CHAPTER ONE

An Analysis of Political Concepts
in Early
Buddhist Literature

The sixth century B.C. was marked by major changes in the ancient religions of the subcontinent. This change seems not only to have embraced religio-philosophical notions of Indian culture, but also affected much more profoundly its political aspect too as never before.

That the state was regarded, as an absolute necessity for an orderly society is a proposition implicitly self evident in early literature. Similarly the dread of anarchy or disorder was always present in political speculations of the ancient Indians.

The *Arthaśāstra* is an important text on the subject of ancient Indian political thought and institutions. In addition to the ideas of the *Arthaśāstra*, materials from the *Dharmaśāstra*, the *Nitiśāstra*, the epics, Buddhist and Jaina literature have also been drawn upon for filling in details of concepts of kingship, state and government in ancient India. Most of the literature on the subject deal with kingship and institutions of the state, their origins, functions and administrative structure.\(^1\)

Both the traditions, Brāhamana and Buddhist, emphasise the necessity of the political order. Political order signifies the organization of society in such a way so that it

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clearly differentiates and defines the roles of the ruler and the ruled. The political order assumes that a ruler is essential for any society.

The purpose of this chapter is to elucidate and analyse the political concepts in Buddhist literary sources such as the five Nikāyas and the Jātakas. The Sutta Pitaka is useful to understand what the main political concepts of Buddhism are. The Sutta Pitaka consists chiefly of discourses delivered by the Buddha in the various places.

If Buddhist literature is to be used as a historical source, firstly, its chronology must be considered. In 1899, Rhys Davids, editor and English translator of the Dīgha Nikāya mentioned that all Nikāyas belonged to the third-first century B.C. Winternitz states that the Buddhist texts belong to the pre-Mauryan period. Pande has proposed a date before the Third Council in the third century B.C., while Warder has accepted Pāli Sutta Pitaka as belonging to the pre-Mauryan period. Following Pande and Warder, Wagle also accepted that the major part of the Sutta Pitaka and the Vinaya Pitaka were pre-Asokan. He treats the first four Nikāyas and the Vinaya material as being a reliable guide to conditions between 500-300 B.C. Norman asserts that the tradition recorded in Sinhalese states that the Theravāda Canon was prepared and written down during the first century B.C. Some scholars argue that the Jātakas do not belong to the time of the Buddha. On

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2 This Pitaka has been divided into five parts or five Nikāyas in the first Buddhist Council at Rajagaha, viz: Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Anguttara Nikāya, Samyutta Nikāya and Khuddaka Nikāya. Khuddaka Nikāya is divided again into fifteen parts. The Jātakas form an important part of the Khuddaka Nikāya. The Jātakas, are stories of the former birth of the Buddha and told by the Buddha in the course of his conversation and discourses on different occasions. These, as remarks, shed light on many aspects of Indian history in the early period. These provide information on the social, political, economics and customs of the Buddha's time.


monumental and epigraphic evidence, however, some of the *Jātakas* can be dated in the second century or third century B.C. It is clear that although, some part of Buddhist Canonical literature belonged to the period after Aśoka, most part of it can be traced to the pre-Mauryan period.

1.1 The origin of kingship and the state in Buddhism.

The state arises as a punitive institution charged with the responsibility of imposing law and order without which human beings cannot survive as an orderly society. The state becomes an agreement between the government and the ruled, wherein the ruled transfer a part of their sovereignty to the state for a specific purpose. The relationship between the state and the subject is a contractual obligation in which one commands and the other obeys. The contract is symbolized by the institution of taxation, which is payment for specific work. The obligation is mutual and if one party violates it unilaterally the other is no longer obligated by the terms of that contract. But the contract is a basic condition of organized human society for in the absence of such a contract before the birth of the state, anarchy prevailed. It is, therefore, existential and neither the subjects nor the state have any choice outside of it.\(^\text{10}\)

Kingship is the central institution of the state ruled by or centered upon one man, the king. Kingship is thus distinct from other social institutions typical of some stateless societies, such as chiefdoms. Monarchies are symbolically the centre of the society organized as a state. They are considered mediators between the various parts and

\(^\text{10}\) Gokhale, *op.cit.*, 1969, p. 733.
interests that go to make up the social order and between the human and extra-human world.

As discussed in the Introduction, scholars have adopted two contrasting views on the historicity of the Buddhist notion of kingship. Most of the reference to the Mauryan ruler Aśoka but so far there are very few studies that analyse the religious underpinnings of the early state in Sri Lanka. In this and the next two chapters, the attempt would be first, to document the changing perceptions of kingship in assess these with reference to data from the Mauryan period. In the third chapter, the inscriptions and other archaeological data from Sri Lanka would be examined with a view to understanding the role of Buddhism in the emergence of the state in Sri Lanka.

1.1.1 The origin of kingship in the Buddhist canon

In the Aggañña Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, one of the most significant of Buddhist works, the Brāhmaṇa Vāsetta enquires of the Buddha, if the Brāhmaṇic claim to supremacy was just. Buddha is reported to have replied in the negative, recalling a fantastic event in history to support his view. There was a time when people were perfect to the point of having nothing corporeal about them. The Aggañña Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya traces the history of human society and explains succinctly the first problem of the origin of kingship or state. It traces the changing character of socio-political and economic phenomena, which changed from their embryonic form to a more complex form.
The Aggañña Sutta states that the origin of kingship evolved and passed through certain stages of human society. These indicate that ethereal beings enjoyed peace, happiness, prosperity, and tranquillity, which lasted for ages. But a time came when this pristine purity no longer existed and imperfection began to creep in. Differences of sex, colour, creed etc., set in bringing life down from the ethereal to the physical plane. Firstly, they involved themselves with food gathering;\textsuperscript{11} secondly, with food production and by cultivating lands;\textsuperscript{12} thirdly, men began to organize themselves in family,\textsuperscript{13} (Agārāni); fourthly, they decided to divide their rice plants or grain among themselves and established boundaries (marīyādam thapemṣu).\textsuperscript{14} In the final stage, a person in addition to grounding his own share also took another’s, which was not given to him and since then, theft, blame, false-speech and resorting to force began to spread among the people.\textsuperscript{15} After this situation occurred in society, the beings (sattā) gathered and discussed ways to solve this problem. They then decided to select a being (sattā) to solve this social problem.\textsuperscript{16}

The Buddha explains that next step of kingship was the Khattiya or Lord of the Land or field.\textsuperscript{17} Thus the Khattiya represents the second stage of the development of

\textsuperscript{11}Dīgha Nikāya, Vol. III, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 90.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16}“Vāsetta, now those beings (sattā) gathered and bewailed these things, saying from our evil deeds, Sir! becoming manifest, in as much as stealing, censure, lying, punishment have become known, what if we were to select a certain being (satto) who should be wrathful when indignation is right, who should censure that which should rightly, be censured and should banish him, who deserves to be banished? But we will give him in return proportion beings. Then Vāsetta being (sattā) among them who was the handsomest, the best favoured, the most attractive, the most capable and said to him come now good being be indignant rightly, be censured, banish him who deserves to be banished and we will contribute to you a proportion of their rice. And he consented and did so, and they gave him a proportion of them. Chosen by the whole people what is meant by Mahāsammatā (Mahājana sammatoti kho Vāsettha Mahāsammato.). So Mahāsammatā (the great elect) the first standing arise.” Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
political authority. In the third stage of the evolution of this institution, a person came to be called Rājā (*Dhammena ranjetiti rājā*) or the king because he delighted the people with Dhamma or Law and Justice.\textsuperscript{18}

According to the Aggañña Sutta, Mahāsammata was not given the designation of a king (rājā). He was authorised by the people to maintain law and order only by enforcing the customary laws of the community or tribe. Gokhale states that the state, as the Suttanta pointed out, comes into being to uphold the rule of law and order in place of greed and anarchy, to safeguard the institutions of property and family and ensure the victory of the right over the claim of brute force. For this purpose the Mahāsammata was declared to be the king. Later, he was called Khattiya because he was the Lord of the farmsteads and Raja because he pleased and protects the people with his righteousness Dhamma. The state according to this version, therefore, is based, on the general acceptance (*mahajanasammata*) of its aims and functions. It is expected to preserve and safeguard the rights of the individual and to create conditions of happiness for the subjects, through the observance of Dhamma (*Dhammam pare ranjeti*). The state, in brief, is the antithesis of anarchy and the apotheosis of Dhamma.\textsuperscript{19} In the Aggañña Sutta account Dhamma appears as liberation from conflicts born of selfish desires and becomes the basis of the order or state.\textsuperscript{20}

Basham says that Mahāsammata was appointed to maintain law and order, and he was expected to depend for his livelihood on a share of crops and heads, which he received in return for his service. Further observing the marked difference between the

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{20} Gokhale, *op.cit.*, 1987, p. 136.
two traditions of Buddhism and Hinduism, he says "the king is here the servant of god rather than the servant of men". Again stressing this difference he says "at the other extreme we have the Buddhist legend of the Mahāsammata in the Dīgha Nikāya, who was chosen at an enormous gathering of the people at a time when private property and the family were no longer respected. The Aggaṇṇaga Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya has a considerable range of ideas on the origin of the state with its concomitant in the form of the social contract theory. Naturally this story could not be accepted as authentic. But the Buddha made an attempt to explain the position of the king as he thought it ought to be. He asserted that not only was the king elected, but also that his most important duty was to maintain peace and order and protect the property of the subjects, in lieu of tax. 

According to Rahul Sanskrityāyana and Rev. K. Ariyasena’s view, the Mahāsammata was more a judge than a king or law giver. Varma says that Mahāsammata theory cannot be considered to be an exact formulation of the consensual theory of political authority but there is no doubt that the beginning of such a theory is contained here. Gombrich states that, ‘great elect’ is the first king and first Kṣatriya and that is the point of origin for the whole Varna system. The Buddha then uses this myth to claim that Kṣatriyas should rank above brāhmins.

Jayatilake explains clearly that the Aggaṇṇa Sutta does not say that the Mahāsammata belonged to a particular caste, at the time he was elected by the people as the leader of the community. According to the Buddhist theory of social contract,

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21 A. L. Basham, Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1956, p. 16
sovereignty in the sense of the supreme legislative power is vested in the people as a whole. In the Buddhist theory of kingship, there are certain factors that are of great significance. The king as mentioned was selected by the people as a whole (Mahajana sammata): the king, likewise, is after the election merely a prime inter pares being 'like unto themselves and not unlike' because of the equality of man despite the fact that the person so elected has a handsome and commanding personality. This Buddhist legend (Aggañña) clearly shows a theory of social contract. The king draws his authority from those who choose him and is paid for fulfilling the terms of the contract. Tambiah sees this election as an indication of the contractual theory and he has pointed to the association of the king with the protection of the social order based on the institutions of family and private property. Winternitz thinks that the Aggañña Sutta is "important regarding the origin of the universe and beings, and regarding the beginnings of culture and social order". Ajit Kumar Sen describes the Buddhist theory of the origin of kingship as a human institution, where the ideal of election and contract come in, it is so, because of the agnosticism of Buddhism. According to the Aggañña Sutta, the Mahāsammata was not only a law-giver, but was selected by the people as leader from amongst them and depended on rice, which was given by the people. The evidence of the Pāli Canonical texts on the early Buddhist attitude to kingship appear to be somewhat ambiguous.

Rev. P. Gñānārāma pointed out that the procedure adopted to select the Great

29 Winternitz, op. cit., 1939, p. 43.
Elect and the appreciation of it would naturally lead one to come to the conclusion that the Buddha favoured democracy. Later on, the scope of the institution expanded and the Great Elect was called Khattiya or lord of the field. Obviously, the term indicates that his power or authority was gradually extended beyond the original assignment. The institution evolved further and he was called Raja or king, because he delighted the people by upholding law and justice (dhammena janam ranjeti 'ti rājā). Certainly, he was called Raja or king because he ruled the country in accordance with Dhamma, which is law and justice as well as righteousness. This discourse, however, defines the names of the four castes: Kṣatriya, Brāhmaṇa, Vaiśya and Śudra which are more or less synonymous to occupations. The Aggañña Sutta categorically states that it was the people that gave him power and authority.  

The Aggañña Sutta sets out a view of the origin of the institution of kingship which has a bearing on the Buddhist attitude in the sense of indicating, what kind of kingship, Buddhists could support; that is, a form of kingship which had originated in a social contract. The Aggañña Sutta describes how the first ruler was chosen by the people for maintaining justice and order among them. He was the one ‘agreed upon’ or ‘authorized’ to rule, Mahāsammata. This is rather different from the Brāhmaṇical concepts of kingship, in which the king had a ‘cosmic and divine role’, in Heine-Geldern’s words, and “was considered to be either an incarnation of a god or a descendent from a god or both.”

Hence, Buddhistic theory of the origin of kingship is remarkable because the familiar concept of the state of nature and contract occur in it. Naturally kingship is a human institution, where the ideal of election and contract come in; it is more so, because of the agnosticism of the Buddhists. Further, the discourses of the Buddha provide us with detailed accounts of the evolution of human society, the state and kingship. It is evident however that the Buddhist approach is different from the prevailing Brāhmanic tradition in India. Brāhmanas very often interpreted these institutions with a theistic bias. Buddhism, on the other hand, not relying on an all-powerful creator, traces the evolution of human society along with state and kingship without any reference to the intervention of a creator-god. What is most significant here is that the institution of the ‘Great Elect’ is not a creation of ‘Brahma’, the creator-god of the Hindu pantheon, an institution created “of the people, by the people, for the people.” But he was not yet called a king.

The account of this Sutta however does not say that he was a king or a legislator, but rather a sort of executive who looked after law and order among the community. Being impartial, he punished those who transgressed the custom and traditions of the community. In this sense he could be considered an authority of law and justice. Thus as the discourse reveals, a rudimentary social organisation appeared among human beings in this way.35 Likewise, according to Aggañña Sutta, the state also came into existence in the second stage of kingship. Therefore we can conclude that the Khattiya was not only Lord of the lands but also he was king of state and chief of subjects. The evolution of the position the Rājā shows progress in the development of kingship.

35 Gñānārāma, op.cit., 1996, p. 50
1.1.2 Origin of kingship in the Jātaka

The Jātakas and their commentaries represent a prototype of pre-Kautilyan political philosophy of Buddhism. The source provides factual as well as normative data on ancient Indian history and concepts.

In the Jātaka story, namely Uluka, one can find how the first king was chosen by an assembly of people (atite patamakappike sanni paiītvā). The person selected was possessed of a handsome figure and a commanding personality, and of good health. Thus, physical fitness was regarded as an essential quality in a king or ruler. Further, the quadrupeds also gathered and chose the lion as their king and the fish in the ocean chose a fish called Ananda as a king. Then all birds in the Himalayas assembled and also agreed to select an owl as their king.\(^{36}\)

The Jātakas do not mention the reasons for the selection of a king. The qualifications of kingship, in the Uluka Jātaka are more deferent rather than the qualities attributed to the Mahāsammata in the Aggañña Sutta. But some qualities like being handsome or auspicious are similar in both texts. Furthermore, the person who was selected by the people, in the Uluka Jātaka was introduced as a king (rājā) but the Aggañña Sutta does not introduce Mahāsammata as a king (rājā). Thus, the basic concept of the origin of kingship (selection of a person as a leader) is the only similarity in both texts.

The Uluka Jātaka gives us more information on the mechanics of electing a ruler as anticipated in the Buddhist political system. Sen states that in this connection it may be

reasonably inferred that if the question of electing a sovereign ever came up before an assembly, the proceedings followed was generally of the type described in this story.37

In Buddhism, kingship is a human institution with the attendant concepts of the state nature and contract. According to Buddhist Canonical theory, the state of nature was synonymous with anarchy, which led to the institution of kingship by popular election. The Jātaka tales express the conception of kingship as a universal institution arising from popular election in the earliest time. Many of the tales end with a moral, bringing out the king's obligations to his subjects. On the contrary the Pāli canonical works are filled with political data in a comprehensive whole under the various ramifications of the concept of Dhamma. The three stages of the origin of kingship as described in the Dīgha Nikāya goes to show the secular character of political thought in a very clear and definite manner. The Jātakas support this theory. Here we come across many instances of election of kings by councillors or people. This principle of election is carried to a great extent.38

What is the significance to the student of Buddhism of that reason which finds an imminent place in their theory? The human initiative is enterprise and replaces the divine hand and deprives the king of a divine origin and divine sanction. In other words, divine interference is conspicuous by its absence. Reason and expediency alone is the base for the formation of the state. It is significant that in spite of the later distortion introduced into the story, its archaic essence remains the same throughout and this story remains unparalleled in ancient Indian literature outside Buddhism except in the Mahābhārata. Certain passages of the Mahābhārata retain the traces of the transition from the pre-class

37 Sen, op.cit., 1974, p. 86.
38 Manvendra Kishor Das, Political Philosophy of Buddhism (As Depicted in The Jātakas and Their Communities, Ph.D Thesis, Delhi University, 1989, p. 257
to the class divided society.\textsuperscript{39} The king representing the government derives his vitality from consent. The king remains in power to fulfil certain definite needs of the people, or individual members and he is the creation of individual members and he is the creation of individual and group consent. It is his duty to perform a definite task set before him by the individuals.

