

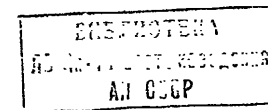
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J. GONDA

# ANCIENT INDIAN KINGSHIP FROM THE RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

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## ANCIENT INDIAN KINGSHIP FROM THE RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

BY

J. GONDA

Utrecht

### I

In India the divinity of kings, however small their domain<sup>1)</sup>, has always been accepted by the masses<sup>2)</sup>. 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"<sup>3)</sup>.

The actual conduct of public affairs lay largely with the prime minister or chief counsellor<sup>4)</sup>. Although authorities disagree<sup>5)</sup> 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 latter<sup>6)</sup>. 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-smṛiti 9, 315 f.; Agni-purāṇa 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-smṛiti 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 *Rgveda* 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) Śukranīti, 2, 1-8.

8) For references see P. V. KANE, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, 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 (*īśvara-* "lord"; *prabhu-* "thriving or mighty one" etc.).

10) *Rgveda* 3, 43, 5.

11) Śukranīti, 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 himself<sup>24</sup>). Not infrequently our sources make mention of a formal promise on the part of a newly elected or inaugurated sovereign to protect his subjects<sup>25</sup>). The *prajāpālana-* is again and again inculcated as the first duty of rulers<sup>26</sup>).

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"<sup>27</sup>). 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 world<sup>28</sup>). 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"<sup>29</sup>). In the days of yore, when there was no kingship, the great epic relates<sup>30</sup>), 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 protect<sup>31</sup>). On the other hand the extreme view is pronounced by an authority on dharma<sup>32</sup>), 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 strong<sup>33</sup>): 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 arms<sup>34</sup>). Emphasis is also laid on his prowess, strength and valour, which set up a greater claim to honour than high birth<sup>35</sup>). 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 arms<sup>36</sup>). Various rulers are in fact called *dirghabāhu-* "of long arms"<sup>37</sup>), *mahābāhu-* "of mighty arms, long-armed"<sup>38</sup>) or *vipulāmśo mahābāhur mahoraskah* "broad-shouldered, long-armed, broad-chested"<sup>39</sup>). 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 arms<sup>40</sup>). And to one of the epic heroes the words are attributed: "we have the disposal of the might of arms (*bāhubalinah*)"<sup>41</sup>). In this connection mention may be made of the epithet *kṣitibhṛt-* "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 *bāhvāyattam kṣatriyair mānavaṇām lokaśreṣṭham dharmam āsevamānāih*.

35) See Sukranīti 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 *bāhubhyām rodasī bibhran mahābāhur iti smṛtah*. 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 bhārukah*.

given to a king by the poet Bhartṛhari<sup>42</sup>). 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 subjects<sup>43</sup>), 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 earth<sup>44</sup>). A kṣatriya must always be strong, and on strength depends chastisement<sup>45</sup>). Being so important the ruler must always preserve himself<sup>46</sup>). The very happiness of a king consists in his protective function<sup>47</sup>).

## 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 people<sup>48</sup>). 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"<sup>49</sup>). He is according

42) Bhartṛhari, 3, 59.

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

44) Kālidāsa, Vikramorvaśīya 5, 18.

45) Mbh. 12, 23, 12.

46) Manu 7, 21, 3.

47) See Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa 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 population<sup>50</sup>). "As is the king so is his people"<sup>51</sup>). A good king should strive always to add to the prosperity of his people, bringing about a state of plenty and affluence<sup>52</sup>). 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 waters<sup>53</sup>). 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 people<sup>54</sup>).

Above all the sovereign is indeed responsible for rainfall<sup>55</sup>) 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"<sup>56</sup>). Where there is no king rain will not fall<sup>57</sup>). 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 cease<sup>58</sup>). In times of drought the subjects approach the ruler for the much desired water<sup>59</sup>). 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 subjects<sup>60</sup>). 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 rulership<sup>61</sup>).

On the other hand, living in the realm of a bad king leads to destruction<sup>62</sup>). 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"<sup>63</sup>) 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 mountains<sup>64</sup>).

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 are expressly enumerated among the manifestations of royal power: *kṣatrarūpam tat*<sup>65</sup>). 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 them<sup>66</sup>). Spirituous liquor—which was forbidden to brahmans<sup>67</sup>)—is often said to help love; hence the custom<sup>68</sup>) 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 nature<sup>69</sup>). 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 heat<sup>70</sup>). The state or grade of 'hotness' of these drinks, though dangerous to brahmans<sup>71</sup>), 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 subjects<sup>72</sup>). That is the very reason of his existence<sup>73</sup>), 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 king<sup>74</sup>)—, and in punishing the guilty, which primarily meant administering justice; besides the king has to save his subjects from calamities<sup>75</sup>). Should the king be remiss in this duty the creatures would perish<sup>76</sup>). 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 (*anuranjayat*) his people according to dharma as a second Indra himself. Hence also the explication 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”<sup>77</sup>).

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”<sup>78</sup>) was also known: “at the touch of the king’s hand, which was fragrant and auspicious, the old man regained his consciousness”<sup>79</sup>). Traditions are not wanting in which the people beseech their ruler to rescue them from every grief and misery, from all pains and diseases<sup>80</sup>). To quote a single instance of a successful reign: when Rāma was king, the epic narrates<sup>81</sup>), 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 protection<sup>82</sup>). The subjects like cattle should be tended and milked at the proper time<sup>83</sup>). A ruler who whilst taking taxes failed to protect the people was regarded as a thief, a *baḷiṣadbhāgataskara-*<sup>84</sup>). “The conduct of a monarch who, without guarding his people like a father his son, collects the usual taxes, is most unjust and unbecoming”<sup>85</sup>). Should he collect taxes or accept presents of fruit, vegetables etc., whilst renouncing his duty, he would incur sin<sup>86</sup>). As one of the aims of gifts to men and to gods is that of buying peace<sup>87</sup>) it may be observed that the term *baḷi-* 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 objects<sup>88</sup>). 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 *baḷi-* proposes the translation “Deponierungsoffer”. It might perhaps be remembered that *baḷi-* 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 *baḷi*-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 opinion <sup>89</sup>), 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 Meyer <sup>90</sup>), 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 divinities <sup>91</sup>).

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. 1, 70, 9, where Sāyaṇa explains: "property in the form of a presentation"), in such a way that a relation of reciprocity is incontestable: 5, 1, 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

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

<sup>90</sup>) 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.

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

especially used for "to dish up food" <sup>92</sup>). 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 expense <sup>93</sup>).

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-*) <sup>94</sup>)" to share out valuable objects to those who give allegiance to him <sup>95</sup>). He should be *ugra-* and well-disposed or gracious (*sumanas-*) <sup>96</sup>). His power ought to overflow. Consequently, the "increaser of his friends" <sup>97</sup>) should bestow gifts <sup>98</sup>); 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" <sup>99</sup>). 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" <sup>100</sup>). In bestowing gifts the monarch shows his vigour and prosperity <sup>101</sup>). On festive occasions intended to promote the general welfare, the king gave satisfaction to the poor and the misshapen with gifts of

<sup>92</sup>) See e.g. Taitt. Br. 1, 4, 9, 2. Many instances were collected by ARBMAN, *Rudra*, p. 67 f.

<sup>93</sup>) See e.g. Śat. Br. 13, 2, 9, 8.

<sup>94</sup>) 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.

<sup>95</sup>) Atharvaveda 3, 4, 2; cf. 4.

<sup>96</sup>) Atharvaveda 3, 4, 7.

<sup>97</sup>) Atharvaveda 4, 8, 2 (*mitravardhana-*).

<sup>98</sup>) 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.

<sup>99</sup>) 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.

<sup>100</sup>) Mbh. 3, 56, 44. *arañjayat prajā vīro dharmena paripālayan*, the very essence of the kingly functions. Similarly, Rām. 1, 52, 7; Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa 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-purāṇa 1, 12, 4 etc.

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

gold<sup>102</sup>). 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 R̥gveda.

Already at the earliest period of Indian history the royal position involved splendour and display of wealth and power<sup>103</sup>). 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 R̥gvedic king was marked out from his subjects by his retinue and his glittering apparel<sup>104</sup>). Such descriptions as are given by Kālidāsa: "he outshone all in power and transcended all in majesty (*tejas*)"<sup>105</sup> are far from rare. Because he is a bearer of majesty and a great deity in human form<sup>106</sup>), 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 sovereigns<sup>107</sup>). Making gifts, a discourse on the duties of noblemen<sup>108</sup>) 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 admired<sup>109</sup>). 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

<sup>102</sup>) 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.

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

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

<sup>105</sup>) Kālidāsa, *Ragh.* I, 14.

<sup>106</sup>) *Manu* 7, 8.

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

<sup>108</sup>) *Mbh.* 12, 65, 3; cf. 64, 27.

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

significance of wealth is not primarily aggression against another, but the glorification of the self"<sup>110</sup>). 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 duties<sup>111</sup>), "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 universe<sup>112</sup>). So sacrificing does not detract from the king's divinity, the less so as the gods according to the Śatapathabrāhmaṇa<sup>113</sup>) are held to present the offerings to each other. It was typical of a wicked king<sup>114</sup>) 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 states<sup>115</sup>) that kings, like those engaged in performing long sacrifices and religious observances are not liable to *āśauca-*, because the first occupy the

<sup>110</sup>) F. BOAS, *General anthropology*, New York 1938, p. 337.

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

<sup>112</sup>) 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.

<sup>113</sup>) *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* 5, 1, 1, 1 f.

<sup>114</sup>) 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.

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

position of Indra, and the last are ever pure like brahman. Purity and impurity, the same authority adds <sup>116</sup>), are caused and removed by the great gods, the lokapālas, by whose essence the king is pervaded. A ruler, seated on the throne of those characterized by greatness of personality, is immediately purified, because he performs his royal duties of protecting the people and administering justice. From other authorities it appears that in this the king is put on a par with a brahmācārin, a sacrificer after being consecrated and other categories of persons filled with holiness or supranormal power <sup>117</sup>). The monarch is always pure lest his business be impeded <sup>118</sup>), at least, another authority <sup>119</sup>) adds, while he is engaged in the discharge of his duty. "The detrimental effect of impurity does not fall on kings, nor on those engaged in the performance of a vow or of a great sacrifice (*sattra*-), for the first are seated on the throne of Indra, the last two are ever pure like brahman" <sup>120</sup>). "As fire is not polluted even though it always burns the creatures of the world (*prajāś*), even so a king is not polluted by inflicting punishment on those who deserve it" <sup>121</sup>).

The king takes, on the other hand, on himself the sins committed by his people if he does not protect it well <sup>122</sup>). If in the country of such a monarch people die from want of protection, the sin of this affects the king himself. Just as he may take a sixth part of the produce of the soil and of many other yields, including the spiritual merits of his subjects <sup>123</sup>), so the ruler who permits crime to go unpunished is burdened with a sixth <sup>124</sup>) of it <sup>125</sup>). Punishment frees

<sup>116</sup>) Manu 5, 97.

<sup>117</sup>) Particulars may be found in KANE, *o.c.*, IV, p. 297 f.

<sup>118</sup>) Gautama-dharmaśāstra 14, 45.

<sup>119</sup>) Viṣṇu-smṛti 22, 48.

<sup>120</sup>) Manu, 5, 93.

<sup>121</sup>) Nārada 18, 8. Cf. also st. 46 where all gains are stated to become pure in the hands of kings, just like gold becomes pure in fire.

<sup>122</sup>) See e.g. Mbh. 12, 24, 18 ff.: the king who does not protect his subjects, whose passions are not under control, who is full of self-conceit incurs sin. Cf. also Manu 8, 316 and parallel texts (see BÜHLER, *Sacred Books of the East*, 25, p. 309); esp. Vāsiṣṭha-dharmaśāstra 19, 46.

<sup>123</sup>) Manu 8, 304 etc.

<sup>124</sup>) Particulars are not always the same. See: MEYER, *Das altindische Buch vom Welt- und Staatsleben*, p. 678.

<sup>125</sup>) That the ruler was expected to protect the people in return for the taxes—his "wages"—is of course not a result of the "doctrine of social contract" as has been held by some modern authors (see e.g. PATIL, *o.c.*, p. 161).

him from responsibility, except for an unjust sentence <sup>126</sup>). Where a man worthy of condemnation is punished, the king is free from guilt, and the judges do not incur sin. The king moreover had to make good from his treasury stolen property if it could not be recovered from the thief <sup>127</sup>). These ideas and prescriptions are typical of a functionary who is expected to keep things well-balanced and to re-adjust the balance of the world. The prescription that the king shall personally strike a thief with the cudgel carried by the latter conveys the idea of a petty chief <sup>128</sup>). The king was also heir and performer of the ritual for the benefit of a deceased man who had no relatives left, and the ultimate protector of all women who have no relatives.

A very interesting rule is handed down in Vāsiṣṭha's dharma-book <sup>129</sup>). All interest on loans ceases to accrue on the death of a king until the coronation of his successor. According to Apte <sup>130</sup>) this usage probably was a recognition of the principle that the monarch represents the state, and all state regulations derive their power and authority from him alone. This scholar is however forced to admit that we do not find the logical application of this principle in any other instance. I for one would suggest seeking the explication in another direction. Interest was, as the very term says "growth, increase" (*vrddhi*-). Since the king is the mediator, through whom all growth on earth is made possible, his death must mean the cessation of growth <sup>131</sup>).

#### IV.

These functions of the king are often briefly expressed in the formula that he upholds dharma <sup>132</sup>): through dharma the king

<sup>126</sup>) For particulars: HOPKINS, *o.c.*, p. 132; cf. also Manu, 8, 18 f.

<sup>127</sup>) For particulars: P. V. KANE, *History of Dharmaśāstra* ... IV, Poona 1953, p. 74.

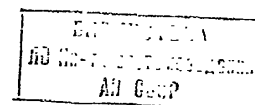
<sup>128</sup>) See Āpastamba-dharmasūtra 1, 9, 25, 4; cf. Gautama 12, 43.

<sup>129</sup>) Vāsiṣṭha-dharmaśāstra 2, 49 f.

<sup>130</sup>) V. M. APTE, in R. C. MAJUMDAR-A. D. PUSALKER, *The Vedic age*, p. 485.

<sup>131</sup>) Attention may also be drawn to the ancient Indian custom to pay as interest to the creditor the children of a female slave, or the young of animals, which were pawned; cf. J. J. MEYER, *Über das Wesen der altindischen Rechtschriften*, Leipzig 1927, p. 132; 134 (see Nārada 1, 107; Yājñavalkya 2, 39; 57). See also MEYER, *o.c.*, p. 299 ff.

<sup>132</sup>) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 3, 207, 26. The king, like the learned brahman, is the upholder of the sacred ordinances (*dharma*-); he should speak and do only what is right: Śat. Br. 5, 4, 4. 5. See also L. RENOU, *La civilisation de l'Inde ancienne*, Paris 1950, p. 130 f.



rules<sup>133</sup>), the king indeed is the maintainer and staff (*daṇḍa-*) of the revealed order of life, which exists in accordance with eternal norms. He maintains the established order. A king should therefore compel his subjects to follow their respective dharma and make all of them do everything in accordance with righteousness<sup>134</sup>. "The king and the priest uphold the moral order in the world" (*dhṛtavaratau*). Very significant is also the first stanza of a well-known work on the elements of polity, the Kāmandakiya-nīṭisāra: "By whose might (majesty, dignity, power: *prabhāva-*) the world is established on the eternal (*śāśvata-* "what has always been") path, that god (*devaḥ*) is victorious (*jayati*), prosperous and illustrious (*śrīmān*), administering justice (*daṇḍadhāra-*, lit. "rod-bearer"), lord of the earth". In ancient texts the term *satya-* "reality, truth" is sometimes used to form a syntactic unit with the word for king: kings who keep their word will bring back the abducted wife of a brahman (after the example of king Soma who gave back Bṛhaspati's consort)<sup>135</sup>.

When a king was consecrated "a lord of all beings was created, a defender of the brahman and of the dharma"<sup>136</sup>. The king exists for the upholding of dharma<sup>137</sup> and not for acting as he likes; all beings have to depend on dharma which in its turn depends on the king. Being an element of the eternal order himself, he cannot act arbitrarily. A true king is *dharmātman-*, an embodiment of dharma, of order, truth, norm, and justice<sup>138</sup>. The king who observes the

133) In any case of conflict between dharmaśāstra and practices or between dharmaśāstra and any secular transaction, the monarch should decide by relying on dharma.

134) Mbh. 12, 60, 18.

135) RV. 10, 109, 6; AthV. 5, 17, 10. Cf. Viṣṇu Pur. 4, 6, 5. This is not to conclude (with S. RADHAKRISHNAN, *The principal Upaniṣads*, London 1953, p. 170) that in these passages kings are said "to act out the truth" or "to take hold of the truth"; the participles used in the texts must rather be taken in a conditional sense.

136) Aitareya-brāhmaṇa, 8, 17, 6.

137) The importance of the observance of the dharma by the ruler is often inculcated in our sources. In Jātaka 276 it is for instance related that in the kingdom of Kāliṅga there was a drought and consequent scarcity of food because the monarch did not observe the Kurudhamma, i.e. the *pañcaśīla-* or five moral precepts. See also Mbh. 12, a. 90 f. etc. — See also H. VON GLASENAPP, *Der Jainismus*, Berlin 1925, p. 326 ff.

138) Cf. e.g. Rām. 1, 1, 29.

dharma, is qualified for deva-ship<sup>139</sup>. By upholding the dharma the ruler becomes a *rāṣṭrabhṛt-* "a sustainer of the realm"<sup>140</sup>. The early dharma-works consider this to be the king's most important duty<sup>141</sup>. Thus the authorities who compiled the dharma-texts consider the ruler not only the head of the civil administration, but also the final controlling power in preserving religious and spiritual institutions, in maintaining the status quo. He is to see that people follow the dharma. In so doing he acts on the advice of his purohita and the assemblies (*pariṣad-*) of learned men. This function of the ruler is illustrated by the statement that he wields the *daṇḍa-*<sup>142</sup>, a task performed by Brahmā himself among the gods<sup>143</sup>.

Authors, in the Śāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata, like to hold that royal authority and functions are the very basis of human existence and prosperity. The *rājadharmā-*, the eternal norms, laws and duties belonging to kings are expressly stated to surpass all other manifestations of dharma<sup>144</sup>. All the duties of the other classes of men are covered by those of the king. All sorts of renunciation (*tyāga-*) are included in them, all sorts of learning are connected with them, because they are protected by them. Important as reflecting the ideas fostered by the ancient poets when they used the terms for "protecting" is the phrase *vratam* or *vratāni rakṣ-* "to preserve or protect the observances or rules" (in order to prevent them from being isolated). In the Rgveda the subject of this verbal phrase always is a deity: Varuṇa, Mitra and Varuṇa, Sūrya, Savitar, Agni, Agni and Soma, the Ādityas, the gods in general. The maintenance of norms or fixed rules and laws was therefore considered a quality which accompanied a good ruler to the throne: it also belonged to the heavenly rulers.

That the king also was to promote 'religion' and 'morality' in a general sense of the term may appear from such stray references as the following, which is furnished by one of the oldest upaniṣads: "In my kingdom there is no thief, no miser, no drunkard, no man without

139) Mbh. 12, 90, 3 ff.

140) Śat. Br. 9, 4, 1, 1 ff. *rājāno vai rāṣṭrabhṛtas, te hi rāṣṭrāni bibhṛati*.

141) By arrogantly asserting that he was above dharma the wicked king Vena met his ruin.

142) A survey of *daṇḍanīti* can also be found in HILLEBRANDT's *Altindische Politik*, p. 20 ff.

143) Cf. Vā. Pur. 49, 140; see also 115 ff.

144) Cf. Mbh. 12, 63, 25 ff.

a sacrificial fire, no ignorant person, no adulterer, much less an adulteress" <sup>145</sup>). These words were said of Aśvapati whose court was a "centre of learning".

A king is exempt from punishment <sup>146</sup>), but other opinions also prevailed on this point. It is taught <sup>147</sup>) that Varuṇa is the lord of punishment because he holds the sceptre even over kings. Since this god maintains intimate relations with the waters, the custom is intelligible that a ruler, when fined in consequence of an offence which he may have committed, should throw the money due as the fine into the water. By way of alternative he could give it to brahmins <sup>148</sup>). The sense of this instruction seems to be fairly plain if we consider the character of 'donations' presented to brahmins which are known as dakṣiṇās. They really are offerings, they are offered to, or into, the sacred persons of the brahmin. If a king kills a brahmin he can, according to some later authorities <sup>149</sup>), atone for this heinous crime by performing an aśvamedha (horse sacrifice).

It is not only in those books which deal with polity and the dharma of the ruler that the relation between the king and the eternal norms of justice is discussed. In a highly interesting passage of one of the ancient upaniṣads <sup>150</sup>) we are told that in the beginning this world was brahmin. As it did not flourish because it was alone, it created kṣatra power, or rather that emanated from it, and afterwards the third and fourth classes. Yet "he" (i.e. brahmin viewed as a creator and as the universe) did not yet flourish. He therefore created dharma, that is to say: this, too, emanated from brahmin. That dharma is the ruling power of the kṣatriya class (*kṣatrasya kṣatram*). Therefore, the text explicitly says, there is nothing higher than dharma. So a weak man can defeat a strong man by means of justice as one does through a king.

<sup>145</sup>) Chāndogya Upan. 5, 11, 5.

<sup>146</sup>) Śat. Br. 5, 4, 4, 7.

<sup>147</sup>) Manu 9, 245.

<sup>148</sup>) See Medhātithi, Govindarāja and Kullūka on Manu 8, 336.

<sup>149</sup>) Commentators on Manu, see W. GAMPERT, *Die Sühnezeremonien in den altindischen Rechtsschriften*, Prague 1939, p. 20 n. 3.

<sup>150</sup>) Brh. ār. up. 1, 4, 11 ff.

## V.

In contradistinction to many rules of the Veda student in the different stages of his career (the *brahmacārin*- and *snātaka*-) who is subjected to a variety of tabus <sup>151</sup>), instances of specifically royal tabus are not numerous. Yet the king may not stand on the earth with bare feet <sup>152</sup>), a restraint no doubt intended to prevent his mystic power or special virtue from "flowing away". The snātaka (the student after having concluded his study, when he is filled with holy power) is, in a similar way, not allowed to sit directly on the bare earth <sup>153</sup>): as is well known "powerful" persons or objects are often supposed to lose their (holy) power by direct contact with the earth <sup>154</sup>). Besides, the king might not shave his head for a year after his inauguration <sup>155</sup>), because, the relevant texts state — the hair is filled with manly strength: the rite has put the strength of the water with which he is consecrated into the hair, and he would destroy the virtue thus engendered and impair the *śrī*- conferred upon himself, if he had the hair cut off. So he may shorten it, but not cut it off, and for similar reasons, he may rub but not wash himself <sup>156</sup>). This tabu is commented upon in the Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa <sup>157</sup>): if the king should cut his hair, he would remove his *śrī*- "prosperity, welfare, majesty", not his hairs, because this *śrī*- has gone to his head (*śiras*). He should, likewise for a year, not plunge into water for his daily bath but only rub his body with water. These observances are called *devavratas* <sup>158</sup>). After a year the hair of the king is cut off. Then follow two rites called *vyuṣṭi-dvirātra*-, i.e. a ceremony lasting two days in order to obtain "felicity, prosperity, increase" or (what is perhaps more probable) "supremacy" <sup>159</sup>). One month after the second of these rites another

<sup>151</sup>) I refer to A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 55 ff.; 61.

<sup>152</sup>) Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 5, 3, 7 f. Kāthaka-śaṃhitā 15, 8, 29 says that for a year after the consecration a king should never walk on the ground unless he wears shoes.

<sup>153</sup>) Sāṅkhāyana-grhyasūtra 4, 12, 21.

<sup>154</sup>) See J. G. FRAZER, *The golden Bough* <sup>3</sup> III, p. 3 ff.; X, p. 2 ff.

<sup>155</sup>) Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 5, 3, 1 ff.

<sup>156</sup>) For other references see KEITH, *Religion and philosophy*, p. 306.

<sup>157</sup>) Jaim. Br. 2, 204.

<sup>158</sup>) Cf. Lāṭyāyana Śr. S. 9, 2, 17 ff.

<sup>159</sup>) The translation given by CALAND, *Ap. śr. sū.* 18, 22, 12 (III, p. 161) „Aufleuchtung" seems not correct, although "daybreak" is the primary meaning of the word. Cf. however Nilakaṇṭha on Mbh. 12, 269, 37 *vyuṣṭih pāramaiś-varyam*. The word can also be synonymous with *ṛddhi*-, *saṃṛddhi*-, *phala*-.

rite, the *kṣatradhṛti*- "stability of worldly power" is performed. The king, like the student, should at the time of official deliberation avoid any contact with sick and deformed persons, women, and barbarians<sup>160</sup>). He must not take the property of a man guilty of mortal sin<sup>161</sup>), no doubt because it would defile and injure his royal, i.e. divine, dignity. Among the equipment of a *snātaka*<sup>162</sup>) are three objects which also belong to a king: an umbrella, shoes and a turban. While the last-mentioned article is a well-known mark of honour<sup>163</sup>), the umbrella—to which we shall have to revert—was needed because the sun was not allowed to shine directly on the sacred person of the Veda student<sup>164</sup>). It may be assumed that the same motive underlies its use in connection with the king<sup>165</sup>).

A special interest attaches to the staff or *daṇḍa*-. A staff is a widespread emblem of religious and social significance. Its use again gives evidence of the alliance between the conception of sacredness in 'primitive' thought and that of authority. It can be a magical instrument as well as an emblem of a certain rank or dignity. Often it is regarded as endowed with special power. The ancient Greeks, for instance, held the sceptre to be the badge of command, allowing it to be borne by kings and chiefs—it was even transmitted from father to son—, by heralds, priests, soothsayers, minstrels etc.; above all, it was an outward sign of royalty and kingly power. So it is in India: the *daṇḍa*- is the attribute of those who are in power, and of those who are vested with judicial authority; it represents power, authority and punishment. On the other hand, the Vedic student was given a staff, which had to conform to the requirements formulated by the authorities: it should be straight, without blemishes, unhurt by fire, not likely to terrify men<sup>166</sup>). The student, moreover, was forbidden ever to let anything

160) Cf. Manu 7, 149.

161) Manu 9, 243.

162) See *Āśvalāyana-grhyasūtra* 3, 8, 1.

163) Cf. e.g. *Kāthāsāritsāgara* 12, 190.

164) Cf. *Apastamba-grhyasūtra* 12, 2; *Hiranyakeśi-grhyasūtra* 1, 10, 3.

165) For the religious significance of the umbrella see J. G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough* 10, p. 18 ff., and N. M. PENZER, *The Ocean of Story*, London 1928, vol. X, p. 263 ff., who also suggests considering the umbrella to be a symbol of the firmament.

166) Cf. e.g. Manu 2, 47 and the parallel passage enumerated by G. BÜHLER, *The Laws of Manu*, Oxford 1886, p. 38; and in addition to the dharmabooks: Gobhila G.S. 3, 1, 14; 27; etc.

intervene between his body and the staff. This shows that it was so to say part of himself, or at least a very important attribute: the interception of contact is, in Vedic rites, often regarded as dangerous or undesirable. Considering the wide-spread belief in the transmissibility of power and in its residence in detachable parts or appurtenances of living beings or objects this fear of interception is quite intelligible. The staff obviously participated in the "holy power" present in the student, for when his studentship was over, it was thrown in the water with the rest of his outfit<sup>167</sup>). However, he then obtained a new staff of bamboo<sup>168</sup>) which is expressly stated to be of use for the protection against not merely human foes but also against demons (*rākṣasas* and *piśācas*). This is indeed one of the main functions of the object under discussion, to protect the wearer<sup>169</sup>), and to enable him to protect others. This may shed a somewhat softer light on the injunction: let the king always uplift his staff, i.e. be ready to strike, for of him who is always ready to strike, the whole world stands in awe<sup>170</sup>). A remarkable detail is handed down in one of the dharma-books<sup>171</sup>): in inculcating that honour is due to the monarch this authority adds that, as in the case of a father, he should not be addressed by name: tabus of this sort are well-known indications of being an object of awe and a container of power.

Just as the power of a potent being can be dissipated if he violates any tabus laid upon him during his tenure of office, so special restrictions can serve to enhance and accumulate his potency. Thus the horse which is the central figure of the *aśvamedha* has, for the whole year of its roaming about, to abstain from sexual intercourse<sup>172</sup>), no doubt in order to accumulate his potency and to enhance, in the interest of the realm and the fertility of the soil, the effectiveness of his marriage with the queen. During that same year the king must achieve a very

167) A similar rule applies in case the staff etc. have been damaged: Manu, 2, 64 etc.

168) See e.g. Manu 4, 36; see also Gobhila G.S. 4, 9, 17 f. etc.

169) For similar application in ancient Indian ritual see KEITH, *Rel. and Phil.*, p. 384.

170) Manu 7, 102 f.

171) Vas. 11, 1-2; Gaut. 116.

172) Cf. *Sāṅkh. śr. sū.* 16, 1, 15: the horse may gratify all its desires, with the exception of sexual intercourse; cf. also Baudh. *śr. sū.* 15, 8.

exacting deed of tapas or 'asceticism': though lying, every night, between the thighs of his favourite wife, he is not allowed to indulge in intercourse 173).

## VI.

In examining the status of the ancient Indian king from the religious point of view we should never forget that he is called and considered a *deva*- 174), that is to say, not God, the sole Eternal Lord and Creator of all things, nor his Son 175) or representative, but one of a class of powerful beings, regarded as possessing supernormal faculties and as controlling a department of nature or activity in the human sphere. King Parikṣit, the Atharvaveda for instance states, was "a god among men" 176).

In particulars this deva-ship of the king is not always explained in the same way 177). A good example of the belief that the king is identical with all the gods or all the divinities is found in the Mahābhārata 178). That is to say: He is Śakra (Indra), Śukra (the proponent of morals), Dhātā (the establisher or arranger) and Bṛhaspati (the purohita of the gods with whom he intercedes for men, also representing wisdom and eloquence). Is there therefore anybody who considers himself above worshipping the person to whom such appellations as, Prajāpati (Lord of all creatures), Virāt, Samrāt 179) Kṣatriya, Bhūpati (Lord of earth), Nṛpa are applied in praise? The

173) Śat. Br. 13, 4, 1, 9. Śāṅkh. śr. sū. 16, 1, 8: He does so thinking "may I by this act of asceticism reach successfully the year".

174) For ancient Indian royal titles see also E. KUHN, in the *Festschrift* F. Thomsen, Leipzig 1912, p. 217 ff. who inter alia observes: „selbst scheint ein indischer König sich nie *devas* genannt zu haben". The term *deva*- is as far as I am able to see not given to the king in the ancient literature. Compounds such as *naradeva*- or *nṛdeva*- "god of men" are however often found in Manu and the epics.

175) In the Mathurā inscriptions we find, inter alia, the royal title *devaputra*- which, according to E. KUHN, *o.c.*, p. 219 is „nichts anderes als eine Übersetzung des sowohl die Arsakiden als den chinesischen Kaiser bezeichnenden Namens *fagh-pūr* = altiran. \**baghapatra*, einer unverkennbaren Nachahmung des chinesischen „Himmelsohnes", die ihren ostiranischen Ursprung nicht verleugnen kann".

176) AV. 20, 127, 7.

177) Attention may also be drawn to Bh. S. UPADHYAYA, *India in Kālidāsa*, Allahabad 1947, p. 74 ff.

178) Mbh. 3, 185, 26 ff.

179) These terms will be commented upon in the following pages.

monarch is further styled "the prime cause (to wit: of social order founded on dharma), the conqueror in battles (and hence the destroyer of calamities), the watchman, joyful well-being (*mudito bhavaḥ*), the guide to heaven, the easily victorious, Babhru (i.e. Viṣṇu)"; he is the one who abides in truth and reality (*Satyayoni*), who knows the events of former times, he is the originator of the norms of truth (*satya-dharma-pravartaka*-); like the sun among the gods in the celestial regions which destroys darkness by its *tejas* (brilliance-and-energy), the king (among men) eradicates sin from the earth.

According to some authoritative texts, e.g. Manu 7, 4 ff., the king was in the beginning created from eternal and essential particles of Indra, and the seven other great devas, who in later literature are grouped as "guardians of the world" (*lokapāla*-); as such they are believed to protect the eight main points of the universe. Hence he is sun and moon, fire and wind, Yama and Kubera, Varuṇa and Indra. Nobody on earth is able even to gaze at him. Even an infant king is no mortal being, but a great deity (*devatā*) in human form. It is of course no matter of indifference that it is these main gods, protectors par excellence, whose essence constitutes his majesty (*pratāpa*-) 180). These divinities very significantly represent those functions and activities which are the essential characteristics of kingship. Manu himself already observed 181) that the king like the sun, burns (*tapati*) eyes and hearts, "nor", he adds, "can anybody on earth even gaze on him": the Sun indeed shines, dispels the darkness and its beings; he is the "lord of eyes", all seeing and the spy (or witness) of the whole world. Like a man of the military class the Sun slays. The earthly ruler has several qualifications and epithets in common with the great luminary: *pratāpa*- is, in the king, his majesty, brilliance or energy, in the sun, the glowing heat or brilliance; the adjective *pratāpin*- means "burning, scorching" as well as "glowing, shining; splendid, powerful, majestic".

180) Cf. the commentator Kullūka on Manu 7, 7 "because (the king) consists of the constituent particles (*aṁśa*-) of Agni and the other gods and because he does what is their task he is called *pratāpa*-" ("majesty", the word implying also such ideas as "glowing heat, warmth, splendour, brilliancy, glory, strength").

181) Manu 7, 6 (*ayaṁ ca rājā svatejasā sūrya iva paśyatām cakṣuṁsi manāṁsi ca samtāpayati*, Kullūka).

It will be worth while to consider Manu's idea of the divine components of kingship more closely <sup>182</sup>).

Like the sun the king dispels the beings of darkness, and slays enemies. He outshines all rivals in wealth and splendour. Like the sun he possesses *pratāpa-* and *tejas*, the supranormal principle of might, which enables him to perform great exploits.

The identification of the Moon with the "king of the plants", Soma, is a commonplace already in the *brāhmaṇas* <sup>183</sup>). The moon is gentle and a benefactor of men, and, moreover, a god of vegetation and fruitfulness. The use of the epithet *saumya-* is of interest: meaning "resembling, or relating to, the moon" it is very often said of gentle, mild, placid persons <sup>184</sup>); although it is the proper mode of addressing a brahman <sup>185</sup>) and it is often employed in connection with other beings or objects — also expressing the idea of "bringing luck, faustus" — kings are often given this epithet: a *saumya-* king is, in the epics, likened to the Moon <sup>186</sup>). On the following pages we shall have to revert to the other *lokapālas* <sup>187</sup>).

The Wind is a god who, according to the *Rāmāyaṇa* <sup>188</sup>), cannot be bound; he serves as the type of the freed saint. He is typical of freedom, being able to go in all directions, and to wander where he desires. Although in the ancient texts the epithets belonging to Vāta, the divine element wind, are chiefly expressive of swiftness and violence, he is stated to have been generated for the sake of wealth, which he grants, giving horses, gold, offspring. In the epics he is described as the strongest god, who smashes the demons.

The god of Fire, Manu states, burns a man if he carelessly appro-

<sup>182</sup>) I also refer to my paper on *The sacred character of Ancient Indian kingship*; see n. 187. For the king = the eight *lokapālas* see also Manu 9, 303 ff.

<sup>183</sup>) See e.g. Ait. Br. 7, 11; cf. also HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, p. 90; MEYER, *Trilogie III*, p. 311.

<sup>184</sup>) „(Wie der Mond) durch ein mildes Wesen wohlthuend auf die Sinne oder das Gemüth einwirkend, ansprechend" (Petr. Dict.).

<sup>185</sup>) Manu 2, 125.

<sup>186</sup>) Cf. e.g. Rām. 6, 111, 124 *rāmaḥ sa saumyatvaṃ upāgataḥ*.

<sup>187</sup>) This identification of the king and the eight *lokapālas* was amply discussed in a paper read in the Indian section of the VIIIth Congress for the History of Religions: Rome 1955; see n. 182. It will be published in the Acta of the Congress.

<sup>188</sup>) Rām. 3, 55, 24. Cf. also Mbh. 1, 119, 19; Śat. Br. 8, 2, 3, 5; RV. 7, 90, 2; 3; 6; HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, p. 96.

aches the flames; the king's anger however not only destroys the evil-doer himself, but also his family, cattle and property. Besides Agni, the Fire, is a benefactor, a dispeller of demons. In the *Ṛgveda* he is called a monarch (*samrāj-*) <sup>189</sup>), strong as Indra. He is greater than heaven and earth. When he was born he filled all the worlds <sup>190</sup>). Like the king in performing the *nirājana-* ceremony fire is able to cleanse from sin, guilt and impurity in purificatory ceremonies. Agni is brought into close relation with the daily life of man in the sacrifice. He is an intermediary between heaven and earth, transmitting the oblations to the celestial. Hence the belief that he is the divine counterpart of the earthly priesthood: he is the "priest", the chief priest, the most adorable of priests, being constantly invoked to worship the gods. So priesthood may be said to be the most salient feature of his character. To sacrifice is, as we have already seen, one of the king's duties, "worshipper" one of his common epithets. Since he not only conveys the oblations to the gods, but also brings the gods to the sacrifice, knowing the paths between heaven and earth, Agni is constantly and characteristically styled a messenger or intermediary. He is the protector who leads men to happiness; in that capacity he is a leader of men. Gods and men made him the mighty lord of their community (*viśpati-*); promoting the welfare of both parties in accordance with the sacred ordinances (*vrata-*) he visits both parts of the universe <sup>191</sup>). The king on the other hand was often considered a mediator, who by his mere presence promotes the prosperity of the kingdom and causes or allows the blessings of heaven to reach the inhabitants of the earth. Agni is often called *śuci-* "glowing bright, pure", and the same quality belongs to the king, who is not liable to impurity (*āśauca-*). This detail and other features in Agni's character which may be of interest have already come up for discussion.

Kubera, the lord of the North, is especially worshipped because of his wealth. His are the treasures, in the first place gold. He is the norm of inexhaustible wealth; being united with his wife *Ṛddhi* "prosperity" he possesses *śrī-* i.e. material prosperity; his happiness

<sup>189</sup>) RV. 6, 7, 1.

<sup>190</sup>) See MACDONELL, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 98.

<sup>191</sup>) Cf. RV. 2, 9, 2; 3, 6, 5; 6, 15, 1 f. There are more passages in which Agni is described in the same way as the earthly monarch: e.g. 1, 36, 3 his flames extend and his rays reach the sky.



and generosity are proverbial. He is also a god of productivity. Since all kings are under his command, he is called "king of kings" (192).

Varuṇa, the god personifying the static aspects of dominion, is the lord of punishment, who holds the sceptre even over kings (193). As he binds a sinner with ropes, even so, Manu observes, the king must punish the wicked. The man, however, who desires to expiate sins, can become pure by worshipping this god (194). He is the great lord of dharma, the famous protector of *ṛta*-, "truth", of Vedic times, the upholder of order, the ruler of the laws of nature, by whose ordinances the rivers flow, and the moon shines. With his eye, which is the sun, he always observes mankind. He is omniscient. His spies and messengers behold and traverse the two worlds. Besides Varuṇa established the broad heaven and earth, keeping them apart (*viṣṭambh*-). Together with Mitra he stretches out his arms. According to the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (195) Varuṇa, conceived as the lord of the Universe, thrones in the midst of heaven. We already know that he is a king and a *samrāj*-. Sovereignty is in a striking manner appropriated to him. Neither the birds nor the rivers can reach the limit of his dominion.

