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The Eyes of Power and Dharma: Conceptions of the Advisor in Early India

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M.A., Indiana University, Bloomington, 1998
B.A., Muhlenberg College, 1990

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ABSTRACT

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By Lisa Wessman Crothers

The Indian social context challenges assumptions that sources of power and authority must be absolute, mutually exclusive, and universal. Early Brahmanical and Buddhist texts that imagine royal governance share an understanding that advisors possess powers a king cannot do without. By considering the advisor, this study provides a more expansive view of the contributions of other actors in creating royal power and *dharma*. Through a comparative consideration of early Brahmanical and Buddhist sources, an integral relationship between advice, trust (and its predicates, emotion and intimacy) and kingship emerges. While the advisor is idealized as the mediator of a king's *dharma* and power, ultimately, it is the relationship between the advisor and the advised—between the king and his counselor—that is the nexus of royal power and *dharma*. Thus, royal power—while centered on the king—is not exclusively within the king's grasp. Power is collaborative, relational, and fragile, as is the *dharma* imagined to sustain it.

This study works comparatively on multiple levels. Advisors, ministers and advising others are examined as ideals, and the idealized methods and media which they employ to influence, advise, and otherwise relate to and with kings are explained. The history of how dharmic communities (Brahmanical and Buddhist) imagine the ideal advisor, and how they imagine *dharma* should be engaged in royal contexts through the literary experiences of a larger ruling context—the *rājanya* experience is also traced. Through this analysis, I demonstrate that *dharma* in Brahmanical and Buddhist advisory contexts exists on a spectrum of uses and demonstrations. The ends of the spectrum are called "deliberative *dharma*" and "talismanic *dharma*," respectively. I argue that *dharma* shifts toward one or the other end of the spectrum by the ways that bonds of kinship, trust and emotion converge on royal relationships. Thus, royal power is reliant on such dharmic intimacies, and not simply on dharmic regulations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> *O king, men who always counsel what is agreeable are plentiful;*
> *Rare is the one who has expressed what is unwelcome, yet suitable,*
> *and rare the one who listens.*
>
> (*Rāmāyaṇa*, 3.35.2)[1]

In a dense forest, the demon king Rāvaṇa is engaged in a moment of counsel with a demon sage named Mārīca. They are discussing the likely outcome of the demon king's designs to abduct Sītā the wife of another king (Rāma), and to use her as a hostage in order to demoralize and weaken Rāma enough so that Rāvaṇa can defeat Rāma. This moment of counsel is pivotal in the royal office of this demon king, since his proposed abduction serves as the foundational narrative trajectory in the Indian epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[2] Rāvaṇa sought out this sage in a manner that the Indian literature of kings and their advisors suggests any king would; to act as an agent to carry out the king's royal aims.[3] In this particular scenario, Rāvaṇa argues with the sage because he does not welcome Mārīca's attempts to counsel him against this dangerous and rash move, the implications of which the sage is well aware. To support the authority of his advice, Mārīca quotes the ancient saying above, versions of which we see in various sources.[4] In this example, Mārīca attempts to give King Rāvaṇa pause in his pursuit of his object, by reminding Rāvaṇa that good counsel (which he presumes to have given the king) sometimes involves "unpleasant truths" that defy a king's deepest wishes (his desire for Sītā). His appeal to the authority of ancient wisdom brings to the fore one of the most basic dimensions of royal advice and the role of the advisor that will be examined in this dissertation—that good advisors are hard to find, and kings that heed good advice are rare.[5]

These truisms about advice raise two related questions: Given that nearly every text on kings and kingship argues that kings need counsel, why is it hard for someone to counsel a king effectively? And, why is it so rare for a king to heed advice? For the king's part, some scenarios suggest he is unable to perceive his counselor accurately and, thus, unable to accept the advice he needs. Sometimes the king's fear of being deceived prevents him from listening. As the scenario between Mārīca and King Rāvaṇa suggests, sometimes the king's desires prevent him from yielding to good counsel. For the advisor's part, it is difficult to advise a raging king due to the conflicts that the advisor's knowledge can sometimes pose to the king's power: Therefore, negotiating the way through the complexities of power and knowledge requires great internal strength. An advisor's perception—whether the dharmic, the svadharmic, or political dimensions of perception—must be clear enough to see what will bring beneficial results. Moreover, that which is 'beneficial,' ideally must be so to more than advisor and/or the king.

The scenario above points to the inherent difficulty of counseling a king and provides the starting point for this study. As I shall show, it is difficult to negotiate power and authority in the royal context, especially when these are idealized through complex dharmic aims and expectations. This difficulty is compounded by the dynamics of royal relationships that are predicated on a kind of trust that is precarious both to grant and to accept. Self-knowledge, command over and prudent use of emotions, affinity for and command of wisdom, all play a part in royal decisions and the king's ability to be dharmic. Importantly, all of these elements have an effect on relations of trust, and trust on these. My argument in this dissertation is that these moments of counsel point to an integral relationship between advice, trust (and its predicates, emotion and intimacy

bonds) and kingship. Because these elements are so central to royal power, the advisor and the technologies of advice appear across genres and religious communities as mediators of royal *dharma* and power. And, while the advisor is idealized as the mediator of a king's *dharma* and power, ultimately, it is the relationship between the advisor and the advised—between the king and his counselor—that is the nexus of royal power and *dharma*. Thus, royal power—while of course centered and focused on the king—is not exclusively within the king's grasp. Power is collaborative, relational, and fragile.

The literature that engages the relationships between kings and his various advisors is diverse, as we shall see, but across genres and traditions we see (variously formulated) arguments for a particular kind of king to heed advice, and a particular kind of advisor to give it. In all cases, the question of *dharma*, and what is dharmic, is in play. As we saw just above in the case of Mārīca, his words reflect aspects of a generalized Indic wish for a dharmic advisor and king capable of heeding dharmic counsel. This wish reflects ideals about these figures that pervade the technologies of wisdom and rule. Normative and didactic treatises alike suggest that ministers and kings struggle to act in ways that exemplify the ideals of royal power and *dharma*. We may traditionally think of this literature as the "literature of kings and kinship." It is, but—as I will argue—this literature is more properly understood as literature of advisors and relationships of advice or counsel, and the ways in which advisors and their practices seek relations with kings.

Śāstra (moral, technical and educational literature), epic, and Pāli Buddhist literature dealing with kings reveal that kings and ministers are imagined as needing superior qualities in order to rule dharmically. A simple summary of these ideals could

be given like this: Kings are to be truthful (but not absolutely), dharmic, devoted to the welfare of beings, controlled, skillful in the arts of war. Advisors are to be knowledgeable, wise, unbiased, sagacious, and socially prudent with the integrity to stand up to the power of the king. Notions of royal *dharma* and efficacy and ideas about what constitutes and creates knowledge and wisdom shape these idealized qualities of kings and advisors.

Brahmanical sources and Buddhist sources alike show the complementary nature of the qualities and powers of kings, advising ministers and advisors in royal governance. According to these sources, power and *dharma* present salient problems for *both* the king *and* the advisor in the royal context. Moreover, much of the literature suggests that the royal advisor was to be a substantial *source* of the king's power and efficacy. Scholars have yet to consider the importance of royal ministers and advisors due to an over-determined focus on the king and his qualities. In fact, the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature argues that there should be a more complex basis of royal power and *dharma*, i.e., that dharmic power is relational.

Thus, in this dissertation I aim to contribute to how we understand the nature of power and authority in Indic royal contexts, as well as the complexity of *dharma* in these contexts. While scholars have explored the political and religious dimensions of kingship, they have not examined directly this general concern with the royal advisor and advising relationships. Ideals of the royal counselor and the media of good counsel appear in epics, court poetry and drama, as well as educational and normative treatises (comprising literature from folk and doctrinal sources). These ideals are present in literature that is explicitly concerned with royal counsel (such as the *Arthaśāstra* and

Pañcatantra) and in literature that addresses kings and kingship (epics and doctrinal treatises). Ideal advisory persons are presented in the literature, and the strategies for negotiating the power of these idealized advisors are presented as well. As we shall see, the literatures present both a range of ideals for the advisor, and the king who needs counsel, while presenting at the same time the relational complexities that shape and constrain these ideal roles and relations.

Frequently, advisors and kings are depicted as icons of power in religious literature against which religious communities must labor for validity or patronage (or both). Buddhist uses of the figure of the advisor in particular reveal this concern for validity, as in the *dharma* disquisitions of the Buddhist elder Nāgasena to King Milinda in *The Questions of King Milinda* or in some *jātaka* tales. In sum, the prevalence of the ideal of the advisor suggests a significant cultural concern with the relationship between a king and his advisor that crosses literary genres and communal boundaries. It is also important to study both these commonalities *and* the differences that obtain in the ideals and media of royal counsel.

Before moving to discuss these emphases on ideals and media in royal advisory relationships, we should pause to consider why this area of study has been overlooked. The nearly exclusive focus on the king in the scholarly literature is due (in part) to two reasons: one, the primary literature has been historically read for its general moral and/or political concerns; and two, the primary literature presents itself as a texts for kings.[6] The *Pañcatantra* presents the most salient example of these tendencies. Its various scenarios of human action and occasions for employing prudent and expeditious values and strategies to royal concerns have been enjoyed as exemplars for social life around the

world.[7] Scholars generally describe it as a book of political wisdom that is "Machiavellian" in character.[8] The text itself declares that it was designed to make a king's ignorant princes "peerless in the field of government."[9] The *Pañcatantra* envisions moral rule, certainly, and its concerns appear directed primarily at the king. [10] However, in central scenarios of the *Pañcatantra*, advisors hold center stage; they manipulate or change the views and concerns of the king to their own vision of the morality of rule. In the context of the concerns of royal *advisors,* if one reads the *Pañcatantra* through the eyes of the ministers in the stories, it reveals rich instructive dimensions for ministers and counselors, not only kings.[11]

A detailed exploration of the general concerns and objectives of the literature dealing with kings and advisors is not the primary focus of this dissertation. Rather, my focus is the role of the advisor and his tools of influence in relationships with the king. This means that its focus is the nature of the literature that features the advisor's concerns and relational authority. My expansion of the concept of royal authority means that our interpretation of this literature will deepen. If we read the literature of kings from the perspective of a royal advisor's concerns, then the texts themselves also emerge into view as the media of influence in royal advice—they are the tools of royal counsel. In this way, texts themselves function as royal advice, as ideas and values that assist the king.[12]

These are the "media" and the "technologies" of counsel (and thus of power and *dharma*) that I will analyze throughout this dissertation. There is a symbiotic and recursive relationship between these texts and advisors: The texts present to us ideals of advisors and their relations to kings in need of counsel; moreover, these texts are meant to be used by advisors to mediate their relations with their kings. Thus, these techniques

of mediation are themselves the media and technologies—the means—of influence that
advisors wield. And, finally, they mediate our understanding of the world they
endeavored to create through these texts.

In fact, early Indian sources frequently conflate the role of the advisors, ministers
and counselors and the media they use: texts <u>and</u> persons can be the "eyes" of the king.
The *Arthaśāstra* calls both the ministers and the *śāstras* ("treatises") of governance and
conduct the "eyes" of their expertise. [13] The person that does not know them does not
know the proper actions to take in his role and is functionally "blind."[14] For example, in
the case of the epic, the *Mahābhārata*, the blind king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is granted the boon of
"seeing" the great battle between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas through a young student
who is watching the events, the telling of which also constitutes the text of the epic.
Thus, I will examine the "text" and the "advisor" together (as the texts do themselves).

As the title of this study suggests, the advisor and his agents are also the "eyes" of
the king. This visual metaphor and others like it—pervasive in literature that engages
counselors and kings—work to create space for advisors and ministers to act as
perceptive agents for the king. The title of my dissertation encapsulates this agency as it
functions in two related conceptions in this literature: the importance of the advisor
and/or minister's ability to see for the king; and the power and wisdom that the various
technologies of an advisor's expertise provide the king. But the power immanent to the
role of the king necessarily requires that his advisors possess not equal power, but
superior faculties in determining uses of power. As demonstrated in the example from
the *Rāmāyaṇa* above, a king's desires can occlude his ability to see the proper course of
action. Thus, the person who advises the king must see more clearly, have command

over the canon of governance and shrewdly implement them, and direct a king back to the ways of *dharma* and the efficacious use of royal power.

As will emerge in my analyses, seeing clearly, or knowing which tool of counsel will help make one see clearly, is often as difficult for the advisor as for the king. Yet, for all the factors I examine that make this difficult, there remains the imperative to be the eyes of *dharma* and power—which are the king's domains. The challenges posed by this imperative of rule provides the basis of my argument: There is an integral relationship between counsel, kingship and *dharma*, with these three together shaped and extended by perceptions of dharmic character and ideals. This relationship means that the advisor and the technologies of advice emerge across genres and religious communities as mediators of royal *dharma* and power. Moreover, not only is there a mediating relationship between these factors, but the personal relationship between a king and his various advisors is crucial to this dynamic creation of the dharmic and powerful king. The terms of this mediation and relationships that facilitate it are construed through and constrained by the dynamic interplay between trust, emotion (and its effects on trust), and the social and emotional bonds of intimacy.

Though the idea of the advisor and his relationship with a king as a fundamental concern cuts across community divisions, the particulars of the ideal and the technologies or methods that bring about correct perception of royal *dharma* and power are different. Moreover, even ideas about *dharma*, power, and the kinds of relationship that create and mediate them shift. The king made powerful and dharmic by Brahmanical advisors appears different in nature than the king perfected under these terms by Buddhist advisors. The difference in nature hinges on Brahmanical or Buddhist conceptions of the

qualities of expertise that make a good advisor and a good king—that which gives one the ability to rule, and to rule dharmically.

Furthermore, 'rule' and 'dharmic rule' are not always coterminous in royal contexts, with dharmic community, family and gender causing the boundary between rule and dharmic rule to shift. As a result, advisory challenges to a king's attitudes and actions as a ruler come not from formal advisory roles or sectarian sources alone, but also from intimate family relations, including siblings and also the women in the king's life; queens, as wives and/or mothers who call the king to observe the *dharma* of his *varṇa* (social function) as warrior (*kṣatriya*). Women as advisors to kings juxtapose *svadharma*—the king's "own *dharma*' to himself or his family, or both—against increasingly sectarian *dharma*-s that Brahmanical or Buddhist communities envisioned as a universal for all to observe. The particular perspicacity of intimate relations as advisors, or the dharmic aims of religious communities complicate our picture of power and *dharma* and its mediation in royal settings.

These differences in the factors that shape ideas of mediation and its effects raise questions about 'correct perception' and the practical means designed to create this perception. What practice or wisdom (or the ideologies about them) yields accurate perception in an advisor and, hence, the king? What constitutes dharmic perception in the royal context as construed through the eyes of Brahmanical or Buddhist technologies of wisdom, or through the wisdom particular to intimate relatives? How do these advisors help the king see? Is correct royal perception a shift in dharmic perspective, and if so, which *dharma* obtains?

Perception has always played a role in works of Indian religious and philosophical traditions, however in the royal context; ideas of perception extend beyond these traditional categories. As the literature of kings envision them, advisors, spies, and ministers all literally extend the king's abilities to see into his realm. And, once they act to see for the king, advisors and spies must convey what they perceive in a manner that not only *considers* the king's limited perception, but that *alters* his perception as well, what form of advice changes his ability to see the best course of action.

Moreover, in these dimensions of counsel, there is an inherent danger in delivering information to the king.[15] And, as is commonly known, the experience of danger alters an individual's ability to perceive correctly. These factors and more result in discussions of dharmic perception and the ways in which to behave that are markedly different from what one might expect in treatises from early Indian *darśanas* that discuss perception: they are radically practical and ethical.

Rather than argue over whether the perceived object has an inherent reality or not,[16] literature and narratives that address the conduct of advisors and kings and the vagaries of royal advice presume the effects of perception on royal decision making. Moreover, discussions of royal actions and their intersection with power and *dharma* presume misperception, which is one warrant for advisors in the first place.[17] For these reasons, rather than use the theoretical engagement of *darśanas* or *sūtras* about the nature of perception, I will focus on discourses that show the forces that make clear perception difficult, that compromise an advisor's or king's ability to see things clearly. I will also examine the factors that make it difficult to act according to the dictates of power and *dharma*. My analyses demonstrate the practical and relational nature of instigating

changes in perception—a particular kind of perception prescribed for royal contexts, directed at royal actions. All of these changes are mediated relationally, through a range of advisors and advisory roles and relations.

Throughout this dissertation, I demonstrate the ways that emotions and trust shape the moment of counsel and both form and test the advising relationship (and thus the exercise of power). At times, emotion is an advisor's most potent means of dharmic influence in restraining or increasing a king's perception of his own power. Emotions can pull the king, the advisor and the reader into complex negotiations of *dharma*, or in some examples, lead all to renounce emotion and its effects. Furthermore, since the "intimacies" imagined in royal courts are complex, I point out the distinctions between such intimacies in Brahmanical and Buddhist contexts. In the end, emotion emerges as an analytical category of contexts that affects advising relationships and thus affects royal judgment and action.

Chapter Outline

The argument of the dissertation unfolds following this Introduction through six main chapters (followed by the Conclusion, Chapter Eight), each of which is comparative in its methodology. Throughout, I engage advisors and kings on two inter-related levels: First, I examine advisors, ministers and advising others as *ideals*, as well as explain the idealized methods and media which they employ to influence, advise, and otherwise relate to and with kings. Second, I set out to trace the history of how dharmic communities (in the Brahmanical and Buddhist cases) imagine the ideal of the advisor to kings, and how they imagine *dharma* should be engaged in royal contexts. Thus, I think through the literary experiences of a larger ruling context—the *rājanya* experience.

Rājanya functionally includes not only *kṣatriya* kings and princes, but the other "royal" persons closely associated with kings—princes of lesser caste or caste-less, royals tied to kings either through loyalty, devotion and role, family, teaching lineage, and affinal relationships. In doing so, I provide a larger understanding of the history of Indian religions with respect to *dharma* in royal contexts. I demonstrate that *dharma* in Brahmanical and Buddhist contexts exists on a spectrum of uses and demonstrations. I call these ends of the spectrum "deliberative *dharma*" and "talismanic *dharma*," respectively. Furthermore, I argue that *dharma* shifts toward one or the other end of the spectrum by the ways that bonds of kinship, trust and emotion converge on royal relationships. I show that royal power is reliant on such dharmic intimacies, and not simply on dharmic regulations.

Beginning with Chapter Two, "A Survey of Images and Roles of the Advisor," I lay out the general structure of the categories of persons and texts of concern to this dissertation. I explain what I mean by 'advisor' and 'advising other' as a general term for understanding this idealized figure. As I examine this figure in the scanty study of it in scholarly work, I discuss the ways in which the importance of the advisor has been misunderstood. The lion's share of attention has been paid to the king, which provides me with many ways to sketch the nature of such *rājanya*, but here with the aim of demonstrating the necessity of advisors in the first place, because of the nature of a king's power, personality and aims. Because reliance or dependence of a king on an advisor is mediated through dharmic communities, I also define what I mean by "Brahmanical" and "Buddhist," and present studies from both Brahmanical and Buddhist examples to demonstrate the need to keep their idealizations distinct. Both dharmic communities

envision a particular kind of reliance that a king should have on his advisors. As a transition to the next chapter, I provide an outline of the kinds of literature included in this study and modes of demonstrating this reliance with and through the literature.

In Chapter Three, "Textual Genres and the Shaping of Idea(l)s of the Advisor," I review the specific textual sources for advisors by tracking the advisor through different genres, focusing particularly on changing conceptions of this role. After reviewing the texts, I provide the social and institutional context for advising ministers, advisors, and advising others. In discussing the traditional terminologies of advisors in their varieties, I show that the ideal of the role encompasses the complex nomenclature of advisors (*mantrin*, *amātya* or *amacca* in Pāli*, sacivan, mahāmātra* or *mahāmatta* in Pāli, and *nāyaka*). This nomenclature itself may be highly relative, because it is shaped by the nature and aims of the distinctive literatures, rather than being explained systematically. In the rest of Chapter Three, I discuss the sources that I use or that have influenced the literature I use in this dissertation. I examine *artha-, nīti- and dharma-śāstra*, *dharmasūtra, itihāsa, kāvya* and epigraphy in Brahmanical sources and *sutta/sūtra, jātaka, avadāna, kāvya* and *pañha* in Buddhist literature as they pertain to advisors, ministers, and kings. Separating them into four large genres, I analyze these "technical," "dramatic," "dharmic "and" declarative" genres in order to determine their aims in royal contexts. Relatedly, I analyze their importance as genres in understanding the place that dharmic communities seek to maintain for advisors at court.

By keeping these distinctions of genre in the foreground, one can see subtle changes emerge in ideals and functions of the advisor and the advising relationship as a conduit for dharmic influence. One gains a sense of the dharmic intimacies that converge

on the relationship between the advisor and the king, and the ways that creators of the literature make room for granting trust. These genres—ranging from tales, to treatises, to inscriptions—function as tools of the cultures of normativity that dharmic communities seek to instigate into the court, assembly, and education of kings.

In Chapter Four, "Ideals of the King in Need of Advice," I demonstrate that dharmic communities envision particular kinds of "kings in need" to fit the aims of their respective dharmic cultures. Whether the texts depict him in a negative or positive light, the king is repeatedly presented as being in need of assistance—a special kind of advising reliance. I show the general characteristics of such kings (denoted through similes such as, "the king is like a fire") as well as some special problems that can converge on the interests of dharmic communities aiming to counsel *rājanya* (such as the renunciant king) and other kings. An exploration of the problematic kinds of kings encountered in Brahmanical and Buddhist sources leads into a discussion of the rudiments of royal power, authority and personality which advisors must negotiate as they seek to counsel a king and shape his cultural actions into the desired dharmic outcome. The primary work of this chapter, then, brings the respective communities' construct of the nature and tendencies of kings and *rājanya* into view that serve to substantiate their claims that the *dharma* and power of the king is properly mediated through relationships with advisors.

Chapter Five, "Into the Darkness of Kings and Rule: The Ideal Advisor," turns from the analysis of the paradoxically ideal "king in need" of counsel to analyze the intellectual history of ideal qualities of advisors, and thus of their ideal relations with kings. Here, I discuss both the ideal characteristics of advisors and also the ideal means of advisory influence exhibited in Buddhist and Brahmanical texts, and the tensions that

exist between these ideals. The intellectual history of the idea of the advisor shows an impetus to refine, redefine and elaborate the ideals and nomenclature. This movement to refine and redefine is evidence that royal needs for counsel and support were in flux, as were the structures of relationships that could have existed between a king and advisor. Trust and distrust imbue these relationships on both sides—kings to advisors, and advisors to kings. Moreover, this trust is embraced or problematized in all the literature in some way. For instance, a king could put his trust in an advisor who betrays him, or an advisor could suggest the king take an unwelcome path, counsel that could cause a king to retaliate against him. Regardless of the results, the complex relations of reliance and trust exist. So how can a king replicate or expand a circle of trust and deepen the bonds of trust between himself and his advisors? Both communities envision dharmic and wise advisors with superior skills in perception and relations—their "skill-in-means"—to invoke a Buddhist ideal (*upāya)* for a moment.[18] Brahmanical and Buddhist literatures imagine complex characteristics in order to mitigate the risks and benefits of the advisor-king relationship. These ideals are the bases for an expanded circle of trust around rulers.

In Chapter Six, "Beyond the Ideal: The Pragmatics of Lies, Tricks, and Illusion," I turn from *the ideals* of trust and reliance and rule in advisor-king relationships to *the pragmatics* of trust (*viśvat*) and rule through advisors, especially as exemplified through scenarios in which various apparent violations of trust and adharmic actions are undertaken, such as engaging in lies, tricks, illusions, or other deceptions. Beyond ordinary or ideal forms of counsel, advisors use various pragmatic means to influence kings toward the 'dharmic.' The pragmatics of counsel include forms of deception and "illusion-making" and prudent manipulation of emotions and emotional attachments.

Such pragmatic violations of dharmic behavior that facilitate rule through others (such as, espionage) depend on and challenge the very dharmic ideals that are supposed to create dharmic power. Thus, an examination of the pragmatics of counsel brings into clearer view the complexities of dharmic power, and highlights the central idea of power as relationally formed and exercised, even as these strategies seem to violate relationships. Such pragmatics can also be explained as advisor/counselor activities that support and mediate royal power and *dharma*, and as activities that help the king subdue himself and direct his actions toward the kingdoms' aims. Subduing the self, subduing the enemy, subduing the very material structure of the world are part and parcel of the ways that ministers and advisors harness powers and authorities around them in service of the king.

In Chapter Seven, "Advisory Ideals and Modes of *Dharma*—Deliberative and Talismanic," I discuss how *dharma* itself is conceptualized for advisors and kings in moments of counsel in the analytical terms I mentioned above: *dharma* as deliberative method, or *dharma* as transformative talisman. Differences in contexts present challenges to understanding *dharma* that require special interpretive faculties that not all kings, *rājanyas*, *brāhmaṇas* or advisors possess. And yet, if we accept the arguments of advisors and advising others from both traditions, *dharma*, understood in one way or another, is or should be the solution for all royal aims and challenges. My consideration of the ideals of the advisor shows that *dharma* changes the way that power functions, and that mediated power changes the nature of *dharma*. On the one hand, royal power and *dharma* are thought to be enacted through collaborative, deliberative processes, a process that itself has its dharmic progress. On the other hand, royal power is thought to be perfected, made dharmic through the intervention of a dharmic person or norm. Using

examples from both traditions, I bring the subtlety and dynamism of this dharmic spectrum into view.

In Chapter Eight, "Conclusion: The Aims of Comprehensive History and the Modes of Mediating Dharmic Power," I summarize the work of this dissertation and argue that this conception of *dharma* as existing on a dynamic spectrum involving *deliberative* and *talismanic* modes has implications for how we might view *dharma* in contexts beyond royal scenarios of advice, toward thinking about the role relationships, trust, and emotion play in determining what is dharmic, or in being dharmic. Thus, this way of seeing *dharma* as existing on a dynamic spectrum offers a new way to think about *dharma* in the history of religions in India.

Methodology

My analysis focuses on relationships and interchanges between advisors and counselors, advising ministers and kings in texts that many consider reflecting a heterogeneous Indian scenario. This focus is shaped by my abiding interest in the nature of religious ideas and practices as they occur at the intersection of significant cultural moments and/or ideological boundaries, especially in periods of intercultural exchange or presence of extra-cultural rulers. This interest also forms my choice of texts. Therefore, the religious, social and ideological fabric of India *before* the efflorescence of classical Brahmanical thought is the context for this inquiry.[19] The upper limit of this study is roughly analogous with the end of the "Epic Period," (c. third century CE). In this period, social and religious groups were formulating themselves in the face of a growing renunciant ethos, emergent devotionalism, and shifting tribal, monarchical and imperial consolidations, and intercultural contacts with conquerors from Central Asia and the

Greco-Roman East. The heterogeneous nature of India in these royal and imperial eras

and realms requires that my study of the idea of the advisor be comparative in nature.

I compare Brahmanical and Buddhist contexts, since both have devoted

considerable narrative energy to envisioning the ideal king and/or his advisors. All of

these factors—the ideas used, the persons moved to the foreground or marginalized, or

the relationships negotiated—represent a social and religious context in flux. Some

sources reflect struggle for establishment or changes in control of the structures already

established (the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Milindapañha*); others suggest the negotiation of

identity against a prevailing social norm (such as in examples from Pāli *sutta*-s or *jātaka*

tales). The *Mahābhārata* reflects an intricate set of negotiations. The king, his court, and

his advisors stand in a strange position within and outside of these many relationships.

This fact makes the study of the advisor and his moments of counsel with the king a

fruitful means to examine the shifting powers among such relationships, and to look

closer at the nature of religious ideals or ideas that influence these relations. Because of

this special location of the king and his court and because of the heterodox elements of

these texts, a comparative approach is the best to bring forth similarities or differences in

foundational structures of rule that are not as apparent without this comparative stance.

The comparative approach is especially important because there has been a

tendency in studies of Indian kingship and royal power to argue that "Buddhist" imagined

ideals of royal power preceded "Brahmanical," or vice versa. For example, the "marks of

the great man," and the myth of the *cakravartin* (the "wheel-turning" or universal king)

are contested through Buddhist and Brahmanical claims to ownership of these ideals.[20]

Studies of Buddhist kingship use Aśoka as a benchmark for Buddhist royalty.[21] Another

tendency is to describe early kingship and the court in terms of Brahmanical sacrificial activity; where *brāhmaṇa* activity in turn is articulated through its renunciant dimensions, to the exclusion of other Brahmanical ideals that may have been at play.[22] My goal is especially to resist continuing these tendencies in my analyses. Although these approaches are illuminating, taking one sectarian construction of the imagined ideal over others obfuscates more than it reveals when dealing with these materials.

Regarding the Buddhist materials, it is not always possible to delineate with precision *which* Buddhists are talking about the king or advisor in a particular way: whether Mahāyāna, Theravāda, or Sarvāstivāda, for instance. Buddhist texts tend to escape these categories, which are over-determined and often set against each other by how scholars have studied them. The same is true of the Brahmanical materials. There are diverse Brahmanical ideals in the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Mahābhārata*. I consider texts within these sectarian categories, with a view to imagine the function they might have had in the context of royal concerns.

I use the following sources that are typically categorized as Brahmanical: the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya (c. 300 BCE to 200 CE),[23] the *Pañcatantra* of Viṣṇuśarma (c. 300 CE), and the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* (that scholarly consensus places between 200 BCE to 200 CE), with comparative forays into *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* (first to second centuries CE) and select *Upaniṣads*. The Buddhist dimension of my study will include texts from the Pāli *Tipiṭaka*, (the earliest written down in Sri Lanka, c. 80 BCE), the extra-canonical *Avadāna* literature (first century CE), the *Jātaka* literature (third century BCE-fourth century CE), the *Milindapañha* (dialogue situated c. 155-130 BCE,

text likely written in second century CE during the Kuṣāṇa dynastic period) and examples from Buddhist *kāvya*, the *Buddhacarita*.

In addition, the diversity of texts and their contexts that engage and are engaged in any moment of counsel requires me to keep a flexible perspective on questions of genre. One instance of counsel from the *Mahābhārata* illustrates why: Kṛṣṇa in the *Karṇaparvan* appeals to 1) an unidentified ancient tradition, 2) an illustrative story, 3) the *Vedas*, and 4) the concept of temporally constrained *dharma* (a variation on *varṇāśramadharma*) all in one sequence of "reasoned" advice.[24] This moment is a complex intersection of concepts of authority and the media of authority. How is one to understand the forces prevailing on this moment in the narrative? The moment of counsel invokes the valence of a range of religious and other norms, texts, and traditions. Therefore, my analysis demonstrates the benefits that *re*imagining aspects of normative and religious genres in the context of royal counsel can have for how such norms and concepts are used, or how they change as they are used to make decisions about *dharma*.

Frequently, I discuss ideas in light of how I think that the authors in Buddhist or Brahmanical texts may have "imagined," "envisioned," or "argued" for things to be. However, I should stress that I do not see my research bringing forth a picture of *how things really were* in the early Indian royal context. Rather, following J.Z. Smith (1990), this study (and especially the comparative method I use in executing it) aims to reveal "[like models and metaphors]…how things might be conceived, how they might be 'redescribed.'"[25] Building upon much good work on the *dharma* and authority of the king in early India, I see this dissertation as an extension of such studies, in which I expand the

scope of royal materials and the persons in them, and *re*describe the royal context in light of this new scope. Thus, to call this study a redescription of this kind seems appropriate.

These considerations of genre are an essential component of my comparative methodology. With these considerations in mind, let me focus more specifically on the nature of my comparative methods. I make comparisons in two ways—first, internally (between the various media of counsel, the various contexts of counsel, the various persons of counsel, and the various *dharma*s of counsel); and second, externally, between select Buddhist and Brahmanical sources. The broad engagement with genre is necessary to this kind of comparative enterprise.

I see this approach to comparison as particularly helpful in thinking with and about religious traditions and ideologies. What makes this kind of comparative endeavor fruitful is that it is multi-dimensional (e.g. comparing across tradition and genre): As such, it works against the tendency to make provisional categories used to study religion axiomatic, which sometimes hide dimensions of these traditions from view. J.Z. Smith comes closest to articulating this process:

> A comparison is a disciplined exaggeration in the service of knowledge. It lifts out and strongly marks certain features within difference as being of possible intellectual significance, expressed in the rhetoric of their being 'like' in some stipulated fashion. Comparison provides the means by which we *'re*vision'; phenomena as *our* data in order to solve *our* theoretical problems.[26]

Thus, the questions I seek to answer through this complex comparative approach are the following: How are power and *dharma* negotiated relationally? What specific elements of power and *dharma* are negotiated, if these concepts are also considered constitutive of royal functions and relationships in absolute ways?   What relational factors are most constitutive of advisory moments, or good counsel? How do advisors and kings work

with what seems a cultural mandate to be perfectly wise, dharmic, and powerful, and related to one another and society in perfect ways? And, how do they do this while at the same time relating to one another through personal and relational constraints and contingencies that forever militate against perfection?

Critical Contribution

My consideration of the advisors, occasions of advice between an advisor and king, and the dynamics of these exchanges expands how historians of religion conceive of royal power and *dharma* in three significant ways: First, *dharma* and power refract through more than the figure of the king. The *dharmarāja* carries tremendous valence in early Indian literature, especially the epics. Because scholars have been persuaded by the ideological claims made in the literature about the centrality of the Dharmic King as an idealized figure, the contribution of other spheres of social and religious power to the royal office is lost. The Brahmanically oriented texts of this study argue that a king needs an advisor's eyes to see, and needs an advisor to educate the king's "eyes" or perception. The Buddhist texts of this study recommend a conversion to the Buddha-*dharma*, which involves exacting the *upāya* necessary to bring on the realization that royal *dharma* and power is the only valid basis of rule.

Second, the advisor-king relationship and royal technologies of counsel and influence were not the purview of *brāhmaṇas* alone. In the *Mahābhārata* for instance, the royal advisor Vidura, though of mixed origins, was educated in the same manner as kings Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra and was considered "conversant with all aspects of virtue."[27] Many scholars have accepted at face value Brahmanical claims about their hegemony in dharmic domains. The presence of mixed authorities (non-Brahmanical) in the office of

royal counsel should provide an alternative view of the sources of royal knowledge and wisdom. In the Buddhist materials of this study, displaying transformational values becomes more important than attaining royal office itself in effecting a dharmic change in the king.[28]

Third, royal authority is made dharmically effective by being collaborative, by being shared. Texts that imagine royal governance in some way, share an understanding that advisors possess particular powers that a king cannot do without. That the king was dependent in this way does not suggest that his power was perceived as "relative."[29] Scholarly analyses of the authority of the king belie an assumption that such constructions of royal power and *dharma* were somehow "unstable" or "relative" because they were collaborative.[30] As a correction, Ronald Inden envisions a dialogic construction of royal power in early India. This dissertation extends Inden's revision of early Indian agency beyond his primary concern with the "circle of kings." By considering the advisor, this study provides a more expansive view of the contributions that other actors have in creating royal power. The Indian social context challenges assumptions that sources of power and authority must be absolute, mutually exclusive, and universal. Brahmanical ideologies of royal power argue for the advisor, even non-Brahmanical ones, as the ultimate collaborator in royal authority. Buddhist ideology presents a more nuclear form of royal authority, where relationship with a monk or with the idea of the saṅgha itself—as embodiment of the Buddha and the *Dharma*—replaces the group of advisors as "collaborator."

Fourth and finally, while this is a study of the early history of whom the Indic people who composed these texts imagined *they* were—the advisors, in what they did and in

how they managed their relationships with kings to help them be powerful and dharmic—we cannot help but learn something about who *we* are. Thus, in these compelling stories about trust and distrust, relationships and the factors that create, complicate, undermine, enhance or destroy them, the material frequently called my own ideas and attitudes about trust and distrust into question. As I saw the material begin to exert this effect on me, I perpetually had to turn and refine my methods and approach to the material; simply, to keep in mind the distinction between myself and my work. What this meant in process was that after writing each chapter—and then after revising each chapter—I had to revisit the sources, what we know of the history, as a check on myself and my work. Because of this placing and *re*placing myself with respect to the project sources, the material provides a place to think about how these conceptions of trust and *dharma* relate to our own conceptions—knowing full well that our own conceptions are not the early Indian ones.

Furthermore, this project has led me to think about the development of character in more general terms, beyond the character that advisors attempt to develop in their kings. I have come to see that the extent to which we are good, the extent to which we are who we are, we become through relationship (inter-subjectively and intra-subjectively). Each self needs others to teach and remind us who he or she is, and how to be good, in particular circumstances. As power and responsibility increases, this need becomes greater. These insights are expressed in the ideals for advisors, for kings, and for advice-giving in the Brahmanical and Buddhist examples used throughout this dissertation.

Chapter 2: A Survey of Images and Roles of the Advisor

> *Be their counsel (mántra) the same, their gathering the same, their course (vratá) the same, their intent alike (sahá); I offer for you with the same oblation; do ye enter together into the same thought (cétas). Be your design the same, your hearts the same, your mind the same, that it may be well for you together.*

> *Atharva Veda VI.64.2-3*[1]

In this chapter, I review the literature on advisors pertinent to my study, as they have been represented (or not) in studies of kings, and in studies that aim to focus directly on advisors and related others. To provide a conceptual focus for that literature review, my first aim is to provide a terminological and thematic framework of key terms and concepts about the advisor that are to be elaborated, problematized and examined in subsequent chapters. These include introductory consideration of terms for advisors, and preliminary consideration of key questions about the relations between advisors and kings: intimacy, dependence, and failures in relations. Each of these will be analyzed in depth in subsequent chapters, but need to be introduced here as they form what I call the "grammar" of the advisor and advising relationship. This grammar of advisors and advising will show the complex logic of the inter-subjective dynamics of intimacy (such as emotion and trust) that complicate the advisor-king relationship and which are the fulcra of religious activities in and conceptions about this relationship.

The second aim of this chapter is to show both the scholarly landscape of consideration of the advisor and advising relationship, and to show the structure of my thinking that shapes the subsequent chapters of this dissertation. And while the text that opens this chapter inveighs the reader or hearer to see the unity in advising, counsel, and their relations, I will show here, and in each subsequent chapter, a complex logic, or

"grammar," that structures and constrains advising relations. I will do so without avoiding the intricacy and contingency of these relations as represented across diverse Brahmanical and Buddhist textual traditions, and without avoiding the sheer scale and scope of sources, contexts, and persons imagined as filling the role of "advisor" to the king.

Articulating Terms and Limits for "Brahmanical" and "Buddhist" in this Context

Before doing these things, however, I must pause to discuss an essential part of the architecture of my study, which is to articulate what is meant in the context of this dissertation by the terms "Brahmanical" and "Buddhist." Scholars use these terms all the time and presume that we know and have a shared understanding of what they mean; however, these terms for these traditions have their particular contexts. Thus, my purpose here is to show what these terms mean in the specific contexts of conceptions of advisors and kings and relationships of counsel.

I presume certain markers of Brahmanism at this introductory level, which will expand throughout the dissertation. These "Brahmanical" markers include *Veda* (and *Vedānta*) as knowledge, authority, lineage and tradition; sacrificial priesthood and intellectual traditions, (*darśanas*); renunciant *brāhmaṇa* ideals and the valence of the peripatetic sages (*ṛṣis and brāhmaṇas*); dedication to and elaboration of function and social aims (*varṇa-s* and *āśrama-s*), and the extension of these to general conduct (*guṇa*) and family loyalty (*kula*; *bandhu*); and the rise and promulgation of terms of *dharma* into both *brāhmaṇa* and *rājanya* realms.[2]

By "Buddhist," I refer to the picture of early Buddhist *nikāyas* (schools) that we can glean from texts such as the *Sutta-Nipāta, Jātaka* tales, and the *Milindapañha*.[3] Also, I refer as "Buddhists" the community formations—the markers of such that are discernible in the rhetoric of texts—which either presume or actively engage Brahmanical and Upaniṣadic culture (if not hegemony), such as the *Buddhacarita* (*The Life of the Buddha*) and the *Aśokāvadāna*, *The Legend of King Aśoka*. I consider these to be at least partially representative of an early Indian context. Their rhetoric—such as reliance of kings on *brāhmaṇas* and priests (*purohitas*), the problem of evil ministers and advisors, and practices of peripatetic sages (*ṛṣis* and *śramaṇas*, especially shaved-hair ascetics)—is more instructive for my use than other discourses.

More particularly, I consider "early Buddhist rhetoric" any that homologizes Śākyamuni to the good "Brahmin" exemplar, that presumes the presence of *brāhmaṇa* priests and uses their religious tropes, royal ministers and early Indian social geography, that echoes early *brāhmaṇa* genres or sciences,[4] that uses the thirty-two marks of the great man as an important signifier of his exemplary status, and assumes the presence of heterodox ascetic (*śramaṇa)* and renunciant *brāhmaṇa* culture.[5] I consider these to be the cultural contents for conveying Śākyamuni's singularity as an 'awakened being' (*buddha)* in early India.[6]

The communities of texts that rely on the religious economy of the "Brahmin" are useful for thinking about early Buddhist sources.[7] The use of this term suggests Buddhist *nikāyas* aware of and/or closer to an established Brahmanical parlance than we see in other texts. The currency of the "Brahmin" as a paradigm of wisdom or the representative wise man is particularly great in the *Sutta-Nipāta*, and in many *jātaka*

tales, where the texts assert Buddha Śākyamuni to be the ideal or true Brahmin.

Aśvaghoṣa, the poet considered a Brahmin convert to Buddhism, uses this same parlance

explicitly in his *Buddhacarita* (*Life of the Buddha)*—where he authenticates the

bodhisattva Siddhartha's (Śākyamuni Buddha-to-be) path to awakening through

predictions based in the venerable wisdom of *brāhmaṇas* and *purohitas*.[8] Such parlance

is situated in and assisted by patronage provided through the courts of kings; the key

places of enactment and production of texts.

Other markers of the "Buddhism" I construe include incipient docetic views of

Śākyamuni Buddha, held in tension with those that stress his humanity. In addition, I

assume early nikāya distinctions in the Buddhist communal imagination to be reflected in

texts which articulate conceptions of "no-self "(*anātman/anatta*) with respect to the

Brahman-ātman dichotomy, rather than texts which reveal more emphasis on

"emptiness" (*śūnyatā*) philosophy.[9] Rhetorical concern to equate 'emptiness' with 'no-

self' is typically attributed to Indian Mahāyāna, in particular Madhyāmika formations, so

I am limiting my use of these texts. My purpose is not to eliminate Mahāyāna, but to

highlight texts pertinent to dialogues and counsel between kings and advisors and

ministers, and the nature of the interlocutors (Brahmanical or Buddhist). I based my

determination in what I have identified as the rhetorical interest in authenticity of the

community of texts (early *nikāya versus* Indian Mahāyāna). I observe that the rhetoric of

Indian Mahāyāna texts are more concerned with authenticity of their *texts*, their *sūtras*

themselves, than arguing for the authenticity of Buddhist narrative influence at court vis-

à-vis the presumed Brahmanical presence there.[10]

In spite of the need to use them provisionally, prevailing use of Buddhist sectarian terms—'early Buddhist,' 'Hīnayāna,' Mahāyāna,' or even simply 'Buddhist'—elides the complexity and uncertain composition of the communities around these texts. The reason for this is the nature of Indian Buddhist texts.[11] However problematic the dating of early Indian texts may be, what complicates the picture beyond general dating is the fluid nature of sectarian affiliation with respect to these texts. For instance, the Pāli *jātaka* tales reveal conceptual characteristics that are typically considered to be Mahāyāna, though they are considered part of the Pāli *nikāya* that were "opposed" to Mahāyāna conceptions. As a result of these correspondences, these texts are sometimes called "proto-Mahāyāna."[12] "Extra-canonical" discourses like the *Questions of King Milinda* (*Milindapañha)* contain what have become normative dialogues on the nature of the self for most Pāli *nikāyas*, yet it is likely a Sarvāstivādin text for its provenance in northwest India.[13]

And yet, in all of these examples that complicate some of our ideas about Buddhist contexts, the texts presuppose *brāhmaṇa* presence in royal courts and advisors of various kinds. Johannes Bronkhorst, in many recent studies, traces the influences back and forth between Buddhist and Brahmanical (and Jain) cultures, and expands our sense of the community interaction. [14] One does not have to accept fully his conclusions about the manner in which shared ideas may be exchanged and then depicted in texts to recognize that 'Buddhist' texts were part of a shared religious culture that belies temptations to oversimplify distinctions between textual communities.[15]

Furthermore, taking the example of the *Milindapañha'*s context a bit further, this Brahmanical culture, or ideas about it, is the basis of the *Milindapañha's* rhetorical form.

In it, Buddhist doctrine emerges by means of successive demonstrations of conversation between King Milinda and the Buddhist monk, Nāgasena. This dialogue structure is typical to *saṃvād* conversation types that occurred between kings and wise men in many *Upaniṣads*, which helps locate it in religious culture of wisdom and praxis that is Brahmanically constrained. However, the *Milindapañha* operates as a *Nikāya* Buddhist critique of the content of these very kinds of conversations, using ideas and forms of *brāhmaṇa* orthodoxy and their ideas about heterodoxy to make room for Buddhist ideas at court.

In spite of the Buddhist discourse on the surface of the *Milindapañha*, the discourse complicates the social terms of its day, presenting a picture of heterodoxy in formative ascent to power at court. The text depicts a royal court ruled by a foreign king bearing a Bactrian name, but was likely produced within the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, foreign occupier of India. Traditional Brahmanical lore imagined both foreign rulers to be Buddhist supporters; and this has been the basis for thinking that these were Buddhist kings, inimical to Brahmanical culture. But the fact that *brāhmaṇa* signifiers were used means that this text perceived that *brāhmaṇas* still had considerable intellectual currency; that conceptions of Brahmanism were rhetorically necessary to convey a Buddhist message. Timothy Lubin has argued that these foreign kings used Sanskrit to garner prestige for themselves in their public declarative inscriptions. It follows that the idea of the *brāhmaṇa* himself, as well as the kinds of discourse in his command, would be just as prestigious.[16] Why use this rhetoric if Brahmanism was on the wane?

Finally, I consider 'early Buddhist textual communities' to be those that use some of the "typical" or "basic" structure of relationships that obtain between kings and

advisors, between *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* (*khattiya* in Pāli) as social terms for rulers, between *Brāhmaṇa* elites and rulers, and between kings and various advising others. Again, the presence of these figures signals communities concerned about heterodoxy in royal courts—the rhetoric where we can observe Brahmanical, Ājīvika, and Buddhist ideals insinuating themselves into courts and to the construction of normative advisory ideals for royal courts. Brahmanical and Buddhist conceptions of the advisor are tied to court cultures in various ways, proof of which unfolds throughout this project. This is one contribution of this study to understanding early Indian religious cultures. Scholars such as Peter Skilling and Johannes Bronkhorst are only beginning to describe the complex interactions of Brahmanical and Buddhist ideologies in court literature.[17]

In summary, I have articulated what I mean by the terms Brahmanical or Buddhist and related categories to give as much clarity as possible, but not to elide the religious complexity in the texts I use in this dissertation.[18] Even with my articulations about these communities here, it is important to keep in mind the fluidity of ideals and ideals of practices not only *within* Buddhist and Brahmanical textual communities, but *between* them. This fluidity at the level of textual discourse is traceable through the "stability" that story tropes have when used between communities.[19] Around the idea of the advisor too, for all the differences that obtain in my analyses to follow, the idea of the advisor follows the contours of interactions between Brahmanical and Buddhist texts. The advisor-king relationship ideal directs us even more to these religious communities' relationship to each other in the more heterogeneous early Indian contexts, a fabric of texts and interactions that scholars in recent comparative works are now examining.[20]

Foundational Comments on Advisors and Counsel

> *'Bhīma and Arjuna are my two eyes, Janārdana I deem my mind (manas); what kind of life shall be left for me without my mind or eyes (manaś cakṣur vihīnasya)?'*

King Yudhiṣṭhira; *Mahābhārata* 2.15.2[21]

This quotation is one of many in *Mahābhārata* traditions that show Yudhiṣṭhira to be a king who knows the importance others play in his ability to judge and rule. Bhīma and Arjuna—his brothers, his closest associates (*sacivān*)—are so important that they are allegorized to the very organs through which the king experiences and interprets the world. This crucial reliance forms the matrix of mediated rule: Yudhiṣṭhira's reliance on his advisors is a literary exemplar of an ideal that moves beyond the boundaries of this text.

My purpose in these foundational comments is to give a basic sense of terms for the advisor and associated mediators that are subsumed into the advisor role, as well as some themes that either set the tone or that shape important questions of my study. These themes involve the following conceptual dynamics: the ideological challenges and arguments present in moments of counsel and failures in them; and some preliminary context for the way in which relationships of reliance—of kings on their advisors—are complicated by intimacy, and its associated dynamics of emotion and trust.

Name of the Role

In the most general sense, the advisor is a close confidant of the king and possesses special wisdom with which to counsel him. It has diversities that I discuss in subsequent chapters. The most typical word used to denote advising officials of the king is *amātya* (Pāli: *amacca*), which is usually translated as "minister," but sometimes "advisor" or

"counselor," depending on context and the concerns of the study. It may also be the term of greatest antiquity, perhaps one reason why *amātya* is the default term in both traditions for special servants to kings.[22] Their ubiquity is certain, but the extent to which kings rely on them is not; hence the efforts in both traditions (Brahmanical and Buddhist) to create the bases of this reliance.

In spite of the prevalence of the idea of an advisor, there is no real uniformity in terminology with respect to the advisors and ministers in narratives of these traditions.[23] However, they do consistently attend to the idea of a person who mediates power and *dharma*, who advises and helps a king be what the advisors want him to be. Summarily, an advisor, counselor and advising minister can be denoted by *amātya/amacca*, as indicated above, and also *sacivan* or *sahāya* ("companion," also a king's "friend"), and *mantrin* (or *mati-saciva*), among others. The *idea* of the role and Brahmanical and Buddhist attention to it is our focus here—the person or persons in close position to aid and influence the king. I endeavor to translate this idea as "advisor," but sometimes "minister" is used, as well as "advising others," depending on the context. In the next chapter, we will learn more about these terms, and in which constellation of texts they occur. My purpose here is to prepare the reader for the manner in which they are referred in the secondary sources discussed below.

Traditional Indian formulations of the powers of the king reflect the importance that advisors envision for themselves. According to P.V. Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra*, kings have been enjoined to heed the advice of *brāhmaṇas* from the time of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.*[24] In most Brahmanical sources, ministers (*amātyas*) are one of the seven constituents (*prakṛti*-s) of rule (*rājyam*), those indispensable elements that constitute a

kingdom.[25] In the Buddhist texts, the advisor (most typically, *amacca*) appears in more than one construct of the king's power.[26] For instance, an advisor (*pariṇāyaka*) is counted among the seven jewels (*ratna*-s) of a good and dharmic ruler, which is analogous to the Brahmanical formula above.[27] In addition, the power of the minister (Pāli: *amacca-balam*) is one of the five powers that are the basis of kingship in the *Tesakuṇa Jātaka*.[28] Other *jātaka* mention an officer responsible for advising the king in contexts of material pursuits (*artha*; Pāli: *attha*) and *dharma* (Pāli: *dhamma*).[29] The indispensability of this character is either argued for or presumed in literature that addresses kings directly, or that engages the idea of the king, or royalty, in some way. In turn, ideals of the advisor are shaped by the contexts in which the advisor acts, discussed in Chapter Five.

Intimacy

There is a special intimacy and wisdom associated with advisors that is reflected in the language that denotes them. Pāṇini's gloss on the formation of the word *amātya* suggests Vedic origins and use through the classical period and beyond. Connotations in both Sanskrit and Pāli texts*, amātya*/*amacca* has closeness as its base; "those of me or near me," or "in one's own house."[30] With this meaning, the intimacy of relationship with the king is clear. But, even though closeness such as this is necessary, it is not sufficient in most instances. As I will discuss in subsequent chapters, intimacy and the conditions for it may help in counseling kings; but these also may be obstacles to good counsel. Nevertheless, the intimacy that the term for the advisor implies—from the beginning and

in subsequent royal histories—is the condition to which Brahmanical and Buddhist interlocutors aspire.

Closeness is needed to be near and dear enough to counsel him, and to be near enough to assess the inclinations of the king and the situations that require counsel. Trust also makes way for these confidences, and many factors contribute to its generation and granting. As we shall see in later chapters, certain persons receive the king's trust— certain roles make room for a special closeness to the king. In this opportune intimacy, certain persons may engage a king without the obstacle or protection of ceremony. They act as decision partners in casual settings and give counsel, and direct the king to better perception of himself and/or his duty.

A chariot driver (*sūta*) is an example of this kind of access. *Sūtas* are marginal figures in the *Mahābhārata* in terms of social status (*jāti*), but are close confidants even in spite of this. Notable examples in narratives are the *sūta* Saṃjaya, who sees for and has the ear of the elder king Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the *Mahābhārata*; or Sumantra, the *sūta* to Daśaratha in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The driver to prince Siddhartha in the *Buddhacarita* was not only complicit in the prince's encounter with sickness, old age, and death; he also explained the experiences associated with them (*Buddhacarita*, 3.55-65 and 5.16-5.20).[31] John Brockington suggests that the *sūta* Sumantra "is evidently one of the major officials at court and illustrates well the role of the ancient *sūta* as confidant, eulogist and charioteer."[32] Yet, Brockington reveals nothing more about these three roles that a *sūta* can play.

But if we imagine what kind of relationship the *sūta* might have with his king for the action within the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*—sharing the small space of a chariot,

close enough for the *sūta* to know his king's excellences and weaknesses, knowing the king well enough to discern which of his *guṇas* (personal qualities) to help him mobilize, let alone exaggerate in eulogy—then it is possible to see that this marginal location nevertheless occasions a certain kind of intimacy and trust with the king.

The marginality and isolation created by power, station and birth differences—as in the distinctions of *kṣatriya* to *sūta*, king to charioteer-servant—make room for special access and influence with the king. To his charioteer, a king may stand down from ceremony. Women, especially, but also those with the most intimate and unguarded access are also depicted in positions of special influence. Queens, wives and mothers of kings are in a special position to whisper (or shout) their perspectives on royal activity and duty to kings—in chambers, in secret, away from the eyes of most spies. Moreover, royal women (*rājanyā*) provide support to a king through their mastery of familial and warrior terms of *dharma*.

Closeness or intimacy may be at the heart of conceptual terms for advisors, but excellence and wisdom are their ornaments. It takes mastery of the foundations of religious discourse to complete the sense of the role of the advisor. The term used in Brahmanical sources for the advisor closest to the king (the *mantrin*) resonates with Vedic *mantra* (sacred speech or hymns, devices to effect change, protection, etc.) that becomes the word for "counsel" or "deliberation" in the royal context (*mantram*). These religious utterances and words of counsel are derived from the same Sanskrit root, √*man,* which has many senses. But from the *Ṛg Veda* and after, all aspects of this term for the advisor resonate "to think, believe, imagine, suppose, and conjecture". Therefore, counsel (*mantram*) can be whatever can be thought, believed or imagined. In

Mahābhārata and poetic conventions such as *kāvya* it can mean, "to be of the opinion, to think fit or right." Many derivatives are involved; not only in senses which denote counsel and advice given, but also in the sense of religious remembrance, focus, meditation, and more. All these are at play in idealizations of advisor activity and influence.[33]

Qualities for Dependence

Thus, the close advisor and his counsel both are linguistically and conceptually tied to the genre of arguably the most powerful speech acts in Brahmanical traditions, a conception of the transformative power of words that continues into other Indic genres. In the discourse of the *mantrin* and advisory contexts, this is speech act-based wisdom with the potential to move gods, reality and emotions in material ways.[34] In the Buddhist context, the idea of the advisor in the term *pariṇāyaka* also stresses his wisdom. This advisor becomes an eponym for keen insight or intellectual attainment, and a synonym for *prajñā* (Skt.) or *paññā* (Pāli), frequently translated as "wisdom."[35] Therefore, the advisor in both Buddhist and Brahmanical sources personifies wisdom (or the texts argue this identity for him) in the royal context of advice.

Most conversations about the wise advisor and other ideal qualities he should have start with the *Arthaśāstra,* attributed to Kauṭilya, a treatise devoted to success for kings and kingdoms.[36] Not only wisdom, but also the social and personal markers of it—one's qualities—become more and more of a basis for rule, and is argued for in the persons engaged to help the king. These excellent qualities (*guṇas*) give them power to serve the king in human and material ways. Indeed, Kauṭilya reserves the closest

positions to the king for men of the highest virtues (*Arthaśāstra* (*Aś)* 1.8.27).[37] The close

counselor (*mantrin*) is presumed to be on hand as the king chooses his circle of close

advisors and administrative ministers (*amātya*) and the court priest (*purohita*).[38] The

priest (*purohita*) and the close advisor (*mantrin*) together then orchestrate the activities of

the lesser ministers (*amātyas*) and spies.[39]

There are grounds within the *Arthaśāstra* to argue that these two possess an

extraordinary level of trust; for the two together were conceived to have the power—

mantripurohitaśakhaḥ—to help the king establish the verity of his other ministers (*Aś*

1.10.1). The importance of being trustworthy cannot be denied, since the ministers

(*amātya*) comprised the cadre from whom the king might choose his many close

counselors. Integrity—including the range of excellent qualities subsumed under this

comprehensive term—signaled a special wisdom that kings would need. However, even

these ideals did not account for all contingencies: Power gained from intellect and virtue

still needed augmentation. Therefore, the priest has a signature position in the

Arthaśāstra, for he has powers beyond those that either the closest advisor or the

ministers possess.

Arguably, the priest is prepared to enhance the king in terms of the traditional

sciences of governance (in this example, the science of *daṇḍa*), but his control over the

material world makes the *purohita* a special source of power. The priest was thought to

have special command over the material world through spells, incantations and other

ritual and verbal activity including and beyond the Vedic sacrificial setting.[40] The

purohita was to use these special sciences to evoke some of the material and cognitive

changes—elimination of fear, or creating it—deemed necessary to protect kings and

manipulate royal enemies. More aptly for the context here, spells and other rituals of magical power were "tools" of the *brāhmaṇa*.[41] So, the priest's power spans through multiple circles of operation in this *Arthaśāstra*: that which comes from social status; that which comes from sacrificial sources; and that which comes from magical sources.[42] These three roles—the advisor, the priest, and the ministers—together are only one configuration of idealized mediators for the king. (I will discuss others in Chapters Three and Five.)

Examples in Buddhist texts intersect with this structure of dependence comprised of the advisor, the priest, the minister, but in dissimilar, even divergent ways. Some assume these figures to be the norm, and so conceive of the Buddha, his *dharma* and its representatives (monks) in their roles. Other texts also portray these roles, but since these close positions are filled by non-Buddhists, they fail to achieve success. Using the Brahmanical metaphor, the king does not see through these agents; rather they blind him. Either course involves transformation of some kind. The authors of the stories show an awareness of various agents and spies, ministers, advisors, and counselors—but all work against king, until his eyes are opened by the Buddha-*dharma*. In most cases where the Bodhisatta is depicted as a key advisor, he is a figure for transformation.

He can act through one of three figures of the royal court: The Bodhisatta can be the (*amacca*) or (*matisaciva*), used interchangeably to denote someone close to the king; he can be a *brāhmaṇa* advisor in both "strategic and dharmic matters" *(atthadhamma)*;[43] or he can be the dear, hereditary family priest (*purohita*). In *jātaka* texts, the bodhisattva could fill multiple roles as advisor—as mediator of *dharma* and proper exercise of power—in any number of non-human animal forms, living according to the pattern of

royal life as a king advised, an advisor consulted, an advisor and his ministers ruling, or a *brāhmaṇa* as priest conflating all these functions. In the face of the Bodhisatta's flexibility with respect to individual needs of his interlocutors, the Brahmanical treatises of rule are shown to be limited, compounding the king's distance from true power and *dharma*. So, as will emerge in my analyses in subsequent chapters, the Bodhisattva or Buddha embodies the Buddhist wisdom that functionally becomes the eyes of the king, and thus replaces other technologies of wisdom.[44] In contradistinction to Brahmanical ideals of mediated rule, in Buddhist contexts a king *can* turn the wheel alone, so long as he is directed by the *Buddha-dharma*. Moreover, the wheel must turn in a particular direction—toward the needs of the *saṅgha*. This is the ideal Buddhist king, usually a corrected and transformed king who becomes a dharmic king that turns the wheel of *dharma*, through a transformational encounter with the *dharma*.

Arguments for advisors to be the mind and eyes of the king—observed in Yudhiṣṭhira's remark above—are aimed at inculcating the ideal that reliance on counsel will increase the insight, excellence and efficacy of the king. Advisory moments in these texts have the potential to create insight, which is why they are depicted in the texts. Such texts range from those teaching prudent, idealized conduct (*nīti*) as in the *Mahābhārata* and *Pañcatantra*, to religious texts teaching some mode of *dharma* by means of the varieties of Buddha Śākyamuni's words and actions depicted in *jātaka*, "birth stories," and *sūtras, "*discourses."

Failures in Relationships

In many ways, narratives that depict advisor or king error are also rationalizing failures of counsel and failures of relationship. Failures and error are also powerful venues in which to articulate ideals of royal reliance or dependence. Failures in advising relations themselves argue for the success of one advisory authority over another; of the intimacy of one kind of relationship or bond over another. The following example from the *Mahābhārata* demonstrates such perspectives on royal failures. The failure is blamed on advisors, on their neglect of the king's misperception; or, that the king's misperception of things is even worsened by the advisors through the way in which they managed the exchange of knowledge and authority in their relationship. The ideology of failure highlights the complexity of the advisor-king mutual dependence envisioned in the text and is nevertheless a signature argument for the necessity of advisors.

A poignant example of such a failure occurs in the *Śalyaparvan*, where King Yudhiṣṭhira derides his rival, Duryodhana for retreating from his devastating failures of battle, and for using royal powers of illusion to do so (*MBh*, 9.30-16-34).[45] Yudhiṣṭhira upbraids him for causing all of his troops—brothers, uncles, various relatives—to be slain *and* for falsely describing himself as a hero, especially since he hides in a lake, saving his own life (9.30.25-26). The ideology of the narrative presents Duryodhana's flawed self-perception as reasons for his defeat: It also addresses the failure of Duryodhana's closest advisors. The text from the *Śalyaparvan* reads: "Relying upon Karṇa, and also upon Śakuni the son of Subala, [You have regarded] yourself as immortal out of ignorance, and failed to understand [your] own self!" (9.30.29).[46] In the first section of this passage, Yudhiṣṭhira highlights the flawed nature of his enemy's character. The condemnations

that Yudhiṣṭhira uses reflect Brahmanical and yogic values: Duryodhana does not know himself, and worse, misperceives himself as immortal.[47]

Importantly, in addition to Duryodhana's false self-understanding, this passage suggests that his reliance on Karṇa and Śakuni as advisors contributed to his false self-perception as well. But what is wrong in his relying on these two? These are not new criticisms of Duryodhana; Karṇa, and Śakuni, inveighed against them as individuals and their relationships. An earlier moment of counsel in the *Sabhāparvan* reveals the fundamental flaws of Karṇa and Śakuni: They flatter Duryodhana and tell him what he wants to hear, rather than give him advice that is good for him and his kingdom. Moreover, they do not consult the dictates of *dharma* in advising their king.[48] According to this narrative, such behavior on the part of a royal advisor betrays his obligation to the king, and to royal counsel, even while it argues this very obligation into *dharma*.

Having introduced here some of the key terms for advisors and crucial themes and issues (such as intimacy and relational failures) that shape this study—all of which will be taken up in depth in subsequent chapters—let us turn now to consider the range of secondary sources on the advisor, keeping in mind the terminological and thematic issues already introduced.

Secondary Sources on the Advisor

Because of the way scholars have tended to study royal power and *dharma*, it is necessary to discuss the work that has been done on advisors, ministers and royal powers in two basic ways. I present them first through how they have been discussed in studies

of kings and kingship; and second, from the short surveys of the minister's role in studies of ancient Indian polity, or their apparent relationship to texts like the *Pañcatantra*. Even in these studies, as I discuss below, the scope and complexity of ideas about the advisor and minister's role, purpose and involvement in the lives of kings and kingship is largely ignored. This is not surprising given scholarly focus on the king—his qualities, *dharma* and power. This focus on the king means that studies of royal power and *dharma* with respect to the king are numerous, while the figures that support, work, or interpret for the king are not understood, even within the royal sphere. Most important, the dynamics of relationships between kings and advisors are not given attention.

Given this emphasis on royals, one would expect all aspects of kingship to be examined; however, lesser kings or princes (possessing royal privileges as *rājanya*, or "royals") are also not seen in their importance to kingship as Buddhists and Brahmins imagined them in their texts. This oversight creates a deficit in our understanding of the functions of the king, since these other royals are often engaged in the literature as key advisors to the king and mediators of power and *dharma* in their own right. Nevertheless, our studies of kings over a hundred years can still be supplemented, by a closer consideration of these royals and other excellent figures deemed worthy (or not) to advise them. Even more, our picture of early Indian power and *dharma* in the royal sphere will increase with a consideration of the kinds of persons and relationships deemed necessary to rule dharmically.

A few articles or chapters in books have been written about ministers by Indian historians, but are ultimately not helpful in understanding the role of the advisor, due to their perspectives, which are constrained by the intellectual needs of their era.[49] Such

works are performed through two interpretive lenses: the hermeneutic of modern parliamentary structures and politics in Great Britain and India; and/or a nationalistic historiography of pre-and post-Independence India.[50] In the first case, studies performed through the lens of modern politics seek only to understand royal *dharma* and power in antiquity with respect to modern structures. In the second case, the nationalist perspective obscures ministers and advisors as supporting characters in ancient India, making them paradigms for current India, with the use of evidence directed at supporting their concerns for Indian independence and post-colonial identity.

Advisors and ministers are not tools of power in these texts; rather, they see themselves making the tools and teaching each other and kings how to use them. Persons capable of stepping into the role of advisor are key figures that appear in all foundational genres in some form—such as Upaniṣadic, śāstric, *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions, and various *Buddha-vacana*. Scholarly work about them must be culled from the margins of various studies of kingship and advisors and ministers in ancient Indian polity, since the king is their focus and advisors and ministers are misperceived in the extent of support they provide.

Advisors Unperceived: Advisors in Studies of Kings, Polity and Politics

Some studies of kingship indicate awareness that it takes much more than a king to rule and create a kingdom; that a king needs some kind of power to help him rule. These analyses examine the power a king gains from sacrificial or "renunciant" sources, or from forest deities and the "wilderness," and other locations of divine power.[51] If kings were not seen as relying on divine powers, then emphasis was on obligatory

relationship kings had with advisors, ministers. They consider mythologies that tell of kings engaged to protect the people of the kingdom at a price (such as a sixth of all production). These perspectives are typical of mid-to late twentieth century, and reflect initial attempts to account for colonial and other expansionary powers. In addition to the social structural element, some see power as gained through force or coercion (*daṇḍa*); so a significant dimension of these studies are concerned with how royal advisors and ministers helps a king gain power through force; necessary force given the continual threat of anarchy.[52] Coercion, sacrifice, wilderness, and the supernatural are understood as important to royal power; nevertheless, still we do not have a full view of just *who* would direct these elements to and for the king.

Brāhmaṇas at the Forefront

The seminal study of the elements and sources of royal power, Jan Gonda's, *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View,* attests to this lack of analysis.[53] A full examination of his study is beyond the scope of this chapter, but a survey of how he treats ideas about the mediation of power and *dharma* give some insight into my claims about the advisor and the king-advisor relationship. Gonda's approach points to the irony of advisor and minister ubiquity in literature about kings and royal power, yet their invisibility in scholarship about royal power. The omission begins with the way Gonda frames power and *dharma*. His analysis makes no room for a full consideration of the role of an advisor; given Gonda's perspective that the king alone is

the "mediator of nature and society."[54] Gonda's interest is the religious nature of a king's

power, and the perception of his divinity in the eyes of the "masses."[55]

> Even so, in the second paragraph at the beginning of his study, Gonda states,

> The actual conduct of public affairs lay largely with the prime minister or chief counselor [*amātya*]. Although authorities disagree, 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. The minister causes the commencement of all undertakings in public life, and the entire administrative work was, at least a somewhat later period, carried on by him. A king should never act without his advice.[56]

Yet, after this acknowledgement of the minister's/chief counselor's role in "public life"

and the importance of consulting them before acting, Gonda moves on. Also, in later

sections of his analyses, Gonda acknowledges that the texts state that kings are to rely on

the advice of the *purohita* (personal priest) and other "learned" men in the royal assembly

in order to make people "follow *dharma*."[57] However, the nature of reliance and

relationship between the king, his *purohita*, and the "learned men" in his court is not

examined. The lack of discussion follows, given his focus on the king; Gonda takes his

search for the sources of the king's power and *dharma* in another direction.

Gonda's excellent survey takes us through ancient authorities to explicate the

basis of the king's mediation of "nature and society", and his means to power and

dharma, and the nature of the king's perceived divinity.[58] As one familiar with the

literature of kings would expect, we learn of reliance on myriad sacrifices, *daṇḍa*

(coercion) and its "holy power,"[59] auspiciousness as *śauca* (purity), deities, as

examples.[60] Gonda's discussion of the ritual life of a king points to the king's reliance on

various other powers, including the king's reliance on spies to create the perception of his

omniscience.[61] Nevertheless, the king's relationships of reliance are reduced to one, for in the end Gonda observes,

> [T]he true basis of the king's power is the priest's power, that their union is perfection, though readily enunciated by the Brahmans 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.[62]

The "cooperation" between king and priest is paramount in Gonda's view; because together the king and "learned *brāhmaṇa*" also uphold *dharma* together. And, as well as gain "glory and success" from his relationship with the "learned" priest, his *purohita* (personal priest) protects him from curses, negative spells.[63]

Notably, it is only at the end of his study, after he had established the religious foundations of the king's power and *dharma* that Gonda turns to his very brief consideration of advisors and ministers. He retains his focus on rites as a source of power, though, as he describes the royal advisor, the *mantrin* as having a "magico-religious aspect," since "a *mantrin-* was the one who knew those sacred or potent formulas which were called mantras, apart from the rhythmic parts of the Vedas." [64] Since *mantrin* can also be translated as "secret plans and designs," Gonda reports, he gives *mantrin* "the sense of 'enchanter' or 'conjurer;'" or a more encompassing sense that includes other near officials such as an envoy (*dūta)*, or even the king himself. He concludes that these figures were responsible for acting on the king's behalf to protect the kingdom.[65] Gonda set out to see how ministers relate to the king, but limited his study to the "magico-religious" aspect of the relationship.

Even with all that the sources argue the king gains from religious, magical and other sources of power and *dharma*, Gonda still does not back away from seeing the king as the centerpiece of power. There is evidence to support this interpretation if one

considers the content of these sources alone. Gonda uses *Arthaśāstra* reports of the king's power to appoint advisors and ministers, or its opinion that the king's excellence makes the elements of his kingdom excellent, as proof that the king "was the great power in the background."[66]

This is not to say that Gonda does not observe the collaborative nature of these interactions; he notes the king's reliance on these when he discusses the power that they *bring* to the king, and the rituals that move or make the power. However, Gonda's idea of collaboration is limited to the ritual power of *brāhmaṇa* priests and what they provide. Gonda uses texts composed by Brahmanical and Buddhist authors aimed at creating a virtuous king worthy and able to be in relationship with various advisors. Even so, Gonda does not see the building ideology that it is *they* (the advisors and their texts) that help effect the king's power, through sacrifices and knowledge. Gonda's study puts *brāhmaṇas* at the forefront of mediators of the king's power, but with a radically circumscribed circle of power.[67]

Certainly, a king's power and authority has its sacrificial dimension, as David Shulman points out in *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry* (1985). He discusses the figure of the king and the king's relationship to other spheres of power in early South India, which helpfully provides another way to understand the *context* of the royal advisor. However, he does not consider advisors and ministers themselves. Shulman construes the king as an unstable center due to the king's separation from Brahmanical power, which he presumes is the sole source of power. Brahmanical praxis is considered the source of power in the Indian system since it demonstrates what Shulman considers the necessary qualities of "transcendence." Problematically, his study

assumes that authority must come from a transcendent source in order for it *to be*

authority at all, directing our attention to *brāhmaṇas* and deities only.[68]

Kings, Queens, and Characters In-Between

Indian scholars of polity and kingship—who attend to a larger circle of sources of

authority than kings—bring more than Brahmanical and divine sources of authority and

power into view. This expanded view of sources of authority and power can contribute to

our ideas about the nature of role of the advisor as he or she negotiates the spaces

between two realms—the "political and the religious," the king and the priest. Even in

their different definitions, they provide an epistemic structure for thinking about

mediation of power and *dharma* that considers relational values.

For instance, the post-colonial scholarship (before around 1980) of Marxist

historians such as R. S. Sharma, considers early Indian articulations of polity from the

point of view of labor guilds, village associations and leaders, and agriculturalists. As a

result, a king's power is situated within the network of economic and material realities,

and the sources of them on which the king relied. These studies emphasized "the

people," *janapada*, and the network of power that maintained it all—the king's myriad

ministers, allies, and companions. We get a picture of a radically local, material

contingency in relationships between kings and the people.

Scholars such as K. P. Jayaswal, who were more conservative in terms of Hindu

orthodoxy, situated kings and *brāhmaṇas* in webs of relation that privileged corporate or

collaborative power and exercise of authority. For Jayaswal, kings were reliant on and

strictly controlled by a complex system of advisors and ministers, which included

brāhmaṇas, (for which Jayaswal provides a nuanced view of who these were).[69] K. A.

Nilakanta Sastri, in his examination of Maurya polity, saw a "new norm" that established

royal authority in two places—in the king and in the judgments and rulings of "higher

officials."[70] Also considering the Mauryan period, B. P. Sinha tilted power tensions in

the direction of ministers, "who were the real masters and were representatives of the

Paura-Jānapadas ["townsmen and country people"], capital and national parliaments."[71]

Relationships of authority in both cases are held in a tension that distributes authority to

those within these relationships. And finally, subaltern studies of Indian polities see

exclusionary relationships; there is no mediation. Such studies argue that polities based

in kings and the elite knowledge structures around them—Brahmanical knowledge—are

"false" constructions, so scholars must examine oral histories and tribal locations of

power (Jawalarhal Handoo, 2000). [72]

   Mahābhārata and *Rāmāyaṇa* narratives combine these complex relationships of

reliance, and expand them in ways that the treatises of rule on which the studies above

were based. The epics provide a narrative exploration of ideas a king's reliance on

brāhmaṇas, on other *rājanya* kings, queens, uncles and *sūta*s—another very intimate

companion. Both epics expand the dimensions of reliance on *brāhmaṇas* beyond the

sacrificial domain of activity. We see them as *ṛṣis*, "sages" contributing royal and

dharmic knowledge; as *tapasvins* generating power around the fire, counseling *rājanyā*

like Ambā, who had come seeking justice, but took away the arts of *tapas* in order to fuel

her own vengeance (5.173.10-177).[73] Whether in the forest or inside their courts,

Mahābhārata traditions articulate complex royal relationships between advisors and

kings.

Even so, few studies of the epics mention advisors or ministers more than briefly in the course of their examinations of power, polity and "the state". John Brockington's *The Sanskrit Epics* reveals a typical placement of advisors and ministers in studies of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*—in sections devoted to the "political and military aspects" of the epic textual traditions. The structure of this work deserves attention because it illuminates the same blind spot with respect to the role of advisors that occurs in other studies—the focus on the king as the *executor* of power or *dharma*.

Brockington presents the initial conundrum anyone would face when examining the role of the advisor. The "main court officials [of the *Mahābhārata*] are the *mantrin, saciva* and *amātya* but the terms are not differentiated in meaning."[74] He suggests by way of contrast that "*amātya* [is] a more inclusive, and therefore more inferior, term to *mantrin* (e.g. KA 1.8.29 and 1.10.1), following the *Arthaśāstra*."[75] This indicates he is aware of the importance of someone who gives counsel over someone who administers. However, the contrast between these positions is more properly understood in terms of *who* is allowed the closest *confidence* with the king and on *what grounds* this confidence is deserved.

But Brockington leaves us with only a summary of these figures in the epic; a summary which I include here to highlight how the advisors are seen and unseen:

> Their role is primarily advisory and the Śāntiparvan indicates this by the use of terms like counsellorship (*matisācivya*, 12.112.39c) and the king's advisers (*nṛpater matidāḥ,* 12.116.15c), but they also carried on the administration during the king's absence for any reasons…The qualities that they should possess are given on various occasions but only in general terms of virtues like bravery, learning, loyalty and honesty (e.g. 12.57.23-25, 81.21-29 and 84.11-13) and being of high birth (e.g. 2.5.33, 12.81.21 and 15.9.14). More generally, they are seen as included among the king's servants (*bhṛtya*, or more specifically *rājapuruṣa, rājabhṛtya, rājayukta*) or household officials (*paurogava*, e.g. 3.141.4c and 15.10.13c)."[76]

[…]
However, a chief minister is occasionally mentioned (e.g. *pradhānāmātya* at
3.190.21, *mantrimukhya* at 2.51.20) and other more specialized officials are also
referred to: the envoy, *dūta*, the minister for war and peace, *saṃdhivigrahaka*, and
the army commander, *senāpati* (the qualifications of all three given at 12.86.25-
31); of these, envoys and army commanders figure quite prominently in the
narrative portions…[77]

Brockington follows the advisors' function—in a way similar to the *Arthaśāstra* of

Kauṭilya, which he cites—enumerating the role, but giving little detail to the manner in

which they perform it. His comments on the idea of these figures in the *Rāmāyaṇa* are

even shorter, distinctive only in reporting differences in the frequency of occurrences of

the *mantrin* (special, close advisor) and the *sūta*, charioteer. He adds that Daśaratha's

purohita (Vasiṣṭha) "does not have the role of special advisor."[78] In the end, like others

before him, the "administrative" and "realistic" function of ministers and advisors is all

that is observed.[79]

Brockington's study is a reference work of the history of the study of the epics up

to its year of publication (1998). The limited attention to these figures is surprising in

that Brockington's piece encompasses epic studies. He reports that the envoy "figures

prominently in narrative portions," but he does not consider what the prominence might

suggest about the relative importance of the envoy's role, his relationship with the king,

and the trust implied in the prominence of the envoy's presence. What is more, multiple

scenarios of advice between the protagonists and antagonists of the epic carry the drama

of the kings' actions and consequences. For example, there are the embassies back and

forth between the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, and their strategic appeals to various *dharma*s

and other obligations on the part of Saṃjaya and Kṛṣṇa to avert the war;[80] and the

Pāṇḍavas encouragement of Yudhiṣṭhira to rule rather than renounce and go to the forest.

Recently, however, scholars are paying attention to the more inter-subjective dimensions of relationships of kings, and the implications of these on being dharmic might have on those who might encourage a king like Yudhiṣṭhira in extremity. In an important recent edited volume, *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, Angelika Malinar considers how the "mutual dependence" of husband and wife shaped the rhetoric of dissent between Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī in their argument about his inaction in the *Āraṇyakaparvan*. [81] In the same volume, Brian Black seeks to understand how women claimed authority to speak on matters of *dharma*, beyond their own *strīdharma*. To answer, Black examined how queens learn *dharma*s, how they teach them, and how an implied female audience shaped the trajectory of the narrative.[82] Laurie Patton contributes ideas about how characters work dialogically in the epic to create their dharmic personas.[83] All contribute perspectives on aspects of epic relationships not considered before, and support my analyses (in later chapters) that demonstrate the complexity, relationality and intimacy involved in mediation of *dharma* and power in early India.

Diwakar Tiwary's interests are not with the power that comes on account of some intimacy with the king, but with corporate or collaborative function of ministers in the *Mahābhārata*, in various forms. [84] His analysis of the "council of ministers" in the *Mahābhārata* (1990), is like many others in some respects—he examines the key terms for ministers and their qualifications in terms of political "portfolio" (135-136), describes the network of power and rule that ministers and the king inhabit in terms of "central government" (134), and epitomizes their obligations to advise and provide a verisimilitude of a "checks and balances" system (119).

But Tiwary is notable in the attention—though very limited—he gives to certain dynamics that plagued relationships between kings and their advising ministers: a weak personality leads to ministers having "the upper hand;" that secrecy (in content of counsel) can be a tool of manipulation, even while secrecy is necessary (147ff); that advisors were in a relationship of immanent and imminent danger (145, 150), which often led to fear of rendering advice (149-150).

Tiwary also works to recuperate negative views of ministers, especially the truism that ministers in ancient India were thieves, corrupt, or "sycophants." Even though "historical instances are not lacking of cheat and fraud" (150), he asserts not all ministers were corrupt. Using the manner in which ministers protected Nāla's children while he was in exile in the story of Nāla (138), he concludes that "the ministers were not devourers but they were generally responsible in the performance of their duties." Tiwary anticipates, though not explicitly, the Buddhist caricature of ministers (as well as contemporary ones) and answered with an ancient example of propriety in the exercise of ministerial power.

Buddhists at the Margins

There are no studies that consider the advisor and minister in the Buddhist materials in any detail. Therefore, the minister is described only briefly for his relationship of support to the king. [85] As noted earlier, the minister (often an advisor) is considered to be one of the jewels of kingship that the ideal ruler, the "wheel-turning" (*cakravartin or cakkavatti,* Pāli) king possesses, and one basis of his powers to establish

order and *dharma*. Jan Gonda mentions Buddhist conceptions of the minister or advisor

only tangentially. His report on the "jewel" of the minister, the ideal is "the perfect

administrator who is never short of funds for purposes of lavish generosity."[86] Gonda's

also notes that in Buddhist sources, ministers, retainers and royal favorites were seen as

adversaries that "oppressed people."[87] This polarity of good minister, bad minister

pervades the Buddhist literature.

This polarity explains the common Buddhist depiction of the strength that can be

had from a good advisor. Balkrishna Gokhale, in "Early Buddhist Kingship," (1966)

thinks that the Buddhist conception of the *pañcha-balam* (five powers of the king)

reflects the structures of power and rule in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. He concludes this

from their shared conceptions of the sources of a king's strength—the treasury, the army,

the minister. [88] In spite of their importance as sources of strength, the power of the

minister (*amaccabalam*) is not elaborated. For Gokhale, and most others, it suffices to

assert the minister's responsibility to provide advice to the king in *attha* and *dhamma*,

which he translates as "prosperity and righteousness," respectively.[89]

Let us turn now from this consideration of advisors in studies of kings to survey

the ways that advisors have been understood in studies of ministers, advisors, and

counsel. We shall see that, even though we are considering studies that aim to focus on

advisors, some of the problems we have already observed in bringing them into view in

the literature on kings persists here as well.

