

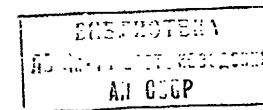
0100

J. GONDA

ANCIENT INDIAN KINGSHIP FROM THE RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

REPRINTED FROM 'NVMEN' III AND IV
WITH ADDENDA AND AN INDEX

SECOND, PHOTOMECHANICAL REPRINT



LEIDEN
E. J. BRILL
1969

1111 1487

1.1.1 23

First published 1966

Copyright 1969 by E. J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced
or translated in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm or
any other means without written permission from the publisher

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

CONTENTS

I. Introduction. Ideas connected with the main 'terms', and epithets of "king".	I
II. The king as a mediator; manifestations of royal power; salvation expected from kingly potency	6
III. Taxes; wealth and liberality of the king; sacrifices; purity and impurity; functions of the king	11
IV. The king upholds dharma; rājadharma; justice	17
V. Royal tabus	21
VI. The king as a deva and a representative of gods	24
VII. Good and bad kings; morality and majesty	33
VIII. Paraphernalia; officials	37
IX. The king as the embodiment of divine powers; gods called kings	47
X. Prāsāda; parallelism between kings and gods, Buddhism on the cakravartin	54
XI. Kings and brahmans; the purohita; the king as a protector	62
XII. Rites, ceremonies, festivals etc.	71
XIII. Darśana; death of the king; the royal guest	77
XIV. Royal Consecration	79
XV. Abhiṣeka	87
XVI. The śānti ceremony Varāh. BS. 48 (Puṣyasnāna)	93
XVII. The deceased king.	96
XVIII. The king's conquests.	100
XIX. The relation of the king to the earth; his "long arms"	106
XX. The aśvamedha	110
XXI. Virā and svarāj; nīrājana	115

XXII. The cakravartin	123
XXIII. Pṛthu, Manu and the ideal king	128
XXIV. Ministers; kingdom	134
XXV. Aryan and non-Aryan elements; Indo-European kingship	138
Addenda	144
Index	145

ANCIENT INDIAN KINGSHIP FROM THE RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

BY

J. GONDA

Utrecht

I

In India the divinity of kings, however small their domain¹⁾, has always been accepted by the masses²⁾. The bearer of authority inspires awe, fear or admiration. Wielding power and occupying a lonely post he is easily credited with special qualities. "They say that the king is a human being; but I consider you to be a god, whose behaviour, if it is in accordance with dharma (norms) and artha (political utility) is superhuman"³⁾.

The actual conduct of public affairs lay largely with the prime minister or chief counsellor⁴⁾. Although authorities disagree⁵⁾ with regard to the question whether misfortune or calamity falling upon the king is a greater evil than that attacking his prime minister, even those who hold the former opinion tacitly admit that, it is true, the king appoints the minister, but leaves the affairs of state to a large extent to the latter⁶⁾. The minister causes the commencement of all undertakings

1) In Vedic times, the tribe was the political unit. The dharmasūtras usually view the monarch as the ruler of a petty state; see also V. M. APTE, *Social and religious life in the grhya-sūtras*, Bombay 1954, p. 52 f.

2) Cf. JEAN LYON, *Just half a world away*, N. York 1954, p. 253: "peasants who (in 1951) had come as much to bask in the bright light of the (sometime) maharajah's presence as to hear him talk."

3) Cf. e.g. Mahābhārata 13, 152, 16; Manu-smṛti 9, 315 f.; Agni-purāna 225, 16 ff.

4) Kāmandakīya-nīṭisāra 13, 23 f. the duties of a 'minister' (*amātya-*) are described as follows: taking care of income and expenditure, administration of justice, warding off enemies, prevention of and fight against calamities, inauguration of the king.

5) See the discussion in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, 127.

6) Cf. also Manu-smṛti 7, 54 ff.: "let him appoint seven or eight ministers, who are versed in the sciences, let him daily consider with them the affairs of state such as ..."; see also 7, 146 ff. I also refer to Bh. S. UPADHYAYA, *India in Kālidāsa, Allahabad 1947*, p. 120 ff.

in public life, and the entire administrative work was, at least at a somewhat later period, carried on by him. A king should never act without his advice 7).

Let us first briefly review the ideas connected by the ancient Indians themselves with the main term for king: *rājan-*. From the exegetical discussions of the Pūrvamīmāṃsā and the works on dharma it appears that the term was often understood in the sense of any member of the three highest classes who actually rules over or protects a country. Sometimes the application is explicitly limited to a *kṣatriya-*, a member of the second class 8). The idea of protecting the people however was central, and also appears from such well-known synonyms as *nrpa-* "protector of men", *bhūpa-* and *bhūpāla-* "protector or guardian of the earth"; *goptr-* "herdsman", etc. 9). The phrase "herdsman of people" (*gopā-janasya*) occurs as early as the times of the R̥gveda 10). "The man who can protect men, who is valorous, restrained and powerful, and who is the punisher of the wicked is called *kṣatriya-*" 11). The king was to be ever wakeful for the benefit of his people 12). He had even been created to be the protector of the classes and orders of society 13). "It is said that the Creator (*dhātṛā*) created power (*balam*) for protecting weakness" 14). "The vaiśya, under the rule of the *kṣatriya*, becomes possessed of cattle" 15). Mercy for all creatures, protection of men, saving them from danger, relieving the distressed and the oppressed, all these are included in the *kṣatriya* duties 16). According to a great authority, Manu's dharma book 17), the second part of the name of a *kṣatriya* should be a word implying protection, of a vaiśya a word expressive of thriving, and of a śūdra a term denoting service. In the Mahābhārata the term for "member of the

7) Sūkrāniti, 2, 1-8.