That Indra is among the eight divinities whose particles constitute the king is self-evident. Indra's concern with growth, vitality, rainfall, vegetation and fertility is too well known to be in need of comment. Energetic action is characteristic of him. Representing, in the belief of Vedic man, force, energy and vitality in nature, he was believed to be intimately connected with atmospheric phenomena and with various forms of fertility and vegetative life (196). He is the bestower of wives, sons and riches (197). Like other gods of this character, Indra was also credited with a warlike temperament, and with a natural bent for the annihilation of evil powers and enemies of gods and mankind. The Vedic Indra is a demon-slayer, a helper, friend and deliverer of his worshippers. Hence he is the god of battle par excellence, and an irresistible warrior, whose mighty arm gains innumerable victories. He may be regarded as the representative of the dynamic aspects of

192) Thus Mbh. 5, 139, 14; see also HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, p. 142; 144 f.

193) Manu 9, 245.

194) Manu 11, 253; 255.

195) Śat. Br. 11, 6, 1.

196) For details see my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, ch. 6.

197) I refer to MACDONELL, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 63; MEYER, *Trilogie* III, p. 302.

leadership. In the ancient literature Viṣṇu is his friend and assistant, in later texts this god, assuming a superior position, becomes the typical fighter of the gods. Hence also the remarkable change in the relation between kingship and these gods. In later times it is Viṣṇu who maintains intimate relations with the royal dignity on the earth.

The Vedic poets are lavish in their praise of Indra's power and greatness; no one is like to him; he is the leader of gods and men, the universal monarch (*samrāj*-) (198). He is Śakra, "the mighty one". He is, more than others, in the possession of *ojas*, the creative vital energy; he is the *ugra*- one and able to achieve mighty deeds. So, it is clear that Indra is the prominent helper of fighters, of warriors, the friend and companion of kings and noblemen. The possession of *ojas*, the potency natural and peculiar to Indra, is very often considered distinctive of kingship. Like Indra the king was to protect his subjects, and to combat the wicked; for these purposes he needed physical strength, force and victorious power. He was also the bearer of lustre and majesty. He was a divine being of Indra-like character. He also was expected to secure the prosperity of his people, *inter alia*, by regulating the powers of fertility, by causing rain, welfare, and the growth of crops. It may be suggested that the connection between *ojas* and kingship does not only hint at the authority and impressive personality of the ideal king, but also at his command of a creative energy which was considered a source of prosperity (199). Appearing and receiving honour as a tree — Indra's tree or banner, which is a counterpart of the 'Maibaum' in European countries—, Indra is the central figure of popular festivities which constitute a fertility ceremony par excellence. As we shall see further on it was part of the personal task of the king, whom we know to be Indra's representative on the earth (200), to have these festivities celebrated.

Yama, the ruler of the deceased, is the gatherer of people, because at the appointed time he subjects both friends and foes. In later times he became the god who punishes the wicked, and his name was understood to mean "the restrainer". Like Yama, Manu states, the king is to control all his subjects. When acting as witness and judge the ruler represents Yama.

198) See e.g. RV. 4, 19, 2.

199) See my *Ancient Indian ojas*, p. 18 ff.

200) Kauṭ. AS. 9, 10.

We may conclude this pericope on Manu's theory of the lokapālas as constituents of the royal person by observing that at a later period the title *lokapāla*- is also given to the king 201).

Kālidāsa in his *Raghuvamśa* 202) refers to this belief in saying that the queen bore an embryo formed by the weighty 203) essences of the lokapālas; the commentator Vallabha quotes the following śloka: from Indra lordship, from Fire brilliancy (majesty: *pratāpa*-), from Hara (Śiva) anger, from Kubera wealth, from the Moon the faculty of causing delight. Nārada 204) gives expression to the view that the king is Indra in visible form; disobeying him means man's destruction; even a weak and undeserving king must be honoured and obeyed. The ruler must be served like a god (*devavat*), because he is a divinity 205). No one should disobey the king by taking him for a man, for he is a great god in human form 206). In poetical descriptions the above gods are said to enter the body of the mother of a future king 207).

Elsewhere, however, the king owes his position to the fact that he is the *sthāna*-, i.e. the abode, support or receptacle of gods, especially of Indra, the lord of aid, and Yama, the ruler and judge of the deceased and Lord of justice (*dharmarāj*-): Kauṭilya, *Arthaśāstra* 9 (*indraya-masthānam*) 208); hence he is anger and graciousness in visible shape, Yama representing the former, Indra the latter. Or he is spoken of as incorporating many gods, Dharma, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati, Śiva and Viṣṇu 209). He has fivefold form: that of Agni, Indra, Soma, Yama and Varuṇa 210). It may be observed that these gods are often called

201) See e.g. Kāl. Ragh. 6, 1 *naralokapāla*-; Kalh. Rāj. 1, 344.

202) Kāl. Ragh. 2, 75.

203) For the magico-religious sense of weightiness see my paper *A propos d'un sens magico-religieux de Skt. guru*-, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, London 12/1947, p. 124 ff.

204) Nārada-smṛti, Prak. 20 ff.

205) Mbh. 4, 4, 22; cf. also 14, 63, 24. This reminds us of the Homeric "honour him as though he were a god" (*Iliad* 9, 155; *Od.* 5, 36).

206) Mbh. 12, 68, 40.

207) See e.g. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, 2, 75; 3, 11. The essences of the gods are called "heavy": see my paper *A propos d'un sens magico-religieux de Skt. guru*-, (see n. 203), London 1947, p. 124 ff.

208) See also MEYER, *Altindisches Buch*, p. 26, and n. 2.

209) Mbh. 3, 185, 28.

210) Rāmāyaṇa 3, 40, 12. Hence they are characterized by heat (severity, fierceness), heroism, gentleness, control (authority including punishment), and purity.

kings. Sometimes the ruler is declared to contain or comprehend (the essence of) all gods 211).

In other sources 212) the idea of divine kingship finds expression in the belief that the ruler puts on five different forms according to five different occasions. Thus he alternately becomes Agni, Āditya, Mṛtyu, Vaiśravaṇa, and Yama. When he consumes with his powerful energy (*ugreṇa tejasā*) the offenders before him, he is said to put on the form of Agni; when he sees through his agents the acts of all persons, giving them security, he is the Sun; when he kills in anger hundreds of wicked men with their families, he is Death; when he suppresses the evil-doers by punishing them severely and favours the righteous by giving them rewards, he puts on the form of Yama; when he pleases with profuse gifts those who have rendered him valuable services and takes away the wealth of those who have offended him, he is said to put on the form of Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) on earth.

In other texts the king is said to perform the task of the gods or is instructed to imitate them 213), or also said to act like Yama, to be like Viṣṇu, or god-like 214). Thus people call a virtuous king, according to Kālidāsa 215), the fifth of the guardians of the quarters. Just as Indra nourishes the people on earth with showers of water, so should a king nourish them with largess 216). In a long passage Manu 217) describes the ruler's functions or observances (*vrata*-): let him shower benefits on the kingdom as Indra sends rain; let him draw taxes as the sun the water; let him penetrate everywhere through his secret agents as the wind moves everywhere; let him control his subjects as Yama subjects all men; let him punish the wicked as Varuṇa binds them with his ropes; let him be welcomed with great joy like the moon; let him be ardent in wrath (*pratāpa*-) and endowed with brilliant energy (*tejas*), destroying the wicked like Agni; let him support his subjects like the Earth.

211) See e.g. Pañcatantra 1, 120 (*sarvamaya*-).

212) See Mbh. 12, 68, 41 ff.

213) Mbh. 12, 91, 44.

214) See e.g. Mbh. 2, 5, 88; 1, 68, 13; 74, 33.

215) Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa* 17, 78.

216) Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa 27, 22.

217) Manu 9, 303 ff. Cf. also Nārada-smṛti 18, (17), 26 ff. Stanza 26: "Kings endowed with immense power (*amitaujasah*) appear in the five different forms of Agni, Indra, Soma, Yama and Kubera".

But this view of kingship does not prevent the same texts from identifying the ruler with the god<sup>218</sup>), or from stating that he is Yama<sup>219</sup>), that he is Dharma, i.e. Justice, i.e. Yama, Śakra, i.e. Indra, Brhaspati, i.e. the priest of the gods, representing also wisdom and eloquence, and other deities — which, according to the commentator Nilakaṇṭha means that he is an establisher of justice, a protector and an instructor of what is salutary — but owes his powers to the inspired and holy men of yore (the ṛṣis), because they were afraid to transgress the dharma<sup>220</sup>). It is not possible to quote the numerous passages in which the king is in this way identified with a greater or lesser number of deities. Now his five great functions are compared to those of Agni, of Āditya, — when he watches all beings through his spies —, of Mṛtyu, Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera), and Yama, then again he is called a father, mother, guru, herdsman or one of the great gods<sup>221</sup>). Another view again is that expounded in the Mahābhārata<sup>222</sup>): the king has something human, being only one quarter Indra; on dying he shall obtain (complete) divinity. Some great kings of older times are held to have been either incarnations of devas or asuras — e.g. Yudhiṣṭhira is a son of the god Dharma and the queen Kuntī<sup>223</sup>), or of other than ordinary mortal parentage. King Trasadasyu, who R.V. 4, 42, 8f. is called a demi-god (*ardhadeva*-) was born, by divine intercession, in a supernatural way. In the purāṇas all the royal lineages are traced back to the mythical Manu, the son of the sun. Evidence of another view of the divinity of the ruler is found in the Pṛthu legend, to which we shall have to revert. Viṣṇu himself entered into this first king, for which reason people began to adore him<sup>224</sup>).

Or the ruler is described as bearing a portion of Viṣṇu, e.g., in purāṇic conceptions<sup>225</sup>), Rāma: Daśaratha's son represents, according to the Rāmāyaṇa, half of Viṣṇu's personality<sup>226</sup>). Anyhow the funct-

218) Mbh. 12, 91, passim.

219) Mbh. 12, 91, 42.

220) Mbh. 3, 185, 26 ff.

221) For particulars see N. Ch. BANDYOPADHYAYA, *Development of Hindu polity and political theories*, I, Calcutta 1927, p. 290 f.

222) I refer to E. WASHBURN HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, Strassburg 1915, p. 64.

223) Cf. also Th. H. GASTER, in *Numen* I/1954, p. 197.

224) Mbh. 12, 59, 128.

225) See e.g. Patil, *Cult. hist. from the Vāyu-purāṇa*, p. 47; 162.

226) Cf. Rāmāyaṇa 1, s. 16.

ions of the ruler for a large part coincide with divine powers. Examples of this parallelism are also afforded by the ritual texts. "By Agni the sacrificer discerns the world of the gods, by Soma the world of the pitṛs; in the north part he offers to Agni, in the south to Soma... Agni and Soma are the kings of the gods. They are sacrificed to between the gods, to separate the gods. Therefore men are separated by the king..."<sup>227</sup>).

## VII.

Being a deva who walks amongst mankind the king is not infallible<sup>228</sup>). Like the devas in general he is not above good and evil. Morality is not necessarily a feature in a power or powerful being denoted by the term of deva. Devas may work for good or evil, they may be feared or adored, they are not always patterns of virtue. Accordingly kings are often described as indulging in sensual pleasures of every kind: drinking, women, hunting, gambling. Yet the ruler should not indulge in vices, since he is the norm of morals; and we are told that it was the bad kings of old who to the detriment of their countries practised gambling and other wickedness. The kings are viewed like the gods, who are often called "true" and "not deceitful", who are friends and guardians of honesty; but they are, on the other hand, not above practising deceit even without the justification of a good end.

A bad king who oppresses his subjects may be dethroned and even killed by the brahmins<sup>229</sup>). There are several accounts of the humiliation and deposition of kings in the Mahābhārata and the Jātakas, e.g. of Dambhodbhava who despised and maltreated the brahmins<sup>230</sup>); of Vicitravīrya who was banished by the citizens — being too fond of women he fell a victim to consumption, and at the same time the

227) Taitt. Samh. 2, 6, 2, 1 f.

228) Cf. e.g. Manu 7, 45 ff. and see ALTEKAR, *State and government in ancient India*, Banares 1949, p. 62.

229) See e.g. Sukranitisāra IV, 7, 332 f.; Yaśastilaka 3, p. 431. Cf. also R. FICK, *Die sociale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddha's Zeit*, Kiel 1897, p. 67. It may be remembered that the devas were not considered eternal beings. In popular belief they are thought of as kind and just, not perfect and subject to death and rebirth. Indra and Sakka in Buddhist literature are not free from lust, ill-will, stupidity, and anxiety. See also RENOU, *Civilisation*, p. 137.

230) Mbh. 5, a. 96; cf. also 5, a. 147; Rām. 2, 36; Jātaka 73; 194; 432.

country was afflicted by drought. That the conduct of a bad king was censured in plain terms appears also from such epic 'reflections' as the condemnation of Rāvaṇa's mis-government <sup>230a</sup>): "a king who is enslaved to bad habits and addicted to unworthy amusements is held in contempt like fire in which corpses have been cremated ... People do not like to seek refuge with a king who is mean, avaricious, proud and negligent of his duties..." The Mahābhārata <sup>231</sup>) also is quite explicit on this point: the king exists for the sake of justice, not for the gratification of his desires and inclinations; "if he observes the dharma he attains to the dignity of a god; if, however, he acts unrighteously, he sinks into hell." When a ruler proved tyrannical, subjects often rose in revolt, and sometimes even killed the tyrant. "A niggard, haughty, negligent, wicked and inaccessible king is killed by his own subjects" <sup>232</sup>). The author of Mahābhārata 13, 61 <sup>233</sup>) even calls upon the people to put him to death as if he were a mad dog. Regicide is on the other hand considered a great sin; according to an authority on dharma <sup>234</sup>) a son is even called upon not only to forsake a father who has murdered the king, but also not to perform his obsequies <sup>235</sup>). Another dharma-text <sup>236</sup>) went so far as to impose as an expiatory rite a great religious observance (*mahāvratā*-) for 24 years. However, the delict is seldom mentioned, probably because the murderer of a king, if he did not succeed in taking possession of the throne, received short shrift <sup>237</sup>). It does not seem necessary to explain these facts <sup>238</sup>) by the hypothesis that this was the outcome of a different view of king-

<sup>230a</sup>) Rām. 3, 5, 33.

<sup>231</sup>) Mbh. 12, 90, 3 ff.

<sup>232</sup>) Rām. 3, 33, 16.

<sup>233</sup>) Mbh. 13, 61, 33.

<sup>234</sup>) Gautama dh. ś. 20, 1; cf. also 22, 14.

<sup>235</sup>) "The divine conception" of Indian kingship was vigorously denied by N. Ch. BANDYOPADYAYA, *Development of Hindu polity* ..., 2 vol., Calcutta 1927; 1938. inter alia because the ruler was not considered inviolable and obedience to his authority, irrespective of the manner of discharge of his functions was not inculcated. It is however clear that this author does not take the term "divine kingship" in the sense which is given to it in the Comparative Study of Religion.

<sup>236</sup>) Viṣṇu-smṛti 50, 11.

<sup>237</sup>) See also W. GAMPERT, *Die Sühncereemonien in der altindischen Rechts-literatur*, Prague 1939, p. 83.

<sup>238</sup>) In the Pāṇcaviṃśa-brāhmaṇa (6, 6, 5) a sacrifice is described which should lead to the destruction of a king; in pursuing this object vaiśyas and brāhmaṇas co-operated.

ship <sup>239</sup>). As a rule the opinion prevailed that only good kings were truly devas <sup>240</sup>). Only incidentally the view is pronounced that whatever a king does is right <sup>241</sup>), that is to say that even a wicked monarch is inviolable because of his sanctity. We should not forget to distinguish between king and kingship: the king is kingly power and dignity in human form <sup>242</sup>). Hence no doubt the view that a man without distinction and also otherwise incompetent, if he were to come into possession of a great and mighty kingdom, would soon be deprived of his glory (*yaśas*) because of the greatness of rulership <sup>243</sup>). As might be expected a priori, it is not only sinful conduct, but also disease and disability which disqualify a ruler. Devāpi who suffered from skin disease was, the brahmins declared, not acceptable; Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not eligible because he was blind <sup>244</sup>). It is a well-known belief that 'sacredness' can reside only in able-bodied men.

Being formed of the *tejas* of all the gods <sup>245</sup>), the king outshines all beings in *tejas* <sup>246</sup>), the lustre or fiery energy <sup>247</sup>), the brilliant principle of supranormal might and dignity <sup>248</sup>). This possession of

<sup>239</sup>) KANE, *o.c.* III, p. 27 maintains that the ruler was raised to divinity because the writers on dharma, addressing the people in general, wanted a strong king to preserve the social order. Bad kings and ministers were on the other hand threatened with destruction and death.

<sup>240</sup>) ALTEKAR, *State and gov.*, p. 52.

<sup>241</sup>) Nārada-smṛti 18 (17), 21.

<sup>242</sup>) Cf. MEYER, *Das altind. Buch vom Welt- und Staatsleben*, p. LXV f.

<sup>243</sup>) Milindapañho, p. 249 f. T. The same thought is elaborated p. 357 f.: if a man who is unfit for royalty, and unworthy of it, should receive the consecration, he would suffer mutilation, or he would be tortured..., in short, be subjected to various punishments, because being unfit and unworthy, he had placed himself in the seat of sovereignty, and thus transgressed beyond his right limits.

<sup>244</sup>) Mbh. 5, a. 149; 147.

<sup>245</sup>) Manu 7, 11.

<sup>246</sup>) See e.g. Mbh. 1, 171, 17. Many authors make mention of this royal *tejas*, see e.g. Bhagavadgītā, 10, 41 f.; 15, 12; Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa* 3, 15; Kathāsaritsāgara 121, 21; 45. For a detailed description: P. V. KANE, *Hist. of Dharmas.* II, 1941, p. 1206 ff. See in general: J. Ph. VOGEL, *Het sanskrit woord tejas in de beteekenis van magische kracht*, Amsterdam 1930, p. 7 ff.

<sup>247</sup>) Cf. e.g. Kālikā-purāṇa 31, 93 *tejas ... sūryatulyam* "t. similar to the sun"; 27, 20 *pāvakaṇṇamatejas* "whose t. is comparable to that of fire"; 24, 14 *t. samidhyate* "t. is kindled, inflamed" (the verb is usually applied to fuel and fire).

<sup>248</sup>) In illustration of the concept mention may be made of Kālikā-purāṇa 31, 40 f. where the body of Viṣṇu-the boar is said to lose its strength when the *tejas* is withdrawn from it.

tejas entitles him to respect <sup>249</sup>) and enables him to perform great exploits <sup>250</sup>). *Mahātejas*- "of great lustre or majesty", *amītejas*- "of boundless l. or m.", etc. are frequent epithets of eminent kings <sup>251</sup>). The same epithets are also given to the great gods and to illustrious religious men <sup>252</sup>). Mention has already been made of his "majesty, splendour, power, or energy" (*pratāpa*-) which properly is the glowing heat of the sun, to which it is often compared <sup>253</sup>). One of the detailed descriptions of the terrors of anarchy — in a kingless country there will be neither rain nor seed, neither wealth nor wife, neither sacrifices nor festivals — culminates <sup>254</sup>) in the statement that, if there is no king who separates good and bad, this world is wrapped in darkness. so that nobody can know what to do.

(To be continued)

249) Cf. Bhāgavata-purāṇa 4, 13, 23 "The protector of creatures, even if he is sinful, may not be disregarded by his subjects, because he, by his own *tejas*, bears the *ojas* of the guardians of the quarters".

250) See e.g. also Mbh. 7, 39, 7 (together with *pratāpavant*-); 100, 11 (*ugram* 1.); Rām. 3, 21, 14. On Rām. 5, 1, 34 Rāma's commentary explains *tejas* by *parābhībhavasāmarthyam* "the ability to overpower others".

251) See e.g. Rām. 3, 1, 10; 3, 2; 5, 35 (Rāma); *diptejas*- "of radiant l. or m." 3, 5, 2 (his brother Lakṣmaṇa).

252) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 3, 99, 64; 107, 29; 14, 5, 4.

253) Cf. also Mbh. 1, 171, 19; 3, 52, 2.

254) Rām. 2, 67, 36 with the commentary.

## VIII.

The paraphernalia or emblems of royalty were supposed to represent the sovereign authority <sup>255</sup>). The five ensigns of royalty were a white umbrella, fly-whisks, shoes, turban <sup>256</sup>), and throne (the *pañcakaku-dāni*: this term literally means: "the five summits": we shall see further on that the same term for "summit" is also given to the king himself). Besides, there was the sword of state. In other sources the five are: the sword, umbrella, crown, shoes and chowrie. The umbrella <sup>257</sup>), i.e. the white sunshade of state, a residence of Lakṣmī (the goddess of fortune <sup>258</sup>)) and the pair of fly-whisks were absolutely indispensable, constituting the emblems par excellence. The sun should never be allowed to shine directly on the sacred person of the ruler, that is to say to bring its power into contact with his power, otherwise the state of *tejas* or *pratāpa*- "heat" of the ruler would be neutralized by contact with a power possessing excessive "heat". The shoes were to become representatives of the ruler himself; in old-Javanese *pāduka* "shoe or slipper" was used in other expressions for "His or Your Majesty" <sup>259</sup>). A remarkable statement is found in the

\*) See for the first part of this article Numen III/1956, p. 36 ff.

255) A somewhat detailed description may be found in Bh. S. UPADHYAYA, *India in Kālidāsa*, Allahabad 1947, p. 77 f.

256) A turban of honour is e.g. mentioned in the Kathāsaritsāgara 12, 190 f.

257) After performing the Vājapeya the king becomes "one who is entitled to the white umbrella": see e.g. Āpastamba-śrautasūtra 18, 7, 18. See also C. H. TAWNEY-N. M. PENZER, *The Ocean of Story*, London 1924 ff., II, p. 267 and V, p. 175.

258) Viṣṇu-smṛti 99, 12. She also resides in the royal consecration: Vi. Sm. 99, 16.

259) See GONDA, *Sanskrit in Indonesia*, Nagpur 1952, p. 333 f.

Mahābhārata<sup>260</sup>): If a ruler be disregarded by his enemies all his subjects become unhappy. Therefore umbrellas, vehicles, garments, ornaments, palaces and all utensils for use and show should be accorded to the ruler. By such means he will better discharge his duties of protection and be irresistible. Here the outward splendour of kingship combines with the awe-inspiring nature of the paraphernalia to establish the ruler's prestige and reputation.

Like the great gods, Indra, Agni, Soma, Rudra, and in Buddhism, the Bodhisattva, a cakravartin or emperor is considered to be in the possession of seven treasures. These *ratnāni*, which are mystic in nature, are: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the gem, the woman (queen), the minister of finance, and the adviser or general in chief. When a sovereign conducts himself aright they appear to him of their own accord<sup>261</sup>). The wheel, as we shall see further on, denotes universality, the cakravartin being the hub or centre of the universe; the elephant, the ancient royal mount, and the milk-white horse, the sun-steed, carry the monarch on his world inspection; the magic jewel (*cintāmaṇi*—“thought-jewel”) fulfills every desire the moment it is uttered; the perfect queen-consort is the ideal woman, the minister of finance, the perfect administrator who is never short of funds for purposes of lavish generosity. These power-bearers were, as *ratnins* “possessors of ratnas”, already known to the brahmins who described the rājasūya (consecration of a ruler)<sup>262</sup>). In elucidation of this point reference may be made to the well-known fact that in India as well as elsewhere a great magic value is attached to gems and jewels. Whoever wears a wonderful stone is proof against all fear and danger; hunger and want, sickness and weapons, even gods, spirits and demons have no hold on him. Even gods are said to be in possession of such priceless objects: the *syamantaka*-jewel, for instance, which is worn by Kṛṣṇa on his wrist, yields daily eight loads of gold and preserves the wearer from all dangers. So the kings' ratnas may be compared to the so-called royal ornaments (the so-called *upacara*<sup>263</sup>)) or holy heirloom of

260) Mbh. 12, 67, 36 ff.

261) I refer to T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, *Buddhist Suttas*, III. p. 251 ff.

262) We shall have to return to this point.

263) The Jav. *upacara* “insignia of the royal dignity, regalia exerting a strengthening influence” comes from the Skt. *upacāra*—in the sense of “ornament or decoration”. In the south of Celebes these objects were often considered to be the real bearers of the kingly power and authority.

the Indonesian kings and chiefs (called *pusaka* in Javanese). These are bearers of a special power, which they transfer to the man who possesses them, enabling him to prosecute his royal occupations in the right way. These feudal kings also possessed living power-bearers, especially hunch-backed persons<sup>264</sup>). In former and later times the word *ratna*—plays an important rôle in connection with Indian kingship<sup>265</sup>). The theory underlying the practice of the *ratnins* and the belief in the *ratnas* seems therefore to have been that the above persons, animals and objects by their very presence and qualities add to the power of their royal master. In the *Nitivākyāmṛta*<sup>266</sup>) it is expressly taught that the *amātyas*, i.e. “companions”, usually translated by “ministers”, have to concern themselves not only with revenue and expenditure, but also with guarding the body, dharma, and family of the ruler.

Now, particular oblations in the rājasūya are called the *ratnahavis* “jewel-oblations”: they are offered in the houses of twelve (or eleven) persons (called *ratnins*) who may be considered to be the king's most valuable “treasures”<sup>267</sup>). According to the *Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa*<sup>268</sup>) etc. these persons are those who “bestow kingship upon (the king)”. In the house of the purohita or brahman priest an oblation is presented to Bṛhaspati (the priest of the gods), in that of the royal prince (*rājan̄ya*—) an oblation to Indra; in that of the chief queen one to Aditi, the great mother, the representative of freedom and broadness; (in some texts) in that of the favourite queen one to Bhaga, the distributor

264) For magic in connection with gems see e.g. H. WEBSTER, *Magic*, Stanford Cal. 1948, p. 121 ff. For Indonesian beliefs: J. Ph. DUYVENDAK, *Inleiding tot de Ethnologie van de Indische Archipel*, Groningen-Batavia 1940, p. 135 ff. In ancient India the horse, the animal of the kṣatriya, and the elephant were highly appreciated animals. Elephants were, according to the Indian legend, clouds sentenced to walk upon the earth. But the real clouds like to visit them. Hence it is important for a king to have these animals in his palace. Because they guarantee rain in the period of the monsoon they are called “the king's clouds”. See also H. ZIMMER, *Myths and symbols in Indian art and civilization*, N. York 1946, p. 92; 107 ff.

265) See also MEYER, *Das Buch v. W. u. S.*, p. 38, n. 4 and p. 680 (with references to other publications).

266) KANE, *History of Dharmasāstra* III, p. 110. Cf. also Kāmand. NS. 13, 23 f.; Agnipur. 241, 16 ff.

267) For particulars see KANE, *Hist. of Dh.*, II, p. 1215 f.; MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic Index*, II, p. 199 ff. J. EGGELENG, *Sacred Books of the East*, 41, p. 58, n. 2; CALAND, on *Āpast. śr.* s. 18, 10, 12.

268) *Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa* 1, 7, 3: *ete vai rāṣṭrasya pradātārah*. They are enumerated somewhat differently.

of wealth who also presides over matrimonial happiness; in that of the discarded queen one to Nirṛti, the goddess of destruction; in that of the general one to Agni "who occupies the foremost rank"; in that of the sūta, the very sacrosanct charioteer who at the same time was a bard, a herald, a physician and the king's intimate friend, one to Varuṇa, because, I would suppose, this god was believed to be omniscient and to have the disposal of the special craft or mysterious power called *māyā* 269); in that of the *grāmaṇi*- or "village headman (governor)" one to the Maruts, Indra's associates who, being associated with wind, rain, etc., dwell in the mountains; in that of the *kṣattar*- "doorkeeper or chamberlain" one to Savitar, the god who, inter alia, makes people arise and sends them to sleep; in that of the *saṃgrahitar*- or charioteer one to the Aśvins, who drive in a famous car which, touching the end of heaven, extends over the five countries; in that of the *bhāgadugha*- "superintendent of cattle or (and?) of the kitchen" one to Pūṣan, the protector of herds and flocks who brings an abundance of food; in that of the "superintendent of gambling" one to Rudra-Śiva, the god who invented the game of dice 270).

Whatever the particular reason why each of these functionaries was entitled to belong to this body of ratnins, it seems beyond doubt that they contributed to the king's power; they were no doubt believed to exert a salutary influence on the occupant of the throne. The character of the objects gained by the above sacrifices fortify us in this conviction: the first oblation in the house of the priest who of course is identified with Brhaspati is to "whet (sharpen)" brahman for the king's sake; by offering in the royal house 271) to Indra — who is *kṣatra*- "dominion" 272) — he gains *indriya*- "the specific power or quality which belongs to that god"; by that to Aditi he becomes firmly established on the earth, "for Aditi is the earth" 273), and also the wife of the gods. The king himself apparently represents Indra; Aditi is also in other ancient works the wife of the sacrificer (*yajamāna*-)

269) For *māyā* see my paper in: *Tijdschrift voor Philosophie*, 14, Louvain 1952.

270) I refer to MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 145 ff.

271) According to the Sat. Br. 5, 3, 1, 3 this offering is prepared at the dwelling of him who is being consecrated (*sūyamānasya grhe*).

272) Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 3.

273) See also my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 115.

274): she is the wife of the gods and the queen is the wife of the king 275). The next sacrifice put him in possession of *bhaga*- "fortune and happiness": it is clear that the favourite queen could easily be considered a representative of matrimonial happiness (*bhaga*-). By sacrificing to Nirṛti "he satisfies her who is evil"; apparently the discarded queen is a manifestation of evil 276). The ceremony in the house of the general helps the king to "whet" (i.e. to make ready or faithful) the army, Agni being the great slayer of demons and other inimical powers, and a conqueror of thousands with warlike qualities; both Agni and the general are "a front", the former of the gods, the latter of the army 277). By presenting an offering to Varuṇa in the house of the sūta (court-minstrel, chronicler and equerry) he secures the merits of a Varuṇasava, a particular rite which in the same brāhmaṇa is identified with the *rājasūya* 278); the sūta, the custodian of the ancient kṣatriya traditions who in the epic tales is even credited with foreknowledge of the future, resembles Varuṇa in that both of them are *savas* "instigators, stimulators", Varuṇa — who is the god of law and order, who, inter alia, regulates the course of the waters and governs men and nature by his "observances"—of the gods, the sūta of men 279). The oblation to the Maruts in the house of the village headman put him in possession of food; since—at least at a later period—the *grāmaṇi*- 280) formed the channel through which the royal control was exercised and the royal dues received—his post being emphatically declared to represent the summit of the ambition of a vaiśya 281)—, it does not seem unlikely that he was considered to maintain special relations with the Maruts who were Indra's allies and

274) Cf. e.g. AV. 11, 1, 11.

275) Sat. Br. 5, 3, 1, 4.

276) The Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 13 observing that this is a childless wife states that she is seized by, in the power of, Nirṛti.

277) Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 1.

278) T. Br. 2, 7, 6, 1; similarly, Ś. Br. 5, 3, 4, 12; 4, 3, 2.

279) Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 5.

280) It has, probably rightly, been surmised that the curious singular of this word which clearly means: "village headman" shows that only the most prominent among them, or the headman of the royal residence(?) was meant. Anyhow he seems to have been the representative of the "third order": cf. Śāṅkhāyana-śrautasūtra 2, 6, 5 where three men are considered to have reached the highest state of welfare, a learned brahman, a grāmaṇi and a kṣatriya.

281) I refer to A. B. KEITH, in *The Cambridge Hist. of India* I, Cambr. 1922, p. 131.

associates assisting the god in performing his function and accomplishing his exploits. The Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa<sup>282</sup>) expresses this consideration in a few words: the Maruts are the third order, and the grāmaṇī is a vaiśya or member of that order. The offering to Savitar is performed for the sake of procreation of offspring (*prasūtyai*), the term being felt etymologically related to the name of the god, who is sometimes stated to be Prajāpati, the creator of living beings<sup>283</sup>). The doorkeeper or chamberlain may, I think, have been held a manifestation of this god, because the latter was believed to send men to sleep and was implored to protect their houses<sup>284</sup>); both the god and the official are "impellers" (*prasavitar-*) the Śatapatha adds<sup>285</sup>). By the sacrifice to the Aśvins—whose very name implies the possession of horses, by which their car is drawn (hence their connection with the charioteer<sup>286</sup>)) and who are renowned as divine physicians—medicine is procured to the king. The oblation to Pūṣan in the house of a functionary called *bhāgadugha-* ("tax-gatherer, collector of the sixth part of produce", "headcook", "bailiff", or "distributor of portions" or "carver"<sup>287</sup>)) is to secure food<sup>288</sup>). Lastly the ruler should in the usual way appease Rudra by a special oblation<sup>289</sup>). That this ceremony should be performed in the house of the man whose title, in too sonorous a translation, is "superintendent of dicing" becomes intelligible if we remember that, at least at a later period, Rudra-Śiva was credited with the "invention" of gambling<sup>290</sup>).

So the evidence furnished by the Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa seems to suf-

282) Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 6.

283) See A. A. MACDONELL, *Vedic Myth.*, Strassb. 1897, p. 33.

284) See R.V. 2, 38; 4, 53, 6; 6, 71, 2 f.; 7, 45, 1.

285) Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 7.

286) According to the Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 8 the Aśvins who are of the same womb stand side by side like the king and his charioteer who stand on one and the same chariot: they are likewise "of the same womb or standing-place".

287) For the explication of this title see J. EGGEING, *The Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* III, Oxford 1894, p. 63, n. 1; CALAND, *Das Śrautasūtra des Āpastamba* III, p. 132; (R. C. MAJUMDAR and H. C. RAYCHAUDHURI, *An advanced history of India*, London 1948, p. 74).

288) Pūṣan, the Ś. Br. 5, 3, 1, 9 says, is the *bhāgadugha-* of the gods.

289) See e.g. H. OLDENBERG, *Die Religion des Veda*<sup>3, 4</sup> Stuttgart-Berlin 1923, p. 217.

290) The Śat. Br. 5, 3, 1, 10 gives the following explication: Rudra is hankering after the cow which is killed in this hall; Rudra is fire, the gaming-board is fire, and the dice are its coals; it is therefore Rudra who is pleased.

fice to draw the conclusion that the ratnins, i.e. the above important persons belonging to the entourage of the ruler, were by their specific relations to divine beings considered able to enhance the ruler's power or potency in various respects. It does therefore not seem correct to assume that the ratnins formed the king's council in any modern sense of the word. That the queen and the king's favourite wife are invariably mentioned by all our authorities does not, I am sure, suggest that queens in the Vedic age were not merely the consorts of kings, but played some part in administration<sup>291</sup>). The ratnins were, moreover, twelve in number; since there are twelve months in a year, they represent the totality of the year and by performing these sacrifices the priest secures, on behalf of the king, the totality of dominion<sup>292</sup>). According to the version handed down in the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa the eleven oblations which are to be offered first provide the king with *vīrya-* "manly strength and courage", because that number stands for *vīrya-*, the triṣṭubh-verse consisting of eleven syllables<sup>293</sup>). There are however varying accounts of this ceremony. The same brāhmaṇa<sup>294</sup>) has also the "hunter" (*govikartana-*) and the "courier" or messenger (*pālāgala-*) among the ratnins, while the Maitrāyaṇī-saṃhitā<sup>295</sup>) adds the carpenter (*takṣan-*) and the chariot-maker (*ratha-kāra-*)<sup>296</sup>).

One further point may be touched upon in this connection. By performing two more sacrifices in the house of the sacrificer one can win blessings; the gods to whom the offerings are, in that case, to be presented are Indra *sutrāman-* and Indra *amhomuc-*, i.e. "Indra the protector" and "Indra who delivers from distress"; the formula pronounced on that occasion runs as follows: "may the king, the slayer of Vṛtra, be our king and slay the enemy" (*ayaṃ no rājā vṛtrahā rājā bhūtvā vṛtram vadhyāt*)<sup>297</sup>).

291) This view was maintained by ALTEKAR, *State and gov.*, p. 114. The same author has (o.c. p. 115) misunderstood the direction that the king had to repair to the houses of the ratnins and not they to his palace in order to offer the ratnin oblations. These remarks are however not to deny that the allegiance or approbation of these persons was for the man on the throne in practical life an essential factor of success.

292) Cf. T. Br. 1, 7, 3, 6.

293) In this brāhmaṇa the oblation to Nirṛti closes the list (5, 3, 1, 13).

294) Śat. Br. 5, 3, 1, 10; 11.

295) See Maitrāyaṇī Saṃh. 2, 6, 5, 6 ff.

296) I also refer to EGGEING, o.c., p. 58, n. 2.

297) T. Br. 1, 7, 3, 7; cf. T. S. 1, 8, 9, 2.



Another list of 'officials' comprising eight persons which for the greater part belong to the above group of ratnins occurs in the Pañcaviṃśa-brāhmaṇa<sup>298</sup>). It is worth quoting in its entirety: "Eight persons of importance (*vīrāḥ*, often translated by "heroes") sustain together the ruler's kingship: the king's brother, the king's son, the house-chaplain, the queen-consort, the master of the horse (*sūta-*), the grāmaṇī<sup>299</sup>), the chamberlain (*kṣattar-*) and the charioteer<sup>300</sup>). These are the persons of importance who together sustain the ruler's kingship. In the presence of these he is consecrated."

In the Vāyu Purāṇa<sup>301</sup>) the fourteen ratnas of the emperor are divided into two categories, animate and inanimate. To the former group belong not only the purohita, the queen, the general, the charioteer or "chariot-maker", and the councillor, but also the horse and the elephant, and to the latter class the amulet (*maṇi-*), the sword, the bow, the wheel, the chariot, the banner, and the treasure. In contradistinction to Altekar<sup>302</sup>) who is convinced that the nature of the ratnins was clearly misunderstood at a later period because "their council had ceased to function as a part of the administration", I would venture the opinion that this evidence, if it has conclusive force for the earlier period, may be made an argument in favour of the thesis that the Vedic ratnins were no administrative council at all, but an especially constituted group of persons endowed with sacral qualities.

In this connection attention may be drawn to the interesting name of *tirtha-* given to certain high officials. They are enumerated in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, the Pañcatantra, the Tantrākhyāyika and in other texts<sup>303</sup>). Among these are the minister, the purohita, the marshall, the prince royal, the grand door-keeper, the head of the inner apartments, the treasurer, the inspector of the fortifications, and the other superior functionaries. The usual number of them is eighteen. As a *tirtha-* primarily is a sacred bathing-place, or place of pilgrimage

298) Pañc. Br. 19, 1, 4.

299) CALAND translated this title by "praefectus urbi".

300) According to Sāyana's commentary: the treasurer.

301) Vāyu Pur. 57, 68 ff. (*cakram ratho maṇiḥ khaḍgam dhanūratnam ca pañcamam | ketur nidhim ca saptaite... | bhāryā purohitaś caiva senānī rathakṛc ca yaḥ | mantry āsvaḥ kalabhaś caiva...* See also Brahmanḍa Pur. 1, 29, 74 ff. with a variation (*carmaratnam* instead of the bow). Cf. also Brahmanḍa Pur. 2, 29, 75.

302) ALTEKAR, *State and gov.*, p. 116.

303) Kauṭ. AS. 8 (12), 8; Pañcat. 3, 67 f.; Tantrākhy. ed. Hertel, p. 109.

on the banks of sacred streams, and then also a person or object conducive to the annihilation of sin and evil; as, on the other hand, a *tirtha-* is also a worthy recipient of sacrifices or gifts<sup>304</sup>), i.e. an intermediary in transmitting sacred substance — the word originally meaning "a passage, ford, way to the opposite side" —, and, in a more extended sense a person representing purity (*śauca-*)<sup>305</sup>), gifted with wisdom, truth, and omniscience, who is free from passion and attachments and above the pairs of opposites, and who lives upon alms, renouncing everything — these persons are of pure conduct and possess purifying power; they are purity or "tirthas" embodied —, those who first applied the same title to the above high functionaries no doubt believed them to be worthy persons in a more or less distinct religious sense. Probably the title was first given to those officials who were sacrosanct, to wit the purohita, the chief justice or *dharmā-dhyakṣa-*, etc. and then extended to others.