Advisors in Studies of Ministers, Advisors, and Counsel

Political Mediator as Advisor

Ancient texts reflect different ideas about the ideal advisor and the relationship structures in which the advisor would be embedded. The idea and role of the advisor is subsumed strictly into its political sense and described as the "minister." Radhagovinda Basak's study, "Ministers in Early India" (1925), works to bring a representative view of the crucial role ministers played in ancient India from this diversity in ideas and structures. A secondary aim of his project was to show the complex and nuanced nature of ancient Indian political philosophy.[90] Basak's study was a response to public discourse in India—resulting from the 1921 reforms of the Government of India Act of 1919— about institutions of ministers and the structural movements toward 'self-government' of which they were a part. He sought to learn "how ministers in ancient India were appointed, what duties or functions they discharged, what their relation with the king and the people was, and how they fared in the service to the State and the people."[91] Basak's study of ministers in ancient India is advice in its own right; since, in addition to demonstrating historical precedent for Indians to be their own ministers of power, he even makes recommendations based on ancient authorities to present debates about salary grades for Indian ministers.[92]

Basak uses ancient and early medieval authorities to demonstrate that in antiquity, "not just present times alone—[but] as early as the fifth century A.D., we [Indians] have such high offices filled up by worthy and accomplished State-*amātyas* [ministers]."[93] Notably, he chooses examples from the most comprehensive ancient authorities on

success in rule, such as Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* or Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra*.[94] Basak

punctuates his examples from antiquity with illustrations of "actual deeds of some

ministers belonging to the different periods of Indian history."[95] Basak does not use

religious scripture, but the "Law-books" (*Dharmaśāstra*) from Manu and Yājñavalkya

and their medieval commentators to provide the authenticity these histories have as terms

of governance for the British.[96] By using these sources, Basak can also articulate a more

secular history of ministers in the ancient India, which would also bolster its legitimacy.

Basak begins by explaining the "exact meaning of the three words" for ministers:

"Both the words *amātya* and *saciva* mean associates or companions and the word *mantrin*

means a person who is concerned with *mantra* or secret counsel or deliberation on

political matters." [97] Basak asserts that "writers of a somewhat later period made

"indiscriminant use of the three words," so he uses "Amarasiṃha the famous Buddhist

lexicographer from the Gupta period…

> [who] points out, with clear precision missed by many commentators and writers
> that an *amātya* who is the king's *dhī-saciva* (elsewhere called *mati-saciva),* i.e. an
> associate or minister for counsel shall only be called a *mantrin,* and that all
> *amātyas* other than the *mantrins* are *karma-sacivas,* i.e. associates or ministers for
> action or execution and that the latter are also called *mahāmātras* or *pradhānas*."
> [98]

Only after Basak sets the distinctions for ministers does he give the differing opinions of

other writers, earlier than Amarasiṃha, and later.[99] Basak's summary is representative of

these terms in the Gupta period. However, his use of sources does two things: it forces

an unreal clarity on evidence composed of several eras of reflection on governance, and it

constrains this reflection to the "classical" period in India. This classical construction

was and is definitive for Indian historiography, barring some post-modern scholarship.[100]

The rest of his study is an excellent survey of the roles of the ministers in ancient and medieval sources directed at royal spheres of activity alone, according to Brahmanical treatises of "law" and "polity." One learns the Brahmanical assessment of the despotic nature of the king and his tendency to be "misled by insolent pride," (I:3; 529) which makes advisors and ministers necessary (via *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu); Kauṭilya's suggested maximal eighteen positions—from top adviser (*mantrin*), out to the *amātya* in charge of forest hinterlands (*nāyaka)* (I:3; 530-532);[101] proof of political acumen by showing the ancient criteria for choosing and verifying the integrity of ministers(I:4; 627-634); the deliberative body of advisers and theories and strategies to manage king-adviser relationships (I:4; 634-638); proof of this system's success from the Junagaḍh inscription of Rudradāman (I:4; 638); and the often precarious relationships between king and ministers (I:4; 640-642). Bringing his present into this discussion of the past, Basak upholds his cultural paradigm of how to negotiate the mercurial figure of the king:[102] "[M]inisters everywhere in the world should do well to remember the *Mahābhārata* ideal of ministry," an ideal comprised of tolerance and forbearance, endearing qualities to kings.[103]

Basak takes particular care—encompassing more discussion than any topic in his article—to present ancient theories about trust and testing trustworthiness and the personal characteristics that ministers are to have. He is singular in his attention to the importance of trust in the advisor-king relationship. Both trust and character are the foundation for the creation and maintenance of advisor-king relationship, which Basak elucidates using Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. This discussion in the treatise contains seven opinions about the ideal basis of trust and signs of trustworthiness.[104] The variety of

opinion shows that the way to trust in royal relationships was by no means sure. The

structure of the discussion exemplifies the deliberative dimensions involved in

formulating ideas about governance. Since the text also provides the contrary opinion to

each quality—friendship, loyalty, intellect, heredity, cosmopolitan perspective—

subsequent advisors and kings can evaluate the implications of assuming one or more of

these as bases of trust in their relationships. Since the example shows some structure of

royal decision making and the relationships crucial to the process, Basak provides

compelling evidence for anyone setting out to prove ancient Indian capacities to govern,

counsel, and mediate power successfully.

      If Kauṭilya's treatise shows the theoretical elements of the ancient Indian

governance at the levels nearest the king, Basak makes them concrete by citing the

Junagaḍh inscription of Rudradāman, which he asserts is record of a successful "joint

deliberation of members of inner and outer cabinets."[105] While I agree with his

assessment, it is also an ideological argument for Indian rule. Basak's study provides

"proof" that Indians have a history of administrative acumen, demonstrated in the

negotiations between ministers and kings in his sources. While Basak is astute in his

consideration of trust and the problems encountered in advising kings (I:4; 641-642),

there is no discussion of how narratives engage these problems or work to resolve them.

This limitation is created by Basak's use of only treatises of *dharma* and polity (*dharma*

and *nīti*), and not narratives sources—such as *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions.

So, even while he educates us to the breadth of ancient and "classical," theories of king

and minister activity and relationships, we do not experience how the problems of trust

and emotion (as in the king's propensies to rash action) are imagined to play out. But, he demonstrates that ancient Indians were acutely aware of exigencies involved in rule.

Basak shows that "Hindu" (the term he uses) models of governance in their primitive forms involved a rational, common assent to community and to rule with the Indian equivalent of a social contract (I:3; 525-526), as well as awareness of the complex intersections of authority, power, and relationality in ancient Indian courts. These are the foundations upon which rest his apologia for Indian political agency and excellence.[106] As British conservatives unmindfully argue about whether the Indians were prepared to govern themselves, and the British controlled structures that mediated power, authority, and norms were being heavily contested, Basak wrote a history of ancient ministerial power in India as a tacit counter-debate.

Partha Chatterjee has suggested that "the criteria of the 'true historical account' had been, of course, set by then by European historical scholarship. That India had no true historical account was a singular discovery of European Indology." [107] Basak not only uses their criteria, but answers with a history that in the end poses one example of an Indian solution, by means of counsel in poetic form, which Basak translates from the sixth century poet Bhāravi:

> 'That servant is a bad counselor who gives not salutary advice to his sovereign, and that sovereign is a bad master who listens not to the advice of a well-wisher. For all kinds of prosperity favor (the countries in which) the kings and his ministers act in concert.' [108]

Arguably, any interpreter of the past brings his or her own agenda to the materials of study. This means Basak is not alone in using ancient Indian ideas about structures that facilitate relationships between ministers, advisors and kings to answer problems inherent

to modern Indian politics. But, at least Basak was explicit about when he was arguing in this manner.

Religious Figure as Advisor

In addition to the ideological concerns that may frame the reading of texts that address the relationship of mediation between advisors and kings in ancient India, one must consider ideology within the texts. Ideology is an important dimension of any counsel, but this is especially true of royal advice between a king and his court changed by a religious figure (e.g., a monk or *muni*) who might influence the king in another direction. One observes arguments for and against listening to the advice of one figure over another. But arguments against taking the counsel of another are never so frequent nor as elaborate as those occurring in either of the ancient Indian epics.

Walter Ruben comes close to elements of my argument about the varieties of ideologies or *dharma* and power that can be expressed—or challenged—in moments of counsel between a king and his advisors. In his article from *Indian Studies Past and Present*, Ruben searches for an "unequivocal" example of the purported "materialistic" point of view in the counsel of the minister Jābāli in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[109] Ruben's concern is to reconcile traditional assertions about the "*nāstika*" character of Jābāli's argument to Ruben's own assessment of the ideological rhetoric employed by Jābāli.[110] To do this he examines the discourse in moments of counsel between Jābāli and the intimate circle of advisors around Rāma, and identifies general ideological categories, such as "materialistic" or "anti-fatalist" and "idealist."[111]

Before considering Jābāli as the primary object of his concern, Ruben briefly

notes but does not examine the ideological mode (my term) of discourse used by other

important advisors to Rāma, primarily his brother Lakṣmaṇa. For instance, Ruben points

out that Lakṣmaṇa is an important foil to his brother, King Rāma, who is the

"embodiment of idealism, which represents 'Truth' contrasted with 'Force.'[112] Lakṣmaṇa

for Ruben represents the "anti-idealist," presumably an anti-absolutist *dharma* ideal,

which I infer from Ruben's description of Lakṣmaṇa as holding the "anti-fatalist" position

"well-known since the Polity of Kauṭalya [*sic*]."[113] Unfortunately, Ruben does not

evaluate the way either character responds to each other's ideal position.

Going through the counsel among these kings and Jābāli, Ruben sifts for rhetoric

that either *is* or *is not* "materialist." Ruben isolates moments where Jābāli's arguments

are "not materialistic" at all—such as Jābāli's ideas about the son-to-father obligation (of

Rāma to his father) that merely reflect the "magical conceptions" of "rewards and

punishments" as coming out of "a totally different stratum of the old Vedic religious

thought."[114] Or, he relates that while Jābāli urges Rāma to take the throne of Ayodhyā—

which awaits him like "an expectant bride"—he sees no *nāstika* dimension in this

admonishment "not to give up the paternal kingdom."[115]

Ruben follows Jābāli's discourse as it continues to push against Rāma's sense of

obligation, pushing him to move beyond any obligations, beyond the ritual obligations

that assure the progress of his father's soul after death.[116] Jābāli moves into the realm of

those who refute the world beyond this, obligations to ancestors after death. In Ruben's

interpretation and translation, Jābāli states, "I deplore only those who run after ideals and

morals…because they preach nothing but sorrow on this side and find the end in

death."[117] Ruben observes, "[H]ere at last is the materialism unequivocal. After the death nothing remains. There is no reward for the moral and justified action, which might be a provision for the other world."[118] This certainly appears like *nāstik*a discourse—denying a realm of the fathers, the cycle of rebirth, and fruits of dharmic actions—which Rāma then engages to refute from the "idealist" position.

In all his assessments, Ruben is careful to identify ideological positions of the characters. However, he is confounded by the instances in the text where these characters espouse dual or 'competing' ideologies. The remainder of Ruben's analysis reveals an assumption about ideological discourse that needs to be addressed. In Ruben's terms, ideology is to be consistent; if one uses *nāstika* elements as a deliberative tool, the rest of one's rhetoric should be nāstika in nature. Ruben states of the debate between Jābāli and Rāma, "[Vālmīki] does not narrate here the controversy between the materialist and the idealist. On the contrary, he places side by side in the contentions of both, in such a manner that the common listener as a practical man would definitely decide in favour [*sic*] of the materialist."[119]

Beyond the problems with Ruben's interpretation here, I want to focus on how Ruben interprets changes in ideological perspective of one character within a particular narrative. Ruben ultimately concludes—from the dual presence of heterodox (*nāstika*) and (orthodox) *brāhmaṇa* elements in Jābāli's counsel—that these differences are a "device" of the poet Vālmīki to highlight the "inconsistent" nature of Jābāli's "preachings."[120] This interpretation could be correct, but much more can be said about these "devices" in the hand of Vālmīki, especially if one evaluates devices in the hands of characters within the story. The interchanges between the royals and Jābāli are only one

dimension of influence that is possible in a moment of advice. Rather than being

inconsistencies that need to be reconciled, juxtaposing alternate ideologies against one

another in this way is a typical device that advisors use in moments of counsel, as will be

revealed in subsequent chapters.

A Grammar of the Advisor: Toward Complexity and Intimacy in Relationships

Let me turn now to make some counter points to the perspectives represented in

the literature review, in order to illuminate what I consider to be the underlying

"grammar" of my study: that is, acknowledging the movement toward complexity,

relationality, and intimacy in conceptions of power and *dharma*. I proceed from point to

counterpoint, with occasional references to analysis in subsequent chapters. First, to

Gonda: All the sources he used to understand ancient kings also demonstrate that many

close royal associates help the king attain this power. This reliance comes to the fore, if

one considers *who* is making or narrating these norms for power and *dharma*. Though

Gonda uses texts composed by Brahmin and Buddhist authors aimed at creating a

virtuous king, he does not see them building their respective ideology—it is they (the

advisors) who help the king, through their respective media of *dharma* and knowledge—

and that these ideologies pointed at making the king worthy and able to be in relationship.

A brief reconsideration of Gonda's discussion of the oblations to the *ratnin* (which

I discuss in Chapter Five) provides a case for switching from an individual focus on the

king, to a focus on the relationship (III: 2; 123-127) in which he is implicated. Gonda

describes this ancient ritual exchange in the traditional manner: The king gains the

powers of the seven-jewels of kingship by sacrificing to them; the deity associated with

each jewel is the object of sacrifice. The power exchange comes through sacrifice to them and the god's associated with them. However, I consider the power transfer to be radically relational; that the sacrifice renews, binds them all in relationship that mediates power in all directions from the sacrifice. It is the relationship denoted by each jewel, in its point of relation and dynamics that gives the king power; the relationship is the point of mediation.

This bond is implied in more than the jewel-sacrifice (*ratnahavīṃṣi*). For instance, observe the complex bond of king-god-companion that Gonda reports: "Kings are regarded as friends or companions of Indra who is implored to "increase" them to whom they should be dear and whose human counterpart they are."[121] These mantras excerpted from *Atharva Veda* suggest a conception of the power gained in relationship. But Gonda's focus is on *just* these powers and marks of auspiciousness, not on the invitation within the mantra to relationships that increase royal power.

Ruben's study of the Jābāli episode raises questions about the ideological complexity of the moment of advice. There are benefits gained from juxtaposing alternate ideologies—such as alternative dharmic communities, or alternative religious practices—against one another: They provide a means for kings and audience to assess their efficacy in the moment, for instance. There is the further possibility that two views placed "side by side" are not inconsistencies at all, and can be valued as demonstrations of the manner in which advisors and kings reach a decision. But aside from the 'materialist' intellectual perspective given to King Rāma by Jābāli, emotional and devotional devices or means of influence are operating in this moment of counsel as well. I refer specifically to Lakṣmaṇa's fast unto death to persuade Rāma, and the entry of the

gods into the conversation that finally succeeds in convincing Bharata to take the throne. While Ruben might wish to resolve—into one ideological stance for one advisor—the various views in a moment of counsel, my study seeks to understand and describe the nature and strategies of advisors through the many ideologies at work in moments of advice. This is a complexity I explicate and maintain in its distinctions.

The nature of power and authority I isolated in the Indian scholarship on polity above (e.g., Sharma, Jayaswal, Sindh, Nilakanta Sastri, Handoo) is particularly pertinent for providing an alternate episteme of power and authority. The operative conception of authority in all of these is a *situated* one: conceptions in embedded in relationship to other powers—the people, the village headman, the guilds, the priests attentive to the people, and the ministers. These studies examined the social and political aspects of the network of rule, often in opposition to the religious or dharmic aspects. Even so, these studies of early Indian polity do provide a complex picture of the persons and their relations involved in rule, power, and *dharma*. This situated, networked complex of relationships with its focus on trust, emotion, and intimacy forms the logic of the idea of the advisor in early India, and thus is the "grammar" of my study.

Texts as Instructions for Advisors

More recently, scholars are considering the narratives about kings in a new light, making room for one to recognize the importance of relationships and characters around the king. Attention is shifting from using epics, fables, and religious texts as sources of information about a king and his battles, to considering the role of these genres in constructing the good king. Alf Hiltebeitel (2001) set this trajectory in motion in the

most significant manner. Hiltebeitel's more recent work aims to set boundaries around

the *Mahābhārata*—specifically, his arguments about seeing the *Mahābhārata* as a

unitary text—so better to think through the *function* of this text. In the course of

"*re*thinking" the literature of kings, in this case the *Mahābhārata*. Hiltebeitel suggests

that Vyāsa's (the purported author of the *Mahābhārata*) overall concern has been with the

education of King Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Mahābhārata*.[122] My study expands upon this

notion and considers *not only* those who may *educate* kings in the *Mahābhārata*, but

those close members of the royal circle that remind or prepare kings to fill their role, such

as queens and uncles, monks and bodhisattvas, and other authors and sages.

I suggest that since Vyāsa's students are also present in various frames of the epic,

it is fruitful to think of the epic as designed to educate other authors and sages—and

advisors who have the social currency of being sages. Throughout literature considered

in this dissertation, sages (whether orthodox or heterodox construed) and authors of texts

also advise or fill the role of counselor. Therefore, it is fruitful to consider advisors and

the advisory relationship in light of Hiltebeitel's discussion of the pedagogical role of

sages. In this light, Vyāsa's activity can be thought of as functioning as a paradigm for

the practical dharmic formation of kings and other *rājanya* and the complex cadre of

advisors and ministers important to royal rule.

As will emerge in Chapters Five through Seven, this formation is of a sort where

kings are taught the deliberative process of rule and *dharma*, largely (but not solely) in

the Brahmanical context. If the author can enter the frames of the story for the purpose of

instructing the king, he can also enter the frames of the story for other "Vyāsas," as his

discourses with other members of the royal family in and out of royal assemblies (the

sabhā) attest. Therefore, I suggest that the instructional impetus in the *Mahābhārata* is also directed toward the education of a dharmic *advisor*. Scenarios within it depict the king and kings—Yudhiṣṭhira and other *rājanya*; affinal, matrilineal and patrilineal kings—in a variety of relationships, as we know. But, a significant dimension of their relationships involves counseling one another—some as official advisors, and others acting as such due to the intimacy that constrains their relationships. As indicated earlier, scholars (Malinar; Black; Patton, 2007) are forging new directions in understanding, by examining the *Mahābhārata* through narrative analysis, through the experiences of marginal characters, and the dynamics of social relationships.

Hiltebeitel views the *Mahābhārata* as a text directed at educating a king—and the author Vyāsa's own son. In Hiltebeitel's rethinking of Vyāsa's role, and new considerations of the function of narrative, we have a starting place from which to consider the kings that are *around* a king (the *rājanya*) and advisors of other *varṇas*, and to reconsider other sources that have been viewed as educational tools for kings. I suggest that in addition to arguing that the purpose of these texts is to educate kings, we might also see these same texts as a means to educate advisors and advising ministers. It is even more likely that treatises are designed with both aims in mind on one level of experience.

The *Pañcatantra* (a prominent source in my study), for instance, functions in this dual role—serving kings and his ministers. Seeing the text in this way, however, has been suggested only recently. Considering only the explicit audience in the text, earlier scholarship made the *Pañcatantra* a text for kings and other *rājanya* a truism. Franklin Edgerton (1924) describes it as a, "*Fürstenspiegel* or *Mirror for Magistrates*, teaching

worldly wisdom to princes, by entertaining example, as well as by cleverly phrased precepts."[123] Edgerton observed this more than eighty years ago; nevertheless, scholarly focus has remained on the text's importance in educating kings (here, "princes"), without attending to the prominence of ministers in the narrative, let alone its practical ethics and strategies for royal counsel (not royal rule). Rather, we should see the stories in the *Pañcatantra* as tools of advisors, ministers, *and* kings.

Previous studies have made narrow assessments of the narrative action in the text, which have set the tone for scholarly views of the *Pañcatantra's* content and function. Patrick Olivelle summarizes these views in his recent retranslation (1997) of the text, and attempts to expand this assessment. He notes that Hertel and Edgerton (both editors of Sanskrit texts of the *Pañcatantra* in the early decades of the twentieth century) describe the aims of the text as "unmoral," directed primarily to inculcating political wisdom. As a result, it is generally described as "Machiavellian".

Olivelle considers this opinion of the text a narrow one that misses the immense human appeal of the tales that "depict human life with all its ambivalences and contradictions."[124] Olivelle is also critical of studies that seek to soften the Machiavellian dimensions of the text and argue for its nature as a text about "*dharma*," because such studies force one to read the *Pañcatantra* in unnatural ways. Rather, Olivelle demonstrates that our task in reading texts like the *Pañcatantra* is to consider what the narrative structure, the characters and their concerns, and the content reveal the text's function to be, rather than to reduce the text to one dimension of its concern.

The importance of Olivelle's reassessment of the *Pañcatantra* and his assertions about how to read it cannot be understated, for he brings forth some of the complexity of

the *Pañcatantra* and its function as a pedagogical text for groups besides kings and princes, namely, advising ministers. The text is a useful tool of influence in advising kings. Olivelle's more expansive view of the text brought forth this complexity of function in the text. Olivelle briefly highlights two methods of looking at this text that I consider critical to the study of this text and of others like it. First, he is attentive to the importance of context and narrator for the moral valence of the stories in the text. Second, he points out that the stories explore both sides of an ethical dilemma in detail. Attending to these elements, Olivelle observes that every king portrayed in the text is "depicted as helpless and totally under the control of his ministers."

Olivelle asks—but does not explore—if it were possible that a book so disparaging of kings could, indeed, be written for Kauṭilya's kings. Given its tone, he suggests that the *Pañcatantra* and texts such as Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* were intended for ministers and officials of the royal court, not for kings, in spite of their explicit claims to the contrary.[125] My study of the advisor in the *Pañcatantra* and other literature that engages the responsibilities of kings confirms Olivelle's suggestions about this text. My analyses also confirm that in addition to what a focus on narrator can reveal, an examination of context and the boundaries of context, of the myriad techniques and artifices of counsel are important instruments for understanding the ideal role of advisors in this and other narratives about kings.

Summary Remarks

Reading Texts for Both King and Advisor Roles

Given this limited scholarship on advisors and ministers, one may wonder: Is this emblematic of how too strict a focus on one thing can make one miss another equally or perhaps more important thing? If we isolate and focus solely on the king in considerations of power and polity, do we miss the entire network of persons around him? Perhaps, but the history of the relation of the advisor to the king also suggests other limiting factors: Ideas about kings and *rājanya* as a category of ruling people, conceptions of power and its appropriate use; and assumptions about royal religious practice, ideals, and *dharma*.

For instance, there is a foundational and unstated (and perhaps, unexamined) assumption in earlier studies of royal authority (Heesterman 1985; Shulman 1985) that if power is to be shared in the royal context, it is to be validated through sacrificial sources (Brahmanical), examples of which I discussed above.[126] This is certainly the Brahmanical argument in the Vedic *Saṃhitā* and *Brāhmaṇa* literatures. Religious power is (or must be) sacrificial power; an assumption that is evident in theories that locate power strictly in Brahmanical spheres of religious activity. This view of authority may also be tied to how Indologists view normative genres in general. I refer to assumptions that only texts of the "sacred" or normative genres, such as *śruti* and *dharma-śāstra*, carry injunctive power, with *śruti* at the top of these genres.

However, *śruti* is a shifting category, used to describe things perceived to have a high degree of authority upon which persons base decisions about their activities. During moments of advice, where advisors use all these genres, assumptions about the "sacred"

as a source of power does not describe the entire picture. In early Indian royal contexts, morality and ethics can be deliberated upon through a variety of normative media, in complex normative spheres and directed at complex normative ends. A different category is necessary to describe these spheres of "normativity." My analysis of advisors and the dharmic media and methods of these advisors in relationships with kings will demonstrate that scholarly uses and description of these sources must include their functions and content, *in context,* and examine their use in traditional processes of normative discernment in these specific contexts. This provides an important expansion of ideas about what a particular category of normativity may describe, and what the norm is aiming to address.

A few scholars, especially Donald R. Davis, Jr., Timothy Lubin, and Patrick Olivelle in their contributions to *Hinduism and Law* (2010) have recently begun to reformulate categories of normativity. This is important work for thinking about the formations within Brahmanism that are foundational to Hindu law, in that it reexamines the link between law and religion and the sources of these (*Vedas*, *Brāhmaṇas*, *śāstra*s and recently, inscriptions). Even more important than reexamining this link is their re-reading of the structures of authority within these sources. Still, this new understanding has not moved much beyond *brāhmaṇa* and some *śramaṇa* ambits of religious authority, and their ideals of this authority's exercise, as *brāhmaṇas* and *śramaṇas* (a generalized term for non-Brahmanical mendicants and ascetics).

This focus on the *brāhmaṇa* is warranted by the evidence, and their work supports my arguments about the relationships of reliance between kings and the various persons envisioned to advise them. However, as we shall see, the pictures of authority and

relationships of them expand with a consideration of *rājanya* contributions. My argument about the shared stage that advisors (whether *brāhmaṇa*, *rājanya*, *śramaṇa*, *bhikkhu* monks, or *mahīṣī* queens) have with kings in creating power and *dharma* in the literature, gives even more for us to reconsider. Consideration of these figures and their contribution to the various structures of normativity in royal relationships and religious relationships adds to the history of Indian sources of authority.

Moving forward in this understanding was not possible without our antecedents in thinking about royal power and normativity. For my context here, it is well established that Indian tradition indicates that *smṛti* (which includes the epics, *itihāsa*, and technical treatises, *śāstra*) has the injunctive force of *śruti*. Even within these sources, the valence of emotion, relationship and kinship adds to these normative media in a way that suggests that we are dealing with cultures of normativity, not only normative texts. The forces that contribute to this culture only come into view by shifting our focus from the king and his Brahmins as the locus of royal power and authority, to the king and all his close relationships as the locus.

Another obstacle to seeing the role of the advisor is the tendency for some scholars to dichotomize the political and metaphysical spheres of activity and discourse in Indic materials. For instance, Hartmut Scharfe makes a distinction between persons in "political" roles next to the king and those that are "metaphysical." He argues that the political roles are reserved for the *mahāmātras* (sometimes synonymous with *amātyas*) and other persons employed in daily activities of the king, and perhaps even the king's relatives. He claims that royal priests (*purohita-s*) and teachers (*ācārya-s*) hold the "most

prestigious roles" and this placement achieves a two-fold result: both distancing the king from his political functionaries and stressing the "metaphysical aspects of kingship."[127]

Thinking about the prestige and metaphysics of the relationship between a king and his close functionaries in this way elides the nuances of prestige in Indic contexts. For instance, while a "metaphysical" counselor like a priest or a formally "political" one like the *amātya* or *purohita* may be the most prestigious at court, prestige of this sort does not necessarily supersede that held by other persons in gaining the ear of the king. I refer to persons who walk into the role of counselor only temporarily, based on the intimacies they share with the king—either through family or special position (such as that created by *varṇa*; like the *sūta,* the king's charioteer and bard, or a wife could advise and have considerable influence). Scharfe's distinctions could lead us to miss the different kinds of prestige that relatives and other intimates of the king possessed. As will emerge in this study, intimately construed prestige has singular value in counsel.

Arguably, *brāhmaṇas* (as *purohita* or *ācārya*) at court were envisioned to hold analogously intimate connections with the king, predicated on the level of trust created by the special kinship of the teacher-student relationship. Pushing at the implications of Scharfe's categories once more, such a limited conception of the function of prestige and metaphysics of the relationship between a king and his close functionaries also keeps the diversity of Brahmanical activity in royal affairs from view. *Dharmasūtra* or *Dharmaśāstra* alike presume the kind of trust and reliance between a king and his priests, as obtained for him when he was a *kṣatriya* student during his instruction from his *brāhmaṇa* teacher. Reliance on *ācāryas* and *purohitas* is evident; however, the "metaphysics" that defined their roles were not static, which can be lost if one assumes

the "metaphysical aspects of kingship" is lodged in *purohita* or *ācārya* alone. Indeed, my

evaluation of the qualities of the ideal advisor (Chapter Five) demonstrates that the nature

of Brahmanical prestige itself was in flux.[128] This means that beyond the "metaphysics"

of power, the ideas about which *brāhmaṇas* or *ācāryas* might fill these roles were

contested, and the qualities (*guṇas*) they were envisioned to have—or were seen as

necessary to possess—have shifted, expanded, or changed. These fluctuations in ideals

had an impact of the nature of the role of the advisor and the qualities of relationship

between a king and his advisors and ministers.

Moreover, bifurcations of "political" and "metaphysical" elide competing political

or religious ideologies as they converge on rule. Any advisor that stands at the

boundaries of these categories, or that exists on the margins of these realms, is hidden by

such a dichotomy. For instance, analyses that describe the counsel in terms of a

"blending" of the political and religious or "metaphysical" realms, cannot adequately

account for the incursion of a peripatetic sage into the moment of counsel in the forest.[129]

Moreover, it does not provide a way to understand the means by which a sage (or any

advisor) would "blend" mixed authorities of power.[130] The relationship between the king

and advisor is marked by spectral uses of the media of authority that engage a range of

cultures of normativity. [131] These cultures of normativity are the subject of my

discussions in the next chapter; where I consider Brahmanical and Buddhist literatures

through the narrative object of royal power and *dharma*: advisors and ministers,

brāhmaṇa, *rājanya* or otherwise, relationships and trust.

Chapter 3:   Textual Genres and the Shaping of Idea(l)s of the Advisor

In the previous chapter's review of the relevant scholarly literature on advisors, I showed the ways in which advisors and advising relationships have been largely unseen, or seen too simply, across a range of scholarly work on kings, polity, and advisors in early India. As a necessity for providing a basic context for that review, I offered a brief sketch of the most common terms used for ministers, advisors, and counselors. In this chapter, I turn to engage as fully as possible the complexity, ambiguity, and nuances of these terms for advisors, and advising roles and relations in multiple social and institutional contexts, across (and within) Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions, as representations of advisors are shaped and offered in inscriptions and in the various genres of texts. This exercise in engaging the complexity of advisors and their relations is the necessary response to the lacunae in the scholarly literature. It is also a necessary step in the structure of this dissertation, as it establishes the context—in its complexity, ambiguity, and fluidity—of the subsequent chapters on the dynamics of the advising relationship—the "grammar" of the advisor.

I begin with terminology, and move from that to show the range of depictions of advisors across and within texts and genres of texts, both Brahmanical and Buddhist. It is necessary to start with this focus on terms for "ministers," and other terms for those who counsel, and others who presume to give advice. Even as I am delineating terms for persons and roles, the complexity, ambiguity, and fluidity of terms should help keep us mindful of the further aim of examining relational dynamics, so that we do not "fix" these names into an organizational-functional chart that eliminates the nuances of human

relations. As we shall see, these persons may or may not be called "*mantrin,*" or some other term for advisor, counselor, or "advising other."

What is crucial is that the person giving counsel—whomever he or she is, and whatever term may be used (or not)—is perceived, ideally, to <u>possess</u> *mantra,* or "counsel"—a way of describing the role and relationship that reflects several dimensions of personality and expertise. The person perceived to possess *mantra* is seen to have an integrated set of knowledge and expertise (e.g., of particular problems or issues, along with the persuasive-rhetorical skill to engage the king). But equally important, this person also has specific personal-relational expertise (of the person of the king, and of specific dynamics of intimacy in the relation she or he has to the king). As we shall see in future chapters, it is these relational dynamics that facilitate, or thwart, the effective manifestation of a king's power, and his ability to be dharmic. However, in order to get to that point in this study, we must grasp as much as possible the range of depictions of the advisor that exist in particular genres. Thus, we begin with terminology, and move to depictions in the textual traditions.

Ministers, Advisors, and Advising Others

Terms as Ideas: Amātya (Amacca), Mantrin, and Sacivan

The presence of ministers and advisors to kings is ubiquitous in Indian literature and epigraphy. Even so, there is no uniform taxonomy of them other than the general understanding that ministers perform executive functions for kings, and advisors counsel them. The terms used to denote these levels of function are usually *amātya* (Sanskrit) or *amacca* (Pāli) for ministers, *mantrin* (Sanskrit) or *mati-sacivan* (Prakrit) for those who

give counsel, and *sacivan* (in Sanskrit and Prakrit) for colleagues in close relationship to the king, from which ministers and advisors can be drawn. There is some indication of hierarchy—though not consistently—within the terms as well, such as *mahāmantrin* for "chief advisor," and *mahāmātya* for "chief minister;" both of whom advise in dharmic and other narratives. After these most basic denominations, variances occur with dynastic period, work classification, textual and/or dharmic tradition.[1]

Importantly, someone who holds the position of (*amātya*) minister in its various forms can also be an advisor to the king. However, for some texts, this does not mean that all *amātyas* were advisors.[2] This distinction is an important point of departure for this study since it raises questions about which ministers could advise a king and what was the nature of the advisory relationship. The qualifications envisioned for ministers and advisors were a matter of expertise and dharmic integrity in both Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions, though these qualifications were interpreted differently both within and across these traditions, as we shall see. One challenge for interpretation is that the terms and concepts for these figures are not systematic in most of the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature. Thus, the tendency for many scholars has been to use literature of the Gupta and later dynasties—which is more systematic, and about which we have more information—to force an unreal clarity on earlier sources which in fact are unsettled regarding advisors, their roles and relations to kings.[3]

Moreover, terms for ministers and advisors to kings are often not the same even within a single text, let alone across texts and traditions. As stated above, ministers (*amātyas*) could be advisors. Both normative literature and epigraphy (which we should also be mindful to consider as normative) suggest that persons who entered an advising

relationship with the king could also be preceptor (*ācārya*), Vedic ritual specialist or

priest (*purohita*), chariot driver (*sūta*), sage (*muni, ṛṣi,* or *bhikṣu, brāhmaṇa* or *śramaṇa*),

or war and peace minister (*sāndhivigrahika*). Sometimes, the moment of counsel alone

indicates that a particular person is acting in an advisory role. Brahmanical and Buddhist

normative literature indicate that the breadth of categories of persons who sought to *act*

as advisors may not have held formal advisory positions. Intimate relations, such as

uncles, mother or wife, or close friends, or sages, monks or other teachers put their words

before kings in these texts. The range of persons and the range and ambiguity of

terminology are thus to be expected, given the complexity of networked family and other

relations in Indian cultures; as well as the fact that kinship relations, affective bonds,

heredity and social position were all avenues to the king. Moreover, these relationships

were often constitutive of the authority that might embolden one to venture advice in the

first place.[4]

These differences that exist in sources about ministers and advisors thus present

challenges for readers wishing to have a consistent English referent for ministers and

advisors. While we must try to organize and understand this complexity, we must take

care not to eliminate the complexity and ambiguity that is in fact present in the texts.

Nevertheless, we can begin with some basic terminological priorities. As indicated in the

previous chapter and above, there were three general categories of persons that could be

close to the king and act in this role: *saciva* (or *sahāya*), *mantrin* and *amātya* (or

mahāmātra)—loyal colleague or friend, advisors/counselors, and ministers, respectively.[5]

Ideas and ideals about their positions are explored in dharmic narratives, while

conceptions of their roles were elaborated as dynasties grew and administrations became more complex, as indicated by epigraphic sources.[6]

For now, to gain more understanding of these basic terms, I begin with the most general category, the "minister," since it subsumes much of the lexicography of important mediators for the king. In Basak's study of ancient Indian ministers, he used the word "minister"

> to refer to all classes of chief advisers to the sovereign and the chief executive officers of state, and therefore includes all classes of such officer of state, mentioned in ancient Hindu political treatises, law-books and *kāvya* literature, as are denoted by the words *mantrin*, *saciva* and *amātya*, and sometimes the chief superintendents or heads of the various departments of the public services called *adhyakṣas*.[7]

As we can see, the English term "minister" encompasses many positions for Basak—advisor, loyal colleague, administrative minister, and overseer (or "superintendent," as above); *mantrin*, *saciva*, *amātya*, and *adhyakṣa*, respectively. I omit '*adhyakṣa*' from consideration, since I have yet to see this figure actually advise a king in the literature. For the rest, the convention in scholarship has been to subsume the varieties of Indic terms for roles of ministers and advisors into the term "minister."

Problematically, even while this convention is necessary to grasp the idea of the role, it has also hidden the complexity of the role of the minister, especially the advisor or advising minister from view. Moreover, this convention has also constrained our understanding of the corporate and collaborative nature of power in early India. To be fair, this convention is driven in part by the indistinct use of terms for this cadre of persons that assist the king in sources prior to the Gupta consolidation. The challenge is to see past the generalized term to the complexity it can encompass, and to keep this complexity in mind.

Constraints and assimilations of these kinds seem unavoidable, given the variable nature of the term. We have to wait for the genre of treatises devoted to royal aims (*arthaśāstra*) before we see attempts to instate standardized meanings of ministers. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya (*Aś*) provides such an effort to systematize the close and important positions around the king. The scholar R. S. Sharma uses this configuration to provide a functional category with which to discuss the *amātya*, "minister," in his discussion of the seven-limbs of rule, the *saptāṅga,* of which the *amātya* is a part. Sharma presents the *amātya* as a

> cadre of service from which all high officers such as the chief priest, ministers, collectors, treasurers, office engaged in civil and criminal administration, officers in charge of harem, envoys and the superintendents of various departments are to be recruited.[8]

The operative distinction here is, "cadre of service from which all high officers…are to be recruited." This special cadre and the idea of an *amātya* in the *Arthaśāstra* have helped make the *amātya* and Kauṭilya's iteration of it as the point of reference for Indian polity in many studies. This description of *amātya* is also "compatible," as Sharma suggests, with the basic ministerial structure that one observes in Indian Buddhist sources that use the term *amacca* to denote high functionaries of a king.[9] As an indication of his attempt to instantiate more specialized roles to those close to a king, Kauṭilya reserves '*mantrin*' for those with the superlative characteristics needed to advise a king.[10]

But this level of distinction does not hold across the different genres of literature in which the idea of the advisor or minister appears. For instance, within some *Jātaka,* the term '*amacca'* is used regularly—for both minister of administrative function and for the person acting as a primary advisor—but the variants of *mantrin* (*mati*) and *saciva*, or the compound *mati-saciva* are also used. '*Saciva*' is used in the inscriptions of

Rudradāman, a first century CE, Śaka king (non-*ārya* and non-indigenous/foreign); and

the dramatist Kālīdāsa used *saciva* as well. All can denote the ministers nearest and

dearest to kings that do engage in counseling the king, as well as general agents of royal

power.

The challenges involved in sifting through the terminology for these mediating

figures and the ideas that they denote should now be clear. As noted above, my

discussion of the ministerial and advising roles and advising relationships will maintain

the texts' own distinctions or ambiguities as much as possible. For the purposes of

discussion, I use 'minister,' 'advising minister,' 'advisor' and 'advising other,' according to

context and use in the text. If the text is specific, I convey it. But, overall I am always

thinking comprehensively of the advisor—the one who engages in a relationship of

support and dialogue with a king—and the advising relationship. I will examine how

these textual communities conceive of and idealize this figure; the way in which he or she

is used by or uses the king; the way in which he or she negotiates the apparatus of rule, or

perhaps even creates it.   My object is to examine and unfold the idealized figure

considered important enough to advise and/or mediate power and *dharma* for the king in

some crucial areas of royal life, exercises of power and *dharma*.

The terms *mahāmātras*, *pariṇāyaka*, *amātya*, *saciva*, *mantrin* and their varieties in

Sanskrit and Prakrit do still provide the basic contours of the conceptual map for ideas

about advising relationships, and mediators of royal power and *dharma*. The literatures

of good conduct—dharmic behavior or other categories of 'good'—and expertise engage

the ideas of the minister and advisor in these terms and in distinctive ways. For this

reason, this chapter is structured much like a literature review, but of primary sources,

where Buddhist and Brahmanical texts are read through the eyes of advisors and ministers, to see what these texts and genres might look like as tools of the advisor, and to lay bare some more of the structural terms and ideas for later chapters. We have no choice but to proceed in this way—by turns examining advisers "directly" (through the texts that represent them), and then by examining crucial features of the texts/genres themselves. It cannot be otherwise, for it is through the texts that idealized depictions of advisors are created and projected as tools of advice.

General Depictions of the Advisor across Brahmanical and Buddhist Traditions

Because advisors and advising ministers perceived themselves as crucial to the function of a kingdom, they appear across genres and dharmic traditions as mediators of power, *dharma*, and the quality that makes proper exercise of power and *dharma* possible—correct perception. This is true for both Brahmanical and Buddhist narratives. As we shall see from examples drawn from dramatic and poetic literatures (courtly *kāvya*) attributed to Brahmanical authors, or from Buddhist birth stories (*jātaka*) and teaching narratives (such as *Majjhima-* and *Dīgha- Nikāyas*), advisors instruct, connive, inspire, control and influence kings in myriad ways. Idealized advisors affect even a king's closest associates in order to bring other kings and kingdoms to their knees, or to bring other powerful advisors to the knees of a rival king. Indeed, some of these genres and persons associated with these genres, such as Kauṭilya, carry such authoritative weight that they skew the interpretation of other narratives due to their influence, as I will discuss below.

Because of the extent of this influence—whether idealized or real—advisors, advising ministers, and advising others appear in technical, dramatic, epic and dharmic narratives. The ideal pictures of advisors and ministers are shaped by the nature and aims of these narratives in which they appear. For instance, a theoretical text such as the *Arthaśāstra* envisions detailed, expansive duties for the royal circle of advisors, yet does not explore in detail the emotional nuances involved in causing a king to take a different course of action. However, the *Arthaśāstra* assumes that emotions play an important role in both giving and receiving counsel, but does not elucidate beyond brief narrative allusions to kings that failed due to being angry or avaricious. It is left to other genres, such as dramas and normative histories (*itihāsa*) to explore these nuances in detail. The degrees of power and influence advisors are perceived to possess, the extent to which *dharma* shapes or informs the advisors' nature and the level of idealization of the advisory role vary with narrative genre. Therefore, it is important to provide the context for and to describe some of these genres in detail.

Brahmanical and Buddhist texts do portray some minimal expectations and general assumptions that communities had of ministers, advisors and counselors; I provide some of these here to give some common ground for thinking about the distinctions to come. Wisdom, purity, and perspicacity (typically *prajñā*, *śuciḥ,* and *vipaścitaḥ)* are essential in making good and bad ministers and advisors—the distinctions largely lie in the directions in which these qualities are turned.[11] Beyond these general characterizations, textual traditions argue about the best means of cultivating the distinctive qualities they assume the basis of a dharmic and successful advisor or minister.

Various Sanskrit and Pāli terms denote a person who possesses wisdom, such as *paṇḍita* or *ṛṣi* or *dharmika/dhammika*. Wisdom is the ultimate means to virtue (*śīla*), *dharma*, and appropriate expedience (*nīti* and beyond); without it there is no basis for making decisions in human congress or in social policy; no strategies for carrying out decisions. In sectarian terms, wisdom is often conflated into the textual forms of it, such as *Veda, sutta, śāstra*—all become *dharma* or *dhamma*, the contents of and practice of *dharma*. But beyond these special senses of wisdom, wise persons in the Indic context are described and assessed in terms of their conduct *(vinaya)*, purity, and integrity (variously defined).

In many Brahmanical texts, the king is to rely both on *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* associates; largely, those with whom he has been raised and educated.[12] The nature of these figures varies with genre, but generally, Brahmanical ministers and advisors were idealized to be of "noble" birth, with the terms for this nobility sometimes indicated by the virtues pertaining to a family (*kula-śīla*), by established integrity (*dṛṣṭa-śauca*) or high birth-right (*abhijāta*).[13] Inscriptions from the Gupta period onward indicate that ministers and advisors were hereditary positions, with later Gupta sources lauding the efforts of *brāhmaṇa* teachers and advisors.[14] Even so, valorization of heredity appears in no way to have subsumed ministers and advisors on the whole, since texts like the *Pañcatantra* parody the hereditary vocations, and the *Arthaśāstra* contains different opinions about heredity, birth or excellence as bases of choosing advisors (*Aś*, 1.8.1-27).

In Brahmanical contexts, purity (*śuci*) or the related quality of integrity (*śauca*) is often assumed with heredity, but could also be based on divisions of labor (e.g., priestly, agriculturalist, service) and mastery of particular strata of practice and knowledge.

Purity, like other virtues, is an aspect of conduct, so one is assessed for demonstrating it in all situations: In the royal context it must be tested.[15] Perspicacity assumes wisdom and purity of some kind, but also the social shrewdness that comes with experience, status, and reputation. Ideas about and development of perspicacity is the locus of much *dharma*-generative work, as we shall see.

In Buddhist narratives, advisors and ministers appear can appear in primary discourses of the Buddha (such as *Majjhima-* and *Dīgha-Nikāyas*), birth stories (*jātaka*), and other narrative forms, which I discuss below. In the *Jātaka* tales in particular, the Bodhisatta or Bodhisattva (which denotes the Buddha, before he became a Buddha)[16] acts through a range of roles, in relationships of special intimacy with the king. Whether he assumed the role as the chief minister (*mati-sacivan*), the royal ritual specialist (*purohita*), or frontier minister (*nāyaka* or *pariṇāyaka*), his conduct in each role demonstrates that the best royal advice consists in adhering to the Buddhist *dharma* and in Buddhist virtues and idealizations of power. In the darker Buddhist caricatures of these mediators, advising ministers share many features of advisors and ministers described in the *Arthaśāstra*: conniving and politically deceptive, organizationally astute, and possessors, conveyors and wielders of great royal power and authority. High birth is stressed in these Buddhist examples too, along with virtues that attended such births (honesty, perspicacity, wisdom, and an interesting emphasis on beauty).

Both traditions configure the minister (and counselor) as a crucial power (*prakṛti*) of the king—they make the royal machinery revolve, though with different impetus and purposes, as we shall see. The terms of the association with the king vary with textual purpose and tradition, but they share a common image—the wheel and the parts that help

it progress. The integral nature of ministers and advisors to rule is articulated in a seven

part system in both Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions: the *saptāṅga* ("seven

limbs/branches") in the Brahmanical traditions and the *satta-ratana* ("seven jewels") in

Pāli in texts. This conception of the seven facets of royal power reflects the corporate

nature of power that makes up the ideal ruling structure, and is discussed in detail in

Chapter Five. But for now, it is important to pause and to bear in mind one problem that

a corporately articulated jewel-minister presents for scholarly uses of the term "state."

Modern scholars, both Indian and Euro-American, may be inclined by our own

perspectives to call this a "theory of state." But the term "state" suggests a structure that

does not adequately represent what Ronald Inden calls the "dialogic" nature of royal

polities in India. [17] There was not a "state" (as we might think of it in modern terms) but

rather there were many more flexible polities that negotiated and renegotiated for the

right to bring other polities to the universal rule by one polity. This one dynasty or polity

would receive acknowledgement of this status through power and resource tributes from

other polities—until it was lost through lack of support and loss of perceived power by

the other polities. But irrespective of the particular polity, the minister *amātya* (Sanskrit)

or *amacca* (Pāli) has been part of this list from its earliest inception.[18] In the Buddhist

case, ministers or counselors are one of the "seven treasures" of the king, but the nature

of their roles varies with time, Buddhist tradition, and location. In general usages of this

seven-part system, however, ministers are agents of the king in all the areas where royal

work and influence is to be instigated or achieved.

Technical, Dramatic, and Dharmic Genres of Literature on Advisors

Some of the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature depicts the administrative and advisory structure around kings as though the composers were intimately connected with the foundation of the socio-political system (Brahmanical treatises). Other sources seem remote from the workings of royal administration (Buddhist texts), while the details of some seem too idealized in their elaborations to represent the polity as it likely was in fact (Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*). Thus, the purpose of this section is two-fold: First, to articulate the differences among the variety of sources that provide information about advisors and ministers in early India; and second, to assess a particular genre's representation of itself with respect to advisors.

Scholars have mined Brahmanical and Buddhist sources for the activities of kings, ministers and advisors—which some of the literature itself volunteers in complex detail. Numerous studies of early Indian polity painstakingly demonstrate such topics as the historical progression of the role of the king, the nature of administration in Indian imperial life, and cursory studies of ministers in pre-modern India.[19] Though these studies are excellent and thorough, most are convenient yet misleading historical surveys. While I build on these assertions about ancient Indian historiography throughout this project, a sketch of my perspectives on Indian sources and scholarship on ancient India is necessary, to make clear my approach to these materials.

I consider some historical studies to be *misleading* because they too often indulge the prevalent temptation to conflate activities and ideologies into logical artifacts. This conflation is easy to do since the authors of these studies rarely stop to distinguish between different ideologies that are at play in a particular text, or to delineate the

differences in data for those periods of activity for which we do have more information.

As a result, ideology is transformed into historical artifact. Scholars of Brahmanism

(Brahmin or otherwise) often embellish the extent of Brahmanical control, just as the

Euro-American scholars embellished Brahmanical control after them. Likewise, scholars

of Buddhism—(Buddhist or otherwise) may also be blind to the nature of their

perspectives—and may stress the "original" weight of the Pāli tradition, or favor

philosophical treatises over praxis-oriented examples. Thus, we can miss important

dimensions of the life of a text due to our own preoccupations.

I consider some historical studies to be *convenient* because they are based on dates

either traditional or provisional; with dating traditions more representing personal

preference than evidence.[20] Literature and events are judged "early" or "late"—

presumptions often based only on doctrinal affiliation, unexamined assumptions or even

academic taste, than on any historical marker.[21] For instance, it is convenient to continue

to make early Indian Buddhist materials coterminous with the scriptures of the Pāli

canon, in spite of the Pāli canon's provenance in Sri Lanka, centuries later. Or, it has

been a custom to speak of the literary traditions as they coalesce in *Mahābhārata* and

Rāmāyaṇa traditions as one piece—though these traditions span several hundred years.

And, the convenient dates assigned to these epic traditions can be of little help, when we

consign their histories to 300/400 BCE to 300/400 CE and 200 BCE to 200 CE,

respectively.[22] These dates may be unavoidably convenient as they represent good

guesses, but it should be kept in mind that the texts themselves are not bound by these

guesses, nor are the traditions' ideas of themselves.[23] Most important, we should be

careful to examine (or search for) the reasons why particular dates or chronologies are chosen to match particular arguments.

The problems of dating Indian texts are well known; these are only compounded by the historiographic methods of each era; the scholar's own era and those of the Indian past.[24] Reading across Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions in many of their constituent texts, there may be an imputed antiquity for a favored text that language and cultural forms typically belie as connected with the Gupta synthesis.[25] This is the "classical" watermark, the Gupta Empire, with dates of ascension and demise of 320 C.E to 520 C.E., around which we can more reliably anchor some religious and political cultural data, and from which we can follow the progression of religious and political cultures into the early medieval and medieval eras of Indian culture.[26] So how do we wrestle with the eras of cultural formation before this imperial consolidation? Because we cannot substantiate the dating traditions of many textual sources of this pre-classical era, K.V. Ramesh has suggested that sources claiming composition before the Gupta period should be re-considered in terms of 'historical constellations of ideas,' rather than through the constructive means we have seen to date.[27]

Already we have been shown some benefit in an approach that suspends what we think we know about the dating of religious texts. In his reconsideration of the relative chronology of some Buddhist and Brahmanical texts, Johannes Bronkhorst (2007) questions just how fixed textual cultural products such as the Vedic *Saṃhitās* or *Upaniṣads* were in a given period. With these textual ideas in their roles as religious referents in question and no longer assumed, he could argue that one early *Upaniṣad* did not predate Buddhist texts, but may have been articulated at the time of the Buddha.[28]

And, while I disagree with him when he imagines a "lost source" (an Indic 'Q'-source?)

on which Buddhists, Brahmins, and Jains relied for their ideas about asceticism,

Bronkhorst makes a methodological suggestion important to bring into the

conversation.[29] He states: "…we are not therefore taking the chronological priority of

any of them for granted. In this situation similarities of thought and expression (if there

are any) will not, without further questioning, be interpreted as proof of the dependence

of one on the other."[30] Considering as he did, other possible lines of inquiry, Bronkhorst

could see the data from a perspective that made room for the possibility of their "mutual

development."

 Following Ramesh and Bronkhorst, and turning to my topic, I suggest for a

beginning, that we consider the ideas about the advisor in early Indian Brahmanical and

Buddhist texts in terms of their textual genres. In this case though, we should understand

that these textual genres historicize advisors in discrete and particular ways. These

particulars considered discretely and in conjunction provide some structure for

considering the idealized (and ideological) history of advisors and the advisor-king

relationship.

 My aim is to read the figure of the minister and advisor across the genres, to

understand their place within the genres, and also, to see how the textual genres appear *as

a result* of considering the advisor or minister in that generic textual context. There is

good reason to do this: The conventional dates and ideas about genre in historical studies

of ancient and pre-medieval India have been used for so long, that experts in historical

India rarely think about them anymore. A recent and notable exception is Bronkhorst's

evaluations of the religious culture of greater Magadha (using Brahmanical, Buddhist and

Jain texts). Similarly, I think that an interrogation of the terms and bases of royal power and *dharma* through the eyes of the advisor may be helpful to understanding the sources and genres. In the process, it is possible to investigate the authority claims that these texts (in canon and stone) make on behalf of their dharmic communities about the idea of the advisor.

Epigraphic Examples of Advisors and Ministers

Before discussing the genres of Brahmanical and Buddhist genres of texts that argue for advisor/minister in their distinctive ways, let us ground the idea of this figure in history by means of a few examples from the only verifiable historical evidence we have—the minister as he occurs in epigraphic sources. What follows is by no means a comprehensive survey, but rather is a representative sample, by way of a few illustrations of epigraphic information about advisor-ministers from three dynastic eras of interest to this study: Some inscriptions of Aśoka Maurya, Sātavāhana, and Gupta dynasties.[31] There are countless inscriptions involving advisor-ministers. The examples offered here are chosen for the following reasons: Aśokan inscriptions are the earliest, they cover the largest geographic area, and they contain unusual content. The Sātavāhana are representative for their geography and time period: a Deccan empire and a bridge in time and earth between the end of the Aśokan and the rise of the Gupta eras and between north and south India. Finally, the mid-dynastic Gupta inscriptions show a significant degree of advisor-minister specialization. These inscriptions thus give some useful examples of advisor-minister power and role in *dharma*, across time and place in early India.

The inscriptions of Aśoka Maurya (c. 272-232 BCE) are arguably the earliest written historical records that we can decipher, and they include this special mediator for kings.[32] Our first word for the figure—the *mahāmātta*—is also the most general designation, and is a term which is used for hundreds of years after Aśoka (as *mahāmātra*, once inscriptions begin to be written in Sanskrit).[33] The title was revised in the thirteenth year of his reign to reflect the new responsibility of this figure to inculcate Aśoka's conception of *dhamma*; the "*dhamma* officer," *dhamma-mahāmātta*. Rock edicts from the northwest border regions of Aśoka's kingdom, to Pillar edicts erected at his royal center in Pāṭaliputra (Patna), down to the southern border of his realm at Kaliṅga, all attest that *mahāmāttas* were instituted to exercise Aśoka's power and communicate about *dhamma*.[34] So, from what is likely the earliest historical record we have, we see that special ministers existed to aid kings.

Including and beyond these initial records of ministers' mediation of the power and *dhamma* (such as, Aśoka's Rock Edict V) to the more specialized reflections of their activities in later dynasties, such as the ministers attested during the reign of Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty, ministers are crucial to the function of a king and kingdom. Inscriptions report that ministers were instituted to manage frontiers and carry out the king's orders from his location at court, and engage in observational activities of persons and positions (not just espionage, but general communications about the activities within the kingdom). Their functions either changed or became more explicit with dynastic changes. This epigraphy reveals there was changeability in these positions; that the social groups of the ministers were not always constrained by family and birth group; that ministers communicated and displayed royal power. By the time

Samudragupta had consolidated the most power and resources for the dynasty, ministers were involved in the protection of the people and king (by managing war, peace, resources, etc.) the foundation of temples, and the management of funds and land grants.

Only the epigraphic record of Aśoka shows that there were special ministers instituted to uphold the king's aspirations to adhere to some vision of *dharma* and to make sure his subjects did so as well.[35] Their responsibilities built over the extent of Aśoka's reign, but still these ministers are referred to only collectively. There are *mahāmāttas*, as indicated above, and also *yuktas* (regional officers*), rājūkas* ("rural officers") and *pradeśikas* ("local leaders") instituted in the Third Major Rock Edict (MRE) to go on tours every five years to spread the *dharma*.[36] The Fifth MRE reports the officers dedicated to support those persons coursing in *dharma*, the *dhamma-mahāmāttas*.[37] The Twelfth MRE demonstrates even greater commission of persons and extension of the scope of these ministers of *dharma*. Emblematic of the critical mass ministers reached, Aśoka reports in this edict that there are many agents devoted to the progress of *dhamma* in his realm, including *dhamma*-officers particular to women.[38] The *rājūka's* (*lajjūka*) or rural officer's duties receive more articulation in the Fourth Pillar Edict (PE) and the minor rock edicts: In these, they have authority to judge and to punish, as well as teach the *dhamma*.[39] Extended powers such as these would be necessary given the remote location of the rājūka's assignment. In the twenty-seventh year of Aśoka's reign, the Seventh PE promises even more extensive public acts of *dhamma*—distribution of charity and involvement in the *dhamma* of religious sects and householders—and a larger structure of ministers to create it.[40] One might feel frustrated by the list provided here, but other than their tasks, we learn little about these mediators

of power and *dharma* for King Aśoka in these inscriptions. Nevertheless, these inscriptions are a worthwhile and important part of the record, not only because of their early dates, but because they suggest something of the complexity of the role, and they demonstrate that ministers have a history of mediating power and *dharma* for kings.

Inscriptions from the Sātavāhana dynasty of the Deccan plateau (first and second centuries CE) give the personal name of royal ministers, a significant departure from Aśokan inscriptions. Here, the composition of the ministers' names suggests multiple religious affiliations.[41] Moreover, ministers' positions do not appear to have been hereditary.[42] According to R. S. Sharma, in six years of service at the same place (Govardhana), three ministers (*amātyas*) named Viṣṇupālita, Śivadatta and Śyāmaka served during the reign of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi. Another one named Śivaskandila served during the reign of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi (c. 152 CE). Sharma suggests that these figures could not be from the same family; considering their names, their occurrence over twenty-eight years, and their service in the same place. [43]

By contrast, family lineage, rank and expertise become prevalent aspects of advisor-minister authority in Gupta inscriptions. These inscriptions typically announce a minister's and (less often) a counselor's expertise and his (their) association with a king. For instance, the Karaṃḍāṃḍā stone inscription of Kumāragutpa I (Gupta regnal year 117) records one Pṛthivīṣeṇa, a fourth generation *brāhmaṇa* minister and advisor, who erected the image shrine of record. [44] The inscription declares his record of service, starting from his original position to the one he held at the time of the dedication—he began as a *mantrin* of royal status, as *mantri- mahākumārāmātya* and advanced to the *mahābalādhikṛtaḥ*, "officer of the military." The first position, the *mahākumārāmātya*, is

no ordinary *amātya*, but one "entitled in court etiquette to the honor and dignity of *kumāra* or "prince" of the royal blood."[45] In this part of the inscription, the minister Pṛthivīṣeṇa's authority comes through his official affiliation with the king.

This Pṛthivīṣeṇa, then, corroborates his right to be in close relationship with the king—through demonstration of heredity and the authority and privilege it provides in his context. The inscription states that Pṛthivīṣeṇa was the son of Śikharasvāmin, the *mantri-kumārāmātya* of king Candragupta II; Śikharasvāmin was the son of Viṣṇu Pālitabhaṭṭa, who was the son of Kuramarṇyabhaṭṭa, a teacher (*ācārya*) of *Chāndogya* and of the Aśvājin *gotra*.[46] Three generations of *brāhmaṇas* before this Pṛthivīṣeṇa—indicated by the *svāmin* or *bhaṭṭa* suffixes—give him the authority to set up an image, fund a cadre of priests to care for the deity, all in the name of the king, or perhaps for his own merit. Then again, it seems that his heredity and *brāhmaṇa* status were not quite sufficient to fulfill the exclusive nature of this royal role, since the minister (*amātya*) was also adopted into the blood-line of the king, as *mahākumārāmātya*. These are ministers in routinized roles of intimacy with a king.

But what if we compare the question of hereditary or non-hereditary ministers to other data? Aśoka Maurya did not mention in the inscriptions the status of his *mahāmātras* (the functional equivalent of the *amātyas* of subsequent dynasties).[47] On the other hand, Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* gives a contextual answer to the question of heredity,[48] opining that ability is the grounds by which a man [minister] is judged (*Aś*, 1.8.28).[49] However, by the time of the *Pañcatantra,* heredity was so prevalent in the narrative culture that produced the text that the two jackal ministers—*mantri-putras*, men of "ministerial stock"—featured in Book One could lament not being able to get work as

advising ministers. [50] In one scene, where one is upbraiding the other for incompetence,

he states: "Your conduct plainly shows that you have inherited your position as a

minister. Clearly your father must have been as bad as you are!" (*Pañcatantra*, I.148-

149)[51] This rhetoric could be a critique or parody of either the poignant reality or waning

power of heredity.

Read collectively, these epigraphic inscriptions and other textual examples render

some of the variety and development of the role of the advisor-minister—inculcating

dharma, exacting royal justice, dedicating temples, causing finance of perpetual rites,

advising in military matters. Moreover, the assessment of the sources for heredity does

not reveal a hereditary professional class, nor *brāhmaṇa* hegemony in ministerial

positions. Though they complement the picture of hereditary ministers, epigraphic

sources yield no detail about what a *mantrin*, *amacca*, *amātya* or *saciva* might undertake,

inter-subjectively, for the sake of a king's power and *dharma*. To learn more about the

how advisors might conduct their relationships with kings, it is necessary to examine

other genres of texts, to see what idealizations of advisors and their relationships are

formed within them.

Advisors and their Relationships in Brahmanical Textual Genres

Śāstra

The technical or theoretical literature of this study refers to the genre of texts

encompassed by the Sanskrit term, *śāstra*. These sources are usually attributed to use

and/or emergence in the Brahmanical tradition; however, there is an analogous use of the

term in Buddhist scholastic treatises in both Sanskrit and Pāli textual traditions.[52] The

Pāli equivalent, s*attha*, occurs in the earliest strata of the Pāli Canon as "teaching", and "treatise" in scholastic texts. [53] *Śāstra* is most often translated as "treatise" or "science" and can refer to the treatises associated with any branch of knowledge.[54] Therefore, *śāstra* can also be translated as "discipline." Similar to our own understanding of academic disciplines, *śāstra* are detailed and systematic explorations of a field of knowledge. Patrick Olivelle's most recent work with treatises of *dharma* describes śāstric genres in a similar manner; following Sheldon Pollock in his seminal discussions of the nature and work of *śāstra* in Indian traditions.[55]

The diversity of topics in these Sanskrit treatises reflects the complex realms of technical expertise in ancient India, exploring not only dharmic responsibilities, but sciences of grammar and poetics. For example, there are *śāstra* that explore theory of classical dance (*Nāṭyaśāstra*), the science of royal success (*Arthaśāstra*), the science of prudential human conduct (*Nītiśāstra*),[56] and the treatises concerned with normative structures of social conduct (*Dharmaśāstra*). Importantly, all these treatises emerge with the help of royal patronage, and reflect the concerns and politics of these settings. Moreover, both the content of these treatises and the nature of those who have interpreted or wielded them have significantly shaped Indian culture to varying degrees, in the Brahmanical realm and beyond it.[57] Indeed, their perceived importance in the royal context was so great that the texts contain assertions of their own value, claiming that they are "the eyes of kings;" the source of knowledge through which kings (and ministers) see and rule (*Aś*, 1.9.3), or that a king without the eye of science is blind (*Aś*, 1.14.7; 8.2.8-9).[58] For all these effects, whether real or hoped for, *śāstra* comes to denote "authoritative tradition."[59]

The basis of this authority is in part tied to the relation of these treatises and sciences to Indic ideas about teachers and the authority of the specialist.[60] This relationship between an authoritative teacher and a treatise evokes an associative world of experience. The teacher is the paramount means to and keeper of knowledge—he can *be* text (in this case, *śāstra*) and the means to the wisdom contained within it.[61] Contrary to the Western cliché that 'those who cannot *do*, teach,' the Indian cultural assumption is that teachers have mastered the practice, which makes them also the ultimate theoretician.[62] This means that *śāstra* can also refer to the collective techniques or knowledge(s) associated with a teacher or specialist of some renown, [63] or to the collected opinions of various experts around a particular topic.[64]

Such expertise is created and maintained through the intimacy and intensity of legacy (*saṃpradāya*) and discipleship. Students and teachers lived and learned together. This kind of instruction is as existential as it is vocational. As a result, *śāstra* can have an organic impact and represents such fundamental and cumulative changes; that is, a *śāstra* has potential to transform. When the instruction received from a good teacher or the experienced direction imparted by an expert is deemed *śāstra*, the content resonates with ideas about this transformational pedagogy.[65] *Śāstra* has a deep instrumental sense, as conveying techniques for bringing about all kinds of knowledge. This transformational sense of *śāstra* means that any compelling instrument of teaching conceived in this way can be *śāstra*, whether the instrument takes form of an ancient illustrative adage, technical information, or the edifying words of a person.[66]

But *śāstra* as an instrument of knowledge carries a moral and social weight beyond what one might describe as 'compelling.' Such treatises serve as both intellectual

and ethical referents. The performance and mastery of the expertise contained in such a

treatise is usually tied to achieving economic and social success (*artha*), to satisfying the

gods, to creating or maintaining a dharmic life or state. In this regard, the tone and style

of some *śāstra* (especially those dealing with *dharma* or *artha*) are injunctive. As a

result, *śāstra* are typically mined for codes of conduct that might function as doctrine or

law in the lives of persons (either in the past or today). Importantly, depending on

context *śāstra* are treated as having the objectivity of science or the authority of dharmic

doctrine. In this regard they carry a particular normative weight that transcends the status

of other literature: the *Dharmaśāstras* are treated this way, especially *Manusmṛti*.[67]

Indeed, their normative function is tied to their perceived application. *Śāstra* are

as theoretical as they appear practical—they present themselves as sources and

summations of norms of conduct and suggested applications. However, the fact that

śāstra are frequently contrasted with *prayoga*, as "theory" and "practice" respectively,

only stresses their nature as theories directed to a particular aim.[68] And, because the

practical dimension of such *śāstra* is often presumed to represent the state of affairs, the

ideological and normative dimensions of them can be missed. For instance, the

Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya is so detailed and systematic in its articulation of the kind of

imperial structure necessary for royal success that one is apt to think it a positive

inscription of Maurya polity of the fourth and third centuries BCE. Studies of this text by

some Indian scholars, such as K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, S.R. Goyal, R. G. Basak, and R.S.

Sharma have made such positive assessments.[69]

Furthermore, it is important not to let an understanding of what constitutes a

scientific treatise or study in a non-Indian context obscure the fact that *śāstra*s are not

only theoretical in nature, but constructive—in the theological and ideological sense.[70]
This means that they are not only advisory, but seek to create a normative vision for a
particular context.[71] The *śāstra* so frequently associated with the royal court reflect the
impetus to conceive and articulate an ideal world. The *Arthaśāstra* articulates a theory of
polity that should guarantee the flourishing of a kingdom; the *Dharmaśāstra*, in its
various forms, should construct a moral world, borne of Brahmanical mythology and
substantiating Brahmanical social aims (the construction of a universal *varnāśrama*
ideal).[72] These *śāstra* treatises are said to be the eyes of kings because they reflect the
concerns of kings, as seen through the eyes of Brahmanical persons at court.[73] In this
context, *śāstra* appear instrumental to upholding social realities, creating the grounds for
imperial success—treatises portraying realities as ministers (and kings) wish them to be.

It is the nature of *śāstra* to encompass ritual and revelation, and to employ
political, secular, social, mythic, literary, and dharmic elements (as interlocutors tend to
parse these categories of activity and knowledge). Thus, the concerns of *śāstra*, which
often include ideas about *dharma*, religious expression, and polity, go beyond the typical
and well-worn distinctions between "religion" and "politics" as realms of knowledge, or
"myth" and "ritual" as realms of activity. Moreover, the social effects and use of *śāstra*
exceed the definition of what might typically be true of a descriptive, technological
treatise or theory of practice (which they often are). This means that though *śāstra* are
treatises associated with particular kinds of knowledge, their content and articulated
aims—achieving social success, satisfying the gods, maintaining a dharmic existence and
dharmic state—significantly increase their cultural worth. So, in addition to whatever
expertise they contain, treatises or *śāstra* gain a dimension of their authority from these

normative kinds of aims. That is, what they aim to accomplish of normative ideas makes them "śāstric"—makes them authoritative, mandates actions, makes them useful to kings and ministers.

Therefore, "śāstric" actions of a king or "śāstric" counsel of an advising minister *are* so for two reasons: because they uphold the social norm (as inflected in Brahmanical ideologies), and because they adhere to the recommendations or technologies of a particular *śāstra*. As one can see, this is an intellectual, royal and Brahmanical tautology. However, the complexity of the genre mitigates the limits such self-serving technologies might create. As will become evident in later chapters—when *śāstra*s wielded by advisors present a king with exemplary structures for polity and conduct—they appeal to an "authoritative tradition" that is more fluid than their own Brahmanical prescriptions.[74]

Moreover, and important to my argument, these prescriptions are fluid in part because the king's nature and the reality of kingship require different codes of conduct, due to the way his power and responsibilities color contexts. Refracted through the king's nature and responsibility (and ideals about these), codes and *dharma*s of conduct can be inverted and difficult to negotiate. A poignant example of this inversion occurs in a popular *nīti* text, the *Pañcatantra*:

> You cannot govern a kingdom with the standards of common folk; for things that are faults in such folk are truly virtues in a king.[75]

Thus, śāstric texts argue for mediation of power and *dharma* by the wielder of the *śāstra*; they depict advisors as necessary solutions to contingencies created at the fault lines of power, *dharma* and royal responsibility.

Artha, Nīti and Dharmaśāstra

Treatises of governance and polity (*artha* and *nīti*) and *dharma* provide special insight into these fluid and context specific conceptions of royal *dharma*. Differing in degree by the overall topic of the *śāstra*s, these treatises present elaborate ideals of conduct and virtues particular to the royal context—articulating ethics for kings, ministers, advisors, and other persons supported by the king. The *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu and Yājñavalkya contain chapters dealing with kings and ministers, but the discussions of *artha* and *nīti* within them are only part of a larger manifesto of *ārya*-constrained normative conduct.[76] *Arthaśāstra* and *Nītiśāstra*, however, are far more specialized in their focus on the science of royal governance. Texts of *artha–* and *nītiśāstra* topics both demonstrate a concern for royal success and address the activities, relationships, and materials necessary to attain it. They differ over their degree of involvement with material or economic interests (*artha*) and concerns of prudent or expeditious conduct (*nīti*). Kauṭilya and other authors also call these sciences, *'daṇḍa-nīti'*, often translated as "political science" for their concern with the conduct (*nīti*) necessary for rule (*daṇḍa*); where *daṇḍa*, the rod of coercion, here is a metaphor for a king's rule.[77] Yet in their terms of agreement and shared uses, the treatises and narratives of these genres (*artha* and *nīti*) are designed to teach kings and ministers the structures and ethics of statecraft.[78]

Importantly, these structures are largely construed according to Brahmanical ideals. Although the degree of Brahmanical concern varies according to the topic of the treatise, these *śāstra* typically include two authoritative referents of Brahmanical reality: "knowledge," or when it is generalized to a corpus, "science" (*vidyā*), and social organization (*varṇa*). This knowledge consists of the *Vedas*, which—according opinions

in the *Arthaśāstra*, which Kauṭilya affirms—include the *Ṛg Veda* (knowledge of hymns),

the *Sāma Veda* (knowledge of vocalization), and the *Yajur Veda* (knowledge of ritual

instructions).[79] Kauṭilya calls these *trayī*, the 'science of the three Vedas.'[80] Going

against the opinions of other teachers of *artha* (which he gives in his treatise), Kauṭilya

also designates *Atharva Veda* (knowledge of spells) and *Itihāsa* ("things as they

happened") as Vedas.[81] All of these together are the four *vidyās* (1.2.8).[82] Being

acquainted with these branches of knowledge and knowing how to interpret them are

important attainments for ministers and kings. Since according to Kauṭilya, the *vidyās*

are foundational to understanding what constitutes *dharma* (ideal conduct) and what

constitutes *artha* (material success) [1.2.9].[83]

The referent of 'social organization,' denotes the Brahmanical stratification of

persons and the prescriptions for conduct relating to each. The most basic formulation of

this stratification, the *caturvarṇa*, literally "four colors," occurs as follows (in descending

order of status): the *brāhmaṇa* (priest), the *kṣatriya* (ruler, warrior, protector), the *vaiśya*

(merchant and agriculturalist), and the *śūdra* (servant and labor) social divisions. These

divisions theoretically determined the nature of all aspects of life and death—with

prescriptions ranging from where one might live, who one might marry, and how one

might be punished for a crime, as general examples.[84]

From the Brahmanical perspective at least, the maintenance of this structure and

knowledge base was an indicator of a king's success and the resulting success of the

kingdom. This seeks to create a triad of reliance: a king, following a *brāhmaṇa* advisor,

sustaining a kingdom. Many of these treatises either assume or argue for such

Brahmanically inflected wisdom and society. Even treatises that undermine these

categories and persons, assume their relevance to social organization.[85] Importantly, this

relevance is assured through the education required of a king (for which the *śāstra* argue

strenuously). The advising ministers and royal teachers became one means to assure this

Brahmanical inflection, if a king follows the maxim that each king should gain mastery

of the science of royal success and conduct.[86]

Nītiśāstra

Nītiśāstra are treatises that address successful conduct—in the royal context they

explore the ideal conduct of rule that would bring about such achievement. Often,

nītiśāstra is a general category term used to describe treatises and stories that

demonstrate how best to conduct oneself in diverse contexts—to act in a way that is *nīti*.

Nīti is not dharmic conduct that might lead to karmic or social restitution; rather, it is

conduct directed, as van Buitenen aptly states, to experiencing situations "with a

minimum of peril and a maximum of success." [87] Actions shaped by ideals of *nīti*

maximize one's relationships with others—sometimes to meet a particular end,

sometimes to make the most of the limits of the relationships themselves. Therefore,

because of their social function, there are stories and verses that inculcate *nīti*, whatever

one's social pursuit and irrespective of one's dharmic affiliation—whether some variety of

Buddhist, Jain, Brahmanical, or even no affiliation, *Nāstika*. [88] This level of *nītiśāstra*

(and *nīti* operates on many levels) addresses human conduct in general, and as such, they

have been used as moral guidelines by and for many persons and contexts. Because of its

function in this context, *nīti* can be translated as "prudential conduct." However, one

should not ignore *nītiśāstra*'s specialized context and intention—the articulation of the

social and behavioral ideals necessary for a successful "polity," as *nīti* is frequently

translated.

Therefore, *nītiśāstra* is also a category term for wisdom in political contexts—

with advisors and ministers playing instrumental roles.[89] These treatises seek to

demonstrate attitudes and conduct for attaining advantage in the royal court. The

relationships depicted in them are driven by expedient self-interest, and their strategies

advocate for the prudential use of persons and power. *Nīti* attains its predominant lexical

use as "political wisdom" around these aims. Some examples of wisdom topics particular

to this context are ideas about appropriate times to give and receive counsel, when to

attack an enemy, how a courtier should approach a king, and when it is best to deceive.

Therefore, *nītiśāstra* are an important source of knowledge for kings and ministers since

they contain models for success and advantage.

The importance of advisors and ministers in the creation and use of these treatises

cannot be denied, as their counsels are instrumental to the strategies within them. It is not

surprising, then, that the *Pañcatantra*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Arthaśāstra* are all

considered *nītiśāstra* as well as members of other genres. In so far as they are *nīti*, each

of these serves as counsel for kings. That all these texts are considered *nītiśāstra* speaks

to the complex nature of the discipline itself. The topic—inculcating *nīti*—qualifies them

for the designation. This means that the *Pañcatantra* is also part of the story tradition

(*kāvya*); the *Mahābhārata* is considered to be both a normative history (*itihāsa*) and a

great story (*mahākāvya*), two genres that I will discuss below. Tradition also calls the

Mahābhārata a *śāstra*, since its contents address the sciences of life that are of concern to

kings *and* subjects—the disciplines of *dharma*, economic and material gain (and *artha*), (*kāma*) sensual pursuits, and polity and prudential conduct (*nīti*).[90]

Just as *nītiśāstra*s can encompass literature that belongs to other genres, these treatises can take many forms and include different literary modes. There are collections of verses (interpreted from sources more ancient or created by the collector) or aphorisms (*sūtra, śloka, or subhāṣita*); treatises comprised of stories built around technical prose and ancient aphorisms; verse and prose explorations of one or many topics; and narrative elucidation of *nīti* in prose and verse, around a specific story line. Like many academic studies today, an author of a particular *nītiśāstra* might draw on foundational sources of *nīti*, while he elaborates his own theories.[91] One such example is the *Nītisāra* of Kāmandaka (eighth century CE), which uses elements of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*—itself an epitome of the political science of its age—and other *nīti* compendia as it puts forth its own theories of polity.[92] It is not clear how other *nītiśāstra*s are not also pedagogical works, as Winternitz makes the distinction. But the explicit structural concern with advice and counsel suggests that by this time (at least) *nīti* was largely conceived as counsel for kings, not merely prudent human wisdom.

There are many elements at work in these *nītiśāstra*s that together act as counsel to kings; counsel designed to cultivate royal transformations. Gnomic poetry and stories are important constituents in this literature. They are considered gnomic for their contents of "well-spoken" verses, or *subhāṣita* and other verse aphorisms that serve wisdom's aims: to elucidate a point of *dharma*, to rationalize or judge a social maneuver, to provide moral impetus for an ethical change. These sayings are so venerable in the wisdom they epitomize that they are used in diverse genres. Their ubiquitous presence

can be attributed to the "collective memory of the educated classes" or to the periodic

anthologies made of them.[93] Whatever the reasons for their pervasive presence, these

wise sayings and aphorisms become most interesting when an interpreter considers *how*

they are used. For although a point of wisdom conveyed by a *subhāṣita* might appear

universal, what might be useful in one scenario could fail in others.[94] Therefore, the

trajectory a particular adage might take in a narrative becomes important, as are the stated

experiential results of such a trajectory. Every piece of wisdom can become or serve a

story, and every story can become a context for counseling a king.

Due to such varied results or contexts for wisdom, the narrative structures

themselves add an explanatory, pedagogical, and experiential dimension that the limits of

aphorism or verse *nīti* treatises do not provide. Story narratives highlight some of the

drama (and danger) associated with the political scenarios of early Indian polity,

certainly.   But since these narratives are designed to inculcate *nīti*—strategies with the

aim of maximum effectiveness in rule—they also bring forth the possible results of royal

policies. Each story functions as a nodal point of deliberation that provides the characters

within the story (and outside of it) with the contents necessary for the moral education

and moral influence of a king for a particular context.[95] Wisdom sayings set in such

structures provide narrative contexts for evaluating and demonstrating uses of royal

dharma and power.[96] This is a special narrative space—an incipient moral space—that

can show how the vagaries of royal ethics might be resolved, as I discuss in Chapter

Seven. The potential for transformation contained in this deliberative space makes these

narrative structures tools for advisors and counselors to influence a king. [97]

The *Pañcatantra*, a popular treatise of *nīti*, demonstrates just how theoretical royal tactics and counsel might resolve using these kinds of narrative structures. In five chapters, it explores five topics of particular concern to kings, advisors and court ministers: sowing dissension among allies, creating allies, tactics of war and peace, losing what has been gained, and the problem of haste in actions.[98] The text says of itself that it is a strategy for educating a king's "feeble-minded" princes in the "science of government (*nīti*)."[99] A master of polity (Viṣṇuśarman, a scholar of *nīti* and the reputed author of the *Pañcatantra*) summoned to teach in the *Pañcatantra*, conveys this science "under the guise of story."[100] Specifically, Viṣṇuśarman frames the complexities of *nīti* into an overall narrative and uses embedded sub-narratives that exemplify associated, though discrete, norms of *nīti* conduct.[101] This story structure is supposed to "rouse" the prince's limited intellect and compress the time needed to master the science of polity.

Indeed, the *Pañcatantra* is notable for this narrative method.[102] In addition to the pithy technologies of counsel typical of other treatises, the *Pañcatantra* structures and explores its topics of *nīti* through stories framed by a deliberate narrative trajectory.[103] Through each book, Viṣṇugupta provides the reader or hearer with a practical and experiential exploration of a theoretical topic of royal conduct, such as when to create "dissension" (*bheda*) as in Book I. There "under the guise of story," the *Pañcatantra* demonstrates the various methods of causing dissension as well as arguments for avoiding the creation of them. Importantly, the text has interlocutors (animals in all but one book) speak to both sides of a topic, exploring the virtue and vice of each dimension, and their inverse.[104] Olivelle suggests that this is part of its "'abiding popularity'": presenting "*both* sides of an issue, citing proverbs containing age-old wisdom and

narrating illustrative stories in support of both."[105] Popularity aside, this strategy

enhances the pedagogical work of narrative as well.

For instance, in Book One of the *Pañcatantra*, the protagonist, animal minister

(Damanaka), creates a friendship in order to curry favor with the king and to attain a

position in his court as advisor, and then experiences the subsequent problems caused

from instigating the new alliance. The friendship he helped create (between a king and

an outside power) requires he use strategies of sowing "dissension" (*bheda*) in order to

bring the king back into proper behavior with respect to his duties and other relationships.

Cultivating and breaking political alliances is one of the primary concerns of kings and

advisors, and the text records the expedience of techniques for both sides. This narrative

strategy acts as the proving ground for conflicting points of political wisdom; *nīti* is

"proved" *in situ*. Since success could inhere in the wisdom of *both* sides, the narratives in

this text have dynamic demonstrative potential. One may wonder how this may be so:

How does the literary imagination of which Brahmanical and Buddhist communities were

a part, conceive the "dynamic demonstrative" potential of a text, especially in royal

settings requiring narrative intervention?

"Frame-stories," "sub-stories," or "emboxed" stories, as Olivelle describes them,

shape the context for this transformative narrative action *and* put stress on the skill of the

story-teller, and the skill of the advisor. The *Pañcatantra* is one example of such

strategies, but other great stories, particularly *Mahābhārata* traditions, also contain these

narrative techniques. As Olivelle points out, the *Pañcatantra's* narrative structure begins

with a larger frame story—educating a wise king's stupid princes—which gives the

overall narrative trajectory.   Within this larger frame, topics of royal virtue are explored

through sub-stories that also contain other illustrative stories embedded within them. Though Olivelle does not explore it, there is an important link between "emboxed" or "frame" story structures and ancient Indian ritual scenarios. This link highlights the role of demonstrative story in instigating change (especially in literature acting as counsel to kings). Together these suggest that story-telling in the royal context can be considered a wisdom ritual aimed at counseling a king. In other words, story-telling as such is a tool of wisdom and counsel.[106]

But just how can story function ritually, as I suggest, and in such a way as to be a medium of wisdom used by advisors and ministers?   How can the act of story-telling itself be a tool on par with the content of the story itself? The answers lie in the work done on early Indian frame-story and embedding, and associated strategies that occur in *Brāhmaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* textual traditions, by Michael Witzel and Christopher Minkowski. Alf Hiltebeitel (1998; 2001) and Laurie Patton (1996; 2005; 2007) push the implications of these studies to show the multi-dimensional power of narrative structures, of the articulations within them, and the ideologies to which such verbal systems are directed. All provide important context for how communities around texts might have imagined their words, story-telling and its forms to be tools of transformation.