Buddha’s concepts of origin of kingship indirectly helped him to recast the Indian heritage and in several respects furnish a welcome antidote to the old Indian tradition. He did not believe in a creator and could not invite His interference to explain every earthy phenomenon. Reason essentially plays a significant part in Buddha’s political theory rather than in that of the Brāhmanas. Human initiative and enterprise replace divine responsibility and control and altogether account for more in social philosophy.

In doing so Buddha forcefully refutes the Brāhmanical claim to be the ‘genuine children of Brahma born of his mouth.’ Instead, he shows how good and bad qualities are monopolies of a single class and how men are judged by the standard of righteousness. The Buddhist view of the origin of kingship avers that for a long time after the creation of society, there prevailed a golden age of human happiness, when people lived in a peaceful and blissfully happy state. No government existed to see that the laws of nature were represented and followed. But as time passed the speculators had to come down to more solid earth and deal with changing phenomena around them. With the decline in the original state of purity, people began to lament over the appearance of the four-evils thefts, censure, lying and violence. Once again we find that it was solely and purely the drawbacks and limitations of the individuals and its realization that led the people to

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Mahābhārata}, Sānti parva, Ch. 58.6-17.
agree on a chosen leader or one, who would punish those deserving punishment, banishment those deserving banishment, and in return would be rewarded with a share 1/6 of the paddy by the people. Therefore, he came to be successively called by the three ‘standing phrases’ of Mahāsammata or ‘Great Elect’ (one who is chosen by the great multitude); Khattiya (one who is lord of the field) and king ‘rājan one who gratifies the others in accordance with Dhamma. The king was merely to be the leader and guide of the people.40

1.2 The Concept of the Buddhist Cakkavatti or Dhammiko Dhamma rājā

1.2.1 Evolution of the Cakkavatti concept

The term Cakravarti (Pāli Cakkavatti) is a Sanskrit noun referring to an ideal universal king who rules ethically and benevolently over the entire world.41 It is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘cakra’ meaning ‘wheel’ and vartin, one who turns it (Pāli cakka+vatti= Cakkavatti).42 According to Kane, in Sanskrit literature Cakravartin means “one who wields lordship over a circle of kings or one who makes them abide by his order”.43 According to Patroyad Dictionary,44 Gonda suggests that ‘Cakra’ is sometimes equivalent to rāśtra or dominion.45

The term Cakkavatti is translated into English on many occasions either as Universal monarch or as world ruler. This is misleading. In the discourses of the Pāli

42 Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 67.
44 des ūbar die händar hinrolled red des monarches Herrschaft( the wheel of a monarch’s chariot rolling over his dominions realm sovereignty) Patroyad Dictionary, Vol. II, p. 907.
canon, which deal with the concept of Cakkavatti, a king who would rule over the whole world, to be more specific, the whole earth, is not spoken of at all. The Cakkavatti is said to have conquered the four corners (Caturanto vijitāvi) of this earth (imam pathavim) to its ocean bound (sagarapariyantam). The universal or the whole earth is not meant in this world. The word “imam” is very important in the phrase ‘pathavim’ (this earth). It confines the earth envisaged here to the area of the earth known and visible to the listeners of the Buddha. What is meant in the concept of Cakkavatti is a king who can conquer the four corners of the area of the earth thus envisaged. The concept of Cakkavatti was suggested in an environment where there were perpetual conflicts among rival kings. From the early days of the tribal heads, these conflicts were the landmark of Indian political history. The Buddha says that this king could rule over the whole subcontinent. According to him, only a king of this calibre could bring peace and harmony to the people of India. In this light, the concept of Cakkavatti illustrates the last and final stage of the development of kingship in India. It is the culmination of a natural process. The Buddha never saw the dream of a king who could overcome the whole earth.\footnote{Oliver Abeynayake, “Rāja Cakkavatti: The Normative king and the Ideal Society of Buddhism,” \textit{Sri Lanka Journal of Buddhist Studies}, Vol. IV, 1994, pp. 84-85.}

There is concrete evidence which corroborates this argument in the Pāli canon. According to the Nidhikhandha Sutta of the \textit{Khuddakapāṭha}, there are two type of states: regional states (padesarajja) and central state (cakkavattirajja), obviously in the Indian context.\footnote{“Padesarajjam issariyam cakkavattisukham piyam- devarajjam ca dibesu etena labbati,” \textit{Kuddakapāṭha}, p. 7.} The Sēla Sutta found in the \textit{Suttanipāta} as well as in the \textit{Majjhima Nikāya},

categorically states that the lord of India (jambusandassa issaro) is the rājā Cakkavatti. 48

In the Lakkana Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, the Cakkavatti rules having conquered India (Jambudīpam abhibhuya iriyati). 49 Furthermore, the Lakkhana Sutta utilizes the following phraseology to give the idea that the Cakkavatti is “the conqueror of the four corners of this earth to the ocean bound” found in the stock passage: “he turns the wheel and rules the earth (vatteti cakkam pathavim passati).” 50 The Cakkavatti king governs the mighty earth (mahatimahim anusasati). “He whose attendants are pure in heart and who governs the earth is the king of many (rañño hoti bahujano suciparivaro mahatimahim anusasati).” 51

What the words earth (pathavim), this earth (imam pathavim) and mighty earth (mahatimahim) indicate is quite obvious when important reference in the Mahāgovinda Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya is examined. 52

The term Cakravartin was known in the late fifth and early fourth century B.C. by the compilers of the Maitri Upanisad who used the noun when listing the names of several kings who roll the wheel (of the dominion) and had renounced their royal prerogatives in favour of the life of ascetic contemplation. 53 The concept of Cakravartin in Brāhmaṇism is that of a temporal monarch. 54 The term Cakravartin in Dharmasastraic texts signifies all powerful monarchs whose chariot wheel turns freely and whose virtuous rule is described as Sarvabhuma. This word does not appear frequently in any other later ancient text. 55 Further, direct discussion of the Cakravartin as an imperial

48 Suttanipāta, p. 108.
50 Ibid., pp. 149, 158.
51 Ibid., p. 160.
53 Maitri Upanisad, 1. 4.
54 “Cakram, rathacakram āhā vai angatrena sarvam vyāprnotiti cakravarti,” Mahābhārata, Ch. I, 74, 127.
ideal appears as early as Kautilya's *Arthasastra*. In his description of the range of an emperor's influence (*Cakravarti ksetra*), Kautilya notes that the king should undertake any task he feels will bring his and his people's prosperity and that he should have power from Himalayan to the Ocean. Otherwise, the Cakravartin in the *Arthasastra* has been depicted as the universal conqueror, one, who always extends his power over the known earth. 56

Thus, both Jainism and Buddhism ascribe an ethical significance to this term. 57 Sanskrit Buddhist texts and Jaina literature distinguish three types of Cakravartin: a *Pradeśa* Cakravartin is a monarch who leads the people of a specific region and may be thought of as a local king. A *Dīpa* Cakravartin governs all the people of any one of the four continents. Superior even to a *Dīpa* Cakravartin, however, is the *Cakrāvāla* Cakravartin, the monarch who rules over all the continents of the world. It is the political paramountcy of the *Cakrāvāla* Cakravartin with whom Buddha's religious supremacy is compared. 58

Further, the most important concept for reconciling was that of the Cakkavatti king. This concept had been developed much earlier than the days of the Buddha. The performance of the 'Āśvamedha' sacrifice was associated with him. In point of conquest, power, grandeur, goodness, he was superior to the ordinary king talked of above. 59 It is clear, that the Cakravarti concept developed considerably under the Buddhist

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58 *Ibid*.
influence and the new interpretation was given by Buddha to the traditional Cakkavatti concept.

According to the Buddhist texts, the concept of Dhammarāja and Cakkavatti, served to establish internal social order and to pursue external economic and political authority. The concept of Cakkavatti was particularly important in the conquest of neighbouring kingdoms, almost always justified as Dhammavijaya.\(^\text{60}\)

Gokhale states that the Buddhists with their antipathy to sacrificial ritual involving slaughter, naturally cannot sanction sacrifices and a text denounces a king performing Vedic sacrifices as guilty of tormenting himself as well as others. They are, however not averse to using non-rationative elements in their concept of the royal charisma. An ideal king is described as a "holy" person, in whom resides some mystic power. The Cakkavatti has almost all the characteristics of a Bodhisatta like the marks of great men (mahāpurisalakkhanāni), and on death his funeral is conducted in the same fashion as that of a Buddha.\(^\text{61}\) According to early Buddhism, there are only two possibilities of development for a Bodhisattva, either he becomes the Cakkavatti or Dhammiko Dhammarāja and after he renounces the world he becomes the Buddha.\(^\text{62}\) The early Buddhist king was intimately connected with ideas of righteous rule, either as Cakkavatti (lord Paramount) or the Dhammiko Dhammarāja (righteous monarch) as escribed in Pāli works.\(^\text{63}\) The Dhamma as an all-powerful force is able to destroy and

\(^{60}\) The Encyclopaedia of Religion, Vol. VIII, p. 338.


\(^{62}\) "Sace āgāram ajjāvasati rājā hoti cakkavatti Dhammiko Dhammarāja ecatuanto Vijitāvī Janapada-

\(^{63}\) "Cakkavatti ahum rājā- jambudīpasā issaro muddhābhisitto khattiyō- manussādhīpītāhām adandena asattena- vijeyya pathavim imaṃ asāhasena adhammena-samena manusāsiya"
unrighteous king. The culmination of such theorizing came into the concept of the Cakkavattin who is declared to be the Dhammiko Dhammarāja. Chakavarti states that the Buddhist formulation of the Cakkavatti Dhammiko Dhammarāja also implied that power could be used not only negatively to punish, tame, and control society, but also more positively to create a new social order. The new social order would in turn provide the basis for a new moral system. The Buddhist concept of Cakkavatti laid stress on the development of character of rulers and building up of a righteous environment in society. Further, this concept clears the way for the righteous and welfare state.

1.2.2 Character of the Buddhist Cakkavatti.

We must place in proper perspective this fundamental tension in Theravāda Buddhism between the concepts of wheel-rolling Cakkavatti and the religious ruler (Dhammiko Dhammarāja), which is resolved in terms of inclusive dominions of Dhamma, each higher level subordinating the other. The Dhamma of the cosmic order is larger in scope and superior to the Dhamma of righteousness as practised by the ruler. The Buddha emphasises the concept of Cakkavatti and his character, which we find discussed in the Mahāsudassana Sutta, Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta, Ambbatta Sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya, Bālapandita Sutta in Majjima Nikāya, Anguttara Nikāya and Suttanipāta as well as some of the Jātaka stories.

Rāja Cakkavatti, a wheel-rolling monarch, is born into the world for the benefit, happiness and welfare not only of humans but also of gods. He is an extraordinary man
and his death is regretted by many. 67 The wheel-rolling monarch is endowed with five qualities: he knows good (attaññu), knows righteousness (dhammaññu), knows the measure of punishments and impositions (mattaññu), knows times for pleasure, courtwork and touring the country (kālaññu), and knows whether the assembled men are nobles Brāhmanas or not etc. (parisaññu). 68 The wheel-rolling monarch lies down in the dignified way a lion does (sihaseyya), with one leg resting on the other, calm and self possessed. 69 It is impossible to have two wheel-rolling monarchs in the world at the same time and it is possible to have just one Cakkavatti at any one time. 70 The most significant characteristic of the wheel-rolling monarch is that he possesses the thirty-two marks of a superman (Mahāpurisa). A detailed account of these thirty-two marks is given in the Lakkhanasutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. 71

Further, the wheel-rolling monarch, Cakkavatti, has a large retinue (mahāparivāro hoti) comprising of Brāhmins, householders, townsmen and country folk, treasury, officials, bodyguards, warders, ministers, courtiers, tributary kings, feudatory chiefs and youths of high degree surround him. 72 He gets the choice of well flavoured food and tasty, dainty drinks 73 as well as he has well looked after attendants (susamghahitapanjano hoti). 74 The Cakkavatti king becomes chief, best, foremost, supreme, paramount among those who have worldly possessions. 75 Whatever things are worthy of a king, the

73 "labhi hoti paniṭhānam rasitānam khadānīyānam bhojanīyānam sayanīyānam lekhanīyānam pānanām," Ibid., p. 151.
74 Ibid., p. 153.
75 "aggo setto ca pāmokkho ca uttamo ca pavarā ca kāmabhoginām," Ibid., p. 154.
appendages, the treasures, the belongings of a ruler, these do the wheel-rolling monarch quickly acquire. Great wisdom will be his, there is no one equal to him, nor superior to him among those who have worldly wealth. Receiver is he of fine and soft coverlets and cloaks and fine linen, fine cotton, fine silken and fine woollen materials. Rich is he, of great fortune, of great wealth: full is the treasure house of much gold and silver, of many goods, of coin and corn. The wheel-rolling monarch is incapable of failure and loss. He suffers no loss in money or corn, in fields or fallow, in two or four footed beasts, in wife or children, in servants or workers or in kinsfolk, friends or companions and forfeits nothing wherein he succeeds. The Cakkavatti king gets the loyalty of the multitude. The people conform to his wishes. Those who follow him are not to be divided amongst them. The wheel-rolling monarch has a voice that commands attention; all take his words seriously. His attendants are pure in heart.

The great king of glory was beloved and popular with priests and with laymen like as a father who is near and dear to his own sons. All these privileges belong to the

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76 "yāni etāni rājārahaṇī rājāngāni rājupabhogaṇī rājanucchavikāṇī tāni khappiyam patilabhati," Ibid., p. 156.
77 "mahāpānho hoto nāssa hoti koci paṭāhaya sadiso vā visittho vā kamabhoginam," Ibid., p. 158.
78 "labh hoti sukhumānam mudukānam attharanānam pāpuruṇānam khamasukumānam kappasikhasukumānam koseya sukhumānam kambalasukhumānam," Ibid., p. 159.
79 "addho hoti mahaddhano mahabhogo pahūtujātaruparajato pahūtavittīpakarano pahūtadhanadhaṇṭho paripunnako sakotthāgaro; aparīhanaddhammo hoti, na parīhanayi dhanadhanena khetta dippadacatippadehi puttadārehi dāsakammakaraporische ḍatimittehi bandhavehi, na parīhāyati sabbasampattiya," Ibid., p. 163.
80 "maha'ssa jano anvāyiko hoti," Ibid., p. 165.
81 "maha'ssa jano upavattati," Ibid., p. 169.
82 "abhejajariso hoti," Ibid., p. 172.
84 "ādeyyavaco hoti ādiyanti'ssa vacanam," Ibid.
85 Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 177-178.
Cakkavatti king because of his meritorious deeds.\textsuperscript{86} An ideal king is described as one, who is full of charity, truth, forgiveness, non-injury and self denial.\textsuperscript{87}

According to the Mahāsudassana Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, the might and greatness of a wheel-rolling monarch are the result of three qualities practiced for a long period of time. They are giving (dāna), discipline (dama) and self-subjugation (samyama). He is said to be the only ruler who could control himself by addressing his emotions as follows “stay here, O thought of lust I’ll-will and hatred! No more O thought of lust, I’ll-will and hatred!”\textsuperscript{88} The quotation given below shows what the Buddha has said in praise of king Mahāsudassana a legendary wheel-rolling monarch, to indicate the Cakkavatti’s saintly qualities and uniqueness as a ruler.

Further according to the discourses, some qualities are true for both the Buddha and the Cakkavatti. They are both born in this world. In Puggalavagga of the Anguttara Nikāya, the Buddha states that the birth (uppajjamanā), of these two persons, who are manifest in this world is conducive and to the advantage, benefit and profit of many, and to the good and happiness of gods and men. Who are these two? They are the Tathāgata (Buddha) and the Cakkavatti (universal king).\textsuperscript{89} Two Cakkavattis or two Buddhas are not born together in the world at the same time.\textsuperscript{90} The Cakkavatti and Buddha have commanders (senāpatis). The elder son of the Cakkavatti is a commander of wheel-

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. III, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{87} \textit{Jātaka}, Vol. III, pp. 274, 320.
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Anguttara Nikāya}, Vol. I, pp. 76-77.
\textsuperscript{90} “Atthannam etam anavakāso yam ekissā loka dhatuyā arahantu sammasambuddho apubbam acarimam uppajjeyyum tenam thanam vijjati pajanati ….. atthannam etham anavakāso yam ekissā lokadhatuyā deva rājano cakkavattino apubbam acarimam uppajjeyyum netam thanam vijjati pajanati. \textit{Majjhima Nikāya} Vol. III, p. 65.
rolling monarch, while the Elder Sariputta is a Dhamma commander of the Buddha. Furthermore, thirty two bodily signs (Mahāpurisa lakkana) are also similar on the Buddha and the universal king’s body. The Saṅyutta Nikāya states that with the appearance of each of them, the Cakravartti and the Tathāgata, their respective seven treasures appear. A wheel-rolling monarch is cremated in an extraordinary way. The Anguttara Nikāya says that the death of the Buddha and the universal king are similar to each other. Thus these two are worthy of a monument, who are the two? The Tathāgata and the universal king. Further, many people are overcome by sorrow, mourn and wail about the death (kāla-kiriyā) of the Buddha and the Cakkavatti king. There is no such death which is sorrowed, mourned and wailed by people.