8) For references see P. V. KANE, *History of Dharmasāstra*, III, Poona 1946, p. 37 ff.

9) See Mbh. 3, 63, 79. The monarch was further designated by many titles, part of which were at the same time divine attributes (*iśvara-* "lord"; *prabhu-* "thriving or mighty one" etc.).

10) R̥gveda 3, 43, 5.

11) Sūkrāniti, 1, 81 f. Ibidem 1, 375 "his sovereignty is only for protection."

12) See e.g. Kālidāsa, *Sakuntalā* 7, 34.

13) Manu 7, 35; cf. 36; 88; 142 ff.; he should behave like a father: 7, 80.

14) Mbh. 12, 91, 12.

15) Sat. Br. 1, 3, 2, 15.

16) Mbh. 12, 64, 27.

17) Manu 2, 32.

military class", *kṣatriya-*, is said to derive from two components, which together express the meaning: "he saves from destruction": *kṣatād yo vai trāyatīti sa tasmāt kṣatriyaḥ smṛtaḥ*. A similar explication of the word already occurs in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad: "nobility" (*kṣatram*) is "life-breath" (*prāṇaḥ*); the breath of life protects (*trāyate*) one from being hurt (*kṣaṇitoḥ*) 18). "Behave like the sun which protects (*pāti*) and destroys all creatures by its rays"; "protecting one's subjects is from of old *tapas* (asceticism, the word meaning primarily „heat, warmth")" 19) are likewise authoritative opinions on kingship. All creatures live happily in the world if they are protected by kings like children are protected by their parents 20). Among the godlike characteristics of a good king the protection which he affords to his subjects is often mentioned in the first place: "Hear an account of that king of the world, of the life of your illustrious father: he was noble and virtuous, and a protector of his subjects. Like Dharma incarnate he protected the four orders, keeping them in their respective duties. Blessed with fortune or welfare (*śrīmān*) and with matchless prowess he protected the earth, and so on." 21) A priest without knowledge and a king without protecting power are but wooden elephants 22). There is no need for such a man on the throne; he is like a eunuch or a barren field, or like a cloud that does not pour rain. But the person who always protects the good and checks the wicked deserves to become a king and to govern the world. For if the king does not observe the duty of protection, ruin would befall everything, no property would be safe, unrighteousness would prevail, everything would be destroyed untimely, the Vedas and morality would disappear, sacrifices would no longer be celebrated, in short society itself would cease to exist 23).

It may indeed be emphasized that this most important of the royal duties comprised any furtherance of the moral and material welfare

18) Mbh. 12, 29, 138; 59, 126; Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad 5, 13, 4.

19) Mbh. 3, 33, 71 f. Hence also the conclusion that the king has obtained his subjects by *tapas*: Nārada-smṛti 18, 25.

20) Mbh. 12, 64, 29; 65, 2 etc. etc.

21) Mbh. 1, 49, 6 ff. In other passages of the Mbh. the king is also styled the incorporate god of norm, right, and law. Cf. HOPKINS, *Journal Amer. Orient. Soc.* 13, p. 153.

22) Mbh. 12, 78, 41 f.

23) Mbh. 12, 68, 10 ff.

of the people. The ruler was to help men of all classes in realizing their earthly and spiritual aims. The king in whose dominion a member of one of the three higher classes becomes a thief is on that account considered a sinner himself²⁴). Not infrequently our sources make mention of a formal promise on the part of a newly elected or inaugurated sovereign to protect his subjects²⁵). The *prajāpālana-* is again and again inculcated as the first duty of rulers²⁶).

A typical indication of the character of the monarch is also the term *nātha-*, a brief digression on which may find a place here. The neuter *nātham* is in Vedic texts used to denote the ideas of "refuge" or "protection": "let all the gods be my refuge"; "they run for help to Prajāpati, seeking refuge"²⁷). In post-Vedic texts the masculine *nātha-* is often used to signify the patron, protector of the helpless: the husband is the *nātha-* of his wife in distress; the lord Kṛṣṇa is the *nātha-* of those who suffer grief and adversity; in battle heroes are *nāthas* of their companions; an army is protected by an heroic *nātha-*; Rāma is the *nātha-* of the world²⁸). When cattle are said to have the god of rain, Parjanya, as their *nātha-*, this means that they are completely dependent on him. The only word in a related language with which *nātha-* can be connected is the Greek *ὀνίημι*: it means: "to profit, benefit, help", the substantive *ὄνησις* "that which brings profit, advantage; means of strengthening; food, rich presents"²⁹). In the days of yore, when there was no kingship, the great epic relates³⁰), all men used to protect one another in accordance with dharma; but in the course of time they got tired of doing so. According to the received belief in the epic man then lived in anarchy. At first there was neither king nor kingdom, nor punishment, nor one to inflict it; but when man's sense of justice was destroyed, various crimes were perpetrated. The gods becoming frightened, created law and order.