Witzel suggests that the technique of framing or emboxing story is a remnant of the literary structures that helped move ritual moments along to ritual conclusions in late *Brāhmaṇa* texts.[107] But how might ritual progression affect story, stories told to kings, advice, or the perception of the advice? In part, this is due to the role that story fills for the ritual. The articulations of ritual narrative are linked to sacrificial praxis and shape— as do the actions—the outcome of the ritual. Specifically, *mantras* are primary

vocalizations linked to such sacrificial actions, whether articulated to activate discrete and particular actions or to vocalize the larger ritual actions and aim. Such vocalizations *frame* discrete ritual actions, which have discrete aims and results, even while they participate in the larger narrative and ritual trajectory. I consider these narratives and the work of them to be deeply inscribed with the sense of success that comes from the interlocked realities of mantra, rite, and result. But for Witzel, these embedded ritual narratives exist to answer ritual questions and problems. [108]

Considering the frame-story structures in *Mahābhārata* examples, Minkowski points out that epic frame-story is more than embedded; it tells the story of a story.[109] He suggests that the epic exhibits a compositional strategy that mirrors Vedic *sattras*.[110] Of particular interest to my purposes here are the ritual narrative strategies that shape time for digressions, and conversations among ritual participants that he identifies.[111] As a corollary to the ritual answers that Witzel sees in embedded stories, Minkowski provides some indications of how ritual narratives might solve other narrative questions, especially those posed by *brāhmaṇas* seeking to advise kings.

According to Minkowski, the narrative structures in Vedic *sattra* rituals provide temporal space for the telling of stories, especially in large royal sacrifices;[112] where "heroic narratives" are recited in these kinds of intervals. He asserts that *sattra* sacrifices in *Mahābhārata* frames follow this structure of action and depict participants engaged in dialogues during these intervals, telling stories that are instructive in *dharma*.[113] Later he states that "it is possible to compare the relationship of the *adhvaryu* with the *yajamāna* to that of the audience with the narrator," and surmises that "the storyteller is functioning as a kind of specialized priest" who orchestrates the immense literary action of the

epic.[114] At successive frame levels, one observes exchanges in these stories that are

particularly charged by the interlocutors within them, as well as by the ritual structure

itself.[115] The ritual culture that imagined narrative timing and articulation in this way

also provided the narrative structures for royal courts. How do you articulate myriad

royal activities into discrete moments of counsel? Embed them in countless scenarios, of

epic proportion, where efficient use of power and narrative forms are conflated into

endless articulations of narratives with the power to transform.

Hiltebeitel examines *sattra* narratives set in the Naimiṣa forest and suggests that

embedded narrative structures also provide an imaginal place of power, a "Forest of

Literary Imagination."[116] Hiltebeitel follows on Minkowski's suggestions that fixing

Vyāsa as the author of the text and locating the story in Naimiṣa forest served to elevate

Mahābhārata traditions to the status of *apauruṣeyatva,* "not of human origin."[117]

Hiltebeitel seeks to see how these factors might "fix the *Mahābhārata* at this transcendent

level."[118] While the details of his argument do not need to be given in detail here, his

focus on the *location* of the frame-story—in the Naimiṣa forest—is instructive. After

examining seven other *Mahābhārata* narratives that depict *sattra* sacrifices held there,

Hiltebeitel paints a compelling image of a moveable Naimiṣa forest that can always

function as the right place at the right time for moments of counsel.[119] The frame of the

forest—the "momentous forest,"[120] the convocation place of bards and *ṛṣis*—itself acts as

a generative space.[121]

Much can be generated in such a narrative frame—reflections of dharmic

ideologies, on one's identity with respect to these *dharma*s—and the two can poignantly

come together and make the frame-story a space of "self" creation, as Laurie Patton

argues.[122] Moving incisively through these insights about ritualized narratives and the

temporal and spatial dimensions of narrative frames, Patton turns her attention to the

multiple perspectives on *persons* that emerge, to the ideological *selves* within the

"unfolding scene" of the frame story.[123] Synthesizing various theorists' suggestions about

the polyphonies of narrative forms and self-identities shaped by ideas about 'the

dialogical self,' she states, "…the self is internally plural, and dialogical relationships

between voices lend the self-coherence."[124] This notion of the self-coherence created by

means of dialogue is especially relevant to my evaluations of the moment of advice in

advisor-king relationships.

The relevance to the advisor-king relationship lies in the dialogical creation of

coherence, a coherence constrained by ideologies of *dharma*. Patton weighs two

particularly intense sets of gendered dialogical scenarios—both involving Draupadī in

dialogue with other *rājanya* women of different statuses—against this conception of a

'dialogical self.'[125] A full discussion of Patton's argument cannot be undertaken here, but

for now her illustrations of Draupadī's rhetorical agency point to what is at stake for royal

individual selves, for the advisors in counseling scenarios. Patton shows that Draupadī

created herself through constraint *and* agency. I assert the same for one who would

advise kings, who are gentle, truthful, and dangerous (*MBh,* 3.222.34).[126] Both are

embedded in relationship; both are constrained by a king's power, but are also agents due

to intimacy with kings. Draupadī's negotiations and a few elements of Patton's results are

important to keep in mind, going forward into my study: the creation of dharmic

identities in dialogue with other selves and the crucible effects of various power

relationships that smolder within and threaten these dialogues.

This discussion of framing in a few dimensions of narrative action and movement has a particular purpose here—to understand the possible valence story forms might have when used by advisors. Related to this, we must look for the impetus behind framing, in the contexts in which these scholars discussed them. Starting with Witzel, the impetus behind framing is to create the descriptive and interpretive structures for verbal action ('descriptive' and 'interpretive' since the frames are directed at answering and solving problems). Building from here to Minkowski's discussion of *Mahābhārata* examples, framing is designed to make and shape time for discourse (a hyper-dynamic discourse interval). Hiltebeitel's study was useful to show that framing narratives also make a place for special discourses to happen.[127] And, with Patton's explication of Draupadī's creative agency, narrative frames also make a temporal generative place for the creation of a dharmic self. In sum, and I suggest a cumulative sense for how these function in verbal imagination: Frame-story(ies) can be fruitfully described as descriptive and interpretive structures that provide a generative imaginal time and space for reflection.

Having discussed, however briefly, the nature of framing and embedding narratives, I now return to a crucial functional point about *mantra* before leaving this section. I refer to a point I made about *mantra* earlier in this section, following Witzel, that *mantra frames* action. When discussing the importance of frame stories, there is a tendency to focus on the larger framing mechanisms of narrative, but there is also this primal and discrete framing mechanism of *mantra*. One could suggest that *mantra* is the ultimate embed; that is to say, *mantra*—given its uses and functions—is transformative utterance at the most primal and elemental discursive level. The scholars above principally address the larger narrative framing mechanism. Yet, only Patton's work

readily addresses this primal level of utterance, to which I now turn to finish these comments about *mantra*.

Mantra has special relevance to my thesis; since *mantra* (and other verbal forms of it) is also a word frequently used to denote "counsel" or "advice" in the literature dealing with kings and advisors. But this is no mere similarity in word choice: the allusion to the sacrificial power of *mantra* in ritualized settings is deliberate. Following the importance of consecrating words within such structures, the *Arthaśāstra* articulates a homology between *mantra* as counsel and *mantra* as consecrating verse. As we know from Vedic sacrificial ideals, ritual achieved is a world recreated, maintained or transformed: So too, a king successfully counseled is a king transformed or redirected (and so also a kingdom sustained). *Mantra* in both contexts helps maintain the world.

That this would be so is no "mere" coincidence, any more so than the similarity in word choice of *mantra* as both consecrating verse and as counsel is "mere" similarity. Following what Patton has shown in *Bringing the Gods to Mind*, I suggest this meaningful coincidence and similarity in uses and meanings of *mantra* is another example of metonymic or associational thinking (and acting). Through such thinking, "associational worlds" are created through the efficient repurposing of or extension of meanings and functions of *mantra* in one paradigmatic context to another similar and equally important context. Patton's study shows how these metonymic extensions and transformations have come to work:

> Finally, we see mental and verbal power transformed into an instrument – a tool that does not reflect a place or a person, but rather addresses a problematic situation. The eloquence that began as poetic insight, from a close relationship with the gods, moves into a form of ritual expertise, which in turn becomes an instrument to be used outside the sacrificial arena.[128]

If *mantra* retains its unique instrumentality borne in eloquent, efficient, efficacious speech even outside the ritual context, so it is also in the context of counsel, where there is an equally urgent need for such speech to address problematic situations. The associational similarity in meaning and function is mutually supporting—it is not simply that the "ritual" meaning of *mantra* is extended to the "counsel" meaning, but rather that this extension, once made, forms an "associational world," wherein the two senses of *mantra* support each other. It is within this dynamic narrative world that words can transform. Such a conception of narrative in royal contexts and advisory relationships, adds depth to the power of elocution in stories that frame the moment of counsel. I suggest they also are at play in every frame-story wielded in a narrative.

Frame-stories in *nītiśāstra* such as the *Pañcatantra* function in these senses outlined above, though in this case, they move along the aims of counsel, which is to increase wisdom or prompt dharmic change. An embedded sub-narrative as part of a larger frame story creates a reflective moment to help move a royal tactic through to its fruition, not just in the story, but in the mind of the king. With such a narrative, a king can see how a tactic might evolve or devolve on a stated aim and enable him to discern whether to move forward or retreat from a policy. Narratives and sub-narratives enable a king to visualize royal scenarios in a new way. As the *Pañcatantra* relates through the mouth of the jackal minister, Damanaka:

> The tragedy that follows a wrong plan,
> The triumph that results from the right plan,
> To the rules of Polity both are linked;[129]
> so the wise can point them out,
> as if *displayed* [emphasis mine] in advance.[130]

In examples like these, the meaning of a term of conduct is usually pointed out with a verse, which is then elaborated in a sub-story that "displays" the results in detail. As stated earlier, *śāstra* have organic and transformational aims. The same is true of counsel: advice that takes the form of demonstrative story is aimed at transforming royal deliberation and action. As the young minister points out above, those who are wise deliberate—i.e., discuss, in a manner that includes digressions designed to display or illustrate consequences in story form—in advance the consequences of royal plans. "The wise" in this case are the advising ministers, preceptors and counselors of court who know and construct the tales of political conduct—through these they paint the scenarios that enhance or alter what a king may see and discern. Importantly, emotions, dharmic attitudes and expectations can color both conduct and perception. In order to address conduct, and the perception that often can drive it, genres even more detailed and systematic than *nīti* are required. As I have suggested of *nīti* like *Pañcatantra,* which uses extensive framing, is a dynamic tool for advisors to use. It would also be an effective tool, due to its overall rhetorical strategy of encapsulation; bringing wide-ranging rhetoric of modes of ministerial success, ideals of social engagement, and the like, into concise narrative forms, an evocative calculus of wisdom for royal applications. *Arthaśāstra* is of a kind with the *Pañcatantra* here, though more detailed and more systematic; still, it also is a rhetorical strategy of encapsulation, to which I now turn.

Arthaśāstra

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya has become the definitive encapsulation of the teachings and opinions about *artha* we have for tracing the history of the genre. Tradition attributes the text to Kauṭilya (or Viṣṇugupta), which gives this particular

śāstra the gravity of attested success in providing the technologies—intellectual, moral and administrative—crucial to Imperial success.[131] Kauṭilya is the reputed minister of Candragupta Maurya, progenitor of the Maurya dynasty. [132] Candragupta's dynasty would later expand—under his grandson, Aśoka—the geographical bounds of India to its greatest extent until the modern age. The *śāstra* says of itself that it has gathered together into one treatise, the *artha* treatises composed by other experts (*Aś*, I.1.1).[133] Though it brings together the ideas of other teachers, like in other *śāstra* Kauṭilya makes his own arguments for the best form and direction that *artha* should take. As it is, *śāstra* sets the template for the genre that is considered to be the best (at least in Brahmanical literature and its readers' eyes) example of the science of *artha* in early India.[134]

Although I have briefly defined *artha* in other contexts above, it will be helpful to elaborate on the senses of *artha* here, since Kauṭilya brings many ideas about *artha* together in his treatise.[135] In the most material sense, *artha* refers to "wealth" or "riches." But if we consider it within the broad scope of human activities, *artha* denotes "use" or "advantage," "profit" or "good," and especially "success" in the mundane activities in which males might engage in life. In the world of the king and his ministers, the sense of these activities expands to suit royal power and authority. In the gambit of royal control, all actions and resources are to be turned to the *advantage* of the king, for the *profit* and *success* of the kingdom. These are all senses of *artha*, though expanded to reflect the encompassing nature of royal power.[136] *Arthaśāstra* as a science addresses the concerns of kings, ministers, and the royal court to create and maintain power and advantage.

Even so, the relative importance of *artha* to other topics of life mastery for the king and ministers was a matter of debate, even within the purview of the text. Kauṭilya reasons through the suggestions of other experts in the treatise and makes the following assertion in *Aś* I.7.6-7: "Material success *(artha)* alone is essential," says Kauṭilya, "Because material success is the root source of both *dharma* and pleasure (*kāma*)."[137] What is at stake in Kauṭilya's assertion that *artha* is primary? *Artha* is one of the "three paths" (*trivarga*) of conduct in Indian life—an ancient organizing principle for human activity in India. The *trivarga* circumscribes *male* actions into the realms of *dharma*, *kāma* (pleasure), and *artha* (material success), and then articulates the ethics of each realm to suit the path.[138] The treatise reports the opinions of other experts that either equate *artha* and *dharma* or equalize the three aims. Kauṭilya's last word on the argument asserts that actions of governance should be directed to the creation, maintenance and demonstration of *artha* or "material success," for *dharma* and *kāma* are dependent on them.

Kauṭilya's opinion is a strong one—all that is life relies on *artha*. And, by extension, all success relies on his treatise devoted to it. While *artha* may be a path that most males walk for some time, [139] given the extent of his control over resources and his responsibility for success with them, the path and conduct associated with *artha* becomes *the* domain of kings. And, because of the nature of royal power, the life conduct of the king encompasses the paths of particular lives, as tales of the dangers and joys of advising and/or serving a king attest. In this way *artha* is a symbolic condensation of a king's responsibilities, which the *Arthaśāstra* sets out in hopeful detail. The treatise states it was composed in order to consolidate and maintain "this world and the next,"[140]

the aims of *artha*, certainly. But the treatise envisions expansive powers for itself: *Arthaśāstra* creates and preserves (*pravartayati pāti ca*) the conditions for *dharma*, prosperity, and sensual pursuits *and* destroys *(nihanti ca)* their antithesis—lack of *dharma*, failure, and enmity (*Aś,* 15.1.72).

The number of schools and treatises of *Arthaśāstra* confirm the discipline's sense of its own importance. According to the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, there were many teachers and schools of *Arthaśāstra*. Kauṭilya's treatise, for instance, refers to the opinions of Uśānas and Bṛhaspati (as well as others)—two *artha* specialists that other texts corroborate as great teachers of *artha*. Some narratives accord Bṛhaspati great status; in these sources he is the founder of the science of governance and the preceptor of the gods.[141] These two teachers' theories of polity exist only as references in other texts, and their location in time is unavailable.

Yet, such limited conditions of evidence do not limit their import as *artha* teachers of renown. Rather, the limited evidence only assures their status as venerable teachers—with the unknown suggesting the eternal, making hoary their expertise. The ideology of counsel articulates by means of mythological discourse: Even the gods need teachers or counselors in their realms. In addition to these teachers, R. S. Sharma points out that Kauṭilya quotes thirteen individual writers of *Arthaśāstra*, and five schools.[142] Medieval theoreticians of *Arthaśāstra* continued to create and compile treatises for royal success, though they titled them as "extracts" of *Arthaśāstra*, such as Somadeva's, *Nītivākyāmṛta.*[143] Early twentieth century Indian scholars furthered the medieval tradition and compiled *artha–* or *nītiśāstra* to meet their nationalist aims. By compiling and presenting (as complete *śāstra*) the antiquity of Indian political science and statecraft,

these treatises were used as media of influence, as effective tools for demonstrating India's ability to self-govern and proof of Indian political acumen.[144]

Because it is a paradigmatic example of this discipline, *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya is one of the principal sources for this study. This *śāstra* explores in fifteen books not only the operational dimensions of rule—as one would expect in the science of governance—but also presents ideals for the intellectual and social foundations of good rule.[145] The architecture of rule that it envisions begins with the institution of ministers and the kings' close associates (Book One), and the moral and intellectual requirements of each. The books continue through an array of topics, such as: the myriad administrative departments and persons to govern them (Book Two); legal system and punishment (Books Two, Three, and Four); intelligence, espionage, and covert operations (primarily Books Five and Fourteen); ways of conducting foreign policy (Book Seven); the expansionary activities of rule (Books Nine through Thirteen); and putative scenarios for negotiating *plural* royal settings and/or empire ("Circle of Kings").[146] No detail of royal conduct appears missed, for the treatise explores not only its own methodology (Book Fifteen), but even treats the errors and pitfalls of rule into which ministers and kings fall prey (primarily, Book Eight) and the ways to maximize or minimize such negative aspects of governance.

From the earliest chapters of the *Arthaśāstra*, counselors and ministers are imagined into institutional form—in text—through complex iterations of mediators or facilitators of royal rule and conduct. The rhetoric of the text argues for its own value to kings.[147] To do so, the text organizes its recommendations around some foundational assumptions that kings have natural limitations and tendencies. Namely, complexities of

scale are functionally beyond the work of one man; and kings tend to exceed the limits of proper and dharmic conduct. This ideology of limitation informs every dimension of how the creators of this *Arthaśāstra* articulate advisor-minister roles. There is a preponderance of metaphors and similes of limitation in kings that resolves into rhetoric of redress for such limitations. The teachers of *artha* in the text—Kauṭilya and the *ācāryas* with whom he is in dialogue throughout—assume a king cannot act successfully alone. As such, the text's foundational argument for reliance goes to the heart of a king's own aspirations: The king who would be a *success*, specifically, who would be a "victorious conqueror," *vijigīṣu*, looks to and relies on the proper *artha*-promulgators.[148] Perception, seeing, and knowledge couched in favorite visual metaphors of wisdom and the conveyors of it—such as the mediating sage or *ṛṣi*—convey the terms of royal reliance.

These metaphors shift in *artha* contexts; they shape the net of protection around the king, and articulate the structure of his support. For instance, a visual metaphor for reliance plays out in the net of observations (*Aś*, 1.11-1-1.13.26). This means that ministers—and the net of eyes comprised of royal spies and emissaries—see what the king cannot, act where he is not, and carry out his actions in line with royal precedent or context in the full variety of royal affairs. Visual conceptions of limitation shape how Kauṭilya categorizes royal affairs that are beyond a king's immediate control and beyond which the king can perceive for himself. Therefore, the king's affairs (*rāja-vṛttiḥ*) are stratified according to what he is able to see: those he can perceive with his own eyes (*svayaṃdṛṣṭaṃ*), those out of view (*parokṣam*), and those that must be inferred from previous actions (*anumeya*) (1.9.4-7).[149] The treatise presents the institution of royal

ministers to perform the tasks that are out of view. Ministers prevent royal losses—either

loss of kingdom or loss of time deemed likely to occur in those areas where royal

responsibilities are either out of view or unanticipated (1.9.8).[150]

Since they act for kings in this way, ministers and the king's close associates are

the means of conveyance for royal actions. A central simile in the treatise illustrates this

principle wonderfully: rightly accomplished kingship is like a wheel that cannot move

forward alone, *sahāyam sādhyaṃ rājatvaṃ cakram ekaṃ na vartate*; it needs companions

(*sahāya*) to accomplish its aims (1.7.9).[151] The treatise then details the exact manner in

which a king should rely on others, and how to protect royal endeavors in the process. In

the treatise's view of itself, a king's companions bring royal aims—and the kingdom that

such aims create and sustain—straight to their goal, as the use of *sādhyaṃ rājatvaṃ*

suggests: with their help, the endeavors of a kingship are "successful," "fulfilled." The

wheel, in general, is an ubiquitous symbol of kingship (especially dharmic kingship in the

Buddhist tradition). The king turns the wheel of power that encompasses the wheel of

life, which he can set in motion to serve virtue or non-virtue. The allegory in the

Arthaśāstra reveals the wheel's true source of effective movement: ministerial action and

advice. Following the allegory the text advises the king to appoint learned companions

(*sacivān*) and then listen to what they counsel him to do.

The fact that the text argues for a king to listen to these learned companions

suggests that there were kings that did not. The conceptions of *śāstra* being "the eyes" of

the king, examples of which I gave in the introduction to śāstric genres above, expand the

location of this special sight beyond texts to a king's mastery of them. For instance, in

the context of discussions about the exercise of power during times of war and marches

of expansion or recovery of power in Book Nine, Chapter One, Kauṭilya discusses the relative importance of counsel and might in such contexts. Kauṭilya asserts that a king (*rājā*) with "the eyes of intelligence and *śāstra* is able to receive counsel with little resistance," and "to deceive [his enemy] by means of covert practices" (9.1.15).[152] The text envisions a king with the eyes to recognize and evaluate the means of success at his disposal. Since the king's ability to see by means of the wisdom encapsulated in *śāstra*s, and his own intelligence (or with the advisor's intelligence) are equivalent, Kauṭilya lays much importance on the educational foundation for *artha* in the beginning of his treatise (1.5.1-17). The text envisions diverse people with the proper intellectual and moral foundations and data to help the king make choices.

The *Arthaśāstra* presents more grounds for a king's reliance on advisors and ministers, and the corporate exercise of power through speculations about the loss of the seven *prakṛtis,* the constituent powers of rule alluded to above. The discussion polarizes around the importance of the king (*svāmin*) versus the minister (*amātya*). A consistent interlocutor in the *Arthaśāstra* is the teacher, Bhāradvāja (8.1.6-9). He sees the minister as the most important figure, since the king is dependent on him for deliberation, carrying these out to success, etc. (8.1.8.).[153] According to this expert, all royal endeavors are lost; without ministers, a king is a like "[a bird] with clipped wings" (8.1.9).[154] But relative to the other positions that exist to support a king, Kauṭilya ultimately holds the king to the highest responsibility, since he is the head of them all (8.1.18). Even though Kauṭilya argues in other contexts in the text about the crucial nature of ministers, in the context of risk or danger the king's is the power to preserve. Kauṭilya argues that since the king chooses advisor, priest, and ministers—he can choose others even if good ones are lost

(8.1.13-14). Moreover, it is the king and his qualities that direct all toward success and advancement of the responsibilities he has delegated (8.1.15-17).

All opinions reflect the awareness that regardless of which side of the fulcrum that sustains the relationship between royal power and its success might be, there are grave consequences when kings/ministers are not dharmic or prudent mediators of royal power and authority. When they act without wisdom, without reflection and cooperative deliberation, without concern for consequences that reflect their corporate responsibility they tip the balance toward destruction of kingdom. Therefore, Kauṭilya and the *Arthaśāstra* are careful to envision only persons worthy of mediating power, virtue and again mediating wisdom back into the royal office. Even so, while the treatise exhibits confidence in the institution of advisors, ministers and counselors—it also envisions institutional roles and requirements for advisors, ministers, and kings to protect each ideal role and the kingdom for success and *dharma*. The task now is to examine the texts and ideals designed to protect *dharma*.

Dharma Genres and their Idealizations of Advisors and Advising Relations

The literature concerned with *dharma*—a term often expressed in English as "righteousness," "religion," "morality," or "law"—is vast. Moreover, just as we have seen that there were teachers / experts and schools associated with *nīti* and *artha*, so too were there teachers / experts and associated schools of *dharma*. The breadth of the literature reflects the myriad forms and contexts where *dharma* was conceived to operate (or should operate). Though *dharma* texts deal with "the religious duties of men,"[155] *dharma* exceeds the norms of conduct that typically denote the "religious" in Euro-American epistemologies of identity and society. In Indian terms, *dharma* includes

"religious conduct" (that is, ritual conduct and other conduct involving interactions with deities) certainly. *Dharma* also encompasses the more "mundane" (again, according to Euro-American epistemology) and yet highly ritualized and reified terms and regulations of conduct within families, within and between social groups, and between these groups and their relationships with deities. All are summative actions and ideals directed at and constitutive of human and divine cosmogonies.

These connotations of the prescriptions of conduct and society drive conventional translations of *Dharmaśāstra* as "legal treatises" or works of "Hindu civil law." In the royal context of *dharma* for kings and ministers, *dharma* can denote the Brahmanical normative systems, but can also be as variable as the context. In terms of the *dharma* texts themselves, they address are articulating idealized conduct, *dharma*, in Brahmanical ritual and other settings, but also articulating *dharma* for all the "nobles" or *āryas* (the *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdra*s as their servants).[156] Importantly, the experts of this discipline (*brāhmaṇas* as promulgators) come to see kings as responsible for maintaining the conditions and dictates of the entire system of *dharma*.

There are *dharma* texts that address the specific ritual concerns of *brāhmaṇas,* such as the *Dharmasūtras* of the Vedic schools of Āpastamba, Gautama, Vasiṣṭha and the like. These are written in the terse, "aphoristic," *sūtra* style. Though this style was initially accorded great antiquity by Indologists, it is used in ancient, medieval and modern times, and so is not exclusively representative of a particular period.[157] There are also *dharma* treatises associated with schools of *dharma*, such as Manu, Bṛhaspati, and Yājñavalkya, with sections that reflect the realities of Indian antiquity—and the more comprehensive vision of what dharmic conduct entails—as well as "younger" sections. It

is more appropriate, perhaps, to note that *dharma* literature can occur in diverse forms.

Some of the more definitive *dharma* texts, such as that of Manu, the *Mānava-*

Dharmaśāstra, articulate *dharma* through the rigor of a scientific treatise (*śāstra*) of a

school of *dharma* and are written in "metrical form" (particularly the *śloka*) like other

traditional sources of authority—the *smṛti* literature—and the epics.[158] It is through the

authority gained from being a comprehensive treatise and the authority created by its

topic—Brahmanical human and divine structures and rites or "*dharma*"—that *śāstra* in

general, and *dharmaśāstra* in particular reaches its true normative valence for Indian

culture and literary forms.

     As noted in the case of *nītiśāstra*, the narratives of other genres—such as the epic

traditions, *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*—can be considered *dharmaśāstra* by virtue of

their exemplifying the overall topic of *dharma*. They are also śāstric by means of their

comprehensiveness. This means that the *Mahābhārata* as well as particular treatises of

dharma can carry the authority of *śāstra*, as a comprehensive science of normative

behavior, construed by *varṇa*. By the same token, the topic of *dharma* enhances their

normative authority even more. *Dharma* may have emerged out of priestly duties to

maintain the ritual conduct and ritual space of sacrifice, and sacrifice's mundane goal to

maintain the world: It comes to exert its force on the conduct of all groups in ancient

Indian society, sacrificial or not.

     Across all the genres, the treatises of *dharma*, in varying degrees of complexity

and distance from royal concerns, argue strenuously for the Brahmanical vision of social

structure and social wisdom. The king and his ministers are just two of the many

complementary others that these idealists wish to encompass in their vision of dharmic

behavior, leading to dharmic totality. What constitutes *dharma* in these treatises reflects Brahmanical activities and ideals. *Dharma* here is ritual and socio-moral rectitude—that is, ritual, social, inter-subjective behavior: ultimately, "special duty."[159] *Dharma* for kings and ministers then, ultimately involves doing their duty in such a way as to support this system. As far as the kings (largely presumed *kṣatriyas* in the *Dharmasūtras*) are concerned, they are to study, protect (which presumes actions of war), adjudicate disputes (in some treatises), tax and punish. [160] Indeed, a king who does not punish when it is necessary incurs the karmic residue of the offender, which speaks to the breadth of his responsibilities and power.[161] Later *dharma* writers, such as Vasiṣṭha, think the king's activities should be directed to serve and protect all beings: "to take care of creatures is the special duty (*dharma*) of a king, and he attains success by fulfilling it."[162] However, all beings are to be realized within the Brahmanical dharmic system, as the prescriptions that kings assure that people follow the laws of *dharma* for each *varṇa* indicate.

To this end, the various *dharma* genres present detailed expositions of the hierarchical *varṇa* system and its regulation. They circumscribe individuals to their respective activities in the system and establish rules and rites for maintaining ideal levels of congress—capitulated through ideals of purity and prerogative—between individuals within and between the groups. These duties are further organized according to *āśrama* or sub-vocations, which describe archetypal ritual activities or "religious exertions" typical of each vocation, as Olivelle points out in his etymology of the term.[163] This body of literature was reified to the status of code, especially with the facilitation of British rule, since they chose these treatises to realize their objective of finding an indigenous code with which to rule their Indian subjects. The *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, the *dharma*

treatise attributed to the mythic progenitor Manu was considered the representative law code. However, Manu's *dharma* treatise was only one among many treatises that were codified in various schools of Brahmanical *dharma*. The treatises of *dharma* were in themselves more flexible than they came to be used in pre-modern and modern times. This means the ancient Indian setting was scene to diverse articulations of dharmic conduct in Brahmanical circles.

There has been a tendency to evaluate *dharma* genres by means of an evolutionary semantic model (Halbfass, 1988; Olivelle 1999, 2011). On this basis, for instance, Patrick Olivelle has charted the "evolution" of the semantic range of *dharma* from the Vedic, ritual connotations of the *dharma* as 'proper conduct in the ritual context', to the Brahmanical semantic field of *dharma* as the norms of proper conduct in "both ritual and social/moral spheres."[164] We find that *dharma*, therefore comes to denote proper conduct, social law, righteousness, morality. If one accepts that there was a progression from ritual concerns to social, these articulations became increasingly dharmic through time: from proper conduct in ritual settings to proper conduct in social settings. The result is a universalized conception of normative action and ideals that encompassed procedures in legal, ritual, moral/religious, familial, individual and social contexts—all refracted through the Brahmanical conceptions of knowledge and social hierarchy, as discussed earlier.

Dharma as Sūtra

Four idealizations of *dharma* in particular are accorded great antiquity—the *Dharmasūtras* of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiṣṭha.[165] All articulate, in *sūtra* form, an ideal for managing the ritual and social congress of *brāhmaṇas* with

respect to the other twice-born individuals of which they proclaim to be the head. The discussions of kings and ministers in the *sūtras* are rather abbreviated. The most complex are the *dharma* writings of Vasiṣṭha. Even so, the complexities center around the duties of *brāhmaṇas* rather than kings. Moreover, references to ministers occur but rarely—they act as judges with the king, they are to be economically respected, like a king, and can administer royal properties, along with kings.[166] In these sources of *dharma*, the relationship they seek to establish in closest proximity to the king are themselves, as priests, elders, and teachers.

In terms of a king's obligations to *brāhmaṇas*, though he is directed to select a priest and "follow his instructions"[167] there are some subtleties in how these sources perceive their own role. In Vasiṣṭha's treatment of *dharma*, it is not clear that the priests of his school envisioned much more than assuming the king's own sacrificial roles as householder (and the sacrifices he is to perform in that role), since his duties as king preclude his performing them.[168] The king's "special duty" is to "take care of all creatures," not to perform his own sacrifices. The circles of responsibility are established: the king's actions are directed at society, the priests actions are directed at sacrifice. But there is a sense that all beneficial actions are construed sacrificially in this source, since the king's "special *dharma*"—usually construed through *kṣatriya* martial values—is allegorized to sacrifice: "To give up fear and pity, wise men say, is truly for him [a king] a sacrificial session lasting until old age." (Vasiṣṭha, 19.3)[169] Sacrifice maintains the world—that of the king's is the fearless and fierce protection of subjects; that of the priest's is to make sacrifices on behalf of the king and the world.

Along with the material benefits they can provide, other *dharma* teachers like Gautama intimate an inchoate vision of *brāhmaṇas* as advisors. The *Dharmasūtra* attributed to him sees kings and *brāhmaṇas* as dual, if not collaborative, protectors of society: "Brahmins united with *kṣatriyas* uphold the Gods, ancestors, and human beings." (11.27) As above, the actions implied in this verse resonate with sacrifice and their sustaining effects on the world. It is important that the two *varṇa*s are *united* in this effort. As one would expect, this verse reflects the typical Brahmanical ideology of *dharma* that asserts that their actions are constitutive of reality. This call to a unified effort becomes typical of Brahmanical ideals for the royal office. Therefore, this verse is also indicative of the kind of relationship that *brāhmaṇas* wish to have with kings *and* the power of kings. All these sources suggest that the king should assent to Brahmanical superiority, as all *āryas* should.

But this assent must take another form—influence—when dealing with kings who have control over persons, resources, and society. The schools of *dharma* increasingly seek to extend their influence in the exercise of power and protection that the kings as *kṣatriyas* hold. Gautama indicates that *brāhmaṇas* contribute more than sacrifices in the maintenance of society—they also counsel. Kings influence others through coercion, or *daṇḍa*, which he states is derived from *damana* (restraint). It is clear that the king must restrain and direct his subjects to the primary Brahmanical social aim—"steadfast devotion" to the Law *[dharma]* proper to "the different classes and orders of life."[170] If so, there are rewards of prosperity and a good rebirth. Without this structure and the king to assure it, Gautama envisions chaos.[171] Therefore, he gives the formula to keep this chaos at bay: "The teacher's advice and the king's punishment protect them; therefore,

one should never belittle the king or the teacher." (Gautama, 11.31) It is the advice they give as teachers that protect people, while kings protect through coercion. The text is not explicit about whether the teacher advises the king in this context, or advises all those of the elite *varṇa*s. However, given the references to unified aims and actions of kings and priests in preceding verses, the advice is surely to the king, who in turn protects the world. So, these treatises are arguing themselves into this influence. There are no explicit rules of engagement between kings and teachers here—merely advice on the benefit of reliance on teachers, or on kings enhanced through their teachers.

The socio-religious relations we see articulated in various ways in these texts—*brāhmaṇa* ritual specialists extending or seeking to extend their influence to the king as his counselors—tracks along with the semantic range of the term (*dharma*) that describes the range of ideal practices that these texts advocate for kings and counselors. Much more can be said on this topic (and will be, especially in chapter seven), but note at least for now what Halbfass shows in his analysis of what he calls the "associational wealth"[172] —the semantic range of *dharma*—in traditional Hinduism, and the relation of this range to the forms of society that articulated ideal relations between kings and their (*brāhmaṇa*) counselors. The term refers to the primeval cosmogonic

> upholding and opening of the world and its fundamental divisions, and then to the repetition and human analogues of the cosmogonic acts in the ritual, as well as the extension of the ritual into the sphere of social and ethical norms. Subsequently, there is increasing emphasis on the 'upholding' of the social and religious status quo … the rituals and social norms which were once associated with the upholding of the universe are now primarily a means of upholding the identity and continuity of the Aryan tradition. [173]

Dharma—Ideologies of Treatise (Śāstra) and Tradition (Smṛti)

It takes the much longer *dharma* disquisitions of Manu to see the extent to which

Brahmanical ideology envisioned its influence on society, especially for the king and his

associates. In terms of narrative style, it is a treatise or *śāstra* of the *dharma* discipline,

rather than a collection of *sūtras* as discussed above. The treatise of Manu is dually

known as the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, or the *Manusmṛti*. Manu is the mythic progenitor

of Indian humanity and human society. Not only then does his *dharma* articulate a

particular school of *dharma*, Manu seeks to articulate for, which amounts to superseding,

all other schools of *dharma*.[174] Patrick Olivelle describes Manu's influence as follows:

"The treatise ascribed to Manu opened a new chapter in the history of Dharmaśāstric

literature. It was a watershed not only because it departed so radically in style and in

substance from previous literature but also because all the subsequent texts of

Dharmaśāstra work within the frame provided by Manu."[175] Therefore, whatever

normative weight that the *Dharmasūtras* of Āpastamba or Baudhāyana might have

exerted as a source of dharmic praxis, is subsumed by the comprehensive nature of

Manu's *śāstra*. Through this treatise, Manu creates the illusion of Brahmanical

orthodoxy from the reality of complex Brahmanical orthopraxy.

In this regard, Manu is not only a teacher, he is a creator. He precedes even the

Gods of the ancient Indian pantheon, bestowing upon them place and power, and right to

exercise it. This ideological assertion gives great weight then to the structure for *dharma*

Manu envisions. Manu places, describes, and circumscribes: Once the society *that is* the

world is established, he makes the king responsible for all beings and Manu's ultimate

structure. Moreover, as I shall explore later, the king's power and the power of variant

*dharma*s are unified, in an attempt ultimately to control both. The impetus of the text to create greater controls over the royal office belies an assumption that *dharma* is no servant to the realm of *artha*.

   Yājñavalkya-Smṛti, also representative of the diverse expert tradition concerned with *dharma*, shares some of the concern in the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* to increase the influence of *dharma* over *artha*, and so also is a good source for thinking about the roles of ministers and counselors to the king. Like the other *śāstra* and *smṛti* literature of his kind, the work attributed to Yājñavalkya seems largely based on Manu. Olivelle characterizes the relation between Yājñavalkya's and Manu's texts in this way: "Yājñavalkya … represents a clear advance over Manu, especially with respect to statecraft and jurisprudence, both in sophistication and vocabulary…In spite of this clear advance over Manu, Yājñavalkya leans heavily on his predecessor; many of his verses are condensations of several verses of Manu."[176] These considerations plus the fact that it shares ritual and conduct provisions with Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* makes *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti* an instructive treatise for a study of ministers (*amātya*) and advisors (*mantrin*), and their two main bodies of assembly (*sabhya* and *pariṣad*).[177] This *smṛti* marks the terminus of my consideration of ministers and advisors in *dharma* treatises of this kind.

   The normative weight these two *Dharmaśāstra* carry in Brahmanical and early Indian discourse cannot be denied: But the overarching system they seek to construct—in the period of my study—is largely a wished for ideal. Doniger and Smith characterize the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu as an attempt to convert individual ritual rules into a subsuming *dharma*.[178] To whatever extent Doniger's and Smith's characterization of Manu's text is correct, we may still ask what historical circumstances prompted the

particular ideals for which Manu argues. Olivelle's work is helpful here. He

hypothesizes that Manu's work was written during the Kuṣāṇa period, thus presenting the

reality of an imperial regime under foreign—*mleccha*—control. Thus for Olivelle:

> Reading Manu, one cannot fail to see and to feel the intensity and urgency with which the author defends Brahmanical privilege. A major aim was to reestablish the old alliance between *brahma* and *kṣatra*, an alliance that in his view would benefit both the king and the Brahmin, thereby reestablishing the Brahmin in his unique and privileged position within society.[179]

Thus, if Manu's aim is to "ritualize life as a whole," as Doniger and Smith assert, in

Olivelle's view it is with the intention of ritualizing a whole that has as its center the

brāhmaṇa. Timothy Lubin supports this, noting, "the concluding section of the *Mānava-*

Dharmaśāstra (12.108, 113) asserts the absolute authority of the Brahmin: '…whatever

learned Brahmins say in indubitably the *dharma*.'"[180]

Moreover, Manu attempts to locate *dharma* in the priest, transforming the

Brahmin from performer of sacrifice, into carrier of the benefit of sacrifice, and the

symbol of these benefits as a whole. The treatise circumscribes the renunciant or ascetic

paths into their conception of *dharma*, along with duties of kings and ministers—usually

reserved for the treatises of *artha*. With this universalizing impetus, into whatever role a

brāhmaṇa moves—as sacrificer, teacher, ascetic or royal priest—he is placed to act as

perfect emblem of *dharma* and elder of *dharma*. If ministers and advisors are drawn

from this cadre as mediators for kings, as even the *Arthaśāstra* suggests, *dharma* treatises

are placed to transform the values of court. However, as will emerge in the discussion of

the Buddhist conceptions of *dharma* and power for the kings, they created a general role

in the structure, not just a Brahmanical role, thus leaving room for other articulations of

influence on kings, and other media of influence—not only *śāstra* of Brahmanical

dharma, but also Buddhist *dharma* discourses.

The "Śāstric" Mode

As mentioned earlier, *śāstras* in general are the special genres of kings and

ministers reflecting their concerns for dharmic, prudent, success-based knowledge(s).[181]

In Euro-American terms, these bodies of narratives are hybrid politico-religious genres.

In the Indian context however, *śāstra*'s importance to conceptions of dharmic and

successful polity suggests that it is best not to consider them simply within confines of

genre but rather as complex methods of meeting royal aims that encompasses different

ways of knowing. If we liberate them from the circumscriptions of a specific genre (such

as "religious" or "political"), it is easier to observe their function in royal discourse and

the media of royal counsel. Nevertheless, the normative and ideological dimension of the

genre remains, informing the appeal to śāstric knowledge and terms of dharmic conduct

entailed for kings and ministers in the royal context. This slight shift of definition allows

Buddhist treatises of *dharma* a means to enter the royal court, suggesting another means

of filling the role of elder, confidant, or advisors to kings.

Therefore, we must highlight nexes of change in conceptions of *dharma* and royal

duties. *Dharma* can reflect concerns to create and maintain society by means of actions

(*karma*) generated through sacrifice and knowledge construed through mundane or

"worldly" sacrificial terms. *Dharma* can also reflect primary interests to maintain society

by means of *karma* created through special knowledge bases associated with release from

karmic constraints. Scholars have typically construed the difference of concern around

sacrificially informed *dharma* and that informed by a renunciant ethos.[182] But the

realities of *dharma* are more than the two, sacrificial or renunciant (both in the gambit of

male Brahmanical ideals). Kings and ministers move by means of these ideas of

dharmic-centered action and more: Indeed, they mark the connection or gulf between the

two—where most people reside—and suggest a *dharma* shaped by the need to flourish in

all contexts. For while treatises may call for the ultimate source of royal and human

conduct (*dharma*) to be drawn from *dharma* treatises (as is the case of the *Mānava-*

Dharmaśāstra) or *Arthaśāstra*, these means themselves were not enough to accomplish.

As Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* asserts, when *dharma* is lost, it is left to the king to promulgate

dharma.[183] Thus, some other means are needed for discerning proper and dharmic

conduct, especially in the royal context: Tradition (in examples such as Kauṭilya)

presents *itihāsa* ("history" according to indigenous scholars, "legend" to most Western

interpreters) as one of the answers.

Itihāsa Narratives

In this section I discuss the narrative form, *itihāsa*, as it pertains to narrative tools

of influence that idealized advisors and ministers in texts might use. *Itihāsa* is a complex

narrative form associated with Vedic ritual; yet it is a form so dynamic that this ritual

context could not contain it. Moreover, *itihāsa* has changed through time with shifts in

conceptions of the efficacy of forms of religious culture that occur within ritual, such as

mantra and especially these forms as they moved outside the ritual context (*viniyoga*), as

Patton has demonstrated.

As we turn to *itihāsa*, we should ask: How can "history" be a tool of discernment

or an "answer," when it so often is considered a "record?" Recall the "associational

world" that I invoked from Patton's work with *mantra*—specifically the application of it, *viniyoga*[184]—in order to examine the generative aspects of narrative and *mantra*. In another work, Patton examined the ways that *itihāsa* narratives function in the *Bṛhaddevatā*, and two of her findings are helpful here.[185] Wanting to avoid the "extreme" of treating *itihāsa* as actual history, Patton described it instead as an "anchoring story [whose] point is not to tell an 'accurate' tale, but to use narrative to describe a persuasive event in which the *mantras* arose, and were successful."[186] The story captures a success and moves it forward for repeated success. For the way the narratives generally move, Patton found a "general authenticating motive of *itihāsa* narratives."[187] Success and the authentication that comes from retelling it are instructive for thinking about *itihāsa* for my contexts here. In the most general terms, I suggest that *itihāsa* is a place where history and ideal meet—and this is the place where the discourse of advisors and kings can work to discern *dharma* and answer royal problems.

I suggest that in the words of an advisor or advising minister, *itihāsa* genres answer the problems of the more limited application of *dharma* treatises; they are narratives for the space 'in-between,' so to speak, normative injunctive action; from one normative application to the next. In this space, different ideals of normativity— normative for *artha* or *nīti* aims, dharmic normativity constrained through gender and family associations, as examples—provide a means for discerning the right dharmic conduct, at the right time.

Itihāsa is of interest specifically because of how and to what end it may be used by advisors when counseling a king. *Itihāsa* in some of its particular forms provides an important means of interpreting *dharma*, and an important means of teaching how to

interpret *dharma*. *Itihāsa* can refer to the epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, but also to narratives that accompany Vedic instructional texts like the *Brāhmaṇas*. In the context of my study, *itihāsa* will denote the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the ancient tales within them, *itihāsa purāṇa*; contextually normative, functionally normative, old tales put to normative ends, raw materials of normative *itihāsa*. Although *itihāsa* is often translated as "legend" by Indologists, traditional perspectives on *itihāsa* and use of these narratives—even in the literature of kings and ministers—belie this term. Most Indian scholars consider *itihāsa* to be "history" of some kind, rather than "legend." In this regard, they refer specifically to the "epics", the *Mahābhārata* especially, and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Indigenous perspectives on these "histories" suggest they may not be as "legendary" as the Greek "epics" with which they are grouped in world literature. K. Ayyappa Paniker's study of Indian narrative forms aptly summarizes the indigenous view: "...*itihāsa*s are concerned with historical matter presented as legend."[188] *Itihāsa*'s presentation as "legend" presumably refers to these narratives containing both "mythic" and "historical" elements from a "heroic age."[189] Certainly, this connotation of *itihāsa* as "legend" echoes how non-Indian scholars have translated the term. It even reflects the characterizations of the "epic" genre that are refracted through classical Western epic genres. Moreover, the mythic quality of Indian *itihāsa* narratives (their formulaic descriptions of deities' and heroes' powers) or their tendency to explore, argue and epitomize religious themes and ideologies leads us to translate *itihāsa* as "legend." But to say that *itihāsa* may relay history through the artifice of legend (and looks a great deal like Western legendary forms) does not mean that *itihāsa* are not "sincere histories" in their own right.[190]

However legendary its tone may be, the manner in which *itihāsa*s (as the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*) reflect the Indian sense of their own history and the aims of their history should compel us to reconsider how we render "*itihāsa*" in this context. In many ways they are historical dharmic narratives, so perhaps "normative history" is best used of the *Mahābhārata*, at least. The "heroic" conflicts demonstrated by the kings, princes, and ministers of *itihāsa* such as the *Mahābhārata* for instance, are paradigmatic depictions of the emergent republics of India. They are "paradigms" or templates of the socio-political factors characteristic of establishing Indian republics. They are also paradigms of the conflicts that ensued in conceptions of virtue (*śīla*) and *dharma* and efficacious royal conduct around these factors. Though the number of kingdoms that might have aligned, realigned, destroyed themselves in this way may have been many in Indian history, the hoped for realizations of their actions in history, the projected conclusion of royal actions would be the same—victory, flourishing, and protection of social property and values. This is history made formulaic for the sake of teleology. *Itihāsa* is history as experienced through its highest ideals of conduct and social organization. For its function and for its contents—social/self-understanding and social/self-edification—"history is interiorized [*sic*] in the myth that is narrated."[191] This suggests an understanding of history-telling that is perhaps postmodern in its sensibilities—*itihāsa* histories are explicit interpretations of cultural artifacts and facts by means of or through equally explicit Indian socio-religious sensibilities directed to the aim of self and national edification. These formalized histories are ideological in nature, or shaped, in part, by a particular ideology through the mouths of advising ministers, part and parcel of the media of influence someone advising a king might use, as we shall see.

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya points to another dimension of *itihāsa* that is more

pedagogical than its function as normative history. "Listening to *itihāsa*" was one of the

ways that kings were to improve their minds. Kauṭilya counts *itihāsa* among Vedic

sources of knowledge, which is significant for thinking of these narratives as sources of

righteous conduct. In his chapter on the training of the "well-disciplined" king, *itihāsa* is

of a part with *Atharva Veda* as sources of knowledge (*veda*), as I discussed in my

description of *Arthaśāstra* as an advisors' genre above. One Pāli Buddhist source that

uses the term treats *itihāsa* in a way similar to Kauṭilya: *Itihāsa* is one of the "arts and

sciences" (*sippas)* that King Milinda knew, which was an attainment that attested to his

being "learned, eloquent, wise and able."[192] Indeed, other occurrences in Pāli sources

refer to *itihāsa* as the "fifth" *Veda*. The occurrence of *itihāsa* in the *Milindapañha,*

Questions of King Milinda, treats it as a kind of knowledge with "the four *Vedas*, the

*Purāṇa*s, and the *Itihāsa*s," according to one scholar.[193] However, the same source

indicates that *itihāsa* is the concern of "*brāhmaṇas* and their sons,"[194] which suggests that

the king's experience of *itihāsa* would be mediated through his *brāhmaṇa* teachers and

advisors.

The understanding of *itihāsa* as a source of knowledge, especially as it occurs in

Kauṭilya (and echoed in Buddhist texts addressing kings above), has led some to suggest

that Kauṭilya might have drawn political principles from *itihāsa*. A. K. Sen interprets

Kauṭilya's intention: "ministers teach him [the king] with illustrations from *itihāsa* and

purāṇas."[195] This scholar has in mind the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, which are both

considered articulations of *dharma*, and sources of *dharma*.[196] Kauṭilya suggests: *itihāsa*

are one of many objects of study with which a king can improve his "intellect"

(*prajñāyā*), which is the basis for conduct (*yoga*), and the self-possession (*ātmavat*) that results from it. This royal self-possession is the aim of knowledge (*vidyānāṃ sāmarthyam*) in the first place.[197] Indeed, as I shall show, ministers, advisors, and advising others do use *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* (old tales) to teach kings in this way.

Nevertheless, precisely what Kauṭilya means by *itihāsa* is not entirely clear. There is a gloss in the treatise, but it is likely marginalia incorporated in the text at a later date.[198] Without this gloss, the king is told to listen to *itihāsa* in the evening.[199] What does this suggest? Kauṭilya could mean for the king to listen to the performances of *itihāsa* such as the *Mahābhārata*. Kauṭilya could have intended for kings to know about the materials of the larger interpretive schools of Vedic literature, such as the *aithāsika*. Patton argues for *itihāsa* to be translated as "legend," at least in the context of the *Bṛhaddevatā*. She gives other senses that may be appropriate here. As Patton traces the referents associated with the term, *itihāsa* can be: *aitihāsika* as "part of a larger interpretive school;" a referent denoting some fifth *Veda* (sources of knowledge with the valence of the four *Saṃhitās*, but not literally of the same canonical materials); as a synonym for *ākhyāna* (fable like expositions accompanying actions); and non-ritual aspects within a ritual narrative.[200] In sum, the use and value of *itihāsa* was diverse, yet overall part of a "changing landscape of [Vedic] interpretive tradition[s]."[201] Patton also argues that *itihāsa* served ritual and commentarial functions with respect to the *Vedas,* although its commentarial function "eclipsed" *itihāsa's* ritual function.[202] This commentarial function (on the nature of the gods and their powers in particular in the case of the *Bṛhaddevatā*) could be one of roles Kauṭilya envisioned *itihāsa* play in royal knowledge(s). Kauṭilya already presumes that the king will study the *Veda*: The treatise

makes a cursory assertion that the *Vedas* are the basis of knowledge for the *Arthaśāstra*. But "knowing" the *Vedas* in this way involves memorization and recitation—it is commentary of text and teacher that takes a king and any hearer of it into the realm of understanding and application.

Itihāsa as Mahābhārata

Interpreting and subsuming normative and didactic literatures is also a major role of the epics as *itihāsa* as sections of the *Mahābhārata* describes itself. Indian studies of polity frequently cite a passage from the *Ādiparvan* of this *itihāsa* as a means to describe the nature of the *Mahābhārata*. According to Diwakar Tiwary, "the *Mahābhārata* is primarily an *itihāsa*. But in the Ādi-parva... [the] epic is not only an *itihāsa*; it is a Saṃhitā, Purāṇa, Ākhyāna, Kathā, Dharmaśāstra, Kāmaśāstra and Kāvya also. It is also called the Kṛṣṇa Veda."[203]   In his *History of Dharmaśāstra*, P. V. Kane also quotes the *Mahābhārata*, on itself: "Vyāsa composed the work as a great Dharmaśāstra, as Artha*śāstra* (treatise on politics and government), Mokṣaśāstra, and Kāmaśāstra."[204] The crux of Kane's assertion is that the *Mahābhārata* is a treatise that addresses the aims of life for all brāhmaṇa males. In terms of subject matter alone, the *Mahābhārata* tradition encompasses sources that are definitive of ancient Indian Brahmanical literary (and cultural) identity: old tales (*purāṇa*) of sages and gods and goddesses, various story styles (*ākhyāna* and *kathā*), treatises of righteous and of sensual engagement (*dharmaśāstra* and *kāmaśāstra*, respectively), and the knowledge of what some say is the earliest theophany of Kṛṣṇa (*Kṛṣṇa Veda*). The rhetoric of the *Ādiparvan's* "self-description" encompasses knowledge: This gives a broad authoritative knowledge base with which to explore the

history of the royal court and of royal *dharma*.[205] In the hands of kings and his ministers and advisors, the *Mahābhārata* becomes an all-encompassing tool.[206]

Ākhyāna and *kathā* are two kinds of story literature found in the *Mahābhārata*.[207] In the Brahmanical context, *ākhyāna* are "declared" or recited stories, whose distinction seems to rely on their having been told "before" (implying antiquity and renown).[208] Among others who might recite them, these stories were told by *sūtas*, singers at court who also acted as chariot drivers to kings (as in the case of Saṃjaya in the *Mahābhārata*).[209] Some scholars have attempted to delineate the nature of these story styles. One notable study has asserted that the distinguishing feature is the presence of verse.[210] D. R. Bhandarkar and his colleagues have in mind the Gupta constellation of meaning in this context—senses of the terms based in part on epigraphic sources, in addition to court linguistic theory. Making them an element of *kāvya* stresses the poetic art of these two story styles. In these contexts, plot is conveyed in prose, where three different meters might be used; but both should begin with an invocation to some god or goddess.[211] In content alone, these *ākhyāna* and *kathā* also can include thick descriptions of characters, especially their negative characteristics.[212]

The *Mahābhārata* is also an old tale (*purāṇa*) containing genealogical details and feats of gods, demons, super humans, and sages, in addition to its poetic flourishes.[213] This *itihāsa* explores and challenges the aims and nature of *dharma* and desire, and refers to itself (as do traditional interpreters) as a technical treatise on the subject. Indeed, elements of *Mahābhārata* demonstrate knowledge of Manu and the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, if they were not of the same period. It also shares old *purāṇa* sequences with the *Pañcatantra,* for example. All of these texts have the authority of old wisdom to

argue for themselves: In this way they are tools of various cultures of normativity, hence its importance to the education of kings, as even the *Arthaśāstra* attributed to Kauṭilya suggests.[214]

For all it claims to encompass, *Mahābhārata* can be considered a universal pedagogical tool for kings and ministers. *Mahābhārata* as a source of education is thus compelling for this study of advisors and ministers: Its most explicitly didactic sections are likely from the third and fourth centuries of the Common Era, a time of intellectual growth and literary innovations in both the Gupta and southern kingdoms. These intellectual changes were concurrent with an attempt to routinize Brahmanical conceptions of *dharma* and society.[215]

The *Mahābhārata*'s explorations of royal conduct make it an *nītiśāstra* also, even though it introduces pedagogical moments not characteristic of treatises of *nīti*: long disquisitions on *rāja-dharma*, the *dharma* particular to kings, rule, and kingdoms. The longest treatise of this kind occurs in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan*, which reflects a complex synthesis of the techniques of self-perfection being used in various Brahmanical and extra-Brahmanical circles of knowledge. The text is a discourse on how to be a righteous king, spoken through the ancient preceptor, Bhīṣma, to the emotionally and psychologically broken—yet still dharmic—king Yudhiṣṭhira. As universal in its aims as the *dharma* treatise of Manu, the Bhṛgu redactors of the *Mahābhārata* added this chapter as an *imaginaire* of perfect conduct for kings, though in greater detail than Manu. In this way it includes Brahmanical ideations of a king's responsibilities to sustain the *varṇāśramadharma* system, and presents general conceptions of the path that leads to release from suffering and *saṃsāra*. As a result, though the overall terms and conduct in

the *itihāsa* are diverse, the conception of *dharma* in this *rāja-dharma* section subsumes these other *dharma*s.

The "religious" doctrines in this *itihāsa* have been explored extensively by scholars. Though there are important distinctions among the studies, with many noting that the *Mahābhārata* presents traditions in tension about renunciant ideals and worldly concerns, as well as the ideals of various dharmic communities. The exact nature of these terms of renunciation or dharmic orientation varies with scholarly tastes: its use of Yogācāra Buddhist epistemology and phenomenology;[216] the synthesis of non-Brahmanical ascetic ideals into the four *āśramas* of Brahmanical life and the trajectory of *bhakti* devotion;[217] and associated with this, the transformation of the nature of renunciation by the ethos of non-violence. Patton considers Vedic exemplars in *Mahābhārata* traditions and brings into view the text's strategies of "dharmic elaboration" of Vedic figures like Trita and Agastya. These strategies include an elaboration of family emphasis, which are important to my thesis about emotion and trust in familiar advice.[218] Portions of the epic suggest that the king's conduct as *nīti* (political wisdom and prudent conduct) was being "Brahmanized" into innovations of dharmic politics and prudence. Even as it appears innovative, this Brahmanizing impetus functionally reduces the king's options for *dharma*. But this is *dharma* in transformation and transition, as will become evident in later analyses of the terms of *dharma* utilized by ministers and kings.

Though the *Mahābhārata* is noted for its explorations of *dharma* and Indian social identity, it is regarded as a "sincere history" of the formative period in the Indian republics.[219] As *itihāsa* in its function as historical record, it contains the incipient story of victory—the "Jaya" or "victory" section of the epic that all agree represents the earliest

stratum of the epic—of the Pāṇḍava royal clan over their fraternal and rival clan, the Kaurava. Built onto this story of martial conflict and internecine war are the conflicts in conduct and *dharma* created by bonds of blood and marriage, and the karmic consequences of *dharma*, a*dharma* and human limitation. Like the *Pañcatantra*, it uses the narrative technique of the frame story to explore moral dimensions of the conflict. As stated earlier, frame-stories afford special narrative moments for highlighting and analyzing human realties and subjectivities. Couched in terms of conflict and its effects, the trajectory of the narrative gives opportunity to observe kings and counselors in their characteristic settings: political (as in alliances and animosity among princes and kings and with their external rivals) and inter-subjective (in the dynamics of negotiating the kinds of power that kings and ministers each possess). And again, though these historical moments are formalized into mythic and legendary forms, they provide educational scenarios where one can observe advisors in action: in consort or conflict with their kings, showing the dangers and results of giving and receiving counsel, demonstrating the methods of advice.

While I have been focusing solely on *Mahābhārata* as *itihāsa*, both epics share some symbology of royal consolidation, as well as share the paths that consolidation took in Indic history. *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions both traveled (with other courtly literature) beyond the Indian subcontinent. The Hindu conquests of Southeast Asia, beginning in the ninth century CE, take these royal histories with them to other courts. The presence of these stories and characters in foreign court drama and inscriptions show that these epics could be used as symbols of an overriding concept of goodness and conquest, or as a means to enact or reify Indian royal presence. In royal

inscriptions in Laos, the conquering mediators of Indian power and authority inscribe the *dharmarāja,* Yudhiṣṭhira as the epitome of *dharma* and *Kurukṣetra*, the infamous battlefield of the Kurus, as symbols of royal domain even there.[220] Eventually, Yudhiṣṭhira's power as model for royal conduct and the salience of the royal patterns in *Mahābhārata* wane. In later years, Rāma (and the *Rāmāyaṇa*) becomes representative of the dharmic, victorious ruler and kingdom. If *Mahābhārata*, for instance, is a kind of performative advisor, there are interesting questions to answer here about the changing status of virtue and authority models in text.

Rāmāyaṇa as Itihāsa

While most of my work here will be with the critical edition of the *Mahābhārata*, Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* is also an excellent source for observing the dynamics of royal counsel. Though it also is considered *itihāsa* by many in the elite tradition, it is usually described as a great poem, *mahākāvya*, composed by the "first poet" (*ādikavi*), Vālmīki. It is a "romance" in that it traces the exploits of the ideal righteous king Rāma as he attempts to reclaim his wife, stolen by a rival king.[221] It is *itihāsa* in its depiction of the trajectories of alliances made with rival kingdoms, and of wars engaged in with non-compliant kings, such as the king Rāvaṇa. *Rāmāyaṇa* is considered to be later than *Mahābhārata* traditions, but its importance in the courts of Indian kings and into kingdoms beyond India is much greater. From its evolution in royal courts of early India to its prevalence in the medieval period, the exploits of Rāma, his allies and generals become emblematic of righteous kingships and kings. The characters become ideological emblems of royal activity and *dharma*.[222] In this way, the poet inverts the nature of

itihāsa discussed above—the *Rāmāyaṇa* is a legend told like a history, in order to make a particular moral argument about royal and social activity.

From the twelfth century CE in particular, *Rāmāyaṇa* themes are depicted in royal iconography of South India.[223] Beyond the shores of the Indian Ocean, the drama of *Rāmāyaṇa* is performed in Indonesia and Thailand. Since we know *Rāmāyaṇa* came to be performed (or was always performed), the epic plays an important political function when recited or performed in dance and drama in royal contexts. It provides dramatic depiction of an empire extending its rule; it enacts and reifies not only the king, kingdom and its virtues, but the very reality of the Indian royal presence. Moreover, the assertion of the text and iconography of the epic is that this royal presence is universally righteous. For the period of this study, it provides a valuable window into conceptions of royal life. Characters and salient story lines explored in dramatic sources (not quite beyond the period of this study) make the *Rāmāyaṇa* and its characters illustrative of changes in how ministers and kings should relate to one another.

As a case in point, the king in his idealized conduct—his *dharma* and power—of course eclipses that of the advisors who assist him. Ministers and advisors are present acting on behalf of both kings, yet their roles are diminished: This is true for both protagonist and antagonist kings, Rāma and Rāvaṇa respectively. Still, the *Rāmāyaṇa's* focus on the king is instructive for thinking about the mediation of power and *dharma* in early India for its conception of royal perfection and its symbiosis with Brahmanical social structure. As a result, the characters within this epic are more emblematic of a certain kind of *dharma* than those of the *Mahābhārata*, which becomes important to my discussion of deliberative and talismanic *dharma*s in Chapter Seven.

But the nature of *dharma* has changed in *Rāmāyaṇa*: Brahmanical orthopraxy has shifted to new center, construed according to notions of divinity and the proper relationship with it. The incipient elements of bhakti and singleness of devotion to Kṛṣṇa that is captured in the *Bhagavad Gītā* within the *Bhīṣmaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* are fully-developed in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. Sheldon Pollock argues that Vālmīki creates a divine king, because a divine king "is the only being capable of combating evil."[224] With this creation there is no risk of the failures of *dharma*s and aims that resulted from the "imaginative resources" of *Mahābhārata* traditions.[225] This textual tradition argues for a Vaiṣṇava Hindu king and cultural system, whose powers emerge superior to the many other deities that make an appearance in the epic. Lesser deities collaborate to make his victory, while the devotional dimension undermines this collaborative nature of Rāma's power. Collaboration is irrelevant when the king is all-powerful. According to Pollock, the divine king "is Vālmīki's solution to the political paradox of epic India."[226]

At the level of court imagination, this epic may be the allegory for shifts and consolidations in Indic power. This consolidation is part of the authority claims that the Rāma trajectory makes with respect to devotional Brahmanical orthopraxy. Pollock has argued that the shift in power was also a threat. [227] Accordingly, the communities that favored the *Rāmāyaṇa* and Rāma as religious cultural exemplars, in the twelfth century transformed the literary theology of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to a political one.[228] They did this in the face of an "unassailable other" (the Turko-Muslim occupation) that threatened Brahmanical culture in India.[229] The work of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in elite medieval culture, to meet social need, recreated (he uses "imitation," for this social phenomenon's intense self-referential orientation to the past) the *Rāmāyaṇa* around the demonization of an

Other, which it answered with the divinization of Rāma. With this revision of came new terms for arbitrating dharmic culture. Van Buitenen asserts that the "moral and social arbiters" of what is "Hindu" tradition have in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and Rāma "the epitome of *dharma* and the *Rāmarājya*" (the kingdom of Rāma) the "mirror of society."[230]

That the *Rāmāyaṇa* may have acted as a 'mirror of society' does not suggests a positive inscription of some eternal Brahmanical society.[231] The artificial process of 'brāhmaṇization' of the king's conduct that begins in the later sections of the *Mahābhārata* (such as the *Rājadharma* section of the *Śāntiparvan*) has reached maturation in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This means that the Brahmanical conception of an eternal *dharma* (*sanātana dharma*)—the standard to which persons must refer in the regulation of their conduct—that is also a synonym for the Brahmanical socio-religious order (*varṇāśramadharma*) has its proponents in court and, more importantly, its role in the idealizations of the king and kingdom. This idealization has its impact on advisors, ministers and the need for influence with kings, as will become clear in the next chapter. Moreover, the influence of the epics as *itihāsa* at court expanded with the popularity of the poetic forms that emerged with its telling in the courts of Indian kings, which leads to the importance of *kāvya*.

Kāvya, Mahākāvya and Nāṭya: Dramatic Court Literatures

We have to look to dramatic court literature to find something closer to a 'mirror' of royal court life; especially as a mirror to the emotional world of members of court. Poetic and dramatic forms have the power to encompass multiple experiences of reality. This makes their respective forms effective media in communicating the ways that

advisors and kings might relate to one another and their agents. By means of their focus on inter-subjective phenomenon—this is part of what makes these forms what they are— poetry and drama can perform social criticisms or can demonstrate the pain or danger of royal rebuff in a manner not possible in other forms. And, in spite of any obvious embellishments made to advisor actions in the realm of *artha* in these genres, such communication forms still give important access to relationship dynamics we might not see otherwise. In effect, if one might question the degree of pathos depicted and experienced in characters at court, the authenticity of the kind of emotion experienced in the advisor-king relationships cannot be denied. Having adequate skill to move a king through pathos and story can be a powerful means of influence.

Indian poets and other word crafters epitomized and dramatized their favorite characters, actions, and sub-plots from old tales (*purāṇas*) and the epics (*itihāsa*), into Indian court poetry, drama, and "court epic." The typology of these expressive forms of poetry and drama is not straightforward.[232] *Kāvya* ("stanzaic poetry") and *mahākāvya* ("great poem" or "narrative lyric") are related poetic dramatic styles thought to have emerged in the first centuries of the Common Era.[233] In the most general sense, *kāvya* is poetry, and *mahākāvya* is poetry that follows a narrative trajectory. *Kāvya* also occurs in dramatic forms (*nāṭya* or *nātika*) created for court entertainment and royal edification (and sometimes, parody). Ideal kings, wicked or righteous brilliant advisors and ministers, divine and human spies, righteous queens and animals are popular in this court literature. Beyond the obvious source of inspiration—those who dwell in and among the royal courts themselves—*kāvya* also draws on the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* for its dramas and characters.[234]

Kāvya literature spans the courts of several Indian dynasties and periods, and reaches some of its classical expressions in the compositions of the Gupta courts, particularly those associated with Chandragupta II. Therefore, *kāvya* is a situated narrative form—that is, it represents the efforts and intrigues of Indic court life—that captures the salient endeavors of ministers and kings in the exercise of royal virtue (and vice) and power (and abuses or lack of it).[235] Scholars usually call this *kāvya* "court poetry" due to its origins in royal contexts, its themes, its social structure, and its characters.

According to Van Buitenen, the "classical expressions" of the *kāvya* style are the "great poem" (*mahākāvya*), the "well-spoken saying" or as some scholars construe it, the "short lyric" in Sanskrit theatre.[236] To this I would add the *praśasti* or "praises of kings" that characterize many inscriptions of kings during the first centuries of the common era, from kingdoms of the early Gupta period and beyond the inscriptions of this dynasty.[237] Common characteristics of *kāvya* are its propensity to ornamentation and its use of epic characters and themes. *Kāvya's* style also involves a preponderance of environmental and sensual metaphors, and the poetics of "spectacle."[238] Though Van Buitenen includes "wise aphorisms" (*subhāṣita*) as a characteristic of *kāvya*, I think it more accurate to assert that poets (*kavī*) in their *kāvya* compositions also drew on a large body of *subhāṣita* to convey points of wisdom and beauty. In and around these poetic elements the king's advisors, ministers and their agents pervade the actions of the poems, great or epic poems and plays.

In its technical elements, *kāvya* exhibits a "hyper-refined style" of poetics and ornamentation, a style which contributes greatly to *kāvya's* emotional impact.[239] Its

ornamentation adheres to strict patterns of euphony and structure when employing poetic

images, called *alaṃkāra*.[240] While some may consider them to be merely decorative,

these adornments are also thought to evoke subjective experiences. The patterns of

sounds and artifice of *kāvya* poetics are tied to emotional realties. Thus, through

refinement—and obviously the tools of urban courtiers and retainers—poetry and drama

target the mind and emotions.[241] Interactions between advisors and kings in *kāvya* and

other formal scenarios show that the king's intellect and emotion were a means to

instigating a reaction and then, perhaps, dharmic change. And as such, are the tools of

social and dharmic influence.[242]

The holism of these dramatic forms in influencing courtiers and kings becomes

clear if one considers that these literary techniques are tied to a substantial science of the

kinesthetic dimensions of human experience: Theories of emotional states (*bhāvas*) and

their structured, performed articulations (*rasa*). Poetic and dramatic forms that affect the

bhāvas, achieved through the *rasa* dimensions of poetry and drama, can be said to alter

the internal realities of those who hear them. These articulations are not directed solely

to the courtly audience, but to the primary audience, the king. In this way, emotion and

the science of emotion are important media of influence with kings; their use pervades

the literature (whether poetic or narrative forms—that is, whether *ākhyāna, kathā,*

itihāsa, or *kāvya*) as will be explored in chapters dealing with the exigencies of counsel

and emotion.

The depiction of advisors and their relationships with kings in *kāvya* provides a

deeper sense of the role of emotion incumbent on the moment of advice. The sentimental

marks of *kāvya* and *nāṭya*—frequently troubling to western experience—are crucial to

their effects. Sentimental exchange in Indic forms is highly structured, with explicit

purposes:

> The feelings of an individual man are based on personal, accidental,
> incommunicable experience. Only when they are ordered, depersonalized, and
> rendered communicable by prescriptions do they participate in rasa, which is
> created by them and in turn suffuses them. By this ordering, one's own history is
> reactivated in an impersonal context.[243]

This impersonal context provides the space for critique of royal behavior and ideals. In

sāstra ministers argue that a king must learn to control his senses (inchoate indicators of

emotion), in *kāvya* one observes the ways in which kings are too much controlled by

them. As we shall see, drama and poetry show how too often kings are manipulated by

means of them. In the safety of the impersonal—kings can be made to see royal actions,

emotions and their consequents. The advisors are shown appealing to kings on the basis

of justice, manipulating for the purposes of social gain, and conniving on his behalf in

efforts of love.

A great era for the development of drama came during the first period of Gupta

imperial consolidation. The sciences associated with poetic and dramatic forms were in a

process of elaboration—shaping and being shaped by elite styles emerging as genres in

their own right.[244] The *Mālavikāgnimitram*, by Kālīdāsa, and the *Mudrārākṣasa* of

Viśākhadatta are from this era.[245] These plays provide dimensions of the king-advisor

relationship that the *śāstra* and *itihāsa* do not: the mechanics of influence, the intimacies

that this influence involved, and the importance of emotion to counsel.

The *Mudrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta in particular dramatizes the complexities of

the advisor influence in empire building. In spite of its origins at the nadir of the imperial

Gupta formations, the extensive influence of this play (and the image of Kauṭilya in it) on

studies and ideas of Indian statecraft requires a discussion of its genre and fundamental details. This play is a *nāṭaka*, or "heroic drama"[246] that imagines the intrigues in which Kauṭilya likely engaged to help Candragupta Maurya garner power and ascend to the throne. No other figure of an advisor cuts a greater image of expertise and renown in Indian literature as this Kauṭilya. The influence of his reputed success in the art of politics is so great that his name and influence cuts further back into the past and forward into the future than is possible for history. Therefore, this ideal counselor, Kauṭilya, bears the weight of myth in Indian political history, particularly Brahmanical history.[247]

These poetic and dramatic genres stress the importance of invoking and performing emotions to the arts of influence to an advisors craft. The aesthetic styles of the royal court literature should not be considered a "neutral" art, that is, art for art's (in India, this means for "beauty's") sake alone: This is also art for the sake of dharmic influence; influence that is attested in the poets that were ministers and advisors.[248] These sources reveal the hope that a compellingly articulated turn of phrase from the lips of these official poets could move a king, just as the wisdom held in an aphorism could.

Advisors and their Relationships in Buddhist Textual Genres

In most Indian Buddhist literature, the best ministers and advisors support a king through moral action, even-handed advice and fair use of royal funds.[249] They are like the best kings: engaging in royal efforts to serve the kingdom with mindfulness and generosity toward royal subjects. Bad ministers and advisors—like bad kings—abuse their powers for the purpose of individual gain, which usually involves over-taxing

subjects and persecuting the organized Buddhist community. Brahmanical literature

envisions in detail the myriad intellectual and social activities and structures intrinsic to

the royal advisory apparatus. In contrast, early Indian Buddhist literature may initially

seem to be content to depict less nuanced good and bad ministers and advisors, using

them as characters to test and prove either the Buddha's moral mettle, or that of eminent

Buddhists. The literature assumes that advisors greatly affect kings, and that ministers

are his executors: Its caveat is to depict the Buddhist *dharma* as the ultimate counsel

(sometimes given through a peripatetic Buddhist, such as a monk), which eventuates in

the best result—a Buddhist king.[250]

Advisors and ministers span different genres and traditions of Buddhist literature,

serving mundane executive functions, facilitating espionage, and influencing the opinions

of kings. As they appear in Pāli and Sanskrit literature, advisors and ministers cringe and

manipulate as caricatures of Brahmanical abuses of socio-religious authority, or shine

with the virtue expected of paradigmatic executors of royal and imperial will—especially

if they confess to be Buddhist in some manner. One encounters them in Buddhist

literature such as the "discourses" (Sanskrit: *sūtras* or Pāli *suttas*), and other inspiring

literature, such as the "birth stories" (*jātakas*) of the Buddha within the Sanskrit and Pāli

textual canon. Ministers and occasions of advice also occur in literature considered to be

outside of the canon, such as the *Questions of King Milinda,* and in Buddhist wisdom

literature and plays.[251]

Certainly the minister as a figure pervades the canonical literature, but the focus

on the words of the Buddha in many of the canons renders ministers' interactions with

kings during counsel virtually invisible. This does not mean that the *sūtra*/*sutta* literature

refrains from using the minister or counselor as a means to *dharma*/*dhamma*: Ministers

are a presumed part of the social background; they are used, like other figures, to

highlight the power of the Buddha and his *dharma* to transform. But it is not until the

shift of focus to Buddhist figures besides the Buddha as occurs in genres outside of the

sūtra literature and outside the "canon" that one can see advising monks or advisors in

any detail. For this reason, attending to Buddhist literature whose focus is on agents

other than the Buddha becomes important. A more synoptic view of the Indian Buddhist

canon—where the "miscellaneous" is allowed importance with the *buddhavacana*

("words of the Buddha")—provides important opportunities to understand Buddhist

conceptions of the power of the Buddhist *dhamma* or *dharma* in general, and the nature

and influence of advisors and ministers in particular.[252]

Buddhist texts in each genre of the canon contain materials both early and late,[253]

and their purpose is of course dharmic in the Buddhist sense—that is, composed to instill

and edify a Buddhist ethos for Buddhist community. Moreover, these texts are creations

of "anonymous" composers from the "central features" that they perceived in oral

traditions of Buddha Śākyamuni for the aim of edification of Buddhists.[254] In this way

they are always idealized *buddhavacana,* however much data suggestive of their history

and provenance they also contain. It is important to remind ourselves that the focus here

is on the idea of and the ideal of the advisor, in an *ideal* early Indian Buddhism, with the

presumed status that being "original" implied. This is the Indian context—idealized as it

was—that the authors of these texts used to legitimate their discourses as the words of the

Buddha and their traditions as *Buddha dharma*. As stated above, we are dealing with

normative histories from which we can observe historical constellations of ideas about

Buddha, Buddhists, ministers and kings, rather than linear histories. When scholars look for source attestation, the picture of "early India" they can create from these texts is no earlier than its definitive commentator.

Since this is a study of the idea of and ideals about advisors and advising ministers and their relationships to kings and the normative issues at stake for formative Buddhism in India in courtly circles, it is appropriate that these texts and figures are part of history, part of dharmic imagination—the task is not to overstate the history. Gregory Schopen points out "that even the most artless formal narrative text has a purpose and that in "scriptural" texts, especially in India, that purpose is almost never "historical" in our sense of the term."[255] Rather, these "scriptural" texts (normative narratives) which many treat as "adequate reflections of historical reality appear to be nothing more or less than carefully contrived ideal paradigms."[256] However, as the focus of this study is on ideas and ideals, these textual ideals are precisely the paradigms to discuss.

Sutta or Sūtra

The most familiar early Indian Buddhist sources in which we see ministers as part of the social background are the "discourses"—the *sūtras* (Sanskrit) and *sutta*s (Pāli)— that make up the first four *nikāyas*, or "collections," of the Buddha's words.[257] These discourses "of the Buddha" are gathered in the Pāli *Sutta-Piṭaka,* which is comprised of five *Nikāyas* in the Pāli tradition. In the Sanskrit tradition, it is called the *Sūtra-Piṭaka*, and is generally divided into four *āgamas*.[258] This collection is known as the *sūtra* literature (*sūtantra*) in Sanskrit or the (*suttanta*) in Pāli. [259] The first four collections are roughly organized according to the length of the discourses within them—by subject

arrangements, by number associated with some numerically ascending ethical or

doctrinal list, and by topics found in other collections reworked as if for handbooks.[260]

The names of these in the Pāli *Nikāyas* are the *Dīgha-Nikāya (DN)*, or ("Long

Discourses"), followed by the *Majjhima-* ("Middle Length"), the *Saṃyutta-*

("Connected") and the *Añguttara-*("One and Forward") *Nikāyas*, respectively.[261] These

collections are largely prose with verse sections,[262] though sections of some and (others

entirely, such as the *Añguttara-*) seem to be elaborated from ancient lists and mnemonics

associated with terms. These discourses—attributed to the Buddha and sometimes his

disciples—employ in varying degrees ministers and advisors who function as examples

of the desired relationship between Buddhist mediators and kings, as well as provide

examples of weak Brahmanical challenges to the efficacy of Buddhist *dharma*.

The depictions of advisors or ministers may, in contrast with the varieties

expressed in Brahmanical literatures, adhere to a more consistent formula. A king

surrounded by his most intimate advisor circle, usually includes a *purohita*, (royal priest)

and an advisor (*matisaciva*), or a *purohita* acting as an advisor. For instance, the

Mahagovinda Sutta (*DN* 19), tells the story of Jotipāla—Śākyamuni Buddha in one of his

past lives—a hereditary advisor, that excels in all ways; smarter, with a better eye for

what would best serve the king's advantage. His courtly adventures end with him asking

for a royal boon to become a renunciant. In between, one observes other ministers

coming to him for advice. The qualities that make him extraordinary are those that mark

him for renunciation, not for rule. So, although he is depicted as being the greatest

advisor, the greatest action for an advisor, is to take the renunciant path. The king (Renu)

whom he served begged him not be a renunciant, but he is rebuked: "Do not say such

things. Besides, who has greater power and profit that I have? I have been like a king to kings, like Brahmā to Brahmins, like a deity to householders, and I am giving all this up in order to go forth from the household life into homelessness."[263] His retinue followed him into the forest. This trajectory into renunciation is familiar, no matter what royal role the Buddha/Bodhisattva inhabits.

While we can count on the first four *Nikāyas* to reveal the most formal vision of ministerial activities, the illustrative forms in the *Khuddaka-Nikāya* reveal some of the media and rhetoric of Buddhist aspirations to royal influence, as well as depict their impressions of Brahmanical advisors and ministers.[264] The *Khuddaka-Nikāya* or fifth collection contains some of the most creative narratives in the Indian Buddhist textual canon.[265] Scholars typically describe it as a body of "miscellaneous" discourses.[266] But the content of this collection is still a topic of discussion in the Theravāda tradition, which is a mark of its complexity and resistance to categorization that belies mere miscellany.[267] Texts collected here at times sound like *sūtras*, with all the authority that the reciters' (*bhaṇakas*) moniker—"Thus have I heard..."—carries. The *Khuddaka-Nikāya* (*Kṣudraka-Nikāya* in the Sanskrit canons) includes, as examples, the myth-rich collections of the *apadāna* (Pāli) or *avadāna* (Sanskrit) narratives, the *jātaka* tales detailing the exploits of the Buddha while a bodhisattva, and, in the Burmese canon, the *Questions of King Milinda*. This collection varies with geography and tradition, but more interesting is the fact of its utter diversity. It contains discourses in elaborate prose, versified hymns, pithy wisdom utterances (*Dhammapada* and *udāna*), and elaborate examples of the pedagogical genre so important to Indic ideas of socio-religious transformation—the dialogue. Dialogues in particular are an important source for

examining how advisors and kings ideally would relate to one another in Buddhist conceptions of the relationships.[268]

Importantly, the texts and stories of the *Khuddaka-Nikāya* are freed from the constraints of being the declarative words of the Buddha that we observe in the first four *Nikāyas*.[269] And, while the constituents of this collection appeal to the authority of a Buddha's words to cause listeners to turn to them with an open ear, this literature is voiced through figures that largely exert their influence by drawing on the lexicon of "non-awakened" experience. In this way, the *Khuddaka* contains interesting applications of the *Buddha dharma* by non-Buddhas. They give us the tradition and its experience of society through non-Buddhas' words as well—kings, princes, nuns, monks, bodhisattvas, demons, women and hunters, wanderers, workers and spies—the layers of society among which kings and ministers work. But, as we shall see in later chapters, for all these distinctions, the message is the same: *Buddha dharma* transforms all beings it inhabits.