The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya, refers to the cremation of the universal king: viz. they wrap the body of the wheel-rolling monarch in a new cloth. When that is done they wrap it in corded cotton wool. When that is done they wrap it in a new cloth, and so on till they have wrapped the body in five hundred successive layers of both kinds. Then they place the body in an oil vessel of iron, and cover that and close it with another oil vessel of iron. They then build a funeral pyre of all kinds of perfume and burn the body of the wheel-rolling monarch. Then at the four cross roads they erect a stūpa. This is the way in which they treat the remains of a Cakkavatti.

93 The seven treasures of Cakkavatti is Cakra, Hatti, Assa, Itthi, Gahapati, Mani and Parināyaka, Buddha’s seven treasure is Saptabhjihanga such as Sati, Dhammavicaya, Viriya, Passaddhi, Samādhi, Upekkhā; Saṅyutta Nikāya, Vol. V, p. 99; See page 24
The stūpa is that righteous king who ruled in righteousness, the hearts of many shall be made calm and happy, and having thus calmed and satisfied their hearts they will be reborn after death in the happy realms of heavens. It is on account of this circumstance that a wheel-rolling monarch is worthy of a stūpa.  

1.2.3 Seven treasures of the Cakkavatti

Following the Buddhist texts, seven royal treasures also belong to the Cakkavatti as a special privilege because of his virtuous deeds and righteous life. The seven precious things, belonging to the Cakkavatti are: the Wheel treasure (Cakkaratana), the Elephant treasure (Hattiratana), the Horse treasure (Assaratana), the precious Gem treasure (Maniratana) the Woman treasure (Ittiratana), the Householder treasurer (Gahapatiratana); the Councillor treasure (Parināyakaratana).  

The Cakkaratana is probably the most valued symbol of sovereignty possessed by the king. The first of the seven treasures is the Wheel treasure (Cakkaratana). When a Cakkavatti is born into the world, the Cakkaratana appears before him from the cakkadaha, travelling through the air. It has its nave, its tyre and all its thousand spokes complete. An ordinary king becomes the wheel-rolling monarch with the appearance of the wheel treasure. The wheel executes authority only after the king sprinkles water. Then the wondrous wheel rolls onwards towards the regions of the East, South, West and North, in that order, with the king and his fourfold army, elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. As soon as the king takes up his abode where the wheel stops, all the regional

96 Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 141-143.
kings come to him and request: “come, O Mighty king! Welcome. O Mighty king!
All is yours, O Mighty king! Do, O Mighty king, be a teacher to us!” The wheel-rolling
monarch fulfils this request earnestly by admonishing them to be ethically good. Then all
the rival kings in the region become subject to the wheel-rolling monarch. After winning
the four corners of the earth to its ocean boundary in this way, the Wheel returns to the
capital city and remains fixed on the open terrace in front of the entrance to the inner
apartment of the king, as a glorious adornment. 98 But the Wheel is not your heritage (na
petikam dāyajjam).

Rhys Davids interprets the wheel as a representation of the solar disc of the sun. 99
Zimmer says that the luminous apparition of the wheel in the firmament is a duplication
of the Neolithic symbol of the sun wheel. 100 Gonda describes the wheel as a symbol of
the sun, which in its daily course illumines and rules the earth. 101 Chakravarti asserts that
the entire operation seems to represent physical control over dominion, which was an
integral aspect of kingship, because the Wheel then moves forward successively in all the
four directions followed by the Caturangani Senā or four fold army. 102

In its developed form, the Wheel and chariot had become the powerful symbol of
temporal suzerainty and had thus come to be portrayed extensively even in art and
sculpture apart from literature. The Wheel is indeed the appropriate channel, through
which the ideal of central authority, which controls and commands a network of
peripheral forces are brought out effectively. The Wheel with its hub, spokes and wheel

frame provides the most natural analogy to the relationship between the subjects and the king.\textsuperscript{103}

Ratnapala pointed out that the celestial Wheel symbolised public opinion. As long as the king ruled the country according to the law (Dhamma), the celestial wheel remained in the sky without moving away the wishes and aspirations represented by the five following principles:

1. The celestial wheel is the symbol of public opinion or wishes of the people.

2. When a ruled or ruler strays away from public opinion, the wheel automatically moves away thus symbolising the absence of people's support for the ruler.

3. The people themselves kept vigil over the celestial wheel, and whenever the ruler or rulers acted contrary to public wishes, they reacted immediately, indicating their displeasure. There were ways and means of expressing their reactions to their rulers on such occasions when the law of the land was flouted.

4. A king or ruler could not ignore such public opinion.

5. A ruler or king was able to make his exit (when not wanted by the people) in a manner that does not hurt or damage his position in life. Very often the king or ruler would go to the forest to a life of quiet meditation after abdication. As a result of his exit, he does not lose the respect and honour he once enjoyed as the ruler. On the contrary, by being ancestor, respect and veneration for him naturally increased over that which he enjoyed as sovereign monarch. When

\textsuperscript{103} Das, \textit{op. cit.}, 1989, p. 224.
not popularly desired by the people, a king, thus could graciously retire to the forest, keeping his status, respect intact, and suffering no humiliation.\textsuperscript{104}

Abeynayake assumed that it is obvious that the wheel treasure symbolizes the maximum degree of authority that a king could have enjoyed in the Indian context. Even without the wheel one can become a king. His kingship is however limited to a small area in the earth, subject to the challenge of rival kings. The wheel-rolling monarch is a king over a vast area of earth, probably an area as large as the Indian sub-continent. So long as he lives, there is no rivalry whatsoever to his authority.\textsuperscript{105}

The Elephant treasure (\textit{Hattiratana}) and Horse treasure (\textit{Assaratana}) as described in the Mah\text{\={a}}sudassana Sutta, are related to the \textit{Cakkaratana}. According to the Buddhist texts, the Elephant treasure is all white (\textit{seto}) seven fold firm (\textit{sattappatitho}) wonderful in power (\textit{iddhimo}) flying through the sky (\textit{vehasamgamo}) and the elephant name was the change of the moon (\textit{uposatha}).\textsuperscript{106}

The Horse treasure is also all white with a crow black (\textit{seto k\={a}ka siro}) and dark mane (\textit{ma\={n}jakeso}) wonderful in power flying through the sky (\textit{iddhimo vehasa gamo}) and the name was thunder cloud (\textit{valahako}).\textsuperscript{107}

Chakravarti argues that both of these treasures might be symbols of the army. Therefore she thinks that apart from indicating that the army was one of the elements of kingship, the description indicates the king’s actual control of the instruments of dominion.\textsuperscript{108} Abeynayake states that both the Elephant and the Horse understand the

\textsuperscript{104} Nandasena Ratnapala, \textit{Buddhist Sociology}, New Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1993, pp75-76.
\textsuperscript{105} Abeynayake, \textit{op.cit.}, 1994, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}
king’s thoughts and pass over along the broad earth to its very ocean boundary that is the entire domain of the wheel rolling monarch, and return to the royal palace within six hours. It is believed to be auspicious if both the Elephant and the Horse submit wilfully to be controlled by the king. Further from the above description, it is observed that the Elephant treasure and the Horse treasure on the one hand symbolize the means of authority over the entire kingdom and on the other, they symbolize the fertility of the kingdom. Fertility largely depends upon the climate. The Elephant treasure signifies favourable climatic conditions. Since it is named Uposatha, (the changes of the Moon) without rain at the proper time, the entire kingdom, would be barren and unproductive. Rain, that is expected most, is symbolized in the horse treasure. Hence it is named Valāhaka, ‘the thunder-cloud’. ¹⁰⁹

The fourth treasure, which appears before the Cakkavatti is the Gem treasure (Maniratana). That Gem was Veluriya (velurio) bright, of the finest species with eight facets excellently wrought, clear transparent and perfect in every way. ¹¹⁰ “The splendour of the wondrous Gem spreads around a league on every side. ¹¹¹ It is chief of eighty-four thousand Gems. ¹¹² It is said that the king could march out in the gloom and darkness of the night raising aloft the gem upon his standard top after setting all his fourfold army in array. The Mahāsudassana Sutta observes that all the dwellers in the village set about their daily work thinking that daylight had appeared once the king thus marched out. ¹¹³ It seems that the Gem treasure symbolizes the natural resources of the kingdom. It is only

¹⁰⁹ Abeynayake, op.cit., 1994, p. 73.
¹¹² Ibid., Vol. II, p. 185.
then that the king could employ his citizens and maintain his armies. As a gem brightens, the natural resources bring the light of prosperity to the kingdom of the wheel-rolling monarch.\textsuperscript{114}

Chakravarti says that the precious gem was symbolic of the financial basis of kingship in the form of the full treasury. The full treasury supported the army. While the hard work of the inhabitants of the dominion contributed in turn to the maintenance of the full treasury.\textsuperscript{115}

The fifth royal treasure of the Cakkavatti was the Woman treasure (Ittiratana). She was graceful in figure (adhirupa dassaniyo), beautiful in appearance (pāsādica), charming in manner and of the most fine complexion, neither very tall (nāti digā) nor very short (nāti vāssā) neither very stout (nāti kisā) nor very slim (nāti tula) neither very dark (nāti kālī) nor very fair, surprising human beauty, she had attained unto the beauty of the god. The touch of the skin of that wondrous woman was the touch of cotton or cotton wool; in the cold, her limbs were warm, in the heat, her limbs were cool; while from her body wafted the perfume of the lotus. That pearl among woman too, used to rise up before the king, after him retire to rest; pleasant was she in speech, and ever on the watch to hear what might do so as to act to give him pleasure. That pearl of woman too, was never, even in thought, unfaithful to the king- how much less then could she be so with the body.\textsuperscript{116} She is the chief of eighty-four thousand wives of a wheel-rolling

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Abeynayake, \textit{op.cit.}, 1994, p. 74.}
\footnote{Chakravarti, \textit{op.cit.}, 1996, p. 155.}
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monarch.\textsuperscript{117} It should be noted here that the queen of the wheel-rolling monarch bears the same qualities that the Buddha prescribes for any good and vigilant wife.\textsuperscript{118}

Therefore the Woman treasure symbolizes the family life of the wheel-rolling monarch. Harmonious and successful family life is believed to be one of the essential qualities of leadership. The significance of the experience of married life is duly accepted in Buddhism. A bachelor can neither be a wheel-rolling monarch nor a fully enlightened one (sammāsambuddha). Chakravarti argues that the Ittiratana is symbolic of the productive and fertile aspects of the earth.\textsuperscript{119}

The sixth royal treasure was the Householder treasure (Gahapatiratana). He is possessed of a marvellous power of vision by which he could discover wealth, whether it had an owner or not. He is said to have comforted the king as followers; “do you, O king, take your ease! I will deal with your wealth even as wealth should be dealt with”. The Mahāsudassana Sutta related how a wonderful treasure found pure gold for the king when the ship, which carried the king and his men wrecked in the current in the midst of the river Ganga.\textsuperscript{120}

There is no doubt that this treasure represents the economy of the urgent matter. A sound economy of a country always depends on the profundity and skill of its erudite planners. Therefore, the stress is placed on the treasurer, but not on treasure. The word Gahapatiratana, when it is taken alone and out of context, can be interpreted as representing the population since the world Gahapati means householder. This interpretation is unwarranted in the context of seven treasures of a wheel-rolling

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., Vol. III, 185.
\textsuperscript{118} Anguttara Nikāya, Vol. II, p. 37.
monarch, because the definition there quite definitely indicates the person who is in charge of the wealth of the Cakkavatti kingdom. The word Gahapati, when translated etymologically, means ‘the leader of the house’ or ‘head of the family.’ As the head, he earns, spends and organizes the wealth of the family according to the social structure in ancient India. ‘It is this implication of the term that is emphasized’ in the context of seven treasures of a wheel-rolling monarch.  

The seventh treasure appeared to the great king in the form of a wonderful adviser, learned, clever and wise (pandito viyatto medhāvi) and qualified to lead the great king to glory to leave undone what he ought to leave undone. He is said to have been the guide of the king and because of him, the king could take his case. The Parināyakaratana indicates nothing but the Parināyako pandito. The fourth quality of a good king as enumerated by the Buddha in the Anguttara Nikāya. As shown above, he is equivalent to Amātya. This assumption is further corroborated by the fact that the queen of the wheel-rolling monarch Mahāsudassana could arrange, through the wonderful adviser, the fourfold army in array.

Devahuti states that the seven treasures or the precious possessions of the Cakravarti are, the symbolic chakra or Wheel, perhaps signifying the wheel of the chariot; the elephant and horse wings of the army; jewel signifying treasury; retinue; queen and prince or adviser. Abeynayake thinks that the concept of seven treasures

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121 Abeynayaka, op.cit., 1994, p. 75.
attributed to a wheel-rolling monarch symbolically represents the essential elements of sovereign power.\textsuperscript{126}

According to Chakravarti, the Gahapatiratana also respects the people who inhabit the territory or dominion of the king. The Parināyakaratana could then have been the heir apparent of the king and symbolized at the same time the king’s military strength. Furthermore, she categorizes the basic ideas, which are included in the seven royal treasures thus;

1. Dominion or territory represented by the wheel or Cakkaratana.

2. The means of control over dominion represented by the Hattiratana, Assaratana and Prināyakaratana.

3. The basics of control over dominion represented by Ittiratana, Gahapatiratana and Maniratana.\textsuperscript{127}

Chakravarti’s arguments may be partially correct. But on the whole she emphasises mostly on economic and military control, she makes no mention of the role of Dhamma in political control. Thus she does not discuss Dhamma as a factor in the attainment of the seven treasures.

This emphasis on Dhamma is evident from the Buddha’s explanation on how to obtain the seven royal treasures. He says that firstly, when the great king of glory, on the Sabbath day, on the day of the full moon, had purified himself, and had gone up into the upper storey of the palace to keep the sacred day, there then appeared to him the heavenly treasure of the wheel with its nave, its circumference and all its thousand spokes

\textsuperscript{126} Abeynayake, op.cit., 1994, p. 75.
complete, that king became a king of kings invisible.\textsuperscript{128} According to this explanation, good character and practice of virtuous conduct is very essential to win the seven royal treasures. Another outstanding characteristic of a wheel-rolling monarch is that he is endowed with seven treasures and four efficacies. They are described as sources of happiness and joy for him.\textsuperscript{129}

\subsection*{1.2.4 Four efficacies of the Cakkavatti}

It is now appropriate to turn to the four efficacies which are spoken of as an indispensable feature of a wheel rolling monarch. While translating the words "\textit{catuhi ca Iddhihi}" as four marvellous gifts here, Rhys Davids comments: "here again as elsewhere, it will be noticed that there is nothing supernatural about these four \textit{iddhi}. They are merely attributes accompanying or forming part of the majesty of the king of kings."\textsuperscript{130} The first three of the four efficacies are described as "\textit{Ativiya a\={n}hehi manussehi}" which means that the wheel-rolling monarch surpasses other men in some respect.\textsuperscript{131} However, there is evidence in the Pali canon to prove that all these three are common to the other people as well. Therefore, all four efficacies of the wheel-rolling monarch are obviously human qualities. They might not be common, but they are not definitely extraordinary.

The first efficacy of the wheel-rolling monarch is a graceful figure, handsome appearance, pleasing in manner and of most beautiful complexion.\textsuperscript{132}

Second efficacy is that the wheel-rolling monarch is of long life and of many

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\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Dīgha Nikāya}, Vol. II, 173.
\textsuperscript{129} "rājā Cakkavatti sattahi ratanehi samannāgato catuhi ca iddhihi tatonidānam sukham somanassam patisamvedeti," \textit{Majjhima Nikāya}, Vol. II, 172.
\textsuperscript{132} "rājā Cakkavatti abhirupa hoti dassniyo pasadiko paramaya vannapokkhatāya samannāgato," \textit{Ibid}.
As the Lakkhana Sutta states, long lived is he, long does he last, for many years does he preserve his life; no enemy whatever born of man is able in that interval to take his life away. The men of long life as this, are spoken of in the Mahāpadāna, Cakkavattisīhanāda and Aggaṇṇa Suttas also.

