Chapter-3

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Ashoka, the greatest of the Mauryas, formulated the policy of *dhamma* which occupies a significant place in the Mauryan polity. Though the word *dhamma* is sometimes associated with religion, but actually it was a secular policy having certain social and political implications.

The word *dhamma* is the Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word *dharma*. The term *dharma* has been variously translated as piety, moral life, duty, righteousness and religion. As far as Ashoka’s policy of *dhamma* is concerned, it was non-ritualistic and non-doctrinaire. It was a synthesis of moral principles of all the religions and aimed at promoting moral and social consciousness among the people. The *dhamma* was related to guiding individual behaviour in society according to universal moral laws which transcended all sectarianism. The *dhamma* of the edicts was basically a social and an ethical code. It contained no astute exposition of doctrine or metaphysical dogma. It was solely a moral code.

Some historians link Ashoka’s policy of *dhamma* with Buddhism. According to V.A. Smith Ashoka actually became a Buddhist monk for a short span of his life. Smith believes that he was both a monk and a monarch at the same time. D.R. Bhandarkar claims that Ashoka was a Buddhist and his policy of *dhamma* was actually original Buddhism as preached by the Buddha. Radha Kumud Mookerji also formulates that as far as the personal religion of Ashoka is concerned, it may be taken as Buddhism.

3.1 Ashoka as a Buddhist

Various arguments are formulated to show that Ashoka was a Buddhist. It is quoted that Ashoka took the tour of all the holy places associated with the Buddha. He visited Lumbini, Bodhagaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar. He constructed
a number of monasteries or vihāras for the Buddhist monks. These places became
the centres of Buddhist learning. He also constructed a number of stūpas over the
relics of the Buddha. He convened the third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra in 251
B.C.E. for sorting out differences among the followers of the Buddha. The
Council presided over by Mogaliputra Tissa not only helped in resolving
differences among various Buddhist sects but also recommended measures to
further propagate Buddhism. Ashoka’s inscriptions also reveal that he was a
Buddhist. In the Bhabru and Saranath edicts he makes an open confession of his
faith in the trinity— the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. In the 1st rock edict
he uses the term sanghaupete. The word sanghaupete has been interpreted
differently by different scholars. Some say that it stands for Ashoka’s visit to the
sangha while others hold the view that Ashoka became a bhikshu and lived in the
sangha. In several cases Ashoka refers to the Buddha as “the Lord” and in one
case the Buddhist doctrine is mentioned as ‘the true faith’. Minor pillar edict 2
contains the text of his order to his officers to the effect that the heretical monks
and nuns should be expelled from the sangha. This attempt on Ashoka’s part to
promote the unity of the Buddhist church is also known from the Southern
Buddhist tradition. The Kalsi and Dhauli rocks bear the figure of an elephant near
the inscription of Ashoka which is described respectfully as ‘the best elephant’
and ‘the white elephant’. On the Girnar rocks, the figure of the elephant is lost;
but the label speaks of “the All- white elephant named the procurer of happiness
for the whole world”. There is no doubt that the white elephant in these cases is
the Buddha, symbolically represented. It is well known that the Buddha was often
indicated by the figure of an elephant in early Indian art. The Ceylonese
chronicles namely Dīpavamsa and Mahāvamsa refer to Ashoka’s conversion to
Buddhism. Ashoka’s emphasis on non-violence also implies that his dhamma was
somehow the expression of Buddhism because in Buddhism also we see emphasis
on non-violence.
But a minute analysis of Ashoka’s policy of dhamma suggests that the dhamma cannot be identified with the Buddhist doctrine. In his policy of dhamma Ashoka nowhere mentions the basic themes of Buddhism like the four noble truths, eightfold path, prātiṣṭa-samutpāda, theory of momentariness and dwādāśanidānachakra. In his personal belief Ashoka might be a Buddhist and as a result of his personal belief he might have declared his faith in the Buddhist trinity but his policy of dhamma was different from Buddhism. The reference in the 7th pillar edict to the appointment of dhamma-mahāmātras for all communities and sects— the Jaina, the Buddhist and the Ajivikas— indicates the difference of dhamma as a set of ethical rules from any particular religious doctrine. It was a kind of universal religion. It was the essence of various creeds or we can say that it was above religious systems and basic principles of individual doctrines. To understand the true nature of Ashoka’s policy of dhamma let us see what Ashoka did mean by the term dhamma.

3.2 Dhamma: The Concept

In the 2nd pillar edict Ashoka himself asks ‘what is the dhamma? (kiyam chu dhamme?)’. And the answer provided in the same edict is ‘it is absence of sin, many good deeds, charity, donation, truthfulness and purity (apāsinave bahukayāne dayā dāne sache sāchaye)’. Thus the dhamma policy interpreted in the edicts may be described as a two-fold policy containing negative and positive aspects. In the negative sense it emphasises abstention from sin. In the positive sense it emphasises positive virtues like truthfulness, charity, purity and tolerance.

3.2.1 Dhamma as Abstention from Sin

In his 3rd pillar edict Ashoka mentions the wrong deeds or the apāsinavas. The 3rd edict reads as, “a person has an eye on his good deeds only and says to himself: ‘this good deed I have done.’ Not in the least does he notice his sin, saying to himself; ‘this sinful act have I perpetrated,’ or ‘this indeed is what is
called sin’. But this is certainly difficult to scrutinise. Nevertheless, one should verily look into the matter thus: ‘these passions surely lead to sin, such as violence, cruelty, anger, vanity and jealousy. Let me not ruin myself by reason of these very passions.’ One should seriously reflect on the following: this one is for my good only in this world and the other one is for my good also in the next world.’

Thus Ashoka treated some acts as not worth doing and they have been described as āsinavas. These acts are:

- Chandiya or rage or fury
- Nithuliya or cruelty
- Krodha or anger
- Māne or pride
- Irsā or envy

In the 10th rock edict the dhamma is also negatively defined as aparisravas i.e. freedom from parisrava or apunya or the evil. The edict reads as “whatever endeavours are made by king Priyadarshi, Beloved of the Gods, are made for the sake of the people’s happiness in the other world and in order that all men should have little corruption. And, what is sinful is corruption. This comparative freedom from corruption is indeed difficult to achieve both for the poor and the rich if they do not make great efforts by renouncing every other aim. This is certainly more difficult for the rich to achieve.”