The Five Nikāyas

These same characters, as well as others, shape the experience of society according to the Buddha in the first four collections of the *Sutta-Piṭaka*. The typical actions of kings, princes, demons, hunters, etc. all function as evidence of the needs for and effects of the Buddha's coming to *Sahaloka*, "'This world," in this time. In these discourses, the Buddha recasts society in terms of his vision of *dharma* (*dhamma* or *dharma*, in the specific Buddhist sense), his particular construction of the way of life (*magga,* Pāli or *mārga,* Skt.) to attain this *dharma*, re-conception of supreme knowledge and the supreme teacher, and the nature of the world (in cosmogonic, theogonic, and

anthropogonic dimensions). Scholars have pointed out how the Buddha Śākyamuni recast and/or redefined Brahmanical terms:[270] Looking beyond these linguistic dimensions, we observe that he recast the world.[271]

Perhaps using the term "recast" is too strong—as have been most scholarly renderings of the contribution of the Buddha to the early Indian world. Śākyamuni was one among many renunciants—*śramaṇas*—who criticized the efficacy and superiority of Brahmanical sacrifices and claims to ultimate knowledge; a critique articulated from within Brahmanical community, at least at first. However, early studies of Buddha Śākyamuni and the Indian Buddhist "movement" rendered the Buddha's system of *dharma* as radically anti-ritualistic, a-theistic and as anti-*varṇa* or "anti-caste." Before addressing some early Buddhist conceptions of social stratification, let me address the misperceptions about ritual and deities.

First, Śākyamuni's criticisms of Brahmanical ritual practices are by no means unique. Brahmanical literature—such as *śāstra*s, *itihāsa*, and *Veda* and *Vedānta,* and following—itself configures and reconfigures spheres of action concerned with ritual and noetic praxis. Moreover, Johannes Bronkhorst has painted a largely convincing picture about the common religious culture which Brahmanical and Buddhist tradition shared.[272] Second, Śākyamuni does not deny the existence of deities, nor even deny their power. Rather, the Buddhist system of *dhamma*/*dharma* re-inscribes the extent to which Nāgas, gods and goddesses, and sacrifices to them are able to relieve the painful mark of existence for all beings (Skt., *duḥkha* or Pāli, *dukkha*).

Examples from the *sutta*s of these *Nikāyas* show that the Buddha relieved non-human actors—deities of nature, the world, and the ancestors, as examples—of their roles

as primary mediators and negotiators of human suffering.[273] *Buddha dharma* did not deny

their existence, just their primacy. So, in early Buddhist discourse, the ways and means

of other powers remain as options, though not the most efficacious ones. The result is

that divine beings are demoted as primary mediators of power, as are the specialists

associated with them. Nevertheless, these discourses realign deities and their realms to

reflect the ascendancy of the Buddha.

Later Buddhist cosmology reflects this realignment. There are three worlds or

realms: desire (*kāmma-loka*), form (*rūpa-loka*), and formless (*arūpa-loka*)—the Buddha

masters them all in his previous lives and meditation praxis. These realms are morally

stratified according to Buddhist ideas of cultivation, which involves a transformation of

mental states as well and physical actions.[274] Like some *Upaniṣads*, where perfections in

brāhmaṇa activity can take one to the realm of the fathers or to the gods, a being in the

Buddhist system can be reborn into any of these three realms (and their sub-levels) based

on the degree of their dharmic attainment and understanding of the Buddha's system of

dharma in this life.[275] An adept free from sense-desire could be assured of being born in

the realm of form, at least.[276] A generous house-holder (*gahapati*, or *gṛhapati,* Sanskrit)

could be born in the realm of the thirty-three devas, over which the deva Sakka reigns.[277]

With these changes in hierarchy, interesting narrative forms emerge around

deities' relationship to the Buddha: gods, goddesses and other manipulators of nature and

time presage a Buddha's powers or work to protect Śākyamuni; Nāga kings come to

honor the Buddha, rather than fight him;[278] Gods and goddesses roil in the cycle of

rebirth and suffering like all other beings.[279] The suggestion here is that even deities need

advice. They need Buddha knowledge to dispel doubts about reality in divine realms, as

in the example of the deity Sakka (ruler of the gods) in the *Sakkapañha Sutta*. The cosmology is reorganized to show two things: that Buddha has supremacy in all realms, and that reign according to *Buddha dharma* is instituted in through the conversion of gods and goddesses to Buddhism. There is an assent to Buddhist power here though that has implications for kings and ministers through Buddhist eyes. The Buddha is the king of *dharma* and the ways to it, and the literature envisions kings being made to bow to him because of this. This is more than allegory: Nāga kings are made to bow to Buddha powers, just as the ancient Indian circle of kings, bows to the *cakravartin*, the universal wheel-turning king. Both occur through the assent to the technologies of wisdom implied by adopting the Buddhist way of life.

Conversion is a signal event for the kings that appear in theses *sutta*s, as well as for devas. A king's stance to Buddhism after his conversion takes different forms— sometimes leading to the fruit of stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*), often times assuming financial role of devoted patron (*upasāka, -ikā*). The problem of doubt is important for all Buddhists, but this fetter in a king takes special forms, as will emerge later. Doctrinally, "doubt" (Pāli, *vicikicchā*) is one of the basic fetters that must be removed on the path to "stream-entry."[280] Specifically this refers to any "doubts" in the words of the Buddha that one might have. Many discourses with kings in the *suttanta* end with the removal of the king's doubts.[281] This is also what kings in any realm of existence— human or deva—gain: the fruit of removal of doubt. In Sakka's deva realm, of which Sakka is king, his doubts in *Buddha dharma* are dispelled; in the human realm, analogously, and at a similar level of power and authority, a king's doubts in *dharma* are removed.[282] Royal doubt, then, has both particular and larger symbolic meaning.

Homologies between ruler and ruled, kingdom and saṅgha are typical to Indic conceptions of religious efficacy and power. A homology between a king and kingdom means that the goodness of a king will manifest in a flourishing kingdom and royal subjects. Here, such homologies are discussed in terms of the changes that Buddha-discourse and tradition sought to make in contexts dealing with ministers and advisors. Like the royal circle around the king and the advisors that comprise it, these *sutta*s envision a triple-world system where all these powers collaborate with the Buddha. Because of the Buddhist texts' confidence in the power of the *Buddha dharma*, and their homologies of king, kingdom, dharmic world, the status of the king, particularly his relationship status with respect to Buddhist community ideals, becomes very important. One marker of a good relationship is a king that has taken refuge in the Buddha. The importance of a king's entry into the Buddhist fold cannot be overstated—a converted king results in a converted world; and reciprocally, a converted world requires a good king to maintain it. The Buddhist discourses envision a transformation of social structure from the top down, from ruler to ruled—including advising paradigms, or "advisor-treasure" (*amacca or pari-nāyaka-ratana*) in the *Nikāya* Buddhist formulation of the *saptāṅga* theory of polity formation. Two different collections give different understandings of what the "advisor-treasure" achieves for the king: in one the advisor (*pariṇāyaka*) tells the king-elect to relax and he will "rule for him," in another version, the advisor will "counsel." Two versions of mediating for the king that will be explored in detail later.

Rulers (*khattiya*) priests and educators (*brāhmaṇa*) and householders (*gahapati*, includes *khattiya* and *brāhmaṇa* birth-groups, *jāti*) support the inner hierarchy of monks

and nuns, disciples ("sons" and "daughters" of Buddha), and lay-supporters of merchant and agriculturalist social groups (*kula*). There is a basic moral distinction that extends across the family occupation and birth groups: that of high and low. "High" actions maintain a righteous and beautiful world, with kings as paradigmatic examples, and good ministers to carry out his orders or to rule. [283] "Low" actions result in lesser births with loss of health and, especially, beauty (both a signal of good *karma*, and the ability to be a healthful member of the Buddhist monastic community (*saṅgha*).

A stratified idealized social system with a dharmic king at the top, assuring the overall *dharma* of the system seems very different in orientation to Brahmanical ideologies that envision *brāhmaṇas* at the top of the social hierarchy, serving and participating in the powers of the king and his associates. However, this Brahmanical claim to supremacy is the same supremacy that Buddhist texts critiqued, and coveted.[284] Therefore, reassigning the powers exerted by *brāhmaṇas* became important, given the frequency of their appearances in *Nikāya* discourse. Their currency as holders of wisdom and perfection is evident in all *sutta*s of this collection. Even while the *brāhmaṇas* are a favorite foil of this literature, they remain as symbols of good praxis directed toward perfecting the self, of being dharmic. There is even a collection of *sutta*s—the *Brāhmaṇavagga*—dedicated to them in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, at least; they figure as prominent interlocutors throughout the discourses.

The discourses reflect the assumption that *brāhmaṇas* were at the top of the hierarchy, even while these Buddhist texts critiqued their position there.[285] A favorite Buddhist counterpoint to *brāhmaṇa* claims of superiority is that the dharmic praxis (virtuous intent and action) that brings release is neither constrained nor assured by birth

or station, and certainly not restricted to the virtue and expertise of Brahmins. Buddha defines the nature of a "true Brahmin" through descriptions that highlight virtuous actions and honesty within one's *jāti* and towards others. For instance, the Brahmin Soṇadaṇḍa in the *sutta* named for him in the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, learns that he is still a virtuous man— which to him implies possessing all *brāhmaṇa* ideals. In the *sutta*'s revision of Brahmanism, even when all the markers of this expertise and birth are removed, he is still *brāhmaṇa*.[286] The *brāhmaṇa* traditions' social referent of the four-fold *varṇa* system, with the *brāhmaṇa* at the top, could not be escaped by the discourses; it was their social milieu. The currency of the *brāhmaṇa* and his power as icon in courts and society traded to the householder, a stratification based on economic power rather than ritual expertise.[287]

Jātaka and Avadāna: Past Lives in Action

The *avadāna* (*apadāna* in Pāli) and *jātaka* collections also contain stories where the composers envision the impact of a Buddhist counselor or advisor on a king and the royal office. The *jātaka* and *avadāna/apadāna* are similar genres within the *Kṣudraka-* or *Khuddaka-Nikāya* that depict the "noble deeds" of eminent Buddhists.[288] The *jātaka* ("birth stories") depict previous lives of the Buddha and his associates, while the *avadāna* and *apadāna* portray those of non-Buddha figures—Buddhist kings and their sons, monks and nuns, ardent householders. In the *jātaka* tales, the audience can experience the virtues of their Buddha as a bodhisatta as he demonstrates virtues such as *dāna,* ("generosity") or *kṣānti* ("patience") in myriad social roles as he courses through myriad lives. As an animal, a woman, a counselor, a *brāhmaṇa*, or a thief—he excels through

Buddhist supererogatory acts (particularly of *dāna*, "generosity") and penetrating insight. Frequently, the Buddha takes the role of advising minister, *amacca* or priest, or *purohita*—similar to the counseling figures of the Brahmanical literatures.[289] Always, an event in the *jātaka* present is explained, causally, as the moral or immoral consequence of actions in the past.[290]

The stories depict the physical and social consequences of responsibility in a Buddhist dharmic context. The *jātaka* tales are articulated through the use of frame-story; where the state of things in the present is explained through some act that the Buddha, his attendants and disciples—such as Moggallāna, Sāriputta, and Ānanda—or his arch-enemy—Devadatta—had taken in previous lives. These tales explain the results of *karma* for monks and novices now, while they demonstrate how a Buddhist virtue is applied, in its most rudimentary form. According to Strong, these stories illustrate the meritorious deeds for laypersons in a "religious and psychological setting."[291] Overall, the consequences of moral action for individuals are extended into all the realms of time over which the Buddha has demonstrated his special knowledge: the past, the present, (and the future, though the future figures only in the *avadānas*, through "predictions" or *praṇidānas*).

In this regard the Buddha demonstrates a practical omniscience that uses religious and psychological or dharmic content to affect his hearers.[292] These settings are created by the stories, which provide narrative space where hearers and readers can observe the results of good and bad actions in the lives of eminent Buddhists. The use of the narrative space in *jātaka* tales is similar to the structure and function of the *Pañcatantra* discussed earlier.[293] However, rather than portray both sides of a topic of conduct as in

the *Pañcatantra* tales, the *Buddha-dharma* is presented as always winning out. We see

no dilemmas posed by Buddhist terms of *dharma*; no Buddhist moral problems that are

left to the context or interpreter to solve. Rather, the focus is on the explanation of

current tendencies as resolutions of past *karma.* Even the emotional realities persons (in

the present time) are explained or given context from actions in the past. This

interpretation of the mechanism of *karma* gives some insight into how Buddhist

rhetorical forms might work in influencing the king, as will emerge in later analyses.

There are *jātaka* tales that depict the Bodhisatta giving counsel to a king: there is a

burden put on the moment, for the Buddha stresses that kings have always needed this

support and will again.[294]

In these contexts, a Buddha's omniscience has what I will argue are talismanic

properties, which has implications for how Buddhist textual communities understood the

way in which a Buddha's *dharma* might affect a king. The Buddha's ability to see into

the past, present and future of individuals provides a special source of protection. A

Buddha's abilities in this regard make him "far-seeing" (*dīrgha-darśivān*) a quality lauded

and expected of advisors in other Indic texts, for the readiness it provides in anticipating

the outcomes of any action real or imagined, at any time.[295] Moreover, far-seeing ability

like this means that a Buddha (or Buddha 'substitutes' like monks) deeply understand any

person's ideas and actions now (as the result of actions and intentions). As will emerge in

later discussion, the protections that this kind of seeing provide are especially necessary

for kings who typically rely on *myriad* persons to attain them (rather than one person).[296]

The Bodhisatta that gives advice to a king is a good counselor in each temporal

setting: He can see how a king acted in the past, which feeds how he is acting or feeling

now. Whether he is acting as a minister, counselor, or priest giving his advice, Buddha

and most importantly, *Buddha-dhamma* are always victorious. Although the stories of

his victories as advisor are rather one-dimensional, they still provide a picture of the way

the composers of these texts thought ministers might work when *Buddha-dharma* is their

means of influence.

The *Aśokāvadāna* or *Legend of King Aśoka*, an *avadāna* from the Sanskrit

Divyāvadāna collection,[297] is one such picture of how Buddhists imagined advising

ministers should act in a royal court. The *avadāna* reveals this Buddhist community's

sense of its proximity to the structures of counsel through its moments of advice—

through the Buddhist elder monk Upagupta, who advises Aśoka in Buddhist practice, to

the depictions of Aśoka's interaction with his primary minister, Yaśas. Through

Upagupta's eyes, King Aśoka establishes worship structures for *Buddha dharma*. But

one also sees the trouble that the this kind of *dharma*—out of balance as Aśoka's often

is—poses for the ministers that help him rule.

This story also provides a Buddhist answer to the fundamental dilemma posed by

Indic models of self-cultivation that were shaped by a renunciant ethos. Texts of both

traditions depict kings compromising their rule for *dharma*. As discussed earlier, the

ideal solution in many Brahmanical texts is to send advisors, counselors, and ministers

and advising others to bring a king back to the royal constraints on *dharma*. This is not

true of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, where Rāma's status as a god makes counsel seem unnecessary.

The Buddhist texts, in contrast, present a different mediator—the *Buddha-dhamma*, and

conversion to following it. The paradigm of conversion is that of King Aśoka Maurya

since it demonstrates the power of the Buddhist *dharma* when wielded by a Buddhist

ruler. The Buddhist king, then, eclipses the paradigmatic actions of royal ministers and advisors. The impact of the *Aśokāvadāna*, with its stories of royal patronage to Buddhists has been profound. The story of the king Aśoka's dedicating, rededicating or erecting *stūpas* to the Buddha become palimpsests for Buddhist royal *dharma* and kings that would live according to *dharma*; much as *jātaka* tales do of the Buddha as bodhisattva's proof of his path to Buddhahood.

Buddhist Kāvya

There is perhaps no legend more beloved among birth stories in this Rose-Apple world than the life of Siddhartha, the man who would become the Buddha of the Śākya clan, Śākyamuni Buddha. So beloved, in fact, that Buddhist communities created narratives to depict his life through the poetic medium of *kāvya*. Even so, poet Buddhists in India did not participate in this genre to the same extent as those located in Brahmanical traditions. Buddhist *kāvya* is considered "secular" by many readers of Buddhist texts. However, such laudatory portrayals of the Buddha can hardly have been reserved for those audiences unable to participate in the "canonical" realm of dharmic exegesis.

The famous case in point is the dramatization of the life (birth, career, and death) of the Buddha, the *Buddhacarita* of Aśvaghoṣa. Though it is described as "extra-canonical"— meaning that it is not an explicitly attributed discourse or exegesis of the Buddha or his monastic followers—its import exceeds typical conceptions of canonical categories. It contains stories of the Buddha's birth, quest for Enlightenment and death,

and explanations of Buddhist doctrines of the self, of existence, and the way existence operates. Importantly, the doctrinal positions in the text even belie the way in which scholars typically parse Buddhist narratives along Buddhist sectarian lines. Though called a Sarvāstivādin in his orientation, Aśvaghoṣa presents views in the *kāvya* that other Sarvāstivādins refute.[298]

However, the *Buddhacarita* contains more than doctrine: It records ideations of the life of a sage and his effects on others. The art of the poet imitates events of the Buddha's life, and having imitated these, the art that Aśvaghoṣa (and the stories of others from which he drew) created *changes* the Buddha's life. Whether the stories of the Buddha told in the play were shaped or shaped by other stories and iconographic depictions of his life and powers is not clear; nor is it clear which came first. What is obvious though, is that the *Buddhacarita*'s impact on the Buddhist tradition's own stories of itself has been profound.

According to Lamotte, Aśvaghoṣa as poet was "practically the only representative of lyrical epics of Buddhist inspiration."[299] Indeed, as stated earlier, the *Buddhacarita* represents one of the earliest of the kāvya forms to deal with a dharmic figure. The *Buddhacarita* does not possess the complex poetic embellishments of "classical" (Gupta period) poetry. And the play does not demonstrate the same degree of ornate courtly tropes, such as warrior obligations, romantic entanglement, court intrigues between ministers, priests, and attendants. Some argue that its "early" provenance in the first to second century CE is the source of its stylistic differences (as the assumption is that elaborations of texts are "later" and simpler styles are "earlier."[300] However, the

variations from the classical style could be explained by Aśvaghoṣa's location in a

Kuṣāṇa court (non-indigenous conquerors) as well as due to any difference in era.

There are aesthetic variations in Buddhist *kāvya* that reflect Buddhist conceptions

of the causes and complications of what it means to be human and what is true about

reality. And, these conceptions have their effects on the rhetoric and aesthetics of self-

cultivation and *dharma*. For instance, in the *Buddhacarita*, fear for enlightenment (an

aspect of Buddhist doubt) emerges as a particular Buddhist experience. Moreover,

Buddhist *dharma* in kings and advisors is expressed quite differently, even when it

purports to be "Brahmanical" (as will be discussed subsequently). But the *Buddhacarita*

does share elements that are typical of other *kāvya* forms. As in Brahmanical examples,

it dramatizes courtly concerns using ornate images from nature (such as clouds,

mountains, and sun) and shared human experience (desire, familial emotion, ambition

and its consequents) and employs formulaic descriptions of characters (jealous or angry

sages, lamenting women, rash and noble warriors) from a broad royal court repertoire.

Pañha: The Questions of Kings

Dialogues are the primary modes in which Buddhist monks and counselors in

Buddhist literature engage with kings. The king may consult with a circle of ministers

away from the action, and he may be depicted as surrounded by hundreds or thousands of

ministers and retainers. Though ministers are present, verbal action that leads to

transformation occurs between monks and kings in dialogue, often with the king

consulting privately with the monk. Buddhist literature tests its relationships with deva

kings and human kings through the "question" (*pañha*) sub-genre in both *sutta*s and

avadāna. In the *Dīgha Nikāya* for example, the *Sakkapañha Sutta* shows how Buddha

Śākyamuni removes the God Sakka's doubts. A more elaborate version of the "question"

genre is the Sarvāstivādin text known as the *Milindapañha*. Interestingly, despite its

earlier location in the Sarvāstivādin *nikāya*, it is still used today in modern Theravāda

Buddhism to edify and as a text to understand Buddhist doctrines of the self, especially.

The nature of the *Milindapañha* demonstrates the authority that dialogue has as a

rhetorical form in dealing with kings. These texts in particular provide some of the

rhetorical markers that Buddhists perceived necessary to influence a king: super-human

insight into royal affairs, understanding of emotional realities construed through the

processual "aggregates" of Buddhist personality (the *skandhasaṃtāna*).[301] The emotional

states used are different, as we shall see later, as are the terms of *dharma* that bring about

a change in the king. The king in the process of counsel is instrumental to the action of

the *Milindapañha*, as well as its abiding narrative power. The authoritative weight of this

king is decidedly shifted from how pre-*bhakti* Brahmanical literature envisioned a king,

which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. This wise king has his

ministers, counselors, teachers, and advisors—yet he exceeds them all, except the

Buddhist elder Nāgasena. [302] Both are paradigmatic for Buddhists wishing for a king, it

remains for the study below to reveal the role of advisors and advice in turning these

kings to Buddhist patronage.

Summary Remarks

In my search to get a sense of how Brahmanical and Buddhist genres of texts

shape the idea and ideal of the advisor and advisory relationships, I have suggested that

the moment of counsel in advisor-king narratives is a dynamic generative space—

generative in terms of discernment, wisdom, and negotiating identity. More importantly

for this chapter, I have sought to account for the confidence that Brahmanical and

Buddhist texts have in their own dharmic discourses. Part of this confidence is inspired

by ritual and narrative efficacy and success. And thus, one must turn to a consideration

of genre to get a sense of this ritual and narrative efficacy. The survey across the genres

has demonstrated the variety in how each genre, or community of texts, envisions its

relationship with the king by means of particular depictions of advisors and their relations

with kings. Moving into the next chapter, I will again be bringing the reader in through

the eyes of advisors and ministers, as depicted in these texts. My aim is to bring forward

each tradition's and text's argument for itself: Which characteristics and situations of

kings are the ones that make relationships with advisors necessary to achieve dharmic

rule and royal success? While I considered smaller versions of this question in various

places in my discussion above, the next chapter is devoted directly to the idea of the

"king in need," as seen through the "eyes" of the genres of texts examined here.

Chapter 4: Ideals of the King in Need of Advice

As I discussed earlier, scholarly studies of ancient Indian structures and ideas of power and authority abound. It is well established across religious traditions and their genres that the king—as either a ruling deity or a reigning human—was instituted in ancient India to protect the social and ritual activities of *āryas* ("nobles") in both traditions, Brahmanical and Buddhist.[1] It is also well-known that ideas about the sources of such royal power and its exercise by kings move across traditions, time, and geographic boundaries in ancient India.[2] Moreover, it is clear that *brāhmaṇas* have contributed to various dimensions of royal power by means of their sacrificial power.[3] But if one considers the texts' particular portrayals of advisors (*brāhmaṇa* or otherwise)—there is more to these representations of a king than to answer some general religious and political necessity.

Rather, the religious communities around these texts seem to be working to conceptualize power through their representations of the king, and especially the king in need of advisors. This chapter is thus focused on the conceptualization of power advocated in the texts that argue for a variety of advisors to have the authority to aid a king, and thus share in the exercise of royal power. So, to imagine a king, and to name a king within some dharmic text or other discursive practice, is to conceive of the nature of power in some synchronic relationship to a dharmic community. If we concede that traditions constantly create and recreate themselves, even while they claim some unchanging nature for the cultural systems in which they are situated, then the idea of a king within a tradition also represents some diachronic relationship to a dharmic

community. "King" is a conceptualization of power in dharmic terms. But herein lies a

paradox—for these conceptions are continually located in *particular* royal individuals

who possess the power to nurture or destroy persons and communities.

Alongside the *reality* of kings in ancient India are the *emblematic* kings; figures

that serve the purpose of testing dharmic and adharmic doctrines and practices, even as

they are wholly connected to the fates of all subjects due to the sheer extent of their royal

power. Thus, one should not wonder at the differences about the king's nature from text

to text within traditions. These different ideas of a king's nature reflect all that a tradition

can imagine of human behavior in general, refracted through the realities of power. The

varieties of good kings in early Indian literature have been the focus of numerous studies.

These refer to the *dharmarāja* (dharmic king) in his various forms in early literature—

Rāma as dharmic emblem,[4] Aśoka Maurya as donative exemplar for Buddhists, the kings

of warrior and clan-based ethos either called to or depicted in good relationships of

reliance on Brahmins, Buddhas, and Buddha-substitutes, such as in the *Dharma-sūtras* of

Gautama (11.1-5; 12-16) or the *Miliñda-pañha* dialogues between the Buddhist monk

Nāgasena and King Milinda.

Even so, varieties of good kings and general conceptions of kingship are not our

concern here; rather the focus of this chapter is on the darker emblems of royal power and

authority—the kings that sneer at *dharma*, the king who abuses his power and special

duty to punish, and the king in the grip of excessive emotion. Kings such as these

provide some basis for understanding the impetus to advise kings in the first place. These

kinds of kings serve emblematic functions, just as good ones do. Therefore, the advisor's

role in addressing the darker tendencies of kings, as well as some particulars of their

kinds of power over society and the world are our subject of discussion. My aim here is to demonstrate that the construction of these dark emblems of royal activity serve an important role in ideologies of kingship and the power they represent. They show that the communities around these texts perceived the king as a *subject* in need of some level of dharmic assistance or transformation. By envisioning kings and the snares into which they fall in their texts, the communities that created these texts provide some basis for arguing that advisors, ministers, advisory mendicants and priests should have authority to come forward and aid the king.

The Ubiquitous Advisor Problematic: The Paradoxical Tendencies of the King

> *"Just as the sun protects and devours all creatures with its rays, O king, so you must become equal to the sun"*[5] *(Mahābhārata,* 3.34.69)

In order to argue that advisors, ministers, and others should have authority to aid the king, these texts must make that argument by characterizing the king's nature and the nature of his power as (perhaps) inevitably leading him to be in need of counsel. The most ubiquitous image of the royal personality with which religious communities contend in their texts is tied to the paradox of a king's nature: Coursing through the world like the sun, a king may either bring life and sustenance or cause withering and death.[6] Sufficient sun brings light to all activities, warmth and flourishing; while too much scorches all creatures; too little sun and creation—human, flora and fauna—struggles to grow, like rice seed cast in the shade of a *pipal* tree. Kings shine with generative splendor (*śrī*) like the sun, like gods and goddesses. Much has been made of the correspondences between kings and deities, and aptly so: Both are perceived to wield energies that give them

control over abundance, over destinies and over bodies. And as much as a king's power over life and abundance was conceived as necessary by Brahmanical theories about the ideal king, the danger of his power was also always present. Religious communities depicted and examined ways of negotiating or resolving the king's dangerous power in simile and metaphor, using rhetoric and its discourses to mark his nature; examining and mitigating his proclivities in text; warning and admonishing themselves. Some of the prevalent images used by Buddhist and Brahmanical communities around these texts dealing with kings are used as the organizing principle of this discussion of the darker nature of kings—as paradoxical and mercurial, as fire, snake, and warrior; a king with an unstable heart and mind that needs ongoing relationship with an advisor or with a dharmic system. We shall see this idea play out over and over, and we shall see that ultimately the crux of the arguments among these texts has less to do with the king himself than it does with the nature of the advisor who ideally should counsel the king, and the understanding of good conduct and *dharma* that shapes that advising ideal.

Brahmanical Ideals of the King in Need

Dark and unruly kings pervade Brahmanical literature: While the ideal means of influencing kings changes with time (examined in the next chapter), there are some basic conceptions about his nature that persist. All of these conceptions presume the cultivation of a continuous relationship with *brāhmaṇas* (whose qualities also change with time, as we shall see). Kings that want to be successful cultivate these relationships (*MDh*, 7.42), which also involves cultivating themselves (7.37-53). Indeed, this is part of

the śāstric argument—as in *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, here—success and good conduct go together, that is, when conduct is mediated through education and influence from *brāhmaṇas* and advisors at court. Even with this argument for mediation, kings are idealized to have certain qualities so that they may receive the benefits of *brāhmaṇa* influence. But kings are expected also to lack them, or to make erratic use of them— these are the tendencies that necessitate *brāhmaṇa* influence; and that necessitate caution on the part of those seeking relationships of influence.

Advisory Peril: King as Fire

Like the paradoxical nature of the king, fire (*agni*) has the potential to warm and sustain beings, or destroy them if uncontained or mishandled. These dual aspects of fire are amplified in the associative world that makes them of a whole with the sun and with sacrifice. The roles of Agni as god and the carrier of offerings to the gods are well known, as are the special skills necessary to use him.[7] Still, Agni's dual aspects of benefit and danger merit brief emphasis here since the depictions of the king as fire frequently allude to sacrificial settings and to Agni.

The first hymn to Agni in the *Ṛg Veda*, is a case in point. As Agni is lauded and invited to act on the sacrificer's behalf, the scope of his powers are reminiscent of a king's—both necessary and ominous:

> Ruler of sacrifices, shining protector of cosmic order; increasing in his own abode; (I.I.8)
> Be as approachable for us as father to son: Agni, dedicated to our welfare (I.I.9).[8]

Agni is the "ruler" (*rājantam*) of the sacrifice (*adhvarāṇāṃ*), the shining protector of cosmic order (*gopaṃ ṛtásya dīdivim*). This portion of the hymn invokes the protective

range of Agni's power, like a king's. The object of his protection is *ṛtá,* order—the ordering structure of sacrificial power, which is homologized to the ordering structure of the cosmos. Agni is called to protect the very things that offerings to him invoke, institute or maintain. As ruler, he is king of the sacrifice, as Indra is king of the gods: But Agni, as conveyor of the sacrifice, is necessary even to assure the gods receive the offerings, and the benefits that come to the world from the gods.[9]

Yet, as with kings, there are hints that Agni's beneficence, *RV* I.I.9 can turn ominous. The poet asks that he "be as approachable" or "as easy to reach" as a father to a son: This entreaty also implies that his approachability is *not* assured, but must be requested and accomplished through the beauty of the poets' words and the execution of the offerings. In addition, where fire is addressed "increasing in his own abode" (*vardhamānaṃ sve dame)* Agni's ominous potency glowers in his enclosure, contained, as the Sanskrit indicates, but as fire, the threat to flare up always present.

This is no simple simile invoking fire's potential to burn out of control; because fire, mantra, and sacrifice do not reside in the mind as simple associations in the early Indian contexts. As discussed in the preceding chapter, Patton's identification of the "associational world or the metonymic principle" at play in early sacrificial contexts is pertinent here.[10] The intellectual practice that is the metonymic principle that Patton has identified can also be conceived as an impetus in Brahmanical attentions to kings. Thus, the metonymic conveyance of mantra's power and meaning outside of their liturgical applications can be extended to Brahmanical creation of images of kings and their courts.[11] Moreover, if we bring to mind the paradoxical verse above, where the king is advised to be like the sun, protecting and devouring with rays, the affinities between fire

(*agni* and Agni), the burning rays of the sun, and the king become clear. These associations are maintained by the *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* creators of the various discursive practices that imagined the power of kings and the ways to harness or mitigate them.

These rich associations of the benefit and risk of fire continue into the conceptions of the king's energies in the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, albeit the connections between kings and fire are more explicit, as are the risks of association with them. First, Agni appears as one of the constitutive powers of a king. In chapter seven pertaining to *rājadharma* (*dharma* of a king), we learn that a king was created in order to protect the entire world (and to protect *brāhmaṇas*) (*MDh*, 7.1-3). [12] To assure the king had the power necessary to achieve this, the creator of the world made the king from "the eternal particles" of all of the guardian deities from the eight directions (7.4).[13] This spatial image is a means of expressing the king's geographical sovereignty—since the eight directions comprise the world, and each direction is protected by a guardian deity, and following the rhetorical trajectory, all these loci of dominion coalesce in the king, who rules and conquers spatially and ideally in all directions. Agni is one of these eight, but it is the combination of all the deities that constitute a king's power.

The volatile affinities of kings and fire begin to emerge as the text turns to locate his powers with respect to other persons in the next verse. Because of his creation from "these particles from these chiefs of the gods, he overpowers (*abhibhavati*) all beings by reason of his energy (*tejasā*)" (*MDh*, 7.5).[14] Images of fire, sun, and the scorching threat they bear are used in the text to convey the experience of being overpowered by the king:

"Like the sun, indeed, he burns eyes and minds; no one on earth can bear to gaze upon him" (7.6).[15] His power is like the sun and fire because of the way he was created.

Yet, the king's creation into power is restated in an exclamatory way in the next verses, with emphasis on *his* power. As above, the king is a being like the gods, which began with his creation out of them, but notice the last rhetorical twist: "He is Fire, he is Wind, he is the Moon, he is the King of Law [Yama], he is Kubera [lord of riches], he is Varuṇa, and he is the Great Indra—by reason of his power (*prabhāvataḥ*)" (7.7).[16] The king is deva "by reason of his power." The author uses …*so bhavati …saḥ*...plus each deva's name through this list (7.7).[17] The repeated use of *saḥ* emphasizes each god that he becomes and stresses that the king *becomes* these devas because of his power. The structure here is important: Given that a king is created from deva particles (7.4) in order to *overpower* beings (*abhibhavati*) and that by reason of his *power* he becomes these devas (7.7); he is both, created from and become. The text lets this strategic ambiguity remain—preserving the paradox of a king's power, and reserving the paradox of his apparent humanity.

Begging such paradox, the text moves from these laudatory descriptions of his power to cautionary ones—where 'king as fire' comes into play when his qualities bear down on those around him; namely, on those that serve and help him. For these, the text proceeds to a warning to anyone who would think a king only human:

> A king, though a mere child, must never be treated with disrespect, thinking he is just a human being; for it is a great deity who stands here in human form" (7.8).[18]

The use of the image of a child is compelling. It calls attention to the possibility that no matter how the king might appear, given his nature—from birth, not just bestowed at consecration—he can harm at any moment. Describing the king standing there as a god,

puts those near him on watch. They must propitiate a king with the same care and the same knowledge of the divine's capacity to succor or destroy, though only apparently human.

Proper care and decorum are crucial, since the results of their opposites, "disrespect" and "recklessness" are couched in their potentials to inflame a king as the warnings proceed, encapsulated in the following subhāṣita that comprises verse nine.

> When approached recklessly, a fire burns only that single man, but the fire that is the king burns his family, together with all his livestock and wealth" (*MDh*, 7.9).

This is a succinct warning to those who do not have the skill or wisdom to apprehend what is at stake when one approaches such power in human form. Reading the *ślokas* together, one sees the nascent power of the king-child to destroy in the first, which need only be fanned to its true incendiary power when the child grows to be a king.

It is clear that any man can approach fire recklessly and be burned.[19] For associates and other advisors of kings, the risk is greater because of the paradox of a king's power. For although a man may presume when approaching a king, that a king is a man like any man, or a fire like any fire—the reality of royal power belies this assumption. Even a child-king holds the same potential to harm beyond what is thought capable of a child. Any king, like the fire of Agni must be respected and contained. The appropriate respect can certainly be granted to a king, but in what manner? Moreover, how is one to contain the king's power?

We find that part of an answer lies in the management of the behaviors that regulate one's image with the king and court, if we trace a parallel occurrence of this cautionary *subhāṣita* into *Arthaśāstra*. The 'king as fire' *subhāṣita* occurs at the end of one of two associated chapters in Book Five concerning the proper behavior for a royal

"dependent" or "courtier," the *anujīvin*, at court (*Aś* 5.4 through 5.5). In these chapters we gain some more context for understanding what advisory texts (and advisors) might be contending when advising kings. Since the *anujīvin* is a common denomination for a "courtier" used in Brahmanical and Buddhist textual culture, the advice in these chapters attends to *anujīvins* who have already obtained this position.

Yet, in a brilliant organizational move that also serves to normalize the behavior of persons that would be in advisory relationships with kings, the creator of this section of the text expands the cadres of "courtier." Thus, *anujīvins* in the text *also* consist of persons (males) *aspiring* to the importance and power that can be had through closer relationship to the king and the service of *rājanya*.[20] By extending the strategies even to those aspiring to serve a king, the text corroborates what we have come to know; that royal power (like fire) is no respecter of persons. From official *śāstra* makers down to neophytes aspiring to advisory positions at court—anyone entering the role of advisor gains great benefit at great risk.

The first line of protection is drawn by the aspiring associate: The aspiring advisor should choose a king with excellent personal and material qualities (5.4.1-2). Even one lacking in material attainments typical of kings is acceptable if the king is astute. Kauṭilya warns the aspiring advisor that a king who is not self-possessed (*anātmavān)* (5.4.4) loses power in the end from either deriding śāstric wisdom, or surrounding himself with harmful people (5.4.3). This is not a king to serve.

But if the *anujīvin* succeeds in obtaining a position with a self-possessed king, the *wise* aspirant to close advising relationship with a king guards himself by managing his own affect and gestures (5.4.8-13). The first conduct the text addresses is also the most

basic: How the new *anujīvin* should enter and take his seat near the king (5.4.8). Then,

given the importance to speech acts in the success of royal rhetoric, the *anujīvin* learns

that he should neither talk nor laugh too loud, but also guard the perception of what he

does say by assuring that he does not speak to a topic without having experience with it,

nor converse in an uncultured or unreliable way, nor with mendacity (5.4.9).

Such advice to the *anujīvin* gives a glimpse of the royal culture that Kauṭilya's

text seeks to cultivate (and protect by normalizing conduct from the ground up in this

way); it also demonstrates that mismanaged personal comportment distracts from an

advisor's image of intelligence as well as belies any sensitivity to and command of royal

contexts one seeking to be an advisor might otherwise have. I assert that in the text's

attention here to the minutiae (even instructing the around the *anujīvin*'s proper entry into

a king's presence, we can see some antithetical conduct (at the elementary level) to the

ideal relationship culture—requiring sophistication (Brahmanically construed), reliability,

and truthfulness to cultivate. They can be cultivated that is, if the successful *anujīvin*

manages the dangers of being near such power.

The risk to an aspiring advisor from the king's fiery nature is clear in Kauṭilya's

instructions, but the extent of protection is significantly different. Whereas Manu thought

the risk of closeness to the king might be contained if one approached the king

respectfully; Kauṭilya advises that while any containment of the king's fiery nature

achieved through proper respect and decorum is necessary, it is not sufficient. Kauṭilya's

final words in the chapter for the aspiring *anujīvin* add the element of (*ātmarakṣā*) self-

protection:

> A wise person must secure first his own protection, at all times
> Because service to a king is said to be like a fire in this way: (*Aś,* 5.4.16).[21]

> Having gone too near it, fire may burn a body or part of it;
> But a king might destroy one's wife and son, or cause [them] flourish (5.4.17).[22]

The last line above brings to mind again, the paradox of the fire, and the sun like it; the king's power and capacities that it gives—to consume in flame or to sustain. The first line here reveals the typical conceit of the creators of these texts seeking to advise kings—the wise person is his (or her) own best protection.

True to the text's dedication to success in power relationships and structures (*artha*) as we encountered in the previous chapter, Kauṭilya moves beyond mere cautionary tales that demonstrate the wariness that advisors might have about incendiary kings, and gives concrete advice to those aspiring to be close associates at court and to the successful neophytes.. The next chapter (*Aś* 5.5.5) contains myriad instructions to the those now positioned to such closeness of relationship (and support); ranging from how to gauge a king's mood and relative satisfaction or dissatisfaction (5.5. 7-8) in one from his attitude, gestures and facial expressions (5.5.5-9), to how to interpret non-human signs (such as a crane flying to the left) that augur danger for any courtly advisor (5.5.10-11). All the instructions are directed with a view to anticipate the king's needs, and to attend to one's status in one's relationship with the king and his court, and to one's own protection.

We move beyond such basics of advisors' affect management and self-protection as implied in these examples of warnings and protections against mercurial kings, into detailed considerations of who the ideal advisor should be and what he should do. In terms of summary here, we can see that a courtier's basic comportment is part and parcel of his success in being chosen for an advisory relationship with the king. The examples

from Kauṭilya help us see that an individual's comportment is also instrumental not only to maintaining it, but also to his self-protection. Behaviors practiced appropriately to royal culture are also the building blocks to sophistication (Brahmanically construed), reliability, and truthfulness that we can take forward as we consider other factors with which persons who would advise kings must deal. For the paradox again, advisors and advisory texts examined here must manage the dangerous power of kings, in order to create the basis for and maintain the benefit of the advisor-king relationship.

Advisory Peril: King as Snake

The image of the 'king as a snake' also argues for advisors as mediators of royal power, as it evokes the lurking dangers in the royal personality and describes a man easily roused to lethal action, rather than the incendiary and mercurial senses of a king's paradoxical nature described above.[23] Indeed, as Patrick Olivelle tells us about images of snakes in the *Pañcatantra,* snakes are "much feared; there can be no friendship with a snake, which is double-tongued and double-crossing."[24] Even so, the snake is among the principal animal characters in this text. The reason for this is clear, as Olivelle continues: "The snake hidden in one's own house" "is a common image of danger lurking in the most unexpected places."[25] Yet, the fact that this sarpenic metaphor conveys the general wisdom about *rājanya* at court suggests that certain dangers *are* anticipated in kings.

Olivelle does not examine the implications of this lurking danger in the metaphors at court beyond his argument that the *Pañcatantra* demonstrates "that craft and deception constitute the major art of government."[26] However, if Olivelle had considered the image of the *king* as *snake* in light of the advisor-king relationship, he would likely have seen,

as I have found that the image of the snake is a key means of conveying the paradoxical need for and dangers of trust and friendships among kings and advisors. Indeed, deception would not be so tantamount in the text, if trust and its inverse were not so instrumental to the making and breaking of friendships between kings and advisors, as well as to alliances with other kings. With this in mind, the tenuous, unexpected dimension of royal relationships conveyed by the image of a snake comes into sharper relief. Consider the following example from Tantra II: "You may have loved him and showered him with many a favor…yet a bad man inspires no confidence, because of his evil disposition, like a snake asleep in one's own bosom" (*Pañcatantra* II, v. 17).[27]

This image of "a snake asleep on one's own bosom" occurred in the context of two *rājanya* (in animal guise) discussing enmity among allies in the text; but the hazards presented by enemy kings are not the greatest experienced in the king's court. Family and friends are also not immune to these risks: The hazards inherent to relationship with 'the king as snake' obtain even for those nearest and dearest to kings—his royal kula, his *sūta* (confidant and "charioteer"), his wives and closest advisors. Thus, in spite of their intimacy with the king and the great benefits it can bestow, this intimacy can also be their greatest peril.

For instance, in a *Mahābhārata* dialogue between the queen (*mahīṣī*) Draupadī and Saulabhā (the new wife of Kṛṣṇa), Draupadī reports that even while she cares for her five husband-kings, she "warily watches them, as if they were angry poisonous snakes" (*MBh,* 3.222.34).[28] Draupadī knows the danger of the snake that can be in one's home; yet she is intimate with the greater danger of having a snake, just as a king, lying on her own breast—no wonder she watches them so warily, though they are her own husbands.

So, as in Draupadī's example, when kings are likened to poisonous snakes, the metaphor conveys—and the rhetoric encourages—a self-protective mode of action for advisors and other intimates of kings to consider.

The intimate nuances cast on royal relationships because of a king's negative qualities testify that the *king* imagined *as a snake* marks a common point of experience and evaluation of the dangers of royal character. Returning to *Pañcatantra* ideas about the experience, the commonality of this image as a means of depicting a king's darker dimension is evident even in the rhetorical tone used by the advising characters in *Pañcatantra.* For instance, Book One, which is devoted to cultivating dissention, engages the 'king as snake' image with a telling confidence (*Pañc*, I, v. 27). When considered in light of other advising discourse in the rest of this tantra, one is struck by the text's familiarity with royal flaws in particular and with *rājanya* milieus, in general. Indeed, royal flaws—"bad kings"—seem expected (and necessary?), since the creator of the text fashions the king into a calculated type—just another context for an advisor to ply his skills (I, v. 18-21, *et passim*).

In the beginning of this book (Tantra I), a minister aspiring to a closer advisory relationship with the king—one more important than he already has—Damanaka, is in conversation with another minister, Karaṭaka, about the relative benefits and losses in currying the favor of a king (I, v. 6-29).[29] Karaṭaka is always the voice of caution, restraint, and supports only non-duplicitous actions and intentions with respect to making such relationships with kings. Damanaka, however, is willing to take risks in the face of the king's nature, and enters for his own benefit. In the exchange of advisor perspectives that follow, these two ministers discuss the difficult nature of the king and the challenges

of cultivating relationship and culling its favors from him. Karaṭaka—the advisory voice of caution—in particular notes the danger of proximity and association with kings. Karaṭaka cautions through several double entendres designed to convey the risks and treachery encountered in relationships with kings; likening the king and men typically around one to the dangers found around mountains (*Pañc*, I. 28-27).[30]

But these dangers (as well as others) in kings are the advisor's warrant. For instance, while Damanaka agrees with Karaṭaka's assessment of a king's problematic nature, still he thinks all problems can be surmounted by someone intelligent, by men with the "right skill" (*kuśalāḥ khalu mānavāḥ*) (I, v. 28).[31] This is the crux of the advisor argument—confidently conveyed to the king of the tale, to the *rājanya* audience and the audience of advising ministers: "…what is the use of a faithful man, if he is without skill… [or]…of a skillful man if he is ill-deposed? But know, Oh my king, and this is the truth, I am faithful and I do have the skill!"(I.49)

With his sober view of the treachery of kings, one must wonder at the confidence with which Damanaka, or any advisor and advising minister for that matter, enters into relationship with a king. The test of confidence such as his—and the skill at its foundations—is how well it withstands an angry, potentially venomous king. Indeed, significant tests like these are considered in the next chapters. For now, we will focus on the text's presentation of the dangers of kings and royal service from two perspectives— from a minister in the stance of caution and another minister in the stance of confidence and cunning—here too we note their use of simile of the 'king as snake' in their dialogue. Still weighing the feasibility of approaching the king to give him advice in the tale, Karaṭaka sets the tone of caution:

A king is like a snake—the one has a pile of wealth, the other a pile of coils, the one a coat of mail, the other a coat of scale; both are ferocious, the paths of both are crooked as well; the one displays flared nostrils, and the other a flared hood, the one is tamed by sage words, the other by magic sounds. [*Pañcatantra*, I, v. 27][32]

The confident Damanaka is nonplussed by the risk, confirming what Karaṭaka has just said is true. Even so, Damanaka shows a realistic grasp of the danger in his counterpoint:

Even a king a man can serve,
Even poison he can consume;
Even with women he can flirt,
If only he has the right skill. [I, v. 28][33]

According to this verse, any danger can be averted or circumvented by the wise advisor, the man "who possesses the right skill." It also gives a glimpse of the many other prudent or "right" skills contained in this *nītiśāstra*. Such expertise is the lurking partner to kings, and the basis of this minister's confident approach of the king in the text.

Furthermore, knowledge of a king's tendencies and natures provide the bases to anticipate the movements of the 'king as snake' figure. As the cunning minister Damanaka later tells his worried associate—even though the king is engaged in "bad policy," he will think of a strategy with which to circumvent the king, as he confidently states:[34]

Cunning will surely achieve what might alone cannot do;
The crow had the black snake killed, by means of the golden chain (I, v. 60).[35]

While the "cunning" or strategies that advisors might use to redirect a faulty king are examined in my next chapters, my concern here is the evident message of encouragement and warning couched in the 'king as snake' metaphor for any advisors that would assume the role. Just as a snake-handler can calm a poisonous snake with charming words, so also can rhetorical skill and planning, and varieties of dharmic discourse thwart the

poisonous strike of a king. In this manner, even a 'king as snake' contributes to the evaluations of 'kings in need,' which are the proving grounds for communities to test their influence and *dharma*s at court.

Advising the Warrior King

We have seen how the "king as fire" and the "king as snake" are arguments for certain kinds of counsel (e.g., rather than arguments for better kings). We turn now to the king as "waning warrior" as another variety of a king in need of a particular kind of counsel. In the examples that follow, we will see kings advising each other and the dynamic challenges of advising *rājanya* at an intimate level. Since a king's adherence to *kṣatriya dharma* is both exhibited and admonished in many Brahmanical texts, it may be surprising to find the warrior-king targeted for a discussion of the darker sides of kings—especially to be characterized as evidence of 'kings in need' of advisors. As we know, *Ṛg Vedic* hymns appeal to the gods to assure warrior successes, *dharma* treatises like the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* direct kings to live and die as *kṣatriyas* in order to preserve *varṇāśramadharma* (the "*dharma* and stages of life of the *varṇa*"), and *itihāsa* like the *Mahābhārata*—through the guise of a god in the guise of the *rājanya* Kṛṣṇa—encourage the Pāṇḍavas to use *kṣatriya* ways and means; lies, tricks and illusions (the overarching concern of my Chapter Six). To be sure, the warrior-king is not problematic in many Brahmanical depictions of kings.

Nevertheless, advisors might have been challenged by an exclusively warrior ethos at court; or were part of debates among warrior-kings about which values and *dharma*s make for the best warrior. Thus, some of the *itihāsa* narratives in *Mahābhārata*

and *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions turn a critical eye on *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* who respond first (or only) from martial, manipulative, and belligerent royal *dharma*s. Many scholars have attempted to account for these critiques. For instance, James Fitzgerald sees the emergence of "newer *dharma*s" in the *Mahābhārata,* and also the "embrace" by Yudhiṣṭhira of "*kṣatradharma* against Aśoka's *ahiṃsā*."[36] Thus, the character of Yudhiṣṭhira is an important site for the evaluation of *dharma*s in the foundational eras of *Mahābhārata* traditions. Though they characterize him slightly differently, Fitzgerald and Nick Sutton both consider Yudhiṣṭhira's longings for the renunciant life in the *Śāntiparvan* narrative—when overwhelmed by grief and guilt over the war—to be an ideological response of the *Mahābhārata's brāhmaṇa* creators to the *dharma* propounded by Aśoka Maurya.[37]

Both scholars see in the depiction of Yudhiṣṭhira's struggles—with the killing and deceiving incumbent on him, and his refusal to rejoice at his victory—some kind of a Brahmanical critique of the *dharma* (ostensibly *kṣatriyadharma*) of King Aśoka.[38] However, it is not necessary to erect the dharmic 'straw-man' of Aśoka Maurya in order to argue that reconsiderations of *some kind* were occurring over what it meant to live and act as a *rājanya* or *kṣatriya* king. Many competing and foreign ideologies of rule converged over greater Magadha and northern India during the composition of these texts—such as the Bactrians, the Śakas, and the Kuṣāṇas.[39] The creators of the *Mahābhārata* could also have been evaluating and supplanting, in narrative, the ruling *dharma*s in light of these challenges to *varṇāśramadharma* ideals.

The evaluations of *dharma* impelled by some *rājanya* and/or *kṣatriya* courtly impetus are present in the *Rāmāyaṇa* also. Sheldon Pollock considers the dharmic

perspectives that revolve around Rāma—and make him the ultimate *dharma-rāja* in the *Rāmāyaṇa*—as evidence of the emergence of a" new *dharma*," designed to resolve the unresolvable tensions between "political and spiritual" *dharma*s. According to Pollock, Rāma's dharmic character resolves the dichotomy between these two spheres.[40] Although I agree with Pollock that Vālmīki is working to resolve conflicts of power and *dharma* in conceptions of Rāma's character, I do not think that the dichotomy is just between the 'political and spiritual' *dharma*s. Rather, I think the dichotomy, if there is one, operates between the *particular* and the *universal* and coincidently between the *deliberative* and the *talismanic* modes of *dharma,* which I discuss in the last chapter.

For my own aims here, it is sufficient to suggest that the ideologies of kings are in flux in these narratives; which is evident in the dialogues between advisors and kings about which ideals and *dharma*s should govern royal actions. The reasons for my consideration of the warrior and the moniker for the 'king as *waning* warrior,' are the dissenting views over the praiseworthiness of *kṣatriya* ideals that occur in some significant advisory moments depicted in the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* (which I discuss in later chapters).[41] I see them as 'waning' since their ideals are depicted in either of these two narrative modes: first, as subsumed through the defeat of their ideal representatives (Karṇa, Duryodhana, and Rāvaṇa); and second, as superseded by a preferable ideology.[42]

More research is necessary in order to develop any argument about the waning of *kṣatriya* values. Nevertheless, I provisionally use the 'king as waning warrior' idea in order to show that *kṣatriya* kings were sometimes conceived as 'kings in need' of advice or correction *because* they were behaving exclusively like a *kṣatriya*, not because they

were acting like kings. I established two basic criteria with which to evaluate whether examples from dharmic narratives were designed to show a 'king in need' of counsel or correction. First, I ask whether a king was being advised against or chastised for acting through warrior *dharma*; and second, I examine whether *kṣatriya* ideals were being scrutinized for appropriateness to a certain place and time.

An example that meets the first criteria—where a warrior is being chastised for acting as such—occurs in the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, when the news of Rāma's exile is sweeping his family. Resolute in his determination to respect his father's ill-motivated request, Rāma is facing the grief and rage experienced in this mother Kauśalyā (*Rām*, II, 17.15-33; 18.16-24) and brother, Lakṣmaṇa (*Rām*, II, 18.1-15; 20.1-14). In spite of the two threatening death without him, Rāma affectionately consoles and reasons with both through his conception of the dharmic nature of his choice (II.18.25-19.22). The exchanges that occur between Rāma and his brother reveal each challenging the other's understanding of tradition, *dharma*, and *kṣatriya* masculinity. Like many narrative depictions of advice, the evaluation of *dharma* occurs in an intimate family exchange of counsel between two *rājanya*. Rāma quietly consoles Lakṣmaṇa between two significant outbursts; the text narrates that Rāma "firmly taught his younger brother the proper view of things" (II.18.40).[43]

But how did the text characterize Lakṣmaṇa's point of view? Or, since this is a dialogical evaluation of *dharma*s by the creators of this text—how did each characterize the wrong thing in each other, though both *rājanya*? For Lakṣmaṇa's part, in the heat of incredulity that his father ordered Rāma's exile, he impugned his father's grasp of what is

dharmic (II.18.6 & 20.8-9) as well as his mastery of himself (II.18.3). I present his words at length, to impart the feel of Lakṣmaṇa's view:

> Before anyone learns of this matter, let me help you seize control of the government. With me at your side, bow in hand to protect you, who could prevail against you, Rāghava, when you take your stand like Death itself? With my sharp arrows, bull among men, I will empty Ayodhyā of men if it stands in opposition. I will slaughter everyone who sides with Bharata or champions his cause. Leniency always ends in defeat. Now that the king has provoked our implacable enmity, yours and mine, chastiser of foes, what power can he summon to bestow sovereignty on Bharata?...I will drive your [now talking to the Queen] sorrow away with all the power of the rising sun that drives away the dark! Let the Queen behold my power! Let Rāghava behold it! (II, 18.8-12; 18.15)[44]

Lakṣmaṇa points to his power (…*paśyatu me vīryaṃ*!), vows destruction to any opposition from within Ayodhyā, remonstrates their mutual provocation to hostility as surety of their success, and begs Rāma: "Let me help take command"(*sārdhaṃ ātmasthaṃ kuru śāsanamś*) of the kingdom (18.8). With another warrior, this *kṣatriya* paean would evoke his wrath to action and unity in mutual "enmity."[45]

But Rāma does not endorse the direction of belligerence; rather, marking his words with affection to make sure that his *kṣatriya* brother can *listen* to him, he challenges:

> I well know…the profound affection you bear me. But you fail to understand the real meaning of truth and self-restraint. [*Dharma*] is paramount in the world and on [*dharma*] is truth founded. This command of Father's is based on [*dharma*] and absolute (8.32-33)…So give up this ignoble notion that is based on the code of the Kshatriya; be of like mind with me and base your actions on [*dharma*], not violence.[46]

This is a direct critique of warrior *dharma*. Rāma does not accuse him of failing to understand his own *kṣatriya dharma*, but of not apprehending his more generalized *dharma* that is the foundation of "truth" (*satasya*) and "self-restraint" (*śamasya*).

Rāma's critique of the *dharma* of warriors*, kṣatradharma, is* notable. Lakṣmaṇa's suggestion to take the kingdom by force and defend Rāma's right to the throne is not unusual for a king. As Pollock has pointed out, it was *too* usual for accessions to thrones to involve fratricide and parricide.[47] But Vālmīki and the community around the text move narratively to subvert these tendencies.[48] The subversion comes through the reproving words of Rāma, a *kṣatriya* himself, declaring that action through this warrior *dharma* is "ignoble," *anāryām*, since it would use violence (*taikṣṇyam*). It is important to note that the critique is not of *any* use of violence, but of violence against the truth of his father's word—and the *dharma* it implies in Rāma's eyes—and royal family.

On the other hand, the problem in Lakṣmaṇa's view is this *dharma* Rāma is espousing to him. He thinks Rāma is misperceiving *dharma* in his father's command, as well as being naïve for a *kṣatriya* by not questioning his father's motives: "Don't you know my righteous [dharmic] brother, that there are cunning people who wear the guise of righteousness [*dharma*]?" (20.8)[49] Indeed, as master of the *śāstra* of his day, how could Rāma not be suspicious? Lakṣmaṇa's insinuations about his father's sense of *dharma* are provocative: accusing his father as operating under the "guise of *dharma*" (*dharm' opadhāḥ)*, as being like "cunning" or "smooth-talking people" (*ślakṣṇā*). His rhetorical choices are telling of royal strategies of deceit because they echo recommendations of *Arthaśāstra*, wherein various agents of kings use the ruse (*upadhāḥ*) of *dharma*s and devas to bolster royal power—such are the ways of *kṣatradharma*.

Lakṣmaṇa's next statement cuts more directly at Rāma's perception of *dharma*; with brotherly spite he states, "I despise that [*dharma*]…which has so altered your thinking, about which you are so deluded" (20.9).[50] There seems no resolution in the

warrior-kings' positions here: Lakṣmaṇa not understanding that *kṣatradharma* needs to

be based in "truth and restraint," which are based in Rāma's notion of *dharma*; Rāma's

dharma, preventing him from seeing the guise of *dharma* before him in Lakṣmaṇa's eyes.

At the juncture of their charges against one another's perception of *dharma* is a parting of

the ways of warriors.

     Rājanya brothers may conflict over ideas of *dharma* in moments of advice, but so

also do father and son, further complicating the task of advising among kings: As such,

the following example demonstrates the challenge of advising a most beloved son in his

capacity as warrior-king. The *kṣatriya* prince Duryodhana is resolute in his ideas of

kṣatriya dharma, which his father Dhṛtarāṣṭra nobly contests in *Sabhāparvan*, 2.50.10-28.

[51] Duryodhana is worth quoting at length as he explains his state of mind and actions this

way, a ringing *kṣatriya* manifesto:

> Bṛhaspati has said, 'the conduct of a king is different than the conduct of the
> world!' Therefore, the king should endeavor always thinking of his own interests
> alone (2.50.14).[52] The path is directed toward the victory of the warrior, Great
> King; whether dharmic or *a*dharmic, it is to be his own way, Bull of the Bharatas!
> (2.50.15)[53] Dissatisfaction is the root of success; therefore, I *want* to want this
> [dissatisfaction]![54] The one who endeavors to reach the pinnacle, he, king, is the
> ultimate leader. (2.50.18)[55] Should not one strive for that which one knows one is
> to possess, even while already powerful or rich? Other [kings] take away what
> has been attained previously—because they know that this is the *dharma* of a king
> (2.50.19).[56] The earth devours these two, like a snake devours creatures living in
> holes; the king who does not compete with rivals and the *brāhmaṇa* who does not
> roam (2.50.21).[57]

Duryodhana quotes the preceptor of the gods, to substantiate his position, his aggressions

and his dedication to his own path of expansionary rule. There is a timeless nature to

Duryodhana's appeal: Is this not the nature of ambition? The man who has striven for

and attained everything, at the cost of many? Is it not his nature to want this and more, as

one who is ambitious? Duryodhana exemplifies the aims of *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* urgings

for power, which had long been accepted (if his *dharma* is indeed coterminous with

kṣatriya dharma).

Against prince Duryodhana's view, his father counsels a narrowing and

redefinition of this *svadharma*; affectionate counsel designed to attenuate Duryodhana's

drive to acquisition and expansionary success:

> Be content with what you have; stay with your own Law [*svadharmasthaḥ*]—that
> way lies happiness. An unconcern for the riches of others, a constant enterprise in
> one's own tasks; an effort to protect one's own: that defines ownership. […]
> Giving riches at the altar, enjoying the joys you want, and playing healthily with
> the women; Be at peace, Bull of Bharatas!" (2:50.6-7)

Dhṛtarāṣṭra is sounding out ideas of warrior restraint that intersect with Rāma's iterations

of *dharma* in the *Rāmāyaṇa* example above. Here, the father counsels his son to bring

his royal aims within the ambit of his own kingdom that is also his family, "an effort to

protect one's own..." We know that he does not meet with success.

So the *Mahābhārata*'s sense of what happens when *dharma*s are brought into

dialogue with each other ends with an intransigent king ignoring loving advice. I think

Duryodhana's belligerent opposition to the suggestion of any *dharma* but that of a warrior

puts Duryodhana at the fault-line of dharmic changes. His sentiments certainly echo

Lakṣmaṇa's above. What can we take away from these arguments between warriors as

they deliberate ideas of *dharma* in the guise of brotherly or fatherly advice? Pollock has

suggested that the values that drive warriors like Lakṣmaṇa are being attenuated with the

changes and expansions in ruling contexts, which meet narrative resolution in Vālmīki's

depiction of Rāma's *dharma*. In comparison, I would add that advisory arguments

between king Duryodhana and his *rājanya* advisors reflect changes in ideas of rule as

well; however, without the resolution, since Duryodhana and others see a narrative

resolution only in heaven. *Mahābhārata* traditions let conflicting *dharma*s stand for observing advisors to evaluate. And while Fitzgerald may imagine an accommodation of Asoka's *dharma* in the attenuating impulses of conflicting *dharma*s such as those discussed above, if we leave the textual arguments around *dharma* to speak for themselves, we see changes in ideas about how *dharma*s should be enacted in these texts, but no resolution to one conception of *dharma*.

Considering dialogues among advisors and kings where we observe them debating, struggling with themselves, I think the emphasis is on the process of deciding. Advisors and kings are positioning to decide just which ideals and *dharma*s they should use. Thus, if royal ideologies are in flux, and I think they are, it is more instructive to look, rather, to how the characters use ideals of action. If we put the focus on the advising relationship, the texts point us to the dynamics that make or break how advisors and kings direct their actions. In light of this point, let us briefly reconsider Dhṛtarāṣṭra's attempts above to advise his son. This fatherly advice directs his son to ideas about action that preserve family and realm. Duryodhana wants to compete for lands of realm at all costs. The exchange of counsel here shows that the aims of idealized action are being scrutinized as well. As if to presage the question Yudhiṣṭhira asks—'How do I rule with the results of this tragic war?'—too late: How well do advice and the royal action that ideally follows on it serve a kingdom's flourishing? The questions in the texts remain for advisors to consider. Kingdoms might require new warrior kinds of impetus and aims—those that unify and solidify a realm—where formerly *kṣatriya* values could be concerned, however recklessly, with all the *vīrya* and power attendant on *extending* a realm.

Advising the King under the Sway of Emotion

Here we turn to a more general problem of kings that in some ways intersects with the previously examined cases of 'kings in need.' However, this problem is more widespread and endemic to the problems kings encounter that necessitate ongoing relations of counsel. In both Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions, emotions appear to be nearly intractable deterrents to self-perfection, leading beings into confusion and varieties of delusion. According to the texts considered in this study, emotions confound a king's ability to see clearly, impairing his ability to assess the best course of action. Each tradition's conception of what motivates *adharmic* intentions, deliberations, and actions are tied in some way to being confounded by some emotional experience and ignorance. Thus, it is no surprise to see the ubiquitous variable of the emotions (or the senses, which are related) depicted with especially destructive consequences, when they are experience by men of power, like kings. A full survey of these representations is beyond this scope of this chapter; but a few examples will suffice to demonstrate the problem of a king held in sway by his emotions, and how that confirms both the king's need for advisors and counsel and the challenge of advising him when he is held by his emotions in these ways.

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya presents a good example from which to start. *Arthaśāstra* I.6.1-12 contains a discussion of the "victory over [or conquering of] the senses that leads to discipline and knowledge," which is a victory evident in "one whose way of acting is free from impulsiveness, wanton conceit, self-serving pride, greed, wrath, and desire"(*Aś*, I.6.1).[58] These are considered the six enemies (*śatrū)* of good conduct, negative emotional states inimical to the success of kings. Evidently, these six are really trajectories that spring from the six sense objects because in the beginning of

the section (I.6.2) the text indicates that "victory over the senses" is analogous to "being

undistracted" (*a|vipratipattiḥ*) by smell, taste, form, tactile experience, and sound.

Moreover, at the end of the discussion, the community around the text asserts that other

kings perished along with kin and kingdom for their failures to throw off the six enemies,

because they could not control their senses (I.6.11), while kings that controlled their

sense faculties conquered these six enemies (I.6.12).[59]

Many genres share these conceptions about the control and abandonment of the

senses and their objects, each with their own ideas about the means of controlling them.

In the *Arthaśāstra*, the *śāstra* itself is suggested as the means for a king to be victorious

over the senses: "Indeed, victory over the senses is possible to the one favorable to this

śāstra" (I.6.3).[60] And, while a king who is over-assured of his power might be inclined to

imagine himself immune to the ill-effects of being held sway to emotion, the text quickly

dispels any such illusion: For, even kings who control the "four-ends of the earth"

(*cāturanto 'pi…*) perish who do not control their senses (I.6.4).[61]

Using examples primarily from *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* traditions, the

Arthaśāstra takes the audience through the six enemies in kind.[62] Cautionary examples

illustrate the argument that kings should control their senses and the attendant emotional

trajectories, or suffer the suggested consequences.[63] Emotion is stressed as the catalyst of

bad behavior by means of the ablatives that mark each member in the list of errant kings.

For instance, out of desire (*kāmāt*)—and his subsequent obsession, *abhimanyamānaḥ*—

for a *brāhmaṇa*'s daughter, king Dāṇḍakāya was destroyed along with his relatives the

realm he was to protect (*Aś*, I.6.5).[64] The text stresses the king's failure in his duty to

protect his kingdom by the use of *rāṣṭram*, "that which is protected" to denote his realm,

instead of *rājyam* (which has been used in other examples in the text). At the same time, it emphasizes that this failure occurs from the king's misdirected desire.

The list continues through the six enemy emotions, giving the improper action that arises from each: "On account of wrath" (*kopāt*) two kings unleashed violence against *brāhmaṇas*, one specifically against the Bhṛgu *gotra* (I.6.6); "on account of avarice" (*lobhāt*), King Aila (Ila) stole from priests and other *varṇa*s (I.6.7).[65] On account of unbounded or wounded pride" (*mānāt*), Rāvaṇa and Duryodhana were provoked to destructive actions, Rāvaṇa by not returning Sītā to Rāma, and Duryodhana in refusing to cede a portion of a kingdom to his rival (I.6.8).

Because of the particular kind of pride that might arise in royal contexts, both *rājanya* and *kṣatriya*, the choice of *māna* is a compelling and rich way to denote the emotion that provokes Rāvaṇa and Duryodhana into destructive action.[66] Kangle translates it as "arrogance," which is accurate, but obfuscating. Rather, *māna* is a particular kind of arrogance typical of a ruler's concern with reputation or "glory" (*yaśaḥ*).[67] However, in the case of these two kings, each expressed a variety of unbounded and misplaced pride (*māna*) that exceeded even that which is typical of kings; and perhaps because of the excess and misperception, neither would take correction.[68]

It is notable that these errors do not seem as important as the establishment of their remedy—the ministerial and advisory apparatus of the treatise. In other words, the abbreviated discussion of the royal flaws compared to the detailed discussion of the advisors and ministers that follows on this, shows that the king's tendencies are manageable ones. The *Arthaśāstra* itself provides the very structure with which to manage the king; royal education and association with elders and other gifted men. It

functions as a system of associations directed at bringing a king back to himself—a king with his senses under control.[69]

The royal examples of emotionally unsteady kings provided in the counsel of *Arthaśāstra* have their parallels in narrative sources, where one can follow the trajectories of emotion warned of in the *Arthaśāstra* into narrative life. *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions characterize kings losing themselves to intense emotions frequently. Lakṣmaṇa degrades his father's name for his subjection to his passions; a denigration Lakṣmaṇa must think his father deserves for acquiescing to Kaikeyī's demand for her son's succession over Rāma (II, 18.3), as evidenced in Lakṣmaṇa's disparaging words: "The king is perverse, old, and debauched by pleasures. What would he not say under pressure, mad with passion as he is?"[70] Such a question, I think, can lead the royal audience (*kṣatriya* and their advisors) to wonder at their own passions; or to sympathize or commiserate with the king's problem, and an advisor's challenge to mitigate them.[71]

An example of the havoc that can follow royal anger occurs in the *Araṇyakāṇḍa*, when Lakṣmaṇa, acting in an advisory role, calms Rāma's emotions. This occurs when Rāma returns with his brother Lakṣmaṇa from chasing the illusory deer and learns that Sītā has been kidnapped by the 'demon' king Rāvaṇa. Rāma's grief and frustration slowly builds into a raging tirade where he declares in excruciating detail how he will annihilate the triple worlds, the universe and all beings within them (including devas (gods), *yakṣas* (capricious beings), and *rākṣasas* (demons) (*Rāmāyaṇa,* 3.64). I examine the means of his approach later in this project, for now it is sufficient to point out that it takes his brother Lakṣmaṇa to soothe his rage, to calm and remind Rāma of his own nature, of

Rāma's duty as a gentle king, of Rāma's function as a refuge to beings, not a destroyer of them.

At a later point, I analyze this moment—between Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, and others like it in later chapters—where a close advisor (in this case, beloved kin) brings a king back to himself. There are many examples of kings under the sway of emotion, what is important here is to point out that kings' affective responses are part of the dharmic evaluation of them. As we will see in Chapter Six and Seven, the emotional worlds of kings were an important point of influence used by advisors. Though it often is the responsibility of advisors and ministers to move kings away from such responses, there were some circumstances where inciting a king to feel something was the best strategy.

Even so, the text is careful in its rhetoric to show that while Rāma out of grief and anger may turn to what its creators consider to be *a*dharmic attitudes, he does so because he forgets himself.[72] This kind of forgetting gives particular poignancy to the problem of emotion—emotion makes him forget that he must control emotion; Rāma forgets, briefly since he is the dharmic king, that his nature as king is to bear pain and grief. However, going forward, as we shall see, not all kings are able to bear the pain and grief of rule, or of competition, or of the sublimating effects of imperial unifications. This makes creating a relationship of reliance on good advisors and intimate associates, with the proper view of things all the more important.

Buddhist Ideals of the King in Need

The particulars of *kṣatriya* values and belligerence resonate with the Buddhist textual communities selected below. As such he serves as a good transition to considerations of Buddhist textual communities who are also working to resolve dharmic

conflicts, of a different kind—non-Buddhist *dharma*s. The idealized king, who lives and governs according to *Buddha-dharma,* is the primary dharmic model across various Indic *Nikāyas*. Even so, the *a*dharmic *kṣatriya* (*khattiya* in Pāli) or warrior king occurs frequently in Buddhist discourses, where the *a*dharmic king becomes another site for an advisor's evaluation of the success of a dharmic tradition. Depictions of an *a*dharmic or otherwise misinformed king point to *saṅgha* apprehensions about the bases of royal power.

The two texts in the examples below (one Pāli, and one Sanskrit) show how the communities around these texts imagined the causes of *adharma* in kings. These causes of *adharma* in kings were imagined as both royal inclination toward non-salvific activity, or misguided orientations to systems of religious knowledge and action that are not *Buddha-dharma,* or both. Thus, the "king in need" here is not in need because of his own *a*dharmic behavior alone, arising from uncontrolled senses; rather he is in need because he is aligned to religious traditions of practice that uphold the use of sense experiences, and which laud aggression, and employ royal tricks and strategies, directed at unwholesome ends. In other words, the king is in need because of *kṣatriya* and Brahmanical ritual directed at power for its own sake (these Buddhist communities' understanding of *nīti*).

While clearly arguing for the superiority of *Buddha-dharma*, these examples do give a glimpse of the royal culture that these Buddhist authors sought to transform. This culture is discernible below, in the attitude that a Kosalan king exhibits about his royal skills, and a wandering sage's criticism of the expedient technologies of rule designed to attain royal aims. Exhibiting parallel anxieties about the exercise of *kṣatriya dharma* in

the *Rāmāyaṇa* example above, these Buddhist examples also engage the perceived

strengths and limitations associated with rulers who live by a *kṣatriya* ethos, and also

argue in their own way for the needs that such kings have for counsel. The instruction

directed at kings here shows that royal actions construed through the rituals and methods

of *nīti*—rather than *dharma*; particularly, *Buddha-dharma*—lead to *a*dharmic conduct,

certainly. But more encompassing than this, ritualized actions and *nīti* do not address

these Buddhist texts' assessment of a king's true need for a reliance on *Buddha-dharma*,

that is, the king needs new reasons for acting, which will result in new kinds of action.

These texts argue that such transformation of a king can only occur through the

appropriate guidance of an advisor who can lead the king to such a transformation.

Advising the King with Misconstrued Aims

The first example of an *a*dharmic king in need of advice conveys the typical

trajectories of action associated with "consecrated kings" (*khattiyānaṃ*

muddhāvasittānaṃ). In the course of a discourse conveying the inevitability of aging and

death (*Pabbatupamam Sutta, Saṃyutta Nikāya, (SN)* III.25),[73] this Pāli *sutta* reveals a

king in need because he lives like any *rāja,* a consecrated *khattiya* king would[74]—through

his senses and actions aimed at garnering power.[75] King Pasenadi of Kosala approaches

Śākyamuni when he has just come from the activities incumbent on a king:

> Venerable sir, I am here just now, having done energetically, the things that kings
> ought to do—taking possession of a great expanse of the earth for its inhabited
> areas, ascertaining the conduct of established subjects, assessing the condition of
> the realm, exhilarated with the ambition and the enjoyment of it; these are the
> duties of warriors consecrated for rule.[76]

King Pasenadi proclaims that he has done what is necessary for him to do, in sum—to

protect what he has already attained and to expand what he has already got. In addition,

the text is generalizing here about the lives of kings; that all kings might endeavor this

way. These views are evident in the statements: "having done…the things that kings

ought to do" and "these are the duties of warriors consecrated for rule." These

consecration statements proceed through the *sutta*; each repetition places royal actions in

relationship to their proper royal referent and context, and frames them for analysis.

The *sutta* also rhetorically frames the manner in which kings perform such duties.

Pasenadi reports he has carried out his actions—"in the exhilaration of ambition and

enjoyment of it," *kāmagedhapariyuṭṭhitānaṃ* (Pāli). Evidently, royal dedication and zeal

carry particular weight, since the king's declaration is part of the text's descriptive refrain

about the king-in-action (repeated five times). This repetition suggests the text's

conception of warrior-king's zealousness and drive in pursuing his aims. Notably, the

manner with which the king engages in his duties is not evaluated in the *buddha-vacanas*

that follow in the rest of the *sutta*—because zeal is to be desired in kings.

This depiction of Pasenadi's ambitious manner and the attitude about action it

implies are similar to *kṣatriya dharma*s as Duryodhana demonstrated them above. Recall

for a moment his *kṣatriya rājanya* rationale—of wanting the intensity and scope of his

ambitions. Duryodhana lauds experiencing dissatisfaction (Skt: *asaṃtoṣam*) not as some

truth to realize and surmount; but as "the root of success" that induces the constant

striving necessary to make him the "ultimate leader" (*MBh*, 2.50.18).[77] *Kṣatriya* kings

such as Duryodhana—and arguably here, Pasenadi—count on the results that come from

cultivating the ambitious drive for power and increase, the success of which, in turns,

increases royal vigor, motivates further royal actions, and engenders material success—a dynamic mode of attending to *artha*. Furthermore, kings anticipate similar aggressive attempts against their power from contending rivals. Of the many activities that would help him assess the condition of his realm, Pasenadi could also forestall threats from rival kings, thieves, and other threats to order. So, the dynamism of *artha* that is sourced in ambition is also driven by fear of its opposite. Therefore, the threat of *an-artha* is part of the context for royal action and a typical warrant for *kṣatriya dharma*.

The *sutta* is not critical of this resonant picture of *rājanya* zeal for increasing power and realm, nor of the king's actions. Rather, with Buddha Śākyamuni acting as the ultimate advisor, what is being evaluated are the ideas about action that inhere in the king's self-description as a "consecrated *khattiya*"—for they are rooted in doctrines *external* to the *saṅgha*, and shape the king's actions and attitudes about them. So, in the face of his *khattiya* confidence, with Buddha Śākyamuni as advising interlocutor, the king is asked to consider a hypothetical scenario involving news from around his realm. In so doing, the narrative tacitly moves the king's attention to consider *why* he acts, that is, to consider the drive behind his explicit royal aims. The Buddhist community that created this text locates the threat against king and kingdom in the driving force of his actions.

What the king does not yet perceive is the true threat that should be the driving warrant for his actions—a threat more perilous and imminent than royal expansionary drives from other kings. This is a hypothetical scenario the king would not otherwise have considered *and* which requires entirely different actions—the inevitability of "aging and death" (Pāli: *jarāmaraṇa*), conveyed in a simile of a mountain. Given the drive to

surmount all challenges that is seen as inherent in warrior kings, it would take more than

the threat of another king to change the basis of royal action, especially since ambitious

kings are by definition confident of success. For a change to occur in the basis for a

king's actions—or a change in context for action—what is required is something as

unassailable as a mountain, yet that bears all the urgency of the threat of a rival king.

Faced with the challenge of changing the mind of a warrior king confident of

success, the text must make a sophisticated rhetorical appeal, not only to how such a king

might experience the onslaught of a formidable rival king, but also to make use of the

advising structures he would likely already know that were designed to apprise him of

such threats. The text reveals that its creators were aware that kings need to rely on men

who are "trustworthy and reliable" (*saddhāyiko paccayiko*) who observe the realm's

activity and report it to the king. Stressed by means of repetition of the identical report

from each of the four cardinal directions, in the *sutta* scenario four such trustworthy men

come bearing news of having seen a great mountain, like a dense, dark cloud *(*Pāli:

pabbataṃ abbhasamaṃ) on its way crushing all beings in its path *(sabbe pāṇe*

nippoṭhento āgacchati).

This is a compelling use of *khattiya* experience in this simile: The mountain and

cloud invoke images of dark clouds of dust, animal and power that would come pressing

relentlessly forward from a rival king's army; credible indices to threat.   The reports that

come to him are also plausible: Each man coming exclaims the king should do what he

thinks it is necessary to do with the report *(yaṃ te mahārāja karaṇīyaṃ taṃ karohi).*[78]

Using their ideas of the structures of rule, the community around this *sutta* recasts the

nature of the threat. Shifting the royal mundane to the fantastic, the typical threats that

might come from the four directions toward a king's world—other kings—are transferred to the inevitability of aging and death that comes as inexorably as the simile's encroaching mountains. This is a fantastic prediction in the face of *khattiya* power attuned to threats from the outside. Aging and death are the true threats against the king, the consciousness of which should inform all actions that he takes.

Through a persuasive appeal to this metaphysical reality, the Buddha as advisor creates a change in the king's assessment of the nature of the world, which in turn eventuates in his *re*orientation to actions, and the subsequent change in the kinds of royal action in which he engages. As the *sutta* tells us, "what else is there to do other than wish to make merit, by wanting to do good, by living in quietude in accordance with the *dhamma*."[79]

Once the king demonstrates his understanding of the true context from which he should act—aware that aging and death are closing in on him, as with everyone else—he then reviews the apparatus of rule for its efficacy. His *manner* remains the same, which is communicated by a repetition of his formula of action as a 'consecrated king' against each royal power used in war. That is, he acts as a typical *rāja* by "taking possession of a great expanse of the earth for its inhabited areas, ascertaining the conduct of established subjects, assessing the condition of the realm, exhilarated with the ambition and the enjoyment of it." What changes are the actions that attend this new context: The text replaces "the things that kings ought to do" (*rājakaraṇīyāni santi*) with the various "battles" (*yuddhāni*) in which the community understands kings to engage: "battles" by means of elephants, cavalry, chariots, foot soldiers. [80] As the king brings these powers into dialogue with his new conception of reality, he declares of each that "these involve

neither the [correct] scope, nor the [correct path] of action when aging and death are closing in."[81]

The repeated formula—"consecrated king"—placed adjacently to a statement about its newly found impotency in the face of the new terms of action achieves two things. First, it brings the limitations of Brahmanical ritual consecration into view. The argument of the text to any kings listening is that even this ritual of power—that empowers *kṣatriya* and *rājanya* to act as kings and to bear the success of kingship— cannot save one from death. Second, whatever power the king might attain through the typical ways of war (elephants, chariots, infantry, cavalry, counselors and treasury) are not the means to save himself and his kingdom.

The text places great emphasis on two great powers at a king's disposal—his royal cadre of advisors and the royal treasury. The structured repetition that occurred in these *re*valuations of the king's typical powers ceases around the evaluation of the structures of rule that reside in the king's royal house or court (*rājakule*).

> So indeed, venerable sir, there are in this royal court great ministers, advisors who when enemies encroach are able to break them through their counsel. Even so, venerable sir, there is no path, there is no room for these wars of counsel, when aging and death are encroaching.[82]

The text and the king are aware that *mantra*—words or articulations, charmed and otherwise, of counsel—are used as weapons in battles or war, just as other royal implements. As Pasenadi states, with his *former* understanding of the nature of his enemies, he trusted that they could be broken through the strategic counsels (*manta-yuddhā*; lit., "battle through counsel") of his great ministers (*mahāmattā*), who are his advisors (*mantino*). The king's new understanding of reality enables him to see that counsel through the members of his home court are *also* the wrong course of action,

given the circumstances.[83] Continuing the rhetorical structure reserved for the powers

resident in the king's household in the next discursive step, the king observes that the

domination typically gained through the depth of his treasury (*dhānayuddhānaṃ*) meets

the same fate.[84]

The text suggests that the advisors and the treasury were seen as the last basis of

power (or last barrier of protection?) around the king. Yet, even these primary means

kṣatriya use to defeat formidable enemies are no match for the new, real threat brought

home by the Buddhist community around this *sutta*.[85] Given this reality, the king is to

direct his zeal to the only action tenable in the eyes of the Buddhist community around

this text—and now to King Pasenadi with his change in perception—good conduct

directed at merit-making through walking in the *Buddha-dharma*.

Advising the King Allied to False Doctrines

In a manner more explicit than the Pāli *sutta* example above, the *Mahābodhi-*

Jātaka No. 23 of the *Jātakamālā (JāMā)* also problematizes a king' reliance on *nīti* or

artha. Yet they focus on their capacity to *mis*inform royal action.[86] For instance, the

Mahābodhi-Jātaka tackles the systems of *nīti* or *artha* and other warrior-based

knowledge (*kṣatra-vidyās*) as they might be applied or mis-applied. The object is to

challenge the *bases* of royal conduct (e.g., a *dharma* other than theirs), not only royal

conduct. The image of the king's conduct functions as a site for evaluating dharmic

systems. Thus, the ultimate advising relationship is the Buddha, or the *Buddha-dharma*.

Notably, in the *Mahābodhi-Jātaka*, the king of the story is *not aware* that he is in

need. How could he be when, in the story he is surrounded by many kinds of ministers

who advise him, supposedly keeping him aware? The problem is that this is a king in

relationship with the wrong advisors and his ignorance of his peril on account of it. Thus,

he needs not just a different advisor, but a radically different understanding of himself

and his needs. Here, the advisor is a renunciant named Mahābodhi—the *bodhisattva* who

becomes Śākyamuni Buddha in one of his lives as a *parivrājaka*, a wandering renunciant.