From the interesting study by Miss Auboyer<sup>306</sup>) we may learn that the royal throne or seat of authority is intimately connected with the altar. Both of them are a support on which the sacred or "holy being" (a god, Buddha or the *cakravartin-* "emperor") who is the god's substitute takes his seat. The cushion of the throne is identified with *śrī-*, adding to the ruler's prosperity on which his kingship rests<sup>307</sup>). *Śrī* is, in an elaborate description of Brahmā's throne<sup>308</sup>), also the cushion on which Brahmā sits. The throne itself represents the seat on which Āditya, the sun, was anointed. There is a constant correlation between the royal throne and the seat of the gods. It may be interesting to quote a passage from a brāhmaṇa<sup>309</sup>) the author of which with remarkable insight recognized the character of the throne: The priest consecrates the ruler on a throne, for imperial dignity (*sāmraṇjyam*) is established there; by means of imperial dignity he thus causes him to attain *sāmraṇjya-*. It is made of undumbara wood, for this is strength: he thus is consecrated for the sake of strength. It is knee-high, and

304) See Manu 3, 130.

305) See Mbh. 13, a. 108.

306) J. AUBOYER, *Le trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris 1949.

307) See my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 188 f.; P. E. DUMONT, *L'Āśvamedha*, Paris 1927, p. 92.

308) Kauṣītaki-upaniṣad 1, 5 = Śāṅkhāyana-āranyaka 3, 5.

309) Sat. Br. 12, 8, 3, 4. ff. This passage forms part of a discussion of the *sautrāmaṇi*, dedicated to Indra, the "good guardian" (*sutrāman-*).

it is for the rule of this world that the kṣatriya is consecrated... For the throne means kingdom or royal dignity (*rāṣṭram*), and *rāṣṭra-* is of unlimited prosperity... It is the womb and navel of the power called *kṣatra-*, i.e. ruling power<sup>310</sup>).

There were indeed special relations between "welfare, well-being, fortune", i.e. *śrī-*, and "dominion" (*kṣatra-*) or kingship<sup>311</sup>. Śrī, kingship and the power of inflicting punishment rest with the kṣatriyas<sup>312</sup>. Already in the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (2, 4, 4, 6) the idea arises of a royal man's being wedded to Śrī. As a goddess Śrī is believed to select, of her own accord, a mighty king as her husband. Śrī is also described as residing in the sovereign<sup>313</sup>. Hence he is *śrīmant-* "possessed of *śrī-*"<sup>314</sup>. Hence also the verdict that in his serenity or graciousness dwells Śrī, the goddess of prosperity herself<sup>315</sup>. This *śrī-* is considered to be the end or highest of food; by spending, for ritual reasons, three days in the house of a kṣatriya one establishes oneself in the highest of food, in *śrī-*<sup>316</sup>. On account of *śrī-*, which in this connection evidently means material welfare<sup>317</sup>, the king is said to obtain the highest honour (*satkriyā* "respectful treatment").

The king's bow is, in the formulas accompanying the consecration, identified with Indra's Vṛtra-destroying vajra<sup>318</sup>).

An essential element of the royal household was the bards who sang the ruler's panegyrics and those of his ancestors, by which they strengthened his power to perform his royal duties. The contents of the panegyrics which are considered as historical truth have the effect of a magical performance, causing the exploits described to spread their inherent power and to become active again in the person of the listener. Special functionaries were for similar reasons in charge of the royal genealogy (the *māgadhas*); others recited blessings. These

310) Cf. also Vāj. Samh. 20, 1.

311) See *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 188 f.

312) Mbh. 3, 207, 30.

313) See e.g. Kālidāsa, Raghuvamśa 3, 36; 4, 14.

314) See e.g. Mbh. 1, 171, 19; 21.

315) Manu 7, 11.

316) Jaim. Br. 2, 184.

317) Mbh. 12, 133, 7; *śrī-* is opposed to an empty treasure (st. 6).

318) See e.g. Āpastamba-śrautasūtra 18, 14, 10; cf. 17, 10 f.; see also 18, 18, 14.

bards were already part of the household of a Vedic king<sup>319</sup>). The R̥gveda<sup>320</sup> is already explicit in stating that the princes in exchange for presents, which are highly extolled, enjoy the fruits of the eulogies composed by the singers. The 'brahman' of the priestly singer saves the people<sup>321</sup>. The ruler should, however, also listen to itihāsas ("traditional history"), including dharmaśāstra and arthaśāstra ("political government")<sup>322</sup>).

## IX.

Although monarchy was in ancient India, though the most common form of government, not universal<sup>323</sup>), times without a king are often described as terrible<sup>324</sup>). Then man's sense of justice is destroyed because there is no punishment nor one to inflict it; all wicked passions are given free rein. Then there will be rain, no seed, no sacrifices, no festivals which enhance the prosperity of the people; father and husband will have no authority; lawsuits will be useless; dancing and reciting will cease; parks and pleasure-grounds will no longer be frequented; trade and asceticism come to an end; it is no longer possible to enjoy one's possessions<sup>325</sup>). The weak are enslaved, woman are violated, social ties cease to exist<sup>326</sup>). In short, a people without a king is like a river without water or a herd of cattle without a herdsman. The counterparts of these descriptions of anarchy are formed by descriptions of excellent kings: in their dominions there are no thieves, no drinkers of alcohol, no wicked persons; everybody

319) See e.g. AV. 1, 122, 12 and GELDNER's note; MEYER, *Trilogie* 111, p. 141 f.; J. GONDA, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas*, *Acta Orientalia* 19, p. 329 ff., passim; H. LÜDERS, *Varuna*, Göttingen 1951, 16 ff. The high position of the *sūta-*, bard and charioteer, has often been commented upon; see e.g. MEYER, *Sexual life in ancient India*, London 1930, p. 81, n. 1.

320) R̥gveda 5, 42, 8 f.; cf. 1, 125, 4 ff.; 2, 1, 16; 7, 18, 21; AV. 19, 49, 6.

321) R̥gveda 3, 53, 12. GELDNER translates *brahman* by "Kraftwort", see my *Notes on Brahman*, Utrecht 1950, p. 40 ff.

322) Kautilya, *Arthaśāstra* 5.

323) See e.g. R. FICK, *Die sociale Gliederung im nordöstl. Indien zu Buddha's Zeit*, p. 90.

324) See e.g. A. S. ALTEKAR, *State and government in ancient India*, Benares 1949, ch. 5; PATIL, *Cult. hist. from the Vāyu Purāṇa*, p. 19; J. Ch. JAIN, *Life in ancient India as depicted in the Jain Canons*, Bombay 1947, p. 49.

325) Rām. 2, 67, 9 ff.

326) Cf. also Mbh. 12, a. 67 and 68.

performs the rites and sacrifices, every brahman is learned, all classes of men follow the duties of their order, and so on<sup>327</sup>). Thus the king may be styled a creator of all creatures, if he clings to dharma, and also their destroyer, if he is sinful<sup>328</sup>).

In illustration of the value attached to leadership a passage from a brāhmaṇa may be quoted, where the gods are related to have been repeatedly defeated in their struggle against the asuras. At last they recognized that their want of a leader was the cause of their failure. So they elected Soma as their king and with him they conquered all the quarters<sup>329</sup>). Similarly, the brahmins were in the days of yore defeated as long as they had not elected a leader<sup>330</sup>).

These traditions and expatiations resolve themselves to this: the bodily existence of a personification or 'epitome' of the community is essential for its continuance. From one point of view the king is, or represents, the people: an ancient Indian chief or king was often designated by the name of the tribe or people which had accepted his leadership. From another point of view he was more: the embodiment or personification of divine powers which transcended the present phase of the life of the community. In him the community and the divine powers on which its welfare depended met. The institution or re-establishment of kingship signifies an important change: since Pṛthu became king the earth is, with a preposterous etymology, called *prthivī*; dharma, previously violated, became restored. In the mythical past, when the gods and the asuras contended for the dominion over the worlds, the gods realized that it was only "through their lack of a king that their enemies conquered them". They therefore made Soma their king. "He who sacrifices", the brāhmaṇa adds, "has Soma as king, and conquers, through him, the quarters".

It is worth while briefly to relate some ancient traditions. According to the Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa<sup>331</sup>) Indra was made king by the gods because he was the most illustrious, powerful and superior; according to the Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa<sup>332</sup>) Varuṇa who wished to be king of the gods obtained royalty and the appearance of the creator-god Prajāpati and

327) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 12, a. 77, 8 ff. See also Rām. 2, 5, 100.

328) Mbh. 12, 91, 9.

329) Ait. Br. 1, 14, 5 ff.

330) Mbh. 5, a. 156.

331) Cf. Taitt. Br. 1, 5, 9, 1; 2, 2, 7, 2; 3, 1, 3.

332) Jaim. Br. 3, 152.

was, on the royal throne, anointed by various gods "unto sovereignty, unto extended sovereignty, uncontrolled sovereignty, complete sovereignty, unimpaired power and supremacy"<sup>333</sup>). Now the conclusion<sup>334</sup>) that kingship arose out of a military necessity, that success in war led to the royal dignity is no doubt correct so far that, to cite van der Leeuw, for primitive man it is precisely power and luck that possess the mystical element of admiration which creates the ruler<sup>335</sup>). Yet the question may be posed why it was these gods Indra and Varuṇa who were selected for the royal dignity in the heavenly sphere<sup>336</sup>). Indra, the god who more than others had the disposal of ojas, the vital and creative energy in nature<sup>337</sup>), representing force and energy, was regarded as being intimately connected with atmospheric phenomena and with various forms of fertility and vegetation. He is the protector of the earth<sup>338</sup>). As he successfully combated the demon of drought and other evil powers he was at the same time the great deity of the warrior-class<sup>339</sup>), who destroys the enemies. The parallelism between the task of this god and that of the king is evident. As already stated Indra may be regarded as representing the dynamic aspects of kingship. Passing mention may also be made of the rites in honour of this god which form part of the royal 'coronation' as it is described in post-Vedic texts. Thus the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa and other text<sup>340</sup>) prescribe a *sānti*- (propitiatory rite) called the *aindri sānti*-, i.e. one dedicated to Indra. Varuṇa, who is very often called a king<sup>341</sup>), was believed to dwell in the waters, presiding over the oath which was taken over water, guarding the *ṛta*-, that is to say protecting

333) Most of these terms (*rājya*-, *vairājya*-, *svārājya*-, *sāmrājya*-, *sārvavaśya*-, *pārameśthya*-) are of frequent occurrence to denote degrees and aspects of royal power and dignity.

334) Which is for instance drawn by Altekar, *o.c.*, p. 47.

335) G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion*, p. 115.

336) Kingly authority among the gods could pass into other hands: Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 2, 6, 2 ff.

337) See my treatise *Ancient Indian ojas...*, Utrecht 1952.

338) Cf. e.g. Atharvaveda 12, 1, 18.

339) See *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, Index I, s.v. The former aspect of the god was emphasized by J. J. MEYER, *Trilogie*, esp. part III, the latter by H. LOMMEL, *Der arische Kriegsgott*, Frankfurt a.M. 1939.

340) Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa 2, 19. See also KANE, *Hist. of Dharmas*. III. p. 79.

341) Many references were collected by E. HARDY, *Die vedisch-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens*, Münster 1893, p. 51 ff.

truth and maintaining the right order, destroying falsehood and employing agents to obtain information about the doings of man <sup>342</sup>). He, moreover, looks down at the truth and falsehood of men, saves the honest and righteous, punishes the wicked, forgives sins, and wards off death <sup>343</sup>). In his figure the judicial aspects of kingship can easily be discerned. It might be remembered that according to Manu <sup>344</sup>) a king must, by throwing it into water, offer to Varuṇa the fine recovered from a man guilty of mortal sin, because Varuṇa is the lord of punishment. It may be noticed that the ancient authorities themselves <sup>345</sup>) attempted to explain Varuṇa's title by referring to the fact that he was a sovereign because he had established a sacrificial fire; that was why people call him "king Varuṇa".

As to Soma, the main aspects of this god are his being light and life-giving sap, his relations to plants, among which he occupies the first place, and his being identical with the moon. Is it a mere coincidence that many of those passages where Soma is called a king (*rājan-*) also relate his power to prolong life and to restore man to health by clothing him with *amṛta-*, his grants of offspring and good fortune, his lordship of the medicinal herbs <sup>346</sup>)? Soma moreover is considered the king of the brahmans <sup>347</sup>).

Among the other gods who are in a comparatively large number of cases called *rājā*, Agni and Yama occupy the first rank. Yama, the gatherer of men, rules the dead. In post-Vedic texts he is to become the Lord of dharma: *dharmarāj(a)-*. Agni, the god of fire, is a leader and protector of settlers; then he is also called Daṇḍa "Staff" or "Punishment", a lord of the house, dwelling in every abode, preserving his worshippers from calamities; he is a divine monarch strong as Indra. He, moreover, has the disposal of the splendour (*varcas*) with which the king comes into being <sup>348</sup>). With regard to the character of

<sup>342</sup>) So far we can follow H. LÜDERS, *Varuṇa* I, Göttingen 1951, esp. p. 28 ff. For the "spies" see H. H. SCHAEFER, *Iranica* I, *Das Auge des Königs*, *Abh. Ges. Wiss. Göttingen* 10 (1934).

<sup>343</sup>) Cf. in addition to this, also AV. 10, 6, 15.

<sup>344</sup>) Manu 9, 243 ff.

<sup>345</sup>) See Sat. Br. 2, 2, 3, 1.

<sup>346</sup>) See e.g. Rgveda 1, 91, 5; 8, 6, 75, 18; 8, 48, 7; 9, 114, 2; 10, 97, 18; 11, 19, 22; Atharvaveda 2, 36, 3; 14, 1, 49 etc.

<sup>347</sup>) See Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 4, 2, 3; 9, 4, 3, 16.

<sup>348</sup>) Atharvaveda 3, 22, 6.

this kingship of the gods mention may be made of a passage <sup>349</sup>) where an enumeration is given of some divine rulers and the realms over which they hold sway. Yama is king of the Fathers, Varuṇa of the gandharvas — elsewhere <sup>350</sup>) Varuṇa is explicitly called the king of the gods —, Soma of the apsaras, Kubera of the rakṣas, Indra of the gods; likewise Tārksya (the famous bird Garuḍa) of the birds, Manu Vaivasvata of men, and so on.

In the Brhadāranyakopaniṣad <sup>351</sup>) eight divinities are enumerated which are considered to be "ruling or worldly power" (*kṣatra-*) among the gods: Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu, Īśvara. As to the god of rain, Parjanya, it seems clear why he should be called a *kṣatriya*: in the Rgveda he is described as a independent sovereign, who rules over the whole world — of course because without rain life is impossible —; he is, in an equally intelligible way implored to protect mankind. Besides, he is a father, or "our divine father". His wife is by implication the Earth and, as the shedder of rain, he is a producer of plants. So he has much in common with Dyaus and what interests us most, with Indra. It is a significant fact that a god of this character should be described as a *svarāj-* <sup>352</sup>).

Rudra was also considered a ruler <sup>353</sup>), *kṣayadvīra-* "ruling man", a lord (*īśāna-*) of this vast world, a father of the world; by his rule (*kṣaya-*) <sup>354</sup>) and universal dominion (*sāmrājya-*) he is aware of the doings of gods and men. Remarkably enough the above epithet *kṣayadvīra-* is followed by the wish to be protected by the god and to be favoured by his benevolence <sup>355</sup>). This god is several times called "bountiful" (*mīdhvas-*) and beneficent. Although his anger and malevolence are very often mentioned, he is not seldom implored to preserve man from calamity, to produce welfare and to bestow blessings. —

<sup>349</sup>) Śat. Br. 13, 4, 3, 3 ff.; cf. also the notes by EGELING, *The Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa*, V, p. 361 ff.

<sup>350</sup>) Śat. Br. 12, 8, 3, 10.

<sup>351</sup>) B. ā. Up. 1, 4, 11.

<sup>352</sup>) Here (RV. 7, 101, 5) Sāyaṇa's explication of *svarāje*, to wit *svāyatta-dīptaye* is doubtless inadequate.

<sup>353</sup>) Cf. RV. 1, 114, 1 ff.; 2, 33, 9; cf. 6, 46, 1; 7, 46, 2. The epithet *kṣayadvīra-* is also given to Indra and Pūṣan.

<sup>354</sup>) If Sāyaṇa is right in explaining *kṣayena* by *aiśvarya*.

<sup>355</sup>) RV. 1, 114, 10; 3. Cf. also 10, 92, 9.

Mṛtyu "Death" is in the Atharvaveda said to be the lord (*adhipati*-) of men <sup>356</sup>).

The authors of the brāhmaṇas make clear their conception of the relation between the earthly ruler and divine kings <sup>357</sup>). The kṣatriya has Indra as his deity, and is Soma with regard to kingship (*rājya*-), a *rājanya*-, i.e. a man of the royal class, with regard to relationship. Being consecrated he attains brahmanhood; then Agni is his deity, and he is brahman in relationship. Libations and formulas are needed to secure his former connection, quality, and relation.

In attempting to trace the further relations of ancient gods with kingship a study of the *mitravindā* sacrifice should not be passed over. The Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa <sup>358</sup>) informs us that Śrī, the goddess or principle of material prosperity and the outward splendour connected with it, who is intimately related to kingship, when deprived of her characteristic qualities or aspects — food, royal power, universal sovereignty, wealth, etc. — approached ten deities, imploring them to restore these to her. They were ready to do so. Whereas Agni, the eater and lord of food, gave her food, Soma, the king and lord of kings, restored her royal power (*rājyam*) to her; Varuṇa, the *saṃrāt* or complete (universal) sovereign and lord of *saṃrāts*, gave her the quality denoted by that term; Mitra, the *kṣatram* (neuter!) and lord of *kṣatram* (*kṣatrapatiḥ*) or nobility restored her that; Indra, the power (*balam*) and lord of power, restored her power to her; Bṛhaspati, the brahman and lord of brahman <sup>359</sup>), the potency called *brahmanarcasa*—"holy lustre, preeminence in holiness and sacred knowledge, divine glory or splendour"; Savitr, the kingdom (*rāṣṭram*) and *rāṣṭrapati*-, kingdom; Pūṣan, who is fortune (*bhaga*-), fortune; Sarasvatī who is "a well-nourished condition" (*puṣṭi*-), that quality; Tvaṣṭar, the fashioner of forms, cattle with beautiful form.

Incidentally the title king is given to a variety of powerful beings or entities. But even if an amulet is called a keen king of mighty power, demon-slaying, ojas of the gods and formidable power <sup>360</sup>), we learn something about the characteristics attributed to the ruler. The very

<sup>356</sup>) AthV. 5, 24, 13.

<sup>357</sup>) The reader may turn to Ait. Br. 7, 23, 1 ff.

<sup>358</sup>) Śat. Br. 11, 4, 3, 1 ff.

<sup>359</sup>) I refer to *Notes on brahman*, p. 66 ff.

<sup>360</sup>) Atharvaveda 19, 33, 4.

function of an amulet is to preserve the wearer against evil, that is to afford protection.

In this connection attention may be drawn to the mantras pronounced during the *rājasūya*, that is the great sacrifice performed at the inauguration of a king. Savitar (the sun) should endow the king with energy and driving power, Indra with ruling capacity, Bṛhaspati with eloquence, Mitra with truth, Varuṇa with the capacity to protect the dharma.

Kings are regarded as friends or companions of Indra <sup>361</sup>) who is implored to "increase" them to whom they should be dear <sup>362</sup>) and whose human counterpart they are <sup>363</sup>). The same god is also considered the divinity who "maintains the kings fixed" <sup>364</sup>). That there exist special connections between the earthly ruler and Indra also appears from such incidental information as for instance the statement that the ruddy cow, which belongs to Indra, is chosen by "the king here" for himself after winning a battle <sup>365</sup>): the red cows are compared with the red clouds which appear after the thunderstorm.

It is not without interest to quote a passage from the Atharvaveda <sup>366</sup>), where Mṛtyu, Death, in the form of the deceased ancestors, is said to wait upon the earthly ruler. As the king, the sole chief of all people, this text continues, approaches the throne, all beings wait upon him, that is to say, they perform the process indicated by the verb *pari-bhūṣ-* which in my opinion rather means something like "to strengthen, make fit, bestow favour upon a person or an object by a circumambulation or by surrounding him or waiting upon him" <sup>367</sup>). The monarch, the passage quoted continues, clothes himself in fortune: himself prosperous he puts vigour into his friends (*mitravardhana*-). Having all forms and bearing the great name of asura, he approaches what is immortal. Becoming superior to all, he is the object of the longing of all people and the divine water. Thus it is not surprising

<sup>361</sup>) See e.g. Atharvaveda 4, 22, 5 ff.; 3, 3, 2; Mbh. 2, 31, 63.

<sup>362</sup>) Atharvaveda 4, 22, 1; 4.

<sup>363</sup>) Cf. e.g. also Atharvaveda 3, 4, 6.

<sup>364</sup>) Atharvaveda 6, 87, 3; 88, 2 where this function is also allotted to Varuṇa and Bṛhaspati.

<sup>365</sup>) Śat. Br. 3, 3, 1, 14.

<sup>366</sup>) AV. 4, 8, 1.

<sup>367</sup>) See my brochure *The meaning of Vedic bhūṣati*, Wageningen 1939, p. 12 ff.

to find that the monarch is called "the crown" or summit of mankind (*kakun manuṣyānām*) and "complementary companion" (*ardhabhāj-*) of the gods <sup>368</sup>). In him mankind and divinity actually meet and combine.

The *sāmnāyya* offering which — being an oblation consisting of milk taken from a cow on the evening of the new moon, and offered with clarified butter — is a part of the ceremonies on the day of new moon, is mystically identified with royal dignity <sup>369</sup>). This oblation is offered to Indra. The man who knows that the *sāmnāyya* is royal dignity gains royal dignity; besides, he gains all that can be gained by royal dignity. The accompanying texts make mention of Indra's victory over Vṛtra, adding that the god should be chosen in order to conquer enemies <sup>370</sup>).

We hear also in the *Parīṣiṣṭas* of the *Atharvaveda* <sup>371</sup>) of a ceremony for the king's *janmadina-* in the first half of the year. This birthday ceremony, which was probably a rite at the return of the asterism under which the king was born, served to increase or strengthen His Majesty.

## X

It is worth noticing that the term *prāsāda-* which has the widest application to denote the temple as the seat and dwelling of divine power, is also used in the sense of residence of a king. Whether this palace is magnificent or small is a matter of indifference. The *Amarakoṣa* explains: a *prāsāda-* is the residence of gods and kings. The true sense of the word is still larger: it can denote a sacred building or monument,

<sup>368</sup>) AV. 6, 86, 3. For the sense of *ardha-* see *Reflections on the numerals "one" and "two" in ancient Indo-European languages*, Utrecht 1953, p. 29 f. The commentary, though applying the adjective to Indra, rightly understands it to mean "having a share equal to that of all other divinities together". The sense seems to be that the king is on one hand on a par with the devas, on the other hand their complement.

<sup>369</sup>) Sat. Br. 11, 2, 7, 17; 11, 2, 6, 6. I also refer to *Sacred Books of the East* 44, p. 41.

<sup>370</sup>) See *Āpastamba-śrautasūtra* I, 11, 10a.

<sup>371</sup>) See *The Parīṣiṣṭas of the AV.*, edited by G. M. BOLLING and J. v. NEGELEIN, I, 1, Leipzig 1909, p. 104 ff.

a seat of divinity <sup>372</sup>). In purāṇical texts <sup>373</sup>) it is emphasized that the whole *prāsāda-* is to be understood as *Puruṣa* (All-soul); Lord Hari himself is visibly established in it. The house of God, Miss Kramrisch observes <sup>374</sup>), is the concrete manifestation of Śiva or of any other name under which the supreme Principle that is Brahman is beheld <sup>375</sup>). As to the original meaning of the word, Monier-Williams regarded it as a variant of *prasāda-* which does not occur in this sense, literally meaning: "sitting forward", i.e. sitting on a seat in a conspicuous place, and hence, a lofty seat, platform, terrace, palace, temple <sup>376</sup>). It may however be objected that this meaning cannot be paralleled by a similar connotation of the verb *pra-sīdati*. The usual sense of this verb is "to settle down, to become bright, placid, pleased, gracious." If we further remember that the term *prāsāda-* already occurs in the texts on Vedic ritual, mentioning *prāsādas* on all sides of the *āhavanīya* fire <sup>377</sup>) which may have been sacred constructions, "seats", but certainly no terraces to sit upon in a conspicuous manner, and in inscriptions from the 2nd century B.C., referring inter alia to a *prāsāda* of the *Bhagavat* <sup>378</sup>), that it denotes great temples as well as small pavilions where a deity or emblem (Śiva's *līṅga*) is installed, the explication given by Miss Kramrisch may be considered more acceptable: "It denotes a settling down (*pra-sad-*) and a seat made of that which has settled down and acquired concrete form, the form of a dwelling, a residence, the seat of God." In substantiation of her view the learned authoress quotes a passage from the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* <sup>379</sup>). "The *prāsāda* is made up of the presence of Śiva and

<sup>372</sup>) References to *prāsādas* may be found in P. K. ACHARYA, *A dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, Oxford 1927, p. 420 ff. and St. KRAMRISCH, *The Hindu temple*, Calcutta, p. 135.

<sup>373</sup>) See e.g. *Agnipurāṇa* 61, 11; 26.

<sup>374</sup>) KRAMRISCH, *o.c.*, p. 136.

<sup>375</sup>) It may be added that with the Buddhists a *prāsāda-* is the monks' hall for assembly and confession.

<sup>376</sup>) Cf. Pāṇini 6, 3, 122. If the explication, which was already given by commentaries on this authority, be correct the *ā* may be due to the tendency to differentiate homonyms.

<sup>377</sup>) Śāṅkh. Śr. Sū. 16, 18, 13 ff.; cf. also Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* 2, 2, 34. See also MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic Index*, II, p. 44 and 51.

<sup>378</sup>) See especially S. KRAMRISCH, *o.c.*, p. 135 f.; P. K. ACHARYA, *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu architecture*, Oxford 1946, p. 343 ff.

<sup>379</sup>) *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* 3, 12, 16.

Śakti, and of the principles and forms of existence (*tattva-*) from the elementary substance Earth and ending with Śakti; the concrete form of Śiva is called house of god (*devālaya-*). Of course, a house of God is the concrete manifestation also of any other name under which the supreme Principle is beheld.

Another point of interest is touched upon by the authorities on dharma<sup>380</sup>). As is well known the shadow is one of the most important forms of human representation<sup>381</sup>). Among many peoples the belief was held that the shadow is a semi-detached 'soul'; fear of losing one's shadow is therefore widespread. So it was earnestly dissuaded to step intentionally on the shadow of images of the gods, of the guru, the king, the snātaka, or a *dikṣita-* (a man who has been initiated to the performance of a śrauta sacrifice). One should avoid coming into intimate contact with these powerful beings<sup>382</sup>). In this respect, too, a king was completely put on a par with other sacrosanct persons. Manu and other authorities on dharma<sup>383</sup>) in giving rules of conduct for the snātaka (the Veda student after having finished his studies) do not allow him intentionally to step on the shadow of images of the gods, his guru, the king and some other beings which apparently belonged to those persons and animals contact with which should be avoided. We are reminded, inter alia, of the conviction that members of certain exterior castes could by the same act pollute a caste Hindu.

The honour shown to a sovereign is, in Hinduistic times, in many respects similar to the marks of veneration conferred on the images of the gods. When proceeding, on an elephant, through his capital, he was accompanied by musicians. As is well known music was, in descriptions of religious ceremonies, a means of warding off evil influences<sup>384</sup>). The solemn acclamations of the bards, citizens and brahmans, and the festive sounds of tabors, horns and other musical instruments are not seldom said to annihilate, also for the king's sake, all evil. The roads and houses were decorated with banners and trium-

380) See Manu 4, 130; Yājñ. 1, 152; Viṣṇusmṛti 63, 40.

381) The reader might consult J. v. NEGELEIN, *Bild, Spiegel und Schatten im Volksglaube*, in the *Archiv für Relig. Wiss.* 5, p. 1 ff.

382) In Yājñ. it follows (in the same stanza): one should avoid stepping on blood, excrements etc.

383) Manu 4, 130; Yājñ. 1, 152; Vi. 63, 40.

384) See e.g. Varāh. 131, 48, 49.

phal arches. Women threw fried rice on him, whilst expressing blessings.

Speaking ill of the king and the government, a charge brought against them, or public scandal on account of them were on the other hand undesirable acts. Though he knew his wife to be innocent Rāma even preferred abandoning her to giving rise to rumour and public scandal; and the worth of a kingdom which is liable to public scandal is explicitly questioned. As is well known a charge or accusation is a magically potent act which affects a person like a disease. It is therefore considered a crime to accuse supernormal or divine beings<sup>385</sup>). "No person who is intelligent and unwearied in action, and who wishes to acquire virtue should ever spread evil reports about the monarch. By acting against him nobody can ever make himself happy"<sup>386</sup>). A king should always be smilingly addressed by others, and he should speak to others sweetly<sup>387</sup>). "Men who know the eternal natural norms (dharma) affirm that acts giving offence to the king ought not be done"<sup>388</sup>). Reigning kings are always to be forgiven whatever they do<sup>389</sup>), for their touch is like fire<sup>390</sup>) and ordinary men are helpless in their presence. The Mahābhārata even goes so far as to state that the food offered by a man who insults the king is not accepted by his ancestors. The gods themselves do not disobey a virtuous king who is a god (*devabhūta-*) and eternal (*sanātana-*)<sup>391</sup>). Those who look at Rāma with evil eye are smitten by Yama's rod and go at once to hell (*niraya-*, the region of destruction)<sup>392</sup>).

How deeply the belief in the innate divinity of the ruler had taken root may also appear from a remarkable passage in the great epic<sup>393</sup>) where feelings of deep respect for the king's property are inculcated. Everything that belongs to the sovereign should be avoided from a distance; one should even turn away from his property as one would

385) See J. J. MEYER, *Altind. Rechtsschriften*, p. 118; 382 cf.; *Trilogie I*, p. 138 f.

386) Mbh. 12, 68, 48 f. The author adds that unlike fire which may leave a residue, the king's anger leaves nothing to the person who happens to incur it.

387) Mbh. 12, 67, 38.

388) Mbh. 3, 161, 11.

389) Cf. Mbh. 1, 41, 23 ff.

390) Mbh. 3, 41, 20.

391) Mbh. 12, 65, 28 f.

392) Rām. 7, 82, 11.

393) Mbh. 12, 68, 50 ff.

from death itself. By taking the possession of the king a person soon meets with destruction like a deer upon touching a trap. An intelligent man should therefore protect as his own what belongs to the king. These prescriptions are no doubt founded on the belief that the special power of royalty which like all power is dangerous as soon as it comes into contact with objects or persons who are unable to bear or to contain it (who are "unworthy vessels"), attaches also to the king's property. In Javanese traditions the ruler's *sēkti* (the term for special supernormal power, or 'mana', deriving from the Skt. (*śakti*)) likewise inhered in his possessions, so that for instance the man who violates a royal concubine brings upon himself the most awful consequences.

From incidental references<sup>394</sup>) we know that it was usual to offer water to a king when he visited a place. This custom will no doubt also relate to the *arghya*- or paying honour to special guests, to whom water is offered to wash the feet, and to cleanse the mouth<sup>395</sup>). A corollary of these beliefs in connection with the head of government is also that his person must be protected, because he is the protector of the realm<sup>396</sup>). He must be adored because he is the delighter of the people (*bhoja*-), *virāt*, *saṃrāt*, *kṣatriya*-, *bhūpati*- (lord of the earth), and *nṛpa*-<sup>397</sup>). The man who is intent upon his own welfare should therefore always be attached to the king. The divine character of the king may also appear from such phrases and sayings as "the king is like the Lord himself"; the seers declare that the king partakes of the nature of all the gods; therefore "a wise man shall look upon him as a god and shall speak no falsehood before him." In this world there are, Nārada states<sup>398</sup>), eight sacred entities: a brahman, a cow, fire, gold, clarified butter, the sun, water, and a king.

Although the omniscience attributed to the king by Kauṭilya is a political concept — the ruler should for instance be informed (of course through secret agents) of the worth of imported merchandise and pass this information to the custom-officers in order to make

394) Cf. Śat. Br. 3, 3, 4, 31.

395) For particulars see e.g. A. B. KEITH, *Rel. and Phil.*..., p. 363.

396) Kauṭilya, *Arthaśāstra* 13, 1. See also Manu 7, 217; Meyer, *Trilogie* II, p. 129.

397) Mbh. 12, 68, 54 f. Here Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary runs as follows: *rājā rañjakaḥ bhojaḥ sukhānām bhojayitā vividhaṃ rājata iti virāt śrīmān saṃrāt iti rājānām api rājety akunṭhitaśvaryaḥ*.

398) Nārada 18, 54; Vikramacarita (ed. EDGERTON) Introd. 2, 6 and 7.

people believe that he is 'omniscient' — yet the very belief that the ruler knows all about his subjects and their doings had a religious aspect: Varuṇa and other Vedic gods are said to possess knowledge of that sort<sup>399</sup>). The idea that the king was well-informed through agents and so-called spies no doubt reached back to ancient times<sup>400</sup>), because the *spāśah* "spies" of the gods, especially of king Varuṇa<sup>401</sup>), were known already to the poets of the R̥gveda<sup>402</sup>).

In order to illustrate the parallelism between kings and gods it may be of some use to mention also some of the ideas fostered by the early Buddhists, which may reflect popular opinions on devaship and kingship<sup>403</sup>). Inda, i.e. Indra, is in Pāli texts called *devarājā* "king of the gods", and as such he is the most revered of the gods. He is free from old age and death, and is, therefore, the happiest type of king, a condition which could be attained by sacrifice. Indra is the embodiment of the greatest valour and considered the lord of victors (*jayatām pati*-). He is also represented as punishing people guilty of heinous crimes. The gods with Indra as their chief (*indrapurohita*-), seek to promote the welfare of gods and men. Sakka, the other divine figure related to the Vedic Indra, though represented as a king, was a primus inter pares rather than an absolute monarch. He surpasses his companions in length of life, beauty, happiness, renown and power; besides, in the degree of his five sense-experiences. These characteristics are also attributed to the rulers of the other deva-worlds. He is always ready to help and rescue the good, and, being the guardian of moral law he appears to frighten the wicked.

399) R. PETTAZZONI, in discussing the ideological complex of divine omniscience (*Nunch*, 2/1955, p. 1 ff.) emphasizes his conclusion (p. 22) that the subject of this omniscience is a determinate category of divine beings; its object not the whole range of knowledge, but man and his doings. It would be an interesting theme to study the omniscience attributed to the king from a comparative point of view. We need not dwell here upon the other omniscience, to wit that of the successful *yogin*.

400) See H. H. SCHAEFER, *Das Auge des Königs*, *Abhandl. Götting. Ges. d. Wiss.* 10/1934, and H. LÜDERS, *Philologica Indica*, Göttingen 1939, p. 462.

401) See also H. LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, I, p. 35.

402) See e.g. RV. 10, 10, 8; 7, 87, 3.

403) See, in general, G. P. MALALASEKERA, *Dictionary of Pāli proper names* London 1937-8, I, p. 308 ff.; II, p. 957 ff.; J. MASSON, *La religion populaire dans le canon bouddhique pāli*, Louvain 1942, p. 39 ff.



The Buddhists <sup>404</sup>) increased the prestige of the sovereign by their theory of the 'wheel-turning' king <sup>405</sup>). It has been a fiction among them that the kings who favoured them lived more or less up to the ideal conception pictured in such descriptions as the following <sup>406</sup>): he is victorious at the head of his troops, a conqueror, a guardian of the people's good, just (*dhārmiko*), a king of dharma, endowed with the seven treasures, i.e. a chariot (wheel), an elephant, a horse, a jewel, (the best) wife, (the best) treasurer or minister, and (the best) adviser. The treasurer is in possession of divine vision which he loses at the death of the emperor. Then also the woman loses her beauty and the adviser his efficiency. He will have a hundred sons, brave and handsome heroes, destroyers of the armies of the enemies. He shall conquer the whole wide earth to the limits of the ocean, and then he will remove from it all the causes of tyranny and misery. He will rule without punishing, without using the sword, through dharma and peacefulness. Cakkavattis—as is the Pāli form of the title—are rare in the world; they have marvellous figures; they live longer than other men, and enjoy good health and popularity with all classes of their subjects. The sanctity of such an emperor is evident from the belief that the perfume of sandelwood issues from his mouth: likewise the Egyptian god exhaled a scent on approaching the human queen, and the dying Hippolytus sensed the nearness of Artemis by the breath of heavenly fragrance emitted by the goddess <sup>407</sup>). Moreover, like saints in general and like the Buddha <sup>408</sup>) in particular, a cakravartin possesses on his body divinely characteristic attributes, in casu the thirty-two marks of a great being <sup>409</sup>). From the Mahāpadāna Sutta it would appear

404) For the origin of the cakravartin conception see also E. SENART, *Essai sur la légende du Bouddha*, ch. 1.

405) See also the brief survey given by E. CONZE, *Buddhism*<sup>7</sup>, Oxford 1953, p. 74 f.

406) Divyāvadāna, 548 f. C. N.

407) VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion*, p. 236 (Euripides, Hipp. 1391 ff.); E. LOHMEYER, *Vom göttlichen Wohlgeruch* (Sitz Ber. Heidelberg 1919,9).

408) Hence the well-known episod in Buddha's life: when he was born—I quote the words used in (Aśvaghōṣa's) Buddhacarita I, 27 ff.—the world became exceedingly peaceful, as if, being in a state of disorder, it had obtained a ruler... The brahmins, after having considered the tokens said to the king...: "According to the signs found on this excellent one, he will certainly become either an enlightened seer or a cakravartin monarch..."

409) They are enumerated by G. P. MALALASEKERA, *Dictionary of Pāli proper names* II, p. 533 f.

that his birth is attended by the same miracles as that of Buddha <sup>410</sup>).

When in later times Mahāyānist Buddhism elaborated a pantheon of deities of its own, Buddhist monarchs received part of the reflected glory. Kings in those parts of Greater India in which, under Buddhist influence, real theocracies were being built up—Tibet, Java, Indo-China—came to be regarded as Bodhisattvas. Thus king Jayavarman VII of Cambodia (12th century) had a statue of his mother erected as the "Mother of Buddha", and Chengis Khan was in 1326 considered to be a 'Bodhisattva in his last birth'. In the beginning of the 9th century the first king of the Angkor dynasty of Cambodja had a cult of the *devarāja*- constituted. In Khmer this divinity was called "the god who is the king, or who is the kingdom". This *devarāja*- is not the deified sovereign but rather the permanent principle and essence of kingship (*rājyasāra*-) <sup>411</sup>); this essence was conceived to be concretized in, and to identify itself with, the "subtle soul" (*sūkṣmāntarātman*-) of each successive ruler, and it might even be symbolized by an idol or image. Thus the *devarāja*- is renewed every time a new king accedes to the throne. To the idol in which the king's 'subtle self' was believed to reside a sacrosanct character was attributed; it had to be animated by a special rite. Originally this cult was Śivaite in character but in the course of time it was adapted to Viṣṇuism and Buddhism. Thus a great many images of kings and queens in the outward appearance of Śiva, Viṣṇu, a Bodhisattva, Lakṣmī, or Pārvatī give evidence of this conception of divine kingship.