Third efficacy is that the wheel-rolling monarch is free from disease and bodily suffering; his internal fire was neither too hot nor too cold, but such as to promote good digestion. As Rhys Davids pointed out, the same thing is said of Rattapāla in the Ratthapāla Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya. According to Lakkhana Sutta, the wheel-rolling monarch is possessed of this quality due to his taste which is supremely acute: sensations of taste of anything on the tip of the tongue are produced in the throat and are diffused everywhere.

The fourth efficacy is that the wheel-rolling monarch is dear to Brāhmins and householders and beloved of them just as a father is dear and ear to his own son. In the same way, the Brāhmins and householders are dear and near to the king. This is due to the fact that the eyes of the wheel-rolling monarch are intensely blue and he has eyelashes like those of a cow. It is to be noted that this is given as a quality of an ordinary king too in the Anguttara Nikāya.
1.2.5 King Cakkavatti and his rule

Furthermore, the discourses explain how the Cakkavatti, is to rule in the world. The Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta shows that the Cakkavatti attains supremacy over this earth and the ocean, having conquered it, not the scourge, not by the sword but by righteousness.141 According to this explanation, Dhamma is a weapon of the Cakkavatti to rule the world. Thus, he does not want other weapons to control the world. The Dhammiko Dhammarājā thus, provides for the basic needs of the people.142 The establishment of a moral order is thus a precondition for a stable social order to appear.

The wheel-rolling monarch is different from the ordinary king mainly on the basis that he rules righteously. Therefore, he is always called the just and righteous ruler. (Dhammiko Dhammarājā).143 Once asked as to who rules over a wheel-rolling monarch, the Buddha answered; “even a Cakkavatti; though he is the just and righteous ruler, is not without a king, Dhamma is the ruler over a Cakkavatti”. Again it is said that he rolls the wheel, which is not to be upset by any human being whatsoever, by any living foe, according to Dhamma.144 The palace where the wheel-rolling monarch abides is called the palace of righteousness (Dhammapāśāda), which is the chief of eighty-four thousand palaces.145 These references show that the principle par excellence of a wheel-rolling monarch is nothing but the principle of Dhamma. It is futile to examine the multiple meanings of the word Dhamma and ‘Cakka’ in order to understand what this principle

141 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 63.
142 Ibid.
of Dhamma is. The ideal king rules without 'danda' (adandena) for he resorts neither to mutilation norpunishes the errant with fines.

The Cakkavatti is the Dhammiko Dhammarājā par excellence. He is the conqueror because he has overcome his enemies as well as curbed his passion and anger. The best way to understand it is to have a fair knowledge of ways and means by which a wheel-rolling monarch maintains his authority over his kingdom.

Tambiah accepted that for the Dhammiko Dhammarājā the symbol of Dhamma in political life was the wheel (cakka) which replaced the sceptre or rod as the symbol for Arthasastra in Dharmaśastric and Kautilyan doctrine. Gokhale says that Dhammiko Dhammarājā as described in the Pāli works is a symbol of Dhamma, which is synonymous with Nāya and Sāma. Thus, he explains some of the aspects of the ideal of Buddhist kingship as its emphasis on the rejection of coercive force, its egalitarian ethos and its nature as essence of the righteous state. According to the information of Buddhist texts, we can suggest that the concept of Cakkavatti was made as a model of righteous character by the Buddha and as an example to the other kings of the world.

The wheel-rolling monarch is a king over a vast area of earth, probably an area as large as the Indian sub-continent. So long as he lives, there is no rivalry whatsoever to his authority. As the Lakkhana Sutta puts it, he is not liable to obstruction from any human foe with hostile intent. The Cakkavatti rule is a unification of diverse kingdoms under a single leadership. It is a confederation of regions. Its salient feature is that unification

147 Ibid., p. 250.
149 Gokhale, op.cit., 1953, p. 165.
does not wipe out the diversification. Each kingdom, which comes under the leadership of a wheel-rolling monarch does not lose its independence and identity. His is not a direct ruler over a vast area. By nature and by definition, he declines to be the sole ruler. He maintains a decentralized system of government by allowing the regional kings to enjoy their possession as they were accustomed to "yatahahutam bhunjata." 151 As the Cakkavattisihanada Sutta and Mahasudassana Sutta observe, the regional kings are not subject but allied to the wheel-rolling monarch.152 The Sela Sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya informs that "the warriors, the wealthy kings would be allied to the wheel-rolling monarch (kattiyā bhojarājāno anuyutā bhavantu te)."153 The Samyutta Nikaya observes: "because all petty princes whatsoever are allied to the wheel-rolling monarch, he is reckoned chief among the kings.154 The same idea is expressed in the Lakkhana Sutta.155 There cannot be a wheel-rolling monarch without other kings to look after the regional kingdoms. At the same time, there cannot be Cakkavatti rule if the regional kings do not accept the leadership of the wheel-rolling monarch. Therefore the wheel-rolling monarch is called the king of kings.156 The relationship between the wheel-rolling monarch and regional kings is as simple as that between a teacher and the pupils. According to Cakkavattisihanada and Mahasudassana Suttas, what the regional kings expect from the wheel-rolling monarch is; "O Mighty king, be a teacher to us".157 The bond that emerges because of this relationship is so crucial that the whole Cakkavatti rule shatters when the

153 Suttanipāta, p. 109
regional kings do not act according to the instructions of the wheel-rolling monarch. The wheel symbolizes the authority of the wheel-rolling monarch.

The Buddha himself was an ideal Cakkavatti in an earlier life and had ruled without force.\textsuperscript{158} The fact that the Cakkavatti establishes control over his dominion without the use of force, even though he is accompanied by the four-fold army, is a notable feature of the Dhammiko Dhammarāja.\textsuperscript{159} Of course the Cakkavatti was not interested in mere territorial expansion in controlling the material and physical resources of the dominion but in the establishment of a uniform and just moral and social order. In the Buddhist narration of the Cakkavatti's expedition to the four quarters, rival kings have no fear that their territories will be confiscated by the Dhammarāja. The Cakkavatti has traversed the four continents, \textit{Pubbavideha}, \textit{Jambudīpa}, \textit{Aparagoyāna}, and \textit{Uturukuru} accompanied by the \textit{Cakkaratana}; received the allegiance of all the inhabitants and admonishing them to lead the righteous life, he returns to his own native city.\textsuperscript{160} The Cakkavatti's main concern is teaching the five moral precepts of Buddhism to the layman and to the newly subordinated kings, after which he exhorts them to enjoy their possessions as before.\textsuperscript{161}

The Cakkavatti king then consults Khatiyas, Brāhmanas and Gahapatis of the town and countryside and seeks their sanction. When they indicate their approval, they are all described as colleagues by consent. The leadership provided by the Dhammiko Dhammarāja is crucial to the establishment of social and moral order. If he errs, the

\textsuperscript{158} \textit{Anguttara Nikāya}, Vol. III, p. 221.
\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Dīgha Nikāya}, Vol. II, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. I, p. 125.
Khattiya, Brāhmanas and Gahapatis follow suit, and even nature, is affected. Conversely, when kings are righteous all the reverse concurrence follow.\footnote{Anguttara Nikāya, Vol. II, pp. 79-80.}

I. Peace and security of the Cakkavatti’s kingdom.

Further, one of the prime and foremost duties of a wheel-rolling monarch is to take necessary steps to ensure the life of all living beings in his kingdom. This is a consequence of political stability. According to early Buddhists, the maximum security that can be provided by a government to protect its people and other living beings is available in the society created by the Cakkavatti. A ruler who is unable to fulfil this task to the utmost will never become a Cakkavatti. This is one aspect of the Aryan duty of a wheel-rolling monarch (Ayyam cakkavattivattam).

The Aryan duty as explained in the Dīgha Nikāya and its commentary contains wholesome deeds (dasavidhakusalapathadhama). These consist in (i) providing the right watch, ward and protection (rakkhāvaranagutti) for the king’s own folk and the army, (II) for the Ksatriyas, (III) for vassals, (IV) for Brāhmins and householders, (V) for urban and country dwellers, (VI) for the religious men called Śramana Brāhmanas, (VII) for beasts and birds, (VIII) deterring people from sinful deeds, (IX) giving wealth to the poor and (X) consulting religious men regarding what is good and what is bad.\footnote{"Dhammikam rakkhavaranaguttim samvidahati antojanasmim balakayasmim khattiyesu anuyuttesu brāhmanagahapatikesu negamajjanapadesu samanabrahmanesu migapakkhesu," Anguttara Nikāya, Vol. I. 109, Dīgha Nikāya, Vol. III. p. 61; Dialogue of the Buddha, Vol. III. pp. 62-63; Sumangalamalavilāsini Vol. II. p. 816.} This in brief is the Aryan duty of a Wheel-turning monarch.

It is to be noted that the term “rakkhāvaranagutti” highlights three aspects
of social security in a Cakkavatti kingdom. The first one is 'rakkha', the care. The second one is 'ävarana' the shelter. The third one is 'gutti' the protection. The principle behind the first aspect is that one who cares for others is cared for by others. Four qualities should be practised to accomplish this mutual care. These are forbearance (Khanti), non injury (avihimsā), loving kindness (mettacitta) and compassion (anuddaya). The second aspect indicates that the Cakkavatti provides houses for the living and clothes for dress and cover. The steps taken to ward off oppression from the robbers and other hostile elements are reckoned in the third aspect. All these are what "rakkhāvaranagutti" means in brief. It however covers the establishment of his citizens including his family members in morality, giving them things like garments and garlands, and warding off all misfortunes from the country. The army of a Cakkavatti is given benefits by providing food and wages at the proper time. The regional kings are made closer by giving donkeys, horses and wealth. His officials are made happy by supplying suitable vehicles. The Brāhmīns are satisfied by donating food and garments. The householders and the dwellers in villages and towns are made happy by allotting food, seed corn and paddy, and plough and cattle. Those who are engaged in religious life are respected by bestowing these requisites. The beasts and birds are consoled by giving them freedom to live.164

The protection of life is guaranteed to all categories of men and women living throughout his kingdom. There is no favoured caste, class or religion. It is not the army that provides security for the people. It is the Cakkavatti who provides the security

164 Ibid.
for both the army and people. The hypocritical method of having sanctuaries here and there is completely abandoned in this society.

The whole kingdom is a sanctuary for beasts and birds. Whatever happens in actual practice, the principle that human life should be protected is accepted in almost all the systems of government. Only in the society of a Cakkavatti, is it extended with equal emphasis to animal life? It is not a society for pleasure hunting. It is a society where animals and birds sacred or otherwise are not slaughtered for human or divine satisfaction as, in the case of animal sacrifice. In a society of a wheel-rolling monarch, a life is not taken away to sustain another life.

According to commentarial explanation, the principle of “rakkhāvaranagutti” of a wheel-rolling monarch is not confined to security and defence of the people and the country. It indicates that a Cakkavatti and employment are satisfactorily solved. Furthermore, it is a society where the basic needs of each and every group of individuals are met by the government. The people in the kingdom of a Cakkavatti are so trained in morality that theirs is the most disciplined society that can ever be created.

II. Paramount significance of the Cakkavatti

The paramount significance that the passage in the Suttas states is that of “right watch, ward and protection”, which is specifically extended to the recluses, Śramana and Brāhmins (Samanabrāhmanesu). The Dhammiko Dhammarājā patronises Śramanas and Brāhmanas who are worthy, providing them with all the things necessary to pursue

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165 Ibid.
166 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 63.

The word ‘samanabrāhma’ is used in the Pāli canon to indicate leaders of religious life. The word ‘samana’ represents the leaders as well as the followers of the religious movement, which came to prominence challenging the traditional system of belief and morality. The Brāhmaṇa represents the Vedic and Upanisadic thinkers and their followers. In other words, the term ‘samanabrāhma’ signifies all the religious and philosophical systems. In the Sangāharava Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya, four such groups are given under the term ‘samanabrāhma’. They are Anussavika, Takka, Vimansi and those who gained a higher knowledge personally of a doctrine among a doctrine traditionally not heard before. The Buddha belongs to the last category here.\footnote{Majjhima Nikāya, Vo, II, p. 121.}

Commenting on the Sangāharava Sutta, Jayatilake observes, “we find here the Buddha classifying his predecessors and contemporaries in respect of their ways of knowing into three classes, viz. (1) the traditionalists (Anussavika) (2) rationalists and metaphysicians (Takka and Vimansi). (3) The “experimentalists” who had a personal high knowledge of the truth of their doctrine in the society of a wheel rolling monarch. All these movements are equally protected.\footnote{Jayatilake, op.cit, 1963, p. 171.}

A Cakkavatti does not identify himself with any of the religious movements. There is no state religion in the kingdom of a wheel-rolling monarch. He is a secular ruler in the sense that the state does not favour one religion over the others. Freedom of expression, belief and worship are absolutely guaranteed to the extent that the state does not tamper or interfere with any religion. It is a society of religious harmony and tolerance where the state sustains all the religions by providing equal opportunities.
Where there is perfect freedom without reservation whatsoever in the sphere of religion and philosophy, there is found the society of a wheel-rolling monarch.

A Cakkavatti is to consult the leaders of all religions in time and again on moral and ethical matters. This is one of the four major aspects of the Aryan duty of a wheel-rolling monarch. He should consult men of religious life of the calibre of those who have renounced the carelessness arising from the intoxication of the senses and devoted to forbearance and sympathy, each mastering self, each calming self, each explaining what is good and what is bad, what is blameworthy and what is praiseworthy, what is to be associated and what is to be left, what line of action in the long run would be for the well being or for suffering. The Cakkavatti is to listen to them and act accordingly by getting rid of what is bad and taking up what is good. 170

This reveals two points of importance: Firstly, there is no place for those who masquerade as religious dignitaries. Only those who lead a true religious life are to be consulted by the Cakkavatti. Secondly, the head of state is not supposed to take arbitrary decisions on his own especially, on matters concerning morals and ethics. Furthermore, those who lead a religious life have nothing to do with state affairs in a Cakkavatti’s rule. The approach of a wheel-rolling monarch towards religion is two dimensional. On the one hand, it is absolutely protected in his rule. On the other, where and when necessary, the religious leaders are consulted by the state. In this way the Cakkavatti keeps religion and politics apart in his kingdom. Therefore there is no opportunity in his realm for the chaos that would arise through the intermixture of religion and politics. 171

III Dhammika activities and the Cakkavatti’s kingdom

In the kingdom of a Cakkavatti, there is no opportunity for wrongdoing. The advice according to the Aryan duty of a wheel-rolling monarch propounded in the Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta is ‘throughout your kingdom let there be no wrongdoing’. The word ‘adhammakāro’ is explained as ‘Adhammakiriyāya’ (wrong deed) in the commentary. What are these wrong deeds against which a Cakkavatti should take immediate action? Neither the Sutta nor commentary names them. There is, however, a clue in the Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta, which throws light on this connection. On his visits to the four regions, a Cakkavatti is said to have advised the regional kings as: you shall not kill living things, you shall not take what has not been given, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not speak lie, you shall not drink maddening drink. Therefore, it is not incorrect to surmise that the wrong deeds that a Cakkavatti wipes out from his kingdom are the same.

The Sādhuvagga of the Anguttara Nikāya clarifies this issue further. It speaks of ten points which are termed as wrong (asādu), barbarous (anāriya), bad (akusala), harmful (anatta), evil (adhamma), blameworthy (sāvajja), remorseful (tapaniya), leading to transgression (ācayagāmani), yielding pain (dukkhuddarayam) and maturing in suffering (dukkavipākam). It should be noted that the word adhamma found in the statement “mā ca te vijite adhammakāro pavattitha” of the Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta and the commentarial remark “adhammakāro ti adhammakiriyā” of the

Sumangalavilāsini is found in the above context of the *Anguttara Nikāya*. Furthermore, all the other adjectives used here are more or less equivalent to the word *adhamma*. Therefore, it is reasonable to think that wrong deed is implied in the *Anguttara Nikāya* under the above titles. They are taking life, taking what is not given, wrong conduct in sexual desire, falsehood, slander, bitter speech, idle babble, covetousness, harmfulness and wrong view. Quite clearly, these are in conformity with the advice of the wheel-rolling monarch mentioned above. As the concept of Cakkavatti envisages an environment, which is not conducive to these social evils and one that can be brought about only in the kingdom of a wheel-rolling monarch.

Anyone who considers that the Cakkavatti does not advocate any sort of punishment exaggerates the true nature of a wheel-rolling monarch. What is missing under his rule are severe and cruel punishments, which are carried out arbitrarily. In general, a Cakkavatti believes not in punishment but in education and instruction. However, as a king, punishment becomes his legacy in which he maintains restraint and fair play so that no unlawful and unnecessary punishment is carried out in his kingdom. It is to be noted here that a Cakkavatti does not overrun the regional kingdom by punishment. That is what is meant by the word “adandena” in the Pāli canon. It does not necessarily mean that a Cakkavatti does not apply it in day to day affairs in his administration.177

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IV Economic activities and Cakkavatti

The notion of kingship and the protection of family and private property are inseparably linked together. Therefore, by definition, the wheel-rolling monarch has to shoulder the responsibility of looking after the family life and private property. He takes the following steps to look after the family life.