24) Mbh. 12, 77, 4.

25) See e.g. Mbh. 12, 59, 106; 13, 70, 23. We would overstep the mark in considering this promise the equivalent of an oath of office or an oath of allegiance of a modern constitutional king.

26) For this *prajāpālana-* "protection of subjects" see e.g. Manu 9, 253; 7, 144.

27) See e.g. AV. 9, 2, 7; Taitt. Br. 1, 6, 4, 1.

28) Mbh. 3, 62, 3; 5, 34, 38; 2, 68, 42; 6, 43, 22; Rām. 1, 77, 3; 2, 48, 14.

29) Curiously enough this noun can also denote gods, heroes and other persons who are a source of help, advantage or strength for others.

30) Mbh. 12, 59, 13 ff.

The better the king, the greater—we might infer from the texts—his power to protect³¹). On the other hand the extreme view is pronounced by an authority on dharma³²), that on account of his majesty and because the protection of the world is entrusted to him the king is right in whatever he does.

It is only in harmony with this important function of the ruler that he is, in the idealizing style of primitive thought, depicted as physically strong³³): he is able to protect by his own strength. He is like Indra (courageous and energetic; the length and strength of his arms are renowned. The whole world is subject to the power of his arms³⁴). Emphasis is also laid on his prowess, strength and valour, which set up a greater claim to honour than high birth³⁵). Famous kings are described as exceeding all beings in strength, outshining all in lustre (*tejas*), transcending all in majesty.

Kings are indeed said to protect the earth with the force of their two arms³⁶). Various rulers are in fact called *dirghabāhu-* "of long arms"³⁷), *mahābāhu-* "of mighty arms, long-armed"³⁸) or *vīpulāmśo mahābāhur mahoraskaḥ* "broad-shouldered, long-armed, broad-chested"³⁹). Remarkably enough the epithet *mahābāhu-* is also given to Viṣṇu, the protector god par excellence, who is said to owe this title to the fact that he bears heaven and earth on his mighty arms⁴⁰). And to one of the epic heroes the words are attributed: "we have the disposal of the might of arms (*bāhubalinaḥ*)"⁴¹). In this connection mention may be made of the epithet *kṣītibhṛt-* "who supports the earth"

31) He was incidentally supposed to check even the activities of divine beings, see e.g. Kālidāsa, Raghuvamśa 6, 75.

32) Nārada 18, 21.

33) One might compare the literary portrait of Rāma: Rām. 1, 1, 8 ff. "broad-shouldered, long-armed, having large jaws and folds in the neck."

34) Cf. Mbh. 12, 63, 24 *bāhvāyattaḥ kṣatriyair mānarānām lokaśreṣṭham dharmam āsevamānaih*.

35) See Śukranīti 1, 363 f.

36) Cf. Vāyu Pur. 88, 172 f.

37) e.g. Nala: Mbh. 3, 64, 54.

38) e.g. Mbh. 3, 53, 11; 66, 11; Mārka. Pur. 74, 51.

39) e.g. Rāma: Rām. 1, 1, 9 f.

40) See Mbh. 5, 70, 9 *bāhubhyāṃ rodasī bibhran mahābāhur iti smṛtaḥ*. Two sons of the epic king Dhṛtarāṣṭra are called Mahābāhu. The name is also given to Viṣṇu.

41) Cf. Mbh. 3, 52, 11; 209, 17; Taitt. Br. 3, 8, 23, 3 *rājanyo bāhubalī bhāvukah*.

given to a king by the poet Bhartṛhari⁴²). An epithet of similar purport is *rāṣṭrabhṛt-* an adjective which, though often translated by "bearing sway", literally means "bearing, supporting, maintaining the kingdom"; monarchs are called *rāṣṭrabhṛt-*, a brāhmaṇa states, "because they support the kingdom". The ruler is therefore the *pārthiva-* par excellence: "he who relates to or possesses the earth."

The great poets like Kālidāsa also describe the king as an extraordinary man and distinct from his subjects⁴³), attributing to him divine qualities and epithets. Just like the poison of a snake, even if it is young, is deadly, thus a king, though a boy, is by his very nature able to protect the earth⁴⁴). A kṣatriya must always be strong, and on strength depends chastisement⁴⁵). Being so important the ruler must always preserve himself⁴⁶). The very happiness of a king consists in his protective function⁴⁷).