410) In Buddhist texts the *cakkaratana*-, i.e. the wheel-shaped gem of dominion is conceived as an independent and material object appearing when an emperor is born. The emperor asks it to travel to the various quarters of the world, winning them for him. This the *cakkaratana*- does, carrying with it through the air the emperor. Having returned it remains fixed as a sort of palladium in the royal palace. When an emperor leaves the world, the *cakkaratana*- disappears. It also gives warning of his impending death by slipping down from its place some time before the event. So the conclusion may be that this most precious and most honoured object in the world is dominion, connected in a mystic way with the emperor.

411) See G. COEDÈS, *La divinisation de la royauté dans l'ancien royaume khmer à l'époque d'Angkor*, in the *Proc. of the VIIth Congress for the History of Religions* (1950), Amsterdam 1951, p. 141 f. Cf. also the same, *L'apothéose au Cambodge*, *Bull. Comm. archéol. Indochine* 1911, p. 28; *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*, Paris 1948, p. 171 ff.; p. 207 etc.; Th. H. GASTER, *Myth and Story*, in the *Numen*, I, p. 188 f.

The essence of kingship or subtle self of the ruler was also believed to reside in a *liṅga*, a sort of palladium of the kingdom, which was regarded as a presentation of Śiva himself. This *liṅga* (phallos) was placed on the top of a pyramid, in the very centre of the royal residence which was supposed to be the spot where the axis mundi<sup>412</sup>) reached the earth. On this, natural or artificial, mountain the communion between god and king took place. The kings who had entered into this communion considered themselves entitled to the respect due to a cakravartin.

## XI

Indian kingship is peculiar in that the monarch as a rule belongs to the second class, the brahman constituting the first. When the might of the ruling class is under the control of brahmans the kingdom was believed to become prosperous<sup>413</sup>). The superiority of a brahman also appears from the fact that he may not accept and still less solicit from the king. He would lose his superiority, his tejas (fiery power and energy) if he did other than simply take from a ruler. On the other hand the king is advised to adore the brahmans with gifts and services, if indeed he wishes to enjoy the sovereignty, and also, in a significant way, to be on his guard against those brahmans who do not desire to accept favours<sup>414</sup>). "It is not permitted to either advise or rebuke a king or a brahman, on account of their dignity (*diptima-tvāt*) and sanctity (*śucitvāt*), unless they should swerve from the path (of duty)"<sup>415</sup>). To disobey a king, the Nārada-smṛti holds, would bring (instantaneous) death<sup>416</sup>).

That matters were complicated by the doubtless increasing claim to earthly divinity set up by the brahmans<sup>417</sup>) may be regarded as

412) See *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 81 f.; 128; 173.

413) Aitareya-brāhmaṇa 8, 9, 7.

414) See e.g. Mbh. 13, 35, 21 ff. Compare e.g. Manu's verdicts on the same subjects: 4, 186 ff. (see also G. BÜHLER, *The laws of Manu*, Oxford 1886, p. 592.)

415) Nārada-smṛti 18, 12.

416) Nārada 18, 32.

417) Cf. e.g. Manu 1, 93 he (the h.) is by right (*dharmataḥ*) lord (*prabhuḥ*) of this whole creation: They are the most excellent of men (1, 96); the very birth of a brāhmaṇa is an eternal incarnation of the dharma (1, 98); he is the highest on earth, the lord of all creatures, born for the protection of the dharma (1, 99). Like the king he sustains the world; like him a teacher (*brahman*) guards men (therefore he must not be reviled); like him, he is exempt from corporeal

beyond dispute. It is the latter, who, for fear of sinning themselves, entrusted the kṣatriyas with the duty of ruling and protecting the earth and its inhabitants. The rivalry of both orders, and their close alliance on various occasions, are too well known to need comment. No king who lays violent hands upon the cow of a brahman is successful in guarding his realm<sup>418</sup>). The road belongs to the king, a dharma text<sup>419</sup>) says, except if he meets a brahman. We also come across the prescription that a king was to make way for a śrotīya, a snātaka, and a brāhmaṇa. And Gautama, a great authority on dharma, even goes so far as to contend that the royal authority, though holding sway over all, does not touch the brahmans<sup>420</sup>). Rites were devised to ensure the subordination of the kṣatriyas and the vaiśyas to the brahmans<sup>421</sup>). According to the Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa the *kṣatra*- "kingship or dominion" is a "falling down" or rather corrupted form of brahman. The king is a *naradeva*- "man-god", a brahman a *bhūmi-deva*- "earth-god"; and the latter, no matter how evil he may be, pretends to remain a *bhūmideva*-<sup>422</sup>). The king should adore the celestials and the brahmans<sup>423</sup>). There is an interesting statement in the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa<sup>424</sup>) showing how ready these authorities often were to inculcate the superiority of the brahmanical order: "That king who is weaker than the brahman is stronger than his enemies". In this light must be viewed verdicts such as the following in which a god, a brahman and a king are put on a par: "whatever property belongs to one of those three is regarded as an article of superior value"<sup>425</sup>). Witnesses are to be sworn in the presence of the gods, the king, and the brahmans<sup>426</sup>).

punishment (cf. Nārada-smṛti 15 (16), 20). See also Mbh. 12, 56, 26 etc. Brahmans too are regarded as able to cause rain, as very powerful and dangerous; they too are entitled to demand presents.

418) Atharvaveda 5, 19, 10.

419) Apastamba-dharmasūtra 2, 11, 5; cf. Gaut. dh. s. 6, 25; Vas. dh. s. 13, 59.

420) Gautama dh. s. 1, 11 *rājā vai sarvasyeṣṭe brāhmaṇavarjaṃ*.

421) Cf. Pāñc. Br. 11, 11, 8 "in that he ... he places the order of the brahmans before the nobility and makes the nobility and peasantry follow after (and being dependent on) the brahmans"; and Ait. Br. 8, 9, 6 "when nobility falls under the influence of the brahman order, that kingdom is prosperous and rich in heroes".

422) For particulars see E. Washburn HOPKINS, *o.c.*, p. 64.

423) Mbh. 12, 56, 12 f.

424) Sat. Br. 5, 4, 4, 15.

425) Nārada-smṛti 14, 16.

426) For references: see *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 50 (Index), p. 322.

That the relation between both dignities was not always beyond discussion <sup>427</sup>) also emerges from the Buddhist Milindapañha in which they, though considered mutually exclusive, are, both of them, attributed to the Buddha <sup>428</sup>). The Buddha may be described as a king, because he, like an earthly ruler, rules and governs the world; because he, exalted (*abhibhavitvā*, "being lord, conquering") above all ordinary men, makes those related to him rejoice (*nandayanto*, the sense of this verb involving the idea of refreshing or invigorating <sup>429</sup>)), and those opposed to him mourn, raising aloft the pure and white sunshade of sovereignty, which bears fame or high position (*yasa*, Skt. *yaśas*) and prosperity or majesty (*siri*, Skt. *śrī*); because he is held worthy of homage by the multitudes who come into his presence; because he gladdens the heart of his servants by bestowing gifts; because he judges the transgressors; and because he proclaims laws according to ancient traditions.

From stray occurrences of mention of the royal functionary in the ancient texts some conclusions may also be drawn as to his relations to other bearers of power. As is well known the sūtras, in dealing with the *arghya*- i.e. the paying of honour to special guests <sup>430</sup>), mention the teacher, the priest, a snātaka, a connection by marriage, the king, or a friend as those who are entitled to receive this honour. According to Gautama the *madhuparka*- (a mixture of curds and honey) should on this occasion be offered to the ruler as often as he comes — if he is a *śrotriya*-, i.e. learned brahman, to the others only once a year <sup>431</sup>).

Anyhow the king and a learned brāhmaṇa <sup>432</sup>) are the upholders of

427) According to the Nārada-smṛti 18, 42, which is inclined highly to praise the royal dignity, there is no difference of any sort between a ruler and a brahman who, being devoted to their duty, protect mankind in accordance with the dharma. Cf. e.g. Mahābhārata 13, 152, 16; Manu 9, 315 f.; Agni-purāṇa 225, 16 ff.

428) Milindapañho, edited V. TRENCKNER, London 1880, p. 255 ff.; translated by T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, *The Questions of King Milinda, Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 36, Oxford 1894, p. 25 ff.

429) See my relative article in the *Acta Orientalia* 21, p. 81 ff.

430) I refer to A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 79; Keith, *Rel. and Phil.*, p. 363.

431) Gautama 5, 30 f.

432) The king should honour and revere the brahmins; that is beneficial to himself; Mbh. 2, 5, 96; 100.

dharma <sup>433</sup>). Their co-operation <sup>434</sup>) results in glory and success <sup>435</sup>). Accordingly the authority of the sovereign over brahmins was limited; Gautama even says that the king rules over all, except over brahmins.

The king must have a court-chaplain or family priest, a *purohita* <sup>436</sup>), whose task it is to secure to the ruler victory and heaven, to gain what is as yet ungained and to guard what has been already gained <sup>437</sup>). He was the most important among the king's counselors. He was to protect the king and his people by counteracting the magical charms of the enemy and ensuring their prosperity by performing special rites <sup>438</sup>). He also consecrated the war elephants etc. in order to enhance their military efficiency <sup>439</sup>) and even accompanied the monarch to the battlefield in order to ensure victory by his prayers, charms, sacrifices and incantations <sup>440</sup>). The Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa <sup>441</sup>) furnishes us with the interesting information that formerly the purohitas used to be the rulers' charioteers in order to keep a watchful eye on them, in order to prevent them from doing something evil. That is to say the king must have the brahma before him (*brahma karyam purohitaṣṣaram* <sup>442</sup>). In the Rgveda there is a clear passage <sup>443</sup>) to show that a ruler who adores Bṛhaspati, the heavenly, i.e. ideal court chaplain, properly could gain an easy mastery over all inimical peoples. As I have attempted to show elsewhere <sup>444</sup>) the original and

433) Cf. e.g. Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 4, 4, 5; Gautama-smṛti 8, 1, Manu 9, 322 etc. See also P. V. KANE, *History of Dharmaśāstra* II, 1, p. 39.

434) From Gautama 5, 30 f. it appears that a king could be a *śrotriya*- himself. To a king who is a *śrotriya*-, i.e. who is proficient in the Vedas, a *madhuparka*- (a mixture of curds and honey) should be offered as often as he comes. But if the king is not a *śrotriya*-, only a seat and water should be offered to him.

435) Cf. also Mbh. 3, 185, 25: The combined energy of a brahman and a kṣatriya destroys the enemies like fire and wind burn down forests.

436) Cf. e.g. Aitareya-brāhmaṇa 8, 24, 1 ff.

437) See e.g. Mbh. 1, 174, 14 f.; 3, 26, 16 ff.; 12, 72, 1. See also F. W. HOPKINS, *Position of the Ruling Caste in ancient India*, *Journal American Or. Soc.* 13/1889, p. 156.

438) Kaut. S. 5, 15.

439) In the Susima Jātaka (no. 163) the court-chaplain was "master of ceremonies" in the king's elephant-festival.

440) Cf. e.g. RV. 3, 33.

441) Jaim. Br. 3, 94.

442) Mbh. 1, 174, 15.

443) Rgveda 4, 50, 7; cf. 9.

444) J. GONDA, *Purohita, Festschrift-Kirfel*, Bonn 1955.

essential function of this priest consisted in what was expressed by his very title: in protecting the person of the king—and in doing so—his office and the state—by his powerful presence, by his knowledge and by the rites which he performed. He was brahman himself placed like a shield before the king, averting the dangerous powers. The purohita therefore also accompanied the king to battle and helped him by spells and prayers<sup>445</sup>). When, in Mahābhārata 1, 3, king Janamejaya was much alarmed and dejected because he had incurred a curse, “he took great pains to find a purohita who could neutralize the effect of the curse”. Hence the view that king and purohita are, for the sake of the well-being of the kingdom, an inseparable pair; they are each other’s complement. For the good and evil done in the kingdom, both of them are responsible. Part of the rites should be performed by both functionaries in co-operation<sup>446</sup>). There is a passage in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa<sup>447</sup>) which, while dealing with the purohitaship states that what the king does for his chaplain, and to his wife and son, are oblations offered into the sacrificial fires. These persons, being appeased and propitiated, carry him to the world of heaven, to the lordly power (*kṣatra-*), to strength (*bala-*), to the kingdom, and to the people. In the opposite case, they repel him from these.

The often repeated idea that the true basis of kingly power is the

445) This is e.g. seen from the Vasiṣṭha hymns of the seventh maṇḍala of the R̥gveda. Vasiṣṭha was the typical purohita. As Indra and Varuṇa helped king Sudās to conquer his enemy, the purohita office of the Vasiṣṭha family appeared to be true and successful; their prayers or formulas were effective (RV. 7, 83, 4). The king was, if the ritual literature give a true picture of the general belief of those days, supposed to be dependent on the purohita even in military matters. It may be assumed that the prayers of the priest were offered on the battlefield. When battle is beginning, a gr̥hyasūtra (Āśvalāyana 3, 12) says, the priest while making the ruler put on his armour and handing over to him bow and quiver mutters appropriate mantras. He also mounts the royal chariot and the king repeats the formulas.

446) In the hinduized regions of ancient Indonesia, especially in Java, the court priests and official poets likewise enhanced, by their official services rendered to the king, the royal power. Significantly enough, O.Jav. *patirṭhayan-* deriving from the Skt. *tīrtha*—sacred “bathing-place” where sin and evil is annihilated; “object of veneration; sacred person, spiritual adviser” is among the titles of the royal priests. See C. C. BERG, in F. W. STAPEL, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Amsterdam 1938, II, p. 30.

447) Ait. Br. 8, 24, 4.

priest’s power, that their union is perfection, though readily enunciated by the brahmins in order to consolidate their influence, must therefore be regarded as being founded on a relation of a genuinely religious character between these two powers. That the sovereign who turns against the priest, i.e. against brahman itself, is held to destroy himself<sup>448</sup>) is only a corollary of this same view. When a prince becomes in any way overbearing towards the brahmins they<sup>449</sup>) must duly restrain him. There is an important piece of evidence showing that the Indians already at a comparatively early period reflected upon the problem of the mutual relation between the two earthly ‘divinities’: “In the beginning”, the Bṛhadāraṇyaka relates<sup>450</sup>), “the world was brahman, one only. That, being one, did not expand (was not manifested). It created further a superior form, worldly (ruling) power (*kṣatra-*), even those who are ‘worldly (ruling) powers’ (*kṣatra-*) among the gods: Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu, Iśāna. Therefore there is nothing higher than *kṣatra-*. Therefore at the rājasūya ceremony the brahman sits below the *kṣatriya*. Upon *kṣatra-* alone does he confer this honour. But *brahma* is (nevertheless) the source of *kṣatra-*. Therefore, even if the king attains supremacy, he resorts finally to the brahma as his source. He fares worse, as he injures one who is superior.”

In studying phenomena relative to ancient Indian religion we should never lose sight of the fact that all beings, gods as well as men, are confronted with the eternal and universal, so-to-say self-willed and self-sufficient powers or entities, on which world and life, health and happiness are founded, by which they are determined, of which they are manifestations. Even the devas are subject to karman, and dharma is to be observed by all beings. It is therefore from the Indian point of view quite reasonable that the king’s power is checked by the brahmins who are brahman incarnate<sup>451</sup>).

It is worth mentioning that Atharvaveda 1, 9, a text which in general serves to further a person’s success and advancement, can

448) Cf. Manu 9, 320 ff.; Mbh. 12, 56, 25; 78, 21 ff.

449) The text, Manu 9, 320 reads: “the brahman must restrain”.

450) B. ār. Up. 1, 4, 11.

451) Modern Indian authors (e.g. H. C. RAYCHAUDHURI, *Political History of ancient India*, Calcutta 1950, p. 172) like to say that here provision is made for the prevention of royal absolutism.

be used in a ceremony for the restoration of a king as well as the reception of a Vedic student by his teacher. Besides, it may be employed in two ceremonies for fortune <sup>452</sup>). Among the wishes pronounced is the following: "set him in supremacy (*śraiṣṭhya*- <sup>453</sup>) over his fellows" and "make this man ascend to the highest firmament."

An epithet frequently used in connection with the ruler is *dharmatman-* translated by "dutiful" or "religious-minded", but properly meaning "whose personality is (absorbed in) *dharma*-" <sup>454</sup>). "Der König ist der verkörperte *dharma* und der verkörperte Staatsgedanke" <sup>455</sup>). The king indeed is *dharma* roaming on earth in a visible form, with a thousand eyes; if they transgress his orders, mortal beings cannot live at all <sup>456</sup>). How should a king be inferior to a deity, Nārada says <sup>457</sup>), as it is through his word that a criminal may become innocent, and an innocent man an offender? The transfer of guilt in case of royal pardon is indeed a striking feature of the Indian kingship. If an offender is pardoned by the monarch the guilt devolves on the latter, because if he kills the criminal, he destroys sin. If the king grants such a pardon he must fast a day and a night in order to get rid of the impurity inherent in the crime. A criminal who has been punished by the king is purified <sup>458</sup>).

Now it is evident that the dominant element in the conception of kingship was neither that of more or less enlightened autocracy <sup>459</sup>) nor that of constitutional monarchy. It must always be borne in mind that too often modern ideas have unconsciously been introduced into explanations of pre- and proto-historic institutions. An ancient king did not direct the public affairs of a state or nations in any modern

<sup>452</sup>) See Kauśikasūtra 16, 27; 55, 17; 11, 19; 52, 20.

<sup>453</sup>) For *śraiṣṭhya*- see my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 196 ff.; 200 ff.

<sup>454</sup>) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 1, 63, 1; 68, 7; 175, 4; 3, 293, 1; MEYER, *Buch v. W. u. S.*, p. LXII f.

<sup>455</sup>) MEYER, *o.c.*, p. LXII. Cf. Mbh. 12, 64, 25 t.

<sup>456</sup>) Nārada 18, 20.

<sup>457</sup>) Nārada 18, 52.

<sup>458</sup>) Manu 8, 318.

<sup>459</sup>) Expositions of the limited prerogatives of the king are not wanting in our sources. Jātaka 90 for instance a ruler states that he has no power over those who dwell in his kingdom; that he is not their lord and master, being vested only with jurisdiction over those who revolt or do iniquity. See also Milindap. 359.

western sense of the term; he did not rule by making, pouring out, and promulgating never-ending streams of laws and rules on all subjects possible, he did not guide and control the affairs of his people down to the smallest details, he did not continually substitute one instruction for another, he did not plan his subjects' welfare in any modern way. Even such ancient metaphors as "pilot" or "steersman" — cf. the Engl. *govern* from the Lat. *gubernare* "to steer, pilot a ship; to manage, conduct, govern" from the Gr. κυβερνᾶν "to steer; guide, govern", — cannot help us much further: the ancient Indian king was no pilot consciously directing the ship of state, steering his course for specified goals.

He was, as we have seen, a herdsman <sup>460</sup>), a protector, a lord, i.e. authority itself. He controlled with power, protected with care <sup>461</sup>). His were the beneficent functions of owning, controlling, disciplining, defending, pleasing and helping the weak. One of his first responsibilities was to see that the people were fed, not by making 'social laws', but by bringing fertility to the fields, by producing the life-giving water, by giving to the country the normal seasons. He was to administer justice, not by elaborating voluminous codes of law <sup>462</sup>), but by upholding the traditions, by arbitrating disputes, by punishing and counteracting infringements of the established rules and customs, by driving out unrighteousness <sup>463</sup>), by shunning vice himself, by keeping the kingdom in order <sup>464</sup>). Although the relevant literature shows us that a great variety of questions were to be decided by the monarch or his officials, although there was, of course, to a certain extent free play of individual initiative <sup>465</sup>), it is obvious from the

<sup>460</sup>) Compare J. A. WILSON, in H. FRANKFORT and others, *Before Philosophy*, Harmondsworth 1949, p. 88 with regard to the Egyptian king: "This is perhaps the most fitting picture of the good Egyptian ruler, that he was the herdsman for his people".

<sup>461</sup>) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 12, 56, 40: "The king should be neither always mild, nor always severe; he should be like the vernal sun, illustrious, neither too cold nor too hot"; cf. also st. 21. He should behave towards his subjects as an expectant mother towards her unborn child (st. 44).

<sup>462</sup>) See e.g. also Manu 8, 3 ff. and similar passages.

<sup>463</sup>) Cf. Mbh. 12, 56, 7: "As the sun rising removes darkness so the king's *dharma* destroys all the evil conditions". Cf. also 3, 185, 30.

<sup>464</sup>) Cf. Mbh. 12, 56, 6. In the opposite case disorder would prevail on earth and everything would be in confusion.

<sup>465</sup>) Cf. also such prescriptions as Mbh. 12, 56, 14.

same documents, that there was a traditional pattern for the ideal ruler, that there were hallowed precedents, that he had to act within the general framework of eternal law and order (dharma), in conformance with time-honoured rules and customs <sup>466</sup>). And if he is described as "the one who promotes or advances law" (*dharmapraratka*)<sup>467</sup>, this primarily means in accordance with the preponderantly static character of the ancient societies, not that he makes and promulgates laws in any modern sense, but that he upholds the dharma <sup>468</sup>) and applies it to particular cases, that he takes care that the dharma remains unviolated and that it does not fall into decay <sup>469</sup>).

Passing mention may be made of a kingship on the basis of a sort of 'contrat social' mentioned by Buddhist authors <sup>470</sup>). When the originally divine inhabitants of the earth had become sinful they implored the most worthy man among themselves to wield sway, punishing those who deserved punishment and honouring those who were worthy of honour; he would be their proxy or deputy and obtain the sixth part of the crops. This king was a *sammutideva*, "a deva by common consent" <sup>471</sup>).

<sup>466</sup>) We can pass over in silence the innumerable eulogies of kings and the glorifications of royalty in the inscriptions. In these documents the king is as a matter of course described as the equal of the great deities, for instance Indra, Varuna, Kubera, Yama (Allahabad Pillar inscr. of Samudragupta), as a god dwelling on earth. Many of the ideas found in the dharma texts and the epics found place also in the extensive literature of a later period. There too the parallelism between the duties of the king and those of the gods is repeatedly emphasized (see e.g. Agni Pur. ch. 226). The former is to regard his life as a continuous vow for the welfare of his subjects (ibid. ch. 218).

<sup>467</sup>) See Śukraniti 1, 116; Mbh. 3, 185, 29. Cf. Nārada-smṛti 10, 1 ff.; Yājñavalkya-smṛti 1, 360 f.

<sup>468</sup>) The sources of the dharma are the Veda, tradition, the virtuous conduct of those who know the Veda, the customs of holy men, etc., cf. e.g. Manu 2, 6; Yājñavalkya-smṛti 1, 7 etc.

<sup>469</sup>) See also Kauṭilya-arthaśāstra, 58, 50. Cf. also Mbh. 3, 185, 26 where the king is shortly called *dharmā*, and the commentator Nīlakaṇṭha gives the explication: i.e. establisher of *dharmā* (*dharmā-sthāpaka*).

<sup>470</sup>) I refer to F. KUHN, in the *Festschrift-V. Thomsen*, Leipzig 1912, p. 215 f.

<sup>471</sup>) For this term see D. ANDERSEN, *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 1909, p. 121.

## XII

Coming now to the religious rites in the performance of which the king took part, it must first be emphasized that the Indian ruler was no priest-king. A strict distinction is, generally speaking, drawn between the royal and priestly functions. Yet the monarch is advised to celebrate several rites and festivals, meant to avert national calamities and to promote the public welfare <sup>472</sup>). In a sense a 'priestly' or 'spiritual' function of the monarch may be attributed to the activity ascribed to the king in the Atharvaveda <sup>473</sup>), where he is said to defend or protect the kingdom by *brahmacarya*, i.e. study of the Veda, continence and chastity, and *tapas*, i.e. 'asceticism'. By the same means, the text continues, the gods ward off death. By brahmacarya alone Indra gained heaven for the gods. He who practises brahmacarya is Prajāpati, that is the god who "rules widely" (*vi-rāj-*), and the *virāj-* became the controlling Indra. The conclusion might be that the king, when practising brahmacarya, identifies himself with the lord of creation, Prajāpati, bearing rule widely and becoming Indra.

Of the many festivals and celebrations in honour of various gods mentioned in this connection <sup>474</sup>), I only recall to memory the *nirājanā* <sup>475</sup>), the lustration of horses and arms, performed by kings

\*) See *Numen* III/1956, p. 36 ff. and p. 122 ff.

<sup>472</sup>) The festivals were of course also to afford enjoyment to the people and to keep them in good humour.

<sup>473</sup>) AV. II, 5, 17.

<sup>474</sup>) For a brief survey and some references see KANE, *o.c.*, III, p. 234.

<sup>475</sup>) For a discussion of the, not always identical, ceremonies known as *nirājanā* or *nirājana* see H. LOSCH, in *Beiträge zur indischen Phil. u. Altertumskunde* (*Festschrift-W. Schubring*), Hamburg 1951, p. 51 ff.

before taking the field. This ceremony which is only known to us from post-Vedic sources, and which was executed for the benefit of gods and their images, of brahmins, kine and other valuable animals, was, according to the legend, instituted by king Ajāpāla when his subjects implored him to give them a means of warding off all pains and diseases. The ceremony is, on the authority of some texts, executed by the king himself, who at night lustrates Viṣṇu with lights, the cows and so on, offers fruits, flowers and various auspicious objects to Viṣṇu, his spouse Lakṣmī and other deities, and together with his priests and ministers, adores his horses, elephants and the insignia of royalty. After that a woman of auspicious marks, a harlot, or a woman of a good family—all of them radiating, in a magical way, happiness—, should swing a specified light over or around the king's head, to the accompaniment of the formula: "Annihilation of evil influences (*śānti-*) and prosperity to you, the brahmins and your people." Thereupon the king proceeds to lustrate the army. Illumined by the rays of many jewels, which no doubt assist him in expelling the demons, wearing a white garland, shining like the sun and showing the lustre of the rainbow, the ruler marches amid his men like Indra amid the victorious soldiers. If this ceremony takes place every year all diseases in the kingdom are destroyed, the enemies will be defeated and there will be plenty of food. Now that the capital is free from evil influences the king must, at midnight, take a walk through that town in order to watch the festivities. It may parenthetically be observed that there are also different forms of *nirājanā* 476).

It is not possible, for reasons of space, to dwell upon other lustrations as, for instance, that connected with the erection of the *Mārgapālī* "the Road-protectress", and the king's rôle in their performance. Suffice it to say that they form part of a series of ceremonies related to the cult of the demon Bali who, dwelling in the subterranean regions,

476) Losch, *o.c.*, p. 53 "...zwei verschiedene Zeremonien..., von denen die eine durch das Wassersprengen charakterisiert ist, während die andere in Lichterschwingen ihren Mittelpunkt hat. In den Bereich der ersten Zeremonie fielen wohl zunächst die Vorbereitungen von Kriegszügen mit der daran beteiligten Tieren und Personen und Waffen um sie gegen den Feind zu feien, während die zweite Zeremonie der Bezauberung der Kriegswerkzeuge durch Anwendung von Feuer diente. Neben dieser *Nirājanā* gibt es noch die einfache Verehrung eines Götterbildes durch Lichterschwenken..... (p. 58). Dies ist das *Nirājana*, das der Abwehr des Schrecklichen dient und das Gedeihen fördert".

was believed to exert influence upon vegetation. The king himself, accompanied by his *purohita* and praised by bards and eulogists, must adore this demon 477) and offer four different kinds of lotus flowers which, as is well-known, represent moisture, vegetation and fertility. The formula addressed to the *Mārgapālī* shows us the character of the feast: "*Mārgapālī*, adoration to Thou that givest happiness to the whole world; under Thee my horses, elephants and cows may be happy" 478). It is also the task of the king to pronounce a formula containing the wish that he would live among cows and imploring Lakṣmī in the appearance of a cow to yield milk for sacrifices and to annihilate 'sin'. The *yaṣṭikākarṣaṇa-* or "drawing on a string or rope" 479) is another of the following ceremonies in which the king has to take a part personally: this religious game served to ward off evil and, what seems to be a more original feature, to generate useful power for the sake of vegetation. The parties concerned in tugging the rope are men of low caste, i.e. peasants and, in general, those who labour in the field, and the *rājputs* or nobility. If the former win, the king is considered to have won. This feature significantly shows, once again, the intimate relation between the king and the cultivation of the soil.

As is well known religious feasts were often accompanied by theatrical performances. Now it is a significant fact that the wealthy patron who according to our sources usually caused a play to be produced often was the king himself. Although marriages, victories, accession to the throne etc. were among the occasions for performing a play, the spring festivities, celebrated for the sake of a fruitful year, are very often mentioned in this connection. In the *Ratnāvalī* the king even appears on the stage, in attire suited to the spring festival for which the drama was intended, pronouncing, *inter alia*, the words: "The enemies of the kingdom have been subdued, the subjects are fondled by vigilant protection and freed from all diseases; let the god of love (i.e. of procreation) enjoy satisfaction; this great festival is mine own" 480). Before the play is performed an Indra banner,

477) Cf. MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 186 ff.

478) Cf. MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 160 ff.

479) May we infer from the name that the ceremony originally consisted in drawing a pole? For particulars, MEYER, *o.c.*, II, p. 181 ff.

480) Harṣa, *Ratn.* 1, 10. See also my *Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas*, Acta Or. 19, esp. p. 362 ff.

also called *jarjara*-, is to be erected, in order to destroy the enemies of the performance—i.e. those evil beings who wish to interfere with its salutary effect—, and to bring victory and prosperity to the king<sup>481</sup>). In another passage the same banner, being identified with Indra's demon-slaying vajra, is implored to bring victory to the ruler and defeat to his enemies, welfare to the cows and brahmins, and progress to dramatic undertakings<sup>482</sup>). A stage which is properly consecrated brings good luck to the king<sup>483</sup>). Among the benedictions to be recited when a play is acted are such as bless the brahmins, the state and the king, or wish King Soma victory, health and enjoyment<sup>484</sup>).

Another festivity which is largely the king's concern is that of Indra's tree or banner, a fertility ceremony par excellence<sup>485</sup>). When the standard, that "source of vigour" which drives away all evil powers, and which in the days of yore was presented to the gods by Viṣṇu the lord of Śrī, the life essence of all living beings himself, is to be erected, when hymns to Indra and Viṣṇu are sung, and many auspicious rites have been performed, the king should without breaking his fast, recite some auspicious stanzas. Thereby his subjects will be contented, free from danger and illness, and have abundance of food.

In these ceremonies we find that not only the purohita and the astrologer, but also the king are marked out emphatically from other people by the functions which they have to perform. According to parts of our sources<sup>486</sup>) the monarch and his chaplain (the brahman) should bathe, put on new and unwashed clothes, anoint themselves with sweet-smelling unguents of an excellent kind, in a mood becoming to the religious action, observing their vows, and without breaking their fast, celebrate together the festival known as *indramaha-* or *indramahotsava*-, i.e. Indra's feast. The purohita should take hold of the king with his hand—a well-known gesture intended to transfer

481) Bhāratīya Nāṭyaśāstra 3, 81 (73) *jayam cābhyudayam caiva pāthivasya samāvaha*. The *jarjara*- is "a divine weapon with which all destroyers of a play are made *jarjara*-, i.e. beaten and broken" (ibid. 1, 71 ff.).

482) Ibid. 3, 11 ff.

483) Ibid. 3, 93 (85).

484) Ibid. 5, 107 ff. (99 ff.).

485) For a discussion, see MEYER, *Trilogie* III, and also my "*Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*", p. 256.

486) Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭa 19, 3; Kauśika-sūtra 140.

'holy power' — and pour the oblation into the fire. The stanzas accompanying this rite run as follows: "Hither do we call Indra from yonder, who is kine-conquering, riches-conquering, horse-conquering...<sup>487</sup>); the saviour (*trātāram*) Indra, the helper Indra, the hero Indra, of easy call—I now call the mighty (*śakra*-), much-called Indra; let the bounteous (*maghavan*-) Indra make well-being for us<sup>488</sup>); let Indra be well-saving, well-aiding with aids, very gracious, all-possessing; let him remove hatred; let him make for us safety; may we be rich in heroic sons<sup>489</sup>); increase, O Indra, this kṣatriya for me; make thou this man sole chief of the people; unman all his enemies; make them subject to him in the contests for pre-eminence<sup>490</sup>); chief (*vr̥ṣan*- "bull") of Indra, chief of heaven, chief of earth is this man, chief of all existence; do thou be sole chief<sup>491</sup>); Indra will (is expected to) conquer, he will not be conquered, overlord among kings he will rule; (and with the second part of the stanza as found in the Taittirīya-saṃhitā): in all conflicts he will be a protector, that he will be revered and honoured"<sup>492</sup>). With these stanzas, the purport of which is very easily understood, and with a collection of verses called *rāṣṭrasaṃvargāḥ*<sup>493</sup>), i.e. "those which serve to acquire a kingdom", Indra (i.e. the tree representing him) is raised<sup>494</sup>). Whilst they carefully prevent the god from falling, a stanza is recited which in the Atharvaveda forms part of a series of verses used in a rite to establish a man in sovereignty: "I have taken thee; thou hast become within; stand thou fixed, not unsteady: let all people want thee; let not the kingdom be lost to thee"<sup>495</sup>); this is followed by: "firm is the sky, firm is the earth..., firm (shall) this king of the people (be)"<sup>496</sup>) and "let all the people want thee." It

487) Cf. RV. Khila 10, 128, 1; AV. 5, 3, 11; TS. 4, 7, 14, 4 etc.

488) Cf. RV. 6, 47, 11; AV. 7, 86, 1; TS. 1, 6, 12, 5 etc.

489) Cf. RV. 6, 47, 12; AV. 7, 91, 1; TS. 1, 7, 13, 4 etc.

490) Cf. AV. 4, 22, 1; TB. 2, 4, 7, 7.

491) Cf. AV. 6, 86, 1.

492) Cf. AV. 6, 98, 1; TS. 2, 4, 14, 2 etc.

493) Which form part of the Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭāḥ, to wit: ch. 2 in the edition (Bolling and Negelein). Curiously enough these stanzas deal with the importance to the ruler of the appointment of a purohita who can avert portents, and with a glorification of the Atharvaveda, the corpus for the use of this priest.

494) This verb and the following are in the plural.

495) AV. 6, 87, 1. Cf. also RV. 10, 173, 1.

496) RV. 10, 173, 4; AV. 6, 88, 1 etc.



is perfectly clear that this rite in honour of Indra is to consolidate and preserve, not only those powers and phenomena for good which are in Indra's province, but especially on behalf of the population the government in power, that is to say the king.

The king and his priest bring themselves to a special state of 'purity' and 'sanctity'; they abstain from eating, i.e. they observe restrictions to conserve and to accumulate their specific power. "Ihr *tapas* strömt denn auch als zauberische Kraft der Abwehr und des Segens mystisch hinaus in Stadt und Land" 497). The process of erecting the tree should be carefully watched by the astrologer, for any accident or deviation from the prescribed course of action is significant for the future of the ruler and the realm. If for instance a vulture alights on the tree, there is danger of death. It is however part of the purohita's task immediately to intervene, and to ward off the imminent evil by expiatory or propitiatory rites (rites of appeasement: *śānti*-). He also has to consecrate the king with a series of formulas taken from the Atharvaveda 498) and used, in the Kauśika-sūtra, in a battle rite 499), in order to gain victory: "superior (victorious) is the sacrifice, victorious are Agni, Soma, Indra; that I may surpass all hostile armies, so would we pay worship with this oblation; ..... O Mitra and Varuṇa, cause ye here our dominion to overflow with honey, drive off perdition far away; be pleased with this mighty (*ugra*-) hero (*vīra*-); take hold, O companions (plur.) after Indra, the conqueror of towns and cows, who, thunderbolt-armed, slaughters with power (*ojas*), conquering in the course". Whilst reciting these stanzas and making the king perform a circumambulation, from left to right (*pradakṣiṇam* 500)) of the tree, the priest offers a full homa or oblation of clarified butter in bodily contact with the king who joins in the act. As laid down in the above ritual books, the servants of the king should be consecrated (*dīkṣitāḥ*), observe chastity (*brahmacāriṇaḥ*), and perform, for three or seven days, sacrifices. By celebrating this festival the kingdom becomes, day by day, greater, the king

497) MEYER, *Trilogie*, III, p. 111.

498) Cf. AV. 6, 97, 1.

499) Kauśika Sūtra 14, 7.

500) For the *pradakṣiṇa*- see W. CALAND, *Een Indogermaansch lustratiegebruik*, Amsterdam 1898; O. SCHRADER-A. NEHRING, *Reallexikon d. indogerm. Altertums*, I, p. 412 ff.; TAWNEY-PENZER, *Ocean of Story*, I, p. 190 ff.

attains to the position of sole ruler of the earth and shall live a full lifetime.

On the day previous to the starting of a military expedition into a foreign country the ruler has to undergo a ceremonious bath for victory. The ceremony of this 'bath of victory' (*jayasṇāna*-) resembles the consecration ceremony in many respects 501).

### XIII

The ancient Indian king was expected to show himself in full state to his subjects every morning. As it was supposed auspicious to glance at his divine person people flocked to his palace for this purpose 502). As is well known Indian people attach much value to *darśana*- i.e. the sight of an image of a god, the visit to a sacred shrine, the sight or visit of a saint, a successful leader, a king 503). An instance may be quoted here: in the Dūtajātaka 504) the Bodhisattva when king of Benares is described as making it his habit to eat in full view of his people: the sight of a righteous king causing 'religious merit' (*puñ-ñāma*) he wished to confer that merit upon those present. The statement that a king who is difficult to be seen or met with can easily be influenced by his surroundings—he is expected to hear the complaints of his subjects personally—can, whatever its practical and secular aspects, also be understood in the light of this belief 505). "The king who has no time for thought of royal cares shall, with his realm and people, be involved in fatal ruin. The subjects flee from a monarch whose face they seldom or never see (at the times fixed for *darśana*-)" 506). He should allow people to give him auspicious objects which were intended to enhance his power and to ward off

501) This ceremony is described at great length in the Rājanītiprakāśa (Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series), p. 351 ff.

502) Cf. e.g. Kālidāsa, Ragh. 19, 7; Mbh. 2, 5, 86; Rām. 2, 100, 51. For the signification of *samalanṣṛta*- (Mbh.) "in full state" see my paper in the *New Indian Antiquary*, *Festschrift Thomas*, Bombay 1939, p. 97 ff.; for *vibhūṣita*:- *The meaning of Vedic bhūṣati*, Wageningen 1939.

503) Thus the ideal king Rāma was always accessible: Rām. 1, 1, 17.

504) Jātaka 260. Here W. H. D. ROUSE (The *Jātaka*....., ed. E. B. COWELL, II, Cambridge 1895, p. 221, n. 3) recalled to memory that according to the Talmud one should always run to meet the kings of Israel and even gentile kings.

505) Kaut. AS. 16, 30 f.

506) Rām. 3, 33, 5.

evil<sup>507</sup>). Praising the king is also a good and auspicious activity<sup>508</sup>). In the detailed description of the day's work of the ideal king given by Kauṭilya<sup>509</sup>) the last eighth part of the night is destined to "benedictions, auspicious progress, blessings, congratulations"—or whatever translation may be preferred for *svastyayana*—which the ruler has to accept in the presence of the sacrificial priest, the spiritual teacher and the purohita (*ṛtvigācāryapurohitasakhaḥ svastyayanāni prati-grhṇīyāt*). Before entering the audience-hall (or: assembly) he performs from left to right a circumambulation of a cow, a calf, and a bull, no doubt in order to participate in the holiness of these animals. These ceremonies remind us of the daily or periodical homage due to chiefs in other countries. The Javanese princes, for instance, regularly appeared before the noblemen and the high officials who then furthered the realization of their desires and intentions by a sort of magico-religious acclamation, through which they were believed to activate the mystic power of royalty<sup>510</sup>). Generally speaking all good acts performed by his subjects lead to the well-being of the Indian monarch<sup>511</sup>).