Mahābodhi daily engages in conversations with the king about things dharmic

(*dharmyābhiḥ kathābhiḥ*); these conversations kindly uplift (*anujagrāha*) the king,

moving him toward following the better path.[87] The king reciprocates with honors and

service to the needs of Mahābodhi, "like a student does a teacher."[88] The closeness of the

relationship causes consternation among the king's other advising ministers, who

undermine their bond by raising suspicion about Mahābodhi through slander and similar

means (*JāMā*, 23.4), an important means of influence I discuss later in Chapter Six. The

king, seduced by the court's whisperings, becomes less consistent with his hospitality and

affection (23.5).[89] As a result, Mahābodhi resolves to leave, since the king has become

deceptive toward other members of his court and thus is no longer receptive to the

dharma (23.7).[90] Nevertheless, he does not leave before revealing his insight into the

perfidy of the king and his court (23.8-9).[91] Mahābodhi's retreat leaves a vacuum, which

allows the ministers—hoping to fill it—to inveigle the king with their respective views of

reality (23.16-21).[92] These different views would be experienced as conflicting ways of

seeing the world that could lead to inaction on the king's part, but these views are also

leading the king to the brink of falling into error. With the king still unawares of his

predicament, Mahābodhi returns to save the king. The Bodhisattva, Mahābodhi, then

uses his illusion-making activity and discourse to refute the argument of each minister.

In many ways, this is a typical trajectory for a king's encounter with Śākyamuni as a *bodhisattva*. A king, ignorant of reality (leading to action of myriad kinds with varying degrees of misconduct), is made aware of reality in a dramatic manner (through artful discourse and sometimes through the use of some device), the impact of which leads to the creation of some kind of relationship to the *buddha-dharma-saṅgha*.[93] However, there is also a way in which it is not typical; because when the king enters the story he is not portrayed as being *a*dharmic in terms of his behavior towards others. Thus, it is more the case that the text depicts a '*dharma-less'* king's encounter with the Bodhisattva, not necessarily a king who acts contrary to *dharma*.

The privation of *dharma* becomes clear the moment the king is introduced in the story, and occurs again when Mahābodhi quits the king's company. In between, we learn neither the king's name nor his realm; only that he has heard of the Bodhisattva and seeks relationship with him because of his reputation (*JāMā*, 23.142, line 1).[94] Even so, the text is careful to show this king's acquaintance with custom, since he gives proper respect (*satkāram*), as is a *parivrājaka's* due, and a rest-house and grove, which is a *bodhisattva's* due.[95] Indeed, the king is at his best when in relationship with Mahābodhi. However, this relationship wanes in spite of the king's daily conversations about *dharma* with the Bodhisattva. Sharing assumptions about kings with the *Pañcatantra* and *Arthaśāstra* above, the text shows the ephemeral nature of good relations with kings, since his affection for Mahābodhi does not last. To preserve what affection they still held for each other (23.16), Mahābodhi set out from the king's realm, leaving the king again without *dharma*.[96] Here again the ministers around the king are a form of false advice-giving who get in the way of the real advice and real counsel the king needs.

Many forces contributed to the demise of the king-*bodhisattva* relationship in this text: conniving ministers, royal distrust, misplaced trust, mercurial emotions of the king, and the king's duplicity. These inter-subjective factors are characteristic of most advisor-king relationships; they also intersect with some of the darker aspects of kings discussed in the Brahmanical sections above.

Such watchfulness implies the associated states of suspicion and distrust; these are the very weakness that the king's ministers (acting as advisors here) use against the *bodhisattva*, Mahābodhi.[97] Indeed, the authors of the text understood that internal dangers could be cloaked in the typical external threats to royal court culture—foreign powers and foreign ideas about the workings of the world (*JāMā*, 23.143, ln.16-25). The text shows advisors raising the specter of spies from rival kings; playing on the risk implicit in every bestowal of trust to an outsider: "you should not put your trust in this wandering Bodhi."(ln. 18).[98] The ministers insinuate that the Bodhisattva knew too much of the sciences of rule and the envoys too well, *not* to be a spy (23.143, ln. 21-25).[99] Effectively tapping into any king's reserve of distrust and concern to protect his power, they put the Bodhisattva Mahābodhi into the role of secret agent; an insidious threat to kings across genres.[100]

In addition to questioning his loyalty, the advisors target the bodhisattva's *dharma*. The reason, according to the text, is that the ministers "resented the king's attachment to [*dharma*]" (23.143, ln. 16).[101] In order to undermine this attachment, they pit *kṣatriya* ethos and two common cultural paths of action against the *dharma* of Mahābodhi, suggesting his ideas are "at odds with the pursuit of profit and pleasure (*artha and kāma*)…and the role of a king" (23.143,ln. 22).[102] This is a gesture to the

trivarga system of action (*artha, kāma, dharma*) adhered to by *āryas* across the *varṇa*s. But other paths of action are converging at this point in the narrative as well: the *trivarga* system, the overarching aims of royal *śāstra*s, and the *dharma* of Mahābodhi. Inside the text, the ministers sow seeds of uncertainty about the person and teachings of Mahābodhi.

The ease with which the king begins to turn away from Mahābodhi signals some understanding of the mercurial nature of kings. The text attributes his turn to the advisors' emotional manipulations of the king, if not his vanity: "…a large number of people constantly urged the king to break with the bodhisattva, as though it were for his own good. And the effect was that his unbounded respect and affection shrank. He grew suspicious, and his attitude changed" (23.144.ln. 1-2).[103] By attending to the king's loss of confidence, love, and respect and his ready hospitality for the bodhisattva Mahābodhi, the text works to center competing ideologies in the fears and fickle affections of a king.

However, the perfidious emotions of the king are just a symptom of a greater problem—the values by which he lives. Thus, through Buddhist eyes the more significant weakness of kings is their attraction to other *dharma*s. The *Mahābodhi-Jātaka* evaluates the competing views held by the different advisors in the king's court. These are the targets of the remainder of the discourse of the bodhisattva Mahābodhi. The *jātaka* calls these competing ideologies the *dṛṣṭi-kṛta*.[104]

The most general sense of "views" is helpful in reading this text, since it is targeting extra-Buddhist views, not intra-Buddhist views (the prevailing concern of studies of them). A "view" (*dṛṣṭi*) functions as an organizing perspective in this sense, which one can use as a guide for the course of one's life; and yet by the same course can

lead one to conflict and pain, personal demerit and harm (*pāpam* and *vyasanam*) and can

obfuscate the way to happiness and awakening. [105]

Many non-Buddhist *dṛṣṭi* are challenged in this *jātaka*, but we learn a great deal

about particular *dṛṣṭi* through the bodhisattva's description of *Arthaśāstra*: "… the

methods prescribed by the *Arthaśāstra*…approves any act, good or bad, that is to one's

advantage…"[106] Mahābodhi is chastising the one who adheres to this view [a minister]

who had been trying to seduce his king to such expedients.

> [54] Now if this is a fine example of prudence according to your system, what sort
> of an aberration must it call imprudence? Oh! the effrontery of those who despise
> people so much that they cite treatises to preach error!"[107]

After showing the incongruence of each minister's actions in relation to his particular

ordering principle, he asks the king to consider:

> How could anyone who accepts the doctrine of an ordered universe commit a
> crime that neither the advocate of spontaneous creation, nor the determinist, nor
> the materialist, nor the adept in political science would do even for a brief
> glimmer of fame? [58] True or false, it is one's outlook that determines the way
> one chooses to behave, your excellency, for by choosing to do this or that
> according to what one believes, one illustrates one's belief by what one says or
> does. [59] For this reason one should act upon a good doctrine and give up a bad
> one that only showers one with misfortunes. By consorting with good people and
> keeping one's distance from the bad, one can achieve this.[108]

In this case, the *Buddha-dharma* in this tale saves the king from "the error of false

doctrines and set him and his court on the right road."[109]

It is only after all competing doctrines are dismissed, that the text's conception of

a behaviorally adharmic king comes into view. In the final moments of the tale (*JāMā*,

23. 67-70), Mahābodhi closes with a discourse about life *without dharma*. Such a king is

malefic because he does not exact justice or protect subjects; he harms *brāhmaṇas* and

śramaṇas or his subjects; dishonors his army, and fails to protect merchants, and the

like.[110] As this example suggests, a king *could* be aligned to other technologies of rule—*rājaśāstra*, as the text describes them, the ways of *nīti* and *artha*, devoted to his own aims and interests (or manipulated by the interests of his advisors, the implicit danger to kings who rely on advisors). Thus, the 'king in need' through Buddhist eyes is the one who follows *rājaśāstra*. His reliance on *rājaśāstra* and not on *Buddha-dharma* threatens his and his subjects' happiness and life to come.

Summary Remarks

Though scholars have painstakingly examined the varieties of the skillful and dharmic king and their relationships to *brāhmaṇa* and *śramaṇa* religious figures, our understanding of the history of the idea of the king in early Indian religious literature is improved for examining the darker side of kings, for this shows the ideas of power and how that power was argued to be in need of mediation by advisors. The depictions of "kings in need" in Brahmanical and Buddhist texts are narrative endeavors either to resolve or to attenuate the paradoxical nature of kings, by means of demonstrating again and again the needs such kings have for advisors. The narratives of the dark kings demonstrate some rather nuanced understandings of a king's tendencies toward excess and error. They also do a particular and important kind of rhetorical work. Given the complexity of bad kings discussed in these texts, these narratives can be characterized as a concerted endeavor in "mapping" royal natures with which advisors must contend. Moreover, in every case the key features of the resulting maps are the advisors, who mediate, ameliorate, or transform the frailties' of these dark kings, so that royal power can be exercised dharmically.

Recall the claim in the *Pañcatantra* example above—that "even a king a man can serve, even poison he can consume…if only he has the right skill." Here we see an important indication of the confidence in texts like the *Pañcatantra* of advisors' ability, if not mandate, to influence kings. The king's bad tendencies are the very qualities that advisors are supposed to have, which is the subject of the next chapter. Thus, the relationship between an advisor and king is perfectly complementary, even natural given a king's flawed nature.

So, as is evident in the examples above, each depiction of the unruly king—the one whose attitudes and actions are inimical to the flourishing of a kingdom and its subjects, who shirks the advice of elders and peers in these narratives—each problematic king is also made an exemplary field of advisory action. The lack of adherence to the respective systems of both Brahmanical and Buddhist communities are either symptoms of or causes for royal flaws. Rather, they direct kings to rely on such guidance. With the help of an advisor, a king can be good, and thus bring the success and flourishing that is necessary to sustain life. Moreover, a king can be kept that way when he has properly turned to relationship with a dharmic system through the words and person of a Brahmanical or Buddhist expert advisor.

With a sense of his dark natures, the "king in need" emerges as a necessary figure to the ideations and demonstrations of success that can be gained by kings who cultivate proper relationship with the Brahmanical and Buddhist advisors. With this understanding of the dark king in need of advice, we are in a position to proceed to a discussion of the idealized advisors, an intellectual history of them, and of the qualities deemed necessary to be a good advisor.

Chapter 5: Into the Darkness of Kings and Rule: The Ideal Advisor

> *The learned know that a place made difficult because of darkness can be passed through by means of fire, and one that is impassable because of water can be crossed by means of boats, yet there is no strategy for penetrating that made difficult by a king.* (*Mahābhārata,* 12.83.40)[1]

The attentions paid to the 'king in need' by these religious communities presented in the preceding chapter, and the communities' presumptions that they are the solution to royal need, point to a paradoxical premise. Namely, that the power to rule and the ability to rule according to *dharma*, or even *to be dharmic,* is located and imagined in the king, while at the same time such power is never *exclusively* imagined in the king. Others act as a king's eyes, ears, and arms. Therefore, the aphorism above would strike a negative chord for anyone asserting that there is a cadre of persons who might help a king to see more clearly into the mysteries of rule. The general claim of this wisdom saying stresses that the king *should* use someone to guide him in his affairs, even while it points out the difficulty of doing so. Thus, the argument of this chapter follows on that of the previous chapter: Royal power, while inevitably imagined as centered on the king, is argued for—across traditions and genres of texts—as ideally and necessarily shared by kings with (ideal) advisors. Who those ideal advisors are, and what are their qualities, thus become the focal point of discussion in these texts, and in this chapter. Previously, we learned the manner in which religious communities attempted to resolve or mitigate a king's power in their texts by depicting the king in various states of need. In this chapter, we learn how Brahmanical and Buddhist communities idealize advisors and ministers to mitigate the danger of the kings' need to rely on their advice. Whereas the idealized "king in need"

served as the locus of dharmic evaluation, the idealized advisors serve as the locus of dharmic solutions.

The sage (*muni*) who voiced the *subhāṣita* above did not intend anything so general as to claim royal affairs were impenetrable to mediation. Rather, he generalized to make a dramatic, particular point: This king's kingdom (of Kosala) was so fraught with corruption and error that even the king—in all his power—"is not able to rest secure in it"[2] (*MBh*, 12.83.4). This is an interesting assertion, since the sage then proceeded to beg the king to listen to his own words about the condition of his kingdom. The advising words were really a signal for the king to shift his trust from his crooked ministers to him (the sage, Kālakavṛkṣīya, also refers to himself as a (*amātya*) "minister" (12.83.32).[3] The sage is referring to a dynamic of trust or reliance that all the literature embraces or problematizes in some way, in their depictions of kings in scenarios of dependence on ministers, advisors, teachers (*ācārya*, *guru* and *bhikṣu*) and relatives to augment his rule. Even as advisors and ministers stand as mediators of royal activities, this mediation often involves dangerous exchanges of power and apprehensive trusts.

There are risks for all parties involved in the relationship: Kings are at risk from the advisors and ministers they choose; advisors enter into a risk state by counseling and acting for a king; *rājanya* brothers and uncles are at risk given the realities of regicide and fratricide; and a king's royal subjects are always at risk, from the king himself and from royal associates that mediate his power. In the evidence that follows, it becomes apparent that the Brahmanical and Buddhist creators of these texts were in part working to mitigate the risks involved in advisory relationships by creating the ideal advisor and minister for the relationship. So, in addition to knowing the best counsel to give the king

in any royal circumstance, the person who successfully fills the role of advisor does so by navigating through the complexities and dangers of dealing with royal power.

In the idealizations of advisors and ministers that follow, the texts presume that exemplary personal attainments and markers of integrity make persons good advisors to a king; the texts also presume such attainments and signs of integrity make advisors trustworthy to be in a close relationship with the king. Trust and the markers of trust important to cultivating relationships recur across the different genres. We will see that the natures of these trust-markers vary: In *dharma* genres like the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu, the place where an advisor or minister was born, his "native place," is an important boundary of eligibility for trustworthiness. The heredity of advising ministers—whether they come from a family of ministers—as a mark of trustworthiness was a matter of contention, if not ongoing debate, if we consider examples from the *Pañcatantra*. Throughout the examples to follow, the factors that make for trust, the emotions that the exemplary advisor must refrain or master, the intellectual attainment he must master are cast through various idealized interactions. Thus, the representation of the ideal advisor *relationship* is as significant as any abstract ideal, such as intelligence, bravery, or moral conduct. Power and *dharma* are mediated entities in these texts, and as a result there is an ubiquitous concern with human relationships and how to perfect them in the royal setting.

The representation of advisors and ministers centers around two poles of ideal qualities—the ideal *nature* of the advisor and minister and the ideal *means* of the advisor and minister. Through this analysis we will see a broad movement from a ritual role and increasingly idealized qualities, to a mediated role based in dynamics of intimacy and

inter-subjectivity. In addition, there are increasing levels of detail and abstraction around these inter-subjective models of mediation.

There is an important caveat to my suggestion here: Judging by occurrences in Pāli and Sanskrit Buddhist discourses, Buddhist communities concerned with the idea of the advisor in early India are deliberately simplistic on the subject of advising kings. Across the genres in many examples—where a Buddha, *bodhisattva* or monk is depicted advising kings—the ideal advisor and ideal means revolve around the qualities of Buddha Śākyamuni and those who represent him (who also function just like him). Buddhist communities around the texts offered a simplified, yet infinitely efficacious (the "talismanic") alternative to Brahmanical elaborations of ideals for advisors—the infinitely best of men, a Buddha, *bodhisattva* or monk and the perfections or stages of attainment he exemplifies. As a result, the Buddhist section of analysis in this chapter is relatively brief. This does not mean that Buddhist ideas of advisors will emerge as functioning in ways any less than as the closest associates to kings in these discourses.

Some of what follows may initially seem like a simple enumeration of a list; however, it is important to have these many ideas of advisors in view for two interrelated reasons. First, they help us understand in a nuanced way the competing and interrelated ideals about advisors and their means of advising in Brahmanical and Buddhist communities. Second, the broad net of significations of reliance, of which these images of advisors are part, are easier to see when compared not only across Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions, but also across genres of texts within these traditions. The many ideals also provide a means to consider how these communities tried to imagine and

manage the trajectory of their dharmic histories in relation to the persons who have the power to affect the course of their lives—the advisors and ministers acting for kings.

Though it is an extreme simplification of the subtlety and complexity of advising ideals presented in these texts, we may say, by way of providing a point of orientation and departure for the analysis of genres and texts in this chapter, that different genres and their texts will tend to foreground as a dominant theme a particular aspect of the ideal advisor or relationship. For instance, we will see in Manu an argument for elite Brahmins (those who truly know the *Veda*) as the ideal advisors, and especially those of the "native place" of the king. Kauṭilya will tend to foreground and articulate more of the formal roles of various advisors (and the kinds of relationships implied in those roles. The *Pañcatantra*, with its emphasis on brief narratives that present two sides of a situation, will tend to emphasize the skills inherent in an ideal advisor, in contrast (sometimes explicit) with criteria of blood, birthplace, or formal roles. Finally in the Brahmanical materials, the *Mahābhārata*, with its extended complex narratives, brings into the foreground the inter-subjective dynamics of kings and a range of their advisors, across a range of advising scenarios, extended through time. And the Buddhist materials present the greatest contrast to all of these roles, relations, and narratives, with the Buddha (or his stand-ins) as the ultimate ideal advisor. But, the complexity and variety matter, as this chapter will show. So, to step into these discourses of ideal advisors in relation to 'kings in need,' let us begin with a story, as so many of these texts do.

Setting the Scenario: The Sage, the Minister, and a Dead Crow

There are many ways in which the literature of kings attempts to address the two-sided problem of the need for others to rule, and the danger of needing others to rule.

Some discussions of the paradox deal with advisors' and ministers' personal natures; others attempt to envision a role or office. In order to lay out the structure of my analysis in this chapter, I continue with the story from which I quoted the *subhāṣita* at the beginning of this chapter. In the narrative, Yudhiṣṭhira (Pāṇḍava king in the *Mahābhārata*) begins with a poignant query to his own counselor in the *Śāntiparvan*: What kind of person should a king trust, and who should not be trusted (*MBh*, 12.81.2)?[4] Bhīṣma, his advisor in this context, addresses various dimensions of the king's questions over three chapters (12.81-83). He uses an "ancient account of what the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya said to the king of Kosala"[5] (12.83.5) to illustrate the results of one king's misperception and misplaced trust in bad ministers. The tensions that emerge in the story are the ones we are dealing with in this chapter, so it provides a good entry for thinking about the ideal mediator of a king's power and *dharma*.

In this story (12.83.5-65) a peripatetic *muni* named Kālakavṛkṣīya, wandered the realm of a newly ascendant Kosalan king, Kṣemadarśin, with a crow. He displayed the crow to persons around the countryside, and reported to people of the various communities what the bird observed (12.83.7-8). The crow noted the number of crops harvested and reported to the treasury, he observed the number of persons detained or taxed by ministers in the name of the king; in this way he "would inquire into the misdeeds of all the king's employees as he moved among men throughout the kingdom" (12.83.9).[6] Kālakavṛkṣīya reported the crow's words for him, metaphorically speaking, and created authority for the crow throughout the land as an astute observer of royal activities. The sage used the crow as testimony before the king about the corruption among his officials, stating with no uncertain irony (given he was a *muni*), "I know

everything" (12.83.11).[7] By this time, the ministers' fears of being revealed for their crimes had so escalated that they killed the crow in his cage as the *muni* lay sleeping next to it (12.83.15). The crime provided the opportunity for the sage to teach the king about court behavior and his responsibility to it. His topics involve royal corruption in his royal ministers and friends, and for all these laid bare the importance of loyalty.

In this story, the fundamental need of ministers is clear, as is the risk to the *rājyam* that choosing others to govern involves. Yet, the ministers took advantage of their appointment and stole from the treasury, the king, and ultimately, the kingdom—a fundamental negative observation about ministers conveyed in Buddhist and Brahmanical literature alike. The threat to the person *acting* as advisor to the king is evident in the murder of the crow. Just who could or should advise became obvious in the story—the clever sage who knew enough to use the bird to hide his own reconnaissance on behalf of the king. His perspicacity and honesty emerge as fundamental qualities. In this case, the *brāhmaṇa muni* as the wise seer or sage is posed against ministers as a more astute observer of royal affairs, as well as interpreter of them. He functions as counselor, who in this case is the ultimate mediator.

One dimension of the story stresses that there are reliable figures of integrity beyond the general and the often dubious cadre of ministers. The story argues for the *brāhmaṇa* sage: The sage can assure that the king is more aware, can see how his kingdom is progressing, and can keep the king to actions consistent for the good of the *rājyam*. As tropes, sage-like persons provide a moment within the tale for reflection on the action or presumptions of the tale. But more crucial to rule *per se* is the authoritative social value of the wisdom—the "gnomic currency"—that the sage is perceived to

possess. This same kind of authority leads persons who function as sages—whether *ācārya, bhikṣu/bhikkhu, guru*, or queen mother—to presume to give advice to a king in the first place.

The gnomic currency in this example comes from the sage's position as a holy man, from the reality that kings employed sages to spy on his subjects, and from his being a wandering sage—remote from the trappings of being in the royal world, or "of the world" and not tempted by the economic concerns at court. And of course, there is an ideological assertion—kings should listen to sages. I chose this story not for its uniqueness, but for its generality: There are many stories like this. In their prevalence, the many examples across the genres reveal that religious communities are straining to describe the multi-dimensionality of the role of advising ministers and counselors. Many sage-like persons—teachers, sage-advisors, monks, wise friends, mothers and wives—are included in narrative depictions of advising ideals.

This complexity (and abstraction, in some genres) also reveals competing and complementary currencies of wisdom. There are such currencies based in ritual mastery, family status (for instance queens as keepers of *kṣatriya dharma*), and "lineage" (*sampradāya* or *sasana* in Pāli *Nikāyas*): Queens, monks, *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* "family" (*kula*) advisors, *brāhmaṇa* advisors and ministers assume the role. In terms of Kālakavṛkṣīya's gnomic currency in this *itihāsa*, the text stresses the knowledge the sage possesses on two levels; that which he understands about the king's kingdom and that which he knows from his status as *muni*.

First, we learn that he came to the king, having become aware (*sa buddhvā*) of the goings on in his realm and is "aware of all this and that" (*ca sarvān buddhvā tatas tataḥ*)

(12.83.10). The text then reveals Kālakavṛkṣīya's knowledge and authority created by his religious praxis: *sarvajño 'smīti… saṃśitavrataḥ,* "The man of strict vows" [said]," 'I know everything'" (12.83.11).[8] In this example, the text is posing a trustworthy *brāhmaṇa* muni as the solution to the king's corrupt ministers. He adjures the king to check his ministers, and reinforces the need to rely on them; as he states to the king, "…how can you trifle with your rule, which rests ultimately with your ministers (*amātya*)?" (12.83.64). In the eyes of the creators of this story, Kālakavṛkṣīya is the *real* minister to trust, which the text supports with the happy ending of Kālakavṛkṣīya's appointment as "court priest" (*purohitakula*). With the muni in his court, the king accomplished what he ought to do: "…brought the earth under one parasol [unified *rājanya* kingdoms)… [and] governed the land, acting in accordance with what he heard in this helpful speech" (12.83.65).[9]

His appointment as court priest puts an end to the trajectory of roles Kālakavṛkṣīya assumed in order to help the king rule properly. The varieties of roles assumed by this sage—wise-person-qua-minister-advisor—demonstrates once again the unfixed nature of advisor categories (depending on genre), which I discussed earlier. The story of Kālakavṛkṣīya and his crow and the narrative progression devoted to the question of 'whom to trust' of which it is a part (*ākhyānas*12.81-83) is a case in point. The narrative begins with categories of 'advisor/minister' with *sacivan* ("associates"), but the text also uses the words *amātya* and *sahāya*. The *brāhmaṇa* sage calls himself an *amātya*, but the crooked ministers the sage exposes are also *amātya* or *rājāmātya* (royal ministers). The narrative also has the sage declare that he came to the king "for the sake of a friend" (*mitrārtham*), "out of whole-hearted loyalty"(*bhaktyā sarvātmanā),* so the

king should bear with the unpleasant advice to come, of this close of a friend (*suhṛda)*
(12.83.17-20).[10] His loyalty stands in glaring contrast to that of his other *amātya*s: an
ideological assertion typical of the contending values occurring in royal courts.[11] As you
can see, this *brāhmaṇa muni* was imagined as encompassing all advisory needs of the
king—from the wandering spy (reconnaissance with his crow), to the minister, "friend"
(*mitram*) at court and friend closer to the heart *(hṛdaya)*, to the wise *muni* advisor that
trumps all advisors at court, and the court priest.

The story of Kālakavṛkṣīya and the crow also raises questions about the scale and
scope of intimacy and proximity to royalty in its descriptions of the sage's journey to the
king and his authority to be there. First, the sage and his crow are shown wandering
"among men of the kingdom" (12.83.9);[12] where he encountered the crooked minsters
outside and *around* Kṣemadarśin's kingdom. Subsequently, the sage saw these same
figures when he came to the king's *gṛham*, "home" intimately assembled around the king
(12.83.13-14). The term, *gṛham*, suggests a court smaller in scale and greater in intimacy
than the slightly more formal denomination of *rājakula* or *saṅgha*, for "royal court" or
"assembly," as in other examples.[13]

In sum, this family of royal intimates and associates, religious and perfective
sage-types are functional counterparts to the cadre of persons that typically help kings
rule. As stated earlier, three consistent categories of persons helped a king negotiate his
power and the dictates of royal *dharma* in early India: *mahāmātras* or *mahāmattas*,
Sanskrit and Prakrit, respectively (administrative officers or royal functionaries), *saciva*
or *sahāya* (associates), *mantri-saciva* or *mati-saciva* (counselors) and *amātya* or *amacca*

(ministers), with these terms and associated varieties of them spanning literatures and eras.

As with any figure that is elaborated and idealized through time in normative literature, the nature of these various royal associates' actions and qualities expand and contract through traditions and periods within traditions. Their depiction and function in the literature is multi-faceted as a result; but this is only in part due to the changes that come with time. The diversity of depiction of advisors and ministers is due also to the fact that they are idealized figures occurring in different cultures of normativity—Vedic, śāstric, *sutra/sutta*, as will emerge below. Even so, the common functions are important to stress. In spite of this diversity, two basic functions remain: Advisors and ministers help kings perform royal actions (to rule, rightly) and help him to be the dharmic figure that the traditions imagine him to be: But more than assist, advisors and ministers *mediate* his power and authority. And, the best of advisors direct the king back to himself, to his role as king.[14]

Epigraphy—Material Ideals of Advisors and Ministers

The story of Kālakavṛkṣīya and the crow introduced many of the themes important in this chapter. Let us turn now to investigate these themes in the epigraphic data. Given the overall concern of religious communities to imagine 'the king in need' of advisors and to position themselves as advisors in order to meet royal needs, it may seem ironic that the first material institution of ideal mediators of royal power and *dharma* was made by a king. During his reign, King Aśoka instituted a system of reliance on *dharma* and accountability to *dharma* in order to assure the happiness of his subjects. Aśoka's

inscriptions attest to a system of important officers that rule and mediate for the king—the *mahāmātras* and *dhamma-mahāmatta*s. Many scholars tie Aśoka's *mahāmātra* and *dhamma-mahāmātra* officers to the figure of the *amātya* (minister) so prevalent in later dynasties,[15] such as the Kuṣāṇa and Śuṅga dynasties, the early Guptas in the north, continuing into the early medieval Vākāṭakas and Sātavāhanas in the Deccan regions.[16] Though these figures are inscribed in rock, and hence given the verity of antiquity and history; still in Aśoka we have the first idealized mediator of royal power and *dharma*, which subsequent kings emulate and elaborate.

Aśoka instituted various "officers" to help him rule—the *yuktas, rājukas, and prādeśīkas* (and varieties of these)—but *mahāmātras* / *mahāmatta*s were the officials designed to watch these officers and their activities on his behalf. [17] The king engaged other *mahāmātras* to observe these, and stipulated regular intervals for the eyes of regional officers (*kumala*, the later *kumāra*, sons of royalty) to watch these.[18] Though these had important functions, the ultimate eyes for Aśoka's royal activities came with his creation (in the thirteenth year of his reign) of the *dhamma-mahāmatta*s or *dharma-mahāmātras*, officers engaged in promoting the well-being of his kingdom and the sects within it. As he states of these officers in the Third Rock Edict of Shahbāzgarhi, the *mahāmātras* work with all sects in establishing *dharma*, promoting *dharma*, and for the welfare and happiness of those devoted to *dharma*.[19] This is a *dharma* concerned with "the essentials of all sects" and a baseline stance of respect for all persons.[20]

The *dharma* Aśoka sought to inculcate in his realm is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the *dharma* he expected of his officers is not. The most involved instructions on how his officers and *dharma* officers were to behave occur in his most remote regions.

They are to act on his behalf with the object of gaining the affection of all men for him, and also with impartiality in administering justice in his kingdom. He notes several dispositions that his officers should avoid to assure proper administration; they fail from acting out of envy, anger (*āṣulopa,* "quick infatuation"), cruelty, hurry, "want of practice" (lack of skill), laziness and fatigue.[21]

Moreover, just as important to his *dharma* for his officers is the system Aśoka recommends to assure they adhere to it. Aśoka proclaimed that officers were to hear his ruling three times per year (each *Tiṣya*). Every five years another *mahāmātra* was to come to the region to assure that royal officers were treating Aśoka's subjects as they should. Every three years a prince would send someone to observe royal functionaries. And finally, to demonstrate that the prince was not immune from observations, another officer was to come from another region to check on him. [22] Aśoka's inscriptions provide the first record of a king acting to assure that *dharma* is being mediated properly, if not our first record of a king's concern for *dharma* with respect to his entire kingdom and not strictly Brahmanical *dharma* we have seen in other sources. Many dharmic figures in *itihāsa* call for a king to mind his officers; their call for a check on unscrupulous ministers resonates with just such a system as this.[23]

In the inscriptions of the later Gupta dynastic era, the concerns over unscrupulous mediators of a king's power and *dharma* are absent. Ministers declare their goodness before all, or the kings do for them, as a mark of their authority to perform duties with or on behalf of the king. By this time, ministers have garnered more power, and the roles that they could fill have become more complex. The stress on being of a line of ministers is present here too, but without the ambiguity about their qualities. A good example of

this occurs in a donative royal inscription for a cave dwelling to a devotee of Śambu established by King Chandragupta II, with the help of his minister, Vīrasena. The inscriptional declaration shows the minister's pride in his *anvaya-prāpta-sācivyaḥ*, appointment as minister through his lineage. Here, associate *(saciva)* has become generalized out of its more intimate associations in early Vedic genres into a general ministerial position. The declaration of his position as the *sandhivigrāha*, "minister of peace and war, who is in the service of the "king of kings" (*rājādhirāja*) Chandragupta II (c. 380 CE-413/414 CE), is also his declaration of his authority to inscribe for the king.[24]

This minister's being of the lineage of his father is a mark of excellence. His qualities that make him a minister of such position are inscribed also, in words of attainment that are formulaic for Gupta declarations: "[This man] who has been entrusted with the office of Peace and War, is Vīrasena, of the Kutsa *gotra*, known by the family-name of Śāba, conversant with grammar, polity, logic and popular usage and Custom, a poet—*śabd-ārttha-nyāya-lōkajñaḥ-kaviḥ*—and inhabitant of Pāṭaliputra."[25] Part of the minister's character includes his lineage (of Śāba) and intellectual pedigree (signaled by the declaration of his *gotra*).

The qualities that make this minister able to make declarations for the king are his mastery of the social and rhetorical sciences of his day—grammar, polity, logic, custom and poetry. "Mastery of regional custom," (*lokajñaḥ*) would be very important: It is the way in which kings would be sensitive to how his words would be received and given, and how he and his officers should behave in various contexts.[26] There are enough differences between contexts for a science to be devoted to it. These laws are a reflection of a more complex polity formation. *Nyāya* here is a term both general and specific that

requires care in interpreting it. *Nyāya* sometimes is merely one structural basis of

analyzing data. [27] *Nyāya* also denotes deliberative logic and the intellectual rules that

might obtain in a particular court or ethnic context. [28] These characteristics would give

ministers the skill to make important declarations for the king at court and in the field,

two areas that were this minister's ambit of authority. But just as important as ideal

intellectual attainments such as these is the fact that a minister's virtues are publicized as

much as were the kings, and that the two appeared together in inscriptions as

authoritative figures.

The eloquence required of an advisor in more complex dynastic settings would be

used not only to influence the king and other *rājanya* at court, but the people and gods

also. Ranking advisors and ministers for kings would compose the dedications inscribed

at temples (often built through the economy of the king and/or his wealthy associates),

erect dedications to regional manifestations of gods, designate *brāhmaṇas* to engage in

perpetual rituals, and dedicate images and other votive offerings at groves and grottos for

the merit (Buddhist construed) of the royal family.[29] Inscriptions laud and *śāstra* uphold

ideals that ministers must possess knowledge of custom, of beautiful and eloquent

speech, and of military prowess. Through their knowledge of custom and mastery of

language, these marks of efficacious communication, also gave skilled advisors and

ministers the means to command royal domains.

Inscriptions such as these are a genre of court discourse, and inscriptional activity

is another source for thinking about how normative ideals and the power of them played

out in the relationships between ministers and kings. Friendship, intimacy, birth and kin

(direct family and the extended family of *rājanya*) are consistent forces in the ideation of

advisors, ministers and kings. From the primary relation of the "close associate" (*saciva* or *sahāya*) of kings and its generalizations (*amātya* and *mantrin*, etc.) to the larger scale expressions of this relationship in formal advisory and ministerial roles as in the Gupta era, the intimacy of birth, blood, and royal body persist in importance. Qualities that elevate a minister or advisor to the closeness of mediation of royal power and wisdom reach an institutionalized expression of intimate associate with the king, the title of *kumārāmatya*, who was not an ordinary *amātya*, but one "entitled in court etiquette to the honor and dignity of kumāra or prince of the royal blood."[30] Intimacy and royal birth become qualities bestowed, rather than merely born in more complex royal formations. As we shall see below, they are also contested qualities in śāstric and *Mahābhārata* traditions.

Brahmanical Contexts and the Ideal Advisor

Titles and the Title-Less—Teachers, Advisors, Family and Other Ideals

As emerged in my discussion of genres with respect to advisors and advisory relationships in Chapter Three, each genre shapes the ideals of ministers and advisors in its own way. Various *dharma*s shape these ideas as well, but I reserve the dharmalogical analysis for Chapter Seven. Idealized advisors pass through multiple permutations in the various Brahmanical contexts. The inclination is to privilege the śāstric over other examples, since placement, roles and idealization of ministers and advisors appear most clearly in those texts; however, such a strategy would obscure non-śāstric idealizations of advisors and ministers. Therefore, it is better to start this story of the ideal advisor in

Brahmanical contexts with what appears as the figure's simplest association with the king

and move out from there to more complex iterations of the role of the advisor/minister

(which are frequently conflated here). The Vedic *Saṃhitās* ritually depict the persons

working in close relationships with the king; with ritual the binding force between a king

and his associates. In addition to ritualized bonds of relationship, we will see ideals of

the advisor characterized by bonds of kinship and marriage, and the bonds involving

exchange of knowledge. All of this is informed by varieties of inter-subjective modes of

advisor mediation.

The discussion of the Brahmanical materials will begin with the Vedic (primarily

Brāhmaṇa and *Upaniṣadic* examples), and then proceed through representative

occurrences in *śāstra* and the normative histories (*itihāsa*). A person may act as an

advisor with only a rudimentary title; in other examples, advisory roles are presumed

from the person having proximity to the king. In each case, whether title of minister and

advisor is held or not, the literatures depict certain kinds of persons in special relationship

to the king who have this kind of access and importance. Although formal title may not

indicate someone acting as advisor, we can count on scenarios of proximity, access and

intimacy to give place for friends, family, ministers, and counselors to act as mediators of

wisdom and *dharma* to kings.

Jewels of Reliance (Ratnin)

Perhaps the earliest figures depicted in both special and routinized relationships to

the king are the *ratnin-s*, or "jewel-holders" found in Vedic *Saṃhitās*.[31] They figure

prominently in royal consecratory rituals (*rājasūya)* [32], such as the *Vājapeya* sacrifice and

in the *ratnahavīṃṣi* segment of the *rājasūya* ritual in *Brāhmaṇa* literature, where the king presents ritual gifts to each *ratnin* as part of the ritual's progression.[33] On the whole, Indian scholars perceive the jewel-holders in the ratnahavīṃṣi as key to understanding the "political organization of the Aryans in the later Vedic period." [34] Sharma sees in these ratnins the precursors to the seven limbs of power that emerge in detail in *Dharmaśāstra* such as Manu.[35] Two of the texts that contain the ritual have the king articulate that "the ratnins as the sustainers of his realm" and the "limbs of ruling power."[36] In other words, the two texts voice a ritualized reliance of the king on his associates.

These figures vary with a particular *Brāhmaṇa* or *Saṃhitā*, although there are commonalities enough to list and group them.[37] Five of these texts contain a cadre of royal ratnin-s: Eleven jewels are common to all, and twelve are common to a majority of them.[38] R.S. Sharma and others have elucidated these jewels in detail,[39] but here I will focus only on those ratnin that also occur in scenarios of counsel or ministry in other sources, such as the *Mahābhārata* or even *Jātaka* (in Buddhist sources). These are the *brāhmaṇa* priest (*purohita* in some *Brāhmaṇa* texts), *rājanya* (symbolic king), *mahiṣī* (primary queen), *senānī* (military leader), and the *sūta* (court chronicler).[40] Some scholars assume that these characters served advisory and ministerial roles to kings (even as they point out that we cannot know this for certain).[41] Others see the *amātya*, *saciva*, and *mantrin* as their functional replacements.[42] Though the jewels' function as advisors may not be clear from the text, the *ratnin*'s symbolic importance to the king is clear, which suggests at least a ritualized dependence of the king on these figures.

As we know from J. C. Heesterman's study of the ritual, the king goes to the house of each *ratnin* and makes an offering to each one. The ritual exchange is based on

the qualities of each *ratnin*, with the preferred ritual offering given to the deity associated with each jewel-holder. For instance, at the house of the primary queen, the offering is made to the goddess Aditi; at the house of the *rājanya* ("royal person"), the king's offering is made to Indra, since it is the house of a warrior, and the king is seeking to reinforce the powers of being a warrior. Though the presentation at each house may be different in kind, the focus here is on the symbolic reliance—the reliance of the king on the jewel-holder—that is reinforced in the ritual cycle.

The figure common to all conceptions of *ratnin-s* is the *brāhmaṇa* or *purohita*,[43] who appears in scenarios of counsel through most of the literature considered in this dissertation. The *brāhmaṇa*, and later the *purohita,* we know from the various *Saṃhitās* as a sacrificer to the deities. [44] In royal contexts, *brāhmaṇas* were educators of kings and performers of the consecration sacrifices (such as the *rājasūya*), demonstrating various levels of complexity in their ritual function in each *Brāhmaṇa* text. As the king goes to the home of the *brāhmaṇa* to make an offering to Bṛhaspati there, the king's offering to the *brāhmaṇa*'s deity stresses his importance as priest to the gods.[45]

But the *brāhmaṇa*'s function within the *ratnahavīṃṣi* ritual also leads us to consider the relationship between king and *brāhmaṇa*. As a 'jewel-holder' in the *ratnahavīṃṣi*, he demonstrates the formal relationship that could be had with the king: A relationship characterized by presentation of power (in the form of gifts), surrender (in the accepting of gifts) and exchange of promise (a continued relationship). The 'promise' is that a *brāhmaṇa* be present to the king, through his overall function as *brāhmaṇa* in royal contexts—reciting appropriate *mantras*, formulating remedies, pacifying deities or marshaling them as resources for royal use.[46]

The next figure in the list is usually the *rājanya*, or "royal person," whose presence in the ritual suggests that the bonds of kin were basic to the early depictions of relationships to the king; indeed, his associates were relatives of some kind, either by marriage or descent. The term *rājanya* is frequently translated as "prince," but this over-stresses the distinction between the *rājanya* and the consecrated king, rājan: The *rājan* was a *rājanya*. According to Sharma, the *rājanya* refers to the royal house in general, which would of course include the king. Jayaswal—who used Pāṇini and his commentators in order to understand this *ratnin* better—follows suit, suggesting **t**hat *rājanya* were "the leaders of families consecrated to rulership [*sic*]."[47] They occur as aids or mock combatants in various ritual segments of the *rājasūya* sacrifice designed to test and demonstrate the king's military skill (archery task, cattle raid, chariot command). These actions are likely only ritual expressions of the same activities in which *rājanya* and kings engaged, for *rājanya* families trained in martial arts together, tested and improved each other. Actions such as these would be easy enough to engage since the relationships between the *rājanya* were likely affinal or cognate.[48] For Sharma, a representative *rājanya* in the ritual itself stresses the dependence of the king on his "royal kinsmen."[49]

The queen or *mahiṣī* (primary queen) as jewel-holder is the figure that leads Heesterman to presume that affinal relationships are fundamental to understanding the ratnins. The *mahiṣī* occurs in all lists as the third *ratnin* in the *ratnahavīṃṣi* ritual, except for the ritual as it occurs in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, where she is fourth, following the "sacrificer." Indologists have typically explained the queen as jewel-holder in terms of her sexual function to the king; with Euro-American scholars largely enamored of the

mock copulation in which she engages in the *Aśvamedha* (horse sacrifice).[50] Some

Indian scholars prefer the conceptions of wifely duty and her function of completing the

king's nature or power on the throne as the proper interpretation of her function. [51]

Sharma sees no such conception in the ritual but prefers to see the queen as symbolic

source of fecundity for humans, like the goddess Aditi.[52]

The *mahiṣī's* function in providing progeny is clear, as well as her function as

companion in power. Two other consorts often are numbered among the *ratnin*, the "set

aside" wife (*parivṛkti)* (set aside for being childless) and the "favorite wife" (*vāvātā*).[53]

The "set aside" wife receives honors from the king also.[54] Scholars argue that she is

propitiated in this way since she is a source of danger.[55] Besides their sexual function, all

three female jewels emerge in other literature in positions of counsel and support to the

king, as we shall see; in the case of Kuntī—a vestigial jewel in the Pāṇḍava court—

queens can be special interpreters of *dharma*, which makes them especially qualified to

counsel a king.

The *senānī* (leader of army) and the *sūta* (charioteer), discussed earlier, are the

two remaining jewels of interest here. These are the *ratnin* associated with clan prowess

or military might and the chronicling of history; the *senānī* and the *sūta* (also the

chronicler for his king).[56] The *senānī* is believed to have aided the king in maintaining

the safety of his kingdom and to aid him in military affairs. The *sūta* is an important

figure in the life of a king, especially as the keeper of the history of the king's endeavors

for his realm.[57] As a king's charioteer and chronicler, the *sūta* would be a particularly

intimate associate. Serving as the king's charioteer, the *sūta* would go anywhere that the

king went. And, as his chronicler, the *sūta* would accumulate and report on activities for

the king at the end of a tour or expedition. [58] These reports would place the king within

his own history; viewing his actions through the eyes of his sūta. The *senānī* and the *sūta*

are ritually honored by the king, which demonstrates the king's reliance on them as

sources of power and awareness.

Most studies of ancient Indian polity assume that the existence of the ratnin and

the actions within the *ratnahavīṃṣi* ritual indicate that the jewels functioned as a "king's

council."[59] Heesterman has asserted that their importance as indicators of a formal king's

council is unlikely, given the inclusion of royal wives and family members in the list of

ratnins, who "at best…may be considered household officials, who, of course, according

to the needs of the moment, may be entrusted with all sorts of charges not covered by

their designations."[60] Heesterman underestimates the importance of household members

as "officials" in this regard. Even if these family figures were not officials in a formal

sense, it is nevertheless reasonable to understand them as being entrusted with

advisor/counselor responsibilities (as Heesterman notes). Sharma observes correctly that

assistance to the king at this time would not be as differentiated into political functions in

the manner that scholars such as Jayaswal claim, nor would there be any baseline of

political stratification that Heesterman seemed to expect.[61] However, Sharma points out

that several examples stress the 'political' importance the figures of the ritual had for the

king.[62] Each *ratnin* can be seen as representative of various working relationships with

the king, relationships that the ritual instigates, affirms, and celebrates. Moreover, even

though the function of the *ratnins* outside of the ritual context is not clear, the king's

reliance on them is reinforced in the ritual context.

Heesterman states that his analysis of the *ratnins* shows that "kingship is constituted by the network of personal relations; it cannot transcend it."[63] But even though he notes there is this "network of personal relations" on which the king relies, he does so only in passing. Heesterman thus suggests that networked power structures are not necessarily strong structures of power. If this is Heesterman's meaning, then his analysis misconstrues the importance of this "network of personal relation" to royal power. Instead, Heesterman suggests that kings are empowered only through sacrificial forces, and gives no credence to royal relatives or to the other jewels.[64] In my view, however, the power and counsel gained in the "household sphere," as he describes it, should not be underestimated. This sphere, shaped by kin and marriage, will magnify the dictates of *dharma* in royal scenes occurring in other literature. As we shall see, more relationships than sacrificial ones will emerge as sources of power for the king.

These various jewel-holders are salient components of the ritualized dependence of kings beginning to form in Vedic cultures of rule. The working relations established and reinforced in the *ratnahavīṃṣi* ritual provide explicit examples of attempts to manage crucial intimate relationships between the person of the king and others. The king's ritual dependence on the jewels also marshals particular qualities of the jewels to forms of power for the king to use. Intimate reliances between queens, the *rājanya*, and the sūta are established and reified in this ritual setting that are only assumed or unstated with their appearances in subsequent genres. However unstated these might be, the generative powers of these figures remain part of the growing net of signification of royal reliance.

Upaniṣadic Ideals of Dialogue

As in the *Brāhmaṇa and Saṃhitā* examples above, there is no formal position of advisor, counselor or minister in early Upaniṣadic literature. But we do see another kind of reliance by the king on those around him—a reliance on the wisdom of *brāhmaṇas* in some of the *Upaniṣads* from the early period of their compositions. Scenarios in this literature give a window into intimate assemblies of rulers, with kings of the northern regions holding debates or instruction with teachers and students. Such scenes depict instruction about the nature of ritual and fundamental reality and the many means to livelihood and success—such as, the relationship of Brahman to ātman, and the nature of death and the ultimate destination of wisdom and ritual consequences. The topics in the *Upaniṣads* are complex and the texts span six hundred years.[65] But as the figures of the *Upaniṣads* debate their ideas, some commonalities of rhetoric show that kings gained knowledge, power and influence *through* others; through *brāhmaṇa* experts that wandered to their courts, and through the debates (*brahmodya*) or demonstrations of knowledge that they might sponsor.

In the Upaniṣadic literature, knowledge is the fundamental exchange that occurs between kings and *brāhmaṇas*. But the exchange is not the only thing stressed in the literature—the relationship of reliance between king and *brāhmaṇa* is crucial as well. A statement from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* articulates this assumption clearly: "Knowledge leads one most securely to the goal [of Brahman] when it comes through a teacher."[66] Here emerges the Indic cultural notion of the importance of the *ācārya*. The teacher-student relationship and the reliance therein will shape the way that kings learn and know in most of the literature of this study. The Upaniṣadic discourses highlight that dialogue

or debate between two people (*saṃvāda* or *saṃvadana*) is an important means to wisdom. In the royal context, this points to one basis for royal dependency on others that is also foundational to the nature of royal power and *dharma*. If one of the innovations of Upaniṣadic discourse is that it increasingly frames knowledge for a *kṣatriya* audience,[67] then we have another scenario for examining sources of wisdom for kings and the mediators for it.

Some of the evidence from the Upaniṣadic texts suggests that the transfer of knowledge was mutual. For instance, *brāhmaṇas* teach kings the foundation of Brahman and students are depicted as having access to the king for instruction. And, as Brian Black notes, the reputation that kings gain is not for the knowledge that they possess, but for the wisdom that the *brāhmaṇas* demonstrate while at their courts.[68] I would add that by the same token, kings demonstrate their own ability to convey knowledge as well, besting *brāhmaṇas* in their understanding and showing that there is more than an exchange of power when dealing with kings; they also exchange prestige. The differences between the prestige of each would remain, albeit mutually enhanced. Furthermore, the enhanced prestige does not come from the knowledge itself, but from the sharing of it in a dialogic moment. In other words, the prestige transfers to and regularizes these kinds of knowledge exchanges between kings and wise *brāhmaṇas*. Overall, we see public instruction and debate as a forum for articulating religious ideas become an important trope of royal activities. The figures who emerge as instrumental to these *vidyāna* activities are the *brāhmaṇas*. As depicted in the various *Upaniṣads*, they were of diverse intellectual leanings, which would make them appealing to kings as important sources of knowledge and prestige.

This exchange of prestige functions in other ways: If kings gain honor from having the priests in their assemblies, then *brāhmaṇas* gain it also. One example of the dual prestige to be had occurs in a dialogue between Ajātaśastru, king of Kaśi, and a *brāhmaṇa* named Gārgya Bālāki that occurs in both the *Kauṣītaki* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* [69] Gārgya offers to tell the king a "formulation of Brahman," the king returns that he will give him a thousand cows because giving such a teaching would cause people to flock to his court, saying "here's a Janaka!," another king of renowned wisdom.[70] Being another Janaka seems to bear some prestige for the king; and the *brāhmaṇa* benefits from the gift of cows.

But what do we make of the fact that in both versions of this dialogue, the king is shown as being more knowledgeable? After all the king's questions, Gārgya's formulation of Brahman remains incomplete. As a result, the *brāhmaṇa* asks to be the king's student, making the symbolic gesture of a bundle of firewood that students make. That a "*kṣatriya*" or member of the ruling class would be depicted as knowing more than *brāhmaṇas*, within Brahmanical texts themselves, has led to much conjecture.[71] Black and Olivelle both take scholars to task who would argue for *kṣatriya* authorship because of these scenarios. For Black, Brahmins portrayed kings as central figures in stories about the transmission of knowledge to show how "indispensable" this knowledge was to the "king's political power."[72] Olivelle surmises that the *brāhmaṇa* authors gained some advantage for including rulers as a source of knowledge, which he describes in terms of political necessity. [73] I propose that *brāhmaṇa* "advantage" would come from construing the discourse in terms that fits the terms of its expanded social location—a heterodox milieu increased with the patronage of *vaiśyas* and *kṣatriyas*—so that it may be

understood and received. In so doing, the communities around these texts are addressing the "political necessity" of making room for more complex exchanges of dialogue at court, and the relationships of influence that would follow on them.

These dialogues do reflect a culture at court that relies on religious knowledge—a court that is also creating religious knowledge as part of its cultural activities (just as some other Upaniṣadic forms of knowledge are being generated at the fringes of the kingdoms). In addition to creating a new location for wisdom, the discourses show the results of this culture: Kings are intelligent enough to engage *brāhmaṇas* using similar terms of knowledge, such as the scenes featuring Ajātaśastru and Janaka. Such a growth in royal intellectual culture would only increase the opportunities for continued relationship with and dependence on *brāhmaṇa* interlocutors. But, the advantage of depicting kings as participating in this wisdom culture is also tied to a need to make kings understand so that they are able to be influenced into better rulers, to be more dharmic or at least amenable to the dictates of a community's *dharma*.

Sometimes Upaniṣadic kings think they are knowledgeable when they are not, a misapprehension that requires others (who are truly wise) to check them. This is a fundamental argument of all the literature—wiser others must mediate knowledge and *dharma* for the king. And, this mediation must be ongoing, cultivated in daily activities. An example from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* shows just how quotidian king-*brāhmaṇa* discussions were imagined to be. There are hints of the intimacy of familiarity in a long dialogue between Janaka, the King of Videha and Yājñavalkya. The text presumes we know that the king had been seeking answers to questions about the nature of Brahman from various teachers (*BU*, 4.1.2). Janaka reveals two common objectives of

brāhmaṇas at court in the question he poses at his approach: "Yājñavalkya why have you come? Are you after cows or subtle disquisitions?" (4.1.1-2)[74] Showing both his reliance on royal patronage and the routine nature of such discussion, he responds: "Both your majesty. Let's hear what they have told you." Janaka then proceeds to relay what he learned.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* makes clear Yājñavalkya's position of superiority to the king and the other *brāhmaṇas* in the very beginning (though in the scene Janaka does not know this yet). This is accomplished by means of rhetorical placement in the text of Yājñavalkya giving the last word (to the other teachings on which Janaka reports).[75] After a long question and answer series, it is revealed that the king had not learned the deeper nature of Brahman through these other teachers. According to Yājñavalkya, that which the king had learned was "one-legged" knowledge (*ekpād vā etat*). What teachers like Yājñavalkya know is the "…abode and foundation…" of it (*…tasyāyatanaṃ pratiṣṭhāṃ*, *BU* 4.2.1).[76] Only after a long display of Yājñavalkya's wisdom over that of the other teachers the king finally asks Yājñavalkya to teach him. The submission is inherent in the inquiry and in the king's movement toward him: "Janaka…got down from his seat, came up to him, and said: 'Homage to you, Yājñavalkya. Please teach me."[77] Yājñavalkya does indeed teach the king in this scene, and even in the next chapter, where the intimate nature of their relationship is stressed.

This intimacy is revealed by internal as well as external dialogue: Here the king imagines withholding his knowledge from his teacher—"thinking to himself, 'I won't tell him'"—but while they are "engaged in a discussion of the daily fire sacrifice" the king plays his hand to ask the first question in a debate."[78] The king's own imagining of not

telling the *brāhmaṇa* what he knows, and the scenario of a discussion of the sacrifice indicates an intimate and on-going teacher-student relationship. Or, as Olivelle describes their union, Yājñavalkya "appears almost as the "personal theologian of the king."[79] Olivelle is careful to say, 'almost' since it is clear that many *brāhmaṇa* share this function with Janaka. The text is playful with the exchange, showing Yājñavalkya's inner thoughts, of the king being "really sharp! He has flushed me out of very cover."[80] Though the text shows that knowledge is revealed in these exchanges, risk is involved too. It also plays with the ideas about dialogues with the king in general—with its incumbent dangers—hinting that such teachers at court are also captive to the kings. This means that the *brāhmaṇa* is obliged to give him even more knowledge, as he states, "'Here sir, I'll give you a thousand cows! But you'll have to tell me more than that to get yourself released!'"[81]

But just as important as the tie between a king and a teaching *brāhmaṇa*, is the special knowledge that this *Upaniṣad* imagines Yājñavalkya gives the king. In this view, knowledge is necessary "equipment" to a king, equipment he can rely on as he does his chariot or vehicle.

> Just as a king, when he is about to undertake a great expedition, would equip himself with a chariot or a ship, so have you equipped yourself with these hidden teachings (*upaniṣad*). You are so eminent and rich; you have learned the Vedas; you are versed in the hidden teachings (*upaniṣad*). So can you tell me where you will go when you leave this world?[82]

He praises the king in his knowledge, which he states prepares him for royal activity. As a good teacher in this *Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya must push beyond what any student thinks he knows, and so he must instruct the king. This instruction highlights the importance of teachers like Yājñavalkya (for he is a paradigm in these texts), and receptive kings like

Janaka, smart enough to learn. The passage also sets the terms for continued relationality.

An ideal *brāhmaṇa* that would enhance a king at court in these dialogues argues brilliantly, wins debates over other *brāhmaṇas* and attains much wealth from kings in reward and favor at court. As many scholars have pointed out, it is not enough for a *brāhmaṇa* to be a priest (whether *hotṛ* or *adhvaryu*): He must know the reality on which these sacrifices stand; he must know what is at the basis of the phenomenal world; and he must teach it to kings. What happens when this foundational reality is taken into the royal context? A king who is teaching a *brāhmaṇa* of what knowledge consists can end his dialogue showing that this new knowledge—of self (*ātman*), *puruṣa,* Brahman, etc.— is the new power that makes a king able to defeat his enemies, not Soma and other ritual based power. We see a demonstration of this new powerful *vidyā* at the end of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad (KaU).*[83] In this case, we see Indra—the warrior king of the gods; like the kings in an intellectual court—move from mere warrior to a warrior who knows that there are now other keys to his power. Indra is cast here as victorious over the demons, not because of his wily tricks (as in Vedic examples), but due to his understanding of the self (*ātman*) (*KaU*, 4.20).[84] The message here is Indra's control in the *Upaniṣads* is now the general control a king should have, again, through the teachings of his *brāhmaṇas* and associates, as we shall see below.

The interactions between *brāhmaṇas* and kings in some of these early *Upaniṣads* present the beginning of an archetypal relationship between the two that develops into a solid presence in other literatures—in all the *śāstra*, whether *dharma*, *nīti*, or *artha* sciences (though *nīti* examples do show conflict between kings and *brāhmaṇas*). This is

a relationship based on mutual exchange of knowledge and prestige, what many scholars have described as a "symbiotic relationship," Olivelle puts quite succinctly:

> The entire Brahmanical ideology of society and the science and practice of ritual were designed, on the one hand, to enhance Kṣatriya power and, on the other, to ensure the recognition by the Kṣatriyas that the source of their power was the Brahmin.[85]

Although enhancement and symbiosis aptly describe elements of the *kṣatriya-brāhmaṇa* relationship, these terms do not capture the nuances of relationship exchanged ritually and dialogically between *brāhmaṇas* and kings in these Upaniṣads.

I have shown (as Black suggests) that the communities of *brāhmaṇa* around these texts were doing more than framing knowledge for a *kṣatriya* audience. They were establishing new terms of exchange necessary to building relationships of reliance with kings, which they achieve in part by incorporating *kṣatriya* metaphor into their wisdom dialogues. The kinds of prestige previously gained through *kṣatriya* and *brāhmaṇa* sacrificial exchanges were changed in two ways: Ideas of prestige expanded to include prestige of the exchange of wisdom; and prestige was conferred to the exchanges *of this kind* between kings and *brāhmaṇas*. By looking closely at the relationship activity between the king and *brāhmaṇa*, the *saṃvāda* or *saṃvadana* emerge as practices and sites for evaluating the wisdom claims of diverse knowledge communities that include kings. As yet, in this Upaniṣadic genre, no *dharma* is being inculcated or mediated; rather, the dialogic means for reaching dharmic decisions are being set into place for kings and his future interlocutors of influence and reliance, once *dharma*s emerge as royal topics to discuss, discern, and dispute.

Dharma Literatures

Sūtras of Gautama, Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha

Insofar as they discuss royal affairs, the *Dharmasūtras* are concerned with the norms most likely to support royal attitudes to uphold the *brāhmaṇas'* new conceptions of *dharma* and to make a normative place for themselves with kings. Besides the primary figure of the *brāhmaṇa*, there is only a shadow appearance of counselors and royal ministers. The *mantrin* and *amātya*, if they come into view at all, appear as background characters. They occur as assistants to the king in the three of the four extant traditions of *Dharmasūtra*, but they are not portrayed as significant mediators in these texts, *brāhmaṇas* are. [86] Not all of the *Dharma*sūtra contain prescriptions that indicate the importance of *brāhmaṇas* in royal affairs. Āpastamba—arguably the most inclusive of experts to compose a *dharma* text (of persons like women and children)[87]—does not assert there should be any mediation of *brāhmaṇas* on behalf of kings at all.[88] Āpastamba's concern is only to assure how the king should live with respect to his associates, his teachers and ministers (*gurūn amātyāṃś ca).*[89] However, the codes of Gautama, Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha conceive in varying degrees that a king best achieves his duty through the ritual and dharmic support of the *brāhmaṇa*, and his personal priest (*purohita*).

Ministers that do appear emerge only as part of the apparatus of rule, particularly, in cases of adjudication where they provide support to the king (and sometimes *brāhmaṇas*) in legal cases. The *sūtras* presume the presence of ministers, but do not address any ideal conduct for their role in royal activities. For instance, in the *Dharmasūtra* of Vasiṣṭha (16.1-2), the king and *mantrin* appear in tandem to settle legal

disputes. In the Baudhāyana *sūtras*, neither *mantrin* nor *amātya* as officers appear at all; rather the *dharma* it envisions for kings is to appoint a *purohita* "preeminent in all affairs" and follow *his* instructions. This is a stress on *brāhmaṇa* involvement in royal affairs that it is important to consider.

Gautama makes the interest of *brāhmaṇas* in sharing power with kings very clear. After presenting the proper way of life in the corpus of *sūtras*, he sums them up as the correct way of life that both the king and *brāhmaṇa* uphold—the *dhṛtavrata*. Assuring the *dhṛtavrata* of the society of persons led the creators of the *sūtras* to argue for an increased reliance on the merits and skills of *brāhmaṇas* on the part of kings.[90] This means that the sūtras sought to create a *dharma* for kings where the *brāhmaṇa* was integral to the king's ability to perform royal duties. As the *Dharmasūtra* of Gautama portrays it, kings and *brāhmaṇas* are in a cooperative venture to maintain the world.

> There are in the world two who uphold the proper way of life—the king and the Brahmin deeply learned in the Vedas. And on them depend the life of the fourfold human race and of internally conscious creatures that move about, fly, and crawl; as well as their increase, protection, non-intermixture, and adherence to the Law (Gautama 8.1-3).[91]

This is an example of the *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya* alliance that has governed how we have considered ancient Indian power relations to date. Scholarly focus has largely been on the complex benefits gained through ritual alliance between the two. There is no denying the importance of the ritual powers gained in the *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya* alliance.[92] But the *Dharmasūtras* sought to instill more for *qualified brāhmaṇas* here: A claim to participation in the ideal of *kṣatriya* power itself—that of maintaining the world.[93]

According to some of the *sūtras*, a king should not share his power with just any *brāhmaṇa* in this venture; he should rely on a dharmic one—a *dharma* that was emerging

even as the *sūtras* declared it.   The baseline good *brāhmaṇa* (Gaut, 11.12-14) he should

be "born of good family, eloquent, handsome, nature, and virtuous; who lives according

to the rules; and who is austere."[94]   This is a typical description of a *brāhmaṇa* to serve as

purohita to a king throughout the sources. Gautama's *Dharmasūtra* already makes value

distinctions among *brāhmaṇas* with respect to *dharma*; between those who know the

Veda, those who rely on Vedic and other knowledges, and those who merely follow the

laws of the *Vedas*.[95]   But what constitutes a *brāhmaṇa* fit for a king and the role of

helping him maintain society? I will focus on the *sūtras* of Gautama since they provide

the most complete account of the suitable *brāhmaṇa*.   He has expertise in ritual and social

conduct and knowledge. Such a *brāhmaṇa* has completed all the sacramental rights

(8.14-21) and is "deeply learned" or (*bahuśrutaḥ*). Knowledge has a particular currency,

for if this knowledge is possessed, such a *brāhmaṇa* is then known to be good, which

means that his behavior is *predictable*.

The kind of knowledge makes a *brāhmaṇa* deeply learned (*bahuśrutaḥ)* is

revealing. Gautama indicates that such a figure should possess both Vedic and secular

knowledge (*lokaveda-vedāñgavit*). The opening *sūtras* establish that this knowledge is

all encompassing: The *Veda* is to be the basis of *dharma*, but the actions of the persons

who know and act according to the *Veda* and tradition (*smṛti)* also are *dharma* (Gaut,

1.1); that is, they embody it through their conduct. This iteration of the sources of

dharma becomes standard in other literature.[96] Yet the culture of interpretation was

dynamic given the differences of opinion across the sūtras about the root of *dharma*

(*dharmamūlam*). But its position here is to make the practice of those who *know* the

Veda definitive for twice-born culture—*vedo dharmamūlam / tad vidāṃ ca smṛtiśīle*)

(Gaut, 1.1-2)—in addition to the authority they claim for the *Vedas* themselves.

Besides relying on these authorities, someone "deeply learned" (*bahuśrutaḥ*) is

also fluent (*kuśalaḥ*) with the normative literatures at court—dialogues (*vākovākya*),

ancient tales (*purāṇa*) and histories (*itihāsa*) (Gaut 8.5-6). [97] The learned man is not only

to have them as part of his repertoire of wisdom at court, but the lessons and stories

within them are also to shape his conduct; *tadapekṣas tadvṛtiḥ* (Gaut. 8.7). This call to

model conduct on these sources points to another element that makes a *brāhmaṇa* fit for a

king—conduct that is congruent with moral discourse in the royal context. Gautama's

norm that the *bahuśrutaḥ* should be skillful in histories, ancient tales and dialogues

makes two things clear: One, that these sources join Vedic literature as part of the culture

of normativity; and two, that there is a growing stratification of *brāhmaṇas* for service in

royal culture that culminates is the ideal of the *śiṣṭa.* Olivelle describes these figures

succinctly: "those who are both learned in the sacred traditions and steadfast in virtue,

who are authorities with regard to the correct language (Sanskrit) and in matters of proper

conduct."[98] In the testimony of Gautama and Baudhāyana, the *bahuśrutaḥ* and the *śiṣṭa*

are figures fit for the demands of royal service and upholding the world.[99]

A *brāhmaṇa* that is to be fit for guiding kings and communities in terms of

dharma must also know how to name, discern and use codes and "notions" of *dharma*—

this also is an exemplary *guṇa* or quality. I use "notions" because the *sūtras* reveal that

the *brāhmaṇa* authors had ideas of what constitutes *dharma* that were not *śruti* based as

they might claim. Olivelle discusses this rhetorical and dharmalogical phenomenon as a

shift to *creating dharma*, from ideas of *dharma* is his discussion of Āpastamba's theory of

the "lost Veda."[100] Olivelle points out that this "principle becomes a cornerstone of later thinking on the sources of *dharma*." [101] These expectations are revealed in comments on the sources of *dharma* and the norms to guide the *use* of *dharma*. According to Olivelle, Āpastamba inverts the sources of *dharma*, putting more stress on customary practices (*sāmayācārikā*) that the other *sūtras* do not.[102]

The customs that are stressed in Āpastamba and elided in Gautama are subsumed to the traditions of the "cultured man" (*śiṣṭa*) in Baudhāyana (2.7-8). As for revealed sources (*śruti*), Āpastamba (2.29.11-14) places it squarely in the hands of the person of conduct:

> It is difficult to gain mastery of the Law (*dharma*) by means of scriptures alone, but by acting according to the markers one can master it. And the markers in this case are as follows: he should model his conduct after that which is unanimously approved in all regions by Āryas who have been properly trained, who are elderly and self-possessed, and who are neither greedy nor deceitful. In this way he will win both worlds. According to some, one should learn the remaining Laws from women and people of all classes."[103]

The methods and materials that are used in determining what is dharmic is an important dimension of what advisors to kings do, so these will be discussed in another chapter. But for now it is important to stress that the rhetoric of the *Dharmasūtras* is arguing for āryas to look to a paradigmatic *brāhmaṇa*. The discourse of the excellent *brāhmaṇa* that spans the *sūtras* attempts either to accommodate or over-ride custom (*sāmayācārikā)*, to expand notions of tradition (*smṛti*) to include elite conduct, or—in the case of Gautama's creation of the "cultured man"—to create an ideal man to supplant claims to authority over *dharma*, from less "cultured" sources.[104] In addition to creating a place for themselves in the structures of power, authority and *dharma* they are arguing to achieve this within twice-born communities.

These sources concur that conflicting points of *dharma* require more than one person to decide; for one person can be a fool alone, but associates make it harder.[105] Gautama colorfully expresses the difficulty of discerning *dharma* in the first place, in his often quoted line: "The righteous (*dharma*) and the Unrighteous (*adharma*) do not go around saying, 'Here we are!' Nor do gods, Gandharvas, or ancestors declare, 'This is [*dharma*] and that is [*adharma*].'"[106] Haste in proclaiming what is dharmic is what makes one a fool according to Baudhāyana (1.11). Furthermore, Gautama understands that there are frauds and fools claiming knowledge of what is *dharma* (1.20.5). And fools with respect to *dharma*—who are frequently kings and other *rājanya*—are a variety of 'kings in need' of Brahmanical assistance and correction.

Some *sūtras* provide guidelines to follow when persons are uncertain which claim of *dharma* to follow that usually involves an assembly (*pariṣad*) of some kind.[107] The Gautama and Baudhāyana *sūtras* suggest an assembly of ten persons, "who are cultured, skilled in reasoning, and free from greed."[108] In Gautama, if consensus cannot be found in this assembly, he advises that a "learned and cultured Brahmin who knows the Veda" be consulted. The reason for this choice is that such learning guarantees impartiality: "for such a man is incapable of hurting or favoring creatures."[109]

It is not entirely clear if Gautama is addressing kings or *brāhmaṇas* here; but I suggest that this advice is directed at both—for these norms were imagined to be instated by *brāhmaṇas* and enforced by kings if we take the testimony of Vasiṣṭha (1.39) for it. If we assume that these norms were directed at the enculturation of *brāhmaṇas* to dharmic behavior in royal contexts, it is in the authors' of the *sūtras* interest to establish *dharma* codes to achieve a dual aim: *Brāhmaṇas* who know how to behave with kings, for the

king's sake; and *brāhmaṇas* whose behavior is consistent with their goals for royal

involvement—an access to royal power, or better yet, participation in it.

Manu's *Dharmaśāstra*

     Manu's *Dharmaśāstra* shares concerns with *dharma* as in the *Dharmasūtra*

textual traditions above, although it is in its own category as dharmic literature.[110] This is

in part due to Manu's role in the intellectual history of early India; Manu becomes the

kingpin of Brahmanical ideations of *dharma*, the basis of many commentaries and

Dharmaśāstra texts that follow it.[111] But its singularity must also be due to its location in

history: The complexity of kingdoms also has increased, given the more detailed

discussions of kingdom, relations between kingdoms, and administration. The discussion

of these elements was limited in the *Dharmasūtras*, though increased structural

development was evident in some of the *dharma* ideas and codes, such as those of

Gautama and Baudhāyana *sūtras*. However, in these *Dharmasūtras* the stipulations and

directives the creators of the texts presumed to make for kings and ministers were small

in scale, by comparison.

     Manu presented comprehensive proscriptions to kings and his ministers that

involved complex interactions with other kingdoms, strategies of influence, diplomacy,

and war, as in royal treatises like *Arthaśāstra* devoted to the topics. All of these are

brought into the realm of Brahmanical dharmic discourse in the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu

(*Mānava-Dharmaśāstra; MDh*).   The increased complexity is reflected in the quotation

above, where Manu notes the difficulty that comes in managing a "kingdom yielding

great revenue;" a complexity which is further affirmed by the royal affairs in which the

seven or eight good *brāhmaṇa* counselors will participate in the next line: "alliance, war,

state, revenue, security, pacification and acquisitions" (*MDh*, 7.56).[112] This *śāstra* is

pulling royal actions into the realm of *dharma*, and attempting to stake a claim to the

advisory positions associated with them.

The Brahmanical relation to the royal court in the treatise of Manu reflects an

increased intensity in asserting the preeminence of the *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya* alliance argued

for in the *Dharmasūtras*.[113] This urgency may signal a rupture in the alliance. The

dharma in Manu lauds the radical orientation to the social hierarchy of the *brāhmaṇas*

and the codes of conduct, as well as the commitment to the rituals created to maintain the

hierarchy and the purity of the *varṇas*. As a result, there is more emphasis on purity in

this *śāstra*, and markers of difference too—ritual, social, native—that set *brāhmaṇas*

apart from others.

According to Olivelle's discussion of the social context for his recent critical

edition and translation of the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, the idea of the court was shaped by

a recent historical memory of foreign occupation and rule of north Indian social centers.

These 'foreigners'—the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa—were described as *mlecchas,* a pejorative

in ancient Indian ethnic categories, who patronized Buddhist communities.[114] Equally

disturbing for *brāhmaṇas* claiming social hegemony would be the reigns of the Nandas

and Mauryas, which were problematic on two counts: First, the Mauryan ideologies of

dharma honored *brāhmaṇas and śramaṇas*, with no supremacy granted to *brāhmaṇas*;

second was the Brahmanical ideology that these rulers were *śūdras*.[115] This means rule

of the world by those deigned to be servants. Olivelle sees an almost "urgent" impetus in

the rhetoric of the *śāstra* to reassert Brahmanical privilege to a nostalgic time when the

relationship to royal power was in their favor (or control).[116]

The *dharma* codes would have to encompass these shifts in the constituents of power and authority, and the basis of power. Smith and Doniger, in their translation and study of the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, suggest that the composition of Manu was also an attempt to conflate many Brahmanical views about *dharma* into one.[117] Olivelle thinks this too, albeit he describes a progressive narrowing of the sources and models of *dharma* to a smaller circle of *brāhmaṇa* experts.[118] Thinking about these scholars' assertions in light of the role of the advisor, it is apparent that there has been a significant shift in the scope and bases of royal power and *dharma* and the composers of the code of Manu want to make sure their construction of the relationship to power (the king) is controlled to reflect their view of *dharma* and Brahmanical power over it. *Dharma* is a social code in this case designed to place heterogeneous elements *outside* of it. There are more persons, *mlecchas*, socially affluent *vaiśyas*, non-*ārya* traders that speak to more cosmopolitan kingdoms. But there are also non-*brāhmaṇa* teachers (2.238-240) with which to contend when *brāhmaṇas* have been claiming superior knowledge (and the best knowledge for a king); that is, more lineages of *dharma* to subsume (1.58-60), and more *brāhmaṇas* from outside regions.

Therefore, in *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* we see stratified qualities of *brāhmaṇa*—to show that not all *brāhmaṇas* have the authority to interact with kings. We observed this concern in the *Dharmasūtras*; it remains in Manu as well. *Brāhmaṇas* have merit by name, by family, through ritual observance, and through learning. Manu adds the conception of assessing persons (and distinguishing them) as "field of merit"—that is, the good merit that accrues when one plants the seeds of a gift (*dāna*) with them. (This is also a popular normative device in Buddhist traditions.) The excellence of a gift to a

person, and the merit achieved through it, is graded according to the "excellence of the

recipient" (…*pātrasya hi viśeṣeṇa…*)" (7.86). In Manu's use of it the fruit (*phalam*) or

good merit also depends on the nature of his "generosity" *śraddhānatayai*…" [119] This is a

popular expectation of kings, that they be good donors. As one would expect, *brāhmaṇas*

are the most worthy recipients: Yet even these are stratified in terms of relative

worthiness; the *brāhmaṇa* "in name only," *brāhmaṇa-bruve,* represents the lowest; and

masters of *Veda* (*anantaṃ vedapārage)*, is the highest.

> A gift to a non-Brahmin brings an equal reward; to a Brahmin by name, a double reward;
> to one who is advanced in Vedic study (var. to a teacher…), a thousand fold reward; and to a man who has completely mastered the Veda, an infinite reward. (7.85)
>
> For, whether the reward a man receives after death is large or small is contingent on his spirit of generosity (3.202 n.) and on the excellence of the recipient (7.86)[120]

In any of the donative suggestions in this example, Brahmanical knowledge is the

distinctive value here, and there are different degrees of it.

In Manu, there are *amātyas*, *sacivān* and *mantrin* that we have seen before,

serving as advisors; while the most important counsel is given by the most distinguished

brāhmaṇa (*viśiṣṭena brāhmaṇena*). The baseline characteristic across all categories of

service is that the individual come from an "illustrious family" *kula-udgatam*.[121] This is

an important quality, for knowing the nature of a person's family, one can presume a

consistent level of conduct, at least.[122] A visible and renowned family can draw on their

own prestige in winning disputes and can command respect in many situations that might

not otherwise be there if this excellent family history is not known. As a result, *kula* can

be viewed as a general dharmic code. This aspect seems to guarantee a person's

behavior; it is an aspect that occurs in most accounts of the *guṇa*s expected of royal functionaries and associates.

Manu also idealized these functionaries' qualities in one section of the chapter dealing with the *dharma* of the king. There are ideals for the minister (*amātya*), the envoy (*dūta)*, and the advisors (*sacivān*). All are expected to be basically intelligent, wise (7.60, 7.141), and clever (7.61 & 7.64), but only the head minister (*amātyamukhaḥ),* envoy and *sacivan* are given stipulations of having expertise in knowing *dharma* (law in the legal sense) or the *śāstra*. The general *amātya* need only be honest, intelligent and steadfast as required of his duties either in commerce, mining, or the royal home (7.60-62). In the eyes of this *śāstra*, both the *amātya*'s and *sacivān* (who act as advisors) character is to be proven through tests. Their integrity is tested for steadfastness in the face of financial and emotional temptation. Financial integrity is needed for the management of the king's affairs and emotional integrity is necessary for anyone close to the king and is family. For by the time of the royal consolidations of—which the Mānava social structure is a part—ministers and advisors did not generally belong to the king's family as they did in Vedic and Upaniṣadic times.[123]

Important for the role he plays in creating and breaking alliances, the envoy (*dūta*) must know all the *śāstra* and be personable, given his primary duty of creating alliances with other principalities and acting as an interpreter of these figures for the king (7.63-68).[124] As we shall see in other contexts, where Kṛṣṇa acts as envoy to the Kauravas for instance, the envoy is a special mediator of knowledge for the king. For this reason, not only is he to be an expert in all treatises, he must be able to read body language as well (7.67). Such a skill enables him to read and anticipate the actions of others, and to figure

out ways to influence members of other courts to the king's advantage.   Other special

powers of discernment are reflected in the desire that the envoy be able to judge "time

and place" (7.64), that is, skill in timing and creating contexts appropriate to pursuing a

particular line of influence. The envoy (*dūta*) is also the only official where beauty

emerges as a special attribute; his beauty would be an advantage that could ease initial

contact, conversation and negotiation.

The only figures that Manu describes as advisors and counselors of the king are

sacivān and *mantrin* (and of course, *brāhmaṇas*). [125] They are to assist the king in

carrying out his affairs:

> The king should appoint seven or eight counselors (*sacivān*). They must be
> individuals who are natives of the land, well-versed in Treatises (*śāstravidaḥ*),
> brave, well-accomplished, and coming from illustrious families, individuals who
> have been thoroughly investigated. Even an easy task becomes difficult when
> undertaken by a single individual… (7.54-55) [126]

Manu makes the point that the king should *not* do this alone. These persons who will fill

these roles are not said to be *brāhmaṇa*, but since the text advises that the closest

counselor is to be chosen from among them, and that he is a *brāhmaṇa*, the text would

like us to assume they are at least of the twice-born. The text makes an important

distinction about the cadre of men that can counsel the king—they are to be "natives of

the land" (*maulam*) (7.54). [127] There is some difference of opinion about what is meant by

this term, which is based in the idea of the king's *mūla*, or his original territorial holding,

but that many think denotes a "hereditary" dimension to the term. [128] Olivelle makes a

convincing argument that "heredity" is not what Manu intends here. In Manu, *maulam*

refers to "native or original inhabitants of the locality as opposed to newcomers; that is,

people with deep roots in the region." [129] Given the closeness of these associates to the

king and to his most important decisions about the kingdom and its fate, it is logical that the text would stress that these close confidants of the king be from the same place, which would guarantee loyalties not only to the king but also to the region that he governs.

Calling for advisors to be "natives of the land" provides another boundary of eligibility for these positions near the king. It seems that the creators of the text are aware that there were persons at court that *were not* persons of the land, though they might have the other qualities needed of advisors—"well-versed in treatises, brave, well-accomplished," from good families and well-tested.[130] By creating a value of nativity or alliance to the region, the elite *brāhmaṇa* creators of the *śāstra* could make sure that there were no outsider competitors to gain the ears and eyes of the king. Rather, the authors of this *śāstra* would reserve special positions for men from the same place as the king, and away from those who might only possess the other good qualities. But the text limits them for all their skills, to the daily, "general matters relating to alliance and war, and about the state, revenue and security… [and] pacification."[131]

The argument here is that such *brāhmaṇas* are *not to be mere* functionaries; they are to be the closest confidant, the object of the king's total trust. Their intimacy with his activities, the call for his complete trust in them is what sets the exemplary *brāhmaṇa* apart from ministers as *amātyas* and sets them apart from the other "associates" (*sacivān*) that help a king rule. The text stresses that this man be the "most distinguished and sagacious…among them" (7.58), *sarveṣāṃ tu viśiṣṭena brāhmaṇena vipaścitā*. The perspicacity of this figure in relaying *dharma* to kings is conveyed in the words chosen: as *vipaścitā*, from (*vi + paś*) he can see deeply into differences in places and detail, giving

a special perceptive quality to his wisdom.[132] Furthermore, this man is not just a personal

priest or *brāhmaṇa*, conducting the king's sacrifices for him—for different men are

appointed only to these tasks (7.78).[133] Rather, the *brāhmaṇa* fit to counsel a king in his

affairs knows all the *Vedas*, knows the treatises of rule, and possesses the royal virtues

enumerated for the other counselors. But since he is *viśiṣṭaḥ*, the most distinguished and

learned, his qualities are also those we see in other chapters of the treatise—especially

chapters that address how to interpret *dharma* when no rules are recorded.

The *Śiṣṭa Brāhmaṇa* of Manu—Advisor Most fit for a King

　　We are given a deeper understanding of this figure if we consider the definition of

the "cultured" *brāhmaṇa*, or *śiṣṭa* in the section of the *Mānava* that sets the distinctive

features of itself as a treatise, and the *brāhmaṇas* as sons of law (personified as Manu)

who are able to create law. *Brāhmaṇas* that are *śiṣṭa* have not only studied the *Vedas* and

their supplements, they have a greater interpretive stance, since they are knowledgeable

in scripture, perception and inference (*śrutipratyakṣahetavaḥ*) (*MDh,* 12.109).[134] With

these methods of interpreting what was heard (*śruti*), what maintains (*dharma*) reality,

merely whatever these *brāhmaṇas* declare (12.108) becomes *dharma*. This is a man who

can be the last word in social conduct and ultimate behavior in the *śāstra*'s view—he can

do this because he has an overarching perspective and vision.

　　This larger vision of the *śiṣṭa brāhmaṇa*, according to Manu, makes him the best

choice for the king who wants to be successful. Therefore, the king should take the *most*

important counsel (*mantrayeta paraṃ mantram)*—"that related to the six-fold strategy"

from the *śiṣṭa*.[135] These strategies are topics in the next chapter; the thing to note now is

the placement of the wisest *brāhmaṇa* with respect to other associates of the king and to

his affairs.   The *śāstra* encourages a king to confer with his usual body of advisors

(*sacivān*), maximizing the experience by meeting for their individual opinions, and later,

by discussing policy with the others jointly.   At this point, the king is to do "what is in

his best interest," (7.57) after considering their counsel. But with his primary counselor,

the sagacious *brāhmaṇa*, the king's best interest is decided *jointly*.

