü* 律, *vinaya*. *Mishasai bu hexi wufen lü* 彌沙塞部和醯五分律 (the *vinaya* of the Mahīśāsaka school) is composed of *Mishasai* (in all probability, a transliteration of Mahīśāsaka), *bu* (school), *hexi* (exact meaning unclear), *wufen* ('in five parts', a Chinese reference to the *vinaya* of the Mahīśāsakas), and *lü, vinaya*. Finally, the title *Genbenshuoyiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶 is a translation of the title *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*. For the sake of clarity and consistency, I have chosen to follow the convention to refer to the *vinaya*s by the name of their tradition. It remains important though to note that these titles cannot be seen as reconstructions of original Indic titles. For details, see Yuyama 1979; Clarke 2015.

11 A Tibetan translation, as well as large sections written in Sanskrit, of the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* are extant. For details, see Yuyama 1979: 12–33; Clarke 2015: 73–81.

12 See, among others, Heirman 2007: 192–195.

13 Clarke 2009: 36.

14 See, in particular, Yifa 2002: 3–98.

15 Public monasteries are monasteries in which the abbacy is not passed down in a tonsure family. The tonsure disciples of the abbot were not even allowed to succeed him to the abbacy, so that a hereditary transmission was excluded. This kind of public monastery was

the start of *qing gui* to the monk Baizhang Huaihai 百丈懷海 (749–814), although none of the rules that were later ascribed to him was in fact unique. The rules of purity—of which the oldest extant code dates from the twelfth century CE—eventually acquired a central position in Chinese Buddhism and set a benchmark for large, active monasteries.[16] Consequently, in much the same way as the earlier Chinese commentaries and manuals, they provide insights into practices and attitudes that aspired to meet a normative ideal in medieval and early modern China.[17]

3 Development of Bodily Care

3.1 *Cleanliness, Decency, Respect and Decorum*

In *vinaya* texts that discuss bodily care practices, the focus is on cleanliness, decency, respect and decorum. Healthcare is mentioned, too, although it is usually not linked to removing dirt, but rather to the beneficial side-effects of washing and cleaning. The construction of bathing places, for instance, is said to have been allowed by the Buddha to help monks with digestion problems (*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 958b26–c9). Similarly, in the *Sarvāstivādavinaya*, when *bhikṣu*s fall ill, the famous doctor Jīvaka says that only bathing will cure them:[18]

> 諸比丘以是事白佛。佛言。聽入浴室洗。洗有五功德。一者除垢。二者身清淨。三者除去身中寒冷病。四者除風。五者得安隱。(T.23.1435: 270b12–15)
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> The *bhikṣu*s told the Buddha about this matter. The Buddha said: 'I allow you to enter a bathhouse. There are five virtues with respect to washing: one, it removes dirt; two, it makes the body clean/pure; three, it removes the disease of cold; four, it removes "wind"; five, it allows one to attain peace of mind.'[19]

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favoured by the Song government in its policy towards monastic Buddhism. As a result, the abbacies operated under quite strict supervision of the state. Many of these monasteries belong to the Chan tradition. See, among others, Schlütter 2005.

16 See, for instance, Yifa 2002: 108–110.

17 See Kieschnick 2010: 545–549, 573–574.

18 For details, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 28–35.

19 'Diseases of cold' are linked to cold weather or to 'cold' in the body. Diseases linked to 'wind' can generally be defined as problems relating to anything that circulates in the body. See Heirman and Torck 2012: 57–58, notes 44 and 46.

The eminent *vinaya* master Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) also refers to this focus on cleanliness and beneficial health effects in his most renowned commentary, the *Sifen lü shanfan buque xingshi chao* 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔, *A Transcription of Abridged Revisions in the Dharmaguptakavinaya* (T.1804). As usual, he expresses his opinion through a selection of passages from other Buddhist texts. With respect to the first passage quoted below, he underlines that bathing helps to combat disease. At the same time, dirt is washed away and one obtains a good-looking body. When commenting on the second passage, however, Daoxuan cautions that vanity is not permitted. Moreover, he states that one should not become too attached to one's own body, to the extent that cleanliness should not even be considered a priority, an opinion which in disciplinary texts is rather unusual:

> 增一云。告諸四眾。造浴室五功德。除風。差病。去塵垢。身輕便。得肥白。
> The *Ekottarāgama* says: '[The Buddha] told the four assemblies (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen): "Five virtues accrue from making bathhouses: it extirpates 'wind'; it cures illness; it removes dust and dirt; it makes the body feel light and easy; and it makes one soft and white."' (T.40.1804: 126c21–23)[20]

> 毘尼母浴室中上座應為浴僧說淨因緣。不為嚴身淨潔故。但令除身中風冷得安隱行道。當為厭患身法調伏心法。應生慈心。為令得少欲知足故。
> The *Pinimu* [*jing*] says that, on bathing houses, seniors should explain to the bathing monks the reasons of cleaning (*jing* 淨). Cleaning is not for the sake of making the body beautiful or clean. But it is to free the body from 'wind' and cold', and to obtain the path of calm and peace. They should preach the doctrines that teach that the body is to be detested, and convey the doctrines on how to calm the mind. They should have compassion. They should make sure that the monks reduce their desires and are happy with little. (T.40.1804: 126c25–28) [21]

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20 Based on the *Zengyi ahan jing* 增壹阿含經 (*Ekottarāgama*), T.2.125: 703a3–5. For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Kieschnick 2013: 105–107.

21 Based on a commentary on the *prātimokṣasūtra* by an unknown school (*Pinimu jing* 毘尼母經, Skt. *Vinayamātṛkā*?, T.24.1463: 835b5–11). On this passage, see also Kieschnick 2013: 114–115.

In addition to being beneficial to the body, bathing is linked to decency, respect and decorum in both the *vinaya* texts and the Chinese manuals and commentaries. The *Mahīśāsakavinaya*, for instance, warns monks against letting laywomen learn about their physical features (via laymen who might bathe alongside the monks). This would arouse desire, and as a result some monks might even leave the monastic order because they allowed contact to become too intimate. Similarly, the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* explicitly bans bathing alongside laypeople, and cautions that it is particularly embarrassing when laypeople see the genitalia of male members of the monastic community. Allowing this to happen reveals their sexuality, and might damage the image of the *saṅgha*. The *Sarvāstivādavinaya* is somewhat more flexible, but it still warns strongly against potential loss of decorum and fame.

> 時諸比丘共白衣浴室中浴。白衣取其形相語諸女人。又身相觸生染著心。遂致反俗作外道者。諸比丘以是白佛。佛言。不應爾。若共白衣浴室中浴偷羅遮。(*Mahīśāsakavinaya*, T.22.1421: 182b23–27)
> At that time *bhikṣu*s bathed together with laypeople in the bathing house. The laypeople told several women of their bodily features. And these bodily features gave rise to feelings of attachment. As a result, it happened that [monks] returned to lay life or became non-Buddhist ascetics. The *bhikṣu*s told the Buddha of this and the Buddha said: 'It should not be like this. If one bathes together with laypeople in the bathing house, one commits a *sthūlātyaya* [lit. "grave offence"].'[22]

> 彼共白衣浴。更相看尾。某甲長某甲麤。諸比丘白佛。佛言。不應共白衣浴。若稱歎佛法僧者聽浴。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 942a16–18)
> They bathed together with laypeople. They saw each other's male organ. For some, it was long; for others, thick. The *bhikṣu*s told the Buddha. The Buddha said: 'You should not bathe with laypeople. Only those who recite "Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha" are allowed to bathe.'