Ashoka has not only mentioned the sin but has also suggested the path to know his sins. This is the path of introspection or self-examination. In the 1st minor rock edict, while describing the purpose of inscribing the edict he talks of exertion or parākrama. One method of this exertion is self-examination. One must examine one’s good deeds and bad deeds. In the 1st pillar edict he emphasises rigorous self-examination or parikshā and intense effort or utsāha as essential aids.
to moral life. In the pillar edict 7 he points out another form of self-examination called reflection or nijhati. Thus while negatively interpreting the dhamma, Ashoka basically focuses on abstention from wrong deeds or sin.

3.2.2 Dhamma as a Set of Virtues

In its positive sense the dhamma is a prescribed code of conduct for various sections of society. It takes the form of certain instructions of behaviour embracing the various relations of life. It comprises the following virtues:

Susrūsā or obedience to father and mother, elders, teachers, and men of high caste or rank. Various rock edicts like the rock edict 3, 4, 11 and 13 and the 7th pillar edict talk of this. The 3rd rock edict declares that it is meritorious to obey the mother and father. It is meritorious to have liberality to friends, acquaintances and relatives and to the brahmins and the sramanas. The 7th pillar edict says that due to the good deeds performed by Ashoka and its imitation by the subjects, the subjects have progressed and will keep on progressing further in respect of obedience to mother and father, elders, and offering courtesy to the aged and to the brahmins and the sramanas.

Apachiti or respect towards teacher. In the 2nd minor rock edict he asks the pupil to obey his teacher.

Sampratipatti or proper treatment towards ascetics (both the brahmins and sramanas), relatives, servants and dependents, the poor and miserable, friends, acquaintances and compassions. Rock edicts 4, 9, 11, 13 and pillar edict 7 and minor rock edict 2 mention these instructions. While describing the dhamma in the 9th rock edict he says that the dhamma comprises proper courtesy to slaves and servants, reverence to elders, restraint in one’s dealing with living beings and liberality to the brahmins and sramanas. These and similar other virtues are indeed the ceremonies of the dhamma.
Dānam or liberality towards ascetics, both the brahmins and sramanas, friends, comrades and relatives and the aged. It can be seen in the rock edicts 3, 8, 9, and 11. In the 8th rock edict Ashoka mentions his visit to Sambodhi (Bodhagaya where the Buddha got enlightenment) ten years after his coronation. This was the beginning of a pilgrimage which later became a regular phenomenon. During these pilgrimages many activities took place like visiting the brahmins and sramanas and making gifts to them, meeting the aged and making provisions of money for them, and contacting the people of the countryside, instructing them in the dhamma and discussing with them the principles of the dhamma.

Along with these practical measures the dhamma also had several characteristic doctrines and philosophical positions bringing out the originality of Ashoka’s ideas of moral reform. Among these theoretical formulations the main ones were non-violence and toleration. According to K.A.N. Sastri, “the promotion of toleration and harmony among different religious sects and kindness towards animal life were two particular aspects of the dhamma to which Ashoka gave very special attention.”

Non-violence or Ahimsā

Ashoka recognised the sanctity of animal life on principle. In the 3rd, 4th, and 11th, rock edicts and the 7th pillar edict Ashoka talks of Prānānām anārambha or abstention from slaughter of living beings, prānānām samyamo or restraint of violence towards living beings, avihimsā bhūtānām or non-violence towards life, sarvabhūtānām akshati or non-injury to all creatures and prāneshu or treatment of living beings with kindness. In the first rock edict he makes a clear command that no living being should be slaughtered for sacrifice. In the same edict he further says that, “many hundred thousands of living beings were formerly slaughtered everyday in the kitchen of Priyadarshi, Beloved of the Gods, for the sake of curry. But now when this record relating to the dhamma is written, only three living creatures are killed daily for the sake of curry, viz., two birds and one animal.
Even this animal is not slaughtered regularly. These three living beings too shall not be killed in future.” In the 4th rock edict also we see the reference to abstention from the slaughter of life and absence of cruelty to living beings. In the minor rock edict 4 it is mentioned that since the king has restricted the killing of animals even for his own consumption, therefore, only a few animals are killed for the royalty. Having seen this all men have given up the slaughter of animals; even the fishermen are now subject to prohibition. Ashoka’s declaration of relinquishment of yuddha-vijaya or conquest by war and adoption of dhamma-vijaya or conquest by the dhamma is also a declaration of belief in non-violence.

_Toleration_

Another doctrinal specialty of Ashoka’s _dhamma_ was the principle of toleration. Though a Buddhist in his personal belief, he never imposed his religion on others. He never looked down upon other religions. He always respected other religions and treated them on the basis of equality. Royal patronage was not limited to any particular sect. He held the scales evenly between the competing claims of different religious sects to the royal patronage as shown by his grant of cave-dwellings to the Ajivikas and Nirgranthas equally with the Buddhists through the instrumentality of his officers, the _dhamma-mahāmātras_ superintending their affairs at the state expense. He also favoured the sect of the worshippers of the previous Buddha by doubly enlarging the _stūpa_ of the Buddha Konamkamana and paying a personal visit to the shrine.

In his various rock edicts he gives instructions for good behaviour with all ascetics be it orthodox like the brahmins and heterodox like the sramanas. But the declaration of toleration as a doctrinal principle is most visible in his rock edicts. In the various rock edicts he preaches liberality to brahmins and sramanas as a public duty and equally condemns unseemly behaviour towards them. Though the principle of toleration is seen in the 7th rock edict also, it is best expressed in the 12th rock edict.
The 7th rock edict is the expression of the wish of the monarch that all religious sects should live harmoniously in all parts of his kingdom. All of them should achieve self-control and purity of thought. According to the monarch if a person practises great liberality but does not possess self-control, purity of thought, gratitude and firm devotion, he is quite worthless.