The great realm in Kūtadanta Sutta, helped his subjects by providing their basic needs and developing their occupations. In the Kūtadanta Sutta the dilemma of a ruler faced with a serious law and order problem in his realm is considered. The question examined is whether it would be more effective to take harsh, punitive measures, 'by degradation and banishment, and fines and bonds and death,' or to adopt another method, that of positive, constructive action, which nowadays would be called a development programme, that is, one aimed at increased agricultural production, capital grants for the development of trade, and improvement in administration. In the case, which is being described, the latter alternative was followed and proved highly successful. As a result of these activities, the country became quiet and peaceful and the populace were pleased with one another and happy, danced with children in their arms and dwelled with open doors.¹⁷⁸

Cakkavatti Dalhanemi in the Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta also helped his subjects to develop their agriculture and other personal occupations, distributing his wealth among them.¹⁷⁹ In the Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta the Buddha analyses the causes leading to crises in society. When poverty is rampant the people resort to vices of numerous kinds. The king, according to Buddhism, is obliged to take precautionary steps by analysing the root

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., Vol. III, p. 64.
causes of crime and to make the life of his citizens secure, safe and prosperous. Wealth not being given to the destitute, poverty became rife, from the growth of poverty, taking of what was not given increased, from the increased use of weapons, the taking of life increased, from the increase in lying, back biting increased, from the increase of back biting, sexual misconduct increased. 180

The Cakkavatti stabilizes the economy of his kingdom so that population will be pleased. He takes the following steps to look after private property and he extends state assistance by way of providing raw material and capital expenditure to develop private land and trade enterprises. 181 There is no place for unjust and arbitrary of his economic policy. The strict instruction not to take what is not given is made known throughout his kingdom. 182 Above all, under the aspect of 'gutti' in "rakkavanaguttī", he takes firm action to wipe out the oppression caused by robbers. 183 In dealing with robbers, a Cakkavatti embarks on a two-pronged strategy. As has been observed earlier, kingship arose with the institution of punishment. Without some form of punishment, no state can prevail. Therefore, by definition, the wheel-rolling monarch punishes those who are guilty of stealing. This is the avowed duty of a king. Punishment to theft has to be carried out for the sake of maintaining private property otherwise, conception of kingship becomes meaningless and the state fails utterly. It should be remembered here that stealing is not always done by those who do not have means to maintain themselves. As mentioned before, it is sometimes done by well to do people.

180 Ibid., pp. 64-65.
Therefore, economic prosperity alone does not uproot stealing from a society. This aspect is delineated in the Aggañña Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. On the other hand, there is no doubt that destitution and maldistribution of wealth cause people to steal. In these circumstances, there is no justification in meting out punishment for theft to a person who takes what is not given solely to keep himself alive. He commits theft not because of any other reason but because of the fact he has nothing else to maintain himself with. The cure for him lies not in punishment but in proper economic planning. This aspect is depicted in the Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta of Dīgha Nikāya.

The sources are reticent as to the way and means of revenue in the kingdom of a wheel-rolling monarch apart from the fact that he has an able treasurer who could provide necessary wealth for any urgent project at short notice. The description of the treasurer makes one believe that there should be an organized treasury with uninterrupted avenues of revenue.

As the lord of soil and land, the Cakkavatti may control the natural resources of wealth. Taxation is supposed to be his prime method of collecting revenue. In the Kūtadanta Sutta, the king is advised not to levy new taxes at a time of distress. Even though the king in the Kūtadanta Sutta is not a wheel-rolling monarch, it is legitimate to think that he too is supposed to follow this advice to the very letter. According to the Mahāsudassana Sutta, a Cakkavatti has enough wealth accumulated through taxation. There, king Mahāsudassana declares: "I have enough wealth, my friend, laid up for

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184 Dīgha Nikāya, Vol. III, pp. 92-93
185 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 65.
myself, the produce of righteous taxation.\textsuperscript{188} Taxation is one of the fields where the ordinary kings and governments often make mistakes and take wrong decisions. Therefore, the words \textquotedblleft dhammikena balikena \textquotedblright (by righteous taxation) are quite important in this statement. In a Cakkavatti's kingdom, taxation is neither a burden to its citizens nor a curse to the government. The treasury of a Cakkavatti is rich enough to establish a perpetual grant to provide food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked, means of conveyance for those who need it, couches for the tired, wives for those who want wives, gold for the poor, and money for those who are in want.\textsuperscript{189} It is to be specially noted that the welfare activities are extended even to find partners for those who want to lead a married life in a Cakkavatti's kingdom.

According to this explanation, the universal king has a special place in Buddhism. He always practises virtuous deeds, righteous life and performs welfare activities for the happiness of all beings of the world like Buddha.

1.3 The Dhamma concept of Buddhism as a political issue

1.3.1 Evolution of the concept of Dharma (Dhamma)

Dharma as a political concept is of great significance in the configuration of the political institutions of ancient India. In the range of Indian thought, it is doubtful whether any concept is as significant as that of Dharma. The senses of law (\textit{Dharma}) are closely related to each other in ancient India.
The first sources of law namely Dharma has been treated as the most comprehensive source by all the political thinkers of India. The Rgveda usually associates, Dharman with cosmic ordinance, often in connection with the sense of natural or divine law. As such, it is conceptually closely related to the Vedic notion of Rta, or universal harmony in which all things in the world would have a proper place and function. The two terms (Dharma and Rta) are different in meaning in that whereas Rta is an impersonal law, Dharman characterises those personal actions that engender or maintain cosmic order of the Rgveda. These two, Rta and Dharma, closely associate conceptions of an omnipotent cosmic or divine order. Dharma that stands for law, the principle of justice, sphere of conduct in conformity with the established custom is represented as a god in the Rgveda, whereas Dharma of the Atharvaveda is a regular word for 'law' and 'custom'.

According to Vedic literature, Rta and Satya have been interpreted as two aspects of one and the same idea of reality. The relation between Dharma, Satya and Rta is so close that very often one takes the place of the other. Rta assumes the name of Satya when it is manifested in the form of practice, duty, or conduct. Max Muller says that in the Vedic hymns Rta, meaning the order of the heavenly movements, became in time the name for order and righteousness. Gupta suggests that to this cosmic plan, the regulative principle of universal and also social, harmony gave the name of Rta.

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190 Rgveda. Vol. III, 3.1; 17.1.60.6; V 26.6, 63.7, 72.2.
192 Atharvaveda, XI, 7. 17; XII, 5. 7, XVIII, 3. 1.
194 Max Muller, Hibbert Lectures and India, London, 1875, p. 235.
Further, there is another conception in the Vedas, which is intimately connected with the concept of Dharma. This is \textit{Rta}. God \textit{Varuna} is the upholder of order in the universe and human society, and hence his surname is \textit{Rtaśya Gopa}, meaning the \textit{Gopa} or guardian of \textit{Rta} or order. \textit{Varuna} is both \textit{Dharmapati} and \textit{Rtaśya Gopa} and rightly so; for the twin conceptions of law and order, Dharma and \textit{Rta} are intimately connected. The cosmic order (\textit{Rta}) rules over the whole universe.\footnote{R\textit{gveda}, V, 63.7.} These two conceptions are logically related to each other as cause and effect: \textit{Rta} being the effect of Dharma, the cause. But if these two conceptions are applied to natural phenomena, Dharma and \textit{Rta} tend to merge into each other, for law in the scientific sense of sequence and co-existence is another name for order and harmony.\footnote{R\textit{gveda}, III, 3.1; V, 63.7-9.} Thus, Dharma which is defined as the laws of the Vedas is binding upon all religious men.\footnote{A. A. Macdonell and A. B. Keith, \textit{Vedic Index of Name and Subject}, Vol. I, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1958, p. 390.} Further, in the early Vedic age, Dharma and \textit{Rta} are deities and not the tribal chief who was the protector of Dharma and guardian of \textit{Rta}.

In the age when the \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa} was composed the conception of law (\textit{Dharma}) changed and possibly this was a case of theory adjusting itself to actual facts. Although in the earlier period the god \textit{Varuna} was \textit{Dharmapati},\footnote{\textit{"For Varuna Dharmapati} (the Lord of the law) he then prepares a \textit{Varuna} pap of barley; thereby \textit{Varuna}, the Lord of the law, makes him Lord of the law; and that true is the supreme state, when one is Lord of the law, for whoever attains to the supreme state, to him they come in (matter of) law; therefore to \textit{Varuna Dharmapati}.\textit{ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa}, V, 3. 3-9.} but subsequently the king became the \textit{Dharmapati} as protector of the law. The \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa} says that the king is the upholder of the Dharma.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, V, 3. 3-5, 4. 5.} The \textit{Aitareya Brāhmaṇa} clearly states that the king is called the protector of Dharma (\textit{dharmaśya gopā}), to the royal sacrificer, thus
hinting at the king’s guardianship of the law. It is clear that Brähmanas claimed to be the upholders of law along with the king. Then the theory of the theological origin of law was formulated in the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad. It runs thus: “He (god) was not strong enough. He created still further the most excellent Dharma (law). Dharma is force to force or power to power. Law is the ‘Khsatra’ of the ‘Kshatra’. Therefore, there is nothing higher than law. Thus, even a weak man rules the stronger with the help of Dharma as with the help of the king. This Dharma is called the truth. If a man declares what is truth, they say that it is Dharma and if he declares the law, they say that he declares what is true. Thus, both are the same.” The concept of Dharma as depicted in the Upanisad from which we have quoted, implied that Dharma came to be identified with the will of the creator and also equivalent to truth. But it is not correct to equate law and morality. Ajit Kumar Sen implies that truth is law and law is truth. The metaphysical aspect of law is seen in the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad.

The Dharma of the epics and the Dharmasāstra is represented usually as the practice of the learned, the elect and persons who are always free from hatred and passion. The epic character of the Dharma (righteous law) is likewise highly generalised in conception and metaphysical at the analysis.

In the Mahābhārata, Dharma is described as being based on justice and truth and dependent on the king. If the king is righteous, the people consider that Dharma is more important than kingdom. A king who followed Dharma, ruled for a long

202 Brhadāranyaka Upanisad, I, 4, 14.  
205 Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, V. 33.  
206 Ibid., Śānti Parva, XX. 161.  
207 Ibid., Ādi Prva, LXXII. 18.
The Anusāsanā Parva of the Mahābhārata mentions that the king who is well conversant with the science of duty and morality is the first requisite of the kingdom's property. Those people, whose king is unrighteous and atheistic in contact and belief, can never be happy. Those people, who have a wise and righteous king live happily and work in happiness. Through the blessing and righteous acts of such a king his subjects become freed from anxiety. The subjects, restrained from wicked acts, grow in prosperity, through their conduct. Capable of retaining what they have, they go on making new acquisitions. A king who acts in the interest of Dharma, is known as (identified with) Dharma. He is called Rājan, in whom righteousness dominates.

According to the Mahābhārata, the king should learn both the paths of Dharma and non-Dharma. Whatever the king will fix as Dharma (law) it is to be considered as actual Dharma and is useful to his administration. Dharma is at first superficially said to be based on justice and truth. Dharma rises from and resides in custom. Further, idealization led the epic to conclude that Dharma is the highest and the only god. Its character comprises its many aspects; after all Dharma is one, it is also constant.

Therefore, all Dharmas lead to one state and any one Dharma may lead to the eternal Dharma. This is like the stoic doctrine of virtues, one virtue leading to other, and all are known where one is known. As such it is the good of all. Ultimately all these run into one another and Dharma becomes equal to goodness, light and beauty.

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208 Ibid., Vana Parva, LXII. 3.
209 Ibid., Anusāsanā Parva, LXII. 40-44.
210 Ibid., Śānti Parva, XC. 3.
211 Ibid., XC. 14.
212 Ibid., Mokshadharma Parva, XII, 262.
213 Ibid., Anusāsanā Parva, XXI. 23, 27, 29; Moksadharma, Parva, XXII. 51.
214 Ibid., Udyoga Parva, XI. 33; Mokshadharma Parva, XXII. 34; Bhīṣma Parva, II. 23.
king should learn both parts of Dharma and that of non-Dharma. It is useful for him to keep his subjects happy.\textsuperscript{215}

Righteousness takes the king to heaven while unrighteousness flings him to hell.\textsuperscript{216} Furthermore, the \textit{Mahābhārata} describes how Dharma influences the king and the state. Anarchy was imagined to be the condition when Dharma was not cared for and hence Dharma disappeared completely.\textsuperscript{217} The king and Dharma are reciprocally protective and Dharma presumes the kingdom.\textsuperscript{218} The king is created for protecting Dharma, which takes the shelter of kings. The king is made like the very self of Dharma. To advance Dharma is the best of ability and is the duty of the king. When Dharma is increased, people also increase, and when Dharma disappears in the kingdom, the people also go down. It is never good to let Dharma down. Evils are removed through the power of Dharma. Dharma was created for the birth and growth of beings. Therefore, for the good of people the king ought to protect Dharma. He is truly king when Dharma is ever present. The king being unrighteous, deformed, dumb and imbecile, men come into being and so do untimely winter and untimely summer, excessive rain, want of rain and many other deniers. Therefore, the \textit{Mahābhārata} says that it is the king who is the cause of the origin of the good and evil of the world. The \textit{Mahābhārata} declares that sovereignty exists for the sake of Dharma. It is the king in whom Dharma lies and the subjects should be protected in accordance with Dharma.\textsuperscript{219} Dharma is more important than a kingdom and one who followed Dharma, rules for a long time.\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{215} \textit{Ibid.}, Sānti Parva, DXXX. 5.
\textsuperscript{216} \textit{Ibid.}, Sānti Parva, XC. 4-6, 10-11, XCI. 6, 19.
\textsuperscript{217} \textit{Ibid.}, Rajadharmānusāsana Parva., XXXII. 34.
\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Ibid.}, Vana Parava XXVI. 32; Rajadharmānusāsana Parva, XXXII. 14.
\textsuperscript{219} \textit{Ibid.}, Pajadharama Parva, XXXII. 24-27, 30, 38.
\textsuperscript{220} \textit{Ibid.}, Vana Parava, CLXXIII. 3, 16.
The ways to Dharma are eight according to the epics viz. *yajña*, study, charity, *tapas*, truth, forgiveness, self-control, un-covetousness.\(^{221}\) Further, social, moral, political and economic well being of the people depends exclusively on the observance of Dharma by the king.\(^ {222} \) The king should pay attention to Dharma, which is the best thing that leads to prosperity; therefore, he should pay regard to Brāhmānas because they are the source of Dharma.\(^ {223} \) Like rivers that go to the sea, prosperity is attained by a king, who has good quality, who does not censure others and who is self restrained and wise. Such a king makes great achievements.\(^ {224} \) A king removes the ' *Adharma* ' just as the Sun removes darkness. According to the *Mahābhārata*, Dharma depends on the king. The king who followed Dharma was called creator and the king who neglected it was deemed to be a destroyer.\(^ {225} \)

In the *Mahābhārata*, Dharma has been used in a different sense. When it is said that a particular person should do a particular act because it is his Dharma, the word means duty. i.e. *Rājadharmā* (duty of king), *Prajādharma* (duty of subjects) and *Mitradharma* (duty of a friend). Establishment of Dharma has been deemed to be the most important function of a state in the *Mahābhārata*. It justifies the existence of sovereignty on the ground that it maintains Dharma. The *Mahābhārata* regards obedience to the state as obligatory on all because the most important function of the state is to establish and maintain Dharma. The inclusion of the maintenance of Dharma in the functions of state was due to the belief that Dharma helped the government to be more

\(^{221}\) *Ibid.*, Āranyaka Parva, IX. 2.
\(^{225}\) *Ibid.*, Rajadharmānusāsana Parva, XII. 90. 9.
stable in every sense and under all circumstances. The states, themselves were in conformity with an established moral code because Dharma was believed to guide them.

The epic *Rāmāyana* also advocates that the king should involve himself in the activities of Dharma. In the epic period, it was believed that Dharma had its root in the king.\(^{226}\) We find Vālmiki referring to the ingredients of Dharma at different places in the epic: such as *Satamdharma, Sanātanadharma, Gunadharma, Pitrpaqmahadharma.*\(^{227}\)

The *Rāmāyana* also believes that the inversion of qualities is the cause of calamity of every element of the state. According to it, the calamity, which can weaken or destroy the king, is caused by the application of Dharma and *Artha.* In life in a way they do not complement each other by allowing *Kāma* to obstruct the application of both Dharma and *Artha.*\(^{228}\) It is also an allusion that people always followed their king and therefore, the king was expected to have exemplary conduct.\(^{229}\) The king was responsible for maintaining the observance of Dharma among his people and for the happiness of the people. It was understood that these depended on the king's pious deeds. An unrighteous king was considered worse than even a lump of earth.\(^{230}\)

According to the observation of the righteous concept of the epics, they highlight Dharma and show Dharma as the main part of the kingdom. Hence, the king respects and honours Dharma for the prosperity of the state and for himself. There is no theological part associated with Dharma. It is introduced as a main part, which has bounded by the virtues of the king.