> 有比丘。共白衣浴室中洗。有下座比丘沙彌揩上座。是白衣共相謂言。但揩是耶。更作如是如是事。諸比丘聞已心不喜。以是事白佛。佛言。從今不得共白衣浴室中洗。犯者得突吉羅罪。有優婆塞病。欲入浴室中洗。佛言。應白比丘已入洗。時白比丘。比丘不聽。佛言。諸比丘若知是優婆塞善好無口過者聽入。有比丘浴室中揩白衣。佛言。浴室中不得揩白衣。犯者得突吉羅。(*Sarvāstivādavinaya*, T.23.1435: 350b8–17)

22 On the interpretation of *sthūlātyaya*, see, among others, Heirman 2002: part 1, 158–160.

> Some *bhikṣu*s bathed together with laypeople in the bathhouse. *Bhikṣu*s of lower seniority and *śrāmaṇera*s [novices] massaged *bhikṣu*s of higher seniority. The laypeople said to each other: 'What is this massage? Moreover, they do such and such things.' When the *bhikṣu*s heard this, they were not happy. They told the Buddha. The Buddha said: 'From now on, one cannot bathe together with laypeople in a bathhouse. If one goes against this, one commits a *duṣkṛta* [lit. "bad deed"].' Then an *upāsaka* [householder] was taken ill. He wanted to enter the bathhouse to bathe. The Buddha said: 'Once you have told the *bhikṣu*s, you can enter and bathe.' The *bhikṣu*s did not allow him. The Buddha said: 'If the *bhikṣu*s know that this *upāsaka* is a good man, without any slips of the tongue, then he is allowed to enter.' Some *bhikṣu*s massaged laypersons in the bathhouse. The Buddha said: 'One should not give a massage to laypersons in the bathhouse. If one goes against this, one commits a *duṣkṛta*.'

Bathing could be embarrassing inside the monastic community, too, especially when this involved nakedness. Therefore, monks are advised that nudity should be kept to a minimum. It is presented as an undesirable, even shameful, state as it can lead to a loss of respect or self-respect. Hence, the Buddha stipulates that a naked man should never greet anyone or receive a greeting:

> 彼露形者禮露形者。佛言不應爾。彼露形者禮不露形者。佛言不應爾。彼不露形者禮露形者。佛言不應爾。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 942b1–3)
> [A monk] who was naked greeted [a monk] who was naked. The Buddha said: 'It should not be like this.' [A monk] who was naked greeted [a monk] who was not naked. The Buddha said: 'It should not be like this.' [A monk] who was not naked greeted [a monk] who was naked. The Buddha said: 'It should not be like this.'

Clearly, similar issues arise when bathing with either laypersons or fellow monks. Decency, decorum, respect and self-respect all go hand in hand, and shameful desire is never far away, as is indicated in a fragment of the *Sapoduo pini piposha* 薩婆多毘尼毘婆沙, a commentary on the *Sarvāstivādavinaya*, which offers guidance on bathing clothes:

> 云今凡比丘浴。若露覆室。要不共白衣。及覆上身。要當著竭支。一當有羞媿。二喜生他欲想故。(T.23.1440: 561a4–6)
> Now, when *bhikṣu*s bathe, whether in an open or a covered building, it should not be together with laypeople. And one should cover the body with a *saṃkakṣikā*. This is because, on the one hand, one should have a

> feeling of shame, and, on the other hand, [nakedness] might arouse desire in another person.

The short story that follows this guideline tells of a *bhikṣu* becoming excited when he sees another *bhikṣu*. So it seems likely that monks were forbidden from bathing with laypeople, and that they always had to wear a *saṃkakṣikā* when bathing with fellow monks.[23] In addition to the issues of shame and (self-)respect, the potential danger of sexual attraction is highlighted.

Similar warnings appear in the Chinese commentaries, where once again the ban on bathing with laypeople in order to avoid embarrassing situations is emphasized. Master Daoxuan (T.1804, p.85c28–86a04), for instance, refers explicitly to the three *vinaya* passages quoted above. In addition, he comments on bathing in his manual entitled *Jiaojie xinxue biqiu xinghu lüyi* 教誡新學比丘行護律儀, *To Explain to Young Monks How to Protect the Vinaya Rules* (T.45.1897: p.873a20–b3). The whole bathing process must be conducted in a dignified manner. Young monks should always bathe after the elders, and never with anyone who is more than five years their senior. Bathing should be conducted in silence, with dignity and respect. This attention to decency, decorum, respect and shame can also be found in one of the most influential Chinese disciplinary guidelines, the *Da biqiu sanqian weiyi* 大比丘三千威儀, *Great* (*Sūtra*) *of Three Thousand Dignified Observances of a Monk* (T.1470), which was probably compiled in China in the fifth century CE.[24] Correct bathing behaviour is outlined in twenty-five stipulations (T.24.1470: 918c15–29). The very first rule is telling, and shows that bathing was considered a humble activity: when entering the bathhouse, one should look down. Respect and decorum are maintained by always paying attention to hierarchy, and by never bathing with a teacher or with any elder who is responsible for conducting the ordination ceremony. Instead, one should wait outside the bathhouse until they have finished.[25] This ensures that exposing oneself to masters and catching a glimpse of them bathing will both be avoided. This is important as exposure of the body might result in a loss of respect or self-respect. The monk Yijing reiterates this in his travel

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23 A *saṃkakṣikā* mostly refers to a cloth worn by *bhikṣuṇī*s to cover the breasts. In addition, *vinaya*s refer to a *saṃkakṣikā* used by men, also used to cover the chest (see Ciyi ed. 1988: vol. 6, 5737–5738; Heirman 2008: 147–151).

24 Although the colophon to the text presents it as a Han translation by An Shigao (安世高, second century), the *Da biqiu sanqian weiyi* was probably compiled in China during the fifth century (cf. Hirakawa 1960: 193–196).

25 For details, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 35–37.

account, the *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳, *Account of Buddhism Sent from the South Seas*:

> 應用四幅洗裙。遮身可愛。非直奉遵聖教。亦乃不愧人神。(T.54.2125: 221a4–5)
> One should use a bathing skirt four times as long as it is wide, big enough to cover the body in a decent manner. This is not only compatible with the holy teachings, but also causes no shame in the presence of men and deities.[26]

3.1.1 Toilet, Teeth Care, Shaving the Hair and Trimming the Nails

The issues of decency, decorum, respect, self-respect, shame and (when applicable) sexuality feature prominently in all discussions of bodily care—whether these relate to going to the toilet, cleaning one's teeth, cutting hair or trimming nails—as well as in guidance on taking care of the robe, sleeping and speaking.

The *vinaya* rules on relieving oneself are based primarily on a determination to avoid embarrassment and to preserve a clean image of the *saṅgha*. Of course, human waste has considerable potential to damage this image,[27] so care is essential both outside and inside the monastery. Any improper behaviour, even an embarrassing noise, should be avoided.

> 時六群比丘。大小便涕唾生草菜上。時有居士見已嫌言。沙門釋子無有慚愧。外自稱言。我知正法。如是何有正法。大小便及涕唾生草菜上。如豬狗駱駝牛驢。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 709a27–b2)
> At that time, the *bhikṣu*s of the group of six relieved themselves and spat on green grass. When householders saw them, they criticized them and said: 'These *śramaṇa*s, son of the Śākyas, do not know shame. To the outside, they praise themselves: "We know the right doctrine." How can this be the right doctrine? They relieve themselves and spit on green grass. They resemble pigs, dogs, camels, cows and donkeys.'[28]

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26 Translation according to Li 2000: 104.

27 For a detailed discussion, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 67–74. See also Schopen (2008), who has conducted a detailed study into what the disposal of human waste can tell us about the location of nunneries in the cities of early India.

28 The rule that prohibits relieving oneself on green grass appears in all *vinaya* traditions. It has been studied in detail by Lambert Schmithausen (1991: 31–33).

> 彼高聲大鳴。餘比丘聞惡之。佛言不應爾。彼大便時不覺卒鳴有疑。佛言不犯。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 932a26–28)
> One [*bhikṣu*] was groaning loud. The other *bhikṣus* hated this. The Buddha said: 'It should not be like this.' The one [*bhikṣu*], while relieving himself, unconsciously groaned and he was unsure [about this being an offence]. The Buddha said: 'It is no offence.'