> Trusting him completely, he should always entrust all his affairs to him and
> proceed with any task only after reaching a decision jointly with him. (*MDh,* 7.59)

Such a move seeks to place the learned *brāhmaṇa* in a superior position to the king's

other sources of advice. Moreover, since he is a master of Vedic knowledge and conduct,

his presence at court provides "embodied *Veda*," so to speak, acting as the king's ultimate

deliberative partner in all his affairs.

Manu's rhetoric about *brāhmaṇas* and their respective excellences are strong

indications that *brāhmaṇas* were competing for influence. They rhetorically move to

squelch competition by stressing the hierarchy of royal affairs, and various stages of

dependence along the decision process, as well as expanding again the nature of expertise

that a king needs to manage his affairs—that is, Brahmanical expertise. So, even if the

dharma for kings is not followed by kings, the ultimate *dharma* for *brāhmaṇas* is being

redefined. As *śiṣṭa,* a man learned enough to be the exemplar of behavior: he *is* the

dharma. But there is more that he manifests for courts and for the world—there is an

expanded sense of order, of *Veda*, of *dharma*, and boundaries between *dharma* and

a*dharma* that is subsumed (or preserved?) in his character as *śiṣṭa* or *viśiṣṭa*. Such an

embodiment of skill and command of conduct is the ultimate qualification, as the text

claims: a man who knows the Vedic treatises (*vedaśāstravid*) is entitled to become chief

of the army (*senāpatyam*), the king (*rājyam*), the arbiter of punishment (*daṇḍanetṛtvam*), and ruler of the whole world (*sarvalokādhipatyam*) (12.100).

Manu's assertions about scripture also suggest heterodox courts with which *brāhmaṇas* had to contend; competition for the ultimate positions of counsel and power mediation for kings. The descriptions of the *Vedas* in Manu appeal to the antiquity of the *Vedas* for validation and to its efficacy in reaching "the supreme good"—two points that appear to be in doubt, merely for their having to be asserted in this way:

> The Veda is the eternal eyesight for ancestors, gods, and humans; for vedic teaching is beyond the power of logic or cognition—that is the settled rule. The scriptures that are outside the Veda, as well as every kind of fallacious doctrine—all these bear fruit after death, for tradition takes them to be founded on Darkness. All those different from the Veda that spring up and then flounder—they are false and bear no fruit, because they belong to recent times (7.94-96).[136]

This passage reflects anxieties about new doctrines that the authors see permeating the court—scriptures that are "outside" the Vedic corpus, doctrines that are "new," "fallacious," as distinct from the *Veda* seem to be making a home, simply for the *śāstra*'s need to refute them. There is also an indication that there were competing methods of inferring how things are to be done, such as the stress on the difference of Vedic "eyesight" over "logic and cognition." These powers of logic and cognition are the tools of those *not* learned as the *śiṣṭa* or *viśiṣṭa*.

But, even though the *Veda* itself is beyond the power of mere logic, its interpretation is not—hence the greater importance of having a class of persons to interpret *dharma*, and create it—which is the duty of the *śiṣṭa*. This transformation of *dharma* from ritual praxis to a more abstract conceptual representation of religious order and good would have an impact on kings, for they are the ones instituted to preserve order and *dharma*. Just as the creators of Manu claim that the *Veda*—not the competing

dharma discourses of which the text is aware—is the eyes of the world, so the *brāhmaṇa* acts as the best eyes for the king. His various methods of influence that require his expertise in perception, inference, and treatises, as will be explored in the next chapter, all point to the over-riding perspective of this text about advisors and advisory relationships: The ideal counselor in *dharmaśāstra* genres is the perfected *Vedin brāhmaṇa*.

As one can see, the intellectual history of the idea of the advisor in *dharma* literatures is diverse; the idealizations of advisors come to reflect more and more the conceptions of the ideal *brāhmaṇas*. Even ideas of *brāhmaṇa* and *dharma*s have their varieties. As in the example of Gautama above, the idea of *dharma* was in flux. "*Dharma*" was emerging even as *dharma* was being made abstract and idealized to align with the more abstract conception of the *brāhmaṇa*. In addition, the power and currency of *brāhmaṇa* ritual is receding to the power and currency of *brāhmaṇa* knowledge. Importantly, not all *brāhmaṇas* possess the same mastery. The competition among *brāhmaṇa* ideals is a fascinating dimension of the history of these *dharma* genres. The "deeply learned" (*bahuśrutaḥ*) *brāhmaṇa* of Gautama is conceived to express such predictable conduct, that the impetus to subsume knowledge and conduct into one ideal gains ground. Even in this totalizing movement, the stratification of *brāhmaṇa* ideals continues and culminates into ideal of the *śiṣṭa*, with its own varieties.

As we follow the progression of the *dharma* genres to their unique codification in Manu, it should be no surprise that the *brāhmaṇas* appear to have reluctantly and increasingly conceded to the reality of advisors, ministers and other agents of kings and royal power of the world. Thus, if there must be an advisor who mediates the power and

perfected conduct (ultimately conceived as 'dharmic' conduct) of the king, the ideals argue that it must be a *brāhmaṇa*—so the intellectual history of the advisor enters the *brāhmaṇa* fold. Expectations of person and knowledge change.

There are fulcra of values and expectations to keep in mind going forward in this historical analysis across textual genres. Along with this history of ideas about who should advise and mediate power for kings, we have observed that non-Vedic (as in not *Saṃhitā*) genres are becoming part of the culture of normativity. It took some development for *brāhmaṇa* knowledge to be the distinctive value axis around which wisdom came to revolve. The *brāhmaṇa* meets its perfected ideal in the form of the royal court aligned *śiṣṭa* in Manu's *Dharmaśāstra,* but it is obvious in the text itself that this was not the reality. And so, the texts convey the truism that there are fools posing as *brāhmaṇas* in the world; they may be kings themselves, they may be unlearned *brāhmaṇas*. The overarching expectation is that kings should rely on these figures, with their perfected expertise in royal concerns, in order to be successful. The ideals and expectations about *brāhmaṇa* involvement in royal life contribute to the growing significations of royal reliance.

Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra

Proceeding with this intellectual history of the ideal of the advisor, we turn to Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra.* If the perfected *brāhmaṇa* can help kings see reality and themselves more clearly with respect to royal dharmic obligations, then it is no small step for *brāhmaṇas* to extend this influence to the sciences devoted to rule. We see the *structural* import of what it means for men to be the eyes of the king in the treatise

devoted solely to royal affairs, Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*—the ideal mediators, ministers, advisors and primary counselors and the perfect circumstances *for* the moment of counsel are presented in minute detail.[137] Although the text is occasionally interspersed with calls to reliance on *brāhmaṇas*, diverse *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* skills and values shape the ideal persons and means of advisors and ministers; the *Arthaśāstra* was a text for kings and advisors.[138]

As we shall see, the text's primary *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* ideology may be one reason that the criteria a minister and advisor (*amātya* and *mantrin*) go beyond calls to be of good family or knowledgeable in the various genres of wisdom. Part of the selection process involves testing their integrity in scenarios of rule; situations that test how an advisor will act in his relationships with the king, with other officers, and even members of other kingdoms. Ideal qualities by themselves may tell little about a person; more important is how these characteristics affect royal relationships, for these relationships affect how royal activities are carried out, and whether they meet with success. Royal success (*artha*) is a relational endeavor.

Therefore, markers of relationship are the ideal characteristics that I will stress here. Other studies of early Indian polity have catalogued the qualities of ministers, advisors, and counselors (the triad of royal associates) from the lists in the *Arthaśāstra*. My interest here is not in just cataloguing these all together, but in highlighting those characteristics that are most directly involved in relationship to the king and other royal persons—and to the qualities on which advisors and ministers draw in order to influence the king. The treatise begins laying the foundation for the proper relationships the king should have in order to be successful from the very beginning. These can generally be

described as the relationship a king is to have to knowledge; the relationships he should have to elders (*vṛddha*) and teachers (*ācārya*), and the relationships that should be had with his ministers, advisors and counselors. These are the highest structures of mediation for royal success. While *Arthaśāstra* authors imagined a "sage-like" king, the *rājarṣi*; what makes him so are education and his associates.

"Philosophy, the three Vedas, economics and the science of politics—these are the sciences (*vidyās*)" (1.2.2): Through these forms of knowledge, according to Kauṭilya, one learns what are *dharma* and *artha*, what are the good and the practical (1.2.9). The details of these sciences and how the king and his advisors are to use them will be detailed in another chapter, for now it is important to point out that Kauṭilya puts particular stress on the interpretive science—philosophy or *ānvīkṣikī*—and, as a result, on the deliberative function of all his associated in helping him determine what is good for the kingdom. In fact, he details the subject of philosophy even before he discusses *Veda*. In this formulation, philosophy or *ānvīkṣikī* is "the lamp of all knowledges," the means of all actions, "and the support of all duties (*dharma*s)."[139] In other words, these deliberations on *Veda* and other knowledge are the basis of the practice of rule detailed in the treatise. Furthermore, the king has a particular responsibility to the preservation of this knowledge through *daṇḍa*—the multivalent royal tool—as force, justice, coercion, and order. Through the power he wields, the king ensures the knowledge base of rule, "the pursuit of philosophy, the three Vedas and economics (*vārtta*)."[140] These are established in the second, third and fourth chapters and are more important than varṇa declarations, since the ideal social structure relies on them (1.4.4).

The *Arthaśāstra* is quick to establish that the king cannot do this alone. In order to have access to them and mastery over them, the king is to maintain relationships with elders (*vṛddha-saṃyogeṇa*), those possessing command of knowledge, including the knowledge required for rule. This is the Indian socio-moral system of experience and expertise coming to bear on the basic education of the king from the earliest age. From the moment of his initiation with his preceptor, for his period as *brahmacārin*, the king is to augment his studies with the special knowledge of rule:

> After his initiation with the preceptor is performed (*vṛttopanayanas*), he should learn the three Vedas and philosophy (*trayīm ānvīkṣikīṃ ca*) from the learned (*śiṣṭebhyaḥ*), economics (*vārttām*) from experts in the field (*adhyakṣebhyo*) and the science of politics (*daṇḍanītim*) in their theoretical and practical dimensions (*vaktṛprayoktṛbhyaḥ*) (1.5.8) [141]

A king's education in governance begins early; and note that the cultivated *brāhmaṇa*, the *śiṣṭa*, has emerged here as in the *dharmaśāstra* genres, though more explicitly construed for the context of rule. Also more explicit is the assumption that practical knowledge is of a part with theoretical knowledge, indicated by the suggestion that the *rājanyas* learn politics (*daṇḍanīti)* from "those who teach theory and those actually engaged in practicing it," as Kangle glosses *vaktṛprayoktṛbhyaḥ*.[142] The details will be discussed later, but a king and other royal persons' education is tied to gaining mastery through experts at court—which is also crucial to royal success. Knowledge is power, and it is mediated through *brāhmaṇas* and other experts. At this point we learn little of the *vṛddha's* attributes; all that matters is the material he has mastered in order to be a resource for kings. Though arguments from silence are rarely convincing, perhaps their function as a resource is sufficient, since the *Arthaśāstra* builds its science upon it.

The *Arthaśāstra* is explicit with respect to advisors and the ministers that might

function as advisors and the attainments they are to possess. The roles that advisors and

ministers play as mediators of a king's power and rule have obviously expanded, since the

text provides a comprehensive view of the qualities expected of them. There are two

chapters devoted to ministers and advisors, one (I.8) that addresses who to appoint to the

positions, and another (I.9) that discusses ideal characteristics, which comprise a long list

of ideal characteristics that range through different kinds of intellectual and emotional

capabilities, which makes them able to act at the right time, in the right place, a common

requirement of a good servant of the king. The treatise establishes their qualities, and

then tests them, largely through relationship behavior. In fact, the *Arthaśāstra* records

the opinions of many *artha* theorists in this regard. Their discussions center on what kind

of person—whether the king's fellow-students and play-mates, hereditary servants, those

of like-vices or like-mindedness, those who are intelligent, those proved loyal, those

well-versed in politics—should be chosen as the king's ministers (*amātyān kurvīta*)

(I.8.1).

There are pros and cons for each, as there are in all relationships: there is

confidence (*asya viśvāsyā*) in the intimacy the king shared with childhood friends in

study (*sahādhyāyinaḥ)* and in play (*sahakrīḍitatvā*), but their familiarity also can breed

their contempt (*paribhanti*) (1.8.3-4). There is the bond created out of fear of knowing

one another's secrets (*marmajñabhayāt)* (I.8.6); secrets that give power to both involved

(I.8.7), but the hold fear might have over him could also make the king acquiesce to what

they do or fail to do (*teṣām api marmajñabhayāt kṛtākṛtāny anuvarteta*) (I.8.8). Loyalty,

though an attractive quality, is born of devotion, which the *artha* expert opinion in the

Arthaśāstra hints is not sufficient to do the work assigned by the king because devotion is not a quality of insight or intelligence (*bhaktir na eṣā buddhiguṇaḥ*) (1.8.11-12).[143] There is also the loyalty that comes with hereditary service, where services of the grandfather and father are taken as indicators of "pure conduct." But heredity is another kind of intimacy that can also lead to contempt and control—control that make the minister master over this king (1.8.21). There is also indication that there was some tension between those who have mastered *śāstra* and those who only know "politics" (*nīti-vidaḥ*) (1.8.22). It is best to know both in order to succeed in any task one undertakes in royal affairs (1.8.24-25). One expert argues that neither *artha-* nor *nītiśāstra* are enough; rather, nobility of birth, intellect, integrity, bravery, and loyalty in ministers are qualities that achieve superior results (1.8.26).[144]

After presenting the different opinions of *artha* theorists about which types of men make the best ministers, Kauṭilya declares *sarvam upapannam*—all these are suitable (1.8.27), the rest of the ministers are appointed to tasks according to their ability, both technical and social (1.8.28-29). But, there is some stratification here—ministers can lack some of the qualities and still take positions managing finances, king's quarters, forest and agricultural centers. However, in order to be a *mantrin*, the king's closest advisor, all qualities are expected, which in the *Arthaśāstra*, for the person who is to be the close counselor to the king. The counselor does more than manage the king's affairs; he helps the king make decisions and manages the king's other advisors and ministers.

As in *dharmaśāstra* genres, the *Arthaśāstra* asserts that nativity in terms of family and place (*jānapado 'bhijāta*) is a primary concern for those who would be placed in powerful positions near the king. Although, in the *Arthaśāstra,* the idea of place is more

specific and notions of noble family (*kula* to *abhijāta*) are more stratified.[145] The truth of

his family and nativity as an indicator of his character is to be verified through an

investigation of his family and connections from "reliable persons" (*āptaḥ*).[146] Therefore,

it follows that in order to be an eminent minister, an *amātya* must know precisely how

family and intellectual lineage affect relationships at court. This stipulation seems

designed to assure the *amātya* would have the social proficiency to assess and maintain

perceptions of him at court, particularly as to whether he will be listened to in moments

of counsel.

Having social perceptiveness such as this certainly comes to bear in the call for

ministers and advisors to be well-connected to (*svavagrahaḥ*) or demonstrate the self-

possession to hold one's own with persons working out of various traditions of

understanding and activity (*sāmpradāyikāḥ*); as well as good at maintaining these

connections with ease, as Ganapati Sastri glosses the concept.[147] For Sastri, *svavagrahaḥ*

means to be "influential," connected with persons demonstrating a history of auspicious

activities and results; and who, with those activities under his umbrella, is also able to

avert, or be made to avert royal activities borne out of careless mistakes. Kangle

translated *svavagrahaḥ* as "able to be kept in check". But this misses the *amātya*'s role in

bringing about the change in affairs (even if made at the instigation of the king). I prefer

the sense of having the control of oneself necessary to be in command of one's

interactions with others; such control allows one to see things more clearly when relating

to persons at court. Since ministers are the eyes of kings they must have the social

confidence and foresight necessary to see and enable the king to avert social missteps, if

not disasters.

As with social perceptiveness, other qualities are also being parsed and elaborated to assure predictable trajectories of action in advisors and ministers. Certainly ministers must be intelligent, but intelligence is articulated in terms of mastery in other areas of expertise. A man who would be minister should have mastered the arts (*kṛta-śilpaḥ*) that Sastri tells us could be the arts of war, archery, etc. The minister is to "possess the eye" (*cakṣuṣmān*), which means one who possesses the "eye of science" (*śāstra-cakṣuṣmān*) ; that is, mastery of the *śāstra* are perceived to be so important to rule that they have become the eyes with which the king sees. This mastery also is verified, through other men trained in the same science *(samānavidyebhyaḥ)* as the minister's claimed expertise. The reciprocating establishment of ideal quality to its ideal exercise is a key dimension of idealizations of mediators for kings in the *Arthaśāstra*.

As important as practical and artistic skill might be, ministers and advisors must also be able to stand firm in the face of adversity (*āpad*, which are the situations that frequently push a person to their limit of loyalty, as often as necessitate a reversal of *dharma*), and in the midst of situations requiring tact. They must take stances with respect to others that avoid friction or hostility—literally, "not a person that excites enmity" (*vairāṇām akartā*). In terms of behavior at court, this characteristic would be very important. It would mean not being inclined to incendiary remarks, as Prince Duryodhana commits in scenarios of the *Mahābhārata*: These might be negative tendencies expected of kings, but they are not appropriate for an effective advisor/minister.

Ministers and advisors are also expected to be good storytellers. They are to be eloquent (*vāgmi*), quick witted in dealing with others. This is achieved by watching the

prospective advisor while engaged in conversation, (*kāthāyogeṣu*). This ability involves

having the power to move others to act or change their moral perspective, and it is

especially important skill to use with kings. This ideal highlights the importance of story

in compelling kings and court members to action. As pointed out earlier, the treatise

makes listening to the stories of kings and pictures of ideal kingdoms—as in *itihāsa* and

tales of old, (*puraṇa*)—an important dimension of royal intellectual life (*Aś*, 1.5.13-14).

Given the painstaking attention to ideal qualities discussed above, it is evident

that the *Arthaśāstra* reflects the conception that these would assure ideal conduct.

However, the mere possession of these qualities in a potential advisor and close minister

is not enough. The ideal man must also *prove* that he is self-possessed of these qualities

and uses them in the context of rule, and in association with the king. According to the

treatise (1.9.3), he is to confirm a minister's qualities through various relationships and

relational activities by watching his behavior. Just as important as any *strategic* skill is a

minister's emotional acuity and this idea is two-fold: The dimension of his social

integrity that can be revealed through his daily interactions or customary practices with

others (*saṃvyavahārāt*); and the dimension of his intimate integrity gleaned from talking

to those with which the minister lives (*samvāsibhyaḥ*). These tests of his qualities are

drawn from relationship contexts. These contexts are also construed into narrative

artifice in other texts, such as in the *nīti* instructions of the *Pañcatantra*. Relational

contexts are turned into stories—idealized narrative contexts—to educate kings and sons

of kings. This is one way that *brāhmaṇas* could assure their intimacy and influence with

kings, but formalizing scenarios of intimacy with kings. Ministers in the *Arthaśāstra* are

to be tested for the right to this intimacy. And even if they pass this first round of tests of

qualifications, they are challenged through four standard deceits (*upadhā*) to confirm

their "purity" (*śuciḥ*) in royal contexts, involving the ability to stand fast in the face of

danger and fear, lust and ambition, and *dharma*.[148]

The *Arthaśāstra* joins other genres in focusing on relationship. Yet Kauṭilya also

asserts his own ideas about relationship:

> Royal power—made to flourish by the *brāhmaṇa*, increased through the
> consecrating words of the counselor, armed with the treatises (of rule and
> society)—triumphs, reigning undefeated.[149]

The advising relationships of enhancement and reliance that were emergent in the

examples of the early *Upaniṣads* is honed to a truism in *śāstra*: The ideal of *kṣatriya*

power that is augmented and maintained through the perfected relationship with close

associates will mark the rest of this discussion. For nowhere else in "Brahmanical"

literature are the claims for their mediation of the king's power and *dharma* so elaborated.

By the same token, Brahmanical mediation for the king is by no means settled in

the *Arthaśāstra* and other texts (to come). It seems that the *brāhmaṇa* is the dominant

image of the ideal advisor. However, the intellectual history of the idea of the advisor—

synonymous with the minister at this point—belies this. It should be stressed that

relationships of advisor-to-king were not only between *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya*. In spite

of the *subhāṣita* above, there is narrative evidence that the instrumental relationships of

rule existed also between *kṣatriya* and other *rājanya*; and other men who had gained the

status of *kṣatriya* at court for the skills that they could provide kings.

In the *Arthaśāstra*, the diversity of persons available for royal service is evident in

the text's advice on how to select advisors and ministers in *Aś,* I.8.3-26 above. The *varṇa*

identities of those who would be royal friends also were not identified or stipulated. Yet,

given the structure of how pupils learned together in a group, they were likely *rājanya* of

some sort.[150] As will emerge below, close *rājanya* relationships indicated in the

Arthaśāstra are also evident in *Mahābhārata* traditions—in the advisory relationships

between Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas, especially throughout the *Udyoga-* and *Karṇaparvan*s;

in the theological advice of Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna (*MBh*, 6.23-40) in the *Bhagavad Gītā;* and in

the didactic advisory relationship between Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira, in the *Rājadharma*

chapters of the *Śāntiparvan.*

Like the *Arthaśāstra* examples examined above, the *Mahābhārata* also

problematizes advisory relationships among *rājanya*s and the reliance of kings on each

other. We might think, for example, of the advisory relationship between Duryodhana to

Karṇa, a crypto-*kṣatriya sūta* and between Duryodhana and Śakuni, fully *rājanya* figures

depicted in advisory relationship.[151] There is uncertainty and fluidity indicated in śāstric

relationships over who the right man for the advisor to a king should be. Thus, we have

so far *brāhmaṇa* depictions of *kṣatriya* and *rājanya* experiential concerns; cast

generically through an idealized court—the king in need and the *brāhmaṇa* fulfillment of

it—an increasingly complex signification of reliance of kings on *brāhmaṇas*.

Pañcatantra

In ways that are comparable to the *śāstra* literature, the *Pañcatantra* is also

clearly meant for advisors and ministers to kings, and created by ministers for ministers

of unstated *varṇa* origins in the text. Advisors and ministers are functionally

synonymous in the *Pañcatantra*: *mantriputra* and *amātya* both occur in the text and the

action of the animals depicted as advisors are not bound by the terminology. I include it

in this analysis of "Brahmanical' genres important to the intellectual history of the advisor because the frame story for the *Pañcatantra*—as Franklin Edgerton reconstructed and Patrick Olivelle translated the text—depicts a *brāhmaṇa muni* coming to the court of a king to instruct his less than skillful sons on the arts of rule (see below). Even so, characters in the text that are *brāhmaṇas* are frequently fools and avaricious; kings are frequently vain and foolish, as much as they are depicted as heroics. Yet, as Olivelle points out: A consistent theme throughout the text "is that the king is a rather impotent figure—a sorry figure—without the aid of a wise and determined minister."[152] The *Pañcatantra* thus joins and expands our net of significations of reliance of kings on advisors.

The *Pañcatantra* is therefore an important text in the intellectual history of the advisor/minister; it provides an opportunity for ministers and kings to observe the results of idealized behaviors, both "good" and "bad," but the text in the end shows that judgments of these kinds are not necessarily beneficial in royal contexts. Indeed, this is the *Pañcatantra's* strength—presenting both sides of advising and strategizing for kings and their complex results, as Olivelle has pointed out.[153] This approach to presenting both sides of an advising scenario, elaborated through many examples, suggests that royal *dharma* is conditional on results and aims.

This conditionality is apparent in the dialogues between the protagonists in Book I, the *mantriputras* (men of ministerial families) Karaṭaka and Damanaka,[154] wherein one virtue, such as being skilled in polity, is posed against the skill of deceit, which brings a change in a political formation.[155] As Olivelle sees it, the true victor in terms of ideal behavior is the minister Damanaka; he is victorious because he gains the position of

counselor of the king. Nevertheless, throughout the book, his actions are challenged by the example of the prudent advisor, Karaṭaka. Seeing the results of the machinations of Damanaka—dissention and destruction of another—he describes Damanaka as "low-born," of having a bad father, serving his interests of individual power rather than the king's, deceptive, and myriad other adjectives that, from his prudent perspective, appear to be negative. However, these criticisms are ideal qualities in the text, and more than once the text claims that a wise man knows the times when being bad is the good thing to do, or "one may do something bad for the sake of something good." [156] Determining what is dharmic is a highly relational affair, between persons and between contexts, as will emerge later.

In the *Pañcatantra,* idealized individual qualities take a secondary role to the strategies a minister might employ during counsel. The first and third books have more activities that involve ministers giving advice. For instance, in Book One, the actions of the *mantriputra-s* Damanaka and Karaṭaka (encountered in the preceding chapter) pivot around only a few fundamental qualities: conceptions of the wise person, heredity, and elocution and negotiating others friendship and enmity. Stock court characters are kings, ministers and counselors (here they are conflated), rich men, *brāhmaṇas*, and outsiders (thieves, hunters, barbers, and women). Not one queen is mentioned, though wives are present in equal share of besting their ignorant or shortsighted husbands. The ones that fare best and take the stage more often are ministers and advisors. Still, though the text might claim a particular quality is positive, such as mastery of dialogue, it also shows how sweet-words can beguile a king into dangerous inaction.

In the *Pañcatantra,* whether it is a king or a minister speaking of ideal qualities in a particular advising scenario makes a difference in the expression of those ideals. Kings that speak of ideal qualities, describe ministers as "faithful" and "skillful" (I.49)[157] and gain immediate recognition from a king if they are *mantriputra*, from good "ministerial stock" (I.29-30).[158] But kings in the view of the text are only capable of judging them superficially; most idealizations of ministers and advisors come from the ministers in the text. In action, kings are invariably shown to need the help of minister and advisor figures to see what is real about a person or about a situation. For instance, in Book III, the young and "inexperienced" king of the crows, Meghavarṇa, knows he must rely on his "most senior" minister, Ciraṃjīvin, out of his several other ministers, who give conflicting or brash advice (II.32-33).[159] Indeed, Meghavarṇa claims he can take the advice of his senior minister because he "tells the truth," has knowledge and wisdom, and has "my welfare at heart."[160]

Ministers claim various ideals other for themselves in the *Pañcatantra*. The senior hereditary minister, Ciraṃjīvin, mentioned above for instance, admonishes others of his position to be brave, prudent and wise (III.18).[161] The minister Karaṭaka imagines a more compliant ideal; the good minister is a man who is meek and demurs to the opinions of his master the king (I.145-146).[162] One of the most crafty ministers, Damanaka (in Book I), claims that good ministers of his stock have a keen mind, shrewd powers of observation, are discerning, good speakers—and as speakers, do not speak out of turn—and what is more, good ministers are cunning (I.18, 24-25). [163] According to this minister, wise men can control a king in all his negative aspects (I.29).[164] He also admires himself for having mastered the entire body of rules for retainers—*nanu mayai*

('ṣa) sakalo 'nujīvi-dharmo vijñātaḥ.[165] While another minister criticizes him for not

knowing them properly because of what he interprets as a disastrous result.

Conceptions of the "wise" are tied to mastery of the treatises of rule in the

Pañcatantra, as we might expect. The *Pañcatantra* shares with other sources some

stratification of this mastery. But the stress is not on Brahmanical keepers of wisdom,

but on the results of wisdom. Here knowledge is given a realistic challenge, by *how* it is

used, not just by who uses it:

> What is the use of learning—if it does not lead a man to control his sense with all
> his heart; if it would not make his own mind docile; if it does not follow the
> righteous path; if getting it only serves to create displays of eloquence before the
> world; if it leads to neither glory nor peace? [I.137][166]

The rhetorical question shows that the wisdom was not put to good use. This is the

opinion of the minister Karaṭaka, who sees ministerial knowledge and virtue as involving

sense-control, docility, dharmic conduct, and speech devoted solely to the king's glory or

peace among agents. Karaṭaka's opinions are the closest we come to a "dharmic"

viewpoint we have seen in other texts, but not close enough. *Brāhmaṇas* are not

presented as wise or dharmic in the text, in fact quite the contrary. Only the *kathāmukha*,

the face story or prolegomena, puts the wisdom of the *Pañcatantra* in the mouth of a

brāhmaṇa (Viṣṇuśarman). The text does not confirm the *varṇa* of the sons of the

ministers either. I suggest that the dharmic qualities and aims required in a king's court

requires a more nuanced conception of such ideals than the conservative Karaṭaka might

suggest.

These nuances reside in the relationships between kings and advisors in the

Pañcatantra. Thus, paying attention to the actions that occur between advising ministers

and kings in the text reveal that formal ideals are not as important as the strategies a

minister masters, and the relationships he is able to cultivate and control to royal advantage. This is the reason for the text's emphasis on skills at using strategy. Advising ministers' qualities and expectations are only valorized during an advisory failure in this text, as from the mouth of the minister Karaṭaka: "True ministers" are skilled in polity, which involves diplomacy, proper use of force, etc. and so are judged by their "success in resolving conflicts" (I.138).[167]

But these ideal qualities are also shown to have their limitations. The actions of both Book One and Three of the *Pañcatantra* demonstrate that abilities to deceive and to use subterfuge against others are important skills. Damanaka uses it to eliminate his own rival to the position of close advisor to the king in Book One, and the senior minister Ciraṃjīvin uses it in order to defeat a rival king in Book Three. There are many facets to the skill of deception. In fact, the *Pañcatantra* adds it as a fifth strategy to the well-known four *upāya* of rule. (Given this importance, deception will get its own discussion in the next chapter.[168])

Ironically, even as the *Pañcatantra* adds *upāya* of deceptions, it also demonstrates a crucial, qualitative facet of deception—trust and the relationship dynamics associated with friendship that it creates or destroys. Book Two, "On Securing Allies," demonstrates myriad scenarios for cultivating royal relationships. Friendship also becomes an important technique of ministers throughout Book Two, evident in its initial frame story. The general values underlying this *tantra* are: knowing when to be a friend and know how to be a friend as minister. Cultivating worthy friendships—as much as deception can—in the right contexts helps men "quickly accomplish their goals"(I.1).[169]

And yet, as much as friendship in the *Pañcatantra* is directed toward advantage, the kinds of friendship that advisors cultivate for kings also involve ministers risking their lives for one another and their king. There is the turtle, Mantharaka who sacrifices himself out of love of his friend Citrāṅga, caught in a trap, by coming to his side at the risk of his own life (II.80-85). Mantharaka explains himself: "By telling your troubles to a faithful friend or a virtuous wife, or a master who's known adversity, your heart will find some rest" (II.83).[170] A friend like this, "will not leave you even in hard times; one gains such a friend, by rare good fortune" (II.88).[171] The *tantra* contains many other *subhāṣita* lauding intimate varieties of friendship. The *mitra* (friend) is "a shelter against sorrow, grief, and fear, a vessel of love and trust" (II.95).[172] Thus, the ideas for creating relationships in Book Two make apparent that real trust and its consequents—friendship, loyalty, and affection—are just as crucial to the efficacy of advisor/ministers in helping kings rule in the *Pañcatantra*.

Heredity as an entry to the position of advisors and ministers emerges in all books involving dialogues with ministers; thus hereditary service is one of the distinctive features of the *Pañcatantra*.[173] As noted earlier, a king in the text presumed Damanaka was safe to enter his presence because he knew his father. Since he was seeking to be in the king's service through his machinations, the text is suggesting that heredity of a ministerial post does not guaranteed a position near the king. Even so, hereditary ministers appear throughout the text. And, they have their distinctions such as, those who are experienced in "emergency measures" and those that "gain their livelihood by their title…and are only good at talking."[174] In addition to this veiled critique, more pointed ones are offered as well: The minister character, Damanaka, has the quality of his father

challenged (I.148), and the use of his heritage is criticized several times. He is called

"merely" a hereditary minister (since "his conduct shows that you have inherited your

position…") (I.149) and a fool for launching forth in a ploy strictly *because he was* a

minister.[175] In addition to these negative aspects, there are positive dimensions to

heredity also, such as the benefit of memory (where a king can be made to recall past

good actions, for instance) and experience in knowing how a minister is likely to act.

In the culture around this *Pañcatantra*, hereditary ministers must have been a

ubiquitous aspect of court life for it to become a stock criticism or moral benchmark of an

advising minister's efficacy. Still seniority and skill trump mere heredity in all examples,

as do the actions of one, special advisor. The text's opinion on this is set early in book

one, where the aspiring servant, Damanaka, states:

> Surely not by the might of someone else,
> Is anyone judged here noble or base.
> By his work alone does a man obtain Greatness in the world or else its reverse.
> (I.16)
> To take a rock up to a mountain top requires a lot of toil;
> Yet it rolls down with the greatest of ease.
> The same rule applies to ourselves as we deal with virtue and vice. (I.17) [176]

Such conceptions of the advisor-minister are different from the calls for ministers to be of

noble birth observed in *Dharmaśāstra* and *Arthaśāstra.* The stress in *nīti* texts like the

Pañcatantra is on mastery of the skills of rule, command of strategy in dealing with other

kings, and of the means of influence (in addition to heredity). And, in its most extreme

mode—where skills and schemes are directed to meet a minister's personal aims over

what a king might wish—cunning and wit is power.[177]

In this way of thinking about ideals for ministers and advisors, the *Pañcatantra*

tilts towards judging things in terms of consequences, as Kauṭilya argues throughout the

Arthaśāstra, and as Kṛṣṇa in the *Karṇaparvan* (8.49). Advisory skills and the aims of kings to which they are directed can be construed as either dharmic or adharmic; this becomes a powerful generative mode in the moments of counsel in *Mahābhārata* traditions, and a point of critique in Buddhist narratives that engage the idea of the advisor.

Mahābhārata Idealizations, Intimate and Abstract

Interactions between advisors and ministers feature prominently within both the Kaurava and Pāṇḍava courts. The temptation has been to look at the didactic or dharmic content of the text, the dynamics of these relationships; the attitudes and behaviors that make them work or fail are also able to teach us. Unlike the structural impetus in the *Arthaśāstra*, the person who may fill the role as agent or counselor for a king is fluid, with little consistency between terms for the role. Moreover, relatives and other persons not explicitly given the title, step in to advise kings and to act for them in various scenarios of rule. The fluidity of role and person that fills the role may be a function of this genre; a normative history directed at educating kings and their ministers and advisors using tropes suitable to their context.

For instance, there is the ritual context: The characters we observed as ritually important from the *ratnahavīṃṣi* ritual play pivotal roles in royal action of the *Mahābhārata*: *brāhmaṇas* (of multifarious forms) wander into courts and forest-dwellings; royal *sūtas* (charioteers and chroniclers) act as envoys (*dūtas*) among kingdoms and as ministers (*mahāmātras*);[178] *mahiṣī* (queens) of various *rājanya* (royal persons) engage in rebuke and give advice on *dharma*; *rājanya* and *senāpati* (military master) teach and advise kings in court and in battle. There are movements from intimate

to abstract contexts: Roles enumerated in śāstric sources are encapsulated in normative scenes of royal life in the *Mahābhārata* and played through different trajectories of action. Nowhere does the king appear more embedded in a network of persons to act for him. In this way, the characters of *Mahābhārata* narrative action comprise the net of Indra, the eyes of kings and the eyes of social reality.

As a result of this complex network of persons entitled in some way to advise a king, multiple discussions occur around a particular royal problem or theme. These multiple moments of counsel could be called "repetition as 'alternative perspective.'" We gain these variant perspectives in those smaller *itihāsa* within the *Mahābhārata*, sometimes called victory stories (*jayo nāmetihāsaḥ*) designed to inspire kings toward action (such as queen Vidurā's instructions to her son in the *Udyogaparvan* ,12.131.1-134);[179] and in those explicitly marked as didactic, such as the *Rājadharma* chapters of the *Śāntiparvan*, the *Mahābhārata's* mode as *śāstra*. The most concerted discussions of ministers, advisors, counselors and advising others occur in *Śānti-parvan* 12.80 through 12.86, with another iteration occurring in 12.116. In the *Āśramavāsika-parvan*, Dhṛtarāṣṭra also gives Yudhiṣṭhira parting instructions on the kinds of counselors and ministers he should choose as well. Then again, the same sage Kālakavṛkṣīya (who figured in the introductory narrative above) gives an illustration from *rājadharma*, within the *rājadharma* of Bhīṣma, as advice for the king who has lost everything and is opposed by his own ministers (12.105). What might first appear as a mere repetition of the ideal advisor in this *rājadharma* illustration actually offers an alternative perspective on who should be the ideal advisor, from "those who are the teachers of the men who serve kings" (12.83.24).[180]

And who are these teachers? In the outermost frame of the *Śāntiparvan* narrative, instructions about advisors, ministers and counselors occur between and among royal persons (from *rājanya* to *rājanya*), or from *brāhmaṇa* to king; from a wiser or more experienced equal to the ascendant power among them (such as from Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira or Dhṛtarāṣṭra to Yudhiṣṭhira, respectively). Much of the counsel in the *Śāntiparvan* in its mode as *śāstra* occurs from warrior to warrior (such as in the counsels between Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīṣma), thus recreating a time of more intimate terms of counselor engagement with kings. As it occurs in the dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīṣma, the lens focuses on the *rājanya* to illumine the best way to choose counselors and counseling scenarios.

This is not to say that the wisdom of *ṛṣis* and *brāhmaṇas* does not occur in the various examples of *rājadharma*. These sages' words and interactions with kings, other *rājanya* and king-like beings are part of the royal wisdom on which Bhīṣma draws. But the *rājadharma* bestowed in the *Śāntiparvan* has all the intimacy and wisdom of parting words to a son.[181] The admonitions are intended to create or continue a tradition for royal wisdom necessary for choosing associates. The extent to which this *rājanya* intimacy is artifice for the purpose of the narrative frame is not clear. Inside the narrative, the intimate tones drop away and the ideals that unfold are shaped by *artha*, *nīti* and other *brāhmaṇa*-construed aims.

In the *Mahābhārata*, many of the basic qualities it extolls for an advisor and minister we have seen in other genres. Birth, family and native geography are repeated as important here, as are varieties of intelligence and acuity. However, after Bhīṣma extols these ideals for advisors and ministers, the *Mahābhārata* attenuates them: Very

good birth is no guarantee of deeper wisdom (12.84.25) and knowing dictates of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma* are no guarantee of being able to counsel (12.84.24) or judge time and places to act appropriately. This move to qualify ideal behaviors and qualities in advisors and ministers, after first asserting the ideals, is a distinctive feature of *Mahābhārata* discussions in the *Śāntiparvan*.

These qualities occur in a panorama of articulations of ideals that reflect the kings' embedded-ness in his social situation, shifting with vignettes of activities and responsibilities due kings. The text argues for the characteristics that a king should anticipate in his friends and associates—context specific virtues necessary to respond to various royal scenarios, as well as general ones. The discussions are not comprehensive, but there are two basic attempts to provide instruction about the king's associates that reveal two impulses with respect to dharmic activity—subsuming to a *simplicior*, and expanding to allow for complexity. Dhṛtarāṣṭra's instructions about how to rule with associates reveals a wish to have ideals such as birth or Vedic learning (as ultimate goods) overlap more fully with the merit required to be a close advisor and minister for a king, and as such is a wish for simplicity. Bhīṣma's instructions show a greater awareness of the disjuncture between ideal qualities and ideal advisors and ministers; hence, his instructions are intricate.

Let us begin with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's parting instructions about advisors and ministers. In the *Āśramavāsikaparvan* he speaks rather straightforwardly. His initial instruction is to honor those of venerable learning (*vidyāvṛddhān*) and use them as consultants about any purported royal action, since they would always act for his benefit (15.9.10). He makes general distinctions between ministers and counselors, but in minimalist terms.

He counsels Yudhiṣṭhira to choose his counselors (*mantrin*) from *brāhmaṇas* or twice-
born men (Pune edition) and appoint ministers who have gained their position due to
heredity (*amātyān…pitṛpaitāmahān*), who are pure in conduct, patient, the leaders among
them (15.9.14).[182] Although heredity is an important marker of trust for ministers
(*amātyān*), they still must be tested for their honesty through staged deceits
(*upadhātītān*)—an allusion to the tests of virtue in Kauṭilya—and entrust the best of those
that excel in these tests to carry out all royal actions (15.9.14).[183] The twice-born cadre
he makes counselors (*mantrin*) should be sincere (*ṛjūn*), conversant with the means of
royal success and *dharma* (*dharmārtha-kuśalān*), of a good family (*kulīnām*), statesmen-
like (*vinītām*), and accomplished in the necessary sciences (*vidyāviśāradān*) (15.9.20).
All men within his court are to be men whose conduct and whose families are well
known. These basics make a man trustworthy to be helpers of the king in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's
view.

The qualities of royal associates in Bhīṣma's instruction are more sophisticated; in
presentation, the nature of the ideals, and the levels of trust. They are stratified by
proximity and closeness to the king, where the role and the name of the role—*sacivan*,
sahāya, *mantrin*, *amātya*—are not as important as *being in* the role. Being in the role
would make one the closest to the king in terms of service, influence, and power; a highly
desirable position, but also a risky place to be. But to some degree, all these associates
can be present around the king; hence Buddhist and Brahmanical alike use the image of a
king "adorned" by his ministers and his advisors, a king surrounded in various iterations
of the *rājā mantri-maṇḍale*. Thus, the intimates and associates are always around him,
mediators and assistants on which to draw. The task is to identify the extent to which the

king can trust each person, including family (12.81), how to work around problematic persons (those who are not so trustworthy) (12.82), how to identify crooked ministers and the repercussions of bad ministers (12.83), the general characteristics of the members at court, *sabhāsadaḥ* (12.84), and one fundamental rhetorical tool for kings and advisors (12.85). The positive and negative qualities given in these sections establish the markers of trustworthy and untrustworthy persons to act as royal mediators.

Consider the circles of trust (*viśvāsaḥ*) around the king that Bhīṣma suggests in *Śānti-parvan* 81, which is where the instruction on how to choose and trust associates begins. They are distinguished at the most basic level as those who are friends, and those who are enemies. But broad, diametrical qualifications such as these are not sufficient for sustaining relationships in the king's circle. Rather, there are types of friendship: "one with the same goals, one who is attached by devotion, one who is a 'born friend,' and one who has 'been made a friend.'"[184] The one attached by devotion and the one who is a born friend "are the best—the other two are always suspect."[185] According to Bhīṣma, even attachments of devotion and life-long friendship should always be suspect, because of human nature: (12.81.8-9):

> A wicked man becomes virtuous, a virtuous man becomes cruel, an enemy
> becomes an ally, an ally goes bad. Man's mind is inconstant, who could possibly
> trust him?

The answer for Yudhiṣṭhira, or any king seeking prosperity and success, the way of good policy (*nītigatiḥ*), is to "trust some and be suspicious of some" (*tasmād viśvasitavyaṃ ca śaṅkitavyaṃ ca keṣu cit,* 12.81.12).[186] So, the question is not really whether to trust; the question is the extent to which an advisor should be trusted to achieve particular royal aims.

Trust gains more nuances as Bhīṣma's discussion unfolds in this *rājadharma*. Degrees of trust are to be granted based on how the person assesses consequences around the king's wellbeing (12.81.14-17). The one that receives the highest trust is the one that sees the king's demise as his own (v.17) and fears for his harm (v.18)—this man the king can trust "like one's own father." (The irony here is that the problem of relatives and their deceptions follows in Bhīṣma's discussion in the very next *adhyāya*). We are told that "the man who…is contented with the degree of the king's prosperity…is said to be a friend equal to oneself," *mitraṃ tad ātmasamam* (v.20). One might think that having this equal kind of regard is a sufficient marker of trustworthiness. However, though equal to the king's self-regard, the *most* trusted *must want even more good for the king than the king would wish for himself*. *This* is one who could choose the policy that goes beyond a king's perspective or wishes. The ill-conceived aims of the Kaurava and Pāṇḍava princes and kings—often shaped by the king's wishes alone—that bore such bloody fruit on Kurukṣetra are evidence of the need for a man like this.

In the words of Bhīṣma, the creators of the *Mahābhārata* reveal some suspicion about *dharma* as the sole referent an advisor would use in the idea of "fifth" friend (12.81.4-5). This is the friend who holds *dharma* to himself as the basis of friendship, rather than loyalty to the king. The problem with this kind of friend is that he will not side-with "the one or the two kinds of friends ("born" or "devoted" bases of friendship), but will side with *dharma* or remain neutral due to considerations of *dharma* (12.81.4). Since the fifth friend is imagined to privilege *dharma* over loyalty, the king is instructed not to "reveal to this man any matter that would not please him" (12.81.5);[187] dharmic orientation limits an advisor's trustworthiness.

The limited trust bestowed to the 'fifth friend' points to the problem of dharmic

perfectionism or rigidity. Rigidity is a problem in other contexts, but the emergent

dharmic code with which *Mahābhārata* stories wrestle suggests that although a unifying

dharma may be attractive in terms of ideals, it presents a problem for someone given the

king's trust, the trust of the *rājyam*, the public trust. A royal and public figure committed

to *dharma* first (or *dharma* alone?) would likely choose *dharma* (or *one dharma*) first.

Thus in Bhīṣma's *rājadharma*, an advisor or minister who takes a rigid stance

with respect to *dharma* is not perceived as able to mediate a king's endeavors

successfully. When royal action requires a nuanced view of *dharma* or for *dharma* to be

suspended, a king needs to know that his friend will not cling to the ideal from the

sidelines. As we are reminded, kings seeking conquest can act both dharmically and

*a*dharmically (*dharmādharmeṇa rājānaṃ caranti vijigīṣavaḥ)* (12.81.5). A friend

attached to *dharma* alone is *not* the best friend for the king. This is not surprising if one

remembers that the *Śānti-parvan* is an *rājadharma* for a *dharmarāja*, and the underlying

premise of a king's *dharma* is its otherness—a king's *dharma* is not the same as others.

Admittedly, even Yudhiṣṭhira must be reminded of this difference—he holds *dharma* to

himself in problematic ways as well, for instance at the beginning of the *Śānti-parvan*

and in the *Udyogaparvan*, when he balks at the advice that he should lie to Droṇa.

With generalized markers of trust put into Yudhiṣṭhira's mind, Bhīṣma turns to the

characteristics of the man appropriate "to be right next to you" (*sa te syāt*

pratyanantaraḥ) (12.81.21, 27). Of course, special personal qualities and attitudes are

the basis of such close proximity. Such a man could be a priest (*ṛtvik*), a teacher

(*ācārya*), or an intimate friend (*sakhā*) (12.81.23). Beyond this, the creators of the text

generalize qualities: The man this close should be "intelligent, have a good memory, industrious, naturally kind" (12.81.22).[188] He should also be attractive enough to be a true jewel of the court, on which the king and others may gaze and assume even more about his power and excellences, because of his physical perfection.[189] As a result, physical appearance, comely stature, and having a good voice (*rūpavarṇasvaropetaḥ*) are ranked along with the importance of being from a good family (*kulīnaḥ*), in addition to having good character (*śīlasaṃpannaḥ*) (12.81. 21). Whereas formerly being of a good family could gain one entry into intimate courts of *rājanya*, this example in the text imagines a visage with the beauty and character to face the royal court and public.

Bhīṣma then expands the ideals that suit one to such proximity to royal power to include qualities that affect how advisors and ministers are perceived by others. These are the all-important public aspects of character that create the persona of power and virtue on which he (and the king that relies on him) must draw to influence subjects and court. Bhīṣma invokes "reputation," (*kīrtipradhānaḥ*)—*kīrti*, "reputation," "fame," the public aspect of royal power that texts and inscriptions record a king must possess and cultivate also (12.81.26). The ideal close advisor cultivates both his own *kīrti* and that of his king's—or one helps cultivate the other, with the renown of each affecting that of the other. Their mutual renown, in turns, is used to rule the kingdom. Kings have always been concerned with displaying their fame; from Indra until this historical present in the *Mahābhārata*. But fame is not meant merely for display; fame also includes more relational and public elements (factors that contribute to developing social trust in advisors, ministers and their kings), as we shall see below.

Public characteristics of a king and his court are necessarily relational—in the responsibilities that they have to each other and to the people of the kingdom—which this portion of the *Mahābhārata* indicates by focusing on qualities conducive to creating and maintaining relationships at court. The ideal advisor/minister must keep his agreements and augment the excellences in others rather than be jealous of them.

> The man whose reputation is the most important thing to him (*kīrtipradhāno yaś ca syād*), who abides by his agreements (*yaś ca syāt samaye sthitaḥ)* who does not dislike able people (*samarthān yaś ca na dveṣṭi*), who in fact makes others able (*samarthān kurute ca yaḥ*); who would not abandon what is Right (*dharma*) from personal desire, fear, greed, or anger (*yo na kāmād bhayāl lobhāt krodhād vā dharmam utsṛjet*); who is industrious and highly articulate (*dakṣaḥ paryāptavacanaḥ*)—he should be *the man right next to you* (*sa te syāt pratyanantaraḥ*) (12.81.26).

All these characteristics are the foundation for a special understanding required for acting as this close advisor, the highest potential role for "the one right next to you"(*sa te syāt pratyanantaraḥ*). Keeping agreements (*samaye sthitaḥ*) is important for building trust, ultimately. Also, ministers and other associates need to trust that they can use their competencies in the service of the king without fear. Therefore, tolerating and augmenting excellence is also of utmost importance, especially since a king should seek to be surrounded by those of the highest capabilities. In the public setting, the damage could refract to all activities—a threat to the success if not also a danger to kingdom and king. Thus, bearing and increasing excellence is a crucial ideal for those serving the king at the closest level.

The qualities of the person "right next to you" that enable him or her to relate to others would also shape his or her general powers of perception:

> He would know the best counsel for the kingdom, as well as that related to *dharma* and practical success [*artha*]. Such [a man] you should trust as if he were your own father" (12.81.24).[190]

Such a person is able to discern the best advice from among all the counsel that the king might receive from others—this is a high level of mediation. Such mediation is the means to well-informed action, the basis of good rule. Mediating counsel in this way gives the person this close a special kind of power.

Evidently however, such power is also conceived as an opening for strife: "Two or three should not be set to work together, for they would not abide each other. Beings always divide when they have the same goal." (12.81.25)[191] The creators of the *Śāntiparvan* envision friction—specifically the kind generated by the self-possession of power—if there are more than two of these high profile and high-powered men having control of the same problem. More than one such mediator could confuse purposes. So, though collaborative authority is a model among kings and advisors, such collaborations are also a problematic good at the highest level of counsel with a king.

But the *Mahābhārata* envisions collaboration as working well with the virtues expected of ministers (*amātya*), who were to be charged with carrying out the king's many mundane tasks. The creators of the *Śāntiparvan* suggest that competition among these men assists the performance of their work. They collaborate with each other, spurring each other to excellence through competition—a reciprocating sense of activity conveyed by *spardhamānā mithaḥ* (12.81.31). A tendency to act in ways so as not to be outdone (another sense of *spardhamānā)* in your excellences by your peers has its contexts then—effective for achieving the king's aims, problematic for those who act as counselors working at the most intimate level with the king on the most sensitive tasks.

Included among the *amātya*'s basic qualifications for trust there is a repetition of a string of the qualities required for the "man right next to you:" These men are to be

"forbearing" and not "resentful."   If we consider the entire phrase as repeated, *kulīnaḥ śīlasaṃpannas titikṣur anasūyakaḥ* (12.81.28), these seem to be baseline qualities along with good birth and impeccable character for ministers and those who might evolve to close advisor. So, ideally ministers and advisors both are to be tolerant, not given to resentment, have impeccable character, and be of a good family. The rest of the parameters for trusting the *amātya* are tied to skills for success in administrative functions: managing finances, property, persons, and resources. The trust in these scenarios comes through consistent performance through the personal qualities outlined in this adhyāya. The skills for success and the qualities that make one trustworthy are intertwined, as is personal ease in negotiating relationships.

Bhīṣma's discussion in the next segment shows the creators of the text struggling with what to do with trust at the fault-lines of traditional royal intimacies—childhood friends and near family. Bhīṣma closes his instruction on the markers for trust and distrust with a chilling discussion of what can be expected from relatives or "kinsmen" (*jñātiḥ*). These "kin" may be paternal relations alone, but "kin" here may also include the intimate connections largely created through marriage (*saṃbandhi*) and close association among and between *rājanya*.[192] In the instructions of Bhīṣma, kinsmen are to be feared for the harm they can bring on a king, but they are also necessary for the protection they can give him that no others are likely to give. As Bhīṣma cautions,

> [Relatives] are always to be feared just as one fears Death since
> Like a lesser king (*uparājeva*), [they] can never tolerate the king's success
> (12.81.32).[193]

What is the nature of the danger Bhīṣma points to in this *subhāṣita*? *Upa-* prefixed to *rāj-* (*uparājeva…*) can denote an inferior (in power) king or a younger brother king, also

inferior in power—the ambiguity heightens the danger intrinsic to the *uparājeva*

(12.81.32). The danger is as near as your family.

Bhīṣma goes on to relate that it is not just success that relatives cannot abide; they

may even celebrate the cessation of it: "No one but a kinsman rejoices at the demise of

one who is upright, gentle, generous, and modest and speaks the truth.[194]" A particular

kind of envy is at work here: accentuated by any presumed tie or identification between

family members. However, the other side of this blade of envy is an identity with the fate

of the relative that exceeds the bond that non-relatives could ever have. It is family

identity that makes them a protection for the king—"the kinsman is the last resort for a

man that has been insulted by other men… [He] never tolerates other men humiliating a

kinsman. He recognizes himself as insulted, even it if is done by his own connections"

(12.81.35-36).[195] Therefore, the intimate power that a relative bears cuts both ways; so

much as they might hate the king for his good qualities, they can be loyal in defending

the family body. If this is the case, then who should a king trust? Bhīṣma answers as the

shrewd *rājanya* advisor that he is: "Always act as though you trust, even when you do

not." [196]

Yudhiṣṭhira is learning about those considered worthy of serving in deliberative

functions for a king. The text layers on more qualifiers: "They are to be wealthy, so that

the king can trust them in times of need; they are to be "heroic warriors" (*atiśūrāḥ)* and

"greatly learned" (*bahu-śrutāḥ*) *brāhmaṇas* (12.84.2).[197] We have seen this greatly

learned man in other sources, but the stress is not on him. The terms of *nīti* and *artha*

also shape expectations of action: There are men who can serve the king's interests and

make him famous, and there are those who can hear and engage in the counsel and plans

that will make him so. This body is also comprised of ministers (*amātya*) and counselors (*mantrin*) with expected virtues—men of "cultivated minds," beautiful…brilliant…affectionate, stable, loyal (12.84.16-22)[198] —and other men who ornament his court (*paricchadāḥ*)—from good families, bold, handsome, learned (12.84.5). Their special function in the context of the *sabhā* is established in the first line—"they must be able to discuss issues fully" (12.84.1).[199]

Although the ability to deliberate is clearly important; the one who has the power to move the king and other powerful men is particularly valuable; this is "the one who can bring you back to yourself" (12.84.4).[200] As we learned in the preceding analysis of the tendencies of kings, kings can lose their heads to various emotions and temptations that come with royal power. Bhīṣma's advice shows how the community can counteract the dark side of the king: 'whether pleased or dissatisfied, vexed or enthralled…he brings you back.'[201] Ideally, a king should have in his court someone who can pull him away from these states, pull him back to himself—the royal self that should put kingdom before person and act wisely to bring about the success of his people. The man (or woman) that can do this for the king may be one of the most reliable persons at court.

The śreya (the most exemplary of men) is another key person on which the king should rely according to Bhīṣma's *rājadharma*.[202] We have seen aspects of the *śreya* in other *dharma* genres, but this *rājadharma* expands the *śreya*'s attributes to suit the needs of the royal context. He stands out among all these other ornaments of court, because he is *more* than friend, since he stands by the king in more than good times (12.84.7-8). The qualities of the exemplary man (ś*reyasaḥ-lakṣaṇam*) are generalized across royal position and *varṇa*—excellences that are not bound to *brāhmaṇas* (12.84.13-14). As the creators

of the text idealize him, he is the best among many, so good that the king should feel no

compunction at abandoning others that person:

> He shows courage, holds his reputation to be most important, abides by his
> agreements, honors capable men, and does not vie with any who are not really
> rivals. He would not spurn *[dharma]* out of personal desire, fear, anger, greed; he
> is free of arrogance, a speaker of truth, an able man who is in control of himself
> and has respect for those worthy of respect—he should be an [advisor] in your
> councils [*sa te mantra-sahāyaḥ syāt*] after you have examined him in every
> respect. He should be from a good family, be truly accomplished, patient,
> industrious, self-possessed, assertive, knowledgeable, and truthful. (12.84.11-14)
> [203]

Like the one fit to be nearest the king discussed earlier, the exemplary man understands

the behaviors necessary to maintain good relationships (keeping agreements, not "vying"

with others, granting respect when it is due, etc.) and to be a worthy of the trust that leads

to relationship with the king.

However, trust in advisors is calibrated to the complexities of royal functions.

The distinctions made about who may be present for counsel demonstrate that while

persons may be trusted to perform various duties for the king (12.84.16-20), and even

contribute to general discussions in the royal assembly (*sabhā*), the privilege of hearing

royal counsel is not extended to everyone. First, participating in counsel—acting as

mantrin, to give and hear advice—requires a special personality, in part in response to the

mercurial nature of the king. The mercurial side of the king can lead to abrupt changes

of favor: Intimacy and friendship ties are imagined to be able to endure these shifts. The

wise man with a strong attachment to the king (12.84.28), either from common ancestry

or devotional ties, is more likely to endure emotional abuses from the king (12.84.30-31).

While forbearance of a king's potential abuses is important, standing firm in the

face of an angry king, for instance, is not sufficient if a counselor has not the rhetorical

skill to neutralize such emotional intensity. Thus, a king should choose men to act as *mantrin* who possess special arts of persuasion—eloquent and sophisticated speech or erudition (*paryāptavacanān*).[204] By the same token, a wise king must choose men who know what to do in the royal context and when to do it—with minds always directed to his king's success (12.84.21-22).[205] And as one might expect, the man acting as counselor is to be learned, of good birth, and intelligent.

But even more is required, for the authors of the *Śāntiparvan* push beyond the limits of standard attainments (12.84.23-27). A man that is learned (*bahuśrutaḥ*) must also be of higher birth (*abhijātaḥ*) so he is not confused by social and dharmic situations that good birth is presumed to assure (12.84.25). His 'good birth' is likened to insight, which is aptly conveyed by a simile that questions attainment of learning alone: A man without excellent birth is confused "like a blind man that has no guide."[206] Pushing the idealization further, Bhīṣma relates that even good birth will not make a man capable of acting as a counselor if he is *alpaśrutaḥ*, "narrowly educated." To the creators of this *rājadharma*, a narrow education yields a limited perspective: Even the typical court disciplines of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma* are not broad enough (12.84.24). A man who is narrowly educated is likely to fail in matters requiring complex reasoning (*ūhyeṣu karmasu*), matters which are germane to counseling kings.[207] The text also states that there are limits to royal success gained through knowledge and technical skills (*upāyajñaḥ*): A highly skilled and knowledgeable man fails without resolute determination (*asthira-saṃkalpaḥ*), and flounders in completing his tasks (12.84.26).

Although the authors of the *Śāntiparvan* take pains to describe ideals for advisors (*mantrin*) versus ministers (*amātya*) in this encompassing way, still the lines between

them are not hard and fast. Distinctions are not clear between the ideals of the *mantrin* (frequently the 'counselor') and *amātya* (frequently the 'minister '), nor even always among the advising ascetics: The sage Kālakavṛkṣīya calls himself a minister (*amātya*), who would tell the king the truth about his other *amātya* ministers.[208] A sage calling himself a minister in this example lays special emphasis on two things: First, the special power of outsider wisdom, especially if the wisdom possessed by such a figure is ascetic in nature. There is an understanding that special clarity can come from a person not bound by the dictates of a particular royal role in these examples.

Second, as stated earlier the role and the name of the role are not as important as *being in* the role. Many characters assume the role of advisor to kings. A mother queen such as Kuntī, a god such as Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, a maternal uncle such as Śakuni, a chronicling charioteer such as Saṃjaya—all can be advisors to kings, as well as ministers of his actions. In *Mahābhārata* scenarios at court, these figures fill the role of the man (or woman) "right next to" the king. These Pāṇḍava and Kaurava *rājanya* are the narrative exemplars for close advisors. In their negative and positive dimensions—which we will see in the next chapters—they demonstrate the vagaries of mediating power and *dharma* for a king.

Thus, in contrast to the extensive detail of the advisor provided by Bhīṣma in the *Śāntiparvan*, the *Mahābhārata* depicts these ideal mediators in more intimate, personal ways. In narrative advisory action in the *Sabhā-, Udyoga-,* and *Karṇaparvans*—which are examined in the next chapters—counsel is exchanged in intimate relationships: Vidura as uncle to both sides, Kṛṣṇa to the Pāṇḍavas, Kuntī and Draupadī to their sons and husbands. With these intimate models of royal reliance, why then does the text so

intensely detail markers of trustfulness and ideal comportment for persons who would be closest to the king, as if the members of court did not know how to manage these relationships?

If we focus on the history of the idealized role of the advisor, this level of detail makes more sense. The authors of this *rājadharma* in the *Mahābhārata* (in its mode as *śāstra* here) are attempting to standardize and expand roles that were once more circumscribed to regional *rājanya* alone. These royal courts would be more intimate as indicated by the friendship codes embedded in court hierarchies, such as those we observe narratively in the friendships, kinships and alliances among *rājanya* of the *Mahābhārata*. The benefits that such intimate connections between kings and associates provide are predictable patterns of behavior, which facilitate predicable royal relationships.

On the other hand, kings of more complex kingdoms would also require the benefit of such intimacy of counsel and advice; these kings have the same tendencies, needs and obligations, but they are expressed through compounded relationship structures. The detailed descriptions of the markers and dynamics of trust in Bhīṣma's *rājadharma* show communities straining to routinize the ways that relationship bonds are created and maintained. Repeated calls in the *Śāntiparvan* for advisors and ministers to be from one's native place suggest that there were advisors and ministers who were *not* from one's native place. Furthermore, the admonitions in the *rājadharma* of Bhīṣma— and the śāstric examples for that matter—to choose close advisors from "good family" suggest that persons seeking royal service were from different, if not wholly *other* kinds of families. The ability for the *rājanya* and *brāhmaṇa* communities to rest easy in the

knowledge provided by familiar relationship markers would be at risk. As a result, the

beneficial and the proper mediation of royal power; that is, the idealized 'dharmic'

mediation of power by the advisors and ministers in their midst would be in doubt. So, in

light of the nuanced answer Bhīṣma gives to Yudhiṣṭhira's question in *Śāntiparvan*

12.81—How do I know whom to trust to advise me, should really be: How do I replicate

the trust I gain in the intimate web of reliances in my court, which would enable me

reasonably to predict or count on how someone would act as my advisor or minister?

Women as Advisors

Given all of these articulations of and discussions of ideal advising relations and

the problems of intimacy, it should not surprise us that women are not excluded as

sources of power for the king. Their virtues lie in their keeping the *dharma* of women,

and knowing the *dharma* of their *kṣatriya varṇa*. Kuntī is shown again and again as

possessing special understanding with respect to "law" and custom, *dharma* and *lokāyata*.

Standing firm as the social world might tumble around you is shown as a virtue particular

to women. Draupadī demonstrates this capacity, such as in her brilliance as interlocutor

even when in her most vulnerable position, dragged at the heels of Duḥśāsana at the

dicing, or hidden as servant to the Virāṭa queens. Still she can pose a philosophical

challenge to whether a person can be surrendered by a king who had lost himself.

Indeed, this is the fundamental quality that queens put to use for kings—to remind them

who they are and what their responsibilities are, through various modes of female rebuke:

shame, challenge, and encouragement.

The source of these queens' power comes from their being ideal women: keepers

of family history; receptacles and symbols of the duty created by dependence on him;

unflinching dedication to the *dharma* of kings—which is to fight and protect (5.130.30-33); and tireless goads to martial virility. Nested in the advice that Kuntī gives to Yudhiṣṭhira, is the sub-story counsel from a queen of old, Vidurā, which she gives to her dispirited son, a king (*Udyogaparvan*, 5.131-134) quailing in the face of a stronger enemy. The virtues that made Vidurā successful as counselor are also the aspects for which her king/son chides her (5.133.1-4)—encouraging war, withholding mercy, and detachment from intimate familial bonds when making royal decisions (5.133.5-11). Indeed, queen Vidurā was more successful in holding the *kṣatriya* code above her affection for her son, than king Dhṛtarāṣṭra demonstrated over the failings of his son, Duryodhana.

In spite of her role as keeper of *kṣatriya* family history, the contribution of the queen is not part of the *Śāntiparvan* creators' vision of the role of advisory and other trustworthy associates of a king. Since the queen figures as an important dimension of the ritualized reliance of king in the 'jewel-holder' ritual, and she appears in the model scenarios of intimate counsel in the *Mahābhārata*, how is she missed from the *Śāntiparvan's* idealized relationships at court? The queen seems to reach a stasis point in terms of representation in the royal court: Kuntī, Draupadī and the dynamics of intimate counsel with them do not expand from their participation in the courts of Kuru.

Thus, in the historical present of the *Śāntiparvan's rājadharma* the idea of the queen moves beyond her ritually symbolic function, beyond her idealized stasis in the her relationships in Pāṇḍava and Kauravas courts, to total silence in the idealized courts whose foundations Bhīṣma describes. The narrowing of the queen's presence is suggestive of how far the court has moved from ritualized advisory roles and counsel of

family *rājanya* to the idealized and elaborate court structure imagined in the *rājadharma*. The creators of the *rājadharma*'s relationship to kings are like the queen's relationship to the complex forms of courtly life; in spite of the familial models of intimacy and exchange that shape the ideal of the advisor in these examples, both are so close, and yet so far.

Buddhist Contexts and the Ideal Advisor

As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, Buddhist communities' engagement with the idea of the advisor and his means are deliberately simple (in comparison with most of the Brahmanical examples), because of their conception of the locus of dharmic assistance and transformation for them is meant to make a straightforward contrast with the complexities of the Brahmanical materials. Namely, the qualities of Buddha Śākyamuni and the content and power of his *dharma* are the best mediators of royal *dharma* and power, specifically because they cut through the complexities of the Brahmanical deliberations. Nevertheless, even in this paradigm for the ideal advisor and his means, a few ideal advisors and ministers are presented that contribute to the discourses of reliance of kings on advisor/minister figures.

Moreover, there is a shift in rhetoric in the following discussion of Buddhist ideals of advisors and their ideal means that will seem abrupt. There are two basic reasons for this: First, all of the elaborations of relationships and contingencies we see in the Brahmanical materials are curtailed in the Buddhist materials to a great extent. And second, the shift in rhetoric is due to the Buddhist texts' presentation of *dharma* as

talisman, which I argue fully in Chapter Seven. A contrast from the last chapter should help here; there I argued that the concern of the Buddhist communities with the 'king in need,' was not to show that the king's natural tendencies are in error, but to demonstrate that errors are due to being caught up in the wrong *dharma*. An analogous assumption informs conceptions of the ideal advisor; the ideal advisor needs only to make known that the *dharma* of Śākyamuni Buddha *or* his body function to transform kings with their counsel. Likewise, since Śākyamuni Buddha is the benchmark, and his monks are his equivalents, then depictions of monks as advisors or ministers need only to show that they appropriate mediators of *Buddha dharma*, or to demonstrate that they are enough like Śākyamuni to be mediators.

Jewels of Mediation and Transformation

There are few distinctive conceptions of the advisor and advising minister in early Buddhist texts, but I begin here with some of the commonalities that Buddhist conceptions of the advisor share with the history of his appearance in the Brahmanical contexts discussed above. In particular, *Nikāya* texts present their own versions of the significations of reliance we observed in the jewel-holders of the king. Overall, the advisor and minister are part of an articulating structure of rule; interactive elements that make up the king's power. Generally, Buddhist discourses envision a transformation of social structure from the top down, from ruler to ruled—including advising paradigms, or "advisor- treasure" (*amacca* or *pariṇāyaka-ratana*) in the Buddhist formulation of the *saptāṅga* theory of state from Brahmanical sources, as discussed earlier.[209]

In the Buddhist case, ministers or counselors are one of the "seven treasures" of the "wheel-turning," Cakravartin king, who governs perfectly according to the *dharma*.[210] In the Pāli and Sanskrit sources this system is the *satta-ratana* and *sapta-ratna* ("seven jewels").[211] With some slight differences, ministers are agents of the king who engage in areas where royal work and influence is to be done. In her study of the social dimensions of early Indian Buddhism, Uma Chakravarti highlights the importance of the householder (*gahapati*) jewel. He is a "treasure" in its most material sense: they are an "asset" with which a king had a close relationship—especially if they are well disposed to him and loyal to him.[212] Such material considerations are important when one considers that the highest function of a "normative king" in early Indian society is his ability to eliminate destitution in his subjects.[213]

There are different understandings of what the "advisor-treasure" achieves for the king: In one version, the advisor (*pariṇāyaka*) tells the king-elect to relax and he will "rule for him," in another version, the advisor will "counsel" the king. The duties of the minister in this configuration are largely administrative; however, an example from *Bālapaṇḍita Sutta* in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* suggests a provocative variety in the execution of powers

> Again, the [counselor, *sic*]-treasure appears to the Wheel-turning Monarch, wise, shrewd, and sagacious, capable of getting the Wheel-turning Monarch to promote that which is worthy of being promoted, to dismiss that which should be dismissed, and to establish that which should be established. He approaches the Wheel-turning Monarch and says: 'Sire, you remain at ease. I shall govern.' Such is the counselor -treasure that appears to a Wheel-turning Monarch.[214]

At first, this passage appears like any other Buddhist explication of the seventh treasure, the minister/counselor. But it is extraordinary that the counselor explicitly states that he shall "rule" for the king. In other texts, a claim to rule directly on the part of a minister

could be a dangerous act of hubris. As described before, advisors, ministers and gurus often preface their counsel to kings with plea that the king bear the words of counsel, and not retaliate against them for the challenge to his power often implicit in counsel. Narratives depict advisors and ministers aligned with *Buddha-dharma* to have especially close and seemingly equal relationships with kings, as this example suggests. To mediate as an advisor for a king, is to rule for the king, because the Buddha is king of the *dharma* and maker of a dharmic world.

Ideal Director of Attha and Dhamma, Masters of Sweet Words

Aside from my argument about these varieties of ideal mediators, there are a few ideas that Buddhist texts share across the genres that engage the idea of the advisors. First, as one familiar with the *jātaka* tales might imagine, Śākyamuni in his previous lives frequently acts as an advisor or minister to a king. In every case, he is wise, and frequently a *brāhmaṇa* or a powerful priest, *purohita*, to the king. These depictions are quite formulaic; the Bodhisattva is born as a king's closest colleague and wise advisor, (*paṇḍita-amacco*). The most pervasive formulation of the relationship of the bodhisattva to a king is found also in the *Tittha-Jātaka,* (*Jātaka* No. 25), where the story states: "the bodhisatta used to be the king's director in things temporal and spiritual." This is the stock translation used by Pāli translators, of the Pāli formula: *tadā bodhisatta taṃ rājānam atthe ca dhamme ca anusāsati.* [215] Also, in the epilogue, the ending frame of the birth story typically states, "in that time, I was the wise minister…" *paṇḍita amacca pana aham evā 'ti.*[216] In terms of his general character, the emphasis in the *jātaka* is on the bodhisattva's role in directing the king in his royal affairs (*attha*) and in his dharmic

affairs (*dhamme*). In this regard, the bodhisatta is continually depicted directing the king, *anusāsati* in *attha* and *dhamma*.

When the bodhisattva is borne as a *purohita*, royal priest,[217] the creators of the texts take pain to show that he was ethical even in his life as a *brāhmaṇa* priest (*J*.86; I.214): "he always kept, without breaking, the first five precepts*, pañcasīlo."* [218] And, living as a *brāhmaṇa* layperson, the Bodhisatta always engaged in the praxis expected of all Buddhists at some level: he lived a generous life of giving, with his mind always set on exemplary conduct, *(sīla).*[219]

Another trope in *jātaka* of the bodhisattva as an ideal mediator of *dharma* to kings is as follows; if the bodhisattva is born as a *brāhmaṇa*, he is depicted as having mastered all of the *śāstra* necessary to be an advisor to a king. An example from his birth as the *brāhmaṇa* wandering sage, Mahābodhi, in the *jātaka* from the preceding chapter is a pertinent here since the story depicts his perfection in two stages (*āśrama*) of life: as householder, *gṛhapati* and wandering renunciant, *parivrājaka.*[220] The Bodhisattva lived perfectly as the *brāhmaṇa* householder: Once he renounces and becomes a wanderer, Mahābodhi's wisdom trajectory encompasses the various *vidyā*s particular to his birth, but also includes the expert knowledge in *dharma* that he gains through *dharma* treatises (*dharmaśāstreṣu*).[221] These *śāstra* are the source of authority for the bodhisattva in the *Mahābodhi-Jātaka*. Through it, the creator of the *jātaka* assures two things: his worthiness to be a king's teacher and his authority to criticize the harmful views of the kings other ministers. But, in a slight contrast to some of the Brahmanical understanding the need for kings to adhere to *śāstra*, Mahābodhi became an expert in *dharmaśāstra* in order to save beings. But the unstated authority of Mahābodhi to transform a king comes

from his perfections through lives that have made him knowledgeable, charismatic and charming as well—all of which converge on his skills in his life as a householder (presumably *brāhmaṇa*, since he studied all *śāstra*, and the king in the *jātaka* refers to him once as a *brāhmaṇa*).

Monks become the ideal mediators of *dharma* and power for kings after the Buddha has entered *parinirvāṇa*, his death, which leads to his "final nirvāṇa without remainder." Thus, charming words and sweet sounds of *dharma* are the valued quality for monks who act in the Buddha's stead as advisors and ministers to kings. The focus on the nature of the words comes as no surprise given that *buddhavacana,* the spoken word of the Buddha, the *Buddha Dharma* become the responsibility of the specialist members of the saṅgha. That the monks mediate the *dharma* for the Buddha in this way is crucial; since the *dharma* of the Buddha is one aspect of the Buddha that continues, even after his passing into extinction (*parinirvāṇa).*

For instance, in the *Milindapañha*, the monk Nāgasena, answering a summons to saṃvadana in King Milinda's court is described as being "revered by many, many kings and great ministers (*mahāmattas*)" (I.22).[222] The epithets for Nāgasena's mastery of discourse show that monks' words were as powerful as those of Buddha Śākyamuni; Nāgasena's are described as,

> …thoroughly satisfying the whole world by thundering out sweet utterances and wrapping them round with the lightning flashes of superb knowledge, filling them with the waters of compassion and the great cloud of the deathlessness of *dhamma*. (I.22)[223]

Nāgasena's sweet discourses are sufficient mediators of *dhamma*, and also enough to quell the doubts about the *dhamma* that King Milinda was experiencing over his perception of contradictions in the *dhamma* (the impetus behind the *saṃvadana* at his

court); the king's perception of dharmic contradictions was really a misperception of *dharma*.

Aśokāvadāna

We know from the examination of epigraphy that King Aśoka provides our first material account of mediators of *dharma* and power for kings in early India. The reign of Aśoka provides, through the *Aśokāvadāna,* an important narrative with which to think about the intellectual history of the idea of the advisor in Buddhist sources. The *Aśokāvadāna*, though concerned largely with the exploits of Aśoka as the epitome of the king in need and the ideal dharmic king and patron, contains the normative conceptions of the ideal Buddhist advisor, in its description of the monk Upagupta.

Upagupta was an elder of a mountain monastery at Urumuṇḍa in the historical present of King Aśoka in the *Aśokāvadāna.* Like King Aśoka, Upagupta was predicted by Śākyamuni to have an important life of service to the *dharma*. In a life, one hundred years after the *parinirvāṇa* of the Tathāgata, a perfumer named Gupta will have a son, Upagupta, who will "become the best of preachers, a Buddha without the marks who will carry on the work of a Buddha."[224] Upagupta's prediction is an important dimension of his authenticity, for he is the monk that took Aśoka on a tour, advising him of special sites of Buddha Śākyamuni involvement in the world. This tour eventuated in the placement of the 84,000 stūpas of the Buddha that make up the sacred geography of Aśoka's realm.

Given the monk Upagupta's role in instituting relic shrines with Aśoka all over Jambudvīpa, it is not surprising that he is described in somatic terms. Upagupta is a

'Buddha without the marks,' a reference to Śākyamuni, who is a 'Buddha with the marks.'
The "marks" here are the thirty-two marks of the "Great man," the *mahāpuruṣa-lakṣana*,
who was predicted to bring a *dharma* of salvation for the world. With the *parinirvāṇa*,
the Buddha's marks transform the nature of his physical remains. The relics of the
Buddha are the *śarīr*a— the body of the Buddha that paradoxically remains after his
parinirvāṇa.

These become the relics that are distributed around the world at his death, which
Aśoka retrieves and enshrines in the 84,000 stūpas.[225] The associations of Upagupta to
the power of the relics are deliberate—he helps spread the *dharma*-relics and thus, the
dharma. He conveys these to Aśoka during their *dharma* tour; becoming his greatest
advisor for showing him how to spread the *dharma*. The equivalence, if not
substitutionary relationship of Upagupta to the Buddha is clear, as the text suggests—
describing Upagupta as the "eye of the world," who is carrying on the work of the
Buddha in this 'triple-world,' because the Buddha has gone to his rest.[226]

In addition to this somatic equivalence to the Buddha, Upagupta is also depicted
as powerful enough to subsume the *dharma* into his own body, the seeing of which is
sufficient to transform. The visual is a crucial part of Upagupta's ultimacy as a mediator
of the *dharma,* which becomes evident when he first travels to Aśoka's court. The
heralds announce Upagupta before the court in Pāṭaliputra, Aśoka's capital city, in this
way:

> If you want to leave behind poverty which is the root of worthlessness, and would
> like to prosper magnificently in this world, go see the compassionate Upagupta
> who can bring you heaven and release. If you never saw the foremost of men, the
> greatly compassionate self-existent master, go see the elder Upagupta who is like
> the Master, a bright light in this Triple World! [227]

The *Buddha dharma* is also proclaimed in the very epithets for Upagupta's activity in the world; the role of the visual and the somatic experience in the mediations of a Buddha-equivalent like Upagupta is clear. Notice also that Upagupta is the "eye of the *dharma*," the reality of which must be tied to his special relationship to Asoka; by showing him the Buddha's sacred sites, he becomes the eyes that point the king to the *dharma*. In this identification of *Buddha-dharma-body*-Upagupta and the role of seeing him, the visual-experience of *dharma*, we see the elements of the talismanic *dharma* to be examined in Chapter Seven.

Jātakas: Ideal Advisor and Minister Transformed

One *jātaka* is particularly pertinent for thinking about the history of Buddhist communities' engagement with the idea of ideal advisors; the *Vidhura-paṇḍita Jātaka*. This is a story of the *Bodhisattva* (who becomes Śākyamuni Buddha) in his previous life as the wise Vidhura, the advisor to king Dhanañjaya-Korabha, who ruled in Kurukṣetra in the city of Indapatta. In the names of the protagonists, it is at once clear that the creators of this *jātaka* were using and transforming the identities of characters and their native place as they appear in the *Mahābhārata*. Dhanañjaya (an epithet of Arjuna that highlights one of his *kṣatriya* duties as "wealth-winner"); Vidura (son of the sage Vyāsa and half-brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra); the Kuru kingdom and battle site of the *Mahābhārata* war, the "field of *dharma*," Kurukṣetra; and the Pāṇḍava royal city of Indraprastha.[228]

The *jātaka* story is a deliberate attempt to transform the essence of an idealized advisor, Vidura of the *Mahābhārata*—as the Buddhist creators of this *jātaka* conceive of him—into Buddhist terms. Note especially that this *jātaka* focuses on an advisor to

transform who is so consistent in his calls to dharmic behavior in the Kaurava king,

Duryodhana, that he appears like the unpopular, "fifth friend," loyal to *dharma first*, we

observed in Bhīṣma's *rājadharma*, in the earlier discussion of Brahmanical materials.

Such an advisor is laudable to *jātaka* audiences, which is to the typical *jātaka* view of

dharmic action. Their view of the essence of the *Mahābhārata* and their transformation

of it in Buddhist *dharma*logical terms will be explored in Chapter Seven, for now my

focus will be on their conception of the ideal advisor, the bodhisattva-as-advisor.

Vidura was one of the few characters in the *Mahābhārata* whose dharmic

character was not consistently challenged; the text was claiming for Vidura that he was

always on the side of *dharma*. He is described as "far-seeing" and wise and remains an

emblem of wise counsel, as he did in the *Mahābhārata*—though the Kaurava kings that

he counseled rarely listened to or heeded his advice. This *jātaka* mobilizes two key

aspects of Vidura's nature in *Mahābhārata* traditions—being born of a *śūdra* woman, and

being associated with *dharma*.

In the *Mahābhārata,* Vidura's birth made him an outsider (born of a *śūdra*

woman), which contributes in part to perceptions of his special wisdom in the

Mahābhārata. Vidura is an outsider in similar ways that sages are; possessing special

wisdom from their outsider ascetic practices. Vidura's marginal birth is also one of the

reasons that the creators of the *jātaka* chose to transform into the ideal Buddhist advisor.

Since Vidura is of a more humble birth *and* wise, he serves as a good vehicle for this

text's subtle critique of Brahmanical ideas that birth plays a role in religious development.

The rest of the transformations of Vidura the mixed-caste sage to Vidhura the *bodhisattva*

child, capable of transforming a king are discussed in Chapter Seven. The most notable

qualities about him in the eyes of the *Vidhura-paṇḍita- Jātaka* were his dual origins: a

dharmic advisor in a central narrative of *kṣatriya* ideals in the *Mahābhārata*, and of

mixed birth. Both showcase the transformative effects of *bodhisattva dhamma*.

Summary Remarks

      We are now at a point to consider the broad web of signification of reliance these

various depictions of advisor and ministers have built. The examples above should show

that reliance and the trust that reliance implies are foundational to dynamics of the

advisor king relationship.   The reliance to which I refer is that which the king must

bestow to his various mediators. It is also the reliance and trust that advisors must accord

to each other as they work together to neutralize the often negative results of royal

actions. The dynamics of reliance and trust at play in royal relationships have been

depicted in diverse ways in these examples. Risk and dangers created by deceit and/or

personal flaws are apparent; since the texts show the difficulty of working successfully,

or even of living and flourishing when associating with royal persons prone to destructive

tendencies.