The 12th rock edict talks of sāravṛiddhi or the growth of the essentials of the dhamma, vāk-samyama or restraint of speech, samavāya or concourse and bahusruta or the sects should not remain self-contained but should know each other’s doctrines. The 12th rock edict is so important from the point of view of toleration as a doctrinal principle that the whole edict needs to be quoted. It reads as:

“king Priyadarshi, Beloved of the Gods, honours men of all religious communities with gifts and with honours of various kinds, irrespective of whether they are ascetics or householders. But the Beloved of the Gods does not value either the offering of gifts or the honouring of people so highly as the following, viz., that there should be growth of the essentials of the dhamma (sāravṛiddhi) among men of all sects. And the growth of the essentials of the dhamma is possible in many ways. But its root lies in restraint in regard to speech, which means that there should be no extolment of one’s own sect or disparagement of other sects on inappropriate occasions. On the contrary, other sects should be duly honoured in every way on all occasions. If a person acts in this way, he not only promotes his own sect but also benefits other sects. But, if a person acts otherwise, he not only injures his own sect but also harms other sects. Truly, if a person extols his own sect and disparages other sects with a view to glorifying his sect owing merely to his attachment to it, he injures his own sect very severely by acting in
that way. Therefore, restraint in regard to speech is commendable, because people should learn and respect the fundamentals of one another’s *dharma*. This indeed is the desire of the beloved of the Gods that persons of all sects become well-informed about the doctrines of all religions and acquire pure knowledge. And those who are attached to their respective sects should be informed as follows: ‘the Beloved of the Gods does not value either the offering of gifts or the honouring of people so highly as the following, viz., that there should be a growth of essentials of the *dhamma* among men of all sects.’ Indeed many of my officers are engaged for the realisation of the said end, such as the *mahāmātras*, in-charge of the affairs relating to the *dhamma*, the *mahāmātras* who are superintendents of matters relating to the ladies of the royal household, the officers in-charge of my cattle and pasturelands, and other classes of officials. And the result of their activities, as expected by me, is the promotion of each one’s sect and glorification of the *dhamma*.”

The farsightedness of Ashoka lies in the fact that he realised the significance of toleration for harmonious functioning of the society from a political perspective. The emphasis on toleration might be an effective measure to prevent politico-religious sectarianism. According to Romila Thapar⁹ this toleration was not a passive co-existence but an active frame of mind in which opinions are expressed in a manner that does not cause any offence.

Besides these doctrinal principles we also find some ritualistic elements in the *dhamma*. Every religion has a set of rituals and a particular way of worshipping. Ashoka criticised the popular ceremonies and suggested an alternative to them in the form of *dhamma-mangala, dhamma-dāna, dhamma-yātās* and *dhamma-vijaya*. These rituals are more secular and less religious in nature.
Dhamma-mangala

In the 9th rock edict he attacks the value of many of the most practised ceremonies. He maintains that the practice of morality is infinitely more valuable than the observance of these ceremonies. Ashoka mentions specifically, ceremonies performed during illness, at the birth or marriage of a child or when setting out on a journey. He particularly criticises mothers and wives as practising vulgar and useless ceremonies. In the 9th rock edict it is said that:

“people perform various auspicious ceremonies on the occasion of illness, the weddings of sons, the weddings of daughters, the births of children and the setting out on journeys. On these and similar other occasions, people perform many auspicious ceremonies. And on such occasions, the womenfolk in particular perform many and diverse ceremonies which are trivial and meaningless. Auspicious rites, however, should certainly be performed. But the said kinds of rites in fact produce meagre results. On the other hand, such ceremonies as are associated with the dhamma produce great results. These comprise the following, viz., proper courtesy to slaves and servants, reverence to elders, restraint in one’s dealings with living beings and liberality to the brahmins and sramanas. These and similar other virtues are indeed the ceremonies of the dhamma. Therefore, whether one is a person’s father, or son, or brother, or master, or acquaintance, or even a mere neighbour, one ought to declare to him: ‘this kind of rite is good. One should observe this practice until one’s desired object is attained and resolve that the practice will be observed again and again even after the object is attained.’ The other kinds of auspicious ceremonies, referred to above, are indeed of dubious value. Perchance a person may attain his object by performing those ceremonies, perchance he may not.
Moreover, performance of those ceremonies may produce results in this world only. But the said rites of the *dhamma* are not restricted to time. If a person performs them and does not attain his result in this world, even then endless merit for him is produced by them in the next world. And, if a person attains his object in this world, both the results are obtained by him, viz., the desired object is attained in this world as also endless merit is produced for him in the next world by those ceremonies of the *dhamma*.”

According to Romila Thapar this was an attempt to see ritual from a rational point of view. Ashoka realised the excessive emphasis of rituals in the religious observances of his time. He was aware that much of it was meaningless and was merely a source of income to the officiating priest. His contention that these ceremonies bear little fruit, and as compared to them the practice of morality is truly valuable, is an attempt to look at ritual from a rational point of view.

The main objection of Ashoka to these rituals was not on religious grounds but on practical grounds. He was concerned with the great expense demanded by each of these ceremonies, an expense which few were able to afford, and which as far as its evaluation in terms of economics went, was money badly employed, since it tended to accumulate in the hands of small section of society. It would then be expended largely in fulfilling unnecessary requirements.

**Dhamma-dāna**

In the 11th rock edict he refers to *dhamma-dāna* or gift of the *dhamma*, distribution of the *dhamma*, and kinship through the *dhamma*. In the 11th rock edict he explains the gift of *dhamma* in these words:

“there is no such gift as gift of the *dhamma*, no such act of dividing as separation of the *dhamma* from what is not *dhamma*, and no such kinship as kinship through the *dhamma*. These comprise the
following, viz., proper courtesy to slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father, liberality to friends, acquaintances, relatives as well as to the brahmans and sramanas, and abstention from the slaughter of living beings.”

The concept of dhamma-dāna also suggests that for Ashoka the dhamma was not a religion but it was a moral-social code and a way of life. According to Romila Thapar, it was based on a high degree of social ethics and civic responsibility. Not being a theorising brahmin he saw this in terms of practical everyday life, rather than in the idealised theory of caste structure. Conscious social behaviour based on a simple reasoned understanding of secular relationships, was for him essential to any society. Under the influence of brahminical teaching this tendency was dying out in the society of his time. The twice-born were given privileges and priorities not because of individual merit, but because of the happy accident of their birth. This feature of brahminical teaching was amongst the many that would thus be disputed by the teachings of Ashoka. Because he insisted on humane social behaviour, he sought to avoid social hypocrisy, commonly found in most societies. Thus by holding out the possibility of heavenly bliss and similar rewards, he tried to raise the idea of responsibility from mere etiquette to a genuinely felt responsibility, investing it with a certain spiritual significance which would be easily understood by a people already acquainted with the idea of spirituality in religion.