II.

In so-called primitive or semi-primitive societies the belief is widespread that the welfare and prosperity of the community depend on harmony with the invisible powers. The Indians shared with many other peoples the conviction that their rulers possessed supernatural power. One of the most striking characteristics of the Indian king is his rôle as a mediator. He is an intermediary between the powers of nature and society. As such he is an essential factor for the well-being of the people⁴⁸). In this respect the ancient Indian ruler was also a worthy colleague of the kings and chiefs of many other peoples. "The impulse (furtherance) of that special power-substance which manifests itself in vegetative life and increase of possessions (*vājasya prasavaḥ*) prevailed over all these worlds, in all directions; from days of yore the king goes about knowing, increasing the people, and the well-being (*puṣṭi-*, "a well-nourished condition") amongst us"⁴⁹). He is according

42) Bhartṛhari, 3, 59.

43) Cf. also Mbh. 2, 55, 6.

44) Kālidāsa, Vikramorvaṣīya 5, 18.

45) Mbh. 12, 23, 12.

46) Manu 7, 21, 3.

47) See Mārkaṇḍeya-purāna 26, 35; 27, 30 f.; 129, 35; cf. also 132, 11.

48) See e.g. also J. J. MEYER, Daṇḍins Daśakumāracaritram, Leipzig 1902, p. 344 f.

49) Vāj. Samh. 9, 25; Śat. Br. 5, 2, 2, 7.

to many descriptions in the epics and other documents the source and origin of all important events in the country. If the king is good, he is a blessing, if he is bad he is a disaster for his subjects. The sins of a king may even be the cause of the fall of the empire; drought, hunger, diseases, and battles will afflict the population⁵⁰). "As is the king so is his people"⁵¹). A good king should strive always to add to the prosperity of his people, bringing about a state of plenty and affluence⁵²). His first aim should be to seek his realm's happiness. Where the ideal king lives the people are prosperous, cheerful, healthy, pure in conduct, expert in works; there the sacrifices are performed and the clouds always pour waters⁵³). Since there were indeed kings who behaved badly, it is not surprising to find many passages in which the king is a source of endless fear and adversity to his subjects. The king, thieves, robbers, fire, are all and sundry considered public calamities. The bad king's officers or favourites are put on a par with robbers and enemies. Snakes, enemies, robbers and the king, or the royal princes and concubines are said to oppress the people⁵⁴).

Above all the sovereign is indeed responsible for rainfall⁵⁵) and this not only through his fitness as a ruler, but also by his presence itself. "Indra, seeing that all the kṣatriya sovereigns ruled their kingdoms very virtuously, poured down vivifying showers of rain at the proper time and at the proper place, and thus protected all creatures"⁵⁶). Where there is no king rain will not fall⁵⁷). If he sins.

50) See e.g. Jātaka 194 and 213.

51) Mbh. 11, 8, 32.

52) Cf. Kālidāsa, Raghuvamśa 8, 6; 9, 2; 17, 41. We are almost tempted to regard the reference made by the same poet, *ibid.*, 4, 20, to women who whilst keeping watch over the rice fields sang the praises of the king as a piece of evidence of a fertility rite (cf. e.g. N. ADRIANI, *Verzamelde geschriften*, II, Haarlem 1932, p. 299 ff.; 392 ff.).

53) Mbh. 4, 28, 15 ff.

54) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 2, 5, 76; 12, 228, 77; 13, 125, 9; Dīghanikāya 1, 85 ff.; Kāmand. NS. 5, 82 = Agni Pur. 239, 46. This double aspect of royal power and behaviour is commented upon also in the literature of other peoples. Often however the terrible and wicked behaviour of the king is said to inspire terror in the internal and external enemies. Thus for instance in a — corrupted — Sanskrit stanza in the beginning of the Javanese version of the Virāṭaparvan; see A. A. FOKKER, *Virāṭaparva I*, The Hague 1938, p. 1.

55) Instances of this belief are very numerous in the Indian literature; see e.g. Jātaka 194 and 276. — Cf. e.g. also Vājas. S. 22, 22.

56) Mbh. 1, 64, 16, the poet adding a detailed picture of a prosperous reign.

57) Particulars which have often been discussed may be found in J. J. MEYER,

that is to say transgresses the dharma in any respect, be it 'ritual', 'moral' or otherwise, or if his purohita ("chaplain") makes a mistake, rain can cease⁵⁸). In times of drought the subjects approach the ruler for the much desired water⁵⁹). Incidentally a text prescribes that a ruler should consider as the highest of his duties reclaiming land for cultivation and fertilizing it, and protection of his subjects⁶⁰). Whatever the speculations in certain parts of the brāhmaṇas may have meant to the general public, such identifications as "kṣatra- (i.e. "power, dominion", the princely and military class as contrasted with the brahmans) is life" anyhow show that great importance was attached to rulership⁶¹).