The *Great* (*Sūtra*) *of Three Thousand Dignified Observances of a Monk* equally urges the monastic community to behave in a decent way when visiting the toilet (T.24.1470: 925b25–c11). Once again, decency, respect, decorum and shame are prioritized in a list of twenty-five guidelines. For instance, the first stipulations decree that a monk should not greet the abbot en route to the toilet, nor receive others' greetings; and when entering the toilet, he should lower his head and face the ground. Daoxuan delivers an even more explicit message in his manual for new monks (*To Explain to Young Monks How to Protect the Vinaya Rules*) when he stresses that it is essential to maintain decorum (*yize* 儀則, lit. 'model of conduct') at all times:

> 一、覺欲出入須早去，不得臨時失儀則。(T.45.1897: 872c27)
> [On toilet etiquette] One: when waking up, if one needs to go, one should go early, and one should not lose one's decorum.

Often related to going to the toilet is the practice of cleaning the mouth. This should be done with similar discretion and respect: 'There are three things one needs to do in a secluded place: relieve oneself, urinate and chew tooth wood (to clean the teeth)' (有三事應在屏處。大小便嚼楊枝; *Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 960c29).[29] Teeth-cleaning was probably not as common in early China as it was in India. Nevertheless, Chinese masters still stressed that it must be practised with decency, respect and decorum. For instance, in his aforementioned manual, Daoxuan says:

> 三、洗漱用灰及楊枝，當向屏處，不得對上座，當與手遮。(T.45.1897: 872b17–18)
> Three, when cleaning the mouth, one should use ashes and tooth wood. One should do so in a secluded place, never in front of a senior, and [the mouth] should be covered with the hand.

29 For details, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 109–120.

There are prescriptions against shameful practices involving the loss of (self-)respect and decorum in other daily practices, too. For instance, the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* cautions that a monk must not soil his robes when shaving his hair, in order to protect his reputation (T.22.1428: 945b10–11). Trimming the nails might be damaging, too, so the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* (T.24.1451: 275a14–15) warns: 'Make sure that laypeople do not hold you in derision.' Therefore, shaving and trimming should always be done in private, discreetly. Similar instructions were given in China, where shaving and trimming was seen as a very humble business: Daoxuan states that a monk should not stand up for a master, nor even greet him, when the latter is in the process of shaving (T.45.1897: 875b4–11).

Monastic robes are mentioned frequently whenever the topic is bodily care because they can be viewed as an outward extension of the human body. Therefore, they should be kept similarly clean, and decorum is a prime concern. The *Mahāsāṃghikavinaya* (T.22.1425: p.509c20–21) makes explicit reference to the link between robes and body: 'If [the robes] are filthy, one has to wash, dye and stitch them repeatedly. One should see one's robes as one's own skin. The rules on robes are as such.' This washing should be done in a way that minimizes the possibility of embarrassment.[30] This is strongly emphasized in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*, which warns monks about washing their robes at communal washing-places, where they might find themselves in an awkward position, such as with the robes tangled around their heads (T.24.1451, p.271a13–16). Once again, this focus on cleanliness, respect and decorum is equally strong in the Chinese monastic guidelines. Right at the beginning of the chapter on clothing in *A Transcription of Abridged Revisions in the Dharmaguptakavinaya*, for instance, Daoxuan says:

> 夫形居世累。必假威儀。障蔽塵染。勿過衣服。(T.40.1804: 104c21)
> As our body abides amidst the entanglements of the world, we must attend to comportment, and for shielding oneself from dust and stain, nothing surpasses clothing.[31]

Here, Daoxuan highlights one of the most important functions of the robes: they shield the body and safeguard its comportment. In a later reference to the *Sarvāstivādavinaya* (T.23.1435: 419b12–18), Daoxuan adds that robes must

30 See Heirman 2014. On the issue of *pāṃśukūlika* robes—'robes from the dust heap' worn by ascetic monks—see the intriguing article by Nicholas Witkowski (2017).

31 Translation: Kieschnick 1999: 10. For a detailed discussion on the symbolism of the monastic robe in China, see, in particular, Kieschnick 1999, and 2003: 87–107.

always be clean and that they should be protected just as a monk would protect his own skin (T.40.1804: 107b22–23).

3.1.2 Sleep and Speech

Decorum and respect are paramount not only in the guidelines relating to bodily care but also when the focus shifts to other daily activities, such as sleep and speech. While the first of these is unavoidable, the second could potentially be banned. However, the *vinaya*s do not encourage silence. Instead, the Buddha says that communication can lead to enlightenment through teaching. The communicative function of speech clearly has a prominent role to play. In this context, the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* refers to the Buddha's reaction to a group of monks who chose not to communicate in order to avoid conflict:

> 佛告諸比丘。汝曹癡人。自以為樂。其實是苦。汝曹癡人。自以無患。其實是患。汝曹癡人。共住如似怨家。猶如白羊。何以故。我無數方便教諸比丘。彼此相教共相受語展轉覺悟。汝曹癡人。同於外道。共受啞法。不應如是行啞法。若行啞法突吉羅。(T.22.1428: 836a12–17)
>
> The Buddha said to the *bhikṣu*s: 'You are stupid people. You think you are happy, but this is truly hardship. You are stupid people. You think you are without suffering, but this is truly suffering. You are stupid people. You live together like a family full of anger. You resemble white goats. Why so? Innumerable times I have told the *bhikṣu*s: "You should learn from each other; you should receive each other's words; you should mutually come to understanding." You are stupid people. You are just like non-Buddhist practitioners.[32] You have all accepted the law of silence. You should not follow such a law of silence. If you follow the law of silence, you commit a *duṣkṛta*.'

Nevertheless, although speech is allowed—and even encouraged—respect and decorum must be observed at all times and any inappropriate comments should be avoided.[33] Moreover, the decorum of the monastic community needs to be protected, and every member of the *saṅgha* should be respectful and set an example when talking. Shouting loudly at mealtimes, for instance,

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32 It is rather vague who is referred to by the term *wai dao* 外道, 'non-Buddhist practitioners'. In *vinaya* texts, the term generally refers to people who have left home, and who can be identified by practices that differ from those seen as Buddhist. On the different ways to label 'non-Buddhist practitioners' in the Pāli *vinaya*, see Maes 2015: 139–172.

33 For a detailed discussion of speech in monasteries, see Heirman 2009.

signifies an undignified attitude. This caution is particularly directed at nuns. For instance, rules 128–132 of the *pācittika* rules for nuns of the *Dharmaguptakavinaya* (T.22.1428: 760a8–762a14) declare that those who were unworthy or did not receive training for a period of two years after their ordination displayed improper behaviour and shouted loudly during meals.[34] Correct behaviour during mealtimes is a recurring theme. For instance, one should not talk with food in one's mouth or make any noise when chewing:

> 時六群比丘。受食食含飯語。居士見已譏嫌言。此沙門釋子。不知慚愧受取無厭。云何含飯語。似如豬狗駱駝烏鳥食。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 706b18–21, *śaikṣa* rule 38)[35]
> The *bhikṣu*s of the group of six accepted food and discussed with the food in their mouths. The householders saw this and criticized them: 'The *śramaṇa*s, sons of the Śākyas, they do not know any shame. They take [food] without any limit. Why do they speak with their mouths full of food? They eat like swine, camels and crows.'

> 六群比丘嚼飯作聲食。居士見已嫌言。此沙門釋子無有慚愧。[…] 食如似豬狗駱駝牛驢烏鳥。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 707c1–4, *śaikṣa* rule 42)
> The *bhikṣu*s of the group of six made noise while chewing their food. The householders saw this and criticized them: 'The *śramaṇa*s, sons of the Śākyas, they have no shame […] They eat like swine, camels, cows, donkeys and crows.'