      The problems presented in making room for reliance and trust in royal

relationships is why idealizations involve so many levels of engagement with inter-

subjective dynamics; to attenuate the problem of relying on advisors and ministers. This

is true primarily of the Brahmanical examples presented above—with their myriad

idealized qualities and behaviors for advisors. Personal attainments such as these are

suggested for the perceived impact that such virtues would have on their relationships

with kings. And, since the texts argue that they are in relationship with advisors, these

idealized qualities are presented also for kings to cultivate in their capacities as associates

and advisors of other kings. As we observed in the *Mahābhārata* examples in the preceding chapter, advisory vignettes also function to teach the *rājanya* audience of advisors, where kings are advising kings.

Since these texts act as advice to advisors, the advisors in a *rājanya* audience would have much to benefit from the attention paid to inter-subjective qualities in advisors and advisory relationships. The depictions of the qualities that shape inter-subjective dynamics provide an efficient means of assessing whether aspiring advisors and ministers possess the skill and character to be within the closest circle of influence with the king. In addition, the texts' many depictions of inter-subjective idealized behaviors may just help those receiving the advice of these texts to be better advisors. And, since I also argue that these texts also serve as advice to kings, then these suggestions about how to select advisors, as well as how to trust them, would model how kings could be better partners in royal relationships, and by extension, better rulers.

What are we to make of these Brahmanical and Buddhist literatures that are posing questions and attempting to answer concerns around reliance and trust in royal relationships? Perhaps the Brahmanical texts reveal a concern that advisors and kings reproduce for each other the confidence that formerly was provided by choosing advisors from intimate friends and close relatives. I see the texts working to create through the artifice of idealizations, the attainments that advisors should possess in order to provide confidence in royal structures of rule. Moreover, Manu's suggestion that place of birth should be a boundary of eligibility to be near the king could be answers to diversity in the kinds of royal ministers and advisors. The examples above demonstrate, at least, the ways in which Brahmanical communities are straining to meet the complexity of the

advisory role at court, as well as a court milieu attended by persons with complex notions of *dharma*.

In contrast, the advisors and ministers depicted in the Buddhist materials engage this complexity not by imagining themselves into the bedrock relationships of rule, but by creating a perfective constant—monks or bodhisattvas so perfected in dharmic behavior and their perceptions of royal power—that obviates the problems of trust and reliance in royal relationships. No relationship is so complex that a monk or bodhisattva cannot cut through to the fundamental obstacle to dharmic rule.

Ultimately in the Brahmanical examples, the representation of the advisor centers on two poles; that of ideal *qualities* of advisors and that of the ideal *means* used by advisors, as we have seen. Beyond these centers, there is also a general progression in the dharmic intimacies of advice and advice-giving that moves beyond ideals shaped by sacrificial roles, to include idealizations that privilege *rājanya* family networks. Further, in some cases—as in śāstric texts or in śāstric modes as in the *rājadharma* of the *Śāntiparvan*—this movement is both abstracted and elaborated to imagine and encompass all the permutations of the means and ideals that pass between advisors and kings. So imagined, negotiations between the advisor and the advised can rely on the ease presumed in *rājanya* familial relations, as well as be protected from the dangers of these families. In other words, relationships between kings and counselors are as formalized as they are safely intimate. Aspects of these ideal means will be discussed in the next chapter. The ideal and role of the advisor weighs more heavily in this chapter because these abstractions are the means the texts use to engage the tensions created by the paradox of trust and reliance (as seen especially in the *Mahābhārata* analyses).

Neither elements of Brahmanically ritualized reliance on advisors, nor Brahmanically routinized relationships of reliance are in play in Buddhist presentations of ideal qualities and means of the advisor. Rather, the ideal advisor in Buddhist scenarios is presented as an antidote to an *adharmic* ill that is created by the king's reliance on non-Buddhist advisors, or to the vagaries of life in general. In a formulaic manner, Buddhist examples depict kings relying on an advisor or minister—a role assumed by *nāyaka* ("provincial leader"), *amacca*, ("close associate"), or *purohita* ("personal priest")—who are perfectly *dharmic.* In the next chapter we will learn how these ideal mediators then perfect kings dharmically. Simply put, in Buddhist literatures there are no ideal qualities to be cultivated other than for the advisor or minister to be Buddhist. In contrast to the questionable merits shown to exist in Brahmanical advisors, Buddhist advisors are unequivocally beneficial fields of merit for kings.

Chapter 6: Beyond the Ideal: The Pragmatics of Lies, Tricks, and Illusion

> *Counsels constitute the armor of a king, and are the limbs of his subjects and officers. A kingdom is said to have its roots in spies and secret agents, and its strength is said to lie in counsels of policy. **If masters (svāminaḥ) and advisors (mantriṇaḥ) follow each other for deriving support from each other, subduing pride and wrath, and vanity and envy, they may both then become happy.** (MBh, 12.84.47-49)* [1]

These verses about counsel, advisors, kings and their agents "following each other" encapsulate the dynamics of the king-advisor relationship, and the presumptions that the Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions have about the obstacles to good counsel and its results—the beneficial exercise of the king's power. In previous chapters, we have seen the means to beneficial rule linked to reliance on advisors and ministers. And, in order to assure that the king relies on the best counselor at the right time, the texts present ideal advisors, which are construed through the Brahmanical and Buddhist communities' senses of dharmic excellence and success. In this chapter, we discuss how the texts impute all of these senses into their ideal understandings of an advisor, with a particular focus on the pragmatics of the relationship itself. The actions taken within the advisory relationship are mediated through emotion and trust, which we have seen both traditions articulate these realities through their depictions of the 'king in need.' Ideally advisors are to have outstanding qualities in order to meet the test of being in relationship with a king (and other advisors). The particular irony for any advisor and minister is that the myriad excellent attainments and virtues that advisors are expected to possess, in the end are put to an ultimate test—directing all his or her integrities to the practice of deception.

All advisors and ministers must deceive at some point in order successfully to mediate power and *dharma* for the king. They may even have to deceive the king in the

course of their counsels; just as kings deceive other *rājanya* as they act toward their aims of royal success. Advisors, ministers and kings also use subtle deceits to maintain power over rivals, as well as the people of the kingdom. Such are the requirements of rule. Therefore, this chapter brings forward those pragmatic considerations of the advisor-king relationships that involve deception, and a key factor in successfully deceiving—trust. These considerations are best illustrated through a category of advising scenarios that go beyond the ideal: those scenarios in which the ideal advisor engages in seemingly adharmic actions—lies, tricks, and illusions—to counsel effectively and mediate power successfully.

The success that attends on counsel and the necessary use of deception are encapsulated in the verses from the *Mahābhārata* above (12.84). Bhīṣma is teaching Yudhiṣṭhira the ways in which success and power are mediated through the advisor-king reliance. In order to show the factors involved in this relationship of reliance, Bhīṣma calls attention to the dynamics involved in sustaining it. Control emotion to protect the alliance, and make room for good counsel. Counsels protect the king and are also the very legs on which the kingdom and its officers stand; these in turn are strengthened by the "policy." The king has his role; he binds counsels together with his ability to enfold things into a functional unity with his power (*mantrasaṃhanano rājā*; 12.84.47). 'Policy' (*mantra*) encompasses everything, in the multiple plans and ends formulated and channeled by advisors. According to the wisdom in these verses, counsel is regarded as the "pith" or the essence that gives "strength" (as above) (*mantrasāra pracakṣate)* to the kingdom. Extending the agricultural metaphor further, counsels are set to root by means of spies (*rājyaṃ praṇidhimūlaṃ*), 12.84.48.[2]

Brahmanical and Buddhist sources show that these communities were aware of the network of spies in their midst—for the tropes of ministers, spies, and advisors, crooked or otherwise that they use. And according to the suggestions of the *Arthaśāstra*, members of these communities were used as part of the network of observation, which means that a *śramaṇa* on the road or a *brāhmaṇa* sage surrounded by students could have been serving the king as spy—whether they were real members of either *saṅgha* or not. As networked as Indic communities might have been due to the nature of the varṇa and jāti social distillations, so too were they caught in a web of power created and maintained by the king's ministers and advisors through complex covert operations.[3] This web of power is cast wide, so that even the jewels of rule are caught up in the royal web as they progress through the activities of royal life.

As the quotation also implies, the bonds of royal relationship create this intricate web of observation. The *svāmin*, "master" and his advisors (*mantrin*) support each other and follow the lead of the other, in a reciprocating dependence conveyed by the choice of verb here—*anuvartanti*—as they negotiate the web of rule founded in counsel and espionage (12.84.48). Furthermore, as the verses above also suggest, there are impediments to this negotiation—avarice and anger, jealousy—impediments created by the nature of the relationship between a king and his advisors, compounded by power. Emotion and the behaviors that follow from it are the obstacles that need to be "subdued" in order to achieve success in life's course (*vṛttyartham*). Sometimes though, these obstacles are conceived as opportunities: Advisors, ministers and their agents artfully manipulate emotion and other inter-subjective aspects of human nature to achieve royal aims.

Due to assumptions about the 'king in need' and the ways these images of a king's personality intersect with power, the burden falls mainly on the king to rid himself of these negative emotions before he takes counsel with his close associates.[4] But his close advisors and ministers also must shoulder the burden, if we follow the strategies these persons use in order to bring the king back to himself. If we consider advisors and ministers in action, there are activities in which they engage that support and mediate his power, and there are those actions they take—the myriad modes of counsel that advisors and close associates employ—in order to help the king subdue himself (or to subdue him) so that he is directed toward the success and flourishing of the kingdom. Both cores of activity are shaped by concerns of trust and distrust, the necessity of creating illusions of power and omniscience, the importance of deception (the "fifth" *upāya*, of the four *upāya*s, 'strategic means, 'of royal influence), and the special counsel that comes through certain bonds of intimacy and family relations. [5]

Interlude on Strategic Relationships and Alliances

Since all these concerns and social bonds seem to affect the efficacy of the advisor-king relationship, it is important to consider these highly relational aspects of an advisor's media and modes of influence. In order to do this, the focus in this chapter is on certain types of narratives that act as "model scenarios" for a king's reflection on the vagaries of power and *dharma* and the results of his actions around these. While some of these scenarios occur across the various genres as story-episodes of dharmic reflection, others occur as texts in texts (such as the *Pañcatantra*) entirely devoted to discussions of four important modes of counsel and rule—conciliation (or diplomacy), bribery (or financial influence), discord, and force (military deterrence and war).[6] These are the four

strategic means—*upāyacaturvarga,* as Kauṭilya formulates them—that kings and ministers are exhorted and presumed to know, in addition to knowing the "six constituents of good policy" (*ṣaḍguṇa*): dual-policy, peace-making, war, mobilizing forces, lying in wait, and seeking asylum.[7] Heretofore, scholars have not addressed these strategies other than to gloss them. While a detailed exposition of these strategic terms is beyond the scope of this chapter, a brief sketch of their use and function brings to light the salience of relationship dynamics for creating royal power in these texts.

In general terms, these royal strategies—the four *upāya* and the six *guṇas*—involve expansive repertoires of behavior directed at managing the networked relationships in which advisors and kings operate in the course of counsel and rule. Manu's *Dharmaśāstra* describes the four *upāya*s as the means to "bring under his [the king's / the advisor's] control all the adversaries he encounters" (*MDh,* 7.107).[8] Kuntī demonstrates a similar understanding of *upāya*, when she incites her recalcitrant *kṣatriya* son, Yudhiṣṭhira: "Unearth your ancestral share that lies buried, strong-armed son! Do it with persuasion, bribery, subversion, punishment or policy" (*MBh,* 5.130.30).[9] Associated with these *upāya* are the six *guṇas* that allow a king to progress from an unstable position to a stable one; and to progress from a stable position to advancing his expansionary interests, according to Kauṭilya (*Aś*, 7.1.38). All resources, material and human, are imagined to be manageable under the aegis of these sets of tactics. And, as the senior minister in Book III of the *Pañcatantra* states: "When a man is anchored [in these] is there any doubt in his success?" [10]

The most common group of strategic means—the four *upāya*s of conciliation, bribery, discord and force—functions as organizing principles for strategies and actions

designed to influence and control a royal opponent. Collectively, all the *upāya*s are

directed at royal relationships and those who participate in them. Individually, each

upāya denotes a particular action principle (the *upāya*), a common aim or trajectory of

action around which other strategies are centered. Conciliation (*sāma*) is preferred over

any other *upāya*, while the use of force (*daṇḍa*) is considered a means of last resort (*Aś*,

9.5.56-61).[11]

Since the *upāya* of conciliation is the preferred mode, a few examples that

demonstrate its aspects will facilitate understanding. Conciliating or creating royal

relationships (*sāma*)—by means of giving daughters in marriage (9.6.70) for instance—

are tools of expansion as well as an important line of defense.[12] True to the context

sensitivity of scenarios of rule, conciliation has its conditions; some reflecting a humane

attitude that considers human limitations even though expediency governs the strategies.

Thus, Kauṭilya suggests acts of conciliation for those who are enervated or "weary of

war…whose efforts are frustrated…distressed by losses…" [and] fearing the power of

another (9.6.22).[13]

Relationship factors are involved also, with conciliation recommended for the

person presenting his own integrity in seeking friendship, or for the person of good

intentions that values friendship (*Aś,* 9.6.22). Underlying these relationship factors of

conciliation is the pervasive impetus in *Arthaśāstra* to manipulate relationships. At an

advisor's and king's behest, a royal secret agent can be "posing as a friend" (9.5.27) to

learn one's true feelings, so to use these feelings to the king's advantage (9.5.28).[14]

The feelings that a king might have about himself are such a means of influence.

Notable for our concern here with *dharma*, power, and relational dynamics, is a repertoire

of conciliatory means that are to be used against a dharmic person or king (*dhārmikaṃ*). The texts advises "extolling his birth, family, learning and conduct, by [invoking] relationship of [both their] ancestors, or by rendering service and refraining from injury" (9.6.21).[15] We have seen these aspects of character before; as common elements of the idealized Brahmanical advisor in the preceding chapter. As ideals they serve as a common basis for understanding in advisory relationships. In the context of conciliating a good man, his birth, learning, and a shared history of royal service become expedient means; artful devices that advisors use to facilitate a relationship that will lead to an increase in royal power and control.

The rest of the *upāya* also involve manipulating the bonds of royal relationships, but around different strategic aims: provoking rifts in royal relationships (*bheda*); enticing into beneficial alliance through gifts (*dāna*); and concerted use of coercion or force (*daṇḍa*).[16] The particular dynamics involved in these *upāya* will become clear in discussion below. My aim here is to show the pervasiveness of the idea of royal stratagems with which dharmic communities contend in their literatures. If we consider that *upāya* occur also as metaphors to denote "affairs of the heart," then it becomes apparent that these *upāya* function to undermine relationships in *rājanya* settings. Robert Goldman suggests the *upāya* metaphor has moved from "military" affairs, to "affairs of the heart" in the efforts of royal *rākṣasīs (*"demonesses") in Laṅkā to turn Sītā against Rāma.[17] In narrative genres such as these, references to the strategies are largely incidental.[18] But the detailed examination in śāstric genres lend support to the texts' contentions that advisors and kings could use these strategies against any rival, internal and external; whether advisors, ministers, and other high functionaries, and other kings.

Functionally related to these *upāya*, the six *guṇas* also are directed at creating and managing relationships, but relationships with external and more formidable foes and allies.[19] There is no standard translation of the six *guṇas* (*ṣaḍguṇa*); "six constituents of good policy" or "six-fold strategy" (Olivelle), or the "six measures" or "elements of foreign policy," (Kangle; Scharfe).[20] The list is consistent: dual-policy, peace-making, war, mobilizing forces, lying in wait, and seeking asylum. Each *guṇa* consists of a dynamic repertoire of behaviors, employing political and economic ploys, as well as psychological, familial and other social levers to achieve the particular aim (peace-making, war, asylum, etc.) The strategies may appear straightforward, but the means and conditions for using them are quite complex; Kauṭilya's explication of the six *guṇas* consists of several hundred *ślokas* (*Aś*, 7.1-18), while Manu's text reduces these to a "nutshell" of twenty *ślokas* (*MDh,* 7.160-180.[21] These many chapters of the *Arthaśāstra,* as well as within the précis of the same expedients that Manu attempts in his *Dharmaśāstra*, share a foundational element. Throughout these model scenarios of royal policy, deception comes into play. Moreover, varieties of intimacies are instrumental to their success. These factors point to the necessity of considering deceptive strategies of rule in detail, along with the other inter-subjective repertoires associated with the four *upāya* and six *guṇas*.

The Buddhist narratives demonstrate some facility, if not intimacy with all dimensions of the four *upāya* and six *guṇas*, deceptive and otherwise.[22] In the numerous *jātaka* that depict advising scenarios, advisors and ministers are engaged in the four strategic means on behalf of their kings, as well as engaging in some of the behaviors involved in the six *guṇas*. For instance, in the *Mahā-Ummagga-Jātaka* (No. 546) a

brilliant *brāhmaṇa* advisor named Senaka, gathers his fellow advisors to "find a means to make a breach between [the sage Mahosadha] and the king."[23] Senaka proposes a *bheda* strategy: the advisors steal from their king, and plant these items in sage Mahosadha's home to make the bodhisattva appear a thief. An example from the *Taccha-Sūkara-Jātaka* (No. 492) claims that an elder forest-dwelling monk, Dhanuggaha-tissa, was "an expert in strategy," in both the birth story and the historical present of Buddha Śākyamuni in the frame story. The monk suggests an 'arrow' battle array and digging of trenches that echo the *guṇas* of mobilizing forces and going to war.[24] Yet, even though Buddhist texts presume that advisors and kings know and use these pragmatic systems of influence; these strategies are also a dharmic problem for the Buddhist narratives to solve.

Thus, as strategies of royal success, the *upāya* and *guṇa* are reduced to summary references as "*nīti*" or "*rājaśāstra*" as strategic means that are harmful and in need of transformation by Buddhist *dharma*. For instance, prince Siddhartha is described as not "learn[ing] science to cause suffering to others, but studied only the knowledge that was beneficent." (*Buddhacarita*, II.35) This is an example of ideas about strategic means shaped by a prevailing concern with non-harmful (*ahiṃsā*) means of influence. Nevertheless, since intimate relationships with the king still are perceived as instrumental to rule and dharmic success, the texts show Buddhist mediators—whether monk, wandering ascetic, advisor, minister, priest, courtier, or queen—using various expedient means (*upāya*), including deceptions, illusions, and spectacle to direct kings to proper use of *dharma* and power.

Before moving to this chapter's discussion of advisory pragmatics, it remains to situate the function of these *upāya* and *guṇa* with respect to Brahmanical and Buddhist

ideas about trust, deception and royal relationships in their dharmic narratives and *śāstra*. In the analysis that follows, it becomes clear that deceptive strategies of influence occur throughout Brahmanical and Buddhist rhetoric directed at royal success. The question remains as to why they devote such attention to deceptive strategies. First, Buddhist and Brahmanical communities care about royal success because they want to influence royal actions through their texts, as I have argued throughout. The evidence presented thus far shows that Brahmanical and Buddhist communities sought to influence kings in their exercise of power and *dharma*. Second, in the Brahmanical case, one of the means they sought to influence royal exercise of power and *dharma* was by making themselves the keeper of royal knowledge about power and *dharma* through their *śāstra*. We also know that each community relied on royal patronage for survival, so it follows that both Brahmanical and Buddhist texts reflect concerns of royal audiences, or construe *dharma*s through royal metaphor to suit this audience.

But the extent of Brahmanical and Buddhist attention to these *upāya*s/*guṇas* gains another dimension if we consider the human reality that undergirds the technique and success of every *upāya*—deception. Its sheer ubiquity makes deception the 'fifth' *upāya*. Humans all are capable of using deception: to deceive others, and to deceive themselves.[25] Advisors and ministers act to deceive many others in the service of the king—the texts indicate that a web of deceit was cast around everyone; family, friends, allies, enemies, royal advisors and ministers themselves. Thus, it makes sense that Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions each must engage deception in its ubiquity and either normalize or counteract the ways of deception in its texts. Thus, Brahmanical and Buddhist *upāya*—their respective strategic and skillful means of dealing with their

relationships with kings—also adopt even this most questionable of resources of kings, strategies of deceit.

Deception underlies all *upāya* to some extent. Varieties of deception in the royal context, executed by royal advisors and agents, comprise a special set of modes of influence. The *Arthaśāstra* examples below show the level of preparation and detail involved in the use of these deceptive modes of influence, and the role that trust in dharmic specialists and the gods plays in making the deceptions a success. The tricks, lies, and other deceptions from the *Mahābhārata* below show how deceptive strategies are enacted in advising scenarios. In addition, these scenarios also reveal the hard ethical questions that are raised by deceptions (and mistrust due to them) in the moments of counsel. Deceptive practices are the first level of actions that advisors and ministers take. Royal and advisory lies, tricks, and illusions are examined in detail so that the extent of their involvement in creating the king's power and public persona—the fundaments of his rule—become clear.

In what follows, I analyze first a variety of models and tactics of deception in Brahmanical sources, and bring forward the ways in which trust (and its varieties) contributes to illusion-making powers of kings and his mediators. Following that, I show a range of Buddhist antitheses to these models. In the Brahmanical materials, we will observe the necessary (and problematic to some) dimensions of rule that substantiate a king's power, which involve adharmic actions, such as lies and deceptions. By contrast, we will see in the Buddhist materials rhetorical and other responses employed by Buddha Śākyamuni (the best strategist) meant to dissipate the necessity of these seemingly adharmic royal tactics of deception. Since the Buddha is the *dharma*, his entry into the

realm of *nīti* and *artha* to resolve royal problems presents a different function of *dharma* as tactic. As such, Buddha strategies dissolve royal complexities into what I will subsequently argue is a "talismanic" model of dharmic presentation and transformation.

Brahmanical Pragmatics

Lies and Illusions

Lies and illusion-making are important weapons. While there are other means used to make a king powerful and virtuous, I focus on these because of the dilemmas of action that they present in relation to the ideals of intimacy and trust between kings and advisors as presented in the last chapter. Kings and ministers can use trust and emotions as weapons, which aspects of the following story from the *Mahābhārata* toward the end of the conflict illustrates. In a moment of exhaustion and duress, Duryodhana retreats to Dvaipāyana Lake. The text states initially that he enters the lake in order to rest, (*MBh*, 9.28.51) but persons who find him reveal he used the lake to hide himself. Presumably, some device would be necessary so that he would not sink or have to work to remain afloat.[26] He is found by three of his own first. He enters the lake under duress, feeling despair at the great losses of his men, wondering whether he should give up his life or fight. If he were to give up now, the kingdom would be lost—the worst loss for a king.

Seeking to take advantage of his sense of *rājanya* identity and the emotion of shame associated with it, the Pāṇḍavas throw insults at him and call this action blameworthy since a warrior—especially as powerful protector of his kingdom—is not to retreat, which is how his enemies perceive his position in the lake. However, while they deride Duryodhana as he rests in the charmed lake, Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira's advisor in such moments, suggests that he return in kind this particular aspect of royal power:

> Oh mighty armed one, use your own powers of illusion to combat this master of illusion here in the lake. [For you too have these powers at your disposal], and illusion must be defeated with illusion.[27] (9.30.6)

Even alone a king has means at his disposal for continuing or exercising power; this is the power to which the advisor alludes. Kṛṣṇa asserts that kings are masters of illusion. Nevertheless, he must persuade Yudhiṣṭhira to use such illusions (Skt. *māyā-yoga*).[28] If kings are indeed masters of illusion, why must Yudhiṣṭhira be persuaded to use these practices? Though Kṛṣṇa cites precedents of their use, his rhetoric and the king's reluctance suggests that the dharmic tension around these practices remains.

However, on this occasion it is important that Yudhiṣṭhira meet the tactic of Duryodhana with his own powers. In this context, for Yudhiṣṭhira to display his might involves using the tools of illusion. Yet Yudhiṣṭhira performs no such charming tricks over the lake; rather as in many of the examples we will consider here, he uses shame to goad Duryodhana to fight. Kṛṣṇa's counsels shows that Yudhiṣṭhira also is a master of illusion, he need only use them. The progression of his counsel—of advising to use illusion, yet choosing to employ emotion instead to instigate Duryodhana to action—suggests that there were the contexts for the use of both, emotional taunts or magical practices. We may also note that Yudhiṣṭhira does not act on this advice and is able to goad Duryodhana from his place of refuge by an appeal to a warrior's (*kṣatriya*) qualities of courage and belligerence.

Does Yudhiṣṭhira's choice indicate that these tricks and illusions were unworthy of him (or of warriors in general)? To answer this, in the *Droṇaparvan* we find another story that involves the use of trickery, this time using the value of truth telling for which Yudhiṣṭhira is so renowned. When it seems that Droṇa, the Kaurava general, cannot be

defeated in the conflict, Kṛṣṇa advises that the Pāṇḍavas demoralize Droṇa by making him think that his only son, Aśvatthāman has been killed in battle. To do so, Kṛṣṇa devises a scheme that involves playing on elements of the truth and Yudhiṣṭhira's reputation. Kṛṣṇa proposes that the Pāṇḍavas announce the recent death in battle (the truth) of a royal elephant named Aśvatthāman, which is coincidentally the name of Droṇa's only son. Kṛṣṇa's trick involves name-play on a half-truth. There is an Aśvatthāman dead; deliberately unstated, however, is which. The confusion of identities is an anticipated element of the deception; it is also the demoralizing device.

The problem here is that Droṇa does not believe their words; he does not have sufficient trust in the veracity of the statements of his enemies. Knowing their opponent as they do, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas plan for this eventuality—Droṇa's disbelief—which Yudhiṣṭhira must answer. Only if Yudhiṣṭhira says that it is so will Droṇa accept the truth of their words. Of course Aśvatthāman is not dead at all, but is merely fighting on another part of the battlefield. Yudhiṣṭhira is reluctant to indulge in such a deceitful stratagem. However, partly due to his fear of defeat and partly due to his trust in Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira is eventually prevailed upon to cooperate. He speaks the lie which is the first untruth ever to come from his mouth, although this truth is not revealed. Droṇa accepts the veracity of Yudhiṣṭhira's confirmation, Aśvatthāman is dead. He withdraws from the battle in a condition of shock and lamentation and sits down in meditation. In this state he is struck down and beheaded by his archenemy, Dhṛṣṭadyumna. The keys to this deceit were the element of trust and the value of truth telling. The trick played on Droṇa initially fails because he does not trust the veracity of his enemies but eventually succeeds because he is convinced that whatever Yudhiṣṭhira says must be true.

The various tactics and illusions employed by the associates of *rājanya* in the name of *dharma* and *artha* involve a manipulation of trust. This is trust at war, which wears a different garment than one might expect. As has emerged in other discussions, there are times when the truth is untruth and untruth is truth (*MBh*, 12.110.5-7).[29] One meaning for this is that that there are situations were untruth (lies and dissimulations of some kinds) are necessary in order to safeguard truth—deceit can be the truth of the moment. If deception is the "fifth strategy" of rule, then trust is its basis: advisors, ministers, spies work to generate trust in the mind of the king's enemies, allies, and subjects to bring these deceptions to fruition. Both sides engaged in sneaky strategies to defeat each other. In the face of these, Yudhiṣṭhira frequently balked as he struggled with the implications of two senses of what is dharmic for a king (those actions which sustain and those which destroy for the sake of success and flourishing).

Salience of Trust and Persons Who Use Trust

Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* provides a way to explore this special strategy as it explicitly details tricks and illusions that are also described in the *Mahābhārata* narrative. With an understanding of the means imagined available to the masters of illusion—performed largely through the mediation of his associates—we will understand the context in which this *itihāsa* engages the often blameworthy practices of ministers, advisors and kings that are part of the system that helps maintain royal power.

The tricks described by the *Arthaśāstra* echo those used by Duryodhana and his advisors, and recommended by Yudhiṣṭhira and his advisors (both human and deity) throughout the *Mahābhārata*. In the *Arthaśāstra* such tactics are used to create sedition

and undermine power. But the tricks are used also to establish his power. They are used to associate the king with divine powers, to create illusions of power and to instill fear in his foes, and in his subjects.

However, they are not to be used with impunity: for even the strategies of the *Arthaśāstra*, with its focus on the aims of governance, labels some of its illusions as blameworthy.[30] Trust in the power and efficacy of religious figures and ideas are used as a basis to create the perception that the king has great powers of illusion in the face of his public and over his enemies. As we shall see after turning the analysis toward the Buddhist assessment of such illusions and their uses, these critiques in the *Arthaśāstra* are part of an emerging discourse of dharmic war not strictly construed through *kṣatriya* values.

Similarly, most of the illusions and lies referred to as being efficacious by the *Arthaśāstra* have some basis in trust. Trust gives many of the royal lies their power to effect a desired good or a result. This trust takes many forms beyond the trust one may put in persons: It can be a negative trust, such as belief in the malevolence of creatures that can be harnessed by a king of means to create fear; or positive trust, such as trust in the authenticity of messages that come in the form of omens and augurs, or that a minister might put in the commander of the king's army. As the descriptions of tricks and illusions in the *Arthaśāstra* reveal, in order for a person to be successfully deceived, the person who is constructing the scheme must have the credibility to make the lie or illusion believable. In the early instances of lies in the *Arthaśāstra*, this reservoir of trust exists in the intimacy of persons that make up the king's court, and in the character of the ministers and advisors.

For instance, the *Arthaśāstra* lays out the net of royal associates imperative to creating and managing the king's power and authority beyond his court in painstaking detail. Evil ministers, deceptive advisors, untrustworthy gurus and monks appear as problems that the authors of the *Arthaśāstra* attempt to correct in their idealizations of advisors and their elaboration of their ideal methods. Myriad associates and secret agents—all orchestrated by the king and his closest advisors—are required to effect the king's power over illusions. There are spies that are stationary, those that rove about the kingdom, and those who are traders, ascetics (wandering and stationary hermits), female mendicants, students, farmers, widows, mountaineers, barbers, courtesans, water-servers, and freaks. There are spies who are masters in interpreting body marks, omens and the stars, and who have the power to sway others (*jambhaka-vidyā*).[31]

The king casts a wide net of informants, possessing just as expansive a collection of expertise. No region or person is left unobserved (even the king's closest advisors). And, no social role seems devoid of its spies; they engage in the life activities (*āśrama-s*) or social groups (*varṇa-s*) that are the normal constituency of persons in the Ārya kingdoms described in the *Arthaśāstra*. The normalcy of these roles only better enable the spies to help the king create broad powers of illusion. Once in place, the spies, directed by the king's ministers and advisors, and the king are able to play on the expectations that his subjects have about the roles the spies are to fill.

The religious roles of the wandering mendicant and the stationary, hermit ascetic and the social expectations that accompany them serve the credibility and efficacy of these spies more than any other social role. These must have been perceived as carrying more advantages in their functions than others, for they appear most frequently in the

Arthaśāstra as agents of espionage and destruction. The *Arthaśāstra* provides more explicit detail in these positions.[32] It takes artifice to create the illusion of being real religious figures, but it also requires the inherent socio-religious restrictions on such persons in their roles as well.

The wandering religious mendicant is in a special position to perform reconnaissance for the king.[33] Since he has left behind the renunciant life, the nature of his lifestyle can be directed to ensnaring other mendicants to the king's service. I quote the passage of the *Arthaśāstra* at length, for the purposes of analysis.

> One who has relinquished the life of a wandering monk, (and) is endowed with intelligence and honesty is the apostate monk. Equipped with plenty of money and assistants, he should get work done in a place assigned (to him), for the practice of some occupation. And from the profits of (this) work, he should provide all wandering monks with food, clothing and residence. And to those (among them), who seek a (permanent) livelihood, he should secretly propose, 'In this very garb, you should work in the interest of the king and present yourself here at the time of meals and payment.' And all wandering monks should make similar secret proposals to (monks in) their respective orders. (1.11.4-8)[34]

This position of the wandering mendicant spy *(udāsthitaḥ)* is to be filled by one who is has left behind the renunciant life.[35] As the *Arthaśāstra* goes on to construct the role above, this spy's primary usefulness to the king is to enlist other mendicants to act in the same way. In the passage above, this former renunciant spy is to provide food, clothing and shelter to all mendicants (*sarva-pravrajitānām*). In this verse not all mendicants are described as *udāsthitaḥ*, which suggests that the *Arthaśāstra* presumed that not all mendicants were like him. In this way he acts as a householder, serving mendicants by feeding them as they make their begging rounds. However, even as he feeds them, the mendicant spy is surveying the real renunciants (*pravrajitā*) for future agents.

This surreptitious recruitment of future spies is a particularly destructive act,

which is indicated by the Sanskrit verb used, *upajap,* (literally "to whisper"), in this

passage of the *Arthaśāstra*:

> And to those (among them), who seek a (permanent) livelihood, he should
> secretly propose 'In this very garb, you should work in the interest of the king and
> present yourself here at the time of meals and payment.' (1.11.7) And all
> wandering monks should make similar secret proposals to (monks in) their
> respective orders. (1.11.8)[36]

The insidious nature of this action of the mendicant spy is lost if one accepts Kangle's

translation of *upajapet* as "should secretly propose". In the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan*),

Manu, and the *Kāthāsaritsāgara*, this term occurs in the sense of "whispering to instigate

rebellion or sedition."[37] Given that the former wandering mendicant is doing this to lure

other renunciants into the king's service, it appropriate to allow this dimension of the

word in the *Arthaśāstra* as well. Presumably, this spy only engages in such destructive

whispering to those he judges to be like him, those "desiring subsistence" *(vṛtti-kāmān)*.

This compound implies turning aside from the deprivations of the renunciant life in order

to serve the aims of the king (*rājā-arthaś caritavyo*), that is, to gain a livelihood by the

king.[38]

If the mendicant spy is successful, and the text assumes that he is, he would have

wandering ascetics in the service of the king, acting as renunciants, but secretly receiving

payments of food in exchange for information. But the corruption of the mendicants is

not to stop at those that he himself supports. The ones the spy seduces to work for the

king are to enlist other members of other orders, so that the king's web of observation can

be extended as far as those orders that might have renunciants wishing to have an easier

life, as is suggested by the statement: "And all wandering monks should make similar

secret proposals to (monks in) their respective orders." [39] The particular sects are not

mentioned, only that the mendicants that have turned from the way of renunciation

should secretly enlist members of their own path of renunciation (*svaṃ vargam)*. It

implies that the king's need for spies requires that the net of deception be cast wide, to

include many and various sects.

The deceptive dimension to the roles the mendicant spy is asking these other

renunciants to assume for the king is also suggested by the manner in which they are to

cloak themselves in the king's service. They are to retain their mendicant garb, even

though they are no longer really mendicants, and with these marks, act as spies. The

Sanskrit reads that these spies should work to effect the king's aims *(rājā-arthaś*

caritavyo) "by means of this same garment"(*etanaiva veṣeṇa*). In other words, the

garment that they had worn as an ascetic devoted to the renunciant life-style would be the

one that they retain. Though they have renounced the life-style it represents, for the full

belly that results from being in service of the king. *Veṣa* can mean merely, "dress,

apparel, ornament, artificial exterior, or assumed appearance."[40] But here in the context

of a garment used to indicate a role which these renunciants no longer live in actuality,

the stress should be placed on the assumed appearance. Therefore, the individuals that

the mendicant spy has turned from religious renunciation to espionage retain their

appearance of wandering mendicants, but now with their robes worn in order to deceive.

In addition to the infrastructure for the wandering mendicant spy above, the

Arthaśāstra would have the householder and trader establish a similar system of

espionage for the king. (1.11.9-12) There must be certain power for those that are

stationary spies, for they have more of a base in social trust on which to capitalize for

observing those around them, and for facilitating illusion—building on other spies, such as the matted haired or shaven ascetic (*saḥ muṇḍo jaṭilo vā*) below.

This kind of ascetic has potential for even more influence than the other spy types above, due to the level of his role's intersection with various needs of persons who may come *to him* for service. Conceivably, people will come to such an ascetic to benefit from his religious powers—and the ascetic spy is to use their need and their trust in his ability to the king's advantage. As the *Arthaśāstra* constructs the hermit spy, he is presented as a locus of devotion or service (he can bestow prosperity) and means of influence that can be turned to serve the king. His character serves important functions in this social setting (interpreter of signs, predictions, etc.) that makes him a rather indispensable spy. Here, we need to quote the *Arthaśāstra* at length to demonstrate how indispensable these functions are, and to show how illusions are created around this kind of spy, and the network of persons required to carry the illusions out. It is important to pay particular attention to how the actions and roles played by the individuals work to create his viability.

> A hermit with shaven head or with matted hair, who seeks a (permanent) livelihood, is the seeming ascetic. (Living) in the vicinity of a city with plenty of disciples with shaven heads or with matted hair, he should eat, openly, a vegetable or a handful of barley at intervals of a month or two, secretly, (however), meals as desired. An assistant of traders (who are secret agents) should adore him with occult practices (*samiddha-yogaiḥ*) for becoming prosperous. [41] And his disciples should announce, 'That holy man is able to secure prosperity (for any one). And to those who have approached him with hope of (securing) prosperity, he should specify events happening in their family, which are ascertained by means of the science of (interpreting the touch of) the body, and with the help of signs made by his disciples, (events) such as a small gain, burning by fire, danger from thieves, the killing of a traitorous person, a gift of gratification, news about happening in a foreign land, saying, 'this will happen today or tomorrow,' or 'the king will do this.' Secret servants and agents should cause that (prophecy) of his to be fulfilled. To those (among the visitors) [who are endowed the strength of truth],[42] intelligence and eloquence, he should predict good fortune at the hands of

the king and speak of (their imminent) association with the minister. And the minister should arrange for their livelihood and work. (1.11.13-20)[43]

In the interactions above, the *Arthaśāstra* recommends tactics to create and validate the religious reputation of this stationary hermit ascetic. These tactics involve concerted illusion making on the part of the ascetic's agents, both to create the power he ostensibly has and to publicize this information. This is done through two strategies: one using social ideals and symbols associated with the hermit ascetic, and one which uses more active and relational deceptions within the role itself.

The strategy of employing the social marks of the role involves laying out the steps for creating the hermit's reputation. The advice of the *Arthaśāstra* would have the hermit-spy assume the standard form and actions, which the public would know and expect. First, he is to surround himself with ascetics, and establish himself at the outskirts of the city. During the time of the Upaniṣads, the prevailing practice was that religious ascetics were stationed at the perimeters of the growing cities—and the *Arthaśāstra* presents a similar understanding of their practice. Indeed, the choice to fit the ascetic to the religious (and geographical, in this case) ideal is part of what establishes his credibility—for it fits the general norm, and hence wears the illusion of familiarity.

There are tiny social deceptions at play throughout the scenario, for the *Arthaśāstra* also has the ascetic make use of public knowledge about the way in which ascetics should take their food. They are to create the illusion of begging and fasting: "…he should eat, openly, a vegetable, or a handful of barley…" This alludes to the practice of the many self-mortifying, wandering ascetics (especially Buddhist and Jain) of the day in which mendicants eat only a small morsel of food. The deception lies in the allowance that in secret—away from those whom they wish to trick into thinking they are

nothing other than renunciants—the ascetic spies and disciples may eat as they wish. The goal is *publicly* to create the illusion of the fast, and thereby meet the social expectation about the eating habits of the wandering religious mendicant.

In addition, the possession of disciples is a key mark of an ascetic's power and religious success in early India, and the *Arthaśāstra* acknowledges this, as it suggests that he live "with plenty disciples."[44] Thus, the disciples are on hand to prove the ascetic's reputation as a teacher. But these students are special, in that they are complicit in the spy's activities. They help create his illusions; for example, the renunciant might plant small rewards for those who come to him, or light fires that were predicted by him in advance. The disciples might also spy out particular family concerns and report them so that the ascetic can use them, as in the phrase, "he should specify events happening in their family, which are ascertained by means of the science of the body, and with the help of signs made by his disciples."

Figures who typically patronize such an ascetic also help create his reputation, and to this end the *Arthaśāstra* enlists trader spies and their agents. These spies don the social marks of their roles and act as if they have benefited from the hermit. Agent traders and their assistants send gifts in thanks for his powers, and also publicize the exchange. This deceitful exchange of gifts signals to the public that the ascetic can help one achieve prosperity. Importantly, it also gives the king access to those who would come to the ascetic seeking these same powers.

This particular scenario of deceit also makes use of public perceptions of the prophetic and interpretive sciences that such an ascetic might possess. For instance, the ascetic will use the common practice of interpreting body marks—(*aṅga-vidyayā*, (lit.)

"by understanding the limbs of the body" (1.11.17)—to demonstrate his knowledge of the person before him, or to predict events yet to happen. These sciences are employed in concert with his disciples, who give him the information that the ascetic reads into the body marks. In addition, the ascetic predicts "small gains" or surprise material rewards, and feigned losses ("fires") that his students carry out. In this manner, a power claimed by the ascetic about his powers is made real by the spies. And it is agents' task to channel the use and service of these popular sciences.

Interestingly, the *Arthaśāstra* seems to take a double view of these sciences of illusion: It assumes that they work, and it presumes to yoke them to the king's advantage. Important for creating the perception that the king also has such powers, the ascetic includes predictions about the king among his other predictions: "'this will happen today or tomorrow,' or 'the king will do this'…and agents should cause that of his to be fulfilled" (*Aś*, 1.11.17). Thus, the ascetic spy and the king need one another's power and reputation in order to create a credible deception. These idealized scenarios reveal that the creators of this *Arthaśāstra* possessed intimate knowledge of the manner in which religious personae work, and the power to be had from any relationship to them: The task is to build on them in a mutually beneficial way, and to implicate the ascetic spy in planting roots for the king's power to grow through other relationships.

Thus, even as the ascetic is creating the illusions of his own and the king's power and office, he is also surveying (among those coming to him) excellent persons whom the king should know from among his visitors. He uses his own powers of discernment to assess who next to recruit as friend of the king: "to those who are richly endowed with spirit…he should predict good fortune at the hands of the king." (*Aś*, 1.11.19) The ascetic

is using his position in two ways: first he predicts that the king will bring good fortune to this person of excellence and that he will be called into the coveted inner circle (in meeting the minister, and the status that would imply), and then he uses his position as spy to bring about the prediction.   This double action—prediction and confirmation of the prediction—bolsters the ascetic's reputation again, and can only increase the viability that the spy's word carries in general.

The creators of the *Arthaśāstra* carefully weave together the power of religious personae and the king; thus, the predictions involving the king's behavior carry special weight here. The ascetic can create the illusion of having a link to the king, because he does have it. But, the real power of the relationship resides in its secrecy: the bond and collusion between the ascetic spy and the king is unknown, which only heightens the perceived powers of the ascetic. For the ascetic's ability to predict the king's activities is created by means of public acts bolstered by illusion-making activity, and deception. The public is deceived into thinking that the ascetic acts through the filter of his own powers. As this analysis should suggest, such spies are significant sources of power for the king. The more spies the king has on hand to use efficiently the social and religious expectations of his subjects, the wider his net of observation, which works to increase the perception of the king's omniscience and divinity in other royal tricks and deceptions.[45]

In the deceptions of the wandering mendicant and the stationary ascetic, the *Arthaśāstra* shows how the king and his agents take advantage of the trust of the deceived. Indeed, several of the illusions employed by the hermit and his disciples are specifically designed to generate this sense of trust so that the tricks they employ are more likely to be effective. The king eventually extends these same tactics to ensnare a

gullible enemy. Both the wandering mendicant and hermit are familiar figures of the period and their occurrences in these passages of the *Arthaśāstra* demonstrate that both are objects of veneration and trust for the general populace.

Because they are so suitable for his purposes, the king makes use of them in surprising ways. In addition to using these persons for surveillance, the *Arthaśāstra* recommends that the king use these mendicant spies as his assassins. The reason for his choice is evident if one considers the nature of these spies. The victim of the assassination places trust in the religious ideals followed by such orders, thus undermining the natural suspicion that he might hold towards any stranger who approached him. Moreover, such wandering mendicants would be able to move from one kingdom to another unchallenged because of the popularly held belief that they live in a manner that transcends the normal circumstances of social life. This belief and trust can be exploited to deadly effect.

Extreme Measures and Other Yogavāmana

Beyond the measures we have seen so far are even darker deceptions that a king's associates use to create illusions and manipulate powers to preserve the king's domain. The Kauravas used them freely as did Rāvaṇa to charm the forest and animals to lure Rāma away from Sītā's and Rāma's *āśrama*. The *jātaka*s hint only at persons being used by evil ministers; the bad consequences they sow become the harsh realities that the Bodhisattva redresses in one of his many lives to prove the efficacy of his *dharma*. But such practices are not recommended or engaged in by the Bodhisattva; if he uses tricks,

they are tricks of *dharma*, as we shall see. But these texts—*jātaka*, *itihāsa* and *mahākāvya* like the *Rāmāyaṇa*—do presume that kings and ministers, advisors and priests use these tactics to gain advantage.

Priests are recommended as close confidants of the king for their ability to use *Atharvan* spells and counter spells that adversarial others may use to undermine the king's reign (1.9.9).[46] With the requirement that the priest possess these skills, the *Arthaśāstra* hopes to provide a means for the king to use all powers—human and divine—to the advantage of his rule. Let us keep in mind this image of the king with persons on hand to help him channel the various objects of power and divinity to the advantage of his rule and the betterment of his realm. For the control and power he gains through them are instrumental to perception of him as a master of illusion.

The most problematic deceits of the treatise are also the most explicit strategies that the spies and various agents of the king (and the king himself) create in order to take-over a rival fortress, to sow sedition in neighboring, weaker kingdoms (*Aś,* 13.2-3) and to draw out the king's enemy. When seeking to preserve the king's domains by taking advantage of the weakness of another kingdom, the *Arthaśāstra* recommends the use of secretive means and "base tactics" (*yoga-vāmana*).[47] Through secretive means the agents create special links to divinities, and his omniscient control over his and other kingdoms, and their resources. Other "base tactics" are those reserved for disabling an enemy kingdom when it is weakened under extreme duress. The media of illusions extend even into alchemy and magic, and the exploitation of religious practices and persons.[48]

Planted knowledge in conjunction with artifice brings about the success of many illusions in the *Arthaśāstra*, and this is done even in creating the illusion of the king's

omniscience (*sarvajña*). The attempt is not to show that the king is wise, but rather to show that he is so far-seeing that he knows what is occurring in the houses of the enemy's ruler (achieved through observing spies). He also knows what news will come from a foreign land (predicting news that he gained by an unknown courier pigeon). (*Aś*, 13.1.1-2) While these may seem to be indices of wisdom, they are rather better seen as exercises of power, specifically of the apparent extension of a king's powers of surveillance.

The tactics that are designed to associate the king with certain gods and divine powers are more interesting, for they enlarge our understanding of the "power of illusion" that Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana both were said to have (by Kṛṣṇa as they argued on the banks of Dvaipāyana lake). In these chapters of the *Arthaśāstra*, the king has agents who animate deities at fire sanctuaries, and who create the illusions that he can walk on water, powers usually associated with the gods. These are also powers that are used to bolster the king's image, as in *Aś*, 13.1.3-6:

> [Aligning the king with deities by][49]…*conversing with and worshiping* agents appearing as deities in fire-sanctuaries,[50] who have entered the hollow images of the deities […] by an underground passage; or, *conversing with and worshiping* agents appearing as Nāgas or Varuṇa risen from the water; showing a row of fires at night inside water by placing a container with sea-sand; standing on a boat held down by slings containing stones [v.3]… [Making] Varuṇa or Nāga maidens [appear to be in conversation] (with them, and) the emitting of fire and smoke from the mouth on occasions of anger [v. 6].[51]

The phrase that repeats "…conversing with and worshiping…" seems designed to show that the king's power to summon and cause responses to him is accepted even among the gods.[52] One can also imagine the control that he might be perceived to have over the waters, if by addressing a lake or in performing ritual gestures he can cause a Nāga or even Varuṇa to rise up to meet him. This king would be perceived to command even the gods to come to him for audience, or to work in his interests. It was common knowledge

that the king's words created edicts and laws—that themselves have power of human life and effect material prosperity. But through these agents and tactics the *Arthaśāstra* would extend his command into the realm of the gods as well.

Other tactics in the *Arthaśāstra* make the king look as though he has power over water, not just the gods dwelling in it. For example, one of the illusions he can cause to occur is to make water glow with light (as suggested in the phrase beginning, "showing a row of fires," 13.1.3). In this way, the king can be said to be able to combine two antithetical elements, fire and water. His ability to combine them suggests he has power over them. Moreover, in the boat trick above—which must have operated like a submerged platform—the king can be said to be able to stand or walk on water. Just as Duryodhana used his powers of illusion to charm the lake so that he could enter it, so the *Arthaśāstra* provides the means to affect powers over waters that are like in kind. The *Arthaśāstra* also gives instructions on how to simulate the manner in which nocturnal creatures move about (13.1.4) and on how to appear able to move through water (13.1.3). [53] Later tricks involve an agent making himself to look like a *rākṣasa* (by wearing skins and breathing out fire and smoke; 13.1.5). What the text suggests of all these tricks is clear: They exist for the king to employ to associate himself even with unexplained or perhaps supernatural things whose powers are themselves feared, but that now may be put in service of the king.

According to the *Arthaśāstra*, these tricks have the specific goal of creating doubt or fear in the king's opponents, so as to subdue them: "the conqueror, desirous of capturing the enemy's town, should fill his own side with enthusiasm, and fill the enemy's side with terror, by getting his omniscience and association with divinities proclaimed."

(13.1.1)[54] If the king is omniscient (*sarvajña*), then the strategies of his opponent are

undermined because the king will know them, as the examples of his omniscience

indicate. Even the strength of the king's treasury and army are to be attributed to his

special connection with the gods (13.1.7). If the king is associated with the gods, it

means that he has invincible allies. If his treasury is conceived of as a gift of the gods,

then the nature and scope of his actions must likewise be perceived as divinely inspired.
[55]

Also in the *Arthaśāstra*, "soothsayers, interpreters of omens, astrologers, reciters

of Purāṇas, seers, and secret agents" all work either to help create the illusion of the

king's control over these matters, or to broadcast his control of them (13.1.7).[56] But more

than this, they collude in destructive tactics through divinities and religious sites. Even

though the *Arthaśāstra* identifies these actions as *yoga-vāmanaṃ* (base tactics) their use

and results are not called into question by the text at all. Moreover, these actions help the

king come to be perceived as the master of illusion. But using them and the notions his

subjects have about these religious elements in this way also demonstrates that the king

as well as the spy is a master of manipulating trust.

Thus the king, through his ministers and other agents, is given plans in the

Arthaśāstra for how to defeat (kill or capture) rival kings—by using images of religious

power that pervade his society. The favorite agents for performing these kinds of

assassinations are the hermit ascetics discussed above. They can slip into various

dimensions of their roles in these examples, and turn them into weapons. A rather

elaborate example suggests a hermit should declare himself to be four hundred years old

as the initial premise of the ruse, and building on the religious power this would give him,

he should lay a web of false prophecies and boons to entice a rival royal family to him,

and entrap the king.

> And his disciples, approaching with roots and fruits, should induce the ministers and [enemy] king to pay a visit to the holy master. And, visited by the king he should speak of the auspicious marks of former kings and their countries (adding), 'When every one hundred years of my life are completed, I enter fire and become a child again; so here in your presence, I shall enter fire for the fourth time; you [deserve] to be honored by me; choose three boons.' When [the enemy king] agrees, [the ascetic] should say, 'You should stay here with sons and wife for seven nights, [and celebrate in the festival']. He should attack him while [the enemy king] is staying there. (13.2.2-5)[57]

This is a clever deception: For it was common for kings to visit religious specialists such

as this, to offer gifts, to receive the power of the religious specialist's blessings, and to

demonstrate their *dharma*. The deception plays on this tradition, and then augments it by

appealing also to the king's desire for prestige. The hermit entices the enemy king with

talk of those kings that bear the marks of a good pious ruler—marks that the hermit

suggests this king possesses also. Not only is this king to be brought into the company of

such good kings by means of the hermit's wiles, but he is promised he will receive a boon

as the hermit-spy leaves this world. The blessings that such a king might imagine would

make this enticement irresistible, and it is the desire for such boons that the *Arthaśāstra*

anticipates and would use to trap the king and seal his fate. However, the boons or the

king's expectations about the hermit alone do not entrap the king—his trust in the hermit

is necessary too.

In addition to associating himself with divinities, the king also bolsters his power

by manipulating deities and religious sites in general. In the *Arthaśāstra*, Varuṇa and the

Nāgas are a symbol of power for these kings, and the hermit spy works to convince rival

kings of his own king's superior powers. In the following example, the spy works
through the rival king's fears and expectations about these divinities using water tricks.

> …an agent appearing as an ascetic with matted locks, all white, staying in water,
> with means of getting away to an underground tunnel or chamber under the tank,
> secret agents should tell the king after gradually making him believe, that he is
> Varuṇa or the King of the Nāgas. (13.2.16)[58]

This is a difficult passage to interpret, as it does not make full grammatical sense, but it
seems that the trick is that the ascetic's coming and going in the water makes him to be a
Nāga, and hence in possession of supernatural insights.

Even while the agents help the king, the king himself uses divinities, religious
roles and sacred sites to cloak his identity and to deceive an opponent. This scenario may
occur when the king is in a weak position. In the context of a king's loss of his fortified
city to an opponent, the *Arthaśāstra* opens the king's actions to a wide range of tricks and
strategies to regain his power. In this weaker position, the king will use spies, but he also
assumes more of the risk himself. In the following example, the king assumes the power
of the divinity, not just through association as in the examples above. For instance, the
text recommends the following strategy:

> Or, if his fort is seized, he should, after setting up a sanctuary with plenty of food
> to eat, remain concealed in a hollow inside the image of the deity, or in a hollow
> wall, or in an underground chamber endowed with the image of a deity.
> (12.5.43)[59]

From this advantage point the king can lie in wait for his enemy, and kill him using the
cloak of the deity.

The *Arthaśāstra* also discusses many ways to lure rival kings and enemies to their
deaths through their very beliefs in omens, demons, deities, and sacred places. Sacred
trees may hold an agent in its branches, which whisper down to planted astrologers

(*mauhūrtika*) and omen interpreters (*naimittika*) that the enemy king's flesh will be eaten if he pursues a particular course (13.2.21). Deities are made to bleed; deities are made to burn with flammable coating while they speak fearful predictions; and Nāgas are made to speak from water tanks—all to instill doom in a rival king that he will fail in battle or meet some other demise. (13.2.23, 25, 27) In all of these deceptive tactics of the king, demons, deities, *rākṣasas*, omens, and sacred objects become agents of the king—tools of deception and tricks of war.

Importantly, these illusions only work because the particulars from which they are constructed—deities, demons, signs, etc.—are trusted as agents of power in their own right. No matter that they become tools of the king for their power in and out of the context of the king's use. They are effective because they are trusted symbols, and because they are deceptions they become even more powerful in the hands of the king. Without the cloak of verisimilitude that the net of spies and the *Arthaśāstra* seek to create, any king using them would begin to look much like the Wizard of Oz, with his powers deflated once he was found to be manipulating the smoke and great roars coming forth from the wizard image from behind the concealing curtain. The powers of illusion are in the eyes of the perceiver, but they must be artfully maintained and played by the deceiver: hence the *Arthaśāstra* outlines these tricks and illusions in extensive detail.

Thus, after laying the artifices above to frighten the enemy the *Arthaśāstra* directs the creation of illusion toward the king. All of the tactics, illusions and their fear-provoking power are made into yet another trick for the *Arthaśāstra*'s ministers to engage in order to demonstrate the king's dominance.

> Or, showing these tricks practiced on himself, he should overcome them, in order to convince the enemies. Then he should employ the tricks (against them). (13.2.36-37)[60]

In this scenario, our king of means is given the opportunity to triumph over those very illusions that threatened the enemy king. By standing firm in the face of a bleeding deity or laughing at the warning words of a burning god, the king wins by holding both the power of creating illusion and conquering it in his hands.

Although the tricks and illusions described here are of a different type than those centering on the mendicant and the hermit, they are still entirely dependent on the trust of the enemy, or more specifically, on his beliefs. In this case it is not so much the enemy's trust in the authenticity of individual agents that make these tricks effective, but his belief in the presence and activity of supernatural forces in this world. These illusions can only be effective if the enemy of the king has trust in the veracity of Nāgas, omens, sacred trees, astrologers, all-knowing sages and divine images—and that the trust can be utilized to his disadvantage.

The mechanisms of trust, tricks and illusion-making in the *Arthaśāstra* provide a technical base with which to analyze trust and deception as well as the use of religious figures and practices in more particular contexts. Ministers and advisors that understand and know how to use the various strategies of *artha* could be sent to gain service to traitors and enemies (*Aś*, 9.6.34-41) in order to sow dissension from within (*Aś*. 9.6.50-51). Since these theories are forged from an explicitly courtly context with *brāhmaṇas* as teachers, scholars, and other *śreyas* (seasoned experts), there are parallels in other Brahmanical-related genres, in the *Mahābhārata* in its mode as *śāstra*.

For instance, the story of the Lacquer House Fire (*Jatugriha-parva*) within the *Ādi-parva* depicts deceptive strategies and counter-strategies, around a religious festival used as an artifice to carry out a murderous *upāya*. Duryodhana and the Kauravas concoct a multi-leveled scheme that begins by luring the Pāṇḍavas away to Vāraṇāvata, to watch the beautiful deva festivals there. In essence, king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, acquiescing to Duryodhana's wishes and his own fears of a Pāṇḍava succession to the throne (1.129.10-18), sends Yudhiṣṭhira and his family "for some time away" and into exile, under the guise of a leisurely observance of the festival (1.131.10).[61] In the meantime, the Kauravas engage in economic tactics (*dāna*) to lure royal subjects loyal to Yudhiṣṭhira to their side. At this point in the narrative, Dhṛtarāṣṭra does not know that Purocana, an associate (*saciva*) of Duryodhana's working by secret arrangement (1.132.4-5), is also building a house out of inflammable materials in Vāraṇāvata in which to accommodate and later immolate the Pāṇḍavas (*MBh*, 1.132.6-19). Duryodhana is deceiving his father about the murderous extent of his plan; his father is aware only up to the exile to Vāraṇāvata.

Leading up to the lacquer-house scheme, Duryodhana and his advisors had been engaging in various subterfuges to kill the Pāṇḍavas (1.129.2).[62] But through the advice of Vidura, the *kṣāttra* counselor to his half-brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Pāṇḍavas secretly anticipated and eluded each attempt (1.129.3). Because of Vidura's sagacity—the text rationalizes that he knew all means and arts of rule—but also due to his dual-allegiance, Vidura counteracts the various Kaurava machinations from his position of trust in the Kaurava court.[63] Vidura forewarned Yudhiṣṭhira of the planned conflagration by means of a riddle (1.133.16-24). Later, Vidura secretly sent one of his own friends to excavate a

trench under the lacquer house to facilitate their safety and escape from the house

(1.135.1-6).[64] Like his opponents, Vidura *meets* deception with deception.

The Pāṇḍavas engage in their own subtle subterfuges, acting as if they trust, when

they do not. With the intelligence that Purocana is in Vāraṇāvata to burn them all alive,

Yudhiṣṭhira reveals his plans to Bhīma, "…we should stay here, eager and guileless, and

seemingly doomed, while we look for a sure way to escape from here" (1.134.19)[65] In

the end, Yudhiṣṭhira turns the lacquer-house trick around on Purocana having Bhīma

light the house where Purocana sleeps near the door, along with six other people

(1.136.4). As the Pāṇḍavas make their escape through the trench, Purocana is burnt to

death in the fire intended for his king's enemies.[66] Such activities of Vidura and

Yudhiṣṭhira go against traditional constructions of their dharmic natures. There is no

ambivalence about their activities within the text itself (except around the burning of the

'mixed-caste' Niṣāda woman and her sons instead of the Pāṇḍavas).[67] Moreover, in

contrast to scenarios depicting Duryodhana's use of various stratagems, there is no

moralization about their deceptive practices.[68] And yet, these *rājanya*s with cunning

construct scenarios to leverage their aims; with each side using elements of trust in order

to defend against or defeat an enemy.

In the *Mahābhārata* case, one might ask, if both sides—the deemed "dharmic"

Pāṇḍava brothers and the "adharmic" Kauravas—engage in similar activities, are the

stratagems themselves to be criticized? Or are the aims to which they direct these

stratagems to be criticized? Could it be that neither Duryodhana nor Yudhiṣṭhira are truly

favored by the authors of *Mahābhārata* traditions since they both were simply looking

for power? Or, as the blame-worthy practices (*yogavāmana*) in the *Arthaśāstra* hint, is it

really a question of whether there is a loss of self, with no chance for agency that makes

it an unfair or immoral quest for power? These questions will be addressed in the next

chapter dealing with the means of *dharma* employed by advisors and counselors. But for

now, we can at least assert that kings become masters of illusion through the myriad

activities that encompass the *rājyam*, and through lies, strategies and illusions that their

advisors help them implement.

Deception as a Test of Trustworthiness

> "Now trusting anyone absolutely leads to the complete annihilation of one's [*dharma*] and success, while never trusting anyone is no different than death."[69] *MBh,* 12.81.10

> "I have explained to you the basic truth and meaning of the Learned Teachings. I have also declared the highest secret—kings' never trusting anyone."[70] *MBh,* 12.84.34

Such a wide net of power exposes king and kingdom to vulnerability. This is the

negative side of complex, networked power, so the trustworthiness of a king's ministers

must be tested, since they are the ones who must help the king rule. Evidence that kings

and ministers were suspicious of one another pervades the literature. As indicated in the

preceding chapter, kings such as Dhṛtarāṣṭra know that the trustworthiness of ministers

must be tested (15.9.14). The instruction from the *Śāntiparvan* recommends they be

tested through schemes or staged deceits (*upadhātītān*), but no method is given in the

narrative. The *Arthaśāstra* is thorough in providing testing strategies, which we may

imagine as the culmination of royal wisdom, such as that put in the mouth of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

The complexity of the tests within the *śāstra* demonstrates that *śāstra* writers may also

have understood with Bhīṣma that a king should not trust anyone. More importantly, the

tests themselves tell us a great deal about relationships between kings and ministers and the salience of trust in forging them and breaking them.

According to the *Arthaśāstra*, once the king has chosen the men for his innermost circle of power, the priest (*purohita*) and the counselor (*mantrin*), he should proceed to assess the next circle of power around him—the ministers who are to act as monitors of his realm. The first royal tricks, lies, and illusions emerge in the schemes (*upadhā*) that are used to ascertain the relative integrity of the ministers (*śaucāśaucajñānam amātya*) (13.1.1-20). The need for virtuous persons here is paramount since the affairs of state exceed what the king is able "to perceive directly." The rest of his affairs are classified as "unperceived" and "inferred", and this reality requires that the king rely on the assessment and communications of others to manage those things that he cannot see for himself. (*Aś*, 1.9.4)[71] Not only must he trust others to observe for him, but he must relinquish these unperceived affairs to them as well:

> Because of the simultaneity of the undertakings, their manifoldness and their having to be carried out in many different places, he should cause them to be carried out by ministers (*amātyaiḥ*), unperceived (*parokṣam*) (by him), so that there may be no loss of place and time. (1.9.8)

Desiring an efficiently run kingdom, the king must yield activities in his realm to others, others whom he cannot see, whose words he must trust to communicate accurately what obtains in places which are out of his sight.[72] It is a truism in the literature of *Brāhmaṇas* and Buddhists alike that a king's ministers can be a danger. They usually write from the perspective of ministers' oppression of the king's subjects, but since this *śāstra* is concerned with the good of the king for the good of the subjects, the perspective is for the kings. Relinquishing rule to ministers and advisors is especially dangerous to the king's hold over his dominions—precisely because the king is yielding power.

Because of this danger, the object of such a yielding of control must be a trustworthy recipient. And, implied in the instructions that precede this verse in the text, such power held in relationship to a king must be constrained in a particular way. In this case, the constraint is not achieved through force of arms, but through requirements of character. As a review of the qualities expected of ministers in the *Arthaśāstra*, the person that takes on this role is required to have a long list of ideal qualities: noble birth (which means parents who also acted virtuously and wisely), intelligence, insight ("possession of the eye of science"), energy, persistence. The list continues, creating an impressive individual. [73] But although this description may cut a fine image of a minister and advisor, even a man with this kind of character may become a threat if he is not always directed to the needs of the king. It is crucial that the ministers have integrity because it provides the king some basis to trust these men to act on his behalf.

Therefore, the *Arthaśāstra* devotes an entire chapter to the tests of the loyalty (Skt. *śuciḥ*, literally, "purity") of the ministers, which are carried out by means of various dissimulations or schemes (*upadhābhiḥ*), such as feigning to discard his chief priest, grounds of being *a*dharmic (1.10.2). The test is orchestrated through two circles of individuals; the king's closest advisors and trusted agents of the king whom the ministers would know from the court. In order for the schemes to work, some basis of trust is necessary: Trust substantiates the premise of the deception. The honesty and reputation of one who is trustworthy is necessary for effective deception.

The *Arthaśāstra* suggests the following ruse for the king to test the minister's integrity in situations concerning *dharma*.[74]

> The king should (seemingly) discard the [priest] on the ground that he showed resentment when appointed to officiate at the sacrifice of a person not entitled to

> the privilege of a sacrifice or to teach (such a person). (1.10.2) He should (then) get each minister individually instigated, though secret agents, under oath, (in this manner): 'The king is [not dharmic]; [so] let us set up another [dharmic] (king)… (1.10.3)

In this scenario, the premise of the test is the ruse that the king is disregarding *dharma* with respect to the priest. The king makes a rash dismissal of this chief priest, and as he does this he is insulting the priest in two ways: first by removing him from his station by judging him to be resentful (an affront to his reputation); and second, by forcing him to conduct the sacrifice for someone not worthy of the privilege. This affront against the purity of the ritual ceremony compounds the king's *adharma* in this ruse.

However, whether the behavior of the king is dharmic or not is not the concern here. Rather, the minister must demonstrate that he will put the king *before* such concerns. This stands in stark relief to the positive priorities that the *Arthaśāstra* accords them. Early in the *Arthaśāstra* the king is envisioned as duty-bound to uphold the social order;

> …the king should not allow the special duties of the (different) beings to be transgressed (by them): for, ensuring adherence to (each one's) special duty, he finds joy after death as well as in this life. For, people, among whom the bounds of the Aryan rule of life are fixed, among whom the varṇas and the stages of life are securely established and who are guarded by the three Vedas, prosper, do not perish. (1.3.16-17)

This verse indicates that the *Arthaśāstra* expects the king to respect the *varṇa-s* and *āśrama-s* and links any affront to these as an action that would imperil the kingdom. Nevertheless, the test of loyalty above presumes the king is capable of acting with wanton disregard for these very ideals. This contradiction serves as the premise of the test: the minister passes the test of *dharma* if he remains loyal to the king, not if he acts to protect the circles of power around the sacrifice or, in this case, the priest who performs

the ritual for an unworthy person. Thus, despite what the *Arthaśāstra* itself attests is

necessary for the prosperity of a kingdom, the minister must remain loyal to the king.

From Kauṭilya's perspective, this test stresses the importance of the king's role in

maintaining the social order, even as he might violate the codes envisioned to protect it.

The test also brings the importance of trustworthy advisors to assist the king into relief.

Upholding *dharma* over the king in this case is equal to a temptation—a temptation into

which a minister should not fall, for his duty is loyalty to the king. This position about

dharma echoes the suspicion that the *Śāntiparvan* instruction conveys about royal

friendships (12.81.4-5): The friend who would put *dharma* first is not fully to be trusted.

In the *Arthaśāstra*, the Commander of the Army *(senāpati)* is used to pit the

ministers' trust in and loyalty to this figure against the king, and importantly, the test uses

their trust in him as a basis for the deception. This scenario is designed to test how the

ministers will act in situations that involve material gain (*artha*). In this test, the king

dismisses the Commander for having supported someone unfit (*asat-pragraheṇa*) for

duty (1.10.5). The commander then proceeds to instigate willing ministers against the

king over his dismissal:

> The commander of the army, dismissed over some ruse of being in league with
> bad men, should instigate (*upajāpayet*) each *amātya* through secret agents
> (*sattribhiḥ*), with the lure of material gain once the king is killed: 'Everyone [else]
> is in agreement—what about you?' In dissenting, he is proved upright (*śuciḥ*)
> (1.10.6).[75]

This ruse presumes to entrap a dishonest minister on two fronts: the first, by drawing on

his relationship with the Commander and testing his loyalty to the king over the general.

In this way the strategy may pit the loyalties the minister might have for the Commander

against those he might have for the king. Choosing the Commander over the king would

be a failure of loyalty. Second, it attempts to trap him through the temptation of material gain. The *Arthaśāstra* uses any loyalties that minister's might have to the Commander to flush out greedy ministers.   If the minister chooses to remain loyal to the king, over and above the lure of wealth, he passes the test.

There is also a secret scheme in the *Arthaśāstra* designed to test how the ministers will act when they are frightened (*bhayopadhā*), which is a particularly risky one for both king and minister. The trick is brutal in its means, as the *Arthaśāstra* suggests that "…they [the ministers] are deprived of property and honor" (1.10.11).   In this scheme, the king incites fear by imprisoning the ministers for assembling together for a celebration. The layers of deception are many. First, it is suggested that one minister throw a party (1.10.9), and by feigning agitation (*tena udvegena*) at their assembly, the king then imprisons the ministers (1.10.10). So not only does the king entice the ministers into an innocent party, he plans to entrap them based on his own invitation.

The scheme is continued through a student who will attempt to trick the ministers as they sit in prison: "The king is behaving wickedly: well, let us kill him and install another; this is approved of by all" (1.10.11). Each minister is proven upright if he remains loyal to the king—loyal even in the face of a rash treatment, even in the face of the danger of being deprived of freedom and of being imprisoned. The king feigns the rash act of imprisoning the ministers, deliberately to cause extreme agitation. The scheme plays on the unruly emotions expected in kings (as we saw in chapter four). The minister of integrity is one who remains true to the king, even as this loyalty apparently imperils his livelihood more than any other test.

While the *Arthaśāstra* recommends such tests of integrity or loyalty, Kauṭilya expresses some limits and reservations about these tricks because of their potential to compromise trust (rather than merely play on it). After recording the nature of the tests, and then assigning the ministers that passed to their tasks, Kauṭilya presents the final words on the use of these kinds of tests. The king is by no means to endanger his own or his queen's safety for the purpose of testing the integrity (*śauca-hetoḥ*) of the ministers (v. 17). He is also not to endanger the lives of those involved in or being tested (v. 18). But even more interesting are the limits to be placed on the king's involvement in these testing schemes:

> Once the four types are completed, and the mind is displeased by the deceptions (*upadhābhiḥ*), [there is the chance that] the ones that remained at the end [of the tests] might not recover from the experiences endured. (*Aś,* 1.10.19)[76]

Thus, even as Kauṭilya recommends testing ministers in the king's inner circle of advisors, he suggests caution. As this verse indicates (v. 19), the consequences of these schemes (*upadhā*) may be so destructive of the individual's trust in the king that his mind may never again be turned back toward the ease with which he related to the king prior to being tested. This caution holds up the importance of trust to the advisor's continuing relationship with the king, and this may vary with personality. Kauṭilya wishes to note that the king should be wary of what common sense may indicate to us is true. Some persons may not be able to trust again, as implied by the statement, "[he] might not recover from the experiences endured." Thus, although deceits may be powerful tools to establish the loyalty of the minister, Kauṭilya's reservations also highlight their destructive dimension.

Even with the acknowledgment of this destructive power, Kauṭilya doesn't throw out the use of the practice entirely; he just shifts the agents of deceit. As the example above suggests, the danger of these deceptive practices may turn a good advisor away from the king. I think Kauṭilya wants an outsider to be the ground of the scheme, as suggest by the statement, "the king should make an outsider the object of reference in the fourfold work and investigate through secret agents the integrity or otherwise of the ministers" (*Aś*, 1.10.20). If the king uses agents to effect these deceptive schemes, he protects himself from the unremitting distrust these tricks might create in those of his inner circle, or even of him.

Desire (*kāma*) also provides a context for the *Arthaśāstra's* tests of the loyalty of ministers. Here, the king uses a female wandering mendicant (*parivrājikā*) and highlights explicitly the necessity for the deceiver involved in these tricks to be trustworthy in order for the scheme to be effective. The mendicant is perceived as being able to test successfully the minister for his response to scenarios of desire since she "has won the confidence (of the different ministers) and is treated with honor in the palace" (*Aś*, 1.10.7). The ministers at court that know the female mendicant have confidence in her; this confidence provides the basis for the appeal of her taunt: "the chief queen is in love with you and has made arrangements for meeting (with you)…" (1.7.10) Perhaps she can carry out the scheme because of her proximity to the queen, or even by means of her presence in the court. Evidently, this figure has the power to gain the confidence of the ministers and hopes that her deception will flush out those ministers who would prove disloyal in temptations involving desire. And, even though the female wandering ascetic is depicted through the wary eye of cynicism in some Brahmanical texts, this example in

Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* demonstrates that women in this position are generally trusted, otherwise they would not be useful agents.[77] In addition to the social power the female ascetic possesses, she also provides an internal example (internal to the king's court) of the weight that trust in various religious figures at court has in royal tricks.

As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, the thread running through all of these actions is the counsel of advisors. Returning to the power of trust—it enables the religious believer to be deceived; and for ministers to be tested. In contrast to the idealized advisors and the ideal means through which such advisors and ministers were imagined to work, here we see the idealized advisor and minister invert the power of seeing clearly into illusion-making. Varieties of wise associates were envisioned to help kings see the true nature of things; to see how the world really is, improving his perception and ability to rule thereby. There is the other dimension of advisory and minister activity that works to change how the king is seen.

As is evident from these examples, various sources of power go into creating the powerful image of the king. Public perception of religious power and religious personae are instrumental to the creation of these sources for kings. Hermit and wandering ascetics are conceived as having considerable connections of influence with the public, royal officers and rival kings. The power of the matted-haired ascetic to serve the king derives as much from his religious functions as from the secrecy kept over his relationship to the court. The spread of the net of espionage did not know the bounds of gender as we observed: Even wandering nuns could be in collusion with kings. The ubiquity of religious specialist involvement in the system of surveillance as the *Arthaśāstra* imagines them is remarkable. These tactics seem to have been widespread,

given the assumption of their activity in the narrative genres examined thus far. The

perception of their ubiquity raises the questions about images of wandering sage or nun in

general, and explains a dimension of the ambiguity that often surrounds these figures.[78]

Buddhist Antitheses to Royal Pragmatics

This attention to extending royal power through trust-based tricks and illusions

above are not unknown to Buddhist texts that depict advisors acting to help kings rule.

The Buddhist materials seek to present an antidote to these practices—transforming artful

or deceitful stratagems to the Bodhisattva's skillful means. This is *upāya*, but in dharmic

contrast both to the complexity of the Brahmanical materials, and to those materials'

embrace of strategies of deception in service of the arts of rule. Buddhist approaches to

skillful deception are relatively sanitized. They are designed to plant seeds of good

conduct and nurture roots that would cause dharmic kings and ministers to mature. These

are the seeds of action that prove the supremacy of the Buddha *dharma*. But in order to

prove this supremacy, the narratives that follow inhabit the culture of advisory influence

presented above, drawing very near to the tricks and illusions of which they are so critical

when mediated by Brahmanical advisors.

Contending with Lies and Other Advisory Illusions

Overall, advisors and ministers in Buddhist *nikāyas* are imagined as either

dissimulating sycophants in service of a king, or thieving drains on frontier Buddhist

communities and royal treasuries. According to the elder monk Sāriputta in the

Dhānañjāni Sutta, an advisor or minister causes harm to everyone: "[The minister] plunders Brahmin householders in the name of the king…and he plunders the king in the name of Brahmin householders" (*Majjhima Nikāya* 97.2).[79] These agents of kings are presumed to use the arts of deception outlined above; and possess little of the exemplary qualities observed in Brahmanical ideals. In the *Aśokāvadāna*, ministers use deception—which includes carrying out his fratricides—in order to bring Aśoka to power over his many brothers.[80]   In the *Mahāsīlava-Jātaka* (No. 51), a traitorous minister in service to the Bodhisattva in one of his births as the king of Benares, goes over to an enemy king, where he engages in myriad strategies to bring the Bodhisattva's opponent to power. Proving this wicked advisor's destructiveness, he advises strategies that involve killing the Bodhisattva king's villagers to test his response to expansionary attacks.[81] In sum, advisors and their minions typically are a negative binding force; either leading the king astray or using deception to bring kings to power. These negative ministers are the foils to the superior Buddhist mediators in *jātaka*, who compete for influence in royal uses of tactics.

Even as foils—from their sheer ubiquity in Buddhist texts that depict advisory scenarios—wily advisors and ministers or, at least, deceptive strategies appear inescapable. The prevalence of strategic means—deceptive and dissimulating, marked by the harshness of expediency—in Buddhist texts points to a perceived necessity of such means in mediating power for kings and the cultivation of royal *dharma*. The narrative challenge therefore, is to transform these means in ways that show the ability of Buddhist interlocutors to create the necessary illusions that bolster royal power, while maintaining distinctiveness from the caricature of the harmful nature of Brahmanical means.

The *Mahā-Ummagga-Jātaka*, No. 548 *(MUJā)* as an example uses Brahmanical ideals of śāstric dominance in mediating royal power to demonstrate distinctive Buddhist uses of them.[82] The *jātaka* tells the exploits of the Bodhisatta as Mahosadha, who is a close advisor to two intimately connected kings, Vedeha, king of Mithilā, and Cūḷani-Brahmadatta, king of Pañcāla. Clever advisors (one *paṇḍita*, one *brāhmaṇa*)—using the means of *sāma upāya*—create the encounters and connections between these kings; first through enmity, then through marriage alliance. Advisory machinations encompass a narrative trajectory of epic proportions. Within this trajectory, the *Mahā-Ummagga-Jātaka* renders a Bodhisatta Mahosadha with the skills of a Kauṭilyan expert in *artha*, who uses means that stop short of success for success' sake and harming others. The scope of the text's use of advisory tactics and strategies is well beyond what can be addressed in this chapter. Therefore, the focus here is on examples that resonate with stratagems discussed earlier in this chapter—barriers to advisory relationships with kings and the measures involved in making and breaking these connections; and strategic use of relationships and spies.[83]

At the beginning of his service to king Vedeha, the Bodhisatta Mahosadha must contend with deceptive sages in king Vedeha's court, who are threatened by his wisdom and the primary place of relationship with the king that this wisdom gains. Senaka—the wisest of the *brāhmaṇas* and also the most intimate of the king's four *paṇḍitas* ("sages")—tests Mahosadha's wisdom and status as 'sage.'[84] On the surface of things, Senaka is testing the Bodhisatta's fitness to serve as advisor to his king. Secretly, the *paṇḍita* Senaka is using these tests to prevent Mahosadha's coming to court because he fears being replaced as close advisor, as he states to himself: "From the time of his

coming I shall lose all my glory and the king will forget my existence" (*MUJā,* 160).[85]

Senaka's fears come true, as the king later observes: "In all these mysterious tests and

counter quips he [Mahosadha] has given answers like a Buddha. Yet such a wise man as

this Senaka will not let me summon him to my side. What care I for Senaka? I will bring

the man here." (*MUJā,* 169)[86] The advisor Senaka's anxiety over losing his status along

with his connection with the king, and the king's waning "care" for his Brahmanical

advisor are instructive. The sentiments of each draw our attention to the importance of

such a close advisory relationship with the king. The text then depicts the *brāhmaṇas*

and Bodhisatta's quest to reserve this closeness and influence with the king.

Senaka engages in bheda *upāya* to break this relationship between the king and

Bodhisatta Mahosadha (*MUJā,* 185-186), a tactic mentioned earlier in this chapter. The

details of Senaka's fractious *upāya* scenarios involve theft from the king, the use of

female servants to plant the king's belongings in Mahosadha's house, and lying to deceive

the king into thinking Mahosadha is a thief and an enemy (*MUJā,* 185-186). Once

Senaka's tactics have compromised the king's confidence in Mahosadha, Senaka derides

Mahosadha not only as thief, but also as a "common man's son," a lower jāti.[87] While

birth and social status is reason for derision in Senaka's eyes, these characteristics are

points of strength in the Bodhisatta's counter-tactics against Senaka's machinations. This

Buddhist narrative engages *brāhmaṇa-paṇḍita*-construed *upāya* with the cleverness that

inhabits the more marginal social roles (in the *brāhmaṇa* schema of them) of a wife and a

potter.

Senaka and his fellow advisors target the Bodhisatta's household, thinking their

servants can deceive his wife (Amarā) into receiving stolen goods. Previously however,

the text had established Amarā's intelligence (*MUJā*, 182-83) and ability to meet any challenge. Just as a close advisor would do of any servant to a king, Mahosadha had put Amarā through Kauṭilyan-like tests of her integrity before he married her. His test topics paralleled Kauṭilya's upadhā, although tailored to meet Amarā's scope of action: the social customs incumbent on women, money, lust, and fear (*MUJā*, 184-85).[88] This is a dimension of Amarā's cleverness that Senaka and his fellow *paṇḍitas* do not know. Amarā uses Senaka's ignorance just like any proven advisor at court. With like perspicacity, Amarā interprets the servant-spies' behavior, and discerns that the servants are engaged in subterfuge on behalf of their masters (*MUJā*, 186).[89]

Coming to Mahosadha's house to plant the stolen items, the *paṇḍitas'* servants are banking on Amarā's trust in incidental exchanges that typically occur between servants and the wife of the house. In turns, each servant-spy delivers the incriminating stolen items within jars of fruit, in flower garlands and other domestically construed ruses (*MUJā*, 186).[90] Amarā cleverly records in writing each planted item on a palm leaf, along with the name of each servant, of the *paṇḍita* that sent her and the date; as if she were recording any domestic delivery. Amarā's written record of these deliveries eventually proves the guilt of the *brāhmaṇa* advisors.[91]

Concurrently to Amarā's efforts, the Bodhisatta tries to meet with the king to enquire about the scheme against him. Angered beyond reason and successfully deceived by the *paṇḍitas*, the king denies Mahosadha's request for an audience, and orders Mahosadha's arrest. Warned off by his own spies, Mahosadha flees the king's wrath and takes up the life of a potter, working at this craft in disguise (*MUJā*, 186). The Bodhisatta is clever to use the potter's social position, a narrative trick which the text

interprets for us within the *jātaka*: "…he [Mahosadha] thought that the king might suspect him of desiring to grasp the sovereign power, but if he heard that he was living by the craft of a potter this suspicion would be put away (*MUJā*, 188)." In his use of disguise here, the Bodhisatta Mahosadha assuages royal suspicions about close advisors manipulating for royal power. Moreover, by lying in wait as a potter, Mahosadha counters the ploys of the *brāhmaṇa* sages, using social position as disguise; one of the tools any "crooked," kauṭilya, advisor might use.[92]

Mahosadha's and his wife's use of counter-tactics in this scenario are refracted through the persistent Buddhist critique of *brāhmaṇa* claims to superior wisdom based on their birth and social location.[93] The *jātaka* counters *brāhmaṇa* contentions with perspicacity in Buddhist characters that uses and surpasses birth location at the same time; wisdom in role of the wife and loyalty in the cloak of a potter. Yet in addition to this tacit argument that Buddhist cleverness such as Amarā's and Mahosadha's saves the day, the text also reveals a conviction that the Bodhisatta possesses power that transcends any royal mediator's cleverness and social caste.