On the other hand, living in the realm of a bad king leads to destruction⁶²). There the cows will not yield milk, but kick over the milking-pails; the farmer will hurt himself when ploughing. In this light we may consider such wishes as are expressed in Vedic mantras: "be this king dear to kine, herbs, cattle"⁶³) as referring to an aspect of ancient Indian kingship not generally known nowadays. In an old Atharvanic text intended to promote the restoration of a king who had lost his realm, Indra is besought to call back the royal man for the benefit of his subjects, Varuṇa for the waters, Soma for the mountains⁶⁴).

Thus it becomes clear that not only lordly power, but also the essence of nutritious food, the essence of water and useful plants, any refreshing draught, a well-nourished condition, and generative power: *kṣatarūpam tat*⁶⁵). An illuminating illustration of the character of these manifestations of *kṣatra-* is also afforded by the in-

Sexual life in ancient India, London 1930, p. 286 f.; the same. *Trilogie* II, p. 255 f.; III, p. 268; GONDA, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas*, Acta Or. 19, p. 362 ff. and passim.

58) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 3, 110, 42 ff., discussed by H. LÜDERS, *Philologica Indica*, Göttingen 1940, p. 1 ff.

59) See e.g. also Jātaka 547; COWELL'S translation, VI, p. 252.

60) Mbh. 12, 65, 2. Cf. also Rgveda 1, 73, 3 "all-nourishing... like a king".

61) Brh. ār. Up. 5, 13, 4 = Sat. Br. 14, 8, 14, 4.

62) Mbh. 3, 1, 21.

63) See e.g. Atharvaveda 4, 22, 4. Cf. also 3, 4, 3.

64) Atharvaveda 3, 3, 3.

65) Aitareya-brāhmaṇa 8, 7, 10.

clusion of *surā* "spirituous liquor" among them⁶⁶). Spirituous liquor—which was forbidden to brahmans⁶⁷)—is often said to help love; hence the custom⁶⁸) to sprinkle a bride with it, so that her whole body is moistened with it; hence also the belief that drinking helps to stimulate the generative powers in nature⁶⁹). In illustration of this belief connected with spirits attention may perhaps be drawn to the prohibitions with regard to hot and strong drinks in magic. Among various peoples the avoidance of these liquids belongs to the special restrictions to be observed by magicians and other potent persons. In New South Wales it was believed that those who were supposed to have the power of calling up spirits did not drink any sort of liquid which would heat them internally. Elsewhere medicine men are careful not to drink anything hot. The avoidance of hot and fiery liquors would seem to be explained by the conviction that the potent person is himself in a state of permanent 'hotness' which would be neutralized by contact with anything possessing a greater heat⁷⁰). The state or grade of 'hotness' of these drinks, though dangerous to brahmans⁷¹), was apparently believed to be congenial to members of the kṣatriya order.

In all this we can see the Indian form of the widespread veneration for authority and of the more or less permanent association between authority and supernatural power in the popular mind. Kings as well as priests were associated with the regulation of the meteorological processes and other natural forces.

It is therefore easily intelligible that the king's main duty, always emphasized by the authorities, consists in protecting his subjects⁷²). That is the very reason of his existence⁷³), of his being created

66) Ibidem 8, 8, 5.

67) I refer to J. J. MEYER, *Das Wesen der altindischen Rechtsschriften*, Leipzig 1927, p. 25 f.; 352; *Buch v. Welt- und Staatsleben*, Leipzig 1926, p. 186; 718 f.; Zus. 190, 24. See also Kāmasūtra 54, 3 ff.

68) Mentioned in Gobhila's G.S. 2, 1, 10.

69) I refer to MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 5; 109 f.; III, p. 178.

70) See H. WEBSTER, *Magic*, Stanford Cal. 1948, p. 237 ff. For magic 'heat' see also M. ELIADE, *Le chamanisme*, Paris 1951, p. 412 ff.

71) The main reason why brahmans should abstain from drinking ardent spirits was the fear that they would expose the Veda, of which they were the repositories, to profanation by reciting it out of season.

72) The term *kṣatriya-* "a member of the military or reigning class" was by way of 'popular etymology' explained as "who saves (*trā-*) from destruction (*kṣata-*): e.g. Mbh. 12, 29, 138.

73) Manu 7, 3.

from particles of the eight *lokapālas* or divine protectors of the quarters of the universe. The duty of protecting mainly consists in meeting external aggression which involved fighting—the gods, when about to join battle with the asuras wanted Indra to be their chief, for it ill becomes a people to wage war without a king⁷⁴—, and in punishing the guilty, which primarily meant administering justice; besides the king has to save his subjects from calamities⁷⁵). Should the king be remiss in this duty the creatures would perish⁷⁶). Authors writing at a later period never tire of emphasizing the same points. King Yayāti for instance is described in the Vāyu Purāṇa as having pleased (*atarpayat*) the gods with sacrifices, the ancestors with śrāddhas, the poor with favour (*anugraha-*), the brahmins with what they desired, the guests with food and drink, the vaiśyas with protection, the śūdras with equity (*ānṛśamsa-*) and the daśyus with due control (*samni-graha-*). Thus he gratified and entertained (*anurañjayat*) his people according to dharma as a second Indra himself. Hence also the explanation of the term *rājarṣi-* “a kingly ṛṣi-” i.e. “an inspired sage of kingly descent, a king who at the same time is an ṛṣi-”: “he moves his subjects (unto their welfare?) through their welfare”⁷⁷).