The fact that householders' criticisms are quoted here indicates that monastic law-makers were deeply concerned with the maintenance of exemplary behaviour during interactions with the lay community. Early Chinese guidelines place similar emphasis on exemplary behaviour, but also stress the value of periods of silence—a tendency that, as we will see, will continue to develop. The *Great* (*Sūtra*) *of Three Thousand Dignified Observances of a Monk*, for instance, cautions against speaking on certain occasions and stipulates that a monk should not make any noise, laugh or talk when entering a hall (T.24.1470: p.919a16–18); and, of course, noise during meals is prohibited (ibid.: 922b9–10, 17–19, 25–27).

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34 A *pācittika* (or variants) is an offence that must be expiated (see Heirman 2002: part 1, 148–149).

35 A *śaikṣa* rule relates to good behavior (see Heirman 2002: part 1, 141–147).

While speech can be avoided, sleep is inevitable, and this lack of control during sleep has the potential to harm the image of the *saṅgha* or its individual members. The compilers of the *vinaya*s were well aware of this danger: they knew that it is impossible to control one's actions while sleeping, so shameful situations might arise. For instance, a naked body could provoke laughter and undermine the status of a monk:

> 六群比丘與諸長者共在講堂止住。時六群中有一人。散亂心睡眠無所覺知。小轉側形體發露。時有比丘以衣覆已。復更轉側露形。一比丘復以衣覆之。尋復轉側而形起。時諸長者見已。便生譏嫌大笑調弄。時眠比丘心懷慚愧無顏。諸比丘亦慚愧。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428, p.638a28–b5)
>
> The *bhikṣu*s of the group of six stayed with elders in one hall. Among this group there was one who had a disturbed mind and when he was asleep he was not aware [of what he was doing]. He turned around a bit and uncovered his body. After another *bhikṣu* had put a cloth on him to cover him, he again turned around and uncovered his body. And then another *bhikṣu* again covered him with a cloth. But, subsequently, he again turned around and his body [presumably his penis] stood up. When the elders saw it, they criticized him, they laughed out loud, and they made fun of him. The monk who had been asleep was ashamed and lost face. The other *bhikṣu*s were equally ashamed.

To avoid such embarrassing situations, the *vinaya*s forbid monastic members from spending the night with non-ordained people, at least for more than two or three nights.

Moreover, sleep can be seen as a sign of laziness or at least of non-activity. And, importantly, it is also often linked to sexual practices. In this context, the *vinaya*s contain several rules that are designed to minimize any accusations of improper behaviour. The Chinese disciplinary texts, such as the *Great* (*Sūtra*) *of Three Thousand Dignified Observances of a Monk* (T.24.1470: 915a24–28, 915c11–17 and c24–27) and the manual *To Explain to Young Monks How to Protect the Vinaya Rules* (T.1897, p.871a5–b2) continue in the same vein, and present sleep itself in a rather negative way. Unsurprisingly, nudity while sleeping is strictly banned.[36]

36 For details, see Heirman 2012: 430–440.

3.1.3 Safeguarding the Saṅgha

The quest for external cleanliness and decorum could be seen as contradictory when compared with Buddhist body-meditation, which tends to focus on repulsiveness.[37] However, as Steven Collins explains, while the inner meditative reflection of a monk or a nun emphasizes the impurity and impermanence of the body, his or her social position demands 'a spotless' performance.[38] Dirt and filth—as well as nakedness and improper noise—compromise this exemplary image of the *saṅgha*, so every member of the monastic community should take steps to avoid them. Any dirt that is accumulated should be washed away, and naked bodies should remain hidden from the eyes of juniors and lay followers. If these guidelines are followed, the *saṅgha* and thus the Buddhist doctrine are safeguarded.

This goal of protecting the community is apparent in both Indian and early Chinese disciplinary texts. In that sense, the *saṅgha* continued to develop along similar ideas in both places. But the challenges in China were different from those in India. Buddhism and even monasticism were new to the Chinese public of the early centuries of the Common Era, and the country's Buddhist communities faced major criticism. For instance, they were accused of promoting a way of life that contradicted the praised value of filial piety, even though Chinese masters were at pains to stress the importance of this principle in the Buddhist tradition. As Gregory Schopen has shown, it is important not to interpret Chinese Buddhists' focus on filial piety as a sign of the religion's 'sinicization'.[39] However, the concept of filial piety developed into a particularly important issue for Chinese masters and laypeople alike, and Chinese Buddhist authors went to considerable lengths to emphasize that pursuing a monastic life did not in any way undermine the respect that was due to one's parents.[40] Several of these masters were rather apologetic, as Tanya Storch has highlighted in her work on Chinese Buddhist bibliographies. Her discussion of master Sengyou's 僧祐 (445–518) catalogue (the *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記

37 On body-meditation, see, among others, Dessein (2014), who discusses meditation techniques that focus on the decay of dead bodies.

38 Collins 1997: 194–203.

39 See, for instance, Schopen 1997a and 2007.

40 On filial piety in Chinese Buddhism, see the pioneering article by Ch'en (1968), who underlines its importance in Chinese society. Often in response to Ch'en, many others have analysed filial piety in a Buddhist context, highlighting its specific status in the Confucian environment of China. For an overview, see Guang (2005), who identifies several similarities between Indian and Chinese Buddhist ideas on filial piety. See also Cole (1998: 41–55), who explores how Indian aspects were made relevant to Chinese concerns; and Heirman (2015: 44–49) who discusses Daoxuan's concerns about women leaving family life.

集, *Compilation of Notices on the Translation of the Tripiṭaka*, T.2145), the earliest extant catalogue of Buddhist texts, is especially interesting. Storch shows that Sengyou explicitly tries to cast Buddhism as 'a part of Chinese history and culture since its earliest days rather than underscoring Buddhism's innovative ideas'.[41] In this way, he attempts to legitimize Buddhism and fight against the accusation that it has a deficient morality. Therefore, moral values needed to be highlighted, and displayed prominently to the Chinese lay community. Obviously, the body is one of the prime markers of this endeavour, so it should come as no surprise that Chinese disciplinary masters turned their focus increasingly to proper bodily behaviour, as shall be discussed below.

3.2 *Karmic Return*

Decency, respect and decorum enhance the image of the *saṅgha* and facilitate contact with lay communities. This is important for the economic development of the Buddhist community, as donors are more likely to offer gifts to a more respectful *saṅgha*. Moreover, when doing so, they also expect to accrue more merit: the better the *saṅgha*, the higher the karmic return will be. Buddhist monasteries, in both India and China, were certainly not averse to such win–win exchanges, since maintaining their domains was a major responsibility.[42]

A good example of the mutual benefit of the Buddhist community receiving and maintaining buildings and donors obtaining karmic return can be found in the *Wenshi xiyu zhongseng jing* 溫室洗浴眾僧經, *Sūtra on Bathing Monks in the Bathhouse* (T.701). Although several early Chinese catalogues assert that this text is a translation, commonly attributed to An Shigao 安世高 (mid-second century CE), the Chinese text probably dates from a few centuries later.[43] It links external cleanliness to internal purity, an issue that will be discussed further below, and repeatedly states that cleanliness is crucial for obtaining

41 Storch 2014: 59.

42 Gregory Schopen (2004b: 26–37) reveals that donors and monastic managers frequently discussed the ownership of monasteries. It was important for monasteries to remain aesthetically beautiful, or to be constructed in beautiful settings, in order to attract donations. In China, the monastic community usually owned its monasteries, and the larger institutes, especially, accumulated land and expanded their buildings to secure their positions in society. In this context, donors were crucial to the survival and maintenance of the *saṅgha*. Michael Walsh, in his study on Buddhist monasticism and territoriality in medieval China (2010: 3), explains the situation eloquently: 'On a material level in the Chinese monastic context, land was the source of food and sustenance of monks. On a more ideological level it was part of a discourse on Buddhist practice: to donate land was to be a good Buddhist.'