**Dhamma-vijaya**

In the 13th rock edict Ashoka shows a preference to dhamma-vijaya or the conquest by the dhamma over yudhha-vijaya or the conquest by war. In the light of the war of Kalinga and its disastrous impact over the lives of men and other creatures he gave up the idea of conquest by war and violence. In the edict Ashoka shows his remorse over the destructive impact of the Kalinga war and considers conquest through the dhamma to be the best conquest because whatever
conquest is achieved in this way creates an atmosphere of satisfaction everywhere both among the victors and the vanquished. Regarding the purpose of the 13th rock edict he says that “and this record relating to the dhamma has been written on stone for the following purpose, viz., that my sons and great grand-sons should not think of a fresh conquest by arms as worth achieving, that they should adopt the policy of forbearance and light punishment towards the vanquished even if they conquer a people by arms, and that they should regard conquest through the dhamma as the true conquest. Such a conquest brings happiness to all concerned both in this world and in the next.”

Romila Thapar maintains that the idea of conquest through the dhamma is a logical development of the theory of dhamma. According to Romila Thapar Kalinga was conquered in the 9th year of Ashoka’s reign. After this conquest Ashoka ceased to indulge in wars of aggression. This, we believe, was not because he completely forsook the idea of war as a means to an end, though he claims to have done so, but because with the conquest of Kalinga the consolidation of the empire was complete. Furthermore now there was no opposing power within the empire. The people on the frontier were generally too weak to consider a war against him. The only possibility was a campaign against the Greek kingdoms of Asia Minor. But they were too distant and the acquisition of their territory was not of particular interest to the Ashokan empire.

Dhamma-yātā

In the 8th rock edict Ashoka makes a plea for taking on dhamma-yātās or pilgrimage for the dhamma instead of vihāra-yātās or tours of pleasure. The 8th rock edict reads as follows:

“In ages gone by, king used to go out on tours of pleasure. During such tours, hunting and other pastime used to be enjoyed by them. Now, king Priyadarshi, Beloved of the Gods, visited Sambodhi ten years after his coronation. Thence started these pilgrimages for the
During these pilgrimages, the following take place, viz., visiting the brahmins and sramanas and making gifts to them, meeting the aged and making provision of money for them, and contacting the people of the countryside, instructing them in the dhamma and discussing with them the principles of the dhamma, all this being conducive to the promotion of the dhamma.\textsuperscript{16}

The list of tasks to be performed during dhamma-yātās shows that the purpose of these tours was not solely religious. Visiting religious sects (both the brahmins and sramanas) was one of the elements of these tours.

Dhamma-yātās may be interpreted as a tour of an area the purpose of which was to further the contact of the ruler with his subjects and to motivate them to adopt a lifestyle based on the policy of dhamma through various means such as through meeting the religious sects, the peasants, the country people and the old people. For an intelligent ruler like Ashoka such activities might provide a satisfactory means of moulding the public opinion in his favour. Another utility of these tours was that they acted as a check on local officials in a vast empire.

3.3 Dhamma as a Moral-Social Code

The dhamma was not a religious policy but a moral-social code. It was a prescribed code of duties, a collection of civic virtues and a guide to social morality which comprised many virtues like\textsuperscript{17}

1. Dayā or kindness (PE 2 and 7)
2. Dānam or charity (RE 7)
3. Satyam or truthfulness (MRE 2, PE 2 and 7)
4. Shauhama or inner and outer purity (PE 2 and 7)
5. Mārdavam or gentleness (RE 13 and PE 7)
6. Sādhuta or saintliness (PE 7)
7. Apa-vyayata and apa-bhāndata or moderation in spending and saving (RE 3)
8. *Samyama* or self-control (RE 7)
9. *Bhāva-shuddhi* or purity (1b)
10. *Kritajnata* or gratitude (1b)
11. *Dridhabhakti* or firm devotion (1b and 8)
12. *Dharma-rati* or attachment to morality (RE 13)

In rock edict 13, the *dhamma* is described in a nutshell as the right attitude towards all, manifesting itself in *akshati* or non-injury, *amayama* or restraint, *samācharanam* or equal treatment, and *mārdavam* or mildness in respect of all creatures, human beings, as well as beasts and birds (*sarvabhūtānām*). In rock edict 1, again, the following requisites are mentioned for attaining happiness in this world and the next: 1. *dhamma-kāmata* or love of the *dhamma* 2. *parikshā* or self-examination, 3. *susrūṣā* or obedience, 4. *bhaya* or fear (of sin), 5. *utsāha* or enthusiasm (for the *dhamma*). The practical side of *dhamma* is also emphasised by defining it positively as consisting in an abundance of good deeds (*bahu kayāne*) and also negatively as *apāsinavam* i.e., freedom from *āsinavam* or *pāpam* or sin, the incentives to which are also pointed out, viz., *chandyam* or rage or fury, *nisthuryam* or cruelty, *krodham* or anger, *mānam* or pride, and *irsā* or envy. In rock edict 10 the *dhamma* is also negatively defined as *aparisoravam* i.e., freedom from *parisorava* or *apunya* or evil.

According to R.C. Majumdar the aspect of *dhamma* which Ashoka emphasised was a code of morality, rather than a system of religion. He never discussed metaphysical doctrines nor referred to God or soul, but simply asked the people to have control over their passions, to cultivate purity of life and character in inmost thoughts, to be tolerant to other’s religion, to abstain from killing or injuring animals and to have regard for them, to be charitable to all, to behave with decorum to parents, teachers, relatives, friends and ascetics, to treat slaves and servants kindly, and, above all, to tell the truth.
Thus we may conclude that the *dhamma* policy of Ashoka found in the edicts is another name for the moral or virtuous life and it stands upon the common grounds of all religions. It cannot be called sectarian in any sense. It is completely cosmopolitan, capable of universal application, and based on the acceptance of the crux of all religions. In the moral interest of the diverse population of his empire Ashoka designed a policy in the form of *dhamma* which could be imposed upon all his subjects irrespective of their personal faith and beliefs. Thus, he laid the foundation of a universal religion.

### 3.4 *Dhamma* as the State Ideology

The Mauryas were the first in Indian history to form a vast empire. To rule and govern such a vast empire the consent of the people was an essential condition and the *dhamma* policy fulfilled this political motive. An all inclusive policy based on common faith might act as a source of legitimacy to the ruler. The policy of *dhamma* was a response to this political need.