The religious character of kingship may also appear from the following facts. Among the events occasioning 'impurity' and, hence, cessation from Vedic study are not only the fall of a thunderbolt, an eclipse of the sun or the moon, the death of the teacher or of a near relative, etc., but also the death of the ruler. A snātaka shall not speak evil of the king or of the gods<sup>513</sup>); yea nobody should lie before a god or a king<sup>514</sup>). If a ruling prince or anyone belonging to the other categories deserving of honour—a priest officiating at sacrifices, a snātaka, a teacher and the relatives considered *gurus*—

507) See e.g. Mbh. 2, 5, 101.

508) I refer to MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 8.

509) Kauṭ. AS. ch. 16 (19), 26.

510) The ceremony was called *mijos sinévuaka* i.e. "to go out of the inner apartments of the palace and to accept homage"; the main task of those present was *djumurung* which is usually translated by "to pronounce benedictions". Annual tours of inspection served a similar purpose. See e.g. the OJav. poem Nagarakṛtāgama 83, 5 ff.

511) Mbh. 12, 59, 130.

513) Āpastamba-dharmasūtra 1, 11, 31, 5. For deformation or insulting language see e.g. Manu 8, 266 ff.

514) See e.g. Pāṇicantra 1, 119.

comes as a guest to one's house he should be honoured by offering him honey<sup>515</sup>), which being considered the quintessence of plants and water is often used as a means of stimulating beneficial powers. We have already noticed that it was customary to greet the sovereign when he passed through his capital, that is to say to pronounce blessings, with fried grain—which was considered a *maṅgala*- or producer of bliss and welfare—showered by girls: as is well known girls were regarded as pure and auspicious<sup>516</sup>). Flowers are showered on his head<sup>517</sup>), or offered to him; so are fruits<sup>518</sup>).

Some additions to this pericope may find a place here: We know from various authorities that it was the adhvaryu priest who had to act as a deputy for the king when the latter was engaged in prolonged performances of religious ceremonies such as the Āśvamedha<sup>519</sup>). We hear of kings who are worshipped (*arcayanti*) like the sun<sup>520</sup>). A curious sidelight on the degree of sacredness enjoyed by the ruler is furnished by a passage in a brāhmaṇa<sup>521</sup>), enjoining upon those who have established sacrificial fires not to go to any person, even to a king who happens to be in their houses, before rendering homage to the fires. It is almost superfluous to add that the sacredness of his function does not safeguard the bearer of majesty against the attempt of rivals and others who have the disposal of very potent ritual—or, if this term be preferred, magical devices. Thus the knowledge of the "dying round the holy power" enabled king Sūtan to cause the death of five rivals<sup>522</sup>).

#### XIV

Since the first king Pṛthu was anointed by Viṣṇu, Indra and other great divinities and brahmans, it belongs to the duties of the king to be consecrated<sup>523</sup>). This ceremony itself, being part of a religious

515) For particulars and references: Kane, *o.c.*, II, 1, p. 542 ff.

516) See Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa* 2, 10.

517) See e.g. Mbh. 1, 69, 12.

518) See also Kuṭṭūka, on Manu 8, 307.

519) See e.g. Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra 20, 3, 1 f.; Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra 15, 4. The adhvaryu is formally anointed.

520) E.g. Mbh. 1, 171, 18.

521) Śat. Br. 2, 4, 1, 6.

522) Ait. Br. 8, 28.

523) For the various procedures described in the ancient sources and medieval text-books see P. V. KANE, *Hist. of Dharmas*. III, p. 72 ff. See A. WEBER, *Über*

service—a soma sacrifice—was performed by a baptism of water<sup>524</sup>). It is mythically connected with, and considered a repetition of, the consecration of Indra or Varuṇa. The accession to the throne is an endowment with power<sup>525</sup>). Hence also the use of the term *pratiṣṭhā*—“to install, found or establish”<sup>526</sup>) which is often applied in connection with images of divinities and similar entities<sup>527</sup>). The ritual acts and especially the ‘formulas accompanying them, are very instructive for our purpose. At the end of the description of the great unction (*mahābhiṣeka*-) of Indra the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa (8, 14, 4) says that “anointed with this great anointment Indra won all victories, obtained all worlds, attained the superiority (*śraīṣṭhyam*), pre-eminence (*atiṣṭhām*), supremacy (*paramatām*) over all the gods, and having won the complete sway (*sāmrājyam*), the ‘bountifulness’ (*bhaujyam*, i.e. the rank of a *bhoja*-, i.e. a king who bestows enjoyment), the self-sway (*svārājyam*), the universal sway (*vairājyam*), the supreme authority (*pārameṣṭhyam*), sway (*rājyam*), the great sway (*māhārājyam*), the suzerainty (*ādhipatyam*) in this world; he was self-existing (*svayambhūh*), self-swaying (*svarāt*), ‘immortal’ (*amrtaḥ*); he was indeed immortal after having obtained in yonder world of heaven all desires. “Then it follows with regard to a member of the ruling order who is to be king: “if a (priest) who knows thus should desire of him that he would win all victories, etc., that he would embrace all what is in the universe (*samantaparyāyī* “all-encompassing”), possessed of all earth (*sārvabhaumaḥ*), possessed of all life (*sārvāyusaḥ*), from the one end up to the further side of the earth bounded by the ocean, sole ruler (*ekarāt*), he should anoint him with this great anointing of Indra.

die Königsweihe, Abh. Preuss. Akad. d. Wiss. Berlin 1893; A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur (Grundriss)*, p. 143 ff.; A. B. KEITH, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, p. 340 ff.; KANE, *Hist. of Dh.* II, p. 1214 ff.; my pupil Mr. J. Heesterman is preparing a new monograph on the subject.

<sup>524</sup>) Some particulars are also discussed by O. VIENNOT, *Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris 1954, p. 168 ff.; 187.

<sup>525</sup>) For the power conferred by the throne upon its legitimate occupant see J. AUBOYER, *Le trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris 1949, p. 173 ff.

<sup>526</sup>) For the verb *pratiṣṭhā*—see my relative paper in vol. I of the *Journal of the 'Centre for Intern. Indol. Research'*, Poona-Paris-Rome, which is to appear in 1955 or 1956.

<sup>527</sup>) See my paper “*pratiṣṭhā*” (see n. 526); cf. e.g. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa* 4, 2; 8, 10.

From the other texts pertaining to the royal consecration (*rāja-sūya*-)<sup>528</sup>) it emerges that the king is to attain ever-increasing prosperity (*śrī*-), which is declared to be identical with the earth, suzerainty and lordship (*aiśvaryam*) over his objects; that he is to become *ugra*- i.e. possessed of that particular vital and creative potency which was called *ojas* and powerful (*balī*), in possession of conquering power (*sahas*) and creative energy (*ojas*), of energy to overcome others (*abhibhūtyojās*), of fiery energy (*tejas*); that he is to obtain limited space (that which is within the altar) and the unlimited abundance or plenum (*bhūmāparimitaḥ*). He is anointed with the waters by which Indra, Soma, Varuṇa, Yama, and the first man Manu were anointed, with the brilliance of Agni, the radiance of the sun, the power of Indra, in order to obtain might, prosperity, glory and food. Placing his feet on the earth he pronounces formulas in which he declares himself to be established on, or to find support in, the sky and the earth, in both kinds of breath, in day and night, in food and drink, in *brahma* and *ksatra*-, that is to say in the highest complementary pairs in the universe, i.e. in the various aspects of the universe itself. Then he really finds this support with his whole self. He attains ever-increasing prosperity, suzerainty and lordship over men. Thereupon, placing himself under the authority of the brahman he secures fourfold victoriousness, to wit: *jīti*-, *abhi-jīti*-, *vijīti*-, *saṃjīti*- “victory, conquest, triumph (in various directions), complete conquest.” Then he makes himself to prosper with that special power which belongs to Indra (*indriya*-) and manly strength or courage (*vīrya*-). Freedom from enemies and safety on all sides becomes his. Thereupon he is addressed as approaching or appearing as brahma, breath, and ‘immortality’ or rather ‘life’, as being protection, shelter and safety, for the sake of well-being, together with offspring and cattle—the ever-recurring objects of desire. Free from harm and injury (*anārta*-, *ariṣṭa*-), victorious (*ajīta*-), protected on every side, he now wanders through all the quarters, finding support in the world of Indra, never being drawn away from his position, living his full life, becoming lord of the complete earth.

<sup>528</sup>) See esp. Ait. Br. 7, 20, 5 ff. (for *śrī* 7, 20, 5; 34, 10; 8, 5, 4; 6, 6); for suzerainty etc. 8, 6, 8; powerful 7, 34, 10; 8, 21; 3, 1; *tejas* 8, 4, 5; unlimited abundance 8, 5, 4; placing his feet 8, 9, 2; freedom from foes: 8, 10, 8; approaching 8, 11, 1 ff.

The Mahābhiṣeka or great anointing of Indra, which constitutes the mythical prototype of the king's inauguration, is also worth noticing<sup>529</sup>). The gods with the lord of creatures, Prajāpati, in consideration of Indra's being the most powerful (*ojīṣṭhaḥ* "standing out from the others with regard to the possession of ojas"<sup>530</sup>), the most forceful (*balīṣṭhaḥ*: *bala-* especially denotes physical strength), the most victorious (*sahīṣṭhaḥ*), the most true or real (*sattamaḥ*), the best to accomplish, resolved on consecrating him. Vedic verses, *sāmans* (metrical hymns intended to be chanted), *yajūṃsi* (sacrificial formulas) etc. served as requisites, the *ṛcas*, for instance, being the throne, the 'Daseinsmacht' *yaśas* ("glory") the coverlet, *śrī-* (prosperity) the pillow. The gods Savitar and Bṛhaspati supported the front feet, Vāyu and Pūṣan the back feet etc. By the long series of formulas accompanying the king's mounting the throne he declares that he does so in order to obtain overlordship (*sāmṛājyāya*), the rank of a king with the title of *bhoja-* (*bhaujyāya*) and other ranks of sovereignty, including supreme authority and pre-eminence. A similar activity of various other gods described in these formulas is to add to the efficacy of these potent recitations and momentous actions. When he was seated the gods proclaimed him, because "he cannot display his strength (*viryam*) if he is not proclaimed". In the formulas proclaiming his sovereignty and paramountcy, emphasis is laid on the fact that no "lordly power (*kṣatram*) has been born, the kṣatriya has been born, the supreme ruler of all creation has been born, the cater of the people (*viśām attā*) has been born, the breaker of citadels (an epithet of the god) has been born, the slayer of the asuras has been born, the guardian (*goptā*) of the brahman has been born, the guardian of the dharma has been born". Thereupon Indra was anointed by Prajāpati. Various classes of gods, belonging to the different quarters repeated this sacramental act, creating him universal king, paramount ruler etc. Thus Indra became the supreme authority. Anointed in this great ceremony he won all victories, acquired all worlds, attained distinction (*śraiṣṭhya-*) among and pre-eminence and supremacy over all the gods; having acquired the various royal positions in this world such as sovereignty, overlordship, paramountcy, he became self-existing

529) See Ait. Br. 8, 12 ff.

530) Cf. also Śākh. Śr. sū. 10, 15, 8 "thereby Prajāpati engendered Indra as a hero and so he overcame those asuras".

(*svayambhūḥ*), self-ruling (*svarāt*) and 'immortal' (*amṛtaḥ*), in yonder world of heaven having obtained all desires he became 'immortal'.

With this great anointing of Indra a kṣatriya should be consecrated, if it is desired that he be a king who wins all victories, attains distinction and so on, and so on.

In other texts relative to the same ceremony the king who is to be consecrated is said to be desirous of the heavenly space<sup>531</sup>); his power to be victorious is essential and so is his ability to bear sway over various categories of beings and entities. To this end the 'authorizing' gods Savitar, Agni, Soma, Rudra, Bṛhaspati, Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, are invited to authorize him to be victorious. He is anointed with Soma's glory, with Agni's brilliance, with the radiance of the sun. He is addressed as being Indra, as conquering his enemies, and invited to bring, in his right hand, possessions. He is identified with Brahmā and Savitar, with Mitra and Varuṇa. He becomes king of the five regions of the sky<sup>532</sup>). He also makes, turning east, three Viṣṇu strides to the accompaniment of the formula: "Thou art the stepping of Viṣṇu, thou art the step of Viṣṇu, thou art the stride of Viṣṇu"<sup>533</sup>). These Viṣṇu strides are part of the so-called *devasū* oblations, i.e. those intended for the "divine 'quickeners', the above eight gods who have the power of quickening or authorizing, who "quicken" the king for lordship over their respective domains, for control over similar powers to those they themselves represent, for energy, kingship, etc. The names and epithets, or functions, of these eight divinities are worthy of our attention: they are<sup>534</sup>) Agni the lord of the house, Soma the lord of the forest, Savitar of true instigation, Rudra the lord of cattle, Bṛhaspati the lord of speech, Indra the superior one (*jyeṣṭha-*), Mitra the true, and Varuṇa the lord of dharma<sup>535</sup>). This list has half of the names in common with the enumeration of the likewise eight deities whose particles are in Manu's dharma-work said to constitute the king: Savitar, Rudra, Bṛhaspati, Mitra are different.

531) Āpastamba-śrautasūtra 18, 8, 1; 11, 1; 12, 6; 16, 1; 17, 3, 4a; 18, 11; 19, 5.

532) Cf. also Āpastamba-śrautasūtra 18, 15, 1.

533) See also Taittirīya-saṃhitā 1, 8, 10g; 15c; Ap. Śr. s. 18, 12, 10.

534) Cf. Taittirīya-saṃhitā 1, 8, 10, 1; and the note by A. B. Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School*, Harvard 1914, I, p. 121.

535) Lord: *pati-*.

By making the Viṣṇu strides the king is said to rise high above everything here; becoming Viṣṇu he gains these worlds<sup>536</sup>). The importance of the rājasūya is inter alia apparent from the statement that one becomes a *rājā* or "king" after having performed that sacrifice<sup>537</sup>). According to two sources<sup>538</sup>) the rājasūya was—before the beginning of time—mystically seen by Varuṇa who wished to attain to pre-eminence, sovereignty, and supremacy over all realms. He then "brought it near" and was the first to perform it successfully. In the same way, the sacrificer now attains to pre-eminence etc. by executing this rite.

The same formula is prescribed in the ritual of the Vājapeya or Drink-of-vigour<sup>539</sup>) rite, held to confer paramount lordship on the ruler<sup>540</sup>). It should be performed by a brahman or kṣatriya desirous of the position of "a super-eminently learned or prosperous man". A characteristic of this sacrifice is that the number seventeen is predominant. This number is mystically connected with Prajāpati, the lord of creation, who is productiveness itself, who created the sacrifice as a counterpart of himself, who is identical with the sun, and from whom the goddess Śrī is said to have arisen<sup>541</sup>). So the king who has this rite performed aspires to the highest excellence of identity, or at least an intimate connection, with Prajāpati. Special features of the rite are a chariot race, in which the king who is the sacrificer is to be victorious, and by which he secures power, victoriousness and this world. When the race starts the brahman priest ascends on to an udumbara chariot-wheel (which is revolved from left to right) pronouncing formulas in which he expresses his intention to win *vāja* and to ascend into the highest firmament of Indra<sup>542</sup>). Udumbara

536) I refer to *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 58 f.

537) Cf. Gopatha Br. 1, 5, 8; Śat. Br. 5, 1, 1, 12 f. Similarly, the other great royal sacrifices make a nobleman *samrāt*, *svarāt* etc.

538) Jaiminiya-br. 2, 197; Śāṅkh. śr. sū. 15, 12, 1.

539) See *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 50 (with references). For a detailed description: P. V. KANE, *Hist. of Dharmas*, II, 1941, p. 1206 ff.

540) I refer to KEITH, *Religion and Philosophy*, p. 340.

541) For a short characterization see *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 77 f. — Although it is impossible to include in this publication all references to the king's being, in a mystical way, identical with some entity or the other, Pañc. Br. 2, 7, 5 (cf. also 2, 10, 4; 18, 10, 9 and Caland's note; Śat. Br. 1, 3, 2, 14) may be quoted: by using a certain chant of seventeen verses which is the vaiśya class (the peasantry) one surrounds the prince by the vaiśyas.

542) Cf. also Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 1, 5, 3; 5.

wood (ficus glomerata) represents food and procreation, Prajāpati and nobility<sup>543</sup>), the wheel the sun and universal dominion: the king is to become a cakravartin<sup>544</sup>). By pronouncing, in this way, these formulas, he wins the atmosphere. This race, like the cow raid and a dice play in other inauguration ceremonies, represents a test for recognizing the ruler's superiority in valour and physical prowess, and a means of enabling him to prove himself the fittest man for kingship, as well as magical devices to achieve the defeat of his adversaries in prowess, sagacity etc. The sacrificer solemnly mounts to the sun by climbing to the top of the sacrificial post, pronouncing the formula: "We have reached heaven<sup>545</sup>), we have reached the gods, we have become immortal children of Prajāpati." In so doing the king wins the world of the gods. In this position the priests provide him, in a ritual way, with food and victory. Descending he declares the earth to be his realm in order to support for tilling, for safety, for peaceful dwelling. In another formula he is invited to mount to heaven and then to regard, as a monarch, mankind, for the sake of tilling, peaceful dwelling, property and abundant thriving<sup>546</sup>), that is to say "for the welfare of the people, for the common wealth: corroboration of kingship renews life. Now the king is explicitly declared to have gained identity with Prajāpati, the lord of creatures—"all creatures are the children of the king"<sup>547</sup>).

A curious feature in this ceremony remains to be described. In close proximity of the *cātvala*- (i.e. pit in the soil of the sacrificial grounds) a piece of wood of the form of an axle-tree is to be dug in, and to it is to be fastened horizontally a wheel<sup>548</sup>) made of fig-wood with

543) Cf. e.g. Ait. Br. 5, 24; 7, 32; 8, 8; Gobhila-grhyasūtra 4, 7, 24. For udumbara wood see also O. VIENNOT, *Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris 1954, p. 270; MEYER, *Trilogie* III, p. 332.

544) See further on.

545) For the significance of climbing in initiations etc. see also M. ELIADE, *Images et Symboles*, Paris 1952, p. 59 ff.

546) See Āp. śr. s. 18, 6, 4 (and Caland's note); Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 5, 2, 1, 25. See also 5, 1, 5, 1. Attention may also be drawn to the following feature: vaiśyas (i.e. mainly agriculturists), which are explained as his children by the commentary on Kātyāyana-śrautasūtra 14, 5, 12, throw upon him 17 bags of saltish earth or four priests (see Āpast. śr.s. 18, 5, 16 ff.) raise up bags containing this earth or ashes to his face on long poles respectively from the four points of the compass, pronouncing such formulas as "for food, for victory etc.". For earth, ashes and salt see MEYER, *Trilogie*, III, p. 294 f.; 288; 317.

547) Cf. Mbh. 12, 91, 9 ff.

548) Cf. e.g. Āp. śr. sū. 18, 14, 3.

seventeen spokes. The brahman priest mounts this wheel whilst pronouncing the formula: "On the instigation of the god Savitar, through Brhaspati, winner of *vāja*-, let me win *vāja*-" <sup>549</sup>). Then the adhvaryu priest calls upon him to sing the song of the vigorous ones (*vājīnām*); here another source adds <sup>550</sup>): "The world of heaven is vigour (*vāja*-); he thereby makes him (the king) conquer heaven." While the wheel is turned round by the adhvaryu or a servant, thrice sunwise, the brahman chants that song <sup>551</sup>)—which contains the words: "Those who possess *vāja*- have come to *vāja*- —at the very moment when the racers start their race. According to another authority <sup>552</sup>) he may also mutter the words "... on the impulse of god Savitar gain you (plur.) heaven." The king mounts his chariot after having touched its two wheels or its sides. Now the turning of the wheel, to which we shall have to return, is no doubt a means to activate the important power *vāja*- or vigour. We may regard this act as an imitation of the activity of the sun on which depends all growth and vegetation (being "vigour") on the earth. The same act is also prescribed as part of another rite, to wit the ceremony of preparing the sacrificial fires <sup>553</sup>): to the south of the sacrificial grounds a chariot or a wheel is to be set in motion, so that the wheel(s) turn thrice. This means, the Taittiriya brāhmaṇa states, that the sacrificer by means of a chariot of men alights at a chariot of the gods. If this really was the sense attributed to this act, it also points to a process of 'deification' to be undergone by the sacrificer <sup>554</sup>).

In conclusion it may be remembered that the idea of securing the above potency of *vāja*- is in the texts explicitly said to involve the acquisition of all. They who win *vāja*- (*vājam jayanti*) win food, because *vāja*- is food. Formerly king Varuṇa was the equal of the other gods, a brāhmaṇa relates <sup>555</sup>). In order to become the lord of the

<sup>549</sup>) Taitt. Samh. 1, 7, 8b; Maitrāyaṇī Samh. 1, 11, 6. Cf. however also Sāṅkh. śr. sū. 16, 17; 1 ff.

<sup>550</sup>) Pañc. Br. 18, 7, 12.

<sup>551</sup>) Cf. Jaim. Br. 2, 194.

<sup>552</sup>) Sāṅkh. Śr. sū. 16, 17, 6.

<sup>553</sup>) Taitt. Br. 1, 1, 6, 8; cf. Caland, on Ap. Śr. sū. I, Göttingen-Leipzig 1921, p. 153.

<sup>554</sup>) Caland considered the signification of the turning wheel in this rite to have originally been a piece of rain magic (Regenzauber): *Zeitschr. d. deutschen morgenl. Ges.* 53, p. 609.

<sup>555</sup>) Jaim. Br. 3, 152. With regard to *vāja*- I refer to Pañc. Br. 13, 9, 20 ff.

gods he became the pupil of Prajāpati, who put him in possession of a sāmān saying: "this is the manifestation of my royal power; go, the gods will make you their king." So the gods did, saying: "in you we see the manifestation of our father Prajāpati". They gave him the royal throne and anointed him unto *rājya*-, *vairājya*- etc. Thus the above sāmān, the varuṇasāmān, is a *śrīṣava*, i.e. an inauguration unto the high and prosperous position of bearer of majesty. Āpastamba and other authorities say that on performing the *vājapeya* a prince is entitled to use the white parasol <sup>556</sup>). Although there was a difference of opinion whether a prince who desired to perform a *rājasūya* should have previously celebrated the *vājapeya* or not, the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa <sup>557</sup>) states that by the former one becomes (*bhavati*) a king (*rājā*), by the latter a universal king or emperor (*samrāt*).

## XV

The simplest of all inaugural performances is the *abhiṣeka*-, the consecration of a king by sprinkling water <sup>558</sup>). The monarch is supposed to be re-born as the son of the sages who act as priests; now he is vested with sanctity and inviolable. An abundance of prayers are said for granting him "greatness" or "extent" (*varṣman*-) and the most important "breadth" or "expanse" (*variman*-), and for giving to those praying, in a safe and sound condition <sup>559</sup>), abundance of cattle. Thereupon the king is asked to be the guide and protector of men. Next there are prayers for the prosperity of cattle, the various components of the population etc. It is worth while to examine some of the formulas more closely: The king is inter alia said to have become prosperous, to have entered the beings, to have become their lord. Death (*Mṛtyu*) who likewise is a king, is through formulas stimulated to 'favour' the sacrificer with the realm (*sa rājā rājyam anumanyatām idam*)—the same verb is used elsewhere <sup>560</sup>) in connection with the gods: *viśve devā anv amanyanta hṛdbhiḥ* "all gods expressed their favour and approbation", and in a collection of magical formulas and

<sup>556</sup>) Āpastamba Śr. 18, 7, 18 and Caland's note.

<sup>557</sup>) Śat. Br. 9, 3, 4, 8.

<sup>558</sup>) We have a description of this solemnity in the Taitt. Br. 2, 7, 15 f.

<sup>559</sup>) For *sarvatātā* see my relative observations in the *Festschrift S.K. Chatterji, Indian Linguistics* 16 (Madras 1956), p. 53 ff.

<sup>560</sup>) RV. 1, 116, 17; cf. also 6, 72, 3; 10, 37, 5.

prayers intended to prolong a person's life<sup>561</sup>: "let all gods express their favour and approbation, not showing enmity". The god Agni is invoked to anoint the ruler with the splendour-and-vigour (*varcas*) which was also present in the power with which Prajāpati fixed the earth after she had been extended (*paṇṇānam adṛmhat*) and which enabled him to fashion the expanse of the sky, by which the sun shines etc. The king is to illumine by his prowess (valour, heroic superiority: *śarvasā*) the five races of men, i.e. the whole human race, to be like Indra pre-eminent (*jyēṣṭha-*) and rich in 'creatures' (*prajāvān*); the wish is formulated that he may be gifted with abundance and splendour; that he will fill or pervade heaven and earth, and the space between these (*upastham*). Kaśyapa<sup>562</sup> is invited to place the sacrificer as a king in his splendid, powerful, illustrious handicraft (*sūlpa-*) in which are put together seven suns. After having been called a tiger the ruler is addressed as follows: "Spread over (*viśrayasva*) the greater quarters; let all the people (*viśah*) want you; let kingship not go lost to you. The waters of heaven which are united with milk, those in the atmosphere and also those on the earth, with the splendour of all these (waters), with their *varcas* I anoint you. Let me anoint you with heavenly *varcas*, and with milk, that you will be an increaser of the kingdom. So shall Savitar make you. All sacred songs have magnified Indra who is expansive as the sea, the best car-fighter of all charioteers, the lord, the true lord of *vājas*. The Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśve devāḥ shall anoint you in the east etc. with the *gāyatrī* and other metres, Bṛhaspati in the upper region." Thereupon the priest after reciting the stanza: "Thou, the tawny, mighty (*ugra-*) wolf, who causeth the din of battle—an epithet given to Indra in the R̥gveda<sup>563</sup>—who art splendid at the foremost point of the light (lustre) of the Maruts, Thee, Indra who art related to the sun, bountiful and victorious, we will invoke at our liturgical ceremonies calling Thee by name", causes the king to raise his arms<sup>564</sup> whilst pronouncing the formula: "Do ye, both of you, stretch out your arms for us to

<sup>561</sup> AV. 8, 2, 21.

<sup>562</sup> In the Ath. V. (8, 5, 14) Kaśyapa "the tortoise" is mentioned as a creator; in the Śat. Br. (7, 5, 1, 5) Prajāpati in creating assumed the form of this reptile. This cosmogonic being was to have a great future at a later period.

<sup>563</sup> RV. 6, 18, 2; 7, 20, 3 etc. Geldner übersetzt: "streitbar".

<sup>564</sup> See Āpast. Śr. sū. 22, 28, 14.

live (that we may live)<sup>565</sup>; do ye bedew our pasturage with ghee; make us famous among the folk, O ye young ones; hearken, O Mitra and Varuṇa, to these my supplications". Moving down the arms the priest says: "I move down your arms who are Indra who performs manly deeds." The king also ascended a chariot—in the meanwhile the purohita pronounced the verse: "mount, conquering your enemies<sup>566</sup>; let the gods intercede for you (favour 'you'—and after having invited the charioteer to mount "vajra (Indra's weapon) in hand" uttered the prayer that the country might not hear the sounds of the bows of enemies. After having been anointed and embraced—embracing, like kissing, is a means of transferring, acquiring a share in, exchanging, "power"<sup>567</sup>—by friends, relations, and brahmans, he is invited by the purohita to speak as follows: "Let yonder sun rise and here my word shall rise; rise, o god sun through my word; ... let the rivers be full, the clouds rain in time; let the useful plants bear good berries; may I be king and the lord of a people that is well provided with food, rice and curds (i.e. of a country flowing with milk and honey)"<sup>568</sup>.

Although it is not my intention to deal with the various forms of inauguration exhaustively<sup>569</sup>, attention may also be drawn to the description of the *rājābhiṣeka* as presented in the Āpastamba-śrauta-

<sup>565</sup> *fra bāhavā sisṛtam jivase nah*. This line and the rest of this stanza is taken from RV. 7, 62, 5 (cf. also Vājas. Samh. 21, 9; Taitt. Samh. 1, 8, 22, 3 etc.): the R̥gvedic hymn is addressed to Sūrya, Mitra, and Varuṇa: the outstretched arms of these gods mean life for men; elsewhere it forms part of the stanzas to be recited in performing the *sautrāmaṇī* sacrifice, which being a ceremony in honour of Indra *sutrāman-* "the good protector" is used to secure the sacrificer the success for which he is anxious in whatever sphere of life he may live: for instance victory or recovery of kingship if he be a king, wealth if he be a vaiśya—or it belongs to the rājasūya.

<sup>566</sup> The text has *vṛtrahantamaḥ* the superlative of the epithet, so frequently given to Indra: "Vṛtra-slayer".

<sup>567</sup> Embracing, with or without kissing, expresses love, veneration, intimate spiritual or mental contact, protection or desire to be protected; it moreover helps to form a magic circle and to transfer power. Thus women often embrace trees to make them fertile. See e.g. WEINKOPF, in H. BÄCHTOLD-STÄUBLI, *Hdwit. d. deutschen Aberglaubens*, VIII, 1302 ff. With us it has sometimes survived in the ceremony of conferring knighthood; the term *accolade* originally even meant "embracement".

<sup>568</sup> Cf. also Āpast. Śr. sū. 22, 28, 15 ff.

<sup>569</sup> I refer to the thesis on the rājasūya by Mr. J. C. Heesterman which, being in course of preparation, will appear before long.

sūtra 570), in which the above-mentioned formulas are used to accompany the rites. The ritual acts again express the desire to make the king a sovereign and victorious monarch, healthy, longlived, heroic, possessed of an abundance of cattle, of powerful arms and of various other desirable qualities.

Another example of the establishment of a royal person in sovereignty is found in a collection of stanzas which occurs, with variations, in the Ṛg- as well as the Atharvaveda 571). According to the Anukramanikā, or index of contents, of the Ṛgveda this text constitutes "a praise of the king". The commentator Sāyana adds that this praise relates to an anointed king, observing that it was to be used in a magical rite directed against the enemy (*abhimantraṇa-*) on behalf of a king who prepares for battle, and quoting a sūtra text 572). There are other ritual applications which however need not detain us for the moment 573). In this short series of stanzas the word *dhruva-* "immovable, fixed, firm, lasting", is repeated many times and it was no doubt the intention of the poet to compose a text which could help a prince to maintain his royal position. "I have brought Thee near (to be king in our country) ...; stand Thou firm; let all clans (all the people) want Thee; let not the kingdom fall away from Thee. Be Thou just here, do not move away; like a mountain not unsteady... Firm is the sky, firm the earth, firm these mountains, firm all this world of living beings; firm (is, be) this king of the clans (people)." It is however also expressly stated that Indra had established this king and had preserved him from being driven from his throne. The same god is invoked to make the people pay tribute, and with Agni, Varuṇa and Brhaspati he is also expected to keep the kingdom "fixed" for the king.

A few lines may be devoted to a more coherent survey of the function of the songs and other spoken words in consecrating a royal person 574). He is sprinkled, i.e. inaugurated, by the voice, because

570) Āpast. Śr. sū. 22, 28. For a translation see W. CALAND, *Das Śrautasūtra des Aṣṭamba*, III, Amsterdam 1928, p. 359 ff.

571) ṚV. 10, 173, 1-6, where they form one continuous passage, and AV. 6, 87; 88, 1-2; 7, 94, 1.

572) Āśval. G.S. 3, 12, 2: (*saṃgrāme samuṣolhe rājānaṃ sannādayet*) ā tvā-hārṣam antar edhiti paścād rathasyāvasthāya.

573) See WHITNEY-LANMAN, *Ath. V.S.*, p. 345; see ṚV. 10, 173, 1; AV. 4, 8, 4.

574) See Pañc. Br. 18, 8 ff.

the opening stanza of one of the important parts of the rite is an invocation of Vāyu, the god of wind, wind and voice being identical. By using verses addressed to different deities, these are yoked, i.e. set to work or made active. The *pr̥sthāsāmāns* are manly strength (*vīrya-*); by sprinkling him with that they help him to be fixed on strength. The utilization of the *Āditya*-verses secures him the advantage of being inaugurated in the midst of these divinities; that of the *triṣṭubh*, which is strength (*vīrya-*), that desirable quality. By the *daśapeya*-rite which is mystically connected with the year he obtains the force and strength (*indrīyaṃ vīryam*) of the year. By the *sāmāns* of the kings of the gods (god-kings: *devarājñām*) he thrives in yonder world, by those of human kings in this world.

As to the royal consecration as known to the poets of the great epics, it was performed by a bath and baptism of water as an accompaniment of a religious service. From the *Rāmāyaṇa* 575) it may appear that the recitation of Vedic mantras with the application of water at the hands of the priest was sufficient to consecrate a son who succeeded a deceased father. The consent of the people was necessary. A form of consecration was, however, needed: "to be consecrated, to sacrifice, and to protect the people are the chief duties of the king", the same epos says 576). The formal rite of the royal consecration which serves to confirm the imperial power is also in epic times preliminary to the horse-sacrifice to which we shall have to return further on. The latter ceremony as a religious rite absolves from sin. Politically it proclaims the successful ends of the emperor's desires. It may also be performed by any king, merely as a religious rite and without any claim to the imperial title. After the cohabitation part of the entrails of the horse are dragged out; they are kissed or smelled by the king and his followers. The sixteen priests present burn its limbs.

In the coronation ceremonies of the *cakravartin*, as at a later period (6th-8th c. A.D.) described in the important work on architecture, the *Mānasāra*, four stages are distinguished, the *prāpta-* or *prathama-*, the *maṅgala-*, the *vīra-* and the *vijaya-* 577). The *abhiṣeka-* proper consists in anointing the king with various auspicious substances. The

575) Rām. 2, 12, 11.

576) Rām. 2, 113, 23.

577) *Mānasāra*, ch. 49; see also P. K. ACHARYA, *Manasara Series*, vol. 6, Oxford 1946, p. 132 f.



monarch—whose empire reaches as far as the four oceans—is then adorned with the royal robes, the sacred thread, and various ornaments. He is led to the consecration hall, which is furnished with the emblems of empire, such as the throne, the wish-yielding tree (*kal-pavṛkṣa*-), the ornamental arch (*toraṇa*-). After having been garlanded, anointed, and sprinkled with substances of good augury the king mounts an elephant and circumambulates the city amidst acclamations of felicity. It was customary to lead the emperor after the inauguration blind-folded and to make him pick up anything he chose. The object taken pointed to victory or prosperity, or to the opposites. It may be noticed that a cakravartin is a sovereign who conquered surrounding kingdoms or brought them under his authority. In purāṇas and Buddhist texts his ideal characteristics are often explained<sup>578</sup>). The purāṇical accounts hold that cakravartins are born on earth as a partial incarnation (*aṃśa*-, inherent portion) of Viṣṇu. Their power, dharma, fortune and wealth are marvellous; all the aims of a successful life, fame and victory fell to their share without being mutually incompatible; in supranormal power (*aiśvarya*-) and supranormal lordly abilities (*prabhuśakti*-) in Vedic learning and asceticism they even surpassed the great sages, in force the gods, demons and human kings. Their bodies are characterized by the thirty-two auspicious marks of a great being. Among these outward tokens of the status of *mahāpuruṣa*- i.e. "great man" or *cakravartin*- is also the *śrīvatsa*-, a particular curl of hair on the breast. This sign also belongs to Viṣṇu, the Jinās and other mighty beings. This figure—the name of which means in my opinion "Śrī's favourite (abode)" or something to that effect<sup>579</sup>)—has nine angles: the number nine often occurs in connection with auspicious objects, powers and ceremonies related to material welfare. Some of the other signs are also worth mentioning: on his feet he wears the marks of a wheel (*cakra*)—which, being especially characteristic, was held to be animated by the spirit of Viṣṇu—and of a fish, a well-known representative of fortune and fertility, symbolizing the penis and causing trees to blossom<sup>580</sup>), on the palms

578) Cf. e.g. Vā. Pur. 57, 68 ff.; Matsya Pur. 142, 63 ff. For the Buddhist conception see G. P. MALALASEKERA, *Dictionary of Pāli proper names*, II, London 1938, p. 1343 ff.

579) See my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 100.

580) See MEYER, *Trilogie* III, p. 296.

of his hands the conch-shell, an auspicious emblem par excellence, representative of (female) fertility, a means of warding off evil, of destroying demons, of strengthening and delighting the divine powers<sup>581</sup>), and a lotus, which, representing water is, as is a matter of common knowledge, extremely frequent in rites and ceremonials for the benefit of fertility and vegetation in general.

We cannot pass over in silence some other interesting features in the numerous descriptions of 'coronations' found in post-Vedic literature<sup>582</sup>). In picturing the ceremonies in honour of Rāma the poet relates, inter alia, that as auspicious signs gold, cows, maidens, brāhmaṇas and men with sweetmeats in their hands passed in front of Rāma<sup>583</sup>); the citizens had raised banners on their houses. Sea-water and water of no less than five hundred rivers was brought in jars. Vasiṣṭha and other great priests sprinkled the hero with the holy and scented waters like Indra in the days of yore. The denizens of heaven, especially the lokapālas co-operated in this act.

## XVI

Finally we may mention a ceremony which<sup>584</sup>) in so far resembles an anointment that the king is sprinkled with a powerful fluid<sup>585</sup>). Actually it is in the first place a complex of rites<sup>586</sup>) intended to keep the king in good condition and to prevent him from being hurt by evil<sup>587</sup>); it is explicitly called the most efficacious rite for appeasing evil influences (*śānti*-)<sup>588</sup>) and for allaying evil portents (*ulpātāntakara*-); it is a *maṅgala*-, a solemn auspicious ceremony producing or stimulating welfare and happiness. In accordance with this character it should be conducted by the purohita and the astrologer (*daivavid*- "he who knows what comes from the divine powers"), at a time when evil portents and calamities are afflicting the realm, at

581) *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 100 f.

582) For a more detailed account see Kane, o.c., III, p. 77 f.

583) Rām. 6, 128, 38 ff.

584) Though incorrectly called an inauguration ceremony by H. KERN, in his translation of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1870-1875, = H. KERN, *Verspreide geschriften*, I, The Hague 1913, p. 311.

585) Varāh. BS. 48.

586) Revealed by (Brahmā) Svayambhū, the Self-existent, Uncreated Brahman for Indra's sake and later on handed down to a ṛṣi for the sake of earthly kings.

587) Cf. *ibid.* 48, 1: because the ruler is to the people what the root is to the tree.

588) For the idea of *śānti*- see also D. J. HOENS, *Śānti*, Thesis Utrecht 1951.

the moment of an eclipse, of the appearance of a comet etc. It is considered very salutary when a ruler longs for a son, when he aspires to the position of an emperor, and also on the occasion of his inauguration; besides it is, as a matter of course, conducive to longevity, increase of progeny, and happiness. That it is no inauguration in the proper sense of the term appears from the statement that the ruler who in the same manner causes his horses and elephants to be washed—washing being the most characteristic feature of this ceremony—shall see them free from disease and as efficient as possible. A fit place for the ceremony is some spot in the forest covered with shrubs, young trees, spreading plants etc. and abounding with lovely and sweet-smelling trees, some wood's skirt resounding with the noises of birds, a pure (*śuci-*) building on consecrated ground, a beautiful sandy river bank, a spot near a lake with an abundance of lotus flowers, a cow-station gay with the lowing of calves, the seaside crowded with happily arrived splendid ships, a hermitage, a house blessed with beautiful women, hallowed shrines, bathing-places, public gardens, spots with beautiful scenery, a tract of land sloping down to the north-east<sup>589</sup>). It may be remembered that the Indians always attach much value to the auspicious character of the place where a rite is to be performed. Forests are appropriate places for worshipping the souls of the deceased and those powers which are connected with vegetation<sup>590</sup>); lovely and fertile spots, the sight of happy and beautiful beings, in short the presence of any representation of luck contributes to the success of a rite intended to ward off evil. The soil on which the ceremony is to be conducted should therefore, to be conducive to victory, be plain, sweet and good-smelling. After having departed by night from the town in an easterly, northerly, or north-easterly direction, the astrologer, minister and priest (*yājaka-*), by which term the purohita must be meant invokes all divine beings who are desirous to receive their worship, adding that after having obtained his worship they are expected to leave the next day giving appeasement (*śānti-*) to the sovereign. The purohita prepares the ground by drawing lines and diagrams which are assigned to various classes of powerful beings, including gods, demons, planets, ancestors, seers, and honours each of them—details which are given in detail can be passed over in

589) I.e. the region of success and victory.