\(^{226}\) *Rāmāyana*, III. 5. 10.
\(^{228}\) *Ibid.*, II. 94. 53.
The laws of Manu and Yājñavalkya also give some ideas about Dharma and how it influenced the rulers and the state. Manu says that the king is the most important unit of state administration. Therefore, the king should follow the advice of Brāhmanas and learn the Vedas. He should constantly learn worship from aged Brāhmanas; the lessons of discipline should be learnt from them; the four traditional sciences should be learnt from the experts; and he should acquire knowledge of the supreme soul for intellectual and moral (Dharma) qualifications of the rulers. Yājñavalkya also remarks that the king should be energetic, grateful, honour the elders, be modest, truthful, not procrastinate, be virtuous, intelligent, heroic, guarding his weak point and trained in the sacred Canon, philosophy, politics and economics. Dharma has been characterised by Manu as that which is followed by the well-versed and accepted whole-heartedly by good men who are immune to feelings of hatred and disaffection towards others.

That the law can be interpreted as good conduct is seen in the dictum of Yājñavalkya viz. “Dharma is Sadācāra” (good conduct). Manu as well as Yājñavalkya mention Dharma as self-satisfaction (ātmāsīthi). Further, Manu says that all Dharmas are born of deliberation. But Yājñavalkya thinks that all Dharmas are rooted in deliberation. Manu states that Dharma consists in the application of righteousness to all cases arising between the members of the state. Manu has ten signs of Dharma: contentment, forgiveness, restraint, un-covetousness, purity, self-control, intelligence, self-knowledge, truth and calmness.

231 Manu, VII. 37-53.
232 Yājñavalkya, II. 1. 309-311.
233 Manu, II. 1.
234 Yājñavalkya, I. 7.
235 Ibid, II. 6, 13; Yājñavalkya, I. 7.
236 Ibid., III. 3; Yājñavalkya, I. 7-8.
237 Ibid., VI. 92.
According to Manu's opinion, one should not transgress or neglect Dharma, even while confronted with great difficulties caused by Dharma, because those, who give up Dharma soon, meet their fall and he thinks that one should cut out Artha and Kāma, if they oppose Dharma. Dharma can also be given up, if it hurts the feeling of others and does not lead to happiness; probably due to the belief that Dharma corresponds to the Sattvaguna. Further, he suggested that custom is the highest Dharma dictated by Sruti as well as Smriti. The sages having seen the way of Dharma, through custom have accepted it as the root of highest Tapas. Where righteousness is violated by unrighteousness and truth by falsehood... then the whole (judicial) assembly is said to be destroyed, for righteousness violated destroys (the world) but maintains it when it is itself preserved.

Manu and Yājñavalkya, describe Dharma as one of the main parts of the state as well as of the society. Varma states that Manu exalted Dharma to the state of supreme principle of human life and he advocates the moral roots of political power of the state. Thus, Dharma is an advisor or guide of the king and state administration. Manu assumed that it was not divine or universal, but was practical and was essential for the prosperity of the state and the king.

Kautilya also discussed the concept of Dharma and it's relation with royal duty. Although Kautilya expounds the superiority of Artha, he believes that wealth is important in as much as Dharma and Kāma depend upon it for their realisation. Further, Kautilya clearly emphasised virtues (Dharma) as a basis of wealth (Artha) and enjoyment as the

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238 Ibid., IV. 171, 176; XII. 38.
239 Ibid., I. 101-110, VIII. 14,15.
241 Arthaśāstra, I. 6.7.
end of wealth. Success was in achieving that kind of wealth, which promoted morality (Dharma). Wealth and enjoyment indicate all round success and one should follow Kāma without violating Dharma and Artha.242 The Arthaśāstra says that a matter in dispute has four feet, viz. law, transaction, custom and the royal edict and the latter one supersedes the earlier one.243 Likewise, Kautilya advises the spreading of virtues in the state and to test the virtuous officers should be appointed in the department of judicial administration.244 Even Kautilya’s empirical outlook had to yield to Dharma (righteous law) as eternal truth holding sway over the world.

The Arthaśāstra states that Dharma is rooted in truth. Further, the king is the judicial source of law and his decision is given in accordance with law.245 At one place the Kautilyan king is called Dharmapraavartaka, which is taken to mean he is the promulgator of a Dharma.246 It is further, said that he should do away with unrighteous practices and establish righteous practices in their place. The king should worship the local gods and favour the orators, and religious and intellectual leaders with gifts of land and much remission of taxes.247 The people always help the just king rather than a strong unjust king.248 Hence, the Arthaśāstra notes that every one must refrain from injury to others and must tell the truth, live purely, practice goodwill, be forgiving, and exercise patience at all time. Such a ruler is known as Sadācāra (pertaining to every body) Samānya (common) or Satana (eternal) in scope.249 He also lays emphasis on the

242 Ibid., VII. 6.5.6.
243 Ibid., III. 1.40.
244 Ibid., I. 10.1-4.
245 Ibid., III. 1.40-44.
246 Ibid., III. 17.42.
248 Ibid., VII. 5. 16-18.
249 Ibid., I. 3. 13.
observance of Dharma by a king because that king, who protects his people in accordance with Dharma, goes to heaven.\textsuperscript{250} It is, further, prescribed that the Dharma, that is; the law of inheritance, which may be peculiar to any region or community or Sangha or village, should be recognised and up held.\textsuperscript{251} Varnāśrama Dharma was due to the belief that its observance leads to prosperity in the world. If neglected it results in the destruction of a state.\textsuperscript{252}

Varma emphasises that at least three meanings of Dharma can be distinguished in Kautilya: (I) Dharma in the sense of social duty, (II) Dharma as moral law based on truth, (III) Dharma as civil law.\textsuperscript{253} According to the Dharma concept of the Arthaśāstra, it is clear that Kautilya attempted to highlight Dharma as one of the main parts, which has been protected and established by the king in his state to promote his authority.

Some political thinkers who lived after Kautilya highlighted the relation between the king and the concept of Dharma. The Kāmāndaka Nitiśāstra says that the subjects respect the Dharmika king. Dharma helps in the prosperity of the state. Hence a king should attach due importance to Dharma.\textsuperscript{254} The Śukra Nitiśāstra explains that people perish along with their ruler, if the latter violates Dharma, whereas that king earns glory for a long time in whose kingdom people follow Svadharma and who himself sticks to Dharma and Niti. A king, without Dharma and Niti, is actually weak because the 'Dhārmika' king can punish him as if he were a thief. By protecting Dharma even a worthless king becomes the best one and by neglecting it even a good (Uttama) king

\textsuperscript{250} Ibid., I. 3. 14.
\textsuperscript{251} Ibid., 3. 7. 40.
\textsuperscript{252} Ibid., I. 3. 15, Ill. 4. 13-17.
\textsuperscript{253} Varma, \textit{op. cit.}, 1977, p. 119.
\textsuperscript{254} Kāmāndaka Nitiśāstra, I. 11-15.
turns to be a worthless (Nīca) one. Likewise, Śukra gave advice to follow Svadharma, without opposing Jātidharma, Janapadadharma, Śrenidharma, Kuladharma and Deśadharmā, otherwise people get annoyed with him. The king, who himself follows Dharma and establishes Dharma in his people without giving rise to conflict with the above mentioned Dharma, attains prosperity and glory. A king should think himself to be a servant so far as the duty of protecting the people is concerned.

Further, Śukra Nītiśāstra goes to the extent of saying that by doing royal duty, he earns the merit of a sacrifice and attains salvation.

These latter political thinkers also attempted to show that Dharma is neither a sacred concept nor is it theological, instead it is a practical quality which aims to cultivate virtues in life not only by rulers but also every human being. Likewise, they explain Dharma as one way to reach prosperity and happiness of the state as well as life.

The most important contribution of the Buddhist canonists of the Theravāda school to ancient political thought consists in their ‘total’ application of the principle of righteousness to the branches of the king’s internal and external policy. Buddhism attempts to present a new interpretation of Dhamma. Varma states that in Buddhism we find the partial triumph of the metaphysic because Buddha condemned all theological godheads. He emphasised a logical and dialectical analysis of things and thought the formula of dependent origination but in his political ideas he did not draw any implication that the Dhamma, would in any way affect political and social behaviour.

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255 Śukra Nītiśāstra, IV. 238-239, 246.
256 Ibid., IV. 568-570.
257 Ibid., l. 30-31, IV. 241, 249-250.
258 See pp. 44, 66.
259 Varma, op.cit., 1977, p. 163.
We have already distinguished between Dhamma as a code of conduct and Dhamma as an all-pervasive, inexorable, indestructible and eternal mystic entity. In the second aspect as a mystic entity Dhamma stood above and beyond the state. These ideas provide us a basis for the construction of what may be termed as the political theory of the early Buddhists.

The inherent arbitrary tendencies of the state’s power confronted the early Buddhists with a serious problem, which they sought to solve through their own theories on the proper exercise of that power. The taming of political power constantly exercised their minds and they saw a solution to the problem through their theory of Dhamma.\(^{260}\) Two primary distinctions must be made in any meaningful analysis of the term Dhamma as a political concept. The first is the distinction made between *Atta* and *Dhamma*. The term *Atta* is generally translated as advantage, gain, blessing, happiness, welfare, material advantage and in the practical means it is used to secure the desired benefit.\(^{261}\) In this essence *Atta* refers to the concerns of the world. As distinguished from this, Dhamma is specifically related to spiritual welfare either here or more often used in the next world. In political contexts the two terms are often used in compounds such as “*Attadhamānusakamacco*” counsellor in worldly and moral affairs according to Buddhism. Further, both terms may be rendered as actions conducive to prosperity and righteousness. According to Buddhism, these two are essential and inseparable parts of the institutions as material and moral welfare of its subjects.

It is this nature of Dhamma or righteousness that gives the early Buddhist idea of the basis of allegiance in relationship between the state and its citizens. Buddhism defines

\(^{260}\) See p. 66.

\(^{261}\) *Pāli-English Dictionary*, p. 23.
the king as one who pleases others by Dhamma. According to this interpretation the king must involve Dhamma to ensure happiness and prosperity of his subjects. If a king rules according to Dhamma, the subjects obey him so long as the king abides by its wish.

The Buddhist political Dhamma concept is a theory of royal conduct; with Cariyā or Vidhāna (procedure or method) that makes a king a moral being which was the ultimate objective of early Buddhist political theory. Buddhism envisages that some moral discipline on the kings is essential. Dasarājadhāmma (Ten royal virtues) is one of the major political concepts, which relates to the Dhamma concept of Buddhism. Further, the king must know and cultivate the qualities of discretion with regard to Atta (welfare) Dhamma (law), Matta (moderation), Kāla (time) and Parisa (counsel). In the descriptions of good kings, the Jātaka stories say that they ruled in righteousness and that they shunned the four wrong courses of life (agatigamana) viz. Canda, (comprising excitement), Dosa (malice), Bhaya (fear), Moha (delusion). The high morality began with the king who observes the five commandments. But the ideal king expects to do much more than observe the basic precepts. He cleans from his mind all traces of Lobha (avarice), Dosa (ill will) and Moha (intellectual error) and he was also expected to cultivate the virtues of non-injury and weapons of distraction (satta). These qualities of the ideal king of Buddhism provide a guide to the general kings to promote their morality and righteousness. Further, kings always treat the four objects (Cattārisangahā Vattuni) for the happiness of the subjects.

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262 See pp. 67-69
263 See pp. 72-75.
The four objects are: Dāna (alms giving), Priyavacana (kind speech) Attacariyā (a life of usefulness) and Samānātmakā (equality or impartiality). These four qualities according to Buddhism will be conducive to the smooth and harmonious running of the world. Moreover, these four qualities are a summary of all the virtues recognised in Buddhism especially in relation to others in the society. These are related to love, sympathy, kindness, friendliness, mercy, pity, compassion and all other human feelings and actions springing out of those, which are measured in relation to others in mind.

A king should involve and cultivate these qualities through long and strict regimen of deep meditation and intense and constant introspection. Such a psychological preparation would enable the king to comprehend what is Dhamma and how to associate it with the everyday task of governance. The Buddha clearly emphasises that Dhamma was the Lord of the king. Further, by ascribing Dhamma as the basis of loyalty to the state they endow it with a charisma, which at once becomes an instrument for the legitimisation of political power in the state and its control by an agency higher than itself. The state, thus, emerges as a mystic entity of control by non-rational forces and obeying norms of continuance and dissolution beyond the reach of its subjects. In the Buddhist view, the Dhamma limits potential despotism of the state and its subordination to the Dhamma makes it an instrument of morality and the state a moral institution.

The concept of Dhamma in Buddhism moralised the power of the state and transformed it from being a legal institution into a moral force. Dhamma is expected to

eliminate the violence of despotism, greed and arbitrariness inherent in the power of the state and make it an instrument of higher morality.

1.3.2 Qualities of righteous and unrighteous king

Buddhist literature is replete with references to kings, their titles and their activities. According to their activities and character these rulers are categorised as those who have done virtuous deeds, have lived righteously, and are hence referred to as righteous kings. Thus Bimbisāra, king of Magadha and patron of Buddhism in the time of the Buddha, has been introduced in the Janavasabha Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya as a righteous ruler (Dhammiko Dhammarājā).\(^{270}\) In the Jātakas some kings have been introduced with the title of righteous or unrighteous, For example, king Makādeva who was righteous and ruled righteously in the Mithilā, realm of Videha.\(^{271}\) According to Mahāsīlava Jātaka, the king, son of Brahmādatta in Vārānasi, ruled his people righteously under the title of great king goodness.\(^{272}\) In Vārānasi, Brahmādatta, son of king Brahmādatta, came to be king and proved to be a righteous king.\(^{273}\) Ruhuka Jātaka mentions that Bodhisatta became king after his father’s death, and ruled in righteousness.\(^{274}\) Further, the Jātaka stories such as Cullapadua, Vikannaka, Madupāni, Sujāta, Sandibheda, Ghata, Nandiyāmiga, Gandhāra, Aditta, Janaka, Dasarata, Sadhina, Sivi, Sambhava, Kusa, Cullahamsa, Mahāsutasoma, Migapakka, Mahānārada contain references to righteous kings and their rule of righteousness.\(^{275}\) Some kings are also


\(^{272}\) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 262.

\(^{273}\) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 289.

\(^{274}\) Ibid., Vol. II, p. 213.

referred to in the Jātakas as having ruled unjustly, for example, Pingala king of Vārānasi, who was wicked and ruled unjustly.\textsuperscript{276}

The next question that is considered is, what are the criteria and measures of righteous and unrighteous kingship in Buddhism. According to Buddhist texts, the concept of Dhamma is the main criterion to identify righteous and unrighteous kingship. Dhamma means morality or righteousness. Dhamma is not to be understood as a metaphysical system or sectarian creed, which could differ from time to time or prophet to prophet. Rather it is taken to mean righteousness, propriety norms and is equated with peace (Sāma), impartiality and justice.\textsuperscript{277}

The contents of the Dhamma practised in the age of the Jātakas are often referred to under the title Kuru Dhamma and Rājadhamma. The Jātakas tell us that the Dhamma consisted in non killing of living being (avihimsa pana na hantavyo), mercy (akkodha), truthfulness (saccam musa na bhanitabbam), charity (dānam), taking not what is not given (adinnam nādātābbam), mildness of temper (maddavam), meek spirit (ajjavam), serving and supporting parent (mattu pattanadhammam pitu pattana dhammam), upholding justice and righteousness (sīlam), avoiding wrongful doings or non attachment to lust (micca na charitabbam), self control (damo), patience (kanti, dhiti), penance (tapo) donation (pariccaga), abstinence from drinking (majja na patitabbam) and purity.\textsuperscript{278}

Dhamma and Adhamma (unrighteous) do not have the same consequences for Adhamma goes into hell while Dhamma leads to a good destiny hereafter. Dhamma is a

\textsuperscript{276} Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 239-240.
\textsuperscript{277} Gokhale, \textit{op. cit.}, 1969, p. 736.
cosmic force, which regulates not only the conduct of the state and its subjects but also the order of nature. In the Adhamma Sutta of the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha explains that when the rājā (king) is unrighteous (adhammiko) the ministers of the rājā are also unrighteous; when ministers are unrighteous, Brāhmanas and householders are also unrighteous. Thus town folk and villages (negama, janapada) are unrighteous. This being so constellation and stars do likewise, day and night, month and fortnight, seasons and year are out of season. As a result Devas (gods) are annoyed. This being so, the Deva, bestows insufficient rain. As a consequence, rain does not fall seasonally, the crops ripen in the wrong season. When crops ripen in wrong seasons, men who live on such crops are short lived, ill favoured, weak and sickly.\(^{279}\) The Jātakas mention that if a king does not follow Dhamma then there is no rain and hence danger of drought, famine, pestilence and war.\(^{280}\) Further, according to the Jātaka, when kings rule un-righteously, it was explained, oil, honey, molasses and the like as well as wild roots and fruits loses their sweetness. Not only these but the whole realm lose their vigour. But should the kings be righteous, these would become strong.\(^{281}\)

According to the Jātaka people do not help or bless a king who rules unjustly or immorally but they help the righteous king. The Buddhists who regarded the king as of human origin did not hesitate in recognizing rebellion as an effective measure to keep a wicked king under control. In extraordinary circumstances even the execution of the king is mentioned in the Manichora Jātaka.\(^{282}\) The Mahāpingala Jātaka mentions the reign of a wicked and unjust king named Mahāpingala in Vārānasi. With taxes and fines and many

\(^{279}\) Anguttara Nikaya, Vol. II, pp. 74-75.
mutilations and robberies, he crushed the folk as if they were sugarcane in a mill. He was cruel and ferocious.