43 For details, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 56–57, note 39.

respect and veneration. A person who is *qingjing* 清淨 ('clean/pure') has removed all external dirt and is internally pure. A *qingjing* 清淨 person is beautiful and upright:

> 耆域長跪白佛言 [...] 今欲請佛及諸眾僧、菩薩大士，入溫室澡浴。願令眾生長夜清淨，穢垢消除，不遭眾患。 (T.16.701: 802c20–23)
> Jīvaka [a famous doctor] kneels and tells the Buddha: '[...] I am asking the Buddha, all monastics and the bodhisattvas to enter the hothouse and to bathe. I want to make sure that all beings are eternally pure, that dirt is removed and all disasters averted.'

It is here that the Buddha enumerates the benefits of donating a bathhouse to monastics and bodhisattvas: the donors will be healthy, pure and beautiful (*qingjing* 清淨), and respected by all. Clothing, wealth and jewellery will materialize, and all anxiety will cease (T.16.701: 803a7–15).

This text on bathing was quite popular in China, and influential masters, such as Huiyuan 慧遠 (523–592), commented upon it. Huiyuan notes that 'the central message of this scripture is the merit of giving' (*Wenshi jing yiji* 溫室經義記, *Analysis of the Sūtra on the Bathhouse*, T.39.1793, p.512c15). John Kieschnick (2013: 118) has shown that this message spread throughout Chinese society, so the *Sūtra on the Bathhouse* 'provided the impetus for lay people to contribute to the construction of monastic bathhouses through its emphasis on the merit accruing to those who build bathhouses for monasteries'.

Karmic return was indeed an important consideration for donors, in both India and China. However, Michael Walsh (2010: 109–112) points out that the accumulation of merit required active participation from both the donor and the recipient: the monks needed to be decent and clean, symbols of internal purity, and thus capable of transferring merit; and the donors needed to provide material help to the monastic community, in return for which they received merit. When discussing this process of exchange in their disciplinary texts, the Buddhist masters paid increasing attention to purity, thus advancing the threshold of what was deemed necessary to become a 'good monastic'. The role of lay donors in this process is strikingly clear in the *qing gui* rules, which underscore how those who help the monastic community to maintain cleanliness (and purity) accrue considerable merit:

> 如施主設浴。則課經回向能妙觸宣明。成佛子住則功不浪施矣。 (T.48.2025: 1131c1–c3)[44]

44 *Chixiu Baizhang qing gui* 敕修百丈清規, *Baizhang's Rules of Purity Revised on Imperial Order*, compiled by Dongyang Dehui 東陽德輝 between 1335 and 1343. A similar passage

> If a donor constructs a bathhouse, a *sūtra* will be recited so that the merit that will be returned can reach Bhadrapāla in a wonderful way.[45] If *bodhisattva*s come into being, the merit [donation] will not be spent in vain.[46]

Karmic return is also an important aspect of life inside the monastery, at least according to the Chinese manual the *Great* (*Sūtra*) *of Three Thousand Dignified Observances of a Monk*. A dirty monk cannot serve the abbot, or greet the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha). And even if he participates in a ceremony, he will not accrue any merit.

> 應淨身口淨衣食。淨身者。洗大小便剪十指爪。淨口者。嚼楊枝漱口刮舌。若不洗大小便。得突吉羅罪。亦不得僧淨坐。具上坐及禮三寶。設禮無福德。(T.24.1470, p.914a15–19)
>
> One has to eat with a clean body and mouth and with clean robes. A clean body entails washing the 'places of urine and excrement' and cutting the ten fingernails. A clean mouth entails that one chews tooth wood, rinses the mouth and scrapes the tongue. If one does not wash the 'places of urine and excrement', one commits a *duṣkṛta* offence. One also cannot obtain any 'pure position' in the *saṅgha*,[47] serve the abbot or greet the Three Jewels. And even if he greets [the Three Jewels], he will not accrue any merit.

3.3 *Purity*

The above examples reveal a close connection between the outward nature of the body and inner morality, a quite traditional feature of Buddhism. For instance, Suzanne Mrozik has suggested that the physical shape of the body functions as a marker of ethical development. In this sense, it is possible to speak of 'virtuous bodies', which are often also marked by social status, such as a wealthy

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can be found in *Chanlin beiyong qing gui* 禪林備用清規, *Auxiliary Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries*, compiled in 1311 by the monk Zeshan Yixian 澤山弋咸 (W 112, p. 110b8–10).

45 宣明 *xuanming*, the layman Bhadrapāla, attained enlightenment in a bathhouse and was subsequently granted bodhisattva-ship. See, among others, Yifa 2002: 285, note 7 (with references to the development of the tradition of inviting bodhisattvas to the bathhouse).

46 For a detailed analysis, see Fritz 1994: 119.

47 The term *jing zuo* 淨坐 ('pure position') remains unclear. Given the context and the fact that members of the *saṅgha*, and certainly members who assume any sort of responsibility, need to display exemplary behaviour, the term possibly refers to any position (*zuo*) that requires purity (*jing*).

family or a high religious position.[48] When living beings come into contact with such a virtuous religious body—of the Buddha, of a bodhisattva or of a member of the monastic community—they are transformed for the better, both physically and morally. Mrozik describes this discourse as 'physiomoral'.[49] The internal mental condition of a monk or a nun, and by extension of the whole Buddhist community, can thus be inferred from their outward behaviour, since external features express internal elements.[50] Bodily care has a strong moral aspect, too, as Reiko Ohnuma (2007: 203) explains: 'Thus the human body, as both the vehicle for one's spiritual progress and the locus of its ultimate goal (enlightenment), should be adequately cared for and maintained.' This connection between the body and internal purity is strongly emphasized in the Chinese disciplinary texts. However, this was scarcely an original notion.[51] Indeed, several *vinaya* passages had already commented on the link between bodily features or practices and state of mind. For instance, the *Mahīśāsakavinaya* associates long nails with an impure way of life:

> 爾時諸比丘養爪令長。生染著心不樂修梵行。遂有反俗作外道者。諸白衣譏呵。此諸沙門如受欲人。修飾手爪無厭離心。(T.22.1421: 173a29–b2)
> At that time, some *bhikṣu*s let their nails grow. They harboured impure thoughts and were not happy to follow the pure conduct. Some returned to lay life or entered a non-Buddhist group. The householders criticized them: 'These *śramaṇa*s look like people who have desire. They decorate their fingernails and do not have thoughts of detachment.'

In this context, time spent sleeping is particularly revealing, since it can expose a chaotic and impure mind through unconscious bodily behaviour, such as the emission of semen or uttering improper words dreaming:[52]

48 Mrozik 2007: 61–81. See also Powers 2009a: 1–23, on the physical beauty and masculinity of the Buddha's body and its moral connection; and Powers 2009b on the strong correlation between virtue and physical beauty.