The political background of the *dhamma* policy can be truly understood in the context of the Mauryan era. The 6th century B.C.E. has tremendous significance in Indian history because of two reasons: first, it was the beginning of the use of iron in agriculture. Due to use of iron ploughs, a revolutionary change took place in the field of agriculture. Iron ploughs could penetrate deeper into the soil in comparison to that of wooden ploughs. Also, by using the tools made up of iron, it was easy to cut the trees and convert the forest into agricultural land. Now the Gangetic plain, which is one of the most fertile plains in the world, was available for agriculture.

The second development that contributed to the advancement in the material life of this phase was the beginning of paddy transplantation. With the large scale clearance of the extremely fertile middle Gangetic zone and introduction of new methods of cultivation of paddy by transplantation the production per hectare substantially increased. This helped in the generation of
surplus. Now the farmers were in a position to support their households and dependents and also to pay taxes to the state.

This increased production was important in two ways; first of all it could sustain a large population. Secondly, due to increased production now surplus was available. As a result of these developments we see the emergence of a territorial state or the mahājanapadas in the Ganga basin. Availability of surplus resulted in the invention of new methods of its appropriation and as a consequence of this we see the emergence of an advanced taxation system. Anguttaranikāya mentions 16 mahājanapadas. Later on, due to various reasons, Magadha emerged as the strongest of these mahājanapadas. It engulfed the adjacent mahājanapadas and formed an empire. The reign of Ashoka saw the culmination of this phenomenon whereby the Magadhan empire overpowered most parts of India barring some parts of Southern and North-Eastern India. With the victory of Kalinga, the process of constitution of empire was completed. But as it happens in every empire, in the empire of Magadha also there was absence of uniformity. It was a vast empire and in such a vast empire there existed tremendous cultural diversity. This heterogeneous nature of society particularly the existence of diverse cultural groups in the empire facilitated the need of an all inclusive policy like the policy of dhamma.

The Mauryan empire also contained a noticeable foreign population like the Greeks. In the North-Western part of the kingdom, the centre of this foreign element and of a cosmopolitan Indo-Greek intellectual life, was city of Taxila. Bordering the Greek settlements of the trans-Indus region and farther West, situated on an important highway, it acted as the meeting ground of the two streams of Indian and Western ideas. Since it also had the official prestige of being a provincial capital and was an important commercial centre, the result was a happy situation where foreign ideas, although they did not modify Indian
orthodoxy, were at least allowed to co-exist. A fair amount of mutual understanding and respect must undoubtedly have ensued.

Various edicts of Ashoka mention semi-civilised groups like the hunters and fishermen in the bordering areas of the empire. They were still not part of a system based on an agrarian and urbanised economy. We see the reference to these people in the 13th edict in which Ashoka warns the forest folks and asks them to obey the royal decrees otherwise the imperial army would destroy them. These people had their own lifestyle which was different from the lifestyle of Pataliputra and Magadha. It was essential to win the allegiance of such excluded groups for the safety of the empire. If these groups were assimilated into the mainstream of imperial life they could significantly contribute to the economic system of the empire also. Particularly in the fourth century B.C.E. when the population was less, inclusion of various excluded groups into the mainstream would have not only resulted in widening the economic base of the state, but also in increasing its influence. Again, an all inclusive policy was needed for this.

Due to these three factors— the heterogeneous nature of empire and cultural diversity prevailing in it, the presence of a foreign element and the problem of inclusion of excluded groups in the mainstream life— the need of a wider citizenship arose. This change introduced the idea of a pan-Indian citizenship concerned with more than just local happenings. This was an extraordinary situation which never existed earlier in Indian history. The solution to this problem lay in a policy which was simple, based on common faith, and included the common elements of all the faiths and beliefs. Only this type of policy could act as a cementing force to join the different sections and groups present in the empire. The policy of *dhamma* was a response to this problem. It was a political ideology. G.M. Bongardlevin also indicates the political nature of the policy of *dhamma*. According to Bongardlevin, “the inculcation of the *dhamma* was largely dictated by political reasons— the need for consolidating the state. The policy of
"dhamma-vijaya" was suited to the new conditions of building a giant empire, which was to incorporate numerous tribes and peoples at different levels of political, socio-economic and cultural development. It encompassed regions which did not belong to the Indian territory proper: in the West there were territories inhabited by non-Indian tribes, and in the South, areas with a population different ethnically and linguistically. The principles of the dhamma were obligatory for all. "

In short, one may say that there were two important features of the Mauryan empire under the rule of Ashoka:

1. Magadha had established its control over most of India’s territory. The confederation of republics gave way to kingdoms with a tendency towards the consolidation of smaller units into larger units and the peak was reached in the Mauryan empire, in more specific terms during the reign of Ashoka.

2. This vast territory under one political rule was constituted of various geographical regions, cultural groups and religious sects.

An empire with such a diversity and scale could not be controlled only on the basis of the use of force or military power. Ashoka being a great statesman knew that the diverse and vast Magadhan empire could not be controlled and governed only on the basis of military power. To govern such a vast and diverse empire a policy had to be invented which could act as a cementing force, help the state to get the allegiance of all groups and hence could minimise the use of force. The dhamma policy which was in the form of a common faith fulfilled this political objective. In this sense it was a state ideology.

The centralised nature of the Mauryan empire also compelled the ruler to propagate a state ideology in the form of dhamma. Chandragupta Maurya on conquering the Nanda domains, completed the policy of centralisation with great success. The empire, administered by an efficient bureaucracy, extensively
covered by good communications, and under the control of a powerful ruler, was probably as centralised as was possible during that period. All these three characteristics—efficient bureaucracy, good communications, and a strong ruler—existed under the Mauryas, as is evident from the *Arthashastra*. The central control of the ruler had to be maintained at all costs and this could be achieved by adoption of either of two policies. One was that of exercising a ruthless control through armed strength, self-deification, and various other means, such as those adopted by Ashoka’s near contemporary Shi Huang Ti in China. The other was certainly more subtle. The king declared himself in favour of a new belief (or one of the less well-established ones) possibly even an eclectic collection of views from various groups. Thus the dominance of the other groups could be undermined and the Central authority could increase its power. The population under the direction of officials would pay at least lip-service to the ideas of the rulers. This was the policy selected by Ashoka, in essence the same, though different in form, to that adopted by Akbar eighteen centuries later.\(^{21}\)