Since kingly potency is no personal capacity, all conceivable salvation is expected of it. Consequently, a ruler is often supposed to be able to heal. The power of the “king’s touch”⁷⁸) was also known: “at the touch of the king’s hand, which was fragrant and auspicious, the old man regained his consciousness”⁷⁹). Traditions are not wanting in which the people beseech their ruler to rescue them from every grief and misery, from all pains and diseases⁸⁰). To quote a single instance of a successful reign: when Rāma was king, the epic narrates⁸¹), no widow mourned; neither beasts of prey nor diseases were to be

74) Taitt. Br. I, 5, 9, 1.

75) In the smṛti literature (dealing with dharma) the king or his officials were even supposed to make good losses in case they were not able to recover stolen property.

76) Nārada 18, 14.

77) Vāyu Pur. 61, 87 *ṛṣanti rañjanād yasmāt prajā rājarṣayaḥ smṛtāḥ*; see MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Dict. s.v. ṛṣi-*.

78) Which until fairly recent times was regarded in England as a cure for scrofula: G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion*, p. 117.

79) Mbh. 15, 3, 68.

80) See e.g. MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 124.

81) Rām. 6, 128, 97 ff.

feared; there were no enemies; the younger generation did not die before the older; all men were delighted and observed the dharma; the trees, always flowering, bore fruits without interruption; it rained when rain was desired; the wind was agreeable to the touch; everybody was content.

III.

The theorists emphasize that the king is only entitled to impose taxes because he affords protection⁸²). The subjects like cattle should be tended and milked at the proper time⁸³). A ruler who whilst taking taxes failed to protect the people was regarded as a thief, a *baliṣadbhāgataskara-*⁸⁴). “The conduct of a monarch who, without guarding his people like a father his son, collects the usual taxes, is most unjust and unbecoming”⁸⁵). Should he collect taxes or accept presents of fruit, vegetables etc., whilst renouncing his duty, he would incur sin⁸⁶). As one of the aims of gifts to men and to gods is that of buying peace⁸⁷) it may be observed that the term *bali-* used for “tax” or “royal revenue” is also very often applied to any offering or propitiatory oblation to gods and semi-divine beings, household divinities, spirits and various creatures including even lifeless objects⁸⁸). Another word for tax, toll, or customs, *śulka-*, under other circumstances denotes the so-called marriage-gift or bride-price: the

82) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 12, 69, 25; 71, 10.

83) Kāmānd. NS. 5, 84.

84) See Mbh. 1, 213, 6 ff.; 12, 139, 100; see also N. CH. BANDYOPADHYAYA, *Development of Hindu polity and political theories* I, Calcutta 1927, p. 280 ff.

85) *adharmah samahān:* Rām. 3, 6, 11.

86) Manu 8, 307. See also e.g. Manu 9, 254.

87) I refer to M. MAUSS, *The Gift* (Engl. Transl.), London 1954, p. 12 ff.; p. 58.

88) I refer to E. ARBMAN, *Rudra, Uppsala Univ. Arsskrift* 1922, p. 64 ff., who for *bali-* proposes the translation “Deponierungsoffer”. It might perhaps be remembered that *bali-* offerings are not seldom made in a place which is related to the recipient: oblations to Parjanya, the waters, and earth are e.g. offered in a water-pot etc. (see A. B. KEITH, *Rel. and Phil. of Veda and Upan.*, Harvard 1925, p. 213 f.). So the price for protection was offered in the person of the king. Attention may also be drawn to Kauṭ. AS. 9, 9 where the ascetics inhabiting the woods are said to throw down (*ni-vap-*, often used in connection with a *bali-oblation*) the sixth part of their gleanings—which are no doubt actually consumed by birds and other animals—; they belong to the one who protects them, i.e. the king.

śulka-, in my opinion⁸⁹), is a transfer of property to which a mystic power is attached which establishes community, redresses a balance of power, or at least binds the recipient.

Another term, used in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, likewise characterizes the ideas formed at least by those who introduced its use, of the taxes due to the head of government: "even the inhabitants of the forest throw down the sixth part of their gleanings". The verb *ni-vap-* used here should not make us believe that they really threw the gleanings into the king's treasury. The word occurs to denote the offerings to animals (birds) and to the deceased progenitors. We may, with Meyer⁹⁰), suppose these offerings, though intended for the king, to have been eaten by the birds. In this they share the actual destiny of other bali-offerings designed to be the food of various divinities⁹¹).