49 Mrozik 2007: 62.

50 As Richard Gombrich (1984: 100) puts it, decorum becomes 'empirical evidence of a monk's internal state'.

51 It appears quite frequently in non-*vinaya* texts, as both Mrozik (2007) and Powers (2009a and 2009b) point out.

52 For more examples, see Heirman 2012: 428–430 (on sleep).

> 時有一比丘亂意睡眠於夢中失精有憶念覺已作是念。世尊與諸比丘結戒。弄陰失精僧伽婆尸沙。而我亂意睡眠於夢中失精而有憶念。將不犯僧伽婆尸沙耶。我今當云何。[…] 世尊以此因緣即集諸比丘告言。亂意睡眠有五過失。一者惡夢。二者諸天不護。三者心不入法。四者不思惟明相。五者於夢中失精。是為五過失。善意睡眠有五功德。不見惡夢。諸天衛護心入於法。繫意在明相。不於夢中失精。是謂五功德。於夢中失精不犯。(*Dharmaguptakavinaya*, T.22.1428: 579b13–c1)[53]
>
> At that time, a *bhikṣu* had a chaotic mind and when asleep he lost semen in a dream. He remembered it and when awake, he thought: 'The Buddha made a rule for *bhikṣu*s, saying that one who masturbates and loses semen commits a *saṃghāvaśeṣa*.[54] Now, I had a chaotic mind and when asleep I lost semen in a dream and I remembered it. I will not have committed a *saṃghāvaśeṣa*, will I? What is my case now?' […] [He asks other *bhikṣu*s for advice and these *bhikṣu*s ask the Buddha.] For this reason, the Buddha gathered the *bhikṣu*s and told them: 'When asleep with a chaotic mind, there are five bad things: one, one has bad dreams; two, the gods do not protect you; three, the mind does not enter the Dharma; four, one does not think of brightness; and, five, one loses semen in a dream. These are the five bad things. When sleeping with a good mind, there are five good things: one does not have bad dreams; the gods protect you; the mind enters the Dharma; one is linked to brightness; and one does not lose semen in a dream. These are the five good things. If one loses semen during a dream, one does not commit an offence.'

Even the position in which one sleeps can be telling, as is clearly stated in the *Mahāsāṃghikavinaya* (T.22.1425: 507a15–b1), a *vinaya* that explicitly links moral behaviour with the adoption of a correct sleeping position: sleeping with the face downwards (on the belly) is said to be the sleeping position of an *asura*; sleeping with the face upwards (on the back) is the position of a hungry ghost;[55] and lying on one's left side is the position of a man full of desire. So the only proper sleeping position is lying on one's right side.[56]

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53 Similar passages appear in other *vinaya*s (see Heirman 2012: 429, note 6).

54 A *saṃghāvaśeṣa* is an offence that, after a monastic procedure, potentially leads to temporary expulsion from the order. It is the second-gravest category of offence (see Heirman 2002: part I, 128–138).

55 An *asura* is one of a group of beings considered to be opponents of the gods. A 'hungry ghost' (*preta*) suffers from an insatiable appetite as a punishment for its greed in former lives.

56 For a discussion and comparison with similar ideas in other *vinaya* traditions, see Heirman 2012: 438–439.

The above examples clearly link sleeping practices with state of mind. Yet all of these problems occur unconsciously, so a monk or nun cannot be held responsible for them. Although the actions are said to reveal an impure mind, there is no volition or intention, and no awareness of them.[57] The agent is acting unwillingly. Consequently, the action does not constitute an offence. In fact, apart from the revelatory aspect of sleep, the *vinaya*s only very occasionally connect bodily practices to internal (im)purity. A notable exception is the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*'s account of a visit to the toilet by the Buddha's disciple Śāriputra (T.24.1451: 276c29–277b27). It tells the story of a Brahmin who goes in search of a group that values purity.[58] He visits several potentially promising communities, but each time learns that there is no washing facility specifically designated for use after a visit to the toilet. However, he then spots Śāriputra carrying a bottle of water to a toilet area and decides to investigate. He sees the monk carefully and elaborately cleaning his bottom, hands and arms, and rinsing his mouth. After watching this elaborate procedure, the Brahmin joins the Buddhist community. The Buddha then praises the infinite value of purity (*qingjing* 清景) in monastic discipline.

> 時此城中有一婆羅門。常樂清淨希願出家。(T.24.1451, pp.276c29–277a1)
> Then in that town there was a Brahmin who constantly found pleasure in purity. He was hoping to leave home.

> 舍利子既見彼人隨從而行。遂便斂念觀此婆羅門何故隨我。乃知此人心求潔淨。欲於我所伺其善惡。(T.24.1451, p.277a11–13)
> Śāriputra saw that this man was following him. He was wondering: 'Why does this Brahmin follow me?' Then he understood that this man was seeking purity. 'He wants to watch in me virtue and evil.'

> 因斯制戒為清淨事福利無邊。(T.24.1451, p.277b24–25)
> If one make rules in this way for the sake of purity, the benefits will be boundless.

57 See Peter Harvey (2000: 52): 'the degree of unwholesomeness of an action is seen to vary according to the degree and nature of the volition/intention behind an action, and the degree of knowledge (of various kinds) relating to it. A bad action becomes more unwholesome as the force of volition behind it increases, for this leaves a greater karmic "trace" in the mind.'

58 It is no coincidence that it is a Brahmin who is searching for purity. As Patrick Olivelle (1998: 189) says, 'especially within the Brāhmaṇical tradition, maintaining the purity of the body was and continues to be a major element of ritual and morality'.

From decency, respect and decorum, this *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* story has shifted the focus to purity. Physical acts of cleansing externalize moral purity. As we will see in the next passage, which discusses the correct procedure for washing robes, this can be the first step on a virtuous path: as a person becomes more clean and pure, they provide ever more fertile ground in which the Dharma may grow. The robe, as an extension of the body, becomes a fully integrated part of this discourse:

> 佛 [...] 為說出世之法。所謂苦集滅道聖諦。猶如浣衣先除垢穢。既清淨已色即易染。耶舍亦爾。初聞佛說心器清淨。便能了知四聖諦法。(*Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*, T.24.1450: 129a8–11)
>
> Thereupon the Buddha spoke about the way to leave the world, that is, about the noble truths of suffering, of the origin of suffering, of the cessation of suffering and of the path [leading to the cessation of suffering]. It is like washing the robes: one first removes all filth. When [the robes] are clean and pure [*qingjing* 清淨], colour can easily penetrate. [The monk] Yaśa is also like this. He first heard the Buddha speak about the cleanliness and purity of the mind [*xin qi* 心器, lit. 'of the mind instrument/organ']. Thereupon, he could understand the four noble truths.[59]

This clear connection between cleanliness and purity in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* is also a feature of Chinese disciplinary texts, less so in the first commentaries that discuss the *vinaya*s, but increasingly in manuals and travellers' accounts, and culminating in the *qing gui* rules, the 'rules of purity'. While this was an internal Buddhist development—as is apparent in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* and the *Sūtra on Bathing Monks in the Bathhouse*—it was certainly appropriate for the Chinese context, where Buddhism gradually acquired an important position. As Roger Ames (1993: 164) points out, the Confucian elite similarly emphasized the close relationship between body and mind: he defines the central Confucian concept of *ren* 仁—often translated simply as 'benevolence' or 'kindness'—as 'the whole human process: body and mind'. In this sense, it was only a small step to start relating bodily practices to moral values. In his article on the development of bathing customs in ancient and medieval China, Edward Schafer (1956: 59) formulates this as follows: 'We know virtually nothing about the bathing habits of commoners, but washing his person was *de rigueur* for a gentleman, for whom the bodily and moral purity was closely interdependent.'

59 For a discussion of the robe as an extension of the body, see Heirman 2014: 484–485.

Purity also lies at heart of Daoist guidelines on bodily practices. In addition, Daoist communities rely on a high level of ritualization. A telling example is the chapter on washing and rinsing in the *Xuanmen shishi weiyi* 玄門十事威儀, *Ten Items of Daoist Ceremonial* (DZ 792, fasc. 564, 7b–8b), a seventh-century CE text on Daoist monastic precepts.[60] One of its chants says:

> 洗灰除垢用灰為首穢去真來淨心淨口成道度人天長地久急急如律令 (DZ 792, fasc. 564, 8b)
> Washing with ashes to remove dirt, using the ashes as a primary means, may foulness go and perfection arise. Cleansing the heart and cleansing the mouth, realizing the Dao and saving others, Heaven is great and Earth everlasting! Swiftly, swiftly, in accord with the statutes and the ordinances![61]

Such chants, which are still in use today,[62] ritualize daily life and unmistakably connect cleansing and purity. The body is cleaned both inside and outside, washing away dirt and defilements.