590) I refer to MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 117; III, p. 327.

silence—, performs an act of worship (*pūjā*) on an altar situated in the western part of the ground where the “bathing” (*snāna-*) is to take place. In the corners of that altar are arranged jars covered with sprouts and fruits and containing water mixed with gems and with the substance for the washing. The choice of the plants used for that purpose is based on the principle of nomen omen<sup>591</sup>): there is the *jyotiṣmatī*, lit. the brilliant, having the brilliance (of the celestial luminaries), the *trāyamāṇā*, lit. “the preserving” (a ficus), the *abhayā* “the safety” (a name of the root of the andropogon muricatum, a fragrant grass which is often used in rites), the *viśaya-* “victory” etc. etc.; further all sorts of seed, gold, and objects held auspicious at festivities so far as available. Next four skins—of a bull with auspicious marks who died from old age, of a red fighting bull, of a lion, of a tiger—are spread out to bear a throne. After having laid a piece of gold on it, the king who wears a new linen garment—because he is to enter upon a new stage in his life—sits down, surrounded by ministers, priests, persons of an auspicious name, etc. The purohita then pours over him the contents of the jars, whilst reciting an old prayer which runs as follows<sup>592</sup>): “(This) glossy liquid (*ājya-*) is identified with *tejas* (“the splendour and energy of majesty”); it is the best expeller of evil; it is the food of the gods; on it the worlds are founded. Whatever evil (“sin”), earthly, atmospherical, or celestial has reached thee, let it all come to nought by contact with this *ājya-*”. Sprinkling him with the ritual water which is mixed with fruits and flowers, he next recites a long prayer in which a great variety of divinities and powers are invoked to sprinkle and consecrate the monarch with water which destroys all evil omens (*utpāta-*) and bestow on him hail, long life, and health. After having honoured the deities, taken the royal umbrella, standard<sup>593</sup>), and weapons, the monarch puts on a new ‘triumphal’ attire (*alankāra-*), which has been consecrated with three stanzas taken from the Yajurveda<sup>594</sup>). These run as follows: “Bestowing a long life, splendour, increase of wealth and forcing its

591) “Andrerseits aber werden doch gar manche solcher Pflanzen ihre Namen daher haben, dass man ihnen von vornherein gewisse magische Kräfte zuschrieb” (MEYER, *Trilogie* II, p. 116, n. 2).

592) Ibid. st. 52 f.

593) I must resist the temptation to enlarge upon the standard (*dhvaja-*)-which is among the regalia believed to be endowed with supernatural power, — reserving this subject for another publication.

way towards my aims this brightly shining gold shall be attached to me for victory. This gold is not injured by any demon, for it is might of gods, and their primal offspring. Whoever wears the gold of Dakṣa's children lives a long life among gods and men. This ornament of gold, which Dakṣa's children bound with benevolent thoughts, on Satānikā, I bind on me for a life of hundred years..."<sup>595</sup>). The ruler finally honours the purohita and the astrologer with many gifts and issues an amnesty to his people, freeing the victims in the slaughter places and the prisoners. A repeated performance of this ceremony at the time of the moon's conjunction with the lunar mansion Puṣya makes happiness, renown and wealth increase. From this constellation it has its name Puṣyasānā "the washing at (the conjunction of the moon with) Puṣya. However, this name is an omen, *puṣya-* meaning also "nourishment", or "the best or uppermost of anything."<sup>596</sup>)

## XVII

The authorities disagree as to the procedure to be followed on the death of the reigning king. The Viṣṇudharmottara-purāṇa<sup>597</sup>) states that there is no waiting for an auspicious time. His successor should be bathed with water in which the highly auspicious mustard and sesame are mixed; a proclamation should be issued that the new king has succeeded the deceased predecessor; the purohita should show him to the people, peace and security should be proclaimed. According

<sup>594</sup>) To wit Vājasaneyī S. 34, 50 ff.

<sup>595</sup>) Dakṣa is in the Veda a creative power associated with Aditi. Of the investiture of Satānikā no particulars have been preserved.

<sup>596</sup>) A similar ceremony is described in the Viṣṇudh. Pur. 2, 161. Being different in a great number of details—the king is actually sprinkled with melted and clarified butter; the rite is intended to make him victorious; a new and splendid garment is consecrated by the Śrīsūkta (i.e. RV. Khila 2, 6 see J. SCHEFTELOWITZ, *Die Apokryphen des Rgveda*, Breslau 1906, p. 72 ff.); and the Arranger of all things, Dhātār, is invoked to bestow *śrī-* upon the ruler, etc. etc. —it is called Ghṛtakambalaśānti, i.e. the "appeasement with clarified butter and a blanket", a term which is also used by Varāhamihira 2, 6 to indicate the *puṣyasānā*—the king has to put on a woollen blanket (*kambala-*) while the fluid is poured over him. In religious rites the use of wool is not infrequently required: in the Kauśika-sūtra 71, 16 f. it is used for cleansing purposes; the wristlet worn by the bride is made of it (see e.g. Kālidāsa, Ragh. 16, 87). Cf. J. PLEY, *De lanae in antiquorum ritibus usu*, Relig. Vers. u. Vorarb. XI, 2; X. WOLTERS, *Notes on antique folklore*, Thesis Utrecht 1935, p. 150.

<sup>597</sup>) Vidh. pur. 2, 18, 2 ff. For sesame see Meyer, *Trilogie* III, p. 319 f.

<sup>598</sup>) Rājanītiprakāśa, p. 62, quoted by KANE, *H. of dh.* III, p. 80.

to the Rājanītiprakāśa<sup>598</sup>) the successor should be crowned one year after the death of his predecessor; when a king abdicates his successor might be crowned on any auspicious day without waiting for a year. We may infer from these rules that a period of mourning was to be observed.—From what we learn from the brāhmaṇas<sup>599</sup>) it is clear that he alone becomes king whom the other kings allow to assume the royal dignity. Hence the statement that those deities to whom the special oblations, called *rāṣṭrabhṛtaḥ* are due, are to give him permission to be consecrated. "Inasmuch as the kings sustain realms (*rāṣṭrāṇi bibhrati*) and these gods are kings, therefore these "realm-sustaining" oblations are performed."

There were, in ancient India, also occasions for a general pardon granted by a sovereign other than the above ceremony. Curiously enough, they largely coincide with the cases in which an amnesty is extended to prisoners in modern times. Kauṭilya<sup>600</sup>) states that the king liberates all prisoners when a new country has been subdued, when the heir to the throne is consecrated, or when a royal prince is born. The same custom is mentioned by many other authorities who sometimes add that also female slaves are liberated, taxes are remitted etc.<sup>601</sup>), the victims in the slaughter-places are freed<sup>602</sup>). Kālidāsa even goes so far as to say that the oxen and horses were unharnessed and given rest from drawing carts and chariots, that birds were set free from cages, and cows were left unmilked for the benefit of their calves<sup>603</sup>). What is the deeper sense of this custom? Should everyone share in the festive joy? Was it the king's intention to reduce the number of the discontented and secret enemies? Or had the general pardon rather something to do with a wholesale remittance of guilt desired on account of, and possible because of, the very felicitous occasion of a royal birth or coronation? Was it an expression of the belief that all that the inhabitants of the country possessed was the gift of the sacred mediator? Was the general release and freedom considered conducive to the success and prosperity of

<sup>599</sup>) Sat. Br. 9, 4, 1, 1 and 13.

<sup>600</sup>) Kauṭilya, *Arthaśāstra* 56.

<sup>601</sup>) I refer to MEYER, *W. u. S.*, p. 741.

<sup>602</sup>) Varāh. BS. 48, 81.

<sup>603</sup>) Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa* 17, 19 f.

the undertaking, the welfare of the king or the newly-born prince? 604).

It is interesting to notice that, in contradistinction for instance to ancient Egypt where the power of the sovereign over his subjects did not cease with death, the ancient Indian documents do not give us much information on the deceased king 605). Some texts state that after death 606) the ruler becomes the associate of Indra 607). Yudhiṣṭhira is, after the great war, received by Indra himself in his celestial realm, having acquired a status equal to that of the god 608); there he sees his former enemy, the deceased king Duryodhana seated on a throne, gifted with *śri-*, effulgent like the sun and wearing the signs of heroic glory: "he now is the foremost of the kings who are dwellers of heaven" 609). Other epic heroes are stated to have gone to the abodes of Kubera or Varuṇa 610), all of them returning to their own divine nature of which they had been, in their earthly career, incarnations. They enjoy the heavenly pleasures and prosperity 611). But no mention whatever is made of their being interested in any human being still alive on this earth 612). Those who have heard the Mahābhārata should perform a *śrāddha-* (ceremony in honour and for the benefit of dead relatives) to the deceased heroes,

604) It is difficult not to remember the customs connected with childbirth: all knots in the house should be loosened: see Kauṣika-sūtra 33, 5 and W. CALAND, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, Amsterdam 1900, p. 108, n. 3. The consecration causes a king to be born.

605) The Javanese kings continued to exercise influence after death. The Babad Tanah Djawi (p. 13 M., 28 O.) relates that those who tried to exhume the dead body of a king fell down; their companion who succeeded in reaching the coffin were put to flight by innumerable bees. Cf. e.g. also H. FRANKFORT, *Kingship and the gods*, Chicago 1948, p. 53 ff.; 198 ff.

606) There is no occasion to dwell on the descriptions of royal burials in the epics (see E. W. HOPKINS, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 13, p. 170).

607) Viṣṇu-smṛti 5, 196; Bṛhaspati-smṛti 2, 38.

608) Mahābhārata 17, 3, 1; 8. The words used in the text are of interest: *amarīyatvaṃ mātamatvaṃ ca* (Indra is speaking) ... *śrīyaṃ kṛtānāṃ mahatīm. caiva siddhim/samprāpto 'dya svargasukhāni ca tvaṃ* "you have now completely acquired "life eternal" ("immortality"), a state equal to mine, complete prosperity, supreme accomplishment (bliss), the felicities of heaven".

609) Mbh. 18, 1, 1 ff.

610) Mbh. 18, 5, 29.

611) Cf. also Mbh. 12, 24, 23 ff.; 25, 32 ff.; 70, 13; 77, 34, etc.

612) Cf. also Mbh. 18, 6, 4 "The deities came to this world for sport (*kṛīḍārtham*); having achieved their tasks, they ascended once more to the celestial

who play a rôle in it, but nothing is asked of them. Innumerable presentations are offered to the brahmins, nothing to the deities which were, in their earthly existence, these great kings.

While expounding the purpose of a specified rite, an author in a brāhmaṇa 613) seems to drive us to the conclusion that royal power, though "heavenly", does not ensure its bearer a permanent position in the celestial regions: in that the prince is consecrated by the rāja-sūya, he ascends to the world of heaven; if he did not, by means of that special rite, descend to the earth, he would either depart to a region which lies beyond all human beings, or he would become mad. Outside its specific sphere all power is apt to be dangerous; kingly power, though divine, belongs to the earth. Yet, it is perhaps worth while to quote a passage from the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa 614) in which in connection with the ruler reference is made to the other world; two of the feet of the throne on which a prince is consecrated stand on the northern altar-ground, which is this terrestrial world, and two on the southern, which is the world of the fathers; thus the prince is consecrated for both worlds. Concerning this an ancient authority observed: "we shall doubtless be like rulers, in yonder world."

This scantiness of information is no doubt closely related to another fact, bearing upon the deceased in general; in the ancient texts little is said about the power of the departed to perform good or bad deeds; they are, it is true, invoked to confer various boons, similar to those given by the gods, to overthrow the enemy of the living, or to dispel the disease of their descendants etc., but their main concern is the continuation of their race; hence they are implored to give sons. So the śrāddha helps to get offspring 615). They have a personal interest in this continuation, since the offerings on which they subsist can only be presented by their descendants. The king, on the other hand, though being, as a rule, regarded as the source and origin of all that happens in his kingdom is, as far as I am able to see, nowhere especially interested in the continuation of the families of his subjects

region". Cf. also KEITH, *Religion and Philosophy*, p. 425 ff.; W. CALAND, *Altindische Ahnenkult*, Leiden 1893, p. 190 ff.; MEYER, *Trilogie* III, p. 323 f.

613) Pañc. Br. 18, 10, 10.

614) Śat. Br. 12, 8, 3, 6 f.

615) For references see e.g. J. J. MEYER, *Sexual life in ancient India*, London 1930, p. 223, n. 1.

nor a special help towards getting children. The presence of the dead on earth to aid their offspring is—at least in our sources—practically unknown before Buddhist documents. Besides, in the overwhelming majority of cases it is the whole body of the fathers as such which is addressed. On those rare instances in which individual ancestors are invoked, these significantly are, like Kaṇva or Kakṣivānt in the R̥gveda, persons of 'spiritual' rather than royal occupations and wicked kings, like all sinners, go to hell <sup>616</sup>).

From later texts <sup>617</sup>) we may conclude that the great sacrifices which are connected with kingship, the rājasūya and the aśvamedha, were considered *saṃskāras*, consecrations or rather sacraments, purifying a person from sin and evil contracted in the preceding period of his life and fortifying him at an important moment of his existence in order to be fit to enter upon the next stage.

### XVIII

We now come to a very important point. From an abundance of data we may conclude that the ancient Indians were deeply impressed firstly by the broadness and extensiveness of heaven and atmosphere, secondly by the fact that the surface of the earth, especially in the plains, is broad—Sanskrit names for our planet are, inter alia, *prthivī* and *urvi* "the broad one", *mahī* "the great one"—and thirdly that the blessings of heaven need room and broadness to reach the earth. The idea of broadness, wideness, or extensiveness is of great importance in their religion. Significantly enough the great opponent of the god Indra, the heroic warrior god, was called *vr̥tra-* the "coverer, restrainer, he who obstructs", and the much feared *aṃhas* "anxiety, oppression, distress (in German: Bedrängnis)" belongs to a family of words meaning "narrow-(ness)". Only if there is room the blessings of heaven, light and rain, can reach the earth, only then the earth can produce food, only then man has 'Lebensraum'. This earth is wide or capacious (*vyacasvatī*) and broad (*prathasvatī*) the Sāmaveda says <sup>618</sup>). In putting a specified brick which is explicitly identified with the breath on the fire altar when being built this formula

<sup>616</sup>) Cf. also HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, p. 107 ff.

<sup>617</sup>) Cf. Mbh. 12, 65, 2 *rājasamskārayogam* and Nilakaṇṭha's commentary: *rājasūyāśvamedhāvabhyasānam*.

<sup>618</sup>) Vāj. S. 13, 17; cf. Śat. Br. 7, 4, 2, 6.

is used, and the words "broaden thou, thou art the broad (earth, *prthivī*)" added.

Now, royal power and the potencies connected with and furthered by it need room and are at the same time considered to be able to create room. The king is expected to make conquests, to extend the boundaries of his realm, to give his people 'Lebensraum' <sup>619</sup>). He should be a *viṇigīṣu-*, ambitious and desirous of victory <sup>620</sup>). The imperative *viṇayasva rājan* "be victorious, O king" or simply *jayatu devaḥ* "victory to the king" serves as a counterpart of our "long live, glory or hail to thee" <sup>621</sup>). The verb, which already occurs in a beautiful hymn to Indra <sup>622</sup>), "without whom men do not conquer, whom they when fighting call for help" is elsewhere applied to the god himself <sup>623</sup>), "when Indra and the snake (Vṛtra) fought, the former remained victorious (*vi jigyē*) for the future". Viṣṇu's conquests (*viṇiti-*), referred to in the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa <sup>624</sup>), are the works of this god who, representing pervasiveness, was mainly concerned with the conveyance of the heavenly blessings to all parts of the universe <sup>625</sup>). How closely the idea of *viṇaya-* "victory" was connected with *śrī-* "welfare, fortune, and majesty" and *bhūti-* "prosperity" appears also from the famous last stanza of the Bhagavadgītā <sup>626</sup>).

<sup>619</sup>) Hence the statement (see e.g. Parāśarasmr̥ti 1, 68) that apart from the man of royal birth two men are fit to ascend the throne: the hero and the general.

<sup>620</sup>) Cf. Mbh. 1, 62, 20; Manu 7, 99; 9, 251; Rāmāyaṇa 3, 16, 7; Kālidāsa, Raghuvamśa 1, 7, etc. A definition is provided by the Nītivākyaṃrta 114, 15 f.: "a king who is endowed with personality (*ātman-*), luck (destiny, divine appointment: *daiva-*), and the constituent elements (or necessary attributes), (who is) the basis of traditional power and forceful heroism (*kramavikrama-*), is a *viṇigīṣu-*. See also Kullūka on Manu 7, 155. For the *digviṇaya-* in kāvya: Upadhyaya, India in Kālidāsa, p. 114 ff.

<sup>621</sup>) Cf. e.g. also Kālidāsa, Vikramorvaśīya, 5, 20+, where the heir-apparent (whose consecration is described) is hailed: *viṇayatām yuvarājah*.

<sup>622</sup>) RV. 2, 12, 9.

<sup>623</sup>) RV. 1, 32, 13.

<sup>624</sup>) Śat. Br. 3, 7, 1, 17.

<sup>625</sup>) For the relations between Viṣṇu and kingship see also my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, ch. 23.

<sup>626</sup>) Bhagavadgītā 18, 78 "Where is Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, there will surely be fortune (*śrī-*), victory (*viṇaya-*), welfare (*bhūti-*) and morality (*nīti-*)", that is to say: when the kingly man representing active and aspiring humanity is enlightened by and united with the Divine, fortune etc. are assured. Cf. also Kām. Nīt. 1, 1, *yasya prabhāvād bhuvaṇam śāśvate pathi tiṣṭhati devaḥ sa jayati śrīman daṇḍadhāro mahīpatiḥ*.

The upasads (a ceremony preceding the pressing of the soma) are *jitis* "victories", "by them the gods gained an unrivalled victory (*asapatnām vijitīm vyajayanta*); he who knows thus gains an unrivalled victory<sup>627</sup>). From such texts it again appears that the divinities in heaven were credited with qualities and aspirations which were regarded as belonging to a king.

Apart from other valuable or much desired objects such entities as the earth, heaven, the three worlds<sup>628</sup>) are among those striven after by royal persons. "No monarch can acquire the earth, prosperity (*bhūti-*) and royal well-being (*śrī-*) by being only *dharmātmā*"<sup>629</sup>). Like *saṃrāj-* beside *rāj-* and *vi-rāj-*, *saṃ-ji-* occurs to accompany *ji-* and *vi-ji-*; at the end of a long text intended to conquer enemies<sup>630</sup>) it reads: "On this side conquer (*jaya*), on this side conquer in various directions (*vi jaya*), conquer completely (*saṃ jaya*), conquer (*jaya*)"<sup>631</sup>). "Being a tiger, upon the tiger's skin<sup>632</sup>) do thou stride out (*vi kramasva*) unto the great quarters of the sky (i.e. unto all directions)"<sup>633</sup>), thus the monarch is addressed when he is consecrated. The tiger is explicitly stated to be the *kṣatram* or "ruling power" of the wild animals<sup>634</sup>). Among the objects required in the ceremony is a sheet of gold which is to be put on the head of the prince. Gold is a manifestation of dominion or nobility (*kṣatra-*)<sup>635</sup>).

There is another compound with *vi-*—a prefix expressing such ideas as distribution, being or going through or between—which is often connected with kingship, to wit *vikrama-*<sup>636</sup>). Viṣṇu's striding, reference to which has already been made, is generally denoted by this term. It denotes a process of world-wide character. By striding Viṣṇu

627) Ait. Br. 1, 24, 1.

628) The earth, e.g. Śat. Br. 13, 5, 4, 13 (the whole earth); Mbh. 1, 62, 21; heaven, e.g. Mbh. 1, 91, 16; the three worlds, e.g. Manu 2, 232 ("and radiant like a god, he will enjoy bliss in heaven").

629) Mbh. 3, 33, 58.

630) Atharvaveda 8, 8, 24.

631) It is not part of our task to enter into a discussion of the "policy of reality" based on these conceptions: see e.g. J. J. MEYER, *Welt- u. S.*, p. LXII.

632) When being consecrated the king strides to the various quarters, and steps on the skin of a tiger, establishing himself in the power of that animal.

633) Atharvaveda 4, 8, 4; Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa 2, 7, 15, 3.

634) Ait. Br. 8, 6.

635) Śat. Br. 13, 2, 2, 17.

636) GONDA, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 61 ff.

was believed to create ample room. The act increases the prosperity and victoriousness of the gods. The *kṣatriya* however also increases in *śrī-* by *vikrama-* which in connection with heroes and princes is usually translated by "heroism, strength, prowess"<sup>637</sup>). In this more general sense it is ascribed to Indra and great kings.

It belongs to the nature of kingship to outshine all enemies in wealth and splendour<sup>638</sup>), to be the sole chief, uppermost of noble men, beating the enemies and taking their enjoyments<sup>639</sup>). It is therefore no happy idea sharply to distinguish between the religious and the secular aspect of kingship<sup>640</sup>), the former requiring from the monarch certain acts for propitiating gods and unseen powers and removing dangers coming from them with the help of the purohita and sacrificial priests, the latter including all acts that lead to prosperity of realm and subjects.

Nor can the view<sup>641</sup>) be satisfactorily substantiated that the doctrine of the king's divinity had mainly developed under foreign influences in the Kushana period, the previous centuries having created only a favourable atmosphere by inculcating the idea that the king was the symbol of a deity. Special mention may be made here of a stanza in the R̥gveda<sup>642</sup>) where Varuṇa and Indra are described as defining their respective competences and authorities. In so doing the former lays special stress on the fact that it was he, the lawful king, who in accordance with the eternal truth and norm (*ṛta-*) extended the earth threefold, i.e. completely and finally. Elsewhere<sup>643</sup>) this activity is ascribed to Indra who is said to have extended (*apṛathayaḥ*) the surface of the earth. What interests us most is that it is Indra who in this ancient corpus is more frequently related to have per-

637) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 13, 6, 16; Varāh. BS. 68, 92; 69, 11.

638) See e.g. Atharvaveda 4, 22, 3 ff.

639) The text Atharvaveda 4, 22, in which these and similar achievements are wished ("increase, O Indra, this *kṣatriya* of mine; destitute of splendour (*avaracasam*) make his foe") is to be recited every morning for the benefit of the consecrated monarch (Kauśika-sūtra 17, 28).

640) Thus P. V. KANE, *History of Dharmaśāstra* III, p. 101. See e.g. also Yājñavalkya-smṛiti 1, 308.

641) Which was recently pronounced by Altekar, *o.c.*, p. 59 f.

642) RV. 4, 42, 4.

643) RV. 1, 62, 5; cf. 1, 56, 5. See also RV, 1, 103, 2; 2, 15, 2; 6, 17, 7; 8, 3, 6; 89, 5; cf. 3, 50, 1; for Indra and Viṣṇu see 6, 69, 5; Indra and Soma 6, 72, 2. For Varuṇa see also 7, 86, 1; Agni 3, 14, 4; Maruts 8, 94, 9; Viṣṇu cf. also 5, 87, 7.

formed this deed than other gods; once he was in the company of Viṣṇu. Now, Indra and Varuṇa who is also mentioned incidentally, are the two deities who maintain special and intimate connections with kingship. Moreover, Indra is also described as becoming broad himself; having drunk Soma he increases in size and felt a bull <sup>644</sup>).

There is, in addition to the above, room for the observation that texts used in ceremonies which serve to establish a sovereign contain references to the quarters of the sky, the sky, the earth, the world in general. Thus a couple of Vedic stanzas <sup>645</sup>), reference to which has already been made, contains the words: fixed are sky, earth, world; fixed is this king of the people etc.: although this text is, of course, intended to fix the king in his realm, and although the sky etc., like the mountains which are also mentioned, are referred to as models of fixity, passages like AV. 4, 8, 4 (accompanying the consecration) "do thou stride out unto the great quarters"; 3, 4, 1 "let all the directions call thee, O king"; *ibid.* 2; 7 (see above) are significant enough. Indra, though as a lokapāla lord of the eastern quarter, is considered king of all the regions of the sky, e.g. in an atharvāṇic 'hymn' <sup>646</sup>) which is intended to secure victory on behalf of an earthly ruler. The four great guardians of the regions of the sky, i.e. of space, who are called "overseers of existence", are invoked to release those praying from every narrowness and distress (*aṃhas*) and from perdition, and to give well-being to cattle, to men, to the world <sup>647</sup>).

Hence also such terms and events as a *diṇjaya*-, "the conquest of various countries in all directions by a paramount king"; or *digvijaya*:- the latter being also the title of a section of the Mahābhārata in which the victories of Yudhiṣṭhira are described <sup>648</sup>).

Words for "broad, wide" <sup>649</sup>) very often came to express such meanings as "important, mighty, powerful, illustrious, etc."; cf. *visāla*- "spacious, extensive, broad, wide" and "great, powerful, mighty, important, eminent, illustrious" (e.g. of a royal family, also as a proper noun of princes and rulers); *vipula*- "large, extensive",

<sup>644</sup>) RV. 10, 94, 9; cf. also 1, 55, 1; the gods: 10, 88, 1.

<sup>645</sup>) RV. 10, 173, 4 f. and AV. 6, 88, 1 f.

<sup>646</sup>) AV. 6, 98, 3.

<sup>647</sup>) AV. 1, 31.

<sup>648</sup>) Mbh. 2 a. 25-32.

<sup>649</sup>) For an ample discussion of the importance of this idea in ancient Indian thought see my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 61 ff.; 68 ff.

and "important, noble (race)" ; *pṛthu*- "broad, wide" and "great, important, abundant, clever, dexterous"; cf. also *vistara*- "extensive" and as a subst. "extension": (plur.) "great wealth or riches"; *āyati*- "stretching, extension, length" could, according to Indian lexicographers, also mean "majesty, dignity" <sup>650</sup>). The nouns *vibhūti*- and *vibhava*-, deriving from *vi-bhavati* "to expand, be developed or manifest" acquired the sense of "mighty, powerful; expansion, abundance, royal dignity" and "rich, powerful, power, might, greatness, exalted position, dominion, majesty" respectively; *vibhū*- a word for "king" also means "far-extending, all-pervading, omnipresent, plentiful, able, effective".

It is most important that the applications and limitations of the terms for "majesty, might, power, glory, greatness, etc." should be clearly apprehended, for otherwise we are in danger of taking them thoughtlessly to be used *honoris causa* everywhere. Thus *mahiman*- "greatness, glory, majesty" is in the Rgveda an oft-used attribute of Indra, Savitar, Agni, the Waters, Dawn, and other deities, signifying that they are "great". At a later period <sup>651</sup>) the word is used in connection with kings, and although terms of this semantic group are generally speaking liable to depreciate, the content makes it in cases like the following clear that the king who is characterized by *mahiman*- is considered a being of exalted rank: "having heard the *mahiman*- of the exalted rājarsis of old and having known their acquisition of the world by the performance of sacrifices ..." In a brāhmaṇa <sup>652</sup>) the king is explicitly called "greatness" (*mahiman*-).

<sup>650</sup>) In Bāṇa's Harṣacarita it is used in the sense of "heroism".

<sup>651</sup>) E.g. Mbh. 2, 13, 2.

<sup>652</sup>) Śat. Br. 13, 2, 11, 2.

## XIX

As narrated in later texts mankind became sorely afflicted when the gods at the end of the Kṛtayuga or 'Golden Age' withdrew to heaven. It was then that king Pṛthu (lit. "the Broad One"), the first of men who was installed as a king, attacked the earth with his bow in order to level her (notice this detail: in every Manu-period the earth becomes uneven, but the first king removes the rocks, enlarges the hills and the mountains and makes the earth even) and to establish order upon her. But she changed her shape into that of a cow, ran away, and took refuge with Brahmā. This highest divinity thereupon mediated between them, making Pṛthu the protector of the earth, and inducing her to yield to him the crops and the sites for building abodes for men and gods<sup>653</sup>). Now the errant state of the earth has come to an end. She exists protected by law and order, for Pṛthu's prototype is Yama, the Dharmarāja himself; she has become a place of abode for the gods. The belief is held that from this first king the earth received her name *pṛthivī*. The Mahābhārata says<sup>654</sup>): "because it was expected that he would increase (advance, "make wider" *prathaiṣyati*) he was, accordingly called Pṛthu.

The relation of the ruler to the earth or the soil is also expressed by the title *pārthiva-* which occurring in the sense of "inhabitant of the

earth" as early as the Ṛgveda, appears to denote a king in Manu and the Mahābhārata<sup>655</sup>). In a simile occurring in a Buddhist work<sup>656</sup>) the whole great earth has become the deposits or property of a king who is properly anointed, belongs to a family of noble birth and has the highest power.

Now it is clear that those beings and entities which expand or extend, which are wide and broad themselves, may easily be supposed to be able to place something at the disposal of others, to give part of their abundance. Such passages as the Atharvanic "let the earth increase and make us increase"<sup>657</sup>) are significant. According to the belief expressed by a Vedic poet<sup>658</sup>) the gods placed the earth (*māhim* lit. "the great one") as a support which gives space or room (*uruṣā*), and is a broad expanse (*uru jrayah*). From other passages it can be understood that it was Viṣṇu who gave man spacious room to live in<sup>659</sup>). An epithet like *uruvyacas-* "widely extending" not only applies to heaven and earth, but also to Indra, and other compounds beginning with *uru-* are used to qualify Varuṇa, Soma, Pūṣan, and again, Indra, who is also called *urujrayas-* "extending over a wide space".

A remarkable passage is also found in the hymn to the earth in the Atharvaveda<sup>660</sup>): "when thou, spreading thyself (*prathamānā*), told by the gods, didst expand (*vyasarpas*) to greatness, then well-being (*subhūtam*) entered into thee"; breadth and expansion result in well-being. Thus a verb *uruṣyati* deriving from *uru-* "broad" not only means "to go to what is broad", i.e. "make off", but also "to protect, secure, defend from": RV. 1, 58, 8 and 9 Agni is invoked to protect (*u.*) the poet against "narrowness", i.e. "distress" (*amhas*); 2, 26, 4 Brahmanaspati is said to protect against distress (the same words) and to ward off injury (*rakṣati riṣaḥ*). An interesting phrase is also

\*) See *Numen* III/1956, p. 36 ff. and p. 122 ff. and *Numen* IV/1957, p. 24 ff.

653) Thus the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra 1, 6 ff.; 6, 5 ff.; 7, 7 ff.; cf. also Viṣṇu Pur. 1, a. 13. See also S. KRUMHOLTZ, *The Hindu Temple*, Calcutta 1946, p. 13.

654) Mbh. 12, 29, 138. In 12, 54, 126 it however reads: *prathitā dharmatā ceyan pṛthivī bahubhiḥ smṛta*.

655) In this connection there may be room for the observation that Indian authors endeavoured to establish subtle differences between these titles. Thus *pārthiva-* expresses relations between the ruler and his own country, *sārva-bhauma-* applies to a conqueror of the earth etc.

656) Milindapañho, p. 360 T.

657) Atharvaveda 12, 1, 13; 18.

658) RV. 5, 44, 6.

659) RV. 7, 100, 4.

660) AV. 12, 1, 55.



*amhós sid ... urucákriḥ* <sup>661</sup>), lit. "effecting broadness even from narrowness", that is "granting ample assistance even in getting rid of distress". The adverbial *uruṣyā* means "granting broadness, protecting, rescuing", it combines with *pāyu-* "guard, protector" <sup>662</sup>).

Verbs, originally meaning "to extend, spread, or penetrate" not infrequently assumed the sense of "filling with, bestowing upon" on the one hand and that of "being light, illustrious, illuminating" on the other <sup>663</sup>). Thus e.g. *tanoti* and *ā-tanoti*, the former of which is RV. 3, 6, 5 used in the meaning of "to fill whilst penetrating": *tāva krātū rōdasi ā tatantha* "mit deiner Einsicht hast du beide Welten durchzogen" <sup>664</sup>) and elsewhere in that of "to spread or extend light", even, as e.g. 4, 5, 13 without an explicit object. The verb *prath-* "to become larger or wider, to spread, extend" also served to express the idea of "to extend over", with the implication of "to shine upon, to give light to" (caus. stem): 3, 14, 4 (Agni) the sun is subject—here Geldner <sup>665</sup>) rightly observes that in the eyes of Vedic man light is width, darkness, narrowness—, and also "to become celebrated", the substantive *prathā* meaning, inter alia, "fame, celebrity" <sup>666</sup>).

It does not seem to have been noticed that the idea of room, wide-ness or spatial extensiveness sometimes crops up in those passages which deal with sovereignty. In an Atharvānic text which is to be recited for the benefit of a king who wishes to be restored to his former kingdom <sup>667</sup>), the god Agni is invoked to bend apart (*vyacasva*) widely extending heaven and earth and to lead the royal man who bestows the oblation. The prince himself is requested to come from the furthest distance, the prosperous roads making wide room for him.

Whatever were the thoughts aroused by the epic bards in their listeners when they added to the name of a king such epithets as

<sup>661</sup>) RV. 2, 26, 4; 5, 67, 4; 8, 18, 5. Cf. also 4, 35, 5 etc.

<sup>662</sup>) RV. 6, 44, 7.

<sup>663</sup>) One might also refer to passages such as Chānd. Up. 4, 5, 2 f.: he who knows brahman's quarter which is *prakāśavān* "manifest, expanded" and meditates on it, becomes *prakāśavān* "shining, illustrious" in this world.

<sup>664</sup>) K. F. GELDNER, *Der Rig-Veda*, I, Harvard 1951, p. 342.

<sup>665</sup>) GELDNER, *o.c.*, p. 351.

<sup>666</sup>) It may be remembered that the "going apart" of heaven and earth is conducive to welfare and prosperity; see e.g. AV. 3, 31, 4.

<sup>667</sup>) Atharvaveda 3, 3, 1; cf. Kauśika-sūtra 16, 30 ff.

*dirghabāhu-* or *mahābāhu-* <sup>668</sup>), that the original sense of these adjectives—mention of which has already been made— cannot be disconnected from the conceptions under discussion is, to my mind, beyond any doubt. Modern interpretations have wavered between a 'metaphorical': "who rules a large kingdom" and the literal "long-armed". In favour of the latter explanation reference might be made to the 'ideal' character of a great part of the ancient Indian literature; the poets like to picture their subjects as typical instances of "the hero" (who is valiant), "the princess" (who is lovely and beautiful) etc., their "king" being, of course, a sturdy man. But the very predilection for these and similar epithets and the emphasis laid on the king's robust figure show that the long arms like the broad chest were believed to be essential in a king who came up to the ideal standard. So the "long arms" may be held to point to the ruler's ability to protect a large number of people by his physical strength and to enforce his sway over an extensive territory. It is important to notice that the Persians gave the same epithet, not only to their rulers (cf. Artaxerxes μακρόχερ), but also to Zarathustra <sup>669</sup>), their spiritual leader par excellence. What could be the implications of the long arms extended to protect and bless may also appear from a Vedic verse, addressed to Mitra and Varuṇa, gods who, as we have seen, are also called "kings" <sup>670</sup>): "Stretch out your arms that we may live". Special attention must in this connection be drawn to a feature in the ritual of the royal consecration: the monarch receives the unction with raised arms, whilst standing on the throne which, as has already been observed, represents the navel or centre of the universe. From the stanzas accompanying this act we may conclude that he at this occasion represents the axis mundi. He is the pivot of the universe, the very road along which the blessings of heaven reach the earth. Here the ancient idea of the sacred king who stretches his arms has been made a part of and given a place in an elaborate and significant complex of rites. It is in this connection worthy of attention that in a text used

<sup>668</sup>) See *Numen*, 3/1956, 40.

<sup>669</sup>) Yašt. 17, 22 "you have such handsome calves and such long arms, to your body *hvaronah* is given." Chr. BARTHOLOMAE, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg 1904, 695 doubtless missed the point in his comment: "es galt das also für schön".

<sup>670</sup>) RV. 7, 62, 5 = Vājas. S. 21, 9 etc. Cf. also RV. 2, 38, 2; 1, 113, 1 etc.

to restore a king all the quarters of the sky and all the five divine directions are invoked to call him back <sup>671</sup>).

In short, any authority working for the common good seems to have been credited with the faculty of making room and performing similar deeds. There is an interesting stanza in the R̥gveda (7, 33, 6) relating that the clans of the Tṛtsus "increased in breadth" (*apṛathanta*) when the famous sage Vasiṣṭha became their leader (*puraetā*).

## XX

It seems therefore warranted to suppose that the idea of expansion in connection with royal power is not foreign to the 'symbolism' of the Aśvamedha either. This horse sacrifice, which no doubt was one of the most ancient and important religious ceremonies and by which the monarch ratified his claim to suzerainty over his neighbours, was only performed by those rulers whose strength, power and wealth justified such an ambitious undertaking. The benefits of the sacrifice were extension of the empire, general increase of strength, undisputed power, success in new enterprises, etc. Both the pretensions of the king who undertook the sacrifice and the results throw, it would appear to the present author, light upon one of its main characteristics: the fact that the horse was allowed to roam at its own will for a whole year <sup>672</sup>). Without entering into a discussion of the meaning and the original force of this famous sacrifice, which have given rise to a variety of opinions <sup>673</sup>), there may be room for the observation that the horse, when set free, is to wander into the north-eastern direction, the quarter of 'invincibility' i.e. victory, where is the door of heaven and where victory is gained <sup>674</sup>), that the king who has the sacrifice performed after his consecration (*dikṣā*) is to be celebrated together with the gods, or even with Prajāpati, the creator-god, whose

<sup>671</sup>) Atharvaveda 3, 4, 1; 2. Cf. also 6, 88, 3.

<sup>672</sup>) For the horse sacrifice: HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 149 ff.; KEITH, *Rel. u. Phil.*, p. 343 ff.; P. E. DUMONT, *L'Aśvamedha*, Baltimore 1927; MEYER, *Trilogie III*, p. 237 ff.

<sup>673</sup>) See also W. KOPPERS, *Pferdeopfer und Pferdekult der Indogermanen*, in the *Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte* 4, Salzburg-Leipzig 1936, p. 282 ff.; S. BHAWE, *Die Yajus' des Aśvamedha*, Stuttgart 1939; W. KIRFEL, *Der Aśvamedha und der Puruṣamedha*, in the *Festschrift Schubring* (1951), p. 39 ff.