It may be argued that the term *bali-* — to which we return in order to elucidate the character of the royal revenues — is in the Ṛgveda used in connection with a tribute to the god Agni (cf. I, 70, 9, where Sāyaṇa explains: "property in the form of a presentation"), in such a way that a relation of reciprocity is incontestable: 5, I, 10 "To Thee, O Agni, the races of men offer a bali (homage characterized by being an oblation, Sāyaṇa), remember us with benevolence, extend to us your mighty protection!". The heads of the horses which are killed in the war are RV. 7,18,19 called balis, offered to Indra (*upahāra-*, Sāyaṇa, i.e. offering to a god, or present to a king or superior, particular kind of alliance obtained through a gift, food distributed to a guest). To the *vajra-* (thunderbolt) with which Indra kills Vṛtra (who keeps the waters back) the rivers bring their bali (*upahāra-*, Sāyaṇa: 8,100,9). Atharvaveda 3, 4, 3 the same term is used to signify the tribute offered to a newly-consecrated king. It seems important to notice that the verb *upaharati*, or simply *harati*, is usual to express, in combination with *bali-*, the idea of "to offer a bali-oblation" as well as "to pay tribute, to present a gift". In daily usage *upaharati* was

⁸⁹) I refer to my relevant paper in *Sarūpa-bhārati* (I. Sarup Memorial Volume, Hoshiarpur 1954) p. 223 ff.

⁹⁰) MEYER, *Buch v. Welt- und Staatsleben*, p. 26, n. 1. See also H. HOFFMANN, „Die Begriffe für „König“ und „Herrschaft“ im indischen Kulturkreis“, *Saeculum* 4/1953, p. 331 ff.

⁹¹) For an enumeration of divinities see A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur* (Grundriss), p. 74 f.

especially used for "to dish up food"⁹²). In connection with this point it may be observed that the wielder of royal power is said to feed on the vaiśyas, i.e. the numerous members of the third class. Like the deer that eats the corn—the corn is the people, and the deer royal power—the king who does not rear cattle himself, lives at their expense⁹³).

The ruler is often described as wealthy, as a lord of riches. He is besought when "resting at the summit of the royal position, and possessed of creative energy (*ugra-*)⁹⁴)" to share out valuable objects to those who give allegiance to him⁹⁵). He should be *ugra-* and well-disposed or gracious (*sumanas-*)⁹⁶). His power ought to overflow. Consequently, the "increaser of his friends"⁹⁷) should bestow gifts⁹⁸); being a dispenser of bounty, he should delight and gratify his subjects: the title *rājā* is in a significant way often derived from *raj-* *rañj-* in the sense of "to make glad, to delight"⁹⁹). Pleasing his subjects is emphasized as a principal trait and duty of the monarch. "He gratified the people protecting them in accordance with the dharma"¹⁰⁰). In bestowing gifts the monarch shows his vigour and prosperity¹⁰¹). On festive occasions intended to promote the general welfare, the king gave satisfaction to the poor and the misshapen with gifts of

⁹²) See e.g. Taitt. Br. I, 4, 9, 2. Many instances were collected by ARBMAN, *Rudra*, p. 67 f.

⁹³) See e.g. Śat. Br. 13, 2, 9, 8.

⁹⁴) I now would in many passages prefer this translation to that of "vital energy" which, beside other English terms was proposed in *Anc. Indian ojas...*, Utrecht 1952.

⁹⁵) Atharvaveda 3, 4, 2; cf. 4.

⁹⁶) Atharvaveda 3, 4, 7.

⁹⁷) Atharvaveda 4, 8, 2 (*mitravardhana-*).

⁹⁸) For his duty to make gifts to learned brahmins etc. see KANE, *o.c.*, II, 2, p. 856 ff.; III, p. 44. See e.g. also Mbh. 3, 293, 2.

⁹⁹) I refer to KANE, *o.c.*, III (Poona 1946) p. 28. The Nirukta (2, 3), however, derives *rājan-* from *rāj-* "to shine"; cf. UPADHYAYA, *o.c.*, p. 81; K. P. JAYASWAL, *Hindu Polity*, II, p. 3. For *rañjayati* see e.g. Mbh. 12, 59, 125. See also A. HILLEBRANDT, *Allindische Politik*, Jena 1923, p. 9 ff.

¹⁰⁰) Mbh. 3, 56, 44. *arāñjayat prajā vīro dharmena paripālayan*, the very essence of the kingly functions. Similarly, Rām. I, 52, 7; Mārkaṇḍeya-purāna 119 (116), 1 etc. Cf. also Vikramacarita 3a (ed. Edgerton, p. 13) "he satisfied the requirements of the gods, the brahmins, the poor...; he gave complete protection to his subjects... won the hearts etc."; Kathāsaritsāgara 51, 19; Bhāgavata-purāna I, 12, 4 etc.

¹⁰¹) See also N. J. SHENDE, *The foundations of the Atharvanic religion*, Poona, p. 185.

gold¹⁰²). One of the titles conferred on the king in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa is that of *bhoja-*, a term which in the sense of "the liberal or bountiful" occurs in the Ṛgveda.