3.3.1 Chinese Masters

As mentioned above, the Chinese masters who discussed and propagated Buddhism responded to both an internal Buddhist development and to the Chinese context in which they lived. Unsurprisingly, the monk Yijing 義淨, who lived in India and South Asia between 671 and 695, is a prime example of this. He displays a desire to spread Buddhism in China, relies heavily on the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*, and shares that *vinaya*'s focus on purity. Moreover, he frequently complains about the laxity of his fellow monastics in China. For him, discipline protects against moral deprivation, and serves as a basis for decency, respect and purity.[63]

> 小便則一二之土可用洗手洗身。此即清淨之先。爲敬基本。或人將爲小事。律教乃有大呵。若不洗淨。不合坐僧床。亦不應禮三寶。此是身子伏外道法。佛因總制芯芻。修之則奉律福生。不作乃違教招罪。斯則東夏不傳。(T.54.2125: 218b19–25)

60 For a short description, see Kohn 2003: 221–222.

61 Translation: Kohn 2003: 117.

62 See Kohn 2003: 240, note 7.

63 Yijing complains that, in China, teachers and disciples alike do not seem to pay sufficient heed to the *vinaya* rules (T.54.2125, p.219b15–21).

> After urinating, one can use one or two lumps of earth to wash the hands and the body. This is the essence of purity [*qingjing* 清淨]. It is the basis of respect. Some people will see this as a trivial thing, but the *vinaya* has great [impact]! If one does not clean oneself, one cannot sit on a seat of the *saṅgha* and one cannot venerate the Three Jewels [Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha]. This is the way in which Śāriputra subdued a non-Buddhist. Therefore, the Buddha generally controls the *bhikṣu*s. If they follow this, they venerate the *vinaya* and blessings will accrue. If they do not, they go against the teaching and they will incur guilt. This is not transmitted to China.

> 又凡受齋供及餘飲噉。既其入口方即成觸。要將淨水漱口之後。方得觸著餘人及餘淨食。若未澡漱觸他。並成不淨。其被觸人皆須淨漱。(T.54.2125: 207a27–b1)
> When receiving food, or when eating and drinking, as soon as food enters the mouth one is 'touched upon'. Only after washing the mouth with clean water can one touch someone else or take another dish of clean food. If one touches someone else before rinsing one's mouth, that person also becomes impure, and the person who has been touched also needs to wash himself [lit. 'purify and rinse'].

So a clean mouth testifies to a monk's—and, by extension, the *saṅgha*'s—purity, while functioning as an identity marker for Chinese monastics. A dirty monk has no place in the *saṅgha*. Similar ideas about purity appear in other Chinese writings, too, such as the manual *Da biqiu sanqian weiyi*, which states that a monk who has not cleaned himself will not accrue any merit, even if he greets the Three Jewels. Still, some texts accord the concept of purity a more prominent place than others in their discussions of bodily care. This is most striking in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* and Yijing's account of his travels. By contrast, the early Chinese *vinaya* commentaries and monastic manuals focus on decency, respect and decorum. At the same time, however, Daoist manuals—although they rely heavily on their Buddhist counterparts—strongly underscore the importance of purity and the link between external and internal purification. This connection also fits neatly within the Confucian framework of the perfect gentleman.

3.3.2 Rules of Purity

Clarifying the relationship between cleanliness and purity culminated in the *qing gui* rules, the 'rules of purity', which started to develop in the eighth century CE. The oldest extant code is the *Chanyuan qing gui* 禪苑清規, *The Pure Rules for the Chan Monastery* (W 111, pp.875–942), compiled by Changlu Zongze

長蘆宗賾 (d. 1107?) in 1103. In these rules, chanting—with karmic return and purity as central issues—is of paramount importance:

> 初三十三二十三念皇風永扇帝道遐昌。佛日增輝法輪常轉。伽藍土地護法安人。十方施主增福增慧。為如上緣念清淨法身等云云。 (W 111: 885b17–886a1)
> On the third, thirteenth and twenty-third of each month the monks chant, 'May the spirit of the emperor live for ever, and may the Dao of the emperor forever flourish. Let the sun of the Buddha grow brighter, and let the wheel of the Dharma eternally turn. May the guardian deities of the monastery and the guardian deities of the earth protect the Dharma and comfort all humans. May the donors from the ten directions increase their merit and wisdom. For all those hopes we chant: "Pure Dharma Body."'[64]

Later *qing gui* rules, compiled in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, go even further than the *Chanyuan qing gui* in emphasizing the importance of purity. All insist, for instance, that a 'toilet incantation' should be recited on every visit to the toilet.[65] When giving this instruction, the *Chixiu Baizhang qing gui* 敕修百丈清規, *Baizhang's Rules of Purity Revised on Imperial Order*, compiled by Dongyang Dehui 東陽德輝 between 1335 and 1343, declares:

> 夫登溷者不念此咒。[…] 亦不能淨。凡登殿堂瞻禮並無利益。奉勸受持每誦七遍。是故鬼神常相拱護。(T.48.2025: 1145c1–4)
> Whoever goes to the toilet and does not recite these ritual sentences will never be able to purify himself […] No matter how often he goes to the shrine hall to worship, it will be of no use. Therefore, one must uphold [the ritual sentences] and recite them seven times on every occasion. In this way, the ghosts and the spirits will always accompany and protect [the person who is reciting].[66]

Dongyang Dehui's message is clear: external purity is the inevitable counterpart of internal purity. This purity also resides in the patched monastic robe: it feeds human life, just like a rice field.[67] Standing for the Dharma, it elevates the mind:

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64 Translation: Yifa 2002: 137. On 'Pure Dharma Body', see Yifa 2002: 12.

65 See Heirman and Torck 2012: 83.

66 For a full translation, see Ichimura 2006: 312–313.

67 *Vinaya* texts had similarly compared the design of a monastic robe to a rice field many centuries earlier. For details, see Yifa 2002: 64–65.

> 增輝記云。田畦貯水生長嘉苗。以養形命。法衣之田潤以四利之水。增其三善之苗。以養身法慧命也。(T.48.2025: 1139a10–12)
> The *Zenghui ji* [*The Record of Rising Splendour*] says: 'A rice field stores water and nourishes good seeds.[68] In this way it nurtures the body. As a kind of rice field, the Dharma robe is moistened with the water of the four benefits [kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity]. It strengthens the seeds of the three good things [absence of greed, hatred and ignorance].[69] In this way it nurtures the Dharma [embodied in the body] and wisdom.'

Purity also affects the activities of the body. Sleep, although unavoidable, should be kept to a minimum. A pure mind is trained through activity, primarily meditation, and the body has a proper sleeping posture.[70] Speech should also be minimized, to the extent that monks who need anything during mealtimes should make this known in silence (*moran* 默然), using gestures.[71] Hence, in large Chinese monasteries, each meal was eaten in silence, apart from a few ritual sentences that were chanted at the beginning and the end:[72]

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68 The *Zenghui ji* (full title: *Xingshi chao zenghui ji* 行事鈔增暉記, *The Record of Rising Splendour of the* [*Abridged and Explanatory*] *Commentary* [*on the Dharmaguptakavinaya*] (a commentary of *vinaya* master Daoxuan) is no longer extant. It is mentioned in Huixian's 慧顯 catalogue (of the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)), the *Xingshi chao zhujia ji biaomu* 行事鈔諸家記標目, *Catalogue of the Records on the* [*Abridged and Explanatory*] *Commentary* [*on the Dharmaguptakavinaya*], W 70: 102a3–4. It is said to have been compiled by a monk called Wenguang 文光 (865–*c.* 948).