<sup>674</sup>) Cf. e.g. Ait. Br. 1, 14; V. HENRY, *La magie dans l'Inde antique*, Paris 1904, p. 46.

relations with kingship have already been commented upon, that the horse is identified with the world, that it is directed to go to Agni Vaiśvānara the extending <sup>675</sup>) (*agnim vaiśvānaram sapṛathasam*), that it is explicitly offered to all gods, i.e. to all the powers in the universe <sup>676</sup>) and to Prajāpati, with whom the sacrifice is identified <sup>677</sup>). It may further be argued that the horse is a representative of royal power or dominion (*kṣatra*-) <sup>678</sup>). Both the horse and the king have for a year to abstain from sexual intercourse, no doubt in order to enhance their potency <sup>679</sup>). In harmony with these facts is that the animal is identified with Yama, Āditya (the sun), Soma <sup>680</sup>), kings among the gods. The objects pursued by the horse sacrifice as described in the R̥gveda are cows <sup>681</sup>), horses, sons and all-nourishing possessions, and in addition to these ritual and moral purity (*anā-gastvam*) and dominion <sup>682</sup>). That means, from the point of view of an ancient Indian prince, in short: unqualified welfare. Oldenberg <sup>683</sup>) was, moreover, no doubt right in observing that the whole country was by the roaming horse brought into contact with the divine power inherent in the animal. Since, moreover, the circumambulation of a territory is a means of asserting ownership of it, the roaming of

<sup>675</sup>) Taittiriya-saṃhitā 7, 1, 11 c; Apastamba-śr. 20, 3, 5.

<sup>676</sup>) Cf. Rāmāyaṇa (Beng. rec.) 1, 32, 32 *vaiśvadevika*-, and H. OLDENBERG, *Die Religion des Veda*<sup>1</sup>, Stuttgart-Berlin 1923, p. 473.

<sup>677</sup>) Sat. Br. 13, 4, 1, 15.

<sup>678</sup>) OLDENBERG, *o.c.*, p. 474. Sat. Br. 13, 2, 2, 15. See also OLDENBERG, *o.c.*, p. 474, n. 1 and p. 428, 1. That there is a close association between the horse and the king also emerges from the fact that the mane of the horses in the kingdom must not be trimmed during the year after the king's inauguration when he is not allowed to cut his hair himself (cf. Lāṭyāyana-Śrautasūtra 9, 2, 18; 21).

<sup>679</sup>) For the king see HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 149, and MEYER, *Trilogie III*, p. 239.

<sup>680</sup>) R̥gveda 1, 163, 3.

<sup>681</sup>) See R̥gveda 1, 162, 22. The R̥gvedic aśvamedha was of a more simple character than that described in the later texts.

<sup>682</sup>) These goods, wealth and dominion, often go together (see also *Aspects of early V̥iṣṇuism*, esp. p. 190 ff.). On various occasions different aspects of the general advantage of the horse sacrifice seem to have been emphasized. Thus Daśaratha in the Rāmāyaṇa (1. R. 8; 13 f.) has it exclusively performed because he is desirous of offspring. (Cf. also Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa 2, 267). The aśvamedha in Mbh. 14 on the other hand serves to purify king Yudhiṣṭhira and the earth after the murderous war (cf. 14, 3, 5 ff.). By both sacrifices a disastrous state of affairs was to be brought to a conclusion, evil affecting the king and his realm was to be annihilated.

<sup>683</sup>) OLDENBERG, *l.c.*

the kingly animal no doubt had a similar significance: it was to assert the king's ownership.

The meaning of the sacrifice was also expressed otherwise<sup>684</sup>: it was in the beginning mystically "seen" (and hence instituted) by Prajāpati when he was desirous of offspring and cattle and when he wished to pervade (permeate, aver, extend to, over) the world (*vīmān lokān āpnuyām*), and to gain (exclusive) ownership of the heroic power which belongs especially to Indra (*indriyaṃ vīryam*). Anyone who wished to obtain the same results now should perform this sacrifice, for it is *vīryam* "heroic power". When they formerly performed it all was in possession of heroic power, the brahman became a mantra-making ṛṣi, the military man a "piercing hero", the vaiśya a wealthy and successful breeder and farmer; the women were pretty and faithful, the grain ripened without previous ploughing, there was no want of food, liquid was everywhere, etc. In the ritual texts the wish is pronounced that the king may, through the sacrificial horse, kill his enemy, be irresistible, be sovereign ruling a wealthy and prosperous people, and attain old age<sup>685</sup>. We might also recall to memory the beautiful blessings whispered by the adhvaryu priest to the brahman: "Let there be born in the kingdom a brahman illustrious for religious knowledge, a prince, heroic, skilled archer, piercing with shafts, mighty warrior; let the cow give abundant milk, the ox be good at carrying, the courser swift, the woman industrious. Let Parjanya send rain according to our desire; let our fruit-bearing plants ripen: may acquisition and preservation of property be secured to us." Besides, Indra is, by means of stanzas containing the words *vi mṛdhaḥ* "ward off, dispense" to scatter and subdue the enemies<sup>686</sup>. The *āsvamedha* is universal in character; being all, it serves to obtain all and to secure all<sup>687</sup>; it is a means of obtaining all desired objects, of attaining all attainments or success (*vyasṭīr vyaśnuvīya*)<sup>688</sup>. It is therefore not surprising to read that this kṣatriya's sacrifice<sup>689</sup> is to

684) See Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa 2, 267.

685) See Taittiriya-brāhmaṇa 3, 8, 5; Āpastamba-śrautasūtra 20, 4, 1 ff.

686) See Āpastamba śr. 20, 20, 7 and Caland's note. It may be added that the king who performs an *āsvamedha* is stated to overcome death: see Caland's note on Āp. śr. s. 20, 22, 9.

687) Śat. Br. 13, 4, 2, 2.

688) Śat. Br. 13, 4, 1, 1.

689) Śat. Br. 13, 4, 1, 2.

be executed by a king who pretends to be the sovereign of the entire earth<sup>690</sup>.

It will be relevant to notice also that the horse is stated to be a courser born from the gods and a *vājīn-* i.e. a "Siegesrosz", a container of *vāja-* "vigour" or, rather, a horse that generates, promotes, wins, secures, especially by racing<sup>691</sup> and similar feats of vigour or heroism, a particular vital power called *vāja-* which, apart from securing victory, is often associated with vegetative life and growth in nature<sup>692</sup>. The sacrificial horse which "went to be slaughtered" is explicitly called a courser possessed of *vāja-* (*vājy arvā*)<sup>693</sup>. Now the most famous of the Rgvedic horses, Dadhikrā or Dadhikrāvan, is not only extolled as a hero<sup>694</sup>, victorious, *vāja*-winning, and expected to generate as a true courser, running quickly and bird-like, refreshment, invigorating food, and heaven, strength and longevity<sup>695</sup>, and to confer a state of holiness or divinity on those who praise it<sup>696</sup>, this animal is also described as extending himself over the nations of mankind, and in this he resembles Sūrya (the Sun), pervading the water with his light<sup>697</sup>; overpowering he pervades the inhabited countries. Besides, this horse is "heroic like a king" and the man who possesses and reveres it is sure to win land and fields<sup>698</sup>. The same epithet is given to the sun when it is conceived as a steed. The heroes, wealthy men, potent male beings and persons paying the costs of the sacrifices are, on the other hand, also called *vājinaḥ* "possessors of *vāja-*", and the same adjective is often applied to Soma, Agni, Indra, Pūṣan (a deity interested in growth, wealth, well-being, and especially in the well-being of herds and flocks) and other gods.

Although we are not attempting to trace the origin of this rite and to attribute its various components to different influences the general

690) Āpast. Śr. 20, 1, 1 and Caland's note.

691) Cf. also Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa 3, 192 "They run a race, in order to reach Prajāpati and to win the heavenly world".

692) See my *Aspects of early Vṛṣṇism*, p. 44 ff.; 147.

693) Rgveda 1, 163, 12. The phrase is also found 4, 36, 6; 38, 10 etc.

694) Rgveda 4, 38-40; see also *Aspects of early Vṛṣṇism*, p. 147 f.

695) Rgveda 4, 40, 2; cf. 39, 4; 6.

696) Cf. Rgveda 4, 39, 3; 6: remembering and praising the horse leads to purity ("sinlessness"; *anāgas-*); to "fragrance" (see D. J. HOENS, *Sānti*, Thesis Utrecht 1951, p. 62); to being in harmony with Mitra and Varuṇa.

697) Rgveda 4, 38, 10 *ā... tatāna* etc.; 9; cf. 10, 178, 3.

698) Cf. Rgveda 4, 38, 1.

impression we obtain from the above survey may in conclusion be said to be as follows: the horse as a representative of royal power or dominion—it has also various connections with Varuṇa<sup>699</sup>)—accumulates by running and chastity, power, and in particular that special power which was given the name of *vāja-*, i.e. generative power conducive to life in nature and vegetation, which as a rule is attended by wealth, victory and similar much desired aims. By roaming about freely it was on the one hand to spread its divine power over the whole country and on the other to extend the rule and power of its king, or rather to establish it, to ratify his claims on overlordship, and at the same time to re-establish it and to reinvigorate it intrinsically, to place it among divine powers<sup>700</sup>) what involves to strengthen the potency of kingship, to enhance welfare and fertility all over the country and the other natural consequences of prosperous sovereignty. The Aśvamedha therefore really was the most important manifestation of kingship.

As the Aśvamedha is the king of sacrifices<sup>701</sup>), and as on the other hand the sacrificer, i.e. the king, is identical with the aśvamedha, certain peculiarities of this ritual are stated to correspond to certain qualities of the king. Thus he is disposed to be “strong in arms”, because the front legs of two goats sacrificed during the aśvamedha are tied—“he thereby lays strength into the front legs”<sup>702</sup>) and strong in thighs, for similar reasons. Before we leave this point we should call attention to an important statement made in the Viṣṇudharmottara-purāṇa<sup>703</sup>). On every anniversary of the first ‘coronation’ the king should repeat the rites; this leads to welfare, to increase of the country, to the destruction of the enemies and so on. Then the ‘inauguration’ has become cyclic, annually carrying the ruler and his realm beyond a difficult stage, and recreating the beneficial power inherent in kingship.

The central and dominant position of the ruler is also illustrated by the incidental identification<sup>704</sup>) of rulership or nobility with the

699) This has — in a rather one-sided manner, it is true, — been pointed out by MEYER, *Trilogie*, see III, p. 314.

700) See Ṛgveda 1, 162, 14.

701) Sat. Br. 13, 2, 2, 1 ff.

702) Sat. Br. 13, 2, 2, 5.

703) Viṣṇudh. Pur. 2, a. 162.

704) Cf. Sat. Br. 8, 7, 2, 2; 9, 4, 3, 5. See also EGGLING, *o.c.* IV, p. 132.

*lokaṃ prṇā iṣṭakā*, i.e. one of the bricks used for building the sacrificial altar and set up with the formula *lokaṃ prṇa* “fill the world”: these bricks are therefore considered to fill the world, or to penetrate—like the ruler—everywhere. The kṣatriya is also called *aparimita-* i.e. “unlimited, unbounded”<sup>705</sup>).

Coming now to a short note on the significance of the term *virāj-*, which is a very frequent title of a sovereign who “rules far and wide”, we first quote some texts<sup>706</sup>).

Virāj is not infrequently coupled with names of very high divine powers: A.V. 4, 11, 7 Indra, Agni, Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin (“Supreme Being”) <sup>706</sup>), Virāj; 8, 5, 10 the same powers (*devāḥ*) and Viṣṇu, Savitar, Rudra, etc.; 11, 5, 7 the brahmācārin or Veda-student is described as generating brahman, the water, the world, Prajāpati, parameṣṭhin and Virāj. AV. 11, 5, 16 Prajāpati is related to “extend himself” or to “bear rule” (*vi-rāj-*), this Virāj becoming the controlling (*vaśin-*) Indra.

AV. 7, 84, 1 Agni is invoked to shine unassailable, ‘immortal’, being *virāj-* (“wide-spreading or -ruling”) <sup>708</sup>), bearing dominion (*kṣa-trabhṛt-*).

In AV. 8, 9 and 10 *virāj-* is extolled as the first and creative principle. AV. 8, 9, 8 f. it is a very high power, existing in the highest firmament, being breathless, but going by the breath of breathing ones; it (or: she) touches everything; if it should fall, the sacrifices fall with it; it (she) goes unto *svarāj-* from behind.

AV. 8, 10, 1 Virāj is unequivocally identified with the universe: “V. was this (universe) in the beginning”; after having ascended and descended in various ritual fires (st. 2 ff.) etc. it (she) is said to stand striding (*vikrānta-*) in the atmosphere (st. 8). Thereupon the gods and men, convinced that she knows that upon which the members of both classes may subsist, and addressing her with names like Refreshment (*ūrjā*), Youthful vitality (*sūrtā*) etc., milk her—she

705) Ait. Br. 8, 20.

706) I also refer to L. RENOU, *Journal Asiatique* 240 (1952), p. 141 ff., and to my *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 187 etc. The geographic distribution of the terms *virāj*, *saṃvāj* etc. which is taught by the ancient tradition need not detain us here.

707) *Parameṣṭhin-*, a “divinity” which is sometimes identified with Agni, sometimes with Prajāpati.

708) WHITNEY-LANMAN.

appears in the shape of a cow—; she yields herbs and waters, expansion (*vyacas*), and the sacrifice. From her ensuing migrations through the trees, the fathers, the gods, men, and from the account of her producing agriculture and grain, brahman and tapas and various other important entities, her universal and pervasive character distinctly emerges. From the at first sight paradox 8, 9, 7 “they call Virāj the father of Brahman” we may also conclude that she was conceived as the universe or, rather, as the ‘idea’ of expansiveness ‘before creation’.

What this signifies becomes also evident from a well-known stanza <sup>709</sup> where Virāj is said to have been born from the original Being or Puruṣa, who in his turn is born from Virāj. Here Virāj is the female principle of creation <sup>710</sup>. But when he was born, the Puruṣa was greater than the earth behind and in front. As is to be expected a priori, the female principle of creation was believed to be present in a young newly-married woman; in the Atharvaveda the bride is considered a *virāj-*, with good progeny, and as such she “has conquered or gained the victory” (*atyajaiṣit*); another passage in the above collection of stanzas describing the *virāj-* runs as follows: “great might is in her: the young woman, the fruit-bearing generatrix, has gained the victory”. These texts probably shed light on a third passage: *śivā syonā patiloke vi rāja* which, though translated by Whitney and Lanman: “do thou, propitious, pleasant, bear rule in thy husband’s world”, may perhaps rather be taken to imply the sense of: “prove to be a worthy representative of the female principle of expansion, i.e. generation” or “spread thyself and be productive” <sup>711</sup>.

But this is not all. Virāj also was the hypostatization of the conception of the universe as a totality. It is the all as the totality of things, the sum of all existence. “The body of the Virāj is made of the material objects in their aggregate. He is the manifested god whose senses are the directions, whose body is the five elements, and whose consciousness glows with the feeling “I am all” <sup>712</sup>. AV. 8, 9, 1 “whence were the two (young of the Virāj) born? out of what world? out of which earth?” points in the same direction.

<sup>709</sup> RV. 10, 90, 5; cf. AV. 19, 6, 9.

<sup>710</sup> Bṛhadār. Up. 4, 2, 3 Virāj is the female partner of Indra.

<sup>711</sup> AV. 14, 2, 74; 8, 9, 11; 14, 1, 64.

<sup>712</sup> See S. RADHAKRISHNAN, *Indian Philosophy*, I, London 1948, p. 171 f.

Here may especially be noticed the part played by the ideal first king Pṛthu or Pṛthī. In the above account of Virāj’s migration he is completely put on a par with the other figures who milked her successively: when she came to the gods Savitar was the milker, when she came to the serpent, the serpent-king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, when she reached the fathers, Antaka (Death). The conclusion must be this that Pṛthī, who milked her when she came to men, is the representative of mankind in the same way as Death is the representative of all the deceased, as Kubera’s son Rajatanābhi represents the ‘spirits’ (a class of supra-normal beings), and so on. He represents a province of the universe, a class of beings, to wit: mankind.

Accordingly, AV. 9, 10, 24 identifies Virāj with speech, the earth, the atmosphere, Prajāpati, and death; besides, he (for here the name is masculine) is the emperor of those who are accomplished; in his control are what was and what is to be (the author adding: “let him put in my control what was and what is to be”); 10, 7, 19 *virāj-* is called the udder of the frame of creation (*skambha-*), brahman being its mouth. This must anyhow mean: a very extensive source of nourishment. This trait is in harmony with the frequent identification of *virāj-* with food (*anna-*, *annādyā-*), emphasized by Renou <sup>713</sup>. The *virāj-* is not only food, it is also *śrī-* <sup>714</sup>. AV. 12, 3, 11 *virāj-* is identified with *dhruvā* “the fixed quarter”, i.e. the ‘point of the heavens’ directly under the feet: we are reminded of 14, 2, 15 where the bride when made to stand firm on a stone is addressed as *virāj-*, whereas ŚB. 12, 6, 1, 40 and elsewhere <sup>715</sup> *virāj-* is identified with the earth; cf. also AV. 3, 17, 2. Hence also the connection between fixed quarter, *virāj-* and Viṣṇu alluded to in AV. 15, 14, 5, Viṣṇu being concerned with the axis mundi <sup>716</sup>. AV. 13, 3, 5 it is spoken of as being set in the sun, together with Parameṣṭhin, Agni and others (see above). From 8, 9, 10 it appears that she is thought of as ordering or arranging, as striding, as being connected with seasons and dawns; from “that she is supposed to be the same that ‘first shone forth’ (*vi-vas-*)”; that she goes among “these other ones (fem.)”, having entered (them); that greatness is in her, that she is a bride, a mother,

<sup>713</sup> L. RENOUE, *l.c.*; see also M. MAUSS, *Mélanges-Lévi*, Paris 1911, p. 333; GONDA, *Early Viṣṇuism*, p. 187.

<sup>714</sup> For references *Early Viṣṇuism*, *l.c.*

<sup>715</sup> Mbh. 12, 262, 41.

who has conquered. One can become the abode of *virāj-* and of all the gods and deities by "knowing thus": AV. 15, 6, 8. AV. 9, 2, 5 the term under discussion is associated with Vāc "Speech" and a milk-cow, which is the daughter of Kāma, i.e. "Love".

In later texts *virāj-* is also used in the sense of *kṣatriya-*, a member of the ruling class: e.g. in the Mahābhārata <sup>717</sup>) where the commentator Nīlakaṇṭha explains it by *virājamānaḥ*: the king meant is Purūravas. In illustration of the connotations implied in the term *virāj-* attention may also be drawn to a stanza in the Atharvaveda <sup>718</sup>) where the upper beam of a house which is built is implored to be powerful (*ugra-*) and *virāj-*, driving off the enemies. This beam, like another *virāj-*, for instance a king by extending itself in a high position, protects the inhabitants of the house. That a mighty and protecting power was believed to be inherent in a *virāj-* may further appear from other passages in the same corpus: a special offering is invoked to bear rule widely in its own field, being free from disease <sup>719</sup>). Among these who are said to bear that rule is Prajāpati; the *virāj-* also became the controlling Indra <sup>720</sup>), who elsewhere is such a mighty personality <sup>721</sup>). He who *vi-rājati* frees from distress <sup>722</sup>). In the Ṛgveda the verb is not infrequently used, *inter alia* in the sense of "having the disposal of, caring for, guarding, ruling, prosecuting a profession, ranking above etc".

Virāj may therefore be regarded as having been, in ancient times, a power of very high rank representing universal expansiveness, which involves: being powerful and creative, and producing food and refreshment. In the etymological explication given by Yāska <sup>723</sup>) this character is, to a certain extent, reflected: according to him the term *virāj-* derives from either *virājana-*, i.e. "ruling widely, being eminent", or *virādhana-* "being loose, deviation", or *viprāpaṇa-* "expansion". Of course, only the first combination can stand criticism—*vi-* expressing the idea of distribution, of "being apart, asunder" or "through"—and the above brief study of the term may therefore shed some light

716) See *Early Viṣṇuism*, p. 81 ff.; 173.

717) Mbh. 1, 75, 23.

718) AV. 3, 12, 6.

719) AV. 11, 1, 22.

720) AV. 11, 5, 16.

721) AV. 6, 98, 2.

722) AV. 19, 42, 4.

723) Yāska, Nirukta, 7, 13.

on the ideas associated with the root *rāj-* in general and the substantive *rājan-* with which it often combines, in particular. The king is indeed characterized by expansiveness, by universality, by creativeness and productiveness; he is the totality of the people and the realm.

As to the connotations expressed by the compound *vi-rājati* they cannot always be distinguished from the meaning of the simplex. Yet, such passages as RV. 5, 63, 7 *viśvam bhuvanaṃ virājasi* "rules the whole world" (Mitra and Varuṇa); 5, 55, 2 "ye rule far and wide" (*urvīyā*, Maruts); 1, 3, 12 "thou art mistress over all thoughts" (Sarasvatī); 5, 8, 5 "thou bearest sway over many foods" (Agni), and especially Sat. Br. 8, 5, 1, 5 *yo vāva sarvasu dikṣu virājati sa eva virājati* "who bears sway in all regions of the universe, he may be said to bear sway" unequivocally show that this verb often helps to emphasize the idea of "widely, everywhere". Like *rāj-* it can also express the idea of "being illustrious, conspicuous, eminent" in various contexts dealing with good fortune and prosperity <sup>724</sup>).

The word *svarāj-* "self-ruling, independent" also deserves a passing notice. As a compound it belongs to the same group as *svāpati-* (Ṛgveda) "one's own lord" <sup>725</sup>), said of Indra and Agni; *svāyaśas-* (Ved.) "glorious, illustrious through one's own" (Indra, Agni, Soma, the waters, etc.); *svābhūnu-* (RV.) "self-luminous" (Uṣas, the Maruts etc.); *svabhū-* (later Upan. and sūtras) "self-existent" (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva); whereas *svayū-* "ruling of one's own free will or own right" (RV.) is, side by side with *svarāj-* and *svayaśāstara-*, an epithet of Indra <sup>726</sup>). The compound *svarājan-* "self-ruling, a self-ruler", which *inter alia* occurs in the Taittirīya-texts, applies to Indra, the brahmins etc. <sup>727</sup>). The term *svarāj-*, which in the Vedic texts is of considerable occurrence, is not infrequently used in a remarkable way <sup>728</sup>): in connection with the swift celestial courses of the Aśvins; with the immortal Maruts, with a "foremost heaven-winner", with Indra whom

724) See *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 200.

725) That means: "über den kein anderer gebietet" (H. GRASSMANN, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-veda*, 1626).

726) Rgveda 3, 45, 5.

727) For the opposite *anyarājan-* see Chāndogya-upaniṣad 7, 25, 2.

728) See Rgveda 1, 181, 2; 5, 58, 1; Atharvaveda 5, 2, 8; Rgveda 1, 61, 9; 8, 81, 4; 61, 2; 45, 5; 49, 2; 8, 69, 17; 7, 66, 6; 2, 28, 1; Atharvaveda 10, 7, 31; Rgveda 1, 80; 5, 66, 6.

people worship respectfully, who in extent surpasses heaven, earth and atmosphere, who is the one who disposes of possessions, who is to wield the power called *ojas*, who is the first among the highest; with the Ādityas and their mother Aditi, "the protectors of the inviolable divine ordinances, who as 'kings' (*rājānaḥ*, i.e. *svāmināḥ* "lords" Sāyana) are very powerful"; with the rich and wealthy Varuṇa, who shall surpass all others in greatness. Autocracy (*svārājyam*) is in the Atharvaveda characterized as that beyond which there is nothing else existent. It belongs to Indra after having defeated the Vṛtra, that is to say, after having expelled him from heaven and earth. But the *svārājyam* of Mitra and Varuṇa is also qualified as most expansive (*vyaciṣṭha-*) and "protecting many" (*bahupāyya-*).

We now have to return for a moment to the *nirājanā* ceremony. On the authority of Varāhamihira<sup>729</sup>), whose description probably is the oldest of those extant, the king "whose soldiers, horses (*vājina-*) and elephants are most pleased, whose army is glittering from the beams of stainless weapons, whose army shows no evil symptoms (resultant on bad omens) and strikes terror into the ranks of the enemy, shall soon conquer the earth". The king who performs the rite must, in full pomp, take his seat on a tiger-skin; a priest touches horses, soldiers, elephants, and the king himself with 'holy' water pronouncing prayers for the expiation of sin and the prosperity of the kingdom (*śāntikaṣaṣṭikamantraiḥ*); the rite is stated to cause a state of appeasement of evil for the weal of the kingdom (*śāntim rāṣṭravacyddhyai*). After the ceremony the king mounts and moves with his army in the northeasterly direction, like Indra amid the victorious gods. The expiatory character of the rite is also evident from the construction of a "seat of appeasement" (*śāntisadman-*) on an approved spot, to the north-east of the town, of an arched doorway (*torana-*) under which the horse is to be led<sup>730</sup>), and of various auspicious and evil-averting objects and figures, such as banners, amulets, fishes. As already emerges from the description given in the preceding part of this treatise it is the king himself who has an important share in the performance of the rites. Indian authorities in

729) Varāhamihira (6th cent. A.D.), *Brhatsaṃhitā*, a. 44, 28; 13; 20; 21; 22; 26.

giving their opinion about the rite are also explicit on this point<sup>731</sup>).

May this fact shed some light upon the signification of the rite and on the name with which it is denoted? The interpretation of the term given by Kṣīrasvāmin: *nirājana-* means *ajana-* i.e. "throwing (*kṣepa-*) of propitiatory water" does not convince: although water is used, the combination with the verb *aj-* "to drive (cattle etc.)" is uncommon. The explication alternatively proposed by the same commentator ("das völlige Erglänzen-lassen von Reittier, Waffe u.s.w. mit Mantra und Feuerbrand"<sup>732</sup>) seems to be right in that it is based on the analysis *nis* + *rāj-*. In the modern dictionaries two meanings of *nirājayati* are distinguished: "to cause to shine upon, illuminate" and "to perform the *nirājanā* ceremony". On closer inspection it seems however possible to maintain that there is only one meaning: "to lustrate or purify". Compare Probodhacandrodaya 2, 8 without touching his feet the princes purify the surface of the ground beside his foot-stool with the rays of their crest jewels (cf. also 4, 30 +): as is well known jewels were highly valued, inter alia because of their supposed power of dispelling enemies, danger and various misfortunes; they can also purify, bestow wealth, children, triumph and good health, in short they may give what one desires<sup>733</sup>). The original or etymological sense of the verb may therefore have been "to remove (*nis-* "away, forth"), by applying a special lustral power, evil influences", the lustral power being implied in a display of the power or the manifestation of the idea contained in the root *rāj-*<sup>734</sup>), i.e. by a display of majesty, royal power and splendour. In the course of time the original sense was, anyhow, forgotten<sup>735</sup>).

730) For this act of lustration see MEYER, *Trilogie* III, p. 334, s.v. *torana-*.

731) See e.g. Amarakoṣa 2, 8, 94, where the *nirājanā* is identified with the *lohābhisāra*-ceremony or "iron-attack" ("Eisenentsendung") which is to be performed by kings, and Kṣīrasvāmin's commentary (*Trivandrum Sanskrit Series* 51, ad 2, 8, 94 a), where both ceremonies, though distinguished, are closely associated.

732) LOSCH, *o.c.*, p. 53.

733) See e.g. Varāhamihira, *Brhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 80 ff.; 81, 22 *mahāpavitra-*; 82, 6 the sovereign who wears a special ruby shall never be ill or poisoned; there will be always rain in his domain and he annihilates his enemies.

734) For the sense of the compound one might compare: *niḥ-sic-* "to pour away, remove"; *nir-mṛj-* "to rub or wipe off"; *nir-vid-* "to do away with"; *ni-ruc-* "to drive away by shining" etc.

735) Cf. e.g. Bhavabhūti, *Uttarāmacarita*, 6, 18.

There may be room here for an etymological digression in order to illustrate the original meaning of the root *rāj-*, which in my opinion originally expressed the idea of "stretching (out), stretching oneself out", the king being the one who "stretched himself out and protected (other men) under his powerful arms" <sup>736</sup>). The same gesture can however also serve to enforce obedience (cf. e.g. RV. 2, 38, 2). Besides, it was of course thought possible for divine powers to stretch out their arms and hands; in the Rgveda the god Savitar, the divine motor and impeller, is stated to stand erect, broad-handed (*pr̥thupāni-*) and to extent his arms, so as to make himself obeyed by all beings.

In a thorough examination of the noun *rajas* Burrow rightly concluded that this word etymologically belongs to the root *rāj-* "to stretch (out)", that is to say: to the same root which is contained in *rāj-* "king". From a study of the contexts in which the word *rajas* is used in the Rgveda it emerges that "space, expanse, extent" is its most usual meaning <sup>737</sup>). In a particular sense it applies to the intermediate space between sky and earth: Agni is said to have gone through the *rajas*, i.e. the space between heaven and earth; the sun pervades it with its rays; the three-wheeled chariot of the Aśvins which appears in the sky before dawn moves round it; in so doing it resembles the sun. The sacrifice is compared to the *rajas* which has expanded (*vitata-*). But in the plural the reference is to the regions of space in general, and in the dual to heaven and earth. We also hear of a *divo rajah* "the expanse of the sky". Elsewhere a stretch of country or distance is meant: "the swift steeds traversing the *rajas* with their steps beat on the surface of the earth with their hoofs". Similarly, with regard to an eminent courser. The extent (*rajas*) of the earth or universe is not big enough to contain Indra. The word can

<sup>736</sup>) For a more detailed discussion of the meaning of this root I refer to a paper *Semantisches zu idg. rēg-* "König" und zur Wurzel *reġ-* "(sich aus-)strecken" which is to appear in the *Zeitschrift für vergl. Sprachforschung* (Kuhn's Zeitschrift).

<sup>737</sup>) On *rajas* see especially T. BURROW in the *Bulletin of the School of Or. and Afr. Studies* 12, London 1948, p. 645 ff. — Cf. RV. 1, 58, 1; 3, 1, 5; 1, 50, 7; 84, 1; 4, 36, 1; 45, 2; 6; 1, 83, 2; 1, 62, 5; 2, 31, 2; 10, 56, 5; 8, 77, 5; 7, 21, 6; 1, 52, 14; 50, 7; 6, 61, 11; 5, 48, 2. — As already pointed out by BURROW, p. 648, the Avestan *razah-* (V. 8, 97) has a similar meaning, *duire asahi razahqm* does not mean "fern an einem Ort der Einsamkeit" (Bartholomae), but "in a remote district of the regions of space (of the world)".

also apply to a divine being. Heaven and earth are not equal to Indra in size, and the rivers have not reached the limit of his extent (*rajas*). The *rajas* is called "broad, wide" (*pr̥thu-*, *uru-*). The verb *tan-* "to spread, extend" is sometimes used in connection with *rajas*.

## XXII

It would not be improper here to go into a brief discussion of the term *cakravartin-*, the title of the emperor who according to the later belief <sup>738</sup>) consisted of a part of Viṣṇu, i.e. was a partial incarnation of that Supreme Deity. The dictionaries <sup>739</sup>) in translating it by "a ruler the wheels of whose chariot roll everywhere without obstruction, emperor, sovereign of the world", follow Indian explications <sup>740</sup>). However, *-vartin-* at the end of a compound regularly conveys the sense of "being situated, abiding, staying in etc.": cf. *kaṇṭhavartin-* "being in the throat" (Kālidāsa); *pārśvavartin-* "standing by the side, attendant" (Kāvyā); *madhyavartin-* "being in the middle, central" (Kāvyā etc.); *vaśavartin-* "being under the control of" (Mbh. etc.), etc. <sup>741</sup>). The remarkable *maṇḍalavartin-* which occurs in the Bhāgavata-purāṇa in the sense of "governor of a province or ruler of a small kingdom", though obviously formed after the model of *cakravartin-* points the same way. The compound *guruvartin-* (epics) means "behaving respectfully towards parents or venerable persons" is not essentially different, the relation between the members of the compound being unaltered. So the term *cakravartin-*, though occurring as early as the Maitrī-upaniṣad. 1, 4 can hardly be interpreted otherwise. The explanation "who sets rolling the wheel (of his dominion), turner

<sup>738</sup>) Cf. e.g. Brahmanḍa Pur. 1, 26, 78.

<sup>739</sup>) Cf. *Petrograd Dict.* 2, 911; MONIER-WILLIAMS 381.

<sup>740</sup>) However, the authorities do not agree in all respects. Nīlakaṇṭha, on Mbh. 1, 74, 127 for instance, observes: *cakram rathacakram ājñā vā anyatarena sarvaṃ vyāpnotīti cakravartī*. Cf. the Mātākṣara on Yājñ. 1, 266 *pratyācakraṭā: apratīhatājñatā*.

<sup>741</sup>) It is not difficult to give some parallels of adjectives in *-in-* denoting a close contact, a person who is charged or entrusted with a task, an "Inhaber" etc.: see J. WACKERNAGEL-A. DERRUNNER, *Altindische Grammatik*, II<sup>2</sup>, Göttingen 1954, p. 333 ff.; compare especially such titles as *śreṣṭhin-* "a distinguished man, chief of an association, head of a guild" and *parameṣṭhin-* "chief, principal". Being more specialized in sense they cannot be called complete synonyms of their "Grundwort".



of the wheel" (2) which is not incompatible with the rules of Sanskrit grammar<sup>743</sup>) may perhaps be regarded as a re-interpretation. If this be correct, the only point which needs clearing up is: what is meant by a *cakra*- in this connection?

What then is a *cakra*-? The original, i.e. etymological sense of the word is "wheel": Avestan *čaxra* (Yt. 10, 136), Engl. *wheel* etc., belonging, with other words, to the root *k<sup>w</sup>el-* "to turn, move round". It does not seem to be an unwarranted supposition that already in pre-historic times the word could also express related meanings: the cognate *κύκλος* expresses, in the earlier Greek texts, mostly the sense of "ring, circle"; moreover, it can, partly in comparatively ancient documents, stand for "any circular body". It is on the other hand beyond doubt that the wheel had already at an early period, what is sometimes incorrectly qualified as a metaphorical or symbolical value, that is to say that it involved conceptions of a ritual or magico-religious order<sup>744</sup>). The *cakra*- or wheel as a 'symbol' is generally assumed to be derived from the wheel of the sun which in its daily course illumines and rules the earth<sup>745</sup>). That the 'symbolism' of the wheel was present to the

742) Cf. also the *Petrograd Dict.* II, 911: "der die Räder seines Wagens ungehemmt über alle Länder rollen lässt".

743) See WACKERNAGEL-DEBRUNNER, *o.c.*, p. 342 f.

744) The ancient texts supply a large number of instances of the important rôle played by the wheel in the thought of Vedic men. The wheel of the chariot of the sun is e.g. mentioned RV. 1, 121, 13; 130, 9; 174, 5; 175, 4; 5, 31, 11; it is checked by Indra: 4, 28, 2, or stolen by the same god: 4, 30, 4; 5, 201, 10. It may be added that this chariot which is the visible representation of the year and of time in general — hence the wheel of the year e.g. RV. 1, 164, 11 — has only one wheel: 1, 164, 2; AV. 10, 8, 7; the sun is said to make it turn: 7, 63, 2 (cf. 1, 164, 14); 2, 11, 20. We find the wheel also in similes. RV. 6, 24, 3, the two worlds being compared to two wheels, Indra to the axle which reaches beyond them (cf. 10, 89, 4). All worlds, abodes, or beings (*bhuvana*-) are called wheels: AV. 19, 53, 1; cf. 9, 9, 2 etc.; or all beings are placed on a revolving wheel: RV. 1, 164, 13 (cf. 11; AV. 9, 9, 14). The wheel of dominion — thus GELDNER — occurs RV. 10, 93, 9, Indra being the one who controls it; 8, 63, 8 the same god protects or helps along the turning wheel; cf. also 10, 89, 2.

745) For the wheel see also K. A. TIEMANN, in H. BÄCHTOLD-STÄUBLI, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* VII, p. 463 ff.: "Das Rad findet ... eine so verschiedenartige Anwendung, dass es nicht möglich ist, diese Formen alle auf eine Grundvorstellung zurückzuführen: ... magisch, apotropäisch, Orakelkraft ...; häufig ... im Kulte des Jahresfeuers: alle Glaubensäusserungen beziehen sich nur auf die Verbreitung von Fruchtbarkeit und Gedeihen oder auf die Abwehr von Schaden und feindlichen Dämonen. In den meisten Fällen sind

'Indian mind' is also apparent from Kālidāsa's statement that the sovereign who could achieve the ideal of ruling the entire world under one umbrella, drove a chariot of unchecked course up to the end of directions, and similar phrases which also recur in inscriptions<sup>746</sup>).

According to the Petrograd Dictionary<sup>747</sup>) *cakra*- is sometimes equivalent to *rāṣṭra*- "dominion" meaning "das über die Länder hinrollende Rad des Monarchen, Herrschaft" ("the wheel of a monarch's chariot rolling over his dominions, realm, sovereignty"). I would propose the following emendation, taking *cakra*- to be the 'symbol' or rather representation of conquering efficacy. On the one hand the wheel constitutes the moving power of a carriage, and chariot races are, as we already know, a very important means of generating *vāja*- and obtaining or establishing dominion. On the other hand the sun which is itself a wheel, ever invincible and ever indefatigable, turns its circle in the sky and the universe. We must recall to memory the famous Buddhist *dharmacakka*, the so-called Wheel of Law, or, rather, the conquering efficacy, perfection, supremacy implicated in the Dhamma, which like the sun illumines and rules the earth, and the likewise Buddhist *brahmacakka* "the excellent wheel", i.e. the doctrine of the Buddha. The wheel is representative of the universality of the spiritual dominion of the Enlightened One, whose secular counterpart is the universal earthly monarch, both of them manifesting the same universal principle, the former on the spiritual, the latter on the secular plane. To roll or move the wheel belongs to

Räder und Scheibe nicht viel mehr als das Mittel, um die Zauberkraft des Jahresfeuers auf einen möglichst grossen Umkreis auszudehnen. Häufig findet man im deutschen Volksglauben die Vorstellung, dass Dämonen zu bestimmten Zeiten auf einem Wagen oder einer Radwelle umziehen. Des öfteren begegnet bei Festen und Umzügen der Brauch, Räder, die meist ..... in drehender Bewegung gehalten werden, mitzuführen. Eine ziemlich Bedeutung besitzt das Rad im altdeutschen Rechtsleben". Special attention may be drawn to a symbolism already known to Plato (Phaedrus 24): the wheel, as "symbol" of motion, can express the idea of life in general. [Now see also L. SILBURN, *Instant et cause*, Paris 1955, p. 14 ff.].

746) Cf. Kāl. Ragh. 2, 47; 3, 4; Śāk. 7, 33 etc.; Mathurā stone Inscription of Candragupta II, etc.

747) Petr. Dict. II, 907, 11. — In a stanza to be pronounced during the simantonnayana (see e.g. KANE, *Hist. of Dharmas*. II, p. 222 f.) it reads: "fixed is the wheel (i.e. dominion) of this river (i.e. the river near which the sacrificer lives)".

a king: "I am that king, that peerless king of dhamma; in accordance with dhamma I roll my *cakka*" ("wheel of Truth") 748). Needless to observe that Buddha is the *cakravartin*- par excellence.

It will however be difficult to assert that the other meanings and connotations must be kept completely apart. The "wheel" could, for instance in magic and yoga, also be a 'centre' containing power 749). It may in this connection be useful to observe that the 'symbolism' connected with kingship plays also an important part in those rites which, in the Tantrist practices of a later period, centre in the *maṇḍala*- or 'mystic' circle 750). The ceremonies performed in a *maṇḍala*- are in essence an *abhiseka*-, i.e. a royal consecration; before entering the circle the pupil who is to be initiated is presented with the royal insignia. He becomes free, i.e. superior to the cosmic powers, he becomes a sovereign. May we, by analogy with this ritual, which probably is much older than our sources, infer from the above data that a *cakravartin*- originally was a king who participated in the conquering efficacy of the 'wheel', i.e. of the sun, of the *vāja*-winning and 'imperialistic' chariot, of a power centre of universality, of universal dominion? Some importance may perhaps be attached to the epithets added to the *cakravartin*'s *cakra*- 751): it spreads abroad, is brilliant, heavenly, invincible. The central and dominant position of the person who occupies a place in a 'wheel' may also be illustrated by a passage in an upaniṣad 752): like the spokes on the hub of a wheel, everything is established on (in) life, the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda, nobility (*kṣatra*-) and the brahmanical class. So the term *cakravartin*- might have come to denote a universal king—a king who according to Buddhist sources rules the earth surrounded by the ocean or the *paṭhavīmaṇḍala*. "the circle of the earth" 753):

748) Suttanipāṭa 3, 7, 554. The Buddhists also hold that the main treasure of the emperor, the *cakkaratana*, which is a sort of palladium of dominion, wins the various quarters of the world for him. Wherever it halts, all the chiefs of that quarter acclaim him as their sovereign.