The *dhamma* was a well planned policy to weed out the discontent which might prevail among the servants and the labourers. According to G.M. Bongardlein, “it would be one-sided to explain the emperor’s appeal for a kind treatment of slaves and servants in the light of traditional religious beliefs alone. Doubtlessly, it must have had some social significance as well. It may have been caused by the intensified exploitation of slaves and dependent labourers, which led to discontent among the exploited groups of the population. Seeking to consolidate the empire, the Central power was trying to find a way of making such conflicts less sharp. In other words, the rules of the *dhamma*, dealing with the pious way of living and behaviour as they did, at the same time conformed to the basic political, economic and social principles of the Mauryas.”\(^{22}\) D.D. Kosambi suggests that, “the state developed a new function after Ashoka, the reconciliation of the classes. The special tool for this reconciliatory action was precisely the universal *dhamma* in a new sense. King and citizens found common
meeting-ground in the freshly developed religion. This may not seem today to have been the best solution but it was immediately effective. It can even be said that the Indian national character received the stamp of *dhamma* from the time of Ashoka.”

The *dhamma* policy could act as an effective and practical path to free the subjects from orthodoxies and superstitions. It might act as a check upon the conservative and dogmatic elements. We know that Ashoka had faced considerable trouble fighting for the throne. It might be possible that in the early years of his reign, while he was consolidating his position, he did not have the enthusiastic support of the older and more orthodox elements at the court. By moving away from orthodox brahminism though not opposing it, and by giving open support to Buddhism and certain other sects such as the Ajivikas, he was seeking the potential support of non-orthodox elements which may eventually have succeeded in weaning the people away from orthodoxy, and in the end making his own principles more acceptable to the populace. He was aided in this way by the fact that these sects had the support of the newly risen commercial class and the mass of the population was not antagonistic to them. In addition to this, the new beliefs were not deeply opposed to the old and it was therefore possible to bring about a compromise. Thus Ashoka saw the practical advantage of adopting the idea of the *dhamma*.

Thus, it is clear that Ashoka was not a prophet who had received special enlightenment and therefore, his policy of *dhamma* cannot be identified with a religious sect. Basically it was a moral-social code and a state ideology with the purpose of fulfilling certain pragmatic goals.

### 3.5 Political Imperatives of the Policy of Dhamma

According to many historians Ashoka’s policy of *dhamma* was primarily responsible for the disintegration of the Mauryan empire. Rhys Davids though he
admires Ashoka as a great leader nevertheless holds him responsible for the disintegration of empire. To quote him, “with all his evident desire to do the very best possible things, and always to be open to the appeals of the subjects he looked upon as his children, he left his empire in such a condition that it soon disintegrated and crumbled away.”

Critics point out two serious drawbacks of the policy of dhamma which led the empire to the path of disintegration. On the one hand it was responsible for military pacifism, on the other hand it invited brahminical reaction against the pro-Buddhist policy of Ashoka. As a consequence, the empire fell down.

Mahamahopadhyaya Har Prasad Shastri holds Ashoka responsible for pursuing a policy which resulted in the brahminic revolt. According to Mahamahopadhyaya Har Prasad Shastri, it was the revolt of the brahmins against the Mauryan empire which not only sapped its foundations but also dismembered the same. The author gives first place to the edicts of Ashoka against animal sacrifices. His contention is that the edict was directed against the brahmins as a class and was particularly offensive as the same was issued by a shudra ruler. According to Shastri, this edict was followed by another edict in which Ashoka boasted that those who were regarded as Gods on earth have been reduced by him into false Gods. If it means anything, it means the brahmins who were regarded as bhūdevas or Gods on earth had been shown up by him. He also points out that the appointment of the dhamma-mahāmātras or superintendents of morals was also a direct invasion on the rights and privileges of the brahmins. Another cause was the insistence of Ashoka on the strict observance by his officers of the principles of danda-samatā and vyavahāra-samatā. These terms are taken to imply “equality of punishment” and “equality in law suits” irrespective of caste, colour and creed. This was offensive to the brahmins as they claimed many privileges including immunity from capital punishment. The author also maintains that after the death of Ashoka brahmins revolted against his successors. He concludes by a reference
to the assassination of the last Mauryan king Brihadratha by his brahmin commander-in-chief Pusyamitra. He points out that there was clearly the hands of brahmins in the great revolution.

But H.C. Raychaudhary, K.A. Nilkanta Sastri, R.K. Mookerjee and Romila Thapar disagree with this viewpoint. They point out that there is no adequate ground to believe that Ashoka ill-treated the brahmins and the latter rose against his successors in a body. According to H.C. Raychaudhary the whole thesis of Har Prasad Shastri does not bear scrutiny at all. It is pointed out by Raychaudhary that the prohibition of animal sacrifices should not be interpreted as an attack on the brahmins. The ancient sages had themselves condemned animal sacrifices and advocated the principle of *ahimsā* or non-violence. This was particularly maintained in the *Upanisadas*. It is also pointed out that Har Prasad Shastri is wrong when he says that the Mauryas were shudras. The evidence is not consistent on this point and the more logical view is that the Mauryas were kshatriyas. It is also contended that the *dhamma-mahāmātrās* did not encroach upon the rights and the privileges of the brahmins. Moreover there is nothing to show that the *dhamma-mahāmātrās* were not recruited from the brahmins or the entry of the brahmins was banned. The *samatā* which was enforced by Ashoka curtailed the autonomy of the *rājukas* and did not necessarily interfere with the alleged immunity of the brahmins from capital punishment. Our sources suggest that the brahmins were not immune from capital punishment in ancient India under all circumstances. Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* lays down that a brahmin guilty of treason was to be drowned. It is stated in the *Mahābhārata* that Mandavya and Likhita were punished although they were brahmins. There is also the evidence that Ashoka did not show any enmity against the brahmins. In his inscriptions Ashoka asked for liberality to brahmins and disapproved of any disrespect shown to brahmins. One of the duties of the *dhamma-mahāmātrās* was to look after the happiness and welfare of brahmins. Moreover we have no evidence to show that there was any conflict between the brahmins and the
successors of Ashoka. The relation between Jaluka, one of the successors of Ashoka, and the brahmins was very friendly. The Mauryan kings employed brahmins as high officials. This is proved by the fact that Pusyamitra, a brahmin, was the commander-in-chief of the last Maurya king. There is nothing to show that brahmins had a hand in the overthrow of the Mauryas. It is pointed out that the Mauryan empire had already begun to decline soon after the death of Ashoka and consequently its downfall could not be attributed to any revolt of the brahmins.