69 *Si li* 四利 and *san shan* 三善 are explained in the *Sifen lü suiji jiemo shu zheng yuan ji* 四分律隨機羯磨疏正源記, *The Origin of the Dharmaguptaka, Commentary on the* [*Abridged*] *and Explanatory Karmavācanā of the Dharmaguptakavinaya* (= a *karmavācanā* commentary of the *vinaya* master Daoxuan), compiled by the monk Yunkang 允堪 (*c.* 1005–1062), W 64: 398b15–16: 'The four benefits are kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity; the three good things are absence of greed and so on [hatred and ignorance].' Many thanks to Fa Ling (Ghent University) for helping to trace the origin of this passage.

70 For a discussion, see Heirman 2012: 435–442.

71 See, for instance, *Chanyuan qing gui*, W 111: 882b5.

72 Similar contemplations can be found in Daoxuan's writings. Notably, these focus on the virtue of a pure mind and eating only simple, modest meals, which are seen as no more than a means to sustain the body (see Daoxuan, *Sifen lü shanfan buque xingshi chao*, T.40.1804: 84a8–12). For details on the origin of these contemplations, see Yifa 2002: 263, note 187.

> 一計功多少量彼來處。二忖己德行全缺應供。三防心離過貪等為宗。四正事良藥為療形枯。五為成道故應受此食也。(*Chanyuan qing gui*, W 111: 882a6–7)
>
> One, to ponder the effort necessary to supply this food and to appreciate its origins; two, to reflect on one's own virtue being insufficient to receive the offering; three, to protect the mind's integrity, to depart from error, and, as a general principle, to avoid being greedy; four, at the same time to consider the food as medicine and bodily nourishment, preventing emaciation; five, to receive this food as necessary for attaining enlightenment.[73]

3.4 *Ritualization*

As was mentioned above, the increasing focus on purity in Chinese disciplinary texts on bodily care goes hand in hand with increasing ritualization, which in these texts is primarily characterized by chanting and by strict rules on the correct sequence of actions. One such ritualized sequence had previously appeared in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*, when Śāriputra welcomes the Brahmin into the Buddhist monastic community by explaining how he cleans himself during a visit to the toilet, using a set number of objects in a precise order. Śāriputra washes himself with fifteen lumps of earth, squats down, places a water jar on his left thigh, and washes his left hand with water from the jar and the first seven lumps of earth. Then he uses the next seven lumps to clean both hands and arms, and the fifteenth to wash the jar. Having donned his robe, he washes his feet. Finally, he rinses his mouth three times. In a truly ritual activity, only the rules matter, not the result.[74] For Śāriputra, however, both the rules and the result are important: he thoroughly cleans himself while executing the precise sequence of actions that is set down in the rules. Hence, in this case, the strict order *ritualizes* the action but does not make it purely *ritual*. Similarly, when monastics eat their meals, they follow a highly standardized routine, but they also consume food to nourish themselves.

In the constant intermingling of decency, decorum, respect, karmic return and purity, most daily actions—such as eating and bathing, going to the toilet, sleeping and getting up in the morning—become standardized: they testify to the respectful attitude of the *saṅgha* members, which merits karmic return. Purity is an essential part of the monastics' identity. Through their pure behaviour, they help the lay community and protect the Dharma. The *Chixiu*

73 Translation: Yifa 2002: 127.

74 Here, I am following Frits Staal's definition. See Staal 1979: 9.

Baizhang qing gui neatly summarizes this notion when it discusses the rules of daily conduct:

> 然則法門興廢繫在僧徒。僧是福田所應奉重。僧重則法重。僧輕則法輕。內護既嚴外護必謹。(T.48.2025, p.1147a27–29)
> The rise and fall of Buddhism lies in the hands of the members of the *saṅgha*. The *saṅgha* is a field of merit that must be respected. If the *saṅgha* is respected, the Dharma is respected. If the *saṅgha* is belittled, the Dharma is belittled. When one is committed to guarding one's inner side, one must be cautious to guard one's outer side.

This is the basis for the meticulous regulation of all activities, in which objects and practices are placed in strict sequences and occasionally even numbered. Ritual sentences accompany these practices, even in such seemingly trivial activities as visits to the toilet. Chanting clearly enhances the ritual level of the action: at first, the chants still had clear meanings, but in the later disciplinary texts several sentences contain only *mantra*-like syllables. In this way, when 'contrasted with the applied activities of our ordinary, everyday life',[75] they neatly exhibit their ritual character. Such ritual aspects became an integral part of daily life in China's large public monasteries, and even today monastics are urged to recite the following whenever they visit the toilet:[76]

> 大小便時 當願眾生 棄貪瞋癡 蠲除罪法 唵。很魯陀耶莎訶 (a popular ritual sentence, of which the direct source is the *Pini riyong qieyao* 毗尼日用切要, *The Essentials of Daily Conduct of the Vinaya*, W 106: 129b14–15, a seventeenth-century manual)[77]
> When relieving oneself, one should wish that all living beings abandon greed, hatred and ignorance, and remove errors. *An, henlutuoyesuohe*.[78]

In sum, empowered by ritual spells, when taking care of one's body, one respects decorum, removes impurity and ensures karmic return. It is a virtuous

75 Staal 1979: 9.

76 On such chants, see Heirman and Torck 2012: 83–84.

77 With many thanks to the participants of a *vinaya* workshop in Chengdu, 2013, and to Michael Radich (Victoria University of Wellington) for helping to trace the source of this ritual sentence.

78 The ritual sentence '*an, henlutuoyesuohe*' had previously appeared in the fourteenth-century *Chixiu Baizhang qing gui*, T.48.2025, p.1145c4–5. Shohei Ichimura (2006: 313) reconstructs it as '*Oṃ krodhāya svāhā*'. While in Chinese, the syllables are purely ritualistic, in Sanskrit '*krodhāya*' standing between the ritual syllables '*oṃ*' and '*svāhā*' might have a meaning related to 'anger' (*krodha*).

circle: while enhancing the status of the *saṅgha* (and its individual members), it also increases the level of purity.

4 Conclusion

The organization of monasteries plays a crucial role in the construction of the Buddhist identity. The activities of monks and nuns thus naturally influence the perception of Buddhism. In this perception, the body is of paramount importance because it is the outward expression of a way of life that has the potential to become a model for the rest of society. Bodily practices provide the Buddhist community with a sense of continuity, and, as Bourdieu puts it, with 'a present past that tends to perpetuate itself into the future'. Indeed, Buddhist guidelines on bodily practices focus on decency, respect, decorum, karmic return and purity throughout the spread of Buddhism from India to China.

Nevertheless, there is also evidence of adaptation to new contexts and networks, and here Elias's 'expanding threshold of aversion' is apparent. In China, this might more accurately be termed an 'advancing purity threshold'. Purity, with its strong connection between outward behaviour and inner thoughts, is an important facet of Buddhist guidelines on bodily care in both India and China. In this sense, dirt and bodily secretions represent not only physical but also mental and spiritual weakness.[79] However, the human body inevitably gets dirty and produces filth, and these weaknesses need to be cleansed, thoughtfully and with purity always in mind. This latter focus on purity gradually moved to the fore in the Chinese monastic identity, culminating in the 'rules of purity', which were written primarily for use in large public monasteries.

A strong ideal of purity fitted well in the religious–philosophical context of China, where Buddhist, Daoist and Confucian ideas intermingled. Adherents understood that they must be diligent in cleaning and purifying their bodies, leaving no spots of filth behind. Everything that related to the body, be it material, such as the robe, or physical, such as speech and sleep, shifted into a higher realm: they stood for purity and proximity to the Dharma. Body and robe shone, while sleep and speech were kept to a minimum. This whole process triggered ever more ritualization: specific chants were outlined in the monastic guidelines on daily behaviour, and the correct sequences of actions were standardized. The purity threshold to reach one's monastic goal did indeed advance—a development that strongly influenced the perception of Buddhist identity in medieval and early modern China.

79 See, among others, Williams 1997: 209–210.