749) I refer to M. ELIADE, *Le yoga*, Paris 1954, p. 237 ff.; 243 ff.; 394.

750) See G. TUCCI, *Teoria e pratica del maṇḍala*, Rome 1949; ELIADE, *o.c.*, p. 225.

751) Cf. Mbh. 1, 74, 127 *tasya tat prathitaṃ cakram prāvartata mahātmanah! bhāṣvaram divyam ajitam lokasamādanam mahat*.

752) Praśna Up. 2, 6.

753) See also W. KIRFEL, *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Bonn u. Leipzig, 1920, p. 11\*.

"he who is placed in the *cakra*-" is he who like the sun is the centre, lord and sustainer of the world, its eye and life-giver; coinciding with the *axis mundi* the sovereign could reside only in the middle.

It must, however, be emphasized that the *cakravartin* idea was largely theoretical and perhaps even utopian in character. In contradistinction to the many authors who liked to dwell on this ideal of kingship the politicians, who based their doctrines on worldly interest, developed the theory of the *vijigīṣu*- or conquerer, i.e. the king who is desirous of victory and desires to conquer his neighbours. According to Kāmandaka 8, 21 the *vijigīṣu*- occupies a position at the head, or in the centre, of a group of 'states' or kingdoms. This group of states is called a *maṇḍala*-. Although this term in this connection is usually translated by "circle of a king's near and distant neighbours with whom he must maintain political and diplomatic relations", the number of these relations varying from 3 to 9 or even 11, it is clear that it is identical with the same word *maṇḍala*- as used in other contexts. It is, however, also plain that the whole conception of *maṇḍala*- in this connection stands or falls with the belief that one of the petty rulers of a certain area—whose aim it is to render tributary those whose kingdoms lie on the borders of his own territory—pretends to be its centre. This ruler, the *vijigīṣu*-, is accordingly considered the *maṇḍalanābhi*- or "centre (chief) of a circle of neighbouring princes." This term actually occurs in Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa* 9, 15. It may be parenthetically noticed that the same poet in the same canto (9, 2) of this work uses the word *maṇḍala*- in the sense of the circle of his own subjects. From these and similar passages it may therefore be inferred that the idea of the central character of the king, whether he ruled his own country or enjoyed the position of a paramount sovereign, here again, underlies a whole complex of ideas connected with sovereignty. These considerations may perhaps be an argument in favour of the above supposition with regard to the original sense of the term *cakravartin*-.

Another explication of the term has recently been proposed by Zimmer 754) who regards it as deriving from *cakravarta*- "the circumference of the mighty mountain-range that surrounds the world,

754) H. ZIMMER, *Philosophies of India*, New-York 1951, p. 128 ff.; cf. also the same, *The Art of India*, New-York 1955, I, p. 245.

beyond the enveloping world-ocean, like a rim". The *cakravartin*-would, then, be "he the rim of whose 'wheel' (*cakra*-) is the universe", the king himself being the hub of the earth. To this view there are obvious objections, first that *cakravarta*- in the above sense does not appear in our texts, the word for that range of mountains being *cakravāla*-, and in the second place that "owner of the circumference of mountains at the extremity of the universe" does not necessarily imply "ruler of the universe" <sup>755</sup>).

## XXIII

Now that we have traced out the main beliefs and customs connected with the 'divinity' of kings it is time to turn once more to Pṛthu, the first king, that is to say the archetype and primordial model of any actual ruler. The way in which he, in the days of yore, was invested with dominion and compelled the earth to yield a sufficient supply of food is not without significance for those who wish to gain an insight into the ancient Indian beliefs with regard to the essence of kingship. Just as to recount the origins of the human race serves to perpetuate human life, and especially the community or social group, so can we be sure that to relate the story of the institution of kingship and the achievements of the first king was a means of ensuring not only the continuance of kingship in general, but also of those particular features of kingship which are emphasized in the story.

The oldest trait of the tradition concerning the primeval Pṛthu seems to be that he i.e. Pṛthī son of Vena, milked Virāj when she, according to a difficult 'hymn' of the Atharvaveda <sup>756</sup>), went through

<sup>755</sup>) For a description of the Buddhist *cakravartin* see Dīgha Nikāya, 17, 7 ff.; 26, 4 (translated by T. W. and C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II and III, London 1910 and 1921). As is well known the ancient Cambodian king was at a later period not only the centre of the world but also identical to the main god. His "symbol", the *liṅga*-, was established and revered on a high mountain which was considered the centre of the universe and a copy of the world-mountain. See e.g. P. MUS, *Cultes indiens et indigènes du Champa*, *Bull. de l'école franc. de l'Extr. Orient* 33, p. 406 ff.; Ph. VAN AKKEREN, *Een gedrocht en toch de volmaakte mens*, Thesis Utrecht 1951, p. 12 f. During the reign of a *cakravartin* the earth will extend to 100 000 leagues and all people will be wealthy and prosperous.

<sup>756</sup>) AV. 8, 10, esp. st. 24.

a series of migrations and metamorphoses: he milked from her agriculture and grain, on which men subsist; on that occasion the earth was the milking-pail. In the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa a Pṛthī (= Pṛthu) is referred to as "the first of men who was installed as a king" <sup>757</sup>). Thereupon he wished to secure all food. After "they had offered for him the so-called *pārtha*-oblations—this term deriving from his name—he appropriated to himself all food here on earth including the forest beasts." He makes his appearance also in other brāhmaṇas, being recorded as the one who by means of a particular sāmān obtained the supremacy over wild and domesticated animals <sup>758</sup>). These early allusions receive a consistent literary form in the Mahābhārata and the purāṇas.

In the great epic <sup>759</sup>) Pṛthu is described as the first emperor of the world who was installed (*sāmṛājye*) by the mighty sages (*mahar-ṣayaḥ*) on the celebration of his rājasūya sacrifice <sup>760</sup>). After having conquered all his enemies, he extended (*prathita*-, a more modern term might be: consolidated) his empire, for which he came to be called *Pṛthu*-. Protecting his subjects from wounds and injuries (*kṣatāt*) he proved to be a true *kṣatriya*-. Because his subjects on seeing him said that they were delighted (*raktāḥ*) he obtained the title *rājā*. The earth yielded corn without being cultivated and she fulfilled all his desires (she was his cow of plenty: *kāmadhuk*). The cows also yielded milk whenever desired, and every lotus-bud was filled with honey. The fruits were nectareous and full of flavour, and none went without food. In his kingdom men lived free from fear and diseases. Neither decrepitude nor calamity prevailed. When Pṛthu went to the sea, its waves became solidified. The mountains opened a way for him and his standard never broke (i.e. was never obstructed). Gods, asuras, manes, sages, ascetics, ordinary men, animals, trees and mountains declared him to be their emperor, protector, delighter, saviour, and father, and asked him for the boons which they desired to obtain in order to live in plenty and happiness for

<sup>757</sup>) Śat. Br. 5, 3, 5, 4.

<sup>758</sup>) Pāñc. Br. 13, 5, 19 f. Cf. also T.Br. 2, 7, 5, 1; J.U.Br. 1, 10, 9 etc.

<sup>759</sup>) Mbh. 7, a. 69.

<sup>760</sup>) Special attention may be drawn to the diversity in particulars — which sometimes even passes into mutual contradiction — in the "theories" about kingship to be found in the epics. See e.g. HILLEBRANDT, *Altindische Politik*, p. 9 ff.

endless years. Then taking his bow and arrows, and meditating for a while he asked the earth to give his subjects the milk (i.e. the edibles etc.) which they wished to possess. After having stipulated that the king should look upon her as his own daughter, the earth consented and Pṛthu arranged for the milking. Thereupon the whole assemblage of creatures began to milk her successively: the trees obtained buds, the mountains jewels and useful plants, the celestials everything capable of imparting energy (*ūrjaskaram*); men cultivation and crops, the serpent poison, the seven sages knowledge of the supreme brahman, the rākṣasas the power of disappearing, the waves the *svadhā*, i.e. the food of clarified butter etc. usually offered to them. Thus the earth gave every class of beings the objects of their respective desire. The king celebrated various sacrifices. In another book of the great epic<sup>761</sup>) the poet emphasizes that during Pṛthu's reign the earth produced crops without being tilled, that every leaf of the trees bore honey, that every cow gave plenty of milk. Pṛthu also removed the rocks which lay all around causing the hills and mountains to increase in size. After his coronation which was performed by Viṣṇu, Indra and the other lokapālas, the earth came incarnate to him with a tribute of gems and jewels; the kings of the rivers and of the mountains gave him inexhaustible wealth. Horses, cars, elephants and men came into existence as soon as he thought of them. He caused all creatures to consider righteousness the most important good. Viṣṇu himself, who confirmed his power, entered his body. Therefore the entire universe adored Pṛthu.

Comment is hardly needed: it is perfectly plain that Pṛthu is the ideal king. At the end of the detailed account it is emphasized that he was superior to the living king to whom this story was told. The ideal king embodied all virtues which are generally attributed to any king. He is the one who protects the earth and her inhabitants and who causes her to give what is desired by any class of beings. Even the demons and the manes derive great benefit from the government of a good king. Without him animals, trees and mountains are frustrated in their most vital functions and in their very *raison d'être*. The ideal king is the true mediator, nay he is the divinity who sets

761) Mbh. 12, 29, 139 ff.; 59, 115 ff. Cf. also 3, a. 185.

in motion the productiveness of the earth, life and fruitfulness of all classes of beings and objects which exist on her surface.

In the purāṇical account<sup>762</sup>) the story of Pṛthu's reign is usually preceded by that of his wicked father Vena, who, though inaugurated monarch of the earth, prohibited worship and sacrifice. Angry at the decay of religion the sages beat him to death<sup>761</sup>). But then anarchy arose. The ṛṣis rubbed Vena's right arm "and from it sprang the majestic Pṛthu, resplendent in body, and glowing like the manifested Agni". Pṛthu then became invested with universal dominion. His subjects besought him for the food which the earth withheld. He seized his bow to compel her to give it. Thereupon she assumed the form of a cow and fled, but being unable to escape she finally complied. In this variant of the story Pṛthu is placed against the dark background of tyranny and anarchy. Only the good king is able to make the right use of the divine powers inherent in his high office. It is further noteworthy that other institutions, too, were attributed to Pṛthu. The origin of bards and eulogists for instance was also placed in his time<sup>764</sup>).

Another stream of tradition regarding the origin of monarchy holds that Manu<sup>765</sup>), the father of the human race, was also the first king. Although he at first refused to assume royalty owing to the sinful nature of man, he finally consented after people had granted him a

762) I refer to F. E. PARGITER, *Ancient Indian historical tradition*, London 1922, p. 40, n. 3.

763) It may be of interest to notice that in the *Harivaṃśa* (1, 5, 15 ff.) *mlecchas*, i.e. barbarians, and *dasyus*, i.e. impious men, enemies of the gods who neglect the essential rites, outcasts, including robbers, wild hill-tribes etc. originated from king Vena's sins. They are up to the present day the living evidence of the terrible results of sins perpetrated by so powerful a being as is the king. Cf. e.g. also Mbh. 2, 5, 76; 12, 228, 77; 13, 125, 9; *Dīghanikāya* 1, 85 ff.; *Kāmand. N.S.* 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 to 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.

764) I refer to F. E. PARGITER, *o.c.*, p. 16; cf. *Brahmaṇḍa Pur.* 2, 29, 74 ff.

765) For Mbh. 12, 67 and the first king in general see E. KUHN, *Zu den arischen Anschauungen vom Königtum*, *Festschrift-V. Thomsen*, Leipzig 1912, p. 214 ff.

fixed share of the produce of their labour. To Manu, who is sometimes styled a father, was attributed the great service of establishing peace among men, but also the invention of sacrifice, the introduction of fire and probably of agriculture <sup>766</sup>). It is difficult to agree with those who would consider this prototype of the elected king—the election of a monarch is indeed often mentioned <sup>767</sup>)—to be an argument for the thesis that kingship was a purely human or secular institution <sup>768</sup>). First, how a particular king acceded to the throne was one thing, another what were the ideas connected with kingship in general, with its essence and with the place it occupied in the scheme of things and the order of the world. Then, the very account of Manu's election expressly stated first that in crowning a king it is Indra who is crowned <sup>769</sup>); a man who strives after his own prosperity (*bhūti*-) should adore the king as he adores Indra himself, and secondly, that as soon as Manu has accepted to be king he was endowed with great energy (*tejas*) with which he seemed to shine. Seeing that power (*mahattvam*) of Manu who was like Indra, the inhabitants of the earth became stricken with fear and began to follow their respective duties. Going round the world like a cloud charged with rain he suppressed everywhere all acts of wickedness. Thus it is the living representation of the royal function among men which inspires awe and veneration, irrespective as to how he had acceded to the throne.

In an Atharvavedic hymn to Rohita, i.e. the sun as the Ruddy One <sup>770</sup>), which was considered by Bloomfield <sup>771</sup>) to have developed into "an allegorical exaltation of a king and his queen", the person speaking expresses the wish <sup>772</sup>) that this Ruddy One with favouring mind will, in concord with the kingdom-supporting (*rāṣṭrabhṛtaḥ*) gods who go around the sun, assign kingdom to him. The adjective *rāṣṭrabhṛt*- is, as we have already seen <sup>773</sup>), also used to qualify the king himself. This being or power called *rohita*-, which "has generated

<sup>766</sup>) Cf. e.g. Mbh. 12, a. 67; RV. 1, 36; 10; 8, 19, 21; 30, 2; 10, 63, 7. MACDONELL, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 138 ff.

<sup>767</sup>) See e.g. BANDYOPADHYAYA, *o.c.*, I, p. 234.

<sup>768</sup>) Thus BANDYOPADHYAYA, *o.c.*, passim.

<sup>769</sup>) Mbh. 12, 67, 4; 30 ff.

<sup>770</sup>) Ath. V. 13, 1.

<sup>771</sup>) M. BLOOMFIELD, in the *American Journal of Philology* 12, p. 429 ff.

<sup>772</sup>) Ath. V. 13, 1, 35.

<sup>773</sup>) See *Numen* 3/1956, 41; 4/1957, 50.

this all", is further requested <sup>774</sup>) to "enter this kingdom" and "to bear" the person addressed "unto kingdom". After having been discovered by the six wide ones, i.e. the spaces, "he brought the kingdom hither" <sup>775</sup>): so much is clear that the sun is considered to have been, by intermediary of the regions of the universe, instrumental in creating, introducing, or establishing kingship. In the next stanza this idea is specified: "he has brought your kingship", so that the scornors have scattered and "security has become yours".

There is one point of some slight interest regarding the rivalry between the gods and the asuras which might find a place here: after having overpowered the latter the gods won the kingdom by means of a series of prayers and oblations called the *rāṣṭrabhṛtaḥ* "supporters of kingdom"; that is, according to the Taittiriya-saṃhitā <sup>776</sup>), why the *rāṣṭrabhṛtaḥ* have their name. They should therefore be resorted to by the man who desires to win the kingdom <sup>777</sup>).

A curious account of the relation between the ruler and the people may perhaps be read in the story <sup>778</sup>) of the self-existent *brāhman*- (neuter) which while performing asceticism came to the conviction that, as there is no perpetuity in asceticism, it should offer up itself in all the creatures (*bhūta*-), and then, at the "all-sacrifice" (*sarva-medha*-) offer all the creatures in itself. Thereupon it (he) attained the supremacy over all the creatures. The sacrificer can gain his end by imitating the god <sup>779</sup>).

From a consideration of these various accounts of the origin of kingship the remarkable fact emerges that—apart from such individual instances as the divine descent of the epic heroes and so on—no theories were enunciated concerning a divine origin of kings or dynasties. Even the legitimacy of individual rulers and dynasties does not seem to have been a matter of much care or dispute to those who discussed the function and position of the ruler. "Śukra—an authority on *niti*—wants us to understand that the king is great only from his station, but that as an individual he is just a mortal among mortals.

<sup>774</sup>) Ibid. st. 1.

<sup>775</sup>) Ibid. st. 4.

<sup>776</sup>) Taitt. Saṃh. 3, 4, 6, 2.

<sup>777</sup>) For these formulas see e.g. Taitt. Saṃh. 3, 4, 7; Vāj. Saṃh. 18, 38-44 etc.

<sup>778</sup>) Sat. Br. 13, 7, 1, 1; Śāṅkh. Śr. sū. 16, 15, 1.

<sup>779</sup>) For the *sarvamedha* see A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 154.

The office of kingship ... may be conceded to be sacred, but not the person who happens to hold it" 780). There is also room for the observation that these traditions and speculations on the origin of kingship contain no traces of such 'primitive' sorcerer-kings or priest-kings as often are a subject of discussion among ethnologists 781).

One might be under the impression that a more or less utilitarian justification of kingship does not fail to make its appearance in our sources. Some authorities in the epics and in works produced in the same period seem to venerate the office of the head of the government mainly on account of the manifold services rendered to mankind. But this does not mean that they regarded kingship completely as a merely human institution and the king as a public servant in the modern sense of the term. A similar utilitarian justification of the worship of the gods is given in the well-known stanza of the Bhāgavadgītā 782), expressing a common Indian conviction: by strengthening the divine power men strengthen themselves. Decay of religion, like absence of royal authority, results in fatal losses in welfare and happiness. Worship, and the very existence of divine powers in general are, from this point of view, extremely pragmatic affairs.

## XXIV

That the prime minister, or the ministers collectively, and the high officials in general, were an important element of the state is no news to anyone who has read such books as the Manusmṛiti or the Arthaśāstra with any care. It seems therefore worth while to examine their function and their relation to the king more closely. An interesting statement is found in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra 783): it is the king who appoints ministers and who replaces them by others if they are liable to what is called *vyasana*-, which means, generally speaking, "evil, misfortune, ill-luck, evil predicament", and being a source of evil for others (in this connection for the state), originates in attachment to evil passions or sinful activities 784), in short "all that removes wel-

780) B. K. SARKAR, *The political institutions*, p. 174.

781) See e.g. J. G. FRAZER, *Lectures on the early history of kingship*, London 1905, p. 106 ff.; VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion*, ch. 26, 3.

782) Bhāgavadgītā 3, 11.

783) Kauṭ. AS. 127, 12 ff.

784) See also MEYER, *Buch v. Welt. u.S.* p. 492, n. 2.

fare from man" 785). The king is constantly intent upon honouring those who deserve to be honoured and in restraining those who are culpable and corruptible. But whether the elements of the state are like ministers, the purohita, and others, human beings or whether they are not, it is the king from whom originates the counteraction of all mischief happening to the elements of the state as well as the furtherance of their welfare. A perfect (excellent, accomplished) ruler makes, by his own perfection (accomplishments), the elements of the state perfect 786). The other elements of the state (ministers, army, subjects, etc.) are addicted to those practices and characterized by those dispositions which are his 787), because they live in dependence on him who occupies the position at the top. So the monarch is so to say the heaven, which permeates the elements of the state, the great power in the background, the irrational foundation of authority.

That there was an irrational element in the relations between the ruler and his ministers also appears from such plain statements as are found in the dharma-books: the king should, according to Manu 788), consult with his counsellors, unobserved, on the back of a hill or terrace—the reason of this is from a practical point of view obvious—and at the time of consultation he should remove animals, idiots, blind, dumb and other disabled men, women, barbarians and very aged persons—and these measures cannot be explained as merely practical and 'secular' in character because, from the point of view of politics or public security, sane and able-bodied men might do more harm than idiots and animals. Although the author adds that such despicable persons, likewise animals, and particularly women betray secret council, and although the commentators would make us believe that the word 'animals' only refers to talking birds, it originally was no doubt the magical harm emanating from these categories of beings which furnished the main motive for this direction. The very title of the 'Imperial Chancellor', *mantrin*-, indicates that at least originally the advices given by him to the king had a magico-religious aspect: a *mantrin*- was the one who knew those sacred or potent formulas

785) Kauṭ. AS. 127, 4 *vyasyaty enam śreyasaḥ*.

786) Kauṭ. AS. 127, 15 *svāmī ca saṃpannaḥ svasaṃpadbhiḥ prakṛtiḥ saṃpādayati*.

787) Ibid. 16 *svayaṃ yacchilas tacchilāḥ prakṛtayo bhavanti*.

788) Manu 7, 147 ff.

which were called mantras: apart from the rhythmic parts of the Vedas, the sacrificial, mystical or magical formulas, the term included also charms and incantations, secret plans and designs; hence *mantrin-* in the sense of "enchanter" or "conjurer". The accomplishments of a *mantrin-*<sup>789</sup> consist in the ability to give 'secret counsel' (*mantragup-ti-*). Sometimes the term is given a very wide sense<sup>790</sup>, including the purohita, the physician, the astrologer, the ambassador, the inspectors of the strongholds, the army and the treasury, and even the king himself. Whereas kings are incidentally related to "leave the protection of the subjects for a moment to the intelligence of their ministers"<sup>791</sup>—and protection of the kingdom is one of the very reasons of their existence<sup>792</sup>—these officials gain in importance as soon as the throne falls vacant<sup>793</sup>.

While it is impossible to collect all references to customs or institutions which are remotely related to kingship, it seems to be worth while to draw attention for a moment to some opinions with regard to the kingdom: *rāṣṭra-*, a term including not only the realm, country or dominion, but also the people or nation. This conception is for instance found in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa<sup>794</sup>: "the third class, the 'people', is the *rāṣṭra-*". In the brāhmaṇas the *rāṣṭra-* is sometimes explicitly identified with *śrī-* "material welfare, and the outward splendour connected with it": "the aśvamedha doubtless is that *śrī*, *rāṣṭra-*"; "*śrī-* is the centre of *rāṣṭra-*". Or possessions (*dhanāni*), wealth, is identified with "kingdom"<sup>795</sup>. The *rāṣṭra-* is identified with the aśvamedha<sup>796</sup>; "it is after *rāṣṭra-* or royal sway that these strive who guard the horse". Elsewhere the *rāṣṭra-* is regarded as identical with the membrum virile<sup>797</sup> and with the fist<sup>798</sup>, because they "press hard", royal power pressing hard on the people. It may also

789) See Kāmand. N.S. 4, 31; for a more detailed account Kauṭ. N.S. 5.

790) The following is borrowed from a stanza quoted in a commentary on the Hitopadeśa 3, 53.

791) Thus Kālid. Śak. 6, 32.

792) Cf. Bhāradvāja quoted by Kauṭ. AS. 127, 8.

793) See Kauṭ. AS. 94 f.

794) Ait. Br. 8, 26, 8.

795) Ait. Br. 8, 26, 10.

796) Śat. Br. 13, 1, 6, 3.

797) Taitt. Br. 3, 9, 7, 4; Śat. Br. 13, 2, 9, 6.

798) Ibid. 5 and 7 respectively.

be observed that the great deities are not infrequently identified with *kṣatra-* i.e. ruling power, rule, dominion, or nobility. *Varuṇa* is *kṣatra-*<sup>799</sup>; Indra is *kṣatra-*<sup>800</sup>; (Agni) Vaiśvānara is *kṣatra-*<sup>801</sup>. But the same remark is applicable to a royal personage, a man of the ruling class: he also is rule, dominion, or 'temporal power'<sup>802</sup> (*kṣatra-*). Or he is described as a manifestation (*rūpam*) of it<sup>803</sup>. Or he is *ojas*, *kṣatra-*, and *virya-* "manly strength"<sup>804</sup>. And *kṣatra-* is also the "kingdom" or "nation" (*rāṣṭra-*)<sup>805</sup>.

This is not to contend that there ever was in ancient, historical and pre-historic India only one single 'idea' expressed by the terms *rāj-* and *rājan-*. One may safely assume that kingship was always complex in function. Indian culture, though homogeneous for centuries, has always been characterized by a considerable degree of variety. For the educated and for the lower people the figure and the cult of the same god often were, and are, different. For the Vedic 'knights' and warriors Indra was in the first place a warrior-god, their divine ally, the dispenser of bounty, for the peasants he was the god of rain and fertility who presided over harvest and agriculture. The same concept of *śrī-* "(material) welfare" showed itself in almost innumerable aspects: for the farmer *śrī-* meant abundance of corn, for the nobleman wealth and outward splendour, for a young woman beauty and loveliness, for others success, power or even intellect. So "the king" could mean something quite different to a soldier, a peasant, a brahman, or a courtier. Besides, religion and social life, even in its economic and political aspects, were inextricably intermingled. Whatever his importance from the religious point of view, the king always was the central figure in the state in the way emphasized by those who like Kautīlya focussed their readers' attention on the practical side of Indian public life as opposed to the religious and who, while covering ground touched on by the authors of dharma-books, do so with facts and details which are widely divergent from the general rules and injunctions expounded in the latter works. But, despite their expatiations

799) See e.g. Śat. Br. 4, 1, 4, 1; Kauṣītaki Br. 7, 10; 12, 8; Gopatha Br. 6, 7.

800) See e.g. Kauṣ. Br. 12, 8; Taitt. Br. 3, 9, 10, 3; Śat. Br. 2, 5, 2 and 7.

801) See e.g. Śat. Br. 6, 6, 1, 7; 9, 3, 1, 13.

802) See Ait. Br. 8, 6; Śat. Br. 5, 1, 5, 3; 13, 1, 5, 3.

803) Śat. Br. 13, 1, 5, 3.

804) Ait. Br. 8, 2 etc.

805) Ait. Br. 7, 22.

on all means of securing a firm hold over all within the realm, of defeating the plans of the princes who aim at the ruler's death, of organizing precaution for the royal person and safety from assassination; on a detailed control of administration, on various measures to be taken in connection with trade and traffic, on means of filling the treasury; despite their detailed discussions of inter-state relations, peace, war, alliance, and neutrality, of hunting, gambling, drinking and women and so on—we should never forget that the Arthaśāstra means by the 'state' an order of society which is not created by the king or the people, but which they exist to secure. These authors regarded the 'state'—if the word might be used here—as essentially a beneficial institution for protection of human life and welfare and for the better realization of the ideals of humanity. Hence the, at first sight strange, fact that the activity of the state relates to a great variety of the aspects of human life, social, economic, and religious. The policy and duties of the ruler are dictated by the necessity of preserving his power, and this noble end sanctifies the means. For the ruler has to preserve and to promote the welfare of the people, and his duty of protecting them gives to him a morality of his own.

The firm rule which is the aim and object of Kautilya's teachings is a necessity, for it is the very foundation of the public good. The activity of the organs of government which acted in the king's name was to embrace all that could lead to the protection of life, welfare and property in the largest sense of the words. This was the 'theoretical basis' of the practice pictured, defended, and propagated by Kautilya.

## XXV

It must also be emphasized that the above account of the main characteristics of Indian kingship from the point of view of the comparative study of religion does not intend to be anything like a history of kingship in ancient India. We could not go into such questions as to how far royal authority was, in practical life, strengthened by particular causes and circumstances, for instance by the existence of a loyal aristocracy or by a more or less influential body of brahmans. Nor did we consider how far every point discussed on the preceding pages was accepted in all milieus and at any period, a problem which indeed is largely insoluble. We have intentionally left

those aspects of kingship undiscussed which do not pertain to our subject. In details there may have been also much difference of opinion with regard to the nature of kingship and the functions of the man on the throne, in different parts of the enormous country different features may have come to the fore. At an earlier period the mighty influence of the brahmans had not yet systematically delineated the position of the king, and defined the various aspects of his function. That the leader of the prehistoric Indian tribes was in a sense a 'divine king' may be taken for granted. On the other hand, it was the first order, the brahmans, who though convinced of their own divinity, by their mighty spiritual and intellectual influence supported and strengthened the position of the ruler with a variety of rites and theories and who proclaimed its superhuman character. It was the purohita who by his mere presence and by his knowledge and practices protected the valuable personality of the ruler, it was priesthood which consecrated him. It may be taken for granted that the superhuman nature of kingship which was rooted in the belief of the masses was in accordance with their philosophy of life and universe, which too was an amplification and an elaborated and well-considered systematization of prae-scientific views, beliefs, and interpretations of the connections between the various entities and phenomena in the universe.

We have also refrained from discussing the intricate question—the importance of which is however not denied—of how far Aryan and non-Aryan components can be distinguished in Indian kingship. A word of warning may not be out of place here. Much has been written in order to show that the non-Aryan substratum has left many traces in various provinces of the Indian culture as it is known to us from historical sources. That this influence has been considerable may be taken for granted a priori. But this is not to concede that any attempt to prove the non-Aryan origin of a particular custom or a definite belief must be regarded as successful. What has been said on this point is for the greater part of a more or less speculative character and any effort to point out more than general outlines would appear to be premature. Most authors neglected to consider a fact which is, with regard to all problems of this description, of outstanding interest. The expression of natural, pre-scientific, 'primitive' and 'semi-primitive' or non-modern humanity, irrespective of racial connections and geographical environments, is fairly similar. It is therefore far



from easy to decide whether definite features in myths, beliefs, customs, practices, or institutions are Aryan or non-Aryan in origin, because they may at a certain stage of cultural development have been belonged to the mental outfit of any people. Only unambiguous philological, historical and linguistic data could help us further in ascertaining what was contributed by the Aryan, what by Dravidian or other peoples<sup>806</sup>). Besides, the processes of identification and amalgamation of religious beliefs, conceptions and institutions originally belonging to different milieus are often complicated to such a degree that the respective contributions are almost always difficult exactly to determine even if philological and historical material is available. For we should always remember that forms of worship, magic, religious beliefs, social institutions etc. occurring among the Aryan immigrants may have been identified, assimilated, and indistinguishably united from the very early moment at which in prehistoric times Aryans and non-Aryans came into contact. An Aryan, Austrian, or Dravidian name does therefore not necessarily cover a figure, cult or institution of purely Aryan, Austrian or Dravidian origin.

With regard to our subject we may, for the time being, arrive at the conclusion that in the main kingship was for the ancient Indians what it was in many other societies. The unity of basic concepts is unmistakable. As generally speaking the forms of socio-religious beliefs and institutions reflect within the pattern of pre-scientific or non-modern culture variations in the degree of civilization both ethically and socially, both temporally and geographically, it is not surprising to find that in many details the conceptions of the ancient Indians were different from those of the Egyptians, the Chinese, of various African tribes or other peoples. Some aspect—for instance the conviction that an incapable king should be killed—which is emphasized in other countries, may hardly have been of any importance in India, and vice versa. In the course of time some views of rulership varied, also in India itself, from their original form.

On the other hand ancient Indian kingship corresponded in many respects to similar institutions of other ancient Indo-European peoples<sup>807</sup>). Despite the comparatively small number of our data

<sup>806</sup>) See for a more detailed discussion of these problems my *Aspects of early V'isnuism*, ch. I.

<sup>807</sup>) The reader may be referred to O. SCHRADER-A. NEHRING, *Reallexikon*

regarding kingship and rulership in large parts of ancient Europe—the Indian sources can safely be said to flow more abundantly than those of all other Indo-European peoples together—we shall not err in maintaining that ancient Indo-European kingship was, in important aspects, a sacred institution. Whereas in India the adjective *śreyas*—"specially characterized by the possession of *śrī*"<sup>808</sup>), prosperous, rich, illustrious to a special or comparatively high degree, distinguished, superior, one's better" and cognate words were often used in connection with rulers, the related *κρείων* was applied to the ancient Greek<sup>809</sup> princes, the idea expressed by the root *krei-* *kri-* being that of "causing to prosper, (re)creating for good"<sup>809</sup>). Agamemnon's and Poseidon's epithet *εὐρύ κρείων* "ruling widely" may be compared to the Indian *prthuśrī-* "of broad *śrī*". The Homeric king was *θεῖος* "divine, holy", and *δῖος* "heavenly"; he was *διογενής* "sprung from Zeus" and *διοτρεφής* "fostered by Zeus". The Odyssey<sup>810</sup>) completely agrees with the Indian authors in regarding "a good lord over many men who upholds justice" the source of his people's prosperity: "the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the trees are laden with fruit, the flocks bring forth unceasingly and the sea yields fish, all from his good leading"<sup>811</sup>). Similar ideas were fostered by the Celts, and German communities to held their chieftains responsible for a bad harvest as well as a military defeat<sup>812</sup>). The Irish king was subject to a variety of taboos<sup>813</sup>), played a part in rites which were in some respects remarkably similar to those described on the foregoing pages: just as the Indian queen had, as a part of the rites of the *aśvamedha*,

*der indogermanischen Altertumskunde* I, Berlin-Leipzig 1917-1923, p. 613 ff.; E. KUHN, *Zu den arischen Anschauungen vom Königtum, Festschrift für V. Thomsen*, p. 214 ff.; ROSENBERG, in PAULY-WISSOWA, *Real-Encyclopaedie*, s.v. Rex.

<sup>808</sup>) Die Andhra kings used to place *siri* (*śrī*-) before their names (II cent. A.D.).

<sup>809</sup>) Sat. Br. 6, 7, 3, 7; 13, 2, 9, 2; cf. 4; Taitt. Br. 3, 9, 7, 1.

<sup>810</sup>) Odyssey 19, 109 ff.

<sup>811</sup>) For traces of a king acting as weather-magician in ancient Greece see J. E. HARRISON, *Themis*<sup>2</sup>, Cambridge 1927, p. 109.

<sup>812</sup>) Cf. E.g. Ammianus Marcellinus 28, 5. See also O. HÖFLER, *Germanisches Sakralkönigtum*, Tübingen 1952; K. OLIVECRONA, *Das Werden eines Königs nach altschwedischem Recht*, Lund 1947.

<sup>813</sup>) Cf. e.g. M. L. SJOESTEDT, *Gods and heroes of the Celts*, London 1949, p. 70 ff.; M. DILLON, *The Taboos of the Kings of Ireland, Proc. Royal Irish Acad.* 54, C, 1, Dublin 1951.

to lie with the sacrificial horse, the Irish king was expected to enter into matrimonial relation with a mare. Whereas the Homeric ruler was honoured with gifts like a god and brought under his sceptre—which he possessed in common with other sacrosanct persons—his ordinances to prosperous fulfilment<sup>814</sup>), the Roman king was not only head of the state, but also a priest; his priestly functions have survived. It was the belief in ancient England that the king was a representative of God; he moreover was the *hlaford*, i.e. “guardian of bread” and like his Indian colleague, the *mundbora* “protector” of the whole people. The birth of the ancient Iranian ruler, who was also believed to be “long-armed”, really was that of a divine helper and redeemer; he represented right and justice, and protected, by his very existence, the welfare and prosperity of his realm against any danger. Even the republican Cicero in defining the essence of kingship<sup>815</sup>) resorted to terms which at least admit of a ‘religious’ interpretation: “(rex est) qui consulit ut parens populo, conservatque eos quibus est praepositus quam optima in condicione vivendi”.

So far kingship in ancient times is concerned, but among the many features of hoary antiquity included in the great solemnity of the coronation of a king or queen of England are, as is well known, inter alia the resemblance of the royal vestments to sacerdotal garb—which in the Middle Ages led to numerous controversies as to whether the king after coronation possessed a priestly character. The ruler is, like the ancient Indian king, expected to protect religion, to help and defend widows and orphans, to do justice, to confirm what is in good order and to punish and reform what is amiss. The purpose of the anointing ceremony is for the recipient of the oil to receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the oil itself being traditionally miraculous: a similar character was, *mutatis mutandis*, attributed to the divine water drawn from the sacred river Sarasvatī, the sea, a well, rain fallen by sunshine, milk and so on, with which the ancient Indian monarch was sprinkled; and the words spoken by the Archbishop in performing his task have a remarkably resemblance to a well-known type of Indian consecrating formulas in which the power inherent in a prototype, or ‘historical’ or mythical ‘first case’ is activated on behalf of the recipient.

814) Iliad 9, 155 f.

815) Cicero, *De re publica* 1, 26, 47.

There can on the other hand be no doubt that the sacred nature of kingship assumed, in India, a much more definite character than may be assumed to have existed in prehistoric Indo-European antiquity. This kingship seems to have been one of those elements of so-called primitive or non-modern culture, which were in the West—mainly under the influence of Greek rationalism—gradually superseded, but in India—which culturally developed on its own lines<sup>816</sup>)—not only preserved but even fostered and systematized. It would therefore be wise, not to rely on the *argumentum e silentio* and to ascribe to the prehistoric Greek, Romans, and Germans all beliefs and customs found in the ancient Indian documents, but rather to regard both the eastern and the ancient western conceptions of royalty and rulership as, in the first place, representative of a generally human belief, and secondly as a continuation of common Indo-European ideas and practices; and not to attribute to the prehistoric Indo-Europeans those details which we know only from the Indian sources<sup>817</sup>).

816) I refer to my *Inleiding tot het Indische denken*, Antwerpen 1948, ch. I.

817) As I have, in this essay, not primarily addressed to specialists in Indology or historians, tried to summarize for students of the history of religion in general and for those interested in the religions of other ancient Asian and European peoples, the results reached by research into the “religious” aspects of kingship from the Rgveda down to the end of the epic period and the break-up of the Gupta empire, no attention has been devoted to the “juridical status” of the king, to the administration of the kingdoms, to the historical interest of the problems discussed, or to other aspects of kingship which, however interesting by themselves, have no relevance for those interested in religion. My aim has been to set forth and to interpret as fairly as I could the main evidence, without concealing the fact that sometimes divergent views have been expressed by those who viewed the subject from another standpoint.

## ADDENDA

passim: for kingship in Vedic times now see also W. Rau, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien nach den Brāhmaṇa-Texten dargestellt*, Wiesbaden, 1957; for kingship in general: E. W. Hopkins, *The Divinity of Kings*, J.A.O.S. 51 (1931), p. 309 ff.; some recent interpretations of the epic theories of kingship:

U. N. Ghoshal, in *Ind. Hist. Quart.* 31, p. 323; general: P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, III, Poona, 1946, Index, p. 1042 ff.; IV, Poona 1953, Index p. 868; V, Poona 1962, Index p. 103 f.

p. 24 ff. the king as a representative of the gods F. O. Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāṇcarātra*, Adyar, 1916, p. 118; P. Huard et M. Durand, *Connaissance du Vietnam*, Hanoi 1954, p. 71 f.

p. 38, 81, 84 and elsewhere: for the rājasūya and the vājapeya see J. C. Heesterman, *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration*, Thesis Utrecht, 1957.

p. 100 for *amhas-* see *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 1 (1957), p. 33 ff.

p. 105 for *mahiman-*, etc.: *Journal Oriental Institute Baroda*, 8 (1959), p. 234 ff.

p. 123 ff. for the *cakravartin-* see also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, in *New Indian Antiquary* 3 (Bombay 1940-41), p. 307 ff.; G. Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the maṇḍala*, London, 1961, p. 23; 43 f.; J. Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, *Amsterdam Acad.* 1965, p. 296; A. Bareau, *Die Religionen Indiens*, III, Buddhismus, Stuttgart, 1964, p. 11; 12; 52; for the wheel also J. M. van Gelder, *Der Ātman in der Grossen-Wald Geheimlehre*, The Hague, 1957, p. 37; 69; W. Kirfel, *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Bonn-Leipzig, 1920, p. 18; 20 f.; *RgVeda* 1, 32, 15.

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