Already at the earliest period of Indian history the royal position involved splendour and display of wealth and power¹⁰³). The Maruts for instance are compared to "kings of a brilliant appearance"; the ruler is a rich man, he possesses clothes or ornaments resembling gold. Already the Ṛgvedic king was marked out from his subjects by his retinue and his glittering apparel¹⁰⁴). Such descriptions as are given by Kālidāsa: "he outshone all in power and transcended all in majesty (*tejas*)"¹⁰⁵) are far from rare. Because he is a bearer of majesty and a great deity in human form¹⁰⁶), his position should be illustrious, his prosperity visible, his power evident. Hence such epithets as *dānapati-* "lord of liberality", i.e. a munificent man, which in connection with *yajvan-* "worshipper" and *sarvabhūtahite rataḥ* "intent upon the well-being of all creatures" were given to ancient sovereigns¹⁰⁷). Making gifts, a discourse on the duties of noblemen¹⁰⁸) says, is the greatest of virtues. Of all kinds of gifts, the author continues, that of the body in battle is the highest.

In primitive societies a wealthy and successful man, a forceful and prosperous personality, soon becomes great and admired¹⁰⁹). Although wealth among many peoples does not give power in the sense of control over persons, the possession of wealth often confers prestige, honour, security, achievement, and not seldom it gives power too. Wealth confers privileges, among the American Kwakiutl the right to sing songs, perform dances, boast publicly, and insult others. When used against another the point of these privileges is prestige, not factual power. "The psychological mechanism behind this formulation of the

102) See e.g. Vikramacarita, 16th story (EDGERTON, p. 134): here the festival is in honour of the spring, and intended to make all seasons well-disposed and to bring about prosperity to all people. See also MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 6 f.

103) The reader might also be referred to H. ZIMMER, *Altindisches Leben*, Berlin 1879, p. 167 ff.

104) For details see the author's *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 189 ff.

105) Kālidāsa, *Ragh.* I, 14.

106) *Manu* 7, 8.

107) See e.g. *Mbh.* 3, 293, 1; 5, 119, 22.

108) *Mbh.* 12, 65, 3; cf. 64, 27.

109) See e.g. A. GOLDENWEISER, *Anthropology*, New York 1946, p. 152 ff.; R. BENEDICT, *Patterns of culture*⁷, New York 1950, p. 174 ff.

significance of wealth is not primarily aggression against another, but the glorification of the self"¹¹⁰). It is the existence of surplus, that is most significant in these societies. Display of wealth is for the happy possessor often obligatory, demanded by prestige, a means of maintaining the ceremonial observances of the community to which he belongs. The value of possessions partly lies in what might be called their ceremonial aspect, partly in the opportunity they give a person to be liberal. Honour and prestige may play an important rôle in the benefits bestowed upon gods and men. The rich man who shows his wealth by spending is the man who aims at prestige.

To sacrifice is explicitly called one of the king's duties¹¹¹), "worshipper" being one of his well-known epithets. This feature is by no means contradictory to his quality of *deva-* ("god"), since the gods are likewise represented as offering sacrifices, the sacrifice being an indispensable means of gaining victory, possessions and other ends, and of maintaining the right order in the universe¹¹²). So sacrificing does not detract from the king's divinity, the less so as the gods according to the Śatapathabrāhmaṇa¹¹³) are held to present the offerings to each other. It was typical of a wicked king¹¹⁴) to have offered the sacrifices intended for the gods, to himself. In this he imitated the asuras who sacrificed to themselves.

A special interest attaches to the prescriptions of dharma-texts in connection with *āśauca-*, "impurity", i.e. the absence of the power or privilege to perform religious acts. *Manu* expressly states¹¹⁵) that kings, like those engaged in performing long sacrifices and religious observances are not liable to *āśauca-*, because the first occupy the

110) F. BOAS, *General anthropology*, New York 1938, p. 337.

111) *Rāmāyaṇa* 2, 113, 23; cf. also *Mbh.* 1, 74, 129; 178, 12; 3, 293, 2 etc. The king is a *pūjītapūjako* "a reverer of what is revered" (*Milindapañha*, p. 226 T., where the force of the royal example is emphasized).

112) The gods also applied themselves to asceticism etc. They are repeatedly said to have obtained their position, including heaven, by these means. See S. LÉVI, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les brāhmanas*, Paris 1898, p. 54 ff.

113) *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* 5, 1, 1, 1 f.

114) As e.g. the mythical Vena, see e.g. *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* 1, 13, 14. This tradition may not be regarded (as was done by ALTEKAR, o.c., p. 59 f.) as an argument in favour of the hypothesis that royal divinity in the proper sense of the term did not turn up before the period of *Manu* and other texts mentioning the story of Vena and other incidents of a similar character.

115) *Manu* 5, 93 f. Cf. also *Vasiṣṭha-dharmaśāstra* 19, 48 and *Viṣṇu-dharma-sūtra* 22, 47 ff.