K.A. Nilkanta Sastri also criticises the view that the fall of the Mauryas was due to a brahminical reaction against the pro-Buddhist policy of Ashoka and the pro-Jaina policy of some of his successors. He points out that Ashoka followed a policy of universal toleration and amity among all the religious sects. There is nothing to believe that Ashoka was animated by any anti-brahminical bias to any degree.

Some writers ascribe the downfall of the Mauryas to Ashoka’s policy of ahimsā or non-violence. Ashoka after the war of Kalinga did not wage any other war and instead of conquest of territories he began with the conquest by the dhamma. As a result of this the military strength of the Mauryan empire declined. The military attitude was also absent from the minds of the people. Ashoka’s followers too followed the path of non-violence which further rendered the empire militarily impotent. It was due to this reason that the Mauryan empire could not survive long after Ashoka’s death.

The Mauryan empire was founded by a policy of blood and iron and could only be maintained by following the same policy. But by eschewing all wars and abandoning the aggressive imperial policy, Ashoka weakened the very foundation of the empire. There is no doubt that he could have easily completed the political unity of India by conquering the Tamil lands in the extreme South, if he only cared to send a powerful army instead of the Buddhist missionaries to that region.
It is also argued that the lack of all military activities after the Kalinga war and the constant preaching of the great virtue of *ahimsā* by the emperor had a permanent effect, not only on the military organisation of the state, but also on the martial qualities of the people in general. The soldiers lost their skill and discipline and Indians generally became averse to war. This is the main reason why the army which successfully resisted the onslaught of Seleucus failed against the less powerful Bactrian Greeks.

According to H.C. Raychaudhary, “the policy of *dhamma-vijaya* which he formulated after the Kalinga war was not likely to promote the cause for which a long line of able sovereigns from Bimbisara to Bindusara had lived and struggled. The statesman who turned civil administrators into religious propagandists, abolished hunting and jousts of arms, entrusted the fierce tribesmen on the North-West frontier and in the wilds of the Deccan to the tender care of “superintendents of piety” and did not rest till the sound of the kettle-drum was completely hushed and the only sound that was heard was that of moral teaching, certainly pursued a policy at which Chandragupta Maurya would have looked askance. Dark clouds were looming in the North-Western horizon. India needed men of the calibre of Puru and Chandragupta to ensure her protection against the yavana menace. She got a dreamer. Magadh after the Kalinga war frittered away her conquering energy in attempting a religious revolution, as Egypt did under the guidance of Ikhnaton. The result was politically disastrous.”

There is no denying the fact that Ashoka asked his successors to follow the path of *ahimsā*. But we cannot hold Ashoka responsible for the downfall of the empire due to adoption of the policy of *dhamma* based on *ahimsā*. Ashoka after the Kalinga war had followed the policy of peace and non-violence but his successors could not continue this policy. The successors did not possess the same strength and effective personality as possessed by Ashoka. They could not administer the empire they had inherited.
No doubt Ashoka abandoned war after the battle of Kalinga but he did not disband his armies. His inscriptions prove this fact. In the 13th rock edict he told the bordering states to expect happiness from him and no sorrow but at the same time warned them not to cause any mischief as it would not be tolerated. This threat Ashoka could give only if he had his armies intact.

According to K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, “Ashoka’s pacifism, his abandonment of war as an instrument of policy, and his exhortation to his successors to follow him in this respect, had nothing doctrinaire about it, and was kept within limits by a wise awareness of the complexity of the human situation and motives. There is no evidence that he diminished the strength of army or weakened the defenses of the empire.”

Moreover waging war or not, does not decide the fate of an empire. Historians have done great injustice to a great personality like Ashoka by holding him responsible for the downfall of an empire. Empires come and go. No personality can be held responsible for the downfall of an empire. It is the process of history which is responsible.

Therefore, we cannot hold Ashoka and his policy of dhamma accountable for the disintegration of the empire. It must be remembered that the end of the Mauryan empire did not differ materially from the fall of many other powerful empires in India, though there was nothing like the pacifist policy of Ashoka to account for it. There were other factors at work, notably the weakness of the successors of Ashoka and the well known centrifugal forces in Indian politics. It may be easily surmised that the great Mauryan empire would have in any case come to an end, sooner or later, even without the policy of Ashoka. But this alone gave it the redeeming grace of having established a mighty moral force over an extensive portion of the world, and making an experiment of ending all wars.
3.6 Significance of the Policy of Dhamma

Though Ashoka has been blamed by various historians for pursuing a policy in the form of dhamma which ultimately led to the disintegration of the empire, nevertheless, the political significance of the policy of dhamma cannot be undermined. The whole policy of dhamma is the result of his ideal of kingship. Ashoka believed that an ideal king should busy himself with the social welfare of his subjects. It was an inspiring ideal of kingship. Probably no ruler ever expressed the relationship between the king and his subjects in a simpler and a nobler language. “All men are my children”, said he, “and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness, in both this world and the next, so also I desire the same for all men.” Again he wrote in the same strain: “just as a man, having made over his child to skillful nurses, feels confident and says to himself, the skillful nurse is zealous to take care of my child’s happiness, even so my officials have been created for the welfare and happiness of the country” (15th rock edict at Dhauli and Jaugada).

V.A. Smith described Ashoka as a combination of the monk and the monarch. According to Smith, “the edicts reveal Ashoka as a man who sought to combine the piety of the monk with the wisdom of the king, and to make India the kingdom of righteousness as he conceived it, a theocracy without a God; in which the government should act the part of Providence, and guide the people in the right way. Every man, he maintained, must work out his own salvation, and eat the fruits of his deeds. ‘The fruit of exertion is not to be obtained by the great man only; because even the small man by exertion can win for himself much heavenly bliss; and for this purpose was given the precept — ‘Let small and great exert themselves.’ The government could only point out the road, which each man must travel for himself.”