When he died, all the citizens of Vārānasi were overjoyed and laughed; they burnt his body with a thousand cart loads of logs, quenched the place of burning with thousand jars of water and consecrated his son to be king. They caused a drum of rejoicing to beat about the streets, for joy that they had got then a righteous king. They raised flags and banners, and decked out the city. At every door there was set of pavilion, and scattering of corn and flowers. They sat them down upon the decorated platforms under fine canopies and did eat and drink.²⁸³

On the other hand, the righteousness of a king causes good administration to develop in the kingdom and this adds to the prosperity of the country and the subjects. The Dhammika Sutta in the Anguttara Nikāya, explains, that when the rājā (king) is righteous, the ministers of rājās are also righteous; when ministers are righteous the Brāhmanas and householders are also righteous. Thus, the town folk and villages are righteous. This being so constellations and stars do likewise, day and night month and fortnight seasons and yeas go on their courses regularly, the wind blows regularly and in due season. Thus the Devas (gods) are not annoyed and the sky Deva, bestows sufficient rain. With the rain falling seasonally the crops ripen in due season. Men who live on these crops are long lived, well savoured strong and free from sickness.²⁸⁴

Further, the possession of Dhamma by a king enables him to acquire mastery over the phenomena of nature. A righteous king could compel it to rain after the performance

²⁸⁴ *Anguttara Nikāya,* Vol. II, p. 76.
of specific ceremonies such as fasting, distributing of charity, observance of the vows of righteousness and meditation for a period of seven days. 285

The people always expect to live under righteous kingship and follow the leader's virtues. The character of the kings as mentioned in the Jātakas are so moral as to inspire respect and exact emulation from his subjects. He possesses all the elements of sovereignty: ministers, countryside, army, treasury as well as high birth. 286 Ummādanti Jātaka states that the bull through floods a devious course will take, the head of kine all straggling in his wake. So, if a leader tortuous paths pursue, base ends will he guide the vulgar crew, and the whole realm age of license rue. But if the bull a course direct shall steer, the head of kine straight follow in his rear. So should their chief to righteous ways, be true the common folk injustice will eschew, and through the realm shall holy peace ensue. 287 From the above example it is evident that while Buddhist literature emphasises the virtues of the righteous king, it rejects the ruler who governs unrighteously.

In the Jātakas a slightly different role of the king appears and a greater emphasis on the moral obligations of the kingly role is the preoccupation, 'Dhamma', 'danda' being relegated to a secondary position. Although it is understood that the king must possess and demonstrate his possession of sovereignty, for the role of the king we will consider some of the Jātakas. In the Sonadanda Jātaka, four virtues, which enable the king to endear himself to his subjects are stated. These are: largesse, affability, beneficent rule, and impartiality (Cattāri sangahāvatumī). 288

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287 Ibid., Vol. V, p. 222.
288 See p. 63.
In a state like this force or 'danda' plays altogether a minor part. The state is conceived of not so much in terms of a coercive instrument designed to uphold the order of Varna with all its social and economic implications as an agency of instruction and cultural and spiritual advancement. The Buddhist tradition seems to conceive of the king ruling almost by acclamation. His virtues will so endear him to the populace that all remains to him is "as a charioteer guides his car, he will skill steers the realness common weal." 

As against the Brāhmanical view that man keeps pure because of the fear of 'danda' or punishment, Buddha advocates the principle of Dhamma as the foundation of temporal rule. Dhamma has to be maintained not only by the negative mean of punishment but the positive way of virtues. The Buddhist conception of Dhamma implies that the supreme principle of righteousness must be the basis for all temporal activities.

According to Buddhist literature, the concept of Dhamma is a major component of political thought. Thus, most of the political ideas in Buddhism are built around the concept of Dhamma. The Dhamma as shown in Buddhist literature is a king of kings in the world. The ideal king (Cakkavatti) is an embodiment of Dhamma in Buddhist texts. There was the early Buddhist argument that morality exists for and by itself and cannot be associated with notions of ritual, purity and impurity. The state must function as an instrument of this higher and universal morality for the transformation of man from being merely a political creature into a wholly moral being.

Further, legal action was obviously taken over by the early Buddhists from contemporary political usage. They added the concept of Dhamma to moralise the power

of the state and transform it from being a legal institution into a moral force. Thus, it can be seen that the basic ideas of Buddhist political thought are radically different from those of the Brähmanical tradition.

Furthermore, righteousness is the essence of kingship. It is also the king's best policy. The king should aim at the promotion of universal happiness of his subjects so as to extend its benefit down to the loveliest creation. One of the adjectives of the temporal rule is the moral progress of the people. The king should guard the people against economic crisis, protect the old people and also animals and help the poor people. His duty also includes that of inspiring people in spiritual life. The king's Dhamma permeates all spheres of the state's activities. The righteousness of the ruler promotes virtue on the part of the people also. If the king adopts the correct approach in his rule, happiness of the entire realm is guaranteed. He can also promote happiness or misery in the social life of the people by influencing them to be either good or bad. In other words, the king is entrusted with the heavy responsibility of ensuring the happiness as well as moral upliftment of his subjects. The subjects live happily as under a cool shade in the kingdom of a king who is free from anger and fixed in righteousness. In short, political righteousness as conceived by the Buddhists is almost hauled to the level of a cosmic principle of creation.

Righteousness, as we are told, is the essence of kingship as well as the king’s best policy. Secondly the scholars clarified principles and policies of government involved in the above concept. The king should avoid the specified groups of vices and practise the specified group of virtues, the latter being identified in some instances with the precepts incumbent on the Buddhist lay disciple.
1 Dasarāja Dhamma

Buddha considered Dhamma to be all-comprehensive. The principles, which lay at the root of the social and moral order, are summed up as Dhamma, law, virtue or duty. Dhamma, conceived in this sense, is above all individuals or groups. It curtails the power of the ruler or the government and regulates its exercise. The power of adjusting social relations rests with the ruler who must proceed according to Dhamma. Buddha’s views on “Rājadhamma” have to be considered in this background.

According to early Buddhism, ten virtues (Dasarāja Dhamma) must be practised by kings as ethical qualities of a king to build up their morality. Further, the moral character of the king is judged by his righteousness. It calls for the freedom of the king from the four evil courses of life. What are these ten virtues? These include Dāna, Sīla, Pariccāga, Ajjava, Majjajava, Akkoda, Tapa, Avihimsā, Khanti, Avirodhanam.

Dāna: Giving alms, which includes charity and practising generosity. Kings are supposed to be liberal, free from attachment to wealth and property. Revenue must be used for the purpose of implementing welfare works in their kingdom.

Sīla: Moral integrity. A king must be morally sound and must be exemplary in his day to day dealings. The lapses of virtuous conduct on the part of a king would naturally influence the people themselves to resort to vices of various kinds, thereby causing moral degradation in the entire kingdom.

Pariccāga: Philanthropy. A king should be ready to give up his personal pleasure and comfort for the sake of his citizens and cultivate a liberal attitude of the mind by providing public facilities and initiating welfare.
Ajjava: Uprightness. He must be free from deception, false promises and pretensions. He must be sincere and must act on his own words. He should promise only what he is able to do. Then only will people repose faith in him.

Majjavam: Gentleness, readiness to listen. He must be conscious that he is a servant of the people and therefore be kind, approachable and sympathetic towards his subjects.

Tapā: Self-control. He must practice restraint in sensual enjoyment. He should not indulge in a life of luxury and must be moderate and considerate in his life style.

Akkodha: Absence of anger. He must be free from anger, hatred and ill will and must bear no grudge leading to revenge. Tempted by anger, he should never take hasty decisions in respect of the kingdom or the people. Cultivation of sobriety is always conducive to healthy administration in view of the welfare of both the king and his subjects.

Avihimsā: Non-violence. He must take steps to prevent the destruction of life and must take steps to promote peace within his territory. He should not harass people for personal gain by wielding the royal power at his disposal.

Khanti: Patience. Being of good temperament he must not override the bounds of propriety. Not being irritated by adverse circumstances, he must cultivate qualities such as forbearance, tolerance and understanding.

Avirodhatā: Absence of obstruction. He should not obstruct the will of the people. The measures to be taken for the welfare of the people must be sanctioned
forthwith. In other words, the country must be ruled, not by opposing progress, but by giving approval to those steps which are beneficial to his people. 291

According to Dasarata Jataka, king Paduma became king after his father’s death and ruled by the ten virtues of righteousness.292 The Kuru Dhamma Jataka mentions that the Bodhisatta, son of the king Dhanañjaya in Kuru kingdom, became king and grew in the Kuru righteousness keeping the ten royal duties (Dasarāja Dhamma).293 Another Jataka story says that the king, son of Brahmadatta in Vārānasi, became king and kept the ten royal virtues: he gave alms, practised virtues and observed the sacred days.294 A king named Bharata reigned at Roruva in the kingdom of Sovira. He also practised one or two of the ten virtues.295 A king who was son of king Brahmadatta in Vārānasi, became king and then caused six alms houses to be built at the four gates of the city; in the midst of it; and at the alace gats. There day by day he used to distribute six hundred thousand pieces of money, and stirred up the entire country with his alms giving. He kept the five virtues, observed the holy fast-day, and ruled in righteousness.296 The king called Sādhino in Mithilā, gave alms at the four city gates after he became king. Daily six hundred thousand pieces were spent in alms: he kept the five virtues, he observed the first day vow: and the city following his admonitions gave alms and did good.297

All of these attributes indicate that the king is to be a model of ethical probity and morality. By his virtue, the king brings prosperity to his country. There are numerous

293 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 368.
296 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 177.
instances of a virtuous king acting as a rain-maker.\textsuperscript{298} He must be zealous in the observance of the items of good behaviour. The king who conquered wrath with mildness and badness with goodness was adjudged superior to others. The king must seek the happiness of his whole realm. The good of his subjects is the first case of a king, and the way leading to it tend to the happiness of both (his subject and himself). And this end will be attained, if the king loves righteousness, for people like to follow the conduct of their rule.\textsuperscript{299} Further, the king must know and cultivate the qualities of discretion with regard to welfare (\textit{Atta}), law (\textit{Dhamma}), moderation (\textit{Matta kālatim}) and council (\textit{Parisa}).\textsuperscript{300} Therefore most of the kings, who are mentioned in the \textit{Jātakas}, have practised the ten virtues to improve their morality and happiness of their subjects.

Furthermore, the ‘\textit{Rājhadhamma}’ is simply a code of proper ethical behaviour for a king. It defines his prerogatives and the conditions under which he may use them. Since each constituent element of the state, the family, the various praises and sundry groups, has its own Dhamma, the whole of society is closely integrated in its web. Dhamma, therefore, was to be the common and ultimate basis of all social relationships presided over by the state.

\textbf{II Satta Aparihiṇīya Dhamma}

The seven conditions of welfare (\textit{Satta Aparihiṇīya Dhamma}) were also preached by the Buddha as one part of Dhamma. These were considered effective means for the

\textsuperscript{299} \textit{Jātakamāla}, p. 198.
kings to prevent their decline and for the prosperity of the country and its subjects.  

Though, these seven conditions of welfare were preached by Buddha to the Vajjians, they are more suitable to be practised in any kingdom or community as virtuous deeds. Varma says that they are “love for and belief in freedom, participation in community life, integrity of discussion, freely assumed obligation of economic groups to serve society; leadership and office holding regarded as public trust; passions to be channelled to constructive end, and cooperation among nations”.  

These seven principles are important because they constitute seven rules put into practice and not those confined only to theory. The republican kings, the Liccavis practised these rules in their everyday political dealings. The first of these rules refers to meetings held frequently. Such meetings are for the purpose of arriving at decisions, particularly political decisions. According to tradition, there were 7,707 Liccavi kings. These kings in the republican body politic were comparable to representatives of people. Frequently meetings held by decision makers would have meant some sort of representation. In the case of these kings, we have no definite evidence to determine whether they were elected, or appointed to such position by virtue of ascription. It could be that by virtue of their particular family status, they were accepted as representatives of the people. But the implied principle that frequently meetings of the decision-makers in

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301 Buddha explained the seven conditions of welfare, thus: they shall be often assembled much in assembled growth they may be expected not decline. They shall sit down in concord, rise up in concord, and do business in concord. They shall not decree the undecreed nor repeal the decreed. They shall honour, respect, venerate revere the Vajjian elders, shall hold they ought to be listened to, growth may be expected not decline. So long as they shall not forcibly kidnap and make live with them women and girls of their own clan. So long as they shall honour respect and venerate, revere the Vajjian shriness within and without shall not fail to provide offerings as given of yore, made of yore. So long as protection, refuge, shelter shall be provided for Arahantas and it shall be known that Arahantas from abroad may come thither and that those there dwell in comfort growth., *Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. I, p. 82, *Anguttara Nikāya*, Vol. IV, p. 17.

this manner was made necessary meant that these decision-makers were people's representatives. They could be elected by the people or in the alternative accepted by them as their worthy representatives in some other fashion, i.e. by virtue of their ascriptive status.\textsuperscript{303}

Furthermore, the Buddha considered these seven rules as very important because, if a state follows these rules, progress would inevitably result and the government of the country based on the confidence of the people will never deteriorate. The rules are for the unity and the confidence of the people. It is when these seven principles are grossly violated in the body of politics that the political machinery causes its own downfall, finally grinding to an inevitable halt. The Buddha drew a set of rules based on these seven principles followed by the Liccavi kings and laid them down as a basis for his community of monks.\textsuperscript{304}

The Buddha, time and again, stressed the significance of his seven precepts and the necessity of following them for the welfare of the society. The forgoing analysis contains significant suggestions. Firstly, it sounds intensely practical in form as well as in substance, secondly, it deals with the order of a specific republican community and provides a useful list of what the author perceives to be the conditions necessary for ensuring the success of that community. But Buddha steadfastly sticks to his resolve not to interfere in political matters, and remains silent about the inherent tendencies and characters of these republics, which no doubt, provide the basis of his pragmatic precepts. More important, the above-mentioned extracts reveal a moralist's analysis of republican conditions. There is nothing specific in them, which could be attributed to a political

\textsuperscript{304} Ratnapala, \textit{op. cit.}, 1993, p. 73.
thinker more in the fashion of Kautilya and Machiavelli or even a modern day politician. The catalogue of qualifications mentioned by the Buddha includes not only the qualities of republican spirit, honour and conformity to the established usage, but also those of obedience to the elders, protection of women, performance of religious rites and honour to saints. He lists the sources of strength as well as weakness of a human community. Buddha provides an admirably comprehensive scheme of citizen’s behaviour in a republican community.

1.4 Qualifications, duties, ceremonies and festivals associated with the king in Buddhist literature

1.4.1 Choice, qualifications and duty of the king

According to Buddhist literature, the king is a leader of the kingdom or society and several ways are described by which one could obtain leadership among the community or kingdom. The most common of them was hereditary. The Jātakas mention that kingship was hereditary in the family (kulasantakam rajjam). But when there were several sons, it was the eldest, who succeeded his father on the throne, whilst the second son became the viceroy (upārajā) and the third son became commander in chief (senāpati).