Radha Kumud Mookerji points out that Ashoka talked of certain principles and tried to practise them which are aspired to in today’s modern world also. To
quote him, “Ashoka gave to his empire certain principles of administration which, in their breadth of vision and outlook, their spirit of humanity and internationalism, are an aspiration even to the modern world. He based his empire on the principles of *ahimsā*, of non-violence, universal peace, peace between man and man, and between man and every sentient creature, so that it was an empire of righteousness, an empire resting on right and not on might, and thus too far ahead of the times to stand the ordained and ordinary historic process of a painful development from the brute to the man! He also gave to his subject peoples of different communities, castes, and creeds, certain common and cardinal ideals of thought and conduct which make him to be humanity’s first teacher of universal morality and religion.”

Ashoka’s policy of *dhamma* is a declaration of welfarism both for humans and non-humans. Throughout his policy of *dhamma* he highlighted the welfarist nature of the state and rightly formulated that the functions of the state should not be limited to the maintenance of law and order only but it should also include within its sphere the various welfarist measures. In the twentieth century this welfarist conception of the state has been highlighted by positive liberals like T.H. Green and H.J Laski. Today, even in the sway of globalisation, in a large part of the globe the welfarist role of state is still accepted. The extraordinary significance of the *dhamma* policy of Ashoka lies in the fact that we see these ideas of welfarism being adopted and implemented by a ruler almost 2200 years ago in the third century B.C.E.

From his second rock edict we come to know that he provided for the treatment of both human-beings and animals and caused the required medicinal herbs, roots and fruits to be imported and grown throughout his empire and also in many other countries beyond its borders, especially towards the West and the South. He was responsible for planting banyan trees and mango groves along the roads, digging wells at the intervals of every eight kosas and building sheds for
supplying drinking water to human-beings and animals. These facilities may well be compared with a programme of social welfare which modern states also take on.

The policy of dhamma was also significant from the point of view of bringing administrative reforms. For promotion of the dhamma Ashoka created a number of new administrative posts e.g., the posts of dhamma-mahāmātras, yutas and rājukas. They were given a protective mission among people of all sects including the brahmins and sramanas. To keep himself informed about all public affairs, specially about the doings of the mahāmātras on whom the success of his mission mainly relied, he therefore gave special directions to the reporters or the prativedakas that when a matter of urgency comes he must be informed without delay. Through the institution of dhamma-mahāmātra he tried to perform the task of betterment and upliftment of the depressed and the neglected sections of the population. The institution of dhamma-mahāmātras was an attempt made by Ashoka to provide some system of social welfare for the lower castes and the less fortunate members of the community. It was a form of social welfare which in practice was eliminated by the rigidity of the caste system and which was neglected by the Buddhist bhikshus.

He also created the post of officials called the rājukas. To the rājukas, responsible over many hundred thousands of people, the emperor granted independence in the award of honours and penalties in order that those officials might perform their duties confidently and fearlessly. He started the dhamma-yātās instead of vihār-yātās. From an administrative point of view these tours might act as an effective means to know the pulse of public opinion and to reach out to the common people. They were also useful as inspection tours and in this sense might be used as a means to keep control over the local bureaucracy. Through the institution of dhamma-mahāmātras he tried to bring uniformity of judicial proceedings and punishment.
Ashoka tried to give a human face to administration using his policy of *dhamma*. During the first twenty-six years of his reign, he ordered the release of prisoners no less than twenty-five times. According to the pillar edict 4 he left the award of rewards and the infliction of punishment to the discretion of the governors of the district in order to ensure impartiality in judicial proceedings. In rock edict 15, the judicial officers are advised to be free from jealousy, anger, cruelty, hastiness, want of perseverance, laziness and fatigue. He granted three days respite to prisoners on whom the sentence of death had been passed. The intention was that, during the period, the relatives of the prisoners would plead for their lives to the officers by appealing to the latter’s mercy or by adding fresh evidence in the convicts' favour, or by paying ransom for their release; but, failing to secure the release of the prisoners by those means, the relatives would console them by observing fasts and giving gifts with a view to securing their happiness in the next world. All these measures were prompted by Ashoka’s anxiety not only for the welfare and happiness of his subjects in this world but also for the popularisation of the practices of the *dhamma* among the people so that they might attain happiness in the next world as well.

Being a pragmatic ruler Ashoka did not completely abolish the system of capital punishment but he tried to humanise the practice. This shows his concern for the rights of his subjects. Today also many modern states continue with the system of awarding capital punishment but they restrict it to the rarest cases. Similarly, by and large it is accepted in the civilised world that capital punishment must be executed in the least painful manner. D.D. Kosambi maintains that “the Ashokan edicts clearly provide the first constitutional check against the crown, the first Bill of Rights for the citizens. This is made clear by the special instruction to officials that the edicts were to be read out and carefully explained to large public gatherings at least three times a year.”35
Ashoka’s policy of *dhamma* is significant also from the perspective of external affairs. For expansion and propagation of the *dhamma* Ashoka sent various missions. From the 12th rock edict we are informed that these missions were sent to the bordering kingdoms as far away as at a distance of six hundred *yojanas* (approximately 7600 kilometers) where Antiyoke and beyond the kingdom of the said Antiyoka, four other kings named Turamaya, Antikini, Maka and Alikasundara were ruling and even to Tamraparni (modern Sri Lanka). These religious missions acted as effective instruments of diplomacy and they may be compared with the modern peace missions. V.A. Smith considers Ashoka’s foreign missions to be his original contribution. According to Smith, “the active official propaganda carried on by various agencies throughout the empire and dependent states did not satisfy the zeal of Ashoka; who burned with a desire to diffuse the blessings of both his ethical system and distinctive Buddhist teaching in all the independent kingdoms with which he was in touch; and with this purpose organised an effective system of foreign missions worked under his personal supervision, the results of which are visible to this day. His conception of the idea of foreign missions on a grand scale was absolutely original, and produced a well considered and successful scheme, carried out with method and thoroughness in conjunction and harmony with this measure of domestic propaganda.”

The policy of *dhamma* is politically significant for one more reason. It was in the form of a universal faith including the common elements of all the faiths. Therefore, it could be easily acceptable to all sections of the empire. It could act as an effective means to Sanskritise the semi-civilised population or the forest folk which was at the fringes of the empire. It could motivate them to join the mainstream of the empire and thus act as a source of legitimacy for the ruler. It could also lead to the expansion of the economic base of the empire.
The dhamma policy was a declaration of benevolence. It clearly suggests what should be the role of the ruler. In this sense it is a guideline to the political class ruling throughout the world which suggests that the purpose of statecraft is public welfare, not personal gain.
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