If the king was without a male heir, and had a daughter, his son-in-law became heir to the throne. In this case the son-in-law was sought either from among his own kinsmen or among the members of another royal house. In the Mahapāni Jātaka the king

305 Jātaka, Vol. II, pp. 95, 116, Vol. IV, p. 120.
chooses his nephew as his successor. He then explains to his ministers that after his
death his nephew will become king and his daughter will become his elder consort
(aggamahesi).\textsuperscript{307}

If there is neither a male heir nor a kinsman, who will succeed to the throne, the
successor seems to be chosen by the ministers or elected by the people in the country.
The \textit{Jātaka} says that during the seven days after the death of the king, the chaplain
\textit{(Purohiita)} let a car, the \textit{Pussarata} \textit{(Sanskrit Pushparatha)} [car of flowers] to be driven
after the funeral ceremony was over. By beating of drum, it is announced in the city that
“tomorrow we shall drive a \textit{Pussaratha}.” The five insignias of royalty are placed on the
car and this is put in motion by the ministers on the assumption that it will reach the man
who will become the king. The car then leaves the city and remains standing at one and
the same place. Namely, the gate of the park, where it is rotated ready to be driven by the
future king.\textsuperscript{308}

Sometimes, when there is neither a male heir nor kinsman; a king was selected by
the subjects of the country. The first such leader, mentioned in the \textit{Aggañña Sutta} was
Mahāsammata, who was selected by the people.\textsuperscript{309} According to the \textit{Uluka Jātaka}, the
first king was chosen by the people from among them.\textsuperscript{310} In the \textit{Pancagaru Jātaka}, the
kingdom was offered to the Bodhisatta by the people of that kingdom, and he accepted
it.\textsuperscript{311}

These qualities were necessary because of the overwhelming power that a king or

\textsuperscript{307} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. II, p. 323.
\textsuperscript{309} \textit{Dīgha Nikāya}, Vol. III, p. 93.
\textsuperscript{310} \textit{Jātaka}, Vol. II, p. 352.
\textsuperscript{311} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. I, p. 470.
ruler would possess. In its destructive aspects, royal power is often exercised arbitrarily, resulting in unpredictable violence and appropriation as implied in the comparison between kings and thieves in their tendencies to deprive persons of their property.\textsuperscript{312}

It was also desirable that he should have the quality of understanding things correctly (attaññu), knowing the Dhamma (dhammaññu), being familiar with measure (mattaññu) (in punishment and fine), knowing the right time for all work (kalaññu) (for pleasure, court work and touring) and knowing the assemblages of men (parisaññu) (i.e. who should be able to handle successfully those who approached him).\textsuperscript{313}

The knowledge of Dhamma and living of Dhamma was much emphasised for kings. The Buddha even went to the extent of relating the story of a certain king of Videha, who lived in accordance with the Dhamma. He used to observe the Uposatha on the 15\textsuperscript{th}, 14\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} day of the lunar half months, and his fame reached even the Heaven of Three and Thirty. This king was said to have visited the heaven in person, and then returned to his realm.\textsuperscript{314} Thus, from the point of personal qualities, family, physical attributes and character, the king had to be par excellence.\textsuperscript{315}

Varṇa was an important factor in the ascent to the throne in the ancient period. Most of the times it was the Kattiyas who became king and great importance was attached to the purity of descent. In the Anguttara Nikāya, the anointed king is described as well born on both sides (ubhato sujāto hoti matito ca pitito ca); pure in descent as far back as seven generations both on the mother’s as also the father’s side; unchallenged

\textsuperscript{312} Gokhale, \textit{op.cit.}, 1966, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{313} \textit{Anguttara Nikāya}, Vol. III, p. 148.
\textsuperscript{314} \textit{Majjhima Nikāya}, Vol. II, pp. 78-79.
and without reproach in terms of birth. This idea is further substantiated by the *Jātaka* stories. In the *Jātakas*, as a rule, only the sons of the eldest queen (*aggamahesi*) who must be of the same caste as the king thus a Kattiya, seems to have been considered legitimate. In the Rajovāda *Jātaka*, the Bodhisatta was conceived by king Brahmadatta's queen consort after he became king. Cullapaduma *Jātaka* mentions that prince Cullapaduma was born as a son of chief queen of king Brahmadatta. Further, the *Jātaka* stories such as Madupāni, Seyya, Sandibheda, Gandhāra, Janasanda, Samkhapāla, give some details about the elder son, conceived of the chief queen consort of kings, who became king after his father's death. According to these examples, caste seems to be essential to reach kingship in the ancient time.

According to Buddhist literature, education was also considered as basic qualification to become king. The *Jātakas* provide some information about this. Generally, the princes were sent to Brāhmanas in Taksilā or other places to learn Vedas and other sciences (*Sippiini*). The *Jātakas* mention that in addition to the Veda, eighteen other liberal arts were learnt by princes. Most of the princes went to Taksilā to learn at the age of sixteen years, as mentioned in the *Jātakas*, Madupāni, Suruci, Sivi, Samkapāla, Ummādanti etc. Further, the princes had to offer to the teacher, a sum of money amounting to a thousand pieces of money for education.

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Sometime, princes were educated by their father before the age of sixteen. Elementary science, physical exercises, spiritual culture and religious studies were learnt in this way as stated in the Gāmini Canda Jātaka.\(^{323}\)

After finishing his education the prince returns to his kingdom, and succeeds in impressing his father with his varied accomplishments and is appointed to the post of vice-royalty (Uparāja).\(^{324}\)

The individual selected or otherwise approved, as the ruler by the people should possess certain important qualities:

1. The ruler was to be well born on both sides (on the side of the father as well as the mother).
2. He was to be handsome, pleasant in appearance, inspiring, gifted with great beauty of complexion, fair in colour, fair in presence, stately to behold.
3. He was to be mighty, with great and large property with a store of silver and gold, of aids to enjoyment, of goods and corn, with his treasure houses and his granaries full.
4. He was to be powerful, in four divisions (of elephant) cavalry, chariots and bowmen), burning up methinks, his enemies by his very glory.
5. He was to be a believer, and generous and noble giving alms, keeping open house, a welling-spring with Śramanas and Brāhmanas, the poor and the wayfarers, beggars and petitioners might draw, a doer of good deeds.
6. He was to be learned in all kinds of knowledge.
7. He must know the meaning of what had been said.

\(^{323}\) Ibid., Vol. II, p. 297.  
\(^{324}\) Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 250.
8. He was to be intelligent, expert and wise, and able to think out things of present, past or future.\(^{325}\)

**I Duty of a king**

Buddhist literature especially the *Jātakas*, mentions that kings do not appear to be absolute masters of their subjects rather they should work like mere servants of the people. A *Jātaka* story clearly explains this idea. viz. "I am not the people’s lord and master, I have only jurisdiction over those who revolt or do iniquity."\(^ {326}\) Hence the king is expected to protect the people against foreign aggression and internal disorder in any form and oppression; he is to administer impartial justice. The king is to receive the help of the ministers in discharging his duties. The Rathalatti *Jātaka* mentions the minister of justice who is none other than Bodhisatta i.e. Buddha in a previous birth advising the king as to the necessity of investigating the case before the sentence is pronounced. "A lazy fellow given to sensual indulgence is not good, a king is not good who acts without investigation, a wise man who is angry is also not good." The king should act after he has heard, "ruler! Honour and fame fall to the lot of him who acts after investigation, O king."\(^ {327}\)

The main factor to be remembered is that kingship as a necessary political institution came into being when people became aware of the existing imperfect human conditions; the consequent social requirements; and the desire on their part to entrust responsibility as well as authority to the ideal of the king profiled in the ideal Buddhist ruler who, as a universal ruler (Cakkavatti) is identified as a Boddhisatta rāja or even a

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Buddha rāja and governs more by virtue of his Buddhist merit than by divine right even though he may be recognized as the Devaputra. (the son of the god, the divine majesty) In other words, one could say that a social contract theory for society, establishing property rights and a correlative governmental contract theory for kingship protecting property rights found predominance in all Buddhist literature. As to the functions, exercise and administration of political authority, the notion prevailed among Buddhist writers that, in accordance with the contractual conditions of kingship, the purpose of a ruler’s authority is to ensure individual and collective well being.

II King and warfare

Other characteristic features of kingship as portrayed in early Buddhist literature include judicial functions.\(^{328}\) The Mahājanaka Jātaka clearly emphasises that a state cannot be preserved in the absence of a king.\(^{329}\) Hence, the protection of the kingdom from external dangers, for which fortifications surrounded by moats were set up and maintained in the border regions and manned by wise and watchful wardens.\(^{330}\) Expansion of the kingdom and the maintenance of tight internal control.\(^{331}\) Recruiting a strong army based on skilled fighters regardless of their social origins,\(^{332}\) marching through the kingdom and setting up camps from time to time\(^{333}\) and providing patronage to diverse religious groups.\(^{334}\) The traditional duties of a ruler to which the kings of Buddhist literature also were subjects, consisted above all in the protection of the subjects

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\(^{328}\) Sānyutta Nikāya, Vol. I, p. 73.
from external and internal enemies and the safety of their person and property as assumed by the punishment of all those who violated these.

Although the Buddha banned low conversation such as tales of terrors, of battle etc. to the Buddhist monks, but at the same time the Buddha also mentioned warrior kings and forces. In the *Anguttara Nikāya*, the Buddha says that three facts must be born in mind by a Kattiya king as long as he lives. What are the three? (I) He must remember the place in which a crowned Kattiya king was born. (II) Then the place in which a crowned Kattiya king gained a victory. (III) The place that a king came out as a conqueror of his enemies in the battle-field must be remembered by the king.

There are also references to the four-fold division of the army. In the *Anguttara Nikāya*, it is said that the power of the four-fold division of the army was one of the major attributes of the warrior king (*balavā kho pana hoti caturanganiyā senāya samannāgato*). Further, the elephant forces of the warrior are described. The king’s elephants, should have four qualities viz. destroyer, bearer, listener, gorer. Likewise, it is said that the horses of a king should be worthy of eight qualities viz. a king’s thorough bred steed is of a good breed on both sides; in whatever part other good horses are bred, there he is bred; when given his feed green or diet he eats it carefully, without scattering it about. He feels abhorrence at lying or sitting in dung or urine. Pleasing is he and easy to live with; he does not cause other horses to stampede. Whatever are his vices, tricks, faults or wiles he shows them to the driver, as they really are, and his driver tries to correct them when in harness. He thinks well and lets other horses pull as they please.

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going, he goes the straight way. He is steadfast showing steadfastness till life-end in death. 339

Further, the Buddha explains that the fighting men (Yodhjiva) of the king should have four qualities viz. a fighting man is skilled in point of vantage, he would be a far shooter, a shooter like lightning and piercer of huge objects. 340

Some of these accounts relevant to the four-fold division and warfare, are included in the Jātaka stories also. In the Jātaka, called Palāsa there is reference to a Gandhāra king’s desire to capture Vārāṇasi and his siege of the city with a complete army of the four divisions (caturanganiyā senā). 341

Further, the Jātaka states that when a fight ensued, the whole army was assembled in the city-centre by beating of drums (nagare berin carāpetvā balakāyam sannipāthā). 342 The order of battle array was of three kinds, two of which are mentioned in detail viz. the wagon battle and the lotus battle. 343 Thus, the Jātakas describe how to build fortification in a country to prevent the entry of the enemies. One of the Jātakas says that there was no lack of attention so far as the building of fortifications of towns was concerned. Besides the walls, already referred to, they had towers and trenches and were surrounded by moats, which obstructed the approach of enemies as far as practicable. 344 In one instance, along the rampart of a city watch-towers were constructed at the four gates and between the watch-towers three moats were dug viz. water moat, a mud moat, and a dry moat (Udaka Parikama, Kaddama Parikam, Sukkha

339 Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 189.
342 Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 170.
343 Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 302.
344 Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 404.
Parikama). Further, Ummagga Jataka gives us more details about warfare such as how to win a war, what are the main plans to win the war, how to organize the four fold division of the army and how to protect the kingdom from enemies.

1.4.2 Ritual and ceremony associated with the king.

I Birth and name giving ceremony.

The rituals, which were related to the king, kingship and state, were held in ancient society. Some facts of these rituals are included in Buddhist literature. Among them, birth and name giving ceremony of princes was one of the main ceremonies of their life.

When a queen conceived it was an occasion for the performance of such rites as were proper to the state. In the Rajovada Jataka, when a king was ruling in Vārānasi, the Bodhisatta was conceived by his queen consort. The ceremonies proper to her state having been duly done (iddagabba pariharo), she was afterward safely delivered. When prince Nālakara was conceived by the chief queen in Videha, she brought the matter to the notice of her husband who did what was usual on such occasion. Probably the rituals included the ceremony known as Garbharaksana (protection against abortion).

Further the name giving day (nāmagahanadivasa) was also considered an auspicious day for the princes, the royal family and the subjects of the kingdom. According to the Pancāyudha Jataka, on the day, when he was to be named, the parent enquired as to their child's destiny from eight hundred Brāhmanas. To these Brāhmanas

345 Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 390.
346 Ibid., Vol. VI, pp. 430-480.
348 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 323.
they gave their heart's desire in all pleasure of sense. These clever soothesaying Brāhmaṇas foretold that, coming to the throne at the king's death, the child would be a mighty king endowed with every virtue, famed and renowned for his exploits with five weapons. He would stand peerless in the Jambudīpa (India). Because of this prophecy of the Brāhmaṇas, the parents named their son prince five weapons (Pancāyudha). In Asadisa Jātaka, on the princes name giving day, his parents gave him the name of Asadisa, prince peerless. Similar stories are contained in some Jātakas such as Cullapaduma, Sonaka etc.

II Coronation ceremony

Consecration was one of the more important ceremony of king’s life in the ancient time. This ceremony was performed by the royal priest with all kinds of public merry making to mark the events. Sometimes, a prince may be installed on the throne during the lifetime of his father, but normally speaking he did not actually rule as a king as long as his father was king. The Cullapaduma Jātaka narrates the story of a prince. When he (son) was of age, he was instructed in the liberal arts at Taksilā and on his return home he was presented with a white umbrella by his father and ruled his kingdom. The norm was for the prince to wait till his father’s death and then seek election by the courtiers. In Kāma Jātaka, when king Brahmadatta was dead, the courtiers were for making the elder son king by ceremonial sprinkling.

Further, Pañcagaru Jātaka presents more details about the consecration ceremony.

349 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 133.
350 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 86.
352 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 117.
The people decorated the town like a city of the gods and the royal palace like the palace of Indra. Entering the city the Bodhisatta (king) passed into the spacious hall of the palace and there seated himself in all his godlike beauty on his jewelled throne beneath the white umbrella of his kingship. Around him in glittering splendour stood his ministers and Brāhmaṇas and nobles whilst sixteen thousand dancing girls, fair as the nymphs of heaven, sung and danced and made music till the palace was loud with sounds like the ocean when the storm bursts in thunder on its water.\(^{354}\)

Thus, the Jātakas indicate that the new king was to be blessed and accepted by various ranks of citizens of the country through the coronation ceremony.

### III King and festivals

Some festivals in which the king participated are pointed out in Buddhist literature. In the Kurudhamma Jātaka there is description of such a festival. Thus every third year, in the month of Kattika the king used to hold a festival, called the Kattika festival. While keeping this feast, the kings used to deck themselves out in the great magnificence, and dress up like gods. They would shoot to the four points of the compass arrows wreathed in flowers, and painted in diverse colours. This king then, in keeping the feast, stood on the bank of a lake, in the presence of the goblin Cittarāja and shot arrows to the four quarters.\(^{355}\)

Susima Jātaka gives another instance of the elephant festival in which the king participated. The chaplain was master of ceremony in the king’s elephant ceremony. He

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had the right to all the trappings and appointments of the elephants which came into the place of festival. By this means he gained as much as ten million at each festival.\textsuperscript{356}

It is significant that in the \textit{Jātakas} several rituals and ceremonies are associated with kings. This ranges from those conducted at the time of conception and birth to festivities performed during consecration and coronation. Further, it is clear that some ceremonies, festivals and ritual, which are depicted in the Jātaka stories are more similar to the Brāhmanical tradition.

This survey of early Buddhist literature has attempted to demonstrate the nature of political ideas and the conception of kingship in these texts. Earlier studies on the subject have taken two contradictory positions: that the king was directly involved in the affairs of the Sangha and the spread of Buddhism;\textsuperscript{357} and two that Buddhism was apolitical in its orientation.\textsuperscript{358} Subsequently Chakravarti has suggested:

"As Buddhism developed, the relationship between the king and the Sangha grew closer, transforming the original relationship based on the patronage of the Sangha by the king, to one of active involvement in the affairs of the Sangha. This was probably a nature outcome of kings unity their state power to propagate the faith."\textsuperscript{359}

In this study, we would like to argue that the distinctiveness of the Buddhist model of kingship lay in the conception of Dhamma as envisaged by early Buddhist thinkers. This concept was fundamental and functional in early Buddhism and not merely normative. This uniqueness of Dharma also translated into autonomy of the Sangha from

\textsuperscript{356} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. II, pp. 46-47.  
political power. As a result, though facilitated by the king, it was the Buddhist monastic and the Sangha that was largely responsible for the expansion of Buddhism, as will argue be discussed in subsequent chapters.