When the king's agent finds Mahosadha seated in his potter's disguise, he derides Mahosadha that his famous wisdom has not brought him prosperity but led him to this lowly position, (*MUJā*, 188).[94] Mahosadha's retort intones a sense of command over more than a mere potter's wheel (which is all the king's agent can see).

> Blind fool! By the power of my wisdom when I want to restore that prosperity I will do it…I make weal ripen by woe, I discriminate between seasonable and unseasonable time, hiding at my own will; I unlock the doors of profit; therefore I am content with boiled rice. When I perceive the time for an effort, maturing my profit by my designs, I will bear myself valiantly like a lion, and by that mighty power you shall see me again."[95]

According to tradition, this particular *jātaka* demonstrates the Bodhisatta's perfection of wisdom. His wisdom is couched in śāstric ideals for advisors—knowing the right time and place to act, bringing plans to fruition by his own designs. Yet Mahosadha claims a kind of wisdom that transcends the scope of a typical advisor's command. Time and discernment are his tools: "When I perceive the time for an effort, maturing my profit by my designs, I will bear myself valiantly like a lion." Mahosadha presages his imminent 'lion's roar' of awakening typical of a Buddha's first discourse. Mahosadha is not mediating his king's prosperity. Paradoxically, this Bodhisatta adviser is content with one lump of rice, and yet envisions prosperity and his own fruition in the transformative power of his wisdom.

Buddhist Anxieties of Identity with False Ascetics

The impetus to separate Buddhist ascetic lifestyles from inauthentic ones creates a narrative conundrum for the Bodhisatta Mahosadha's use of a wandering ascetic later in the *Mahā Ummagga-Jātaka (MUJā)*. The Bodhisatta Mahosadha uses spies throughout this *jātaka*—spies both human and animal—to perform reconnaissance on rival kings, rival advisors, and the court of which Mahosadha is depicted as a member. Yet throughout these examples of espionage, the text never problematizes or reflects morally or dharmically on the use of spies on Mahosadha's (or even his rivals') part. The text's opinion of spies is as neutral as the use of spies is pervasive. However, when necessity requires Mahosadha to use an ascetic to spy for him in order to cull information about his own king, glimmers of ambivalence arise in the text.

Earlier in this chapter I demonstrated some of the ways that Brahmanical texts worked to implicate hermit and wandering ascetics in the myriad lies and illusions that contribute to royal power. The examples also showed that such secret tactics were not bound by gender. Wandering nuns could be agents of advisors and kings, as much as agents of merit for themselves and for the public that supported them. The presumed collusion between religious specialists and kings in complex webs of espionage in these non-Buddhist examples, finds corroboration in the last narrative proof of Bodhisatta Mahosadha's superior advisory wisdom in the *Mahā-Ummagga*.

Toward the end of this *jātaka*, we see these socially loaded conceptions of ascetic figures at court converge on Bodhisatta Mahosadha around his innocent exchange of greeting by means of hand-signals with a female ascetic at court. The scene occurs later in the text, where Mahosadha is now advisor to king Cūḷani-Brahmadatta after king Vedeha's death.[96] A female ascetic (*paribbājikā*) named Bherī, who comes to the court frequently for alms meals, speaks to Mahosadha through hand-sign (*hatthamudāya*) to test his wisdom (*MUJā,* 240). Mahosadha's return gestures are observed by spies set on him by Cūḷani-Brahmadatta's chief queen, and distorted into grounds for Mahosadha's execution.[97]

King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta receives the spies' surmise that the exchange of hand-signals is evidence of schemes of betrayal with relative composure (*MUJā,* 241).[98] Rather than execute him as the spies suggest, the king decides to inquire of the female ascetic Bherī for the truth about her exchange with the Bodhisatta, as he states: "I cannot hurt this wise man [Mahosadha] I will question the ascetic" (*MUJā,* 241). When Bherī comes to the palace for her meal, the king aims to learn the reason for their hand signals.

Bherī is described in the text as "wise and learned" and as an ascetic who comes to court regularly for her meals (*MUJā*, 240). The text capitalizes here on the regularity of Bherī's presence at court and her renown, which the text leads us to believe, is the basis of the king's trust in her opinion. After learning from Bherī that she was testing the Bodhisatta's wisdom by means of the hand signals, the king then asks her: "Is Mahosadha a wise man?"(*MUJā,* 241)[99] By showing the king seeking Bherī's opinion in this way, the text is making a particular argument: Kings can rely on the trustworthiness of such a female ascetic.

This example demonstrates some of the social cachet that wandering ascetics possessed in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Even so, King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta is sufficiently wise to question Mahosadha's version of the exchange as well. Thereafter, once the king corroborates their stories—and proves Mahosadha's innocence of subterfuge against him—the king in his pleasure makes the Bodhisatta his highest advisor and commander of his army (*senāpatiṭṭhānaṃ*), a much coveted position of influence (*MUJā,* 241).[100]

Considering the nature of kings, the text has the Bodhisatta Mahosadha receive the king's gift of trust and power with suspicion. As a wise advisor, Mahosadha is acutely aware such a gift could signal his imminent demise as royal counselor as much as his being in royal favor: "The king all at once has given me exceeding great renown; this is what kings do even when they wish to slay."[101] So, Mahosadha resolves to make use of the ascetic Bherī to do social reconnaissance for him.[102] "Suppose I try the king to see whether he has goodwill towards me or not. No one else will be able to find this out;" but the ascetic Bherī is endowed with wisdom (*ñāṇsampannā*), and she will learn it by some means (*upāyena) (MUJā,* 241).[103]

The manner in which Mahosadha addresses the ascetic demonstrates his own respect for the wisdom of wandering ascetics like Bherī, but also the king's respect for her as well:

> So taking a quantity of flowers and scents, he [Mahosadha] went to the ascetic, and after saluting her, said, 'Madam, since you told the king of my merits, the king has overwhelmed me with splendid gifts; but whether he does it in sincerity or not I do not know. It would be well if you could find out for me the king's mind (*MUJā,* 241).[104]

Mahosadha presents typical tokens of respect for ascetics—flowers and scented offerings. Mahosadha's discourse to Bherī also indicates the king's reliance, as in these words: "since you told the king of my merits, the king has overwhelmed me with splendid gifts." As we observed when the king questioned Bherī about their hand exchange, this is a king who listens to and acts on the opinions of wise ascetics. Thus, in these exchanges of honor and opinions, the text envisions kings as patrons who not only reward exemplary conduct in dharmic figures like Mahosadha with positions involving great mediation of royal power, but who also rely on ascetics for opinions about persons in positions of royal trust.

Even while it imagines royal reliance on trustworthy Buddhist figures like Mahosadha and Bherī, the text is also playing with the necessity of dissimulation in order to protect oneself when dealing with a king. Thus, Mahosadha's and Bherī's pact to query the king on Mahosadha's behalf poses a narrative conundrum to Buddhist moralizing about dissimulations and lies on the part of *rājanya* and Brahmanical advisors and ascetics. Note the ascetic Bherī's caution to herself as she engages in the mission for Mahosadha: "I must not act like a spy, but I must find an opportunity to ask the question, and discover whether the king has good will to the wise man."[105]

To avoid looking like a spy, Bherī directly requests a private audience with the king to begin a lengthy and intimate interrogation of King Cūḷani-Brahmadatta about his attitudes toward the Bodhisatta Mahosadha (*MUJā*, 242-46).[106] Bherī's questions are beyond the scope of this discussion. It is sufficient to note only that Bherī is concerned to preserve her credibility to the king and his court, by taking care that her conversation with the king not be misconstrued. Evidently, the wandering ascetic Bherī and the creators of the text are aware of the advisor discourse about false ascetics and are trying to make in Bherī's interactions with the king a clear contrast between the inherent integrity of Buddhist ascetics with the questionable integrity of other ascetics. The text is concerned to distinguish Bherī by her behavior from so-called false ascetics.

The extent to which *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* counselors wanted to use false ascetics in their counsels and strategies with kings discussed in the Brahmanical section above gives some insight into Bherī's statement here. These depictions put the burden on the Buddhist saṅgha to prove the veracity of their representatives; otherwise Buddhist narratives depicting the perfected wandering sage run the risk of getting trapped in Brahmanical spy rhetoric. As a result, the Buddhist communities perhaps go to extra lengths to say that their ascetics are authentic and superlative. This example involving the wise ascetic Bherī demonstrates both—that she is superlative and that she acts in ways that distinguish her from inauthentic ascetics. Or, at least Bodhisatta Mahosadha's trust in Bherī's wisdom and his reliance on her wisdom and *upāya* (means) to work for him proves Bherī's authenticity.

Bodhisattva Māyā in the Mahābodhi-Jātaka

Concerns about ascetic authenticity play out in compelling ways in the Sanskrit *Mahābodhi-Jātaka* (*JāM*, 23). In this *jātaka*, the Bodhisattva uses illusion-making activity, at the same time that it sets Buddhist use of such means apart from inauthentic and *a*dharmic uses of such illusions. In Chapter Four, I discussed the *Mahābodhi-Jātaka*—the Sanskrit *jātaka* about the Bodhisattva Mahābodhi in one of his lives as a wandering monk (*parivrājaka*)—for its characterization of kings deceived by the ways of *nīti*. Here I want to examine the *jātaka* more closely for the means of influencing kings and courtiers that it contains.

Bringing to mind again the premise of the *Mahābodhi-Jātaka*, Mahābodhi perceives with his divine eye that a king who had once been his patron, is being confused by the false views of all his ministers (*JāM*, 23.147.12-14). To save the king from falling into dharmic error, Mahābodhi appears before the court, reveling in a magically created monkey-garment. The ministers praise Mahābodhi's asceticism with sarcasm; harsh speech which demonstrates they really see Mahābodhi as a hypocrite. The king's ministers well-know the nature of the Bodhisattva's *dharma*, since the text had depicted them watching with envy in times past when Mahābodhi was still in a close relationship with the king and discoursing on *dharma* at court. In the ministers' eyes, by skinning the monkey Mahābodhi has contradicted the non-violent *dharma* he preaches (148.13). The act of eliciting these taunts is foundational to Mahābodhi's design to lure the king's advisors into debate with him.

First though, the text sets Mahābodhi's views apart from the others, by demonstrating his compassion and his perspicacity. Through the panorama of false-

views that Mahābodhi sees by means of his divine eye, Buddhist perceptions of their

competitors to advisory positions in royal courts come into focus:

> As he relished the sweet savor of tranquility, he felt concern for the king and
> wondered how he was getting on. He could see him being inveigled by his
> ministers into whichever false theory each of them adhered to. One minister
> urged on him the doctrine of noncausality, giving instances where it is difficult to
> discern a cause [17]…Another minister favored the idea of God as first cause and
> expounded it to the king [18]…Another minister tried to prejudice the king with
> the doctrine that everything, good and bad alike, is the result of previous actions
> and that no effort of ours can avail to alter things [19]…Another minister, with
> arguments in support of the theory that there is no afterlife, tried to inveigle the
> king into becoming a hedonist [20]…Another minister claimed that a king's rule
> of conduct lay in the devious practices of diplomacy prescribed by the science of
> statecraft, even though they go contrary to the[*Dharma*] and are tarnished with
> ruthlessness [21]….This was how the ministers, each by means of his own false
> theory, tried to lead their king astray.[107]

The Bodhisattva Mahābodhi paints in his mind's eye a royal battle-array for dharmic

dispute. The details of these various doctrinal positions are not the concern here; rather,

the rhetorical work that Mahābodhi's presentation of these views performs in the text is.

The juxtaposition of "each by means of his own false theory" to "tried to lead their king

astray" conveys an image of ministers more concerned with their theories than with their

responsibilities of advising and directing the king to the best behavior for the kingdom.

Any *dṛṣṭi* can prevent the person who holds it from seeing the world and one's

responsibility to the world clearly. Once the ministers' competing theories are arrayed

before us, the text resolves them into an argument for reliance on the only perspective

appropriate for kings at court—the clear view of the Bodhisattva, or Buddhist counselors

like him.

Moreover, intrinsic and distinctive to this Buddhist advisory vision is the

compelling insight into the relationship between trust—more particularly in this case,

appropriate trust—and being able to hear the *dharma*. This is apparent in how the text

construes Mahābodhi being moved to compassion to help the king because the king is too trusting of the wrong advisors:

> …the Bodhisattva saw that the king was ready to fall headlong into some heresy, both because of the bad company he kept and because his trust in others made him gullible. He was overcome with pity for the king and wondered how we could stop him.[108]

Consistent with examples we have seen throughout this dissertation, the *jātaka* argues that a king can be harmed by the company of advisors and ministers he keeps. This example also shows that the trust a king may grant to those in relationship with him carries risk. Notably, the king is not a fool here; his problem is the gullibility that makes him place his trust in the wrong advisors. The text then points to the person that the king should trust.[109] One by one Mahābodhi lays bare the incongruity between the views that each minister espouses with the view that shapes the condemnation of Mahābodhi's monkey-*māyā*. He does this in order to convince the king and the royal assembly of the ministers' limited and flawed ways of viewing reality.[110]

Given the narrative trajectory of the *jātaka*, demonstrating the Bodhisattva's superior perspectives over the views of the king's ministers is not the only aim of the discourse. The text also engages the powers that ascetics are perceived to have over the material world. On one level, the text shows that Buddhist figures can perform various conjuring functions to help a king. Working in contrast to the images of ascetics toiling as secret agents against rival kings and royal subjects in the *Arthaśāstra*, Mahābodhi uses his powers—gained over his many lives and his tapas—to conjure a large monkey.[111] He then magically "skins" it to make himself a garment of the monkey's pelt, making the conjured corpse "disappear" (147.17-19). In contrast to *brāhmaṇa* and *rājanya* conjuring of illusions, Mahābodhi performs his trick in order to save the king.

On another level, Mahābodhi's illusion-making at court resonates with sciences of power, *kṣatra-vidyā* and *rājadharma*, such as those attributed to the śāstric minister trying to seduce the king to his harmful view (147:5-6). I quote Mahābodhi's explanation of his monkey-coat at length for its caricature of the wants of shaven-haired and wandering ascetics discussed earlier.

> Sitting or sleeping on the hard ground, with only grass or straw for a mattress, makes one's body ache, and then it is difficult to perform one's religious exercises. I saw this big monkey in my hermitage and thought to myself, 'Aha! The skin of this monkey could help me to fulfill my religious exercises. If I could perform them on that I could perform them easily. Then I would not covet even the couches of kings, covered with the richest fabrics!' So I took this skin of his and did away with him" (*JāM*, 23.147.2-8). [112]

Note Mahābodhi's emphasis on desires for a comfortable bed, and his envy of the fabrics of kings. These longings for luxuries reflect the presumed motives of ascetics used as spies in the *Arthaśāstra*. Here, Bodhisattva Mahābodhi takes advantage of what is expected of wandering ascetics in royal culture in order to make his motives for conjuring his comfortable monkey-skin cloak believable.

The royal audience in the *jātaka* learns that Mahābodhi wants to perform his religious practices, not on the hard ground, but in comfort—an allusion to material motives of other crooked ascetics. The ministers at court sarcastically call into question the authenticity of Mahābodhi's religious practices for his use of violent means to attain his (feigned) comforts. Such inauthenticity in religious personae is a familiar feature that Mahābodhi invokes. Later in the *jātaka*, when he is refuting the derisive sarcasm lodged at him by one of the crooked ministers, the specter of śāstric strategies emerges again: "How can you find fault with me for killing this monkey for his skin—a sensible procedure actually prescribed by your treatise."[113]

There are conceptions of royal illusion-making at work here that do more than resonate with the tactics in the Brahmanical materials above. These emerge around the minister who is the master of the "science of power," *kṣatra-vidyā* (*JāM,* 23; 147.5). This minister argues his doctrine that the "rule of conduct lay in the devious practice of diplomacy" (*nīti-kauṭilya*).[114] The text uses a cunning pun here: *kauṭilya* means "crooked," or "devious;" it is also one name of the author thought to have written the *Arthaśāstra,* Kauṭilya. In Kauṭilya's *śāstra*, the strategies are often "crooked" (as we have seen), but at the same time they are laudable for the success that advisors and agents using these means can bring to the king they serve. Unlike the connotations of *kauṭilya* in the *Arthaśāstra*, here its connotations are not commendable. Nevertheless, Mahābodhi's trick looks crooked to the royal audience within the *jātaka*.

But of course later, the Bodhisattva Mahābodhi reveals that he never really killed this monkey; he engaged in illusion-making activity to make a rhetorical point, as he tells the king:

> 'I simply produced a magical illusion of one, and then took his skin to spark off these exchanges. So do not misjudge me.' With these words he dissolved the magic monkey skin…aware that the king and the whole assembly were now entirely on his side (*JāM*, 23.152.20-22).[115]

When compared to the Brahmanical and *rājanya* pragmatics discussed above, the words of Mahābodhi, "do not misjudge me," gain an added dimension. He is asking the king in the story not to misjudge him as having killed a monkey; but the creators of the text are also asking for their *śramaṇas* not to be misjudged.

This narrative impetus to protect the dharmic image of Buddhist wandering ascetics is driven conclusively home in Mahābodhi's warning and rebuke of the court in the *jātaka*:

> 'There are loose people who roam the world as they please, impersonating the truly disciplined—demons masquerading as monks. With their false doctrines they are the ruin of simple people, like snakes who can poison with a glance.' (*JāM*, 23.153.15-16)[116]

Considering that Mahābodhi had studied the *śāstra*s before renouncing that life to become a wandering ascetic, the tricky means of courtiers are not unknown to him. The strength of contrast here becomes all the greater if one considers the purported social location of the author of the *Jātakamālā*, Ārya Śūra. Tradition suggests that Ārya Śūra was the son of a king who renounced his claim to the throne to become a Buddhist monk.[117] With this in mind then, Ārya Śūra's castigation of "demons masquerading as monks" bears the rhetorical markers of intimate knowledge about royal courts, royal advisors, royal ascetics and royal spies.

In sum, the narrative reality in the text imagines advisor-king relationships that involve exchanges of knowledge and counsel. The efficacies of the knowledge and the advisory and royal actions they proscribe are continually negotiated through debates within these relationships. The Buddha *dharma* acts as an antidote to Brahmanical and other non-Buddhist views that shape ideals and means of advising. Embracing illusion-making as it does, the *Mahābodhi-Jātaka* makes an argument, by way of contrast, that even illusion-making activity is dharmic when wielded by a Buddhist figure. The *jātaka* makes ironic use of cultural ideas about greedy and otherwise inauthentic ascetics in order to show that the Bodhisattva is the ultimate authentic ascetic and advisor.

Summary Remarks

As we can see, wandering ascetics and other religious personae are imagined as deeply embedded in a complex web of strategies and royal aims that is directed not only

at royal success, but also to the mediation and cultivation of royal power and *dharma*. Intrinsic to this web are shared cultural assumptions about the efficacy of ritual and dharmic practices in creating and negotiating structures of royal power and *dharma*. These structures rely on a cultural logic shaped by the efficacy of religious personae and practices.

At every turn, we have seen also that trust is crucial to the function of this logic—trust is crucial whether trust in religious personae and practices fails or succeeds. The Brahmanical examples above have shown that shaven-haired ascetics, wandering monks and nuns, astrologers and necromancers, and the devas and devīs that inhabit trees, lakes, and the night are seen as efficacious and powerful by the myriad beings that people these texts. The implication is the belief in their power and efficacy is also what makes them effective tools of deception. Religious trusts and truths and religious lies can be negotiated in the same manner, through various rites and devices. The ideas about and the use of *upāya* in the Brahmanical examples in this chapter also demonstrate that the king is also intimately implicated in this logic of religious efficacy. It is this logic—inter-subjective and collaborative in its agencies—that makes the pragmatics of lies, tricks, and illusions work to help kings be powerful and dharmic in the first place.

This cultural logic has forms that are particular to Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions, as we have seen in the examples of illusion-making activity and the myriad agents implicated in such activity. We have seen in this chapter a range of ways in which the pragmatics of advising relationships go beyond ideal relations of trust and dependence into realms of lies and illusions—all in the service of royal power and the exercise of *dharma*. Relative to the Brahmanical literature, Buddhist literature shows less

in the way of modes of deception in service of *dharma*. The argument I am advancing and to which I will turn completely in the next chapter—as it relates to negotiation of royal power between kings and their advisors—concerns the distinction between *dharma* as deliberative method and *dharma* as talismanic display. What we have seen in the current chapter, however, gives us occasion to pause for a moment to consider other possible limitations in seeing the Buddha (or any of his equivalents) as engaging in various kinds of deceptions (lies, tricks, illusions, etc.).

Some reasons for Buddhist restraint in this realm of advising pragmatics are directly related to the subject of this and the preceding chapters: That is, the Buddhist literature, as elsewhere in Indian culture, but especially in relation to the discourses of royal advice, is inherently contrastive with Brahmanical culture. Moreover, given that some Brahmanical texts engage in deception by manipulating the roles of various renunciants, it should not surprise us to see Buddhist literature at pains to establish the Buddha and his representatives as a clear alternative to the pragmatics of Brahmanical deliberations, especially when those pragmatics involve manipulation of ideals of mendicants. Even as the Brahmanical texts we have discussed allow for the discursive space to be adharmic in service of *dharma*, this discursive space is less open in Buddhist literature, wherein the Buddha Śākyamuni is the very embodiment of *dharma*. And even if this is not expressed in all cases across Buddhist literatures, it is especially the case in the contexts of royal advice, wherein the Buddha is being presented as a clear alternative to Brahmanical practice.

Another reason that this discursive space of variant behavior in relation to dharmic ideals is less open in the Buddhist literature is that the Buddha Śākyamuni

himself in Indian Buddhist texts is presented as a singular figure. He may have many

lifetimes recorded in the birth stories, and he may seem to be preaching the *dharma*

everywhere all the time, but, as noted above, he is not "simply" the embodiment of the

dharma; he is a singular character in Buddhist narratives. If the Brahmanical literature of

advisors and advice always focused on one paradigmatic individual *brāhmaṇa*, then the

discourses of his advice would likely be more uniform. For Buddhists, there is, in the

end, one advisor, who—on balance—behaves with great consistency. And even where

there are other Buddhist advisors, they are ideal and efficacious insofar as they measure

up to the ideal of the Buddha. But the narrative reality of a singular, perfect ideal of the

Buddha does not mean that nothing deceptive, or no tricks, ever occurs in Buddhist

literature. As we have seen above, Sanskrit and Pāli *Jātakas* have engaged illusion-

making practices in interesting ways. What is perplexing is how these narrative forays

into varieties of tricks and illusion-making practices in Buddhist texts are largely ignored.

Liz Wilson has pointed out some of these engagements in deception in her work

on representations of females, but more important, we are now seeing scholarly work that

engages this subject more broadly.[118] Sara McClintock has recently argued, across a

wider range of examples, that the Buddha can be seen as a trickster figure, that is, "a

narrative expression of a paradox," here being the paradox of an absolutely unconditioned

figure appearing and acting in the world as a part of conditioned experience.[119] My aim

is to add to this growing discourse by addressing how such practices of deception appear

in Buddhist literature of royal advice. Although the examples she uses are not moments

of royal advice, McClintock's work is helpful to my argument. She notes that the

"common element that unites all the Buddha's tricks" is that "the person or persons to

whom they are directed always *put an end* to some delusion or ignorance itself. The effect of the trick is, therefore, a kind of precursor to nirvana itself…"[120] As we shall see in the next chapter, what McClintock is describing serves to substantiate my argument about talismanic *dharma*, in part. However, as we have seen above in Śākyamuni's lives as a *brāhmaṇa*, *śramaṇa* or other variety of advisor or confidant to kings, sometimes a trick is a means to demonstrate the superior nature of Śākyamuni's attainments, in all the places he resides; the past, present and future.

Beyond these observations, however, there are perhaps other reasons, having less to do with the historical context of Indian Buddhism, that have led most scholars to miss the fact that under certain circumstances the Buddha Śākyamuni (or his equivalents) does in fact engage in some practices that are rightly described as deceptions, tricks, or illusions. In his lives as a bodhisattva, as well as post-awakening, Śākyamuni is clearly perceived as having transformative powers; powers over mind *and* matter. However, as Donald Lopez has argued, some perspectives of "modern Buddhism" have tended to see the Buddha as "just a man," and thus have tended to elide or ignore altogether the supernatural qualities expressed throughout Buddhist literature of his qualities.[121] And yet, following McClintock, such metaphysical displays are crucial to his trickster performances.

I suggest that Buddhist metaphysical displays are also crucial to Buddhist arguments for kings to rely on relationships with Buddhist monks as advisors, and on the Buddhist *saṅgha* in general, to mediate royal power and *dharma*. Metaphysical tactics such as these are of a part of the dharmic repertoires of assistance that we have seen

brāhmaṇa or *rājanya* mediators of royal power use (such as *Atharvan* remedies, theophanies, and the use of *rākṣasa* warrens to frighten an enemy).

Lopez has also shown that scholars have tended to emphasize aspects of Buddhist traditions (e.g., meditation, social activism) that involve effort in spiritual progress. While this kind of effort is certainly a part of Buddhist traditions of practice, it has tended to overshadow the transformative and often talismanic nature of dharmic presentation in Buddhist texts. As we shall see, talisman trumps 'spiritual' effort. This talismanic dimension of *dharma* is but one end of the spectrum on which these traditions, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, present their respective *dharma*s for consideration. This dharmic spectrum is the subject to which I now turn.

Chapter 7   Advisory Ideals and Modes of *Dharma*—Deliberative and Talismanic

The aim of the preceding chapters has been to show a fundamental problem regarding the challenge for kings and advisors to become dharmic, and to rule dharmically: these parties to the advising relationship apparently need to *know everything*, even as most of our texts and traditions show that such knowledge (in almost all cases) is beyond the grasp of kings and (most) advisors. Be that as it may, perfected or ultimate knowledge is presumed necessary to rule successfully, in order for the kingdom and *dharma* to flourish. Problematically, the required knowledge is a shifting ideal, due to the contextual nature of social goodness. The conditions that call for dharmic action are in principle boundless. For this reason Kuntī, Kṛṣṇa, and others say, "the subtleties of *dharma*" make it difficult to know what to do, make it hard to know just what would be 'dharmic'—such 'subtlety' is the reason that collaboration/deliberation is necessary in determining *dharma*.[1]

Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions tend to respond to these challenges with answers along two broad lines: First, the king does not need to know everything if kings and advisors rely on each other; and second, the king does not need to know everything if he has (or has been transformed by) some kind of talisman that can answer everything. What emerges from all of these works about advisors are two basic orientations to thinking about *dharma* that we may place on a spectrum of dharmic activity—*dharma* as deliberative method and *dharma* as talisman.

In overview, the first mode, *dharma* as 'deliberative method,' implies an intrinsically deliberative/collaborative process, requiring advisor and king to be attuned fully to the nuances the relationship of counsel, to the interrelations of trust and emotion,

so they can deliberate successfully to what is dharmic for the situation. In the examples that follow, the method of dharmic deliberation is as important to advising and educating kings as any particular dharmic outcome (dharmic or otherwise) to which the advisor and king might arrive.

In the second mode—*dharma* as talisman—*dharma* functions iconically. Its power is demonstrated again and again as a supreme value applied, and requires only that a king be mindful of and in a proper relationship with the power and *dharma* that resides in and is demonstrated by a monk, guru, or God acting in the role of advisor. Or, in a slight variation on this mode, an advisor or king is to be in proper relationship with a reified conception of *dharma* (the text itself or the concept of a monk/guru/Buddha as text). Talismanic *dharma* thus completely transforms situations and persons into dharmic successes and actors. Often, it is enough simply to display the *dharma* to effect such transformation. In these instances, *dharma* is whatever a guru, such as the ever-effective Buddha Śākyamuni, proclaims to be *dharma*. The transformative effect is immediate, total, and permanent.

The two kinds of *dharma* are in tension with each other. The conception of *dharma* as deliberative method resides at the other end of the spectrum from *dharma* as talisman. Brahmanical examples (before the full development of the *bhakti* devotional traditions) largely reside on the deliberative end of the spectrum—where ongoing contextual qualifications, exceptions and nuances explicate the complexity of *dharma*; they are designed to make a king see and do what is *dharma*. Most important, these endless nuances reinforce the king's need for ongoing relations of advice. He cannot go it alone in the face of such complexities. On the other end of the spectrum, Buddhist

examples of advisors and kings in relationship tend to showcase the efficacy of Buddha-*dharma* and its ability to transform kings and other *rājanya*s with its distinctive *dharma*. With these qualities of complete transformation, Buddhist examples generally reside on the talismanic end of the spectrum. But the transformation is not for kings alone; these instances of relationship in Buddhist texts also demonstrate that even the complexities of Brahmanical narratives, and Brahmanical dharmic actors (such as Vidhura in *jātaka* and Vidura in *Mahābhārata*) are transformed by the presence of a Buddha and his words. These talismanic demonstrations are designed to help a transformed king see differently, and to a different end; the creation of a relationship that assures king and kingdom are directed to the donative needs of the saṅgha, which here signals a dharmic kingdom.

To summarize, deliberative dharmic modes, especially in Brahmanical traditions, but also where they might appear in Buddhist traditions, involve an ongoing interpersonal exchange that allows for nuance, ambiguity, or even unanswered moral questions. In this mode, advisors tend to tell kings stories, to make room for change, which sometimes happens, but oftener than not, there are quasi-transformations, or grudging acceptance of exigencies of *dharma* that cannot be resolved. Those persons advising kings are rarely if ever certain of how kings will act, and *dharma* in such cases may initially appear a weak answer to problems of rule, as the problems, even when dealt with successfully, never go away permanently. In talismanic modes, stories from the mouth of a Buddha are added to his perceptive assessment of a king's dharmic/karmic tendencies. A Buddha knows when the time is ripe for the fruits of Buddha-*dharma* to ripen along with the fruits of a king's actions. Yet, while we have seen a pattern of examples from both Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions that tend to favor, respectively, either talismanic or deliberative

dharmic modes, even some of the advising relationships from Brahmanical sources that engage in deliberative dharmic discourse, show a *dharma* that transcends exceptions (and dismisses them, rather than reasons with them) and thus is somewhat talismanic. In such cases, as I will show below, these Brahmanical presentations of *dharma* that transcend exception seem to attempt to dissolve ambiguity by arguing for acquiescence to a reified *dharma*, even if the characters themselves in the texts object to the injustice of such a *dharma*.

As I proceed in this chapter, I will provide examples as a means of illustrating each end of the spectrum—*Dharma* as Deliberative Method, *Dharma* as Talisman—as advisors and kings address a particular problem and attempt to resolve it within the advisory relationship. My goal is to bring into view the dynamism of *dharma* in these royal settings. I am not arguing for these modes as fixed types or categories, nor am I arguing for the superiority of any particular mode; rather, I am arguing for the a recognition of the complexity of *dharma*, which I have endeavored to show—through the analysis of the preceding chapters – presented as a stubborn fact of reality, whether this complexity is dealt with "deliberatively" or "talismanically."

The Dharmic Spectrum

Before going into detailed explication of the deliberative and talismanic modes and their relations to advising ideals, let us turn first to examine more broadly the idea of the dharmic spectrum, for which deliberative and talismanic are the primary modes. The complexity of the corpus of *śāstra* of rule and social regulation do indeed require clever interpreters; however, as the evidence from many sources indicates, such acumen is

necessary but not sufficient to reach a dharmic decision. Important too is relational expertise, in the interpersonal dynamics of rule and royal sustenance, and exercises of wisdom in which advisors (both formal and intimate) engage in their duties as mediators. As we have seen, the execution of power and creation of *dharma* demand all of these qualities, or at least an awareness of the myriad guṇas that might be required at any given point in order to decide the proper course of action. Across the literature dealing with ideals of advisors and kings, the most basic and laudable advisor or king is the one who knows "time and place." Wisdom is wasted by a person who might know complex military strategies, yet who does not possess the discernment to assess the best time to employ them, for example. Knowing time and place requires acute powers of observation—of persons, situations and social variables: It is a perspective with an eye to the future and sensitivity to the contribution that interpersonal realities and histories make to the dharmic process.

The two kinds of *dharma* might be exhibited within the same scenario—with one character willing to reason with the other toward some dharmic solution, while the other holding fast to a favored interpretation or to an idea warped by an emotion that obfuscates the best course of action. This means that relationships between an advisor and king exist on both ends of the spectrum and that the qualities of relation between them change. *Ṛṣi*, God, or Buddha changes the valence of collaboration from what exists between more ordinary mortal creatures. Their qualities of prescience and/or omniscience radically transform the action of any royal scenario. Their discourses on what would be good to do—and more succinctly in the royal context—what would lead to flourishing for royal subjects and powers, are divine, creative play (since they step out

of time and cosmos, and even out of the dharmic realm) rather than deliberative moments. Kings can learn the dharmic course of action through the Buddha's playful and masterful discourses (*Buddha-līḷhāya*), where the Buddha sees all sides of problems, and identifies the one dharmic path that cuts through all complexity.[2] Or, through the clever demonstrations of a wandering sage, kings can be made to see the consequences of their behavior. Or, they can be tricked into it through the playful machinations of Lord Kṛṣṇa—grim play indeed when he uses deceits in the context of war.

More dialogic dharmic scenarios depict the propensity to error or denial on the part of interlocutors, the discourses reflect the nuances—emotional, intellectual, and familial factors—that affect royal decisions, and often are content to leave ambiguities unresolved, and dharmic options open. Dialogic examples from the *Upaniṣads, Pañcatantra* and the *Mahābhārata* point to *dharma* as a deliberative method of interpretation; where kings and advisors—friends, mothers and wives, teachers and priests—are the deliberative agents. Advisors do not stop at illustrating royal *dharma* as rules, the codes of rule and kingdom. Such media do more than illustrate a method of discerning *dharma*—they *are* the method. The stories and wisdom rituals of counselors and advisors are designed to bring the king and supporting *rājanya*s back to the method, the dialogic interpretation that is *dharma*, instead of just applying any particular *dharma*. To those who might see *dharma* as an absolute category—whether a moral, epistemological, or metaphysical category, for instance—the moments of counsel in these examples move characters beyond absolutist terms. Rather, *dharma* is a deliberative method in the experience of counsel, which stresses *dharma*'s nature as collaborative in these contexts.

The picture primarily from Buddhist examples of the talismanic mode of influencing kings at the other end of the spectrum is quite different: proper solutions are found to royal problems through the agency of the *Buddha-dharma* and the Buddha/Bodhisattva. If a king is moved to dharmic behavior, it is due to his transformation that occurs from an encounter with Śākyamuni Buddha, monks, or *Buddha-dharma*—thus, through a mediation predicated on omniscience and mastery on the part of the Buddha or Bodhisattva alone. In repetitions in the *jātaka* tales, *dharma* works talismanically in every royal context. In examples where a *jātaka* conceives a Buddhist perspective on the action of a traditional tale (many have parallels in Pañcatantra and *Mahābhārata* story traditions), *Buddha-dharma* transforms the emotions of unruly kings and solves the problems of royal justice, with no ongoing discussion between a king and advisor whatsoever needed for dharmic transformation; rather, the mere presentation or demonstration of *dharma* effects the transformation. This puts an emphasis on the *dharma* as transformative agent, rather than the king as recipient and agent of his own transformation.

The talismanic mode also asserts supremacy of *Buddha-dharma* over other characters and their *dharma*s and, therefore, mastery over these dharmic discourses themselves. Authors of *Jātaka* pick up scenes from *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* traditions and rework them to show how their *dharma* advice can completely solve a moral problem. Well-known advisors and kings—like Vidura (with aspirated variant to his name Vidhura) and Dhanaṃjaya (an epithet of Arjuna favored in these Buddhist texts)[3]—are cast into Buddhist tales of the nascent Buddha assuming advisors' successes in transforming kings toward dharmic behavior. This casting of the Buddha/Bodhisattva

into myriad life scenarios serves the function of inscribing the Buddha-*dharma* everywhere, every time. And, with the interpretive frame that attends the *jātaka* tale as well, one sees (can learn) the Buddha explicitly demonstrates how the message/*dharma* explains the actions of the characters within the story. *Dharma* is Buddha *upāya* in each royal scenario; a precept applied; a warrior or priest trope revamped. These are the effects of *dharma* as talisman.

But however much the texts may internally strain to make *dharma* a systematic, nominal explication of rules, the stories and the advisors telling them push back against this. In the moments of counsel we see a tension between *dharma as method* and *dharma as a codified outcome*, or codes enacted to bring about a standardized outcome. Thus, we see an impetus within the traditions to move *dharma* away from being a process to a state—or in linguistic terms, from being a verb or adjective to a noun. With such an impetus, *dharma* may become identified with particular outcomes of its deliberative method. This implies that *dharma* as hermeneutic, which produces certain kinds of meaning and/or results, in some cases becomes more identified with these outcomes of the method, rather than with the process itself. If we keep in mind that *dharma* as deliberation and *dharma* as talisman represent two modalities or points on a spectrum of possibilities, then this tendency we see in some cases to move from considering *dharma* as deliberative method to identifying *dharma* as the outcome of that method represents a "fixing" of *dharma*, but is nevertheless not the same as *dharma* as talisman, as such "*dharma* as outcome" moments do not function in the same way as talismanic *dharma*, as we shall see below.

Wilhelm Halbfass makes a related observation in his analysis of how the concept

of *dharma* was used in his discussion of some shifts in Ṛg Vedic and Atharvavedic

senses of *dharma*:

> In the Atharvaveda, the meanings "law" and "(authoritative) custom" becomes
> more prominent. At the same time, there is an important morphological change:
> *dharman* becomes *dharma*; the old *nomen actionis*, with its strong verbal and
> dynamic connotations, is replaced by the much more abstract noun *dharma*,
> which does not refer to "upholding" as an action or event, but to the result of such
> action, the stable norm, the established order. Already the Atharvaveda refers to
> the *dharma pūraṇa*, the "ancient law." [4]

If we consider Halbfass' assertion in light of the media of counsel and the king-advisor

relationship in these moments, the dynamic connotations of *dharma* appear not to have

been "replaced," rather, they are being consistently and continually negotiated. Even if

the *Atharvaveda* refers to a *dharma purāṇa* or "ancient *dharma*," as countless advisors

and other characters in the literature examined in this study use a *purāṇa* or "ancient

story," it is as part of a negotiation process with kings to bring them to a dharmic

decision, or to the correct frame of mind to make one. In such cases, as it is used by an

advisor, the authority indicated for *purāṇa* is part of a flexible category of traditional

referents that serve the deliberative process of *dharma*.

In *Mahābhārata* examples especially, the negotiation of *dharma* is the crucial

component of the advisor-king dynamic. Recall the claims made about Bhīṣma, Kṛṣṇa

and Kuntī in the counseling scenarios discussed in the previous chapter: When situations

do not meet what is already assumed or circumscribed as dharmic, these three had special

insight into *dharma*. When each character was examined for his or her "insight," in the

context of his or her stories, he or she did not give only some heretofore unrevealed code;

but each engaged in a dynamic analysis and discussion of the problem. These advisors

would remind the king of his duty, what was dharmic for the situation of who he is to be. Most often, these advisors aimed to lead the kings and/or other *rājanya*s being counseled to choose a *dharma* that reflected the circumstances.

This approach is not a fall into individualistic relativism, where a story depicts an individual king being led to *his own* dharmic insight. A choice is dharmic for the corporate results it is perceived to have, for the kingdom, for the *rājanya*s. The corporate nature of *dharma* and the collaborative means of realizing it challenges attempts to mitigate individualistic relativism by means of suppositions about 'relative' and 'absolute' *dharma*, of the individual *dharma* (*svadharma*) in the face of the 'eternal' or 'absolute' (*sanātana*).[5] If we recall the story of Arjuna—when he is being encouraged by Kṛṣṇa to stand down from attacking Yudhiṣṭhira to demonstrate that he is a man who keeps his word—the successful choice of *dharma* is so because the king reasoned toward the dharmic insight in collaborative relation with his advisor(s). *Dharma* is not static, but rather is a processual collaborative hermeneutic, a dynamic kind of seeing, prescience, perception, anticipation, scheming, reflection on contexts, interpretation of results and processes. Good results in one scenario do not end this process, which is understood to be ongoing, lifelong.

There are different sorts of dharmic insight in Buddhist contexts. Buddhist *jātaka* tales depict a 'far-seeing' bodhisattva in a different relationship to sight and insight. [6] In these stories, the Buddha/Bodhisattva sees into the future, into the karmic history of his interlocutors. This past-present-future knowledge gives him insight into the factors he needs to instigate in order for someone to be brought to transformed awareness. He sees into persons—into their motives and the ultimate consequences of their actions. He is

able to describe the present actions of kings and advisors and their enemies in new ways, with a view to their distant past. Buddha/Bodhisattva in the *jātaka* genre creates a different cosmogony of dharmic action.

However, unlike the Brahmanical superlative seers, who may (if successful) lead a king to see things differently, the Buddha causes deep transformations in others. *Buddhavacana* has the power of a talisman, which a king can pick up and understand, or through which the king may attain one of the four paths. In such settings, kings and counselors are not given special faculties with which to deliberate through to the nature of a situation—the Bodhisattva/Buddha sees it for them, and causes them to see it as he does. Any far-seeing agency kings acquire comes after the conversion to which the Buddha brings them. That the Bodhisattva/Buddha is shown to cause such changes signals a talismanic effect. This mode is not "fixing" *dharma* – as we have seen on occasion with the desire in some Brahmanical discourses to move from "method" to "outcome." Rather, the talismanic effect "fixes" the dharmic actor; it transforms him, or his vision, so that the ongoing need for deliberative method is obviated. The transformed king will of course have an ongoing relationship with the *dharma* (typically through support of the Buddhist community), but the king is not depicted as being in need of ongoing counsel about dharmic action.

These brief characterizations should give us some sense of the dynamics and contrasts of the dharmic spectrum and its paradigmatic modes of deliberation and talisman, which shape and which are shaped by advisory ideals. Let us turn now to examples that allow more detailed explanation of the dynamics of deliberative *dharma*, as it appears in Brahmanical texts.

Deliberative *Dharma* in Brahmanical Discourses

> *"There is no [adharma] in any human action which has been well-considered in council, is carried out well, and accomplished according to prescriptions."[7] (MBh, 12.25.20)*

As I have argued, discerning *dharma* and dharmic actions is not restricted to the use of explicitly dharmic texts. Prudent excellent conduct is decided and demonstrated in multiple contexts—*nīti* can occur in *dharma* texts, *dharma* can occur in *nīti* texts. Discerning and acting through *dharma* in these contexts then is fluid. This complexity in the task of discernment is why deliberative method is so important, for the various ways that good conduct as *dharma* are employed in the ministers' and kings' use and creation of *dharma*. I have argued that intrinsic to the method is the presentation of multiple perspectives on royal problems (not simply "both sides," since *dharma* options may be more than two, and may not be in binary opposition to one another). It also includes using story to establish the growing sense of a royal self and its responsibilities that hone the quality of relationship a king has to others and over himself. Brahmanical stories reflect these processes of development (and their failures) in a king, as refracted through advising mediation. The dharmic deliberative mode engages the social complexity of trust, shared power, and relationships and the intimacy bonds that effect or limit dharmic behavior. These are key delimiting factors in *dharma* as method. This dharmic mode and its limitations also show how difficult *dharma* can be.

Given the importance of narrative, of complex and compound perspectives, and intricate networks of relationships developed over long periods of time, it should be no surprise that the *Mahābhārata* is paradigmatic for deliberative *dharma*. Thus, given the importance of and the scale of the *Mahābhārata* sustained analysis of *Mahābhārata*

examples is the best place to focus to understand *dharma* as deliberative method.

Moreover, bringing into view this deliberative method of advisors relating to kings helps

to understand *Mahābhārata* engagements with *dharma* and power. I see in the

Mahābhārata a complex hermeneutic for understanding, demonstrating and working

through moral history. These practices are present in the moments where advice is

exchanged, where kings are admonished or upheld, where advisors succeed or fail, and in

the rationalizations attempted by characters in the text. It is as if the authors are

pondering contingencies in advisory scenes—if only better advice had been given, or

feelings been more under control; if family had been in its proper place with respect to

feelings and royal power (*MBh*, 3.5.11-12, for example); if advisors and kings had been

more diligent in their duties to counsel and be counseled, the disastrous war would not

have happened.

But such things did happen, and some characteristic problematic factors emerge in

the dharmic decision making: problems around love of son and love of family (familial

love) and the problems of emotions (greed) and the character traits (inflexibility) that

make seeing clearly and trusting within royal relationships difficult, that make being

dharmic difficult. Into this mix come the complications of relationship and gaining

understanding through them that is specific to kings—complications of power and

succession to inheritance. Some of the rationales for succumbing to these factors, rather

than developing beyond them, come through the mouths of recriminate or recalcitrant

kings. Fate, time, oaths, family love and attachments, power—all are used to explain and

undermine royal action. These are also things from which advisors (divine or not)

attempt to dissuade or protect kings and kingdoms, as much as they may be caught up in

kingdom-threatening emotion, attitudes and relationships. Love emotion, inflexibility, power and succession, fate and gods: There are dilemmas and trilemmas—dharmic quandaries because each of these can refract in negative, neutral and positive ways.

Variables in Moments of Advice

> *But if one conquers one's self first, as if it were a country, then he does not seek to conquer his counselors and enemies in vain (MBh,* 5.127.26-27).[8]

The counsels around the dicing game and the discussions during the embassies of Saṃjaya and Kṛṣṇa before the Bharata war are particularly poignant for examining variables and contingencies in relations and emotions that affect deliberative dharmic modes. Like other scenes in the *Mahābhārata*, trust, power and emotion and familial bonds affect advice-giving and advice-receiving (or its rejections), which is the regular congress of royal *dharma* in these moments.[9] These advisory scenes are replete with concerns about the effects of emotion on discernment, perception, and action in royal contexts. At the dicing games the tone is desperate, with advisors like Vidura begging all the kings not to engage in the game, and once the game is afoot, attempting to stop the dicing so they could avert the path they knew it was taking. Tracking Śakuni's inexorable winning and Yudhiṣṭhira's ineluctable losses, the dicing eventuates in Yudhiṣṭhira's utter loss of self (that in turn eventuates in losses for Yudhiṣṭhira's *rājanyas*). The specter of such a king's loss of self and the homologous losses to his kingdom looms over the embassies of various advisors later in the text, shadowing discursive efforts to redress the damages. Embassies of Saṃjaya and Kṛṣṇa involve expositions of the *dharma* of kings, the *dharma* of success and action, the *dharma* of emergency situations (*āpad-dharma*, in

which Yudhiṣṭhira considers himself and the rest of the Pāṇḍavas to be as they poise for war in this book) as means of deciding ways to avert or to go forth into action.

In spite of the advisory protocol before the dicing, and the attempts to advise made by the various emissaries to each court before war, these all fail. Even God (Kṛṣṇa) as emissary failed, along with the closest advisor (Saṃjaya) to the Kaurava king, various *rājanyas*, family or loyal friends of the warring kings who also failed to avert the war.[10] Protocol could not solve the warring senses of *dharma* that obtained between the two sides. Wise advisors and other persons educated in all the treatises of rule, conduct, and *dharma* failed, yet they still acted; but to what purpose?

If we focus on the sequences between kings and advisors we note with J. A. B. Van Buitenen that the epic contains segments designed as instructions to kings, "instruction as a call to arms" and "instruction as caution."[11] Van Buitenen's discussion distinguishes Kuntī's apart from one given by Vidura, denoting one as a "survival" of "*kṣatriya* oratory," and Vidura's as a "harangue." Perhaps both are true: There are instructions that can be didactic soliloquies (like Vidura's "harangue") and those that can exhort a king to act according to *kṣatriya* virtues that were typical examples of *kṣatriya* dharmic discourse (Kuntī's incitement to act). Both can be considered as an advisory means to an end in these sequences where both families of kings are careening toward war, in spite of good counsel.

Motives and mistakes are examined by various advisors and kings in these chapters of the text, and much of the mutual chastising suggests that there was a significant failure on the part of the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas (to an extent) that had everything to do with counsel and counselors. Van Buitenen has pointed out that the

authors of the epic are at pains to deal with the horror of the war and its causes, and sees an "attempt to deal with it as a moral lesson."[12] This may be true, but it is a complicated lesson, and perhaps even more than a lesson; it is also a means to think through many dharmic problems that confront a king, all of which are relation, either within the way one relates to one's own self, or with others.

Enemies and Friends

The dharmic problems a king faces are generally seen as being of his own making, as the various arguments about 'the king in need' suggest. The moments where a king fails in the ideal of self-restraint suggested by "being victorious over the senses," *indriyajayaḥ* (*Aś*, I.6.3) can be harbingers of royal error. This is certainly the view in the eyes of those around kings. I have argued that these texts imagined varieties of "kings in need" of advisory reliance and dharmic assistance. The vagaries of royal power and relationships set in motion by the problematical king acting under the sway of emotion are exemplified in the dialogues and actions that result from Duryodhana's embarrassments in the face of the grandeur of Indraprastha at the time of Yudhiṣṭhira's *rājasūya*." As such, the drive of Duryodhana's '*indriya* narratives' shows how the senses can be enemies; emotional enemies that invite responses from royal friends and other varieties of relationship intimacies to appease (or incite) them.[13]

In these dialogues are poignant narrative engagements with the ways in which emotions and the bonds of kinship shape and skew the process of dharmic deliberation. Duryodhana's experience of awe, jealousy and shame set the emotional and deliberative tone, and thus shape any attempts to advise him. The timbre of the event is heightened

through successive retellings of his visit there: Vaiśaṃpāyana narrates Duryodhana's experience (2.43.1-17) first, and Duryodhana then relates it through his feelings to Śakuni (2.43.19-36). Two *adhyāyas* later, Duryodhana's experience of the *sabhā* is anchored as being of a part of "the root of the destruction of the world," (2.46.1-5)[14] where Vaiśaṃpāyana tells it again to Janamejaya, through Duryodhana's own words (2.46.25-35). Through them we observe Duryodhana with the skewed vision that the text emphasizes through passages replete with visual references. Duryodhana observes a shining marble floor and, thinking it is reflective water, stumbles as he lifts his pants to wade in the illusory (to him only) pond. In another area of the shining hall, he thinks he is seeing a shining floor and then falls into a pond. Duryodhana is caught in replicating misperceptions; several events where he could have looked closer and learned, yet still could not see the reality in the reflected image. The blunders suggest that in all his comings and goings, Duryodhana cannot see things clearly, nor even learn properly from things he sees: Understanding the marble for the pond and the pond for the marble, Duryodhana cannot see beyond his own wishes; he is dumb-founded by the symbols of Pāṇḍava success, which highlight that which he lacks. These failures of perception are linked to limitations of perception in relation to others, as we shall see further with Duryodhana.

Śakuni and Duryodhana

Seeing, sights, the visual elements of Duryodhana's experience are tied to forceful emotions that prove he does not possess the self-control necessary for dharmic rule. As such, Duryodhana has entered a state of mind in this moment that requires an advisor to

lead him into a more productive stance with respect to his experience. Quoting the

passage at length helps us to see, as Duryodhana

> saw the earth entire under Yudhiṣṭhira's sway…I saw the grand sacrifice of the
> Pārtha, uncle, grand as that of Śākra among the Immortals…Rancor has filled me,
> and burning day and night I am drying up like a small pool in the hot
> season…(2.43.19-21)

> What man like me who sees their sovereignty over earth, with such wealth and
> such a sacrifice, who would not burn with fever? All alone I am not capable of
> acquiring such a regal fortune; nor do I see any allies, and therefore I think of
> death. Fate, I think, reigns supreme, and man's acts are meaningless, when I see
> such bright fortune fetched to the Pāṇḍavas. In the past I have made attempts to
> kill him, Saubala, but he survived it all and grew like a lotus in the water.
> Therefore, I think fate reigns supreme and man's acts are meaningless, for the
> Dhārtarāṣṭras decline and the Pārthas are always prospering. When I see their
> fortune and that splendid hall and the mockery of the guards, I burn as if with fire.
> Allow that I suffer bitterly now, uncle, and speak to Dhṛtarāṣṭra of the resentment
> that pervades me (2.43.30-35).[15]

Seeing the king in such a state of being—of burning envy and blaming fate for the

meaninglessness of his actions—Śakuni attempts to assuage Duryodhana's sentiments by

countering each of the causes that Duryodhana has attached to them. At first, he frames

his counsel with a moral generalization; he says not to hold resentment toward

Yudhiṣṭhira. Importantly, he goes further and provides Duryodhana a way out of his

paralyzing pain and envy. Śakuni stresses the Pāṇḍavas' luck (which should appeal to the

king, since the fickleness of luck is known by all) in order to lead out of the mental trap

Duryodhana into which he had fallen; bemoaning fate and thinking that actions were

meaningless: *tena daivaṃ paraṃ manye pauruṣaṃ tu nirarthakam* (2.43.32&34).

As his primary advisor, it is important for Śakuni to turn Duryodhana toward

action instead of suffering under his own emotion. To do so, Śakuni parses out Pāṇḍava

successes in light of their continual luck, which "grew through their energy," as well as

through gaining supernatural weapons, and great helpers (*sahāyaḥ*), mighty royal allies

won through marriage alliance and heroic politicians like Vāsudeva to help Yudhiṣṭhira

win the world (2.44.3). Even the superlative quality of the Pāṇḍava *sabhā* is explained as

being the fortunate result of saving the life of an expert artisan (Dānava Maya) who then

enlisted his huge *rākṣasa* friends to lug the enormous stones out of which he designed

and built the amazing *sabhā* (2.44.7-8). As he counters each aspect that threatens

Duryodhana's sense of his own accomplishment, Śakuni encourages him away from such

sentiment, repeating again and again: *tatra kā paridevanā*, "what is the point of

lamenting that?" (2.44.4, 6, & 8)

Indeed, why should he lament, according to Śakuni, when Duryodhana has the

allies necessary for action. He corrects Duryodhana in his error in saying that he

(Duryodhana) is without allies, *yac cāsahāyataṃ rājann uktavān;* countering *asahāyatām*

with *sahāyās*. Duryodhana does have allies. Together, with his brothers, along with

Śakuni and Droṇa and their sons and allies, they will defeat Duryodhana's enemies

(2.44.9-10). Duryodhana shows that Śakuni has been successful in rousing him, for in v.

12 and 13, he moves from his bitter suffering to excitement for action and success.

Though it is not a permanent shift as we know, as Duryodhana frequently goes off into

rages, Śakuni leads him from lament to readiness for his plan to defeat Yudhiṣṭhira.

Śakuni's skill in counsel is reflected in the emotional movement from pain to action.

Duryodhana has been brought back to himself as a king considering aims and allies, ways

to be successful in defeating rivals, which both know includes reliance on the power of

associates.

However, the epic itself is not as neutral as this—because Duryodhana, as a king

"brought to his senses," never accepts compromise or expresses the change of heart that

ideally comes from successful counsel, or a well-directed soul. Again and again, Duryodhana gains self-possession with the help of advisors who do so by appeasing him, agreeing with him, supporting his point of view. So while he may be brought out of derailing emotion, his movements still take him away from corporate concerns, realized through advising relationships. Duryodhana is depicted as being pulled in dangerous directions, like a chariot with wheels out of alignment. He is chastised about his emotions even by his own advisor (3.8.5-10).[16] But even with these under control and with his counselors' help, his deepest drives are not corrected. The narrative seems to suggest that this is the best his advisors can do, given Duryodhana's nature, which limits dharmic deliberations, and thus makes success limited, or fleeting.

Duryodhana's quandary, at this point, connects the limitations of his own nature with the limitations of his advisors. Simply put, the king is in need of good advisors, but the king's own flaws lead him to associate with, at best, limited advisors. One possible response in the text to this quandary is to seek counsel in quarters that are more intimate—among family relations—perhaps taking the problem of the king's choice of advisors with limited capacities out of the advisory equation. With this in mind, we turn to consider the complications of intimate family relations acting in advisory roles.

Family Advice—Gāndhārī and Dhṛtarāṣṭra

The characters in the text continue to moralize about Duryodhana's destructive tendencies, which extend, of course, into choices he makes in his advisors. The ideal that advisors are necessary to help kings be dharmic informs criticism of Duryodhana's actions, which are only increased by his choice in advisors. This is one keynote of advice

the *Mahābhārata* renders, which Duryodhana's mother Gāndhārī encapsulates into the

problem of an unruly king and equally unruly counselors in the *Udyogaparvan*:

> A man's spirit grows when he subdues his senses, as a fire grows by burning
> kindling wood. If they are not firmly ruled they lead easily to ruin, as unruly,
> unchecked horse lead an inept charioteer astray. If one hopes to control one's
> councilors without controlling oneself, then, with self and councilors out of
> control, one helplessly comes to ruin (5.127.25-27).[17]

As a *kṣatriyā* mother, she lays the responsibility for the bad decisions leading up to the

conflict on the king and in his choice of "corrupt" associates that leads to unchecked royal

motivation and action.

Without this self-control, which is necessary for control of others, as Gāndhārī

states, rule is subject to one's own whim, and a kingdom is lost: "A kingdom, man of

wisdom, cannot be obtained, protected, and enjoyed by one's own whim…for one who is

not in control of his senses does not keep his kingdom for long."[18] This threat to the

kingdom posed by such lack of control, Duryodhana proves even in his victory. As he

gains ground, he loses it again to the schemes against the Pāṇḍava borne out of his greed,

anger, and paranoia about the strength of an intimate peer. Notably, although Śakuni

works methodically to redirect his king into better action, their deliberations over what to

do to defeat his rival do not include deep dharmic concern about familial bonds, as with

his father and other elders. Rather, Duryodhana's concerns are with kings allied with

him, not affections born of blood ties.

Loving attachment (construed largely through *sneha*) shapes decision making,

especially in the relationship between king Duryodhana and his father Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Throughout the *Mahābhārata*, there is mutual affection, but one that Duryodhana

manipulates more frequently to attain his desires. Śakuni, himself acting out of affection

for Duryodhana, plants the first seed, by tugging at Dhṛtarāṣṭra's concern, as a father for

his son, directing him to his son's appearance, who "looks pale, and yellow and wan, he is

wretched, and prone to brooding, take notice…" [19] and ties his state to wretchedness over

an enemy (2.45.4-5). Dhṛtarāṣṭra is drawn in with Duryodhana's performance of his

experience of the *sabhā* and his jealousy of their success, which he ties to *kṣatriya*

valorization of conquest. In spite of Duryodhana's own wealth—which is great, as the

father points out to console him—the success of another consumes him (2.45.15-16). But

his father's consolation meets no success; the only solace for Duryodhana is to be found

in plans to defeat this rival.

As Duryodhana and Śakuni describe the plan to dice, Dhṛtarāṣṭra wants to wait for

the advice (*sthito…śāsane)* of his counselor (*mantrin*), the "steward" *kṣattā*, Vidura, since

"he is far-sighted and will put first the [*dharma*] and our ultimate benefit, and proclaim

the truth of the case as it fits both parties (2.45.41-42)."[20] Vidura is frequently referred to

with the nomenclature of his mixed birth (*kṣattṛi*), as if to stress that his counsel is always

a combination of those factors, warrior-birth and sage-birth, martial concerns combined

and informed with prescient wisdom, and here, as employing the *dharma* that would meet

the aims of both sides of the family.

A comprehensive dharmic deliberation and consideration of the needs of both

parties is exactly what Duryodhana does not want—he wants what he wants, ultimate

power over material wealth and all kings. Knowing that Vidura will cut down his father's

resolve if consulted, Duryodhana threatens suicide, and throws his father's reliance on his

relationship with Vidura back at him: "when you are turned down king…I shall kill

myself! Let there be no doubt! When I am dead, be happy with your Vidura…why

bother about me? (2.45.45)"[21] Out of affection at his son's pained threat, the king

Dhṛtarāṣṭra gives into Duryodhana's demands, and calls for the sabh1 for dicing to be

built. This was the first of many emotional capitulations to his son around the decision to

dice, with shifts between agreement and attempts to dissuade Duryodhana from

challenging his rival to a game spilling across chapters 45 through 51 of the

Sabhāparvan.

One of the things becoming apparent through all of these advising scenarios is

that the king's limited nature is unavoidably related to those who are near to him in

advisory relations, whether those are family relations or advising associates the king has

chosen. Seeking advice from within one's own family may, in principle, avoid some of

the problems of a king with limited self-knowledge choosing his own advisors but

advisory relations with intimate family members brings with it deeper complications of

emotion, that shapes the dynamics of the advisory relationship at the very moment of

counsel.

The Limits of Advice—Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra

Let us look further into the dynamics of the moment of counsel, as exemplified in

this narrative with Vidura's counsel of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. This scene—related to the ongoing

struggle with Duryodhana—shows some of the ways that bonds of emotion and intimacy

both facilitate and constrain moments of counsel. The opinion of Vidura or the fear of

it—that the dice would set in motion destruction that none could control (2.45.50-53)—

exerts a continual force on the deliberations between the father-son kings. But for the

elder king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, his counsels with Vidura demonstrate the confounding effects

that un-channeled emotions have on being able to see the wisdom of a particular course of action, or to hear advice about it. Immediately after Dhṛtarāṣṭra yields to the strategy of the dice game, he consults Vidura. Counsel is necessary since he is of two minds about the challenge that his son is instigating— Dhṛtarāṣṭra is tacitly aware that a dicing match is dangerous at the same time he is drawn to appease his son out of love for him.[22] But even as Vidura counsels, "I do not welcome the decision you have chosen. Act to avoid that a breach occur among your sons on account of dicing," the wisdom of Vidura's advice is unseen by the blind king. [23]

The old king's comportment and response to Vidura raises some questions about his motives. Was his question nothing more than a ceremonial request; an attempt to provide himself some procedural defense—in this case, a call for private counsel—from the full consequences of his actions? For once he has Vidura's ear, Dhṛtarāṣṭra merely tells Vidura what he has decided, declaring his own coloring of the imminent dicing match. There is no real discussion between them. Dhṛtarāṣṭra even denies that dangerous consequences could occur if he and his own associates (Droṇa, Bhīṣma, etc.) are present (2.45.53-54). Dhṛtarāṣṭra then takes a step toward abnegating responsibility, stressing his powerlessness over his son. The king moves responsibility out of his ambit and into the realm of the gods and fate, putting it on 'destiny' (*daivam*) which wise Vidura can only shout down in the privacy of his own mind, "It is not [fated]!" (2.45.58)

In other sequences wherein *rājanya*s are asking why Dhṛtarāṣṭra could not control his son or when they chastise him for failing to do so, the prince's father locates responsibility nowhere but in his affection and to deities and chance, never does he give precedence to the wisdom or un-wise nature of this choice. King Dhṛtarāṣṭra acts as if he

maintains his royal responsibility in taking counsel, but his attempt looks more like pretense or self-deception. So why say to his son that he always likes to take counsel from his advisor? Perhaps he claims to privilege counsel before he acts in order to save face before his advisor, or to share his advisor's wisdom in private to protect his son's feelings, or even to have the privacy to explore his son's motivations for the dicing match more deeply. In 2.46.6-18, he attempts to do just that; exploring options with his son, trying to win him over to Vidura's view on account of the wisdom Vidura typically possesses (2.46.7-11).

Perhaps it <u>is</u> a matter of affection for his son, since in the next sequence Dhṛtarāṣṭra argues in private for Vidura's perspective—showing that he did see what "Vidura has in mind" though he did not let Vidura know it (2.46.6).[24] The content of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's argument contains one of the foundational *dharma*s of his time—that of honor among family:

> You have received what tradition says is the first obligation of a father and a mother to their son—paternal and ancestral rank. You have been taught and made sufficient in science; you have always been cherished in the house, and you stand first among your brothers in the kingdom. Do you find no value in this? […] Commanding always this great and prosperous kingdom bequeathed by father and grandfather, you shine as the lord of the Gods shines in heaven! I know that you are perceptive; then why has this source of grief, the more dolorous, well up for you? (2.46.13-17)[25]

But the grief is the source of Duryodhana's misperceptions, and the argument here is only another version of it. Thus, intimate bonds with someone, and the strong emotions related to these intimate relations necessarily allow access to moments of counsel, but here, they limit counsel's efficacy.

Resistance to Counsel—Duryodhana

And yet, the perspective of a *kṣatriya* like Duryodhana has become problematic

enough that appeals to familial affections become means of influence. In response to his

father's admonitions above, Duryodhana tells Dhṛtarāṣṭra again of his encounter in the

sabhā and his bitter jealousy, and his father again acts to appease Duryodhana, by

counseling him not to hate his own brother (2.50.1), to keep his own *dharma* (2.50.6),

rather than covet the wealth and stature of the Pāṇḍava king. Duryodhana's father

reproves him for being jealous of someone with whom he shares friends and aims

(2.50.2),[26] and assures Duryodhana that he could create similar ritual achievements

(*yajñā*) as his rival, and receive equal tribute (2.50.4).[27] But, the proximity of

Yudhiṣṭhira is the heart of the problem for Duryodhana; rather than experience affection

from the closeness of their aims and families as his father points out, Duryodhana only

experiences threat. In this way, certain powers of emotion (e.g., fear – threat), combined

with limitations on other emotional understandings of kinship bonds (e.g., trust) shape—

and limit—Duryodhana's grasp of his situation.

Duryodhana sees threat in the picture his father paints of shared family wealth,

and danger in the consonance of purpose with another king that Dhṛtarāṣṭra lauds—as do

many *rājanya*s of Kuru (as well as with most *śāstra*). Duryodhana and his advisors stand

their ground against conjoined purposes such as this.[28] In fact, where Dhṛtarāṣṭra

counsels enjoying what Duryodhana has, Duryodhana craves the condition of being

discontented, as it is the basis of power and supremacy (2.50.18).[29] In his replies to his

father, Duryodhana quotes Bṛhaspati on *kṣatriya* values of conquest, to the special

conduct of kings that "differs from the ways of the world, and that therefore the king

should endeavor always to think of his own profit (2.50.14-15)."[30] We have seen this conception of the difference of a king's *dharma* compared to the common man, but not in a manner that raises his "own profit" above even the good of the kingdom. But his own interests should not be Duryodhana's principal focus if we take the myriad arguments about what makes a good king to heart. In Duryodhana's case, his is a derangement of the royal self with respect to the kingdom and circle of kings that is not acceptable. Here, Duryodhana is for his own aims alone (and mistakenly assumes those will be fruitful for others as well).

And herein lies the problem, at least in how this text has problematized this "king in need": Duryodhana's *dharma* involves following <u>his</u> (*kṣatriya*) way and acting for his own profit (2.50.15),[31] with the true enemy being the man "whose ways are the same as his own."[32] Such an insular view of his self with respect to the rest of the *rājanya* makes him a problematic figure for a royal relationship ethos that values deliberation and collaboration in rule. As Duryodhana explains in support of his own views over the suggested way of Vidura, as well as his father's reservations about the dicing match, "No man should undertake his own task on another's authority. No two people have the same mind on any point of duty."[33]

This attitude sets Duryodhana in radical opposition to the majority of family advisors and associates in his court, and sets him apart from the advisory ideal for which the text argues—that dharmic kings consult advisors and should hearken to their advice and not only be obedient to them, but to commit to the ongoing processes of deliberation about *dharma*, and to the relationships required for such deliberation. In Duryodhana's case, his understanding of his warrior ethic is not appropriate to the context, or as

suggested earlier, Duryodhana' single-focused pursuit of *kṣatriya* aims makes him appear like a 'waning warrior' king in need of dharmic assistance.

Duryodhana's version of *kṣatriya dharma*, however idiosyncratic it might be according to his detractors, provides his father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, another basis with which to deliberate about the plan of the dice match. Rather than appeal to Duryodhana through obligations to family alone, king Dhṛtarāṣṭra combines filial dynamics with other strategies prevalent in royal *śāstra*.[34] Dhṛtarāṣṭra discusses the problem of coming to the dice challenge from the position of the 'weaker king,' not wanting "to fight with people who are stronger" (2.51.10).[35] To the hazards created by such a difference in strength, Dhṛtarāṣṭra compounds these with the hostility that could be fanned (*vairaṃ vikāraṃ sṛjati*) by challenging a family member, as he states, "enmity as sure a weapon as though it were iron, makes matters worse (2.51.10)."[36]

While in retort Duryodhana appeals to the antiquity of the rules of the dicing game (2.51.12); his father names it as backward, self-serving logic, subverting Duryodhana's claim that kings traverse ways different than ordinary folk: "What you think is sensible is nonsensical, prince" (2.51.11).[37] Yet even so, Dhṛtarāṣṭra leaves Duryodhana to his choices and doom:

> I do not condone what you have suggested, but do that which pleases you, Lord of Men. When you look back, what you have undertaken will torment you, for in time, no such talk will appear dharmic. (2.51.14)[38]

In this moment of counsel of one *rājanya* to another, what pleases prince Duryodhana wins out; rendering impotent king Dhṛtarāṣṭra's attempts at directing Duryodhana to a better course of action.

Even in his resignation to Duryodhana's wishes, Dhṛtarāṣṭra sees the trajectory of the dicing as Vidura had put it. And even though he cannot shape the course of events, Dhṛtarāṣṭra at least shows that he sees into the complexity of perceiving *dharma* in royal contexts with his warning to Duryodhana: Looking back, what may seem dharmic to Duryodhana now, will not be so, later. In spite of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's foresight, which he attributes to Vidura (2.51.15), he still acts to save Duryodhana in this shortsighted way. Dhṛtarāṣṭra "saves" him by capitulating to a family game of dicing, in the face of Duryodhana's threats of suicide if he had to stand in the shadow of Yudhiṣṭhira any longer.

However single-mindedly unreflective Duryodhana may be about his conception of *kṣatriya dharma* and its aims in this context, Dhṛtarāṣṭra has his own blind spots too. Rather than stand against his son he capitulates out of affection, and concomitantly resolves culpability to the gods and fate, as he states repeatedly. Demonstrating a curious detachment from the gravity that his choice will exert for all others and ignoring the consequences of indulging Duryodhana's nonsense, Dhṛtarāṣṭra surrenders what is proper to his son's wishes—and casts his own lots with fate. Dhṛtarāṣṭra's vision of what needs to be done, and his incapacity to do what is dharmically necessary, remains an enigma for advisors viewing the scene. Dhṛtarāṣṭra seems to have "taken counsel" in that he sees the correct course of action, but the counsel seems not to have "taken," in that he remains ineffective in directing Duryodhana. In the face of such intractable problems of personality and relations, perhaps it is no surprise that "fate" is invoked as the limiting factor.

Advisory Affections—Vyāsa and Dhṛtarāṣṭra

Dhṛtarāṣṭra may blame fate, but an astute advisor such as Vyāsa in this next example, does not let rationalizations like this pass. Family affections are depicted as factors that undermine royal perception and decision-making. Even so, advisors often use familial and other affections in order to bring a king to the insight that ideally would lead to proper action. The narrative's transition to Vyāsa's counsel of Dhṛtarāṣṭra illustrates this dynamic poignantly.

Even after the second dicing match (a rematch for singularly higher stakes, which the Pāṇḍavas lost again) when sages have converged on the forest in which the Pāṇḍavas began their exile, Dhṛtarāṣṭra tells his itinerant advisor, Vyāsa, that he did not condone all that went along with the dicing,[39] so that certainly it was fate that must have pressed him into it (*MBh*, 3.10.1).[40] Even in the face of his intimate counselors—his wife, Gāndhārī, his martial leader Droṇa, and his dear advisor Vidura—three of the seven jewels of rule (3.10.2)—he gave way to Duryodhana. Though Dhṛtarāṣṭra knew better, he held his tongue, since he could not abandon Duryodhana and his senselessness, out of love for him (3.10.3).[41]

Can there be comfort for a king who capitulates to *daivaṃ* in this way? Perhaps, but for good advisors that are engaged in directing kings to actions that are the most beneficial for the kingdom, comfort is also a rhetorical device. A moment of counsel with Vyāsa shows king Dhṛtarāṣṭra that even the gods have struggled as he has over affections for children. Vyāsa tells a story to illustrate what he knows to be true about affection for children, that "a son prevails, nothing prevails over a son."[42] In the tale, Indra intervenes to alleviate the suffering of one cow among thousands "equally

oppressed," when driven to pity through the pleas of the Mother of all cows, Surabhi, for the sake of one of her offspring. Indra is moved when she explains that "while she may have a thousand sons, and even though they are all the same to me, my pity is greater for the son that is miserable" (3.10.16).[43] This leads Indra to think "that a son was even greater than life itself."[44] As Van Buitenen puts it, "Indra himself was awakened by the tears of Surabhi to the insight that no other property, however valuable, prevails over a son."[45]

Vyāsa brings the conflict between Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Duryodhana home to the blood dharmic level, asking for true blood to be supplanted by distant blood; getting authority for his own plea by using his own affections for Dhṛtarāṣṭra, a son of his as much as Pāṇḍu and Vidura. Affection conveyed with such rhetorical insight provides the comforting basis with which to invite Dhṛtarāṣṭra into a moment of reflection with Vyāsa. With this rhetorical skill and insight into the king, Vyāsa turns Dhṛtarāṣṭra's affection around on him—as an ideal advisor should do. Once he pulls Dhṛtarāṣṭra into thinking that his choice made out of affection had precedence (since even Indra and the Mother of all cows were moved for these reasons) Vyāsa displaces the solitary suffering child from Duryodhana (which Dhṛtarāṣṭra would assume was meant by the lesson) to the solitary Pāṇḍavas, suffering alone in the forest while Dhṛtarāṣṭra had his hundreds of sons at home (3.10.17-23). Vyāsa appeals to Dhṛtarāṣṭra to lecture his son to make peace; and later asks Dhṛtarāṣṭra to let the Pāṇḍavas be to him as his own sons. Dhṛtarāṣṭra responds to Vyāsa's use of familial affections enough to be able to agree with Vyāsa. Nevertheless, Dhṛtarāṣṭra is unable to curb his son's disrespect for the counsel of family or seers (3.11.1-36).

In light of these concerns, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Duryodhana, flawed through blood, epitomize the ways that emotion and kinship ties affect deliberative discernment and subsequent action.[46] Duryodhana could not see through his jealousy and greed, so took only the advice that went along with his aims; his father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, could only see the misery of his one true child, however penchant. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, in this instance as advisor and king, could not overcome his own emotions and bonds with Duryodhana to get through to Duryodhana. Vidura perhaps was not close enough to Duryodhana or Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Vyāsa, on the other hand, seems to have the perspicacity and knowledge of Dhṛtarāṣṭra to lead Dhṛtarāṣṭra effectively to an understanding of the complexities of emotion and intimacy, and how they could be dealt with (though we know that will not be the case with Duryodhana).

Vidura and Yudhiṣṭhira

While analysis of an entire sequence of counsel in the Kaurava court is necessary to show the effects that emotion (here in its negative dimension) and the bonds of kinship have on the dharmic process, the remainder of my examples provide brief points of comparison to the more difficult, emotion fraught counsel that occurred in the Kaurava court. The gnawing sense that good counsel engaged in between better kings and advisors could have averted the war is also apparent. Even in Yudhiṣṭhira's approach to the invitation to "play and enjoy a family game" (*MBh*, 2.52. 8) of dice demonstrates how the creators envisioned such an event would occur if a king were obedient to an advisor. The brief exchange of opinion between Vidura and Yudhiṣṭhira is short, primarily because Yudhiṣṭhira is self-controlled and obedient.

After performing the necessary obsequies, Yudhiṣṭhira demonstrates his skill in observing persons, in this case the mood of the family counselor come to call: "I do not discern any joy in your heart" (2.52.5).[47] He imagines only three reasons Vidura would look crestfallen as an emissary from his uncle: that Vidura's health is not good, that sons are not obeying their elders, or that the people are no following his rule. His questions, whose intention I summarize here, demonstrate his orientation to *dharma* as well: concern for the health of others, for tradition (sons to fathers), and his subjects (2.52.5). Yudhiṣṭhira is attentive to his advisor's state of mind, which is suggestive of a deep and mutual bond of intimacy that is integral to deliberative *dharma*.

Yudhiṣṭhira is cognizant also of the adversarial nature of the dicing match, even though in the invitation to dice, it was construed as a family game, which he indicates in the first words of his response to the invitation: "At a dicing…we shall surely quarrel. Who, knowing this will consent to a game? (2.52.10)"[48] So begins a hint at his predicament. After he gives his own opinion as king, Yudhiṣṭhira immediately does what advisors would wish—he defers to his uncle Vidura. With the nod to his authority he puts himself in a position of reliance: "What do you, in your experience, think is the proper thing to do? We all will abide by what you say" (2.52.10). Vidura shares his own sense of entrapment to the commands of his brother and king, relating first and foremost that the dicing will end in disaster. He lets the king know that though he has done his due diligence as advisor to stop the challenge of the game, yet he had to come (in spite of his opinion) to the Pāṇḍava court with the invitation. While Vidura's attempts fail, still it seems he hopes to rely on the wisdom of king Yudhiṣṭhira. Demonstrating his own excellence in the decorum of counsel, Vidura cues Yudhiṣṭhira toward deliberation:

"You have heard, you are wise, now do what is best."[49] It is now the king's place to reflect on what is best, a process that Vidura seems to trust in this king.

Yudhiṣṭhira's thinking process leads him to accept the challenge, for two reasons. First, there is the constraint on him as a *kṣatriya* to accept a challenge and correct injustice. Here, he is being draw toward justice in his decision to act after inquiring who the contestants in the game would be. In fact, when he learns that they are masters in the skill and likely to engage in tricks (*upadhā*, like we observed in the tricks of the *Arthaśāstra*), he is incited to accept the challenge. Second, he will not refuse the command (*śāsana*) of his 'father' Dhṛtarāṣṭra. "I will not refuse to go to the game. A son will always respect the father." And, as if there were any doubt that he was obedient, the text has him tell Vidura again that he will do as suggested.

But Vidura had told the king to do as <u>he</u> saw fit. Unfortunately, what is fit engages a fundamental Indic *dharma* that the king could not deny—honor your father and mother and elders. He is constrained on all sides to his correct orientation to what is considered dharmic. However, his assent is tragic for how the game will unfold: His opponents will use tricks likely to cloud his own vision, with the same skill in illusion-making that deities are known to create (*mayopadhā devitaraḥ*). Yudhiṣṭhira is not emotionally demonstrative here, no expressions of anger or temper tantrums as we see in his opponent; rather he is fully self-controlled, in control of his emotions/senses, as sage-kings are imagined to be. He demonstrates perfect form in receiving counsel (even as events turn against him).

We know that epithets capture a person's typical modes of action, as well as remind a person what his or her nature is to be in a particular situation. In the epithet

used of Yudhiṣṭhira in his exchange with Vidura about the dicing, as "the king who is steadfast in truth" (*rāja satyadhṛtiḥ*), shows that his nature is such that he stands his ground to 'truth', even in agreeing to the ill-conceived dicing game. But the words chosen here also convey the multi-faceted nature of such a quality such as *dhṛtiḥ*. You can be 'steadfast' to what is right, *satyadhṛtiḥ*. However, considering the root sense of *dhṛtiḥ*, where √*dhṛ* has meant 'to bear,' 'to carry,' or to hold, 'you can also experience *satya* as a 'burden.' Yudhiṣṭhira frequently embodies this paradox; as well as truthful, he is also the king whose "burden is what is right." He carries the burden of killing for stability of his kingdom, and the burden of guilt in the aftermath of the war, which nearly destroys him.[50] Yudhiṣṭhira, then, is trapped not only by the call to a game, but by his own sense of what is right, by his own oath never to refuse a challenge, by the injunction to obey the words of his elders (*MBh,* 2.52.16).

However staid Yudhiṣṭhira may be the metaphysics implied in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's conception of action informs aspects of Yudhiṣṭhira's ideas about action, and their results as well. The mechanism of Time, the ill will of gods that can derail plans and intentions—or so Dhṛtarāṣṭra asserts—took the upper hand and forced the dicing match. Yudhiṣṭhira takes a different view, one that sees *dharma* in his own action in the face of circumstances beyond his control. When his wife Draupadī later rebukes him for standing by the results of the dicing (their banishment) and rants at the capricious and adversarial influence of a creator on human events, Yudhiṣṭhira sees her opinion as "heresy." He acts because he must in accordance with tradition.[51] Still, in the seeming inexorable results of royal action, the forces of Time and gods hang as a shadow over his

acceptance of the dice challenge, as is evident in the closing comments Yudhiṣṭhira

makes to Vidura after their brief deliberation:

> Fate takes away our reason, as glare blinds the eye.
> Man bound as with nooses, obeys the Placer's [Brahmā's] sway (2.52.18).[52]

This statement names the incipient tragedy that lies in his commitment to act on the

challenge to dice. His obligation to act, though he knows the consequences will likely be

grave, presents a paradox. Solutions to such paradoxes are usually 'resolved' to the

powers of gods, time, and destiny. The authors reinforce the sense of painful inevitability

and say of his departure for the game that Yudhiṣṭhira was "summoned both by the

coming together of Time and by Dhṛtarāṣṭra" (2.52.21), a confluence of inexorable

consequences and command.[53]

Even for the king who is argued as being the most dharmic, Yudhiṣṭhira's *dharma*

does not rescue him from the effects of contingency (personal or cosmic); his

steadfastness is a seed of tragedy, as much as foundation for dharmic activity. But in this

king's case, rather than imagining fate moving him to act (as in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's case),

Yudhiṣṭhira's idea is that all the kings' actions as they converge down to the moment,

have been matured by the hand of fate. There is a tragic resignation here with

Yudhiṣṭhira, since he says nothing but only mounts his horse with the expected aplomb of

a king and takes his brothers and queens to the dicing hall of his cousin, bitter rival

(2.52.21).

So, what do we learn from this scene? On the surface, blame for the war is located

in Duryodhana's quest for power and intransigence in the face of responsibilities to other

than his personal aims. But since Yudhiṣṭhira also continually attempted to wrest a share

of Kurukṣetra from his opponent—both were seeking royal power according to their

dharma—the problem is not that power was sought, but the manner in which it was sought. In the eyes of his family members and other *rājanyas,* Duryodhana's comportment as king is the problem: unwillingness to hear advice that goes against his wishes, habitually under the sway of intense emotion, unwise in his choice of advisors. He ignores in a rude manner the advice from renowned sages like Maitreya (3.11.14-34), and is cursed for it. He laughs contemptuously at the elder Bhīṣma who admonishes him for disobeying his advice not to take the tour of cattle into the forest of exile and advises him to ally with the Pāṇḍavas (3.241.1-14).[54] His attitude toward royal power and the people involved in it denies and destroys the network of relationships involved in rule.

One lesson to be grasped for kings and other *rājanya*s is that while power may be held, its creation and maintenance is dependent on the emotional clarity of its constituents, which forms the basis of trust that is its foundation, its exercise dependent on royal relationships. Problems in rule emerge on both sides when the network of relationships is disregarded. If we look away from the negative example that Duryodhana provides, we can see that royal members of each side have claims for retribution of some moral injury, some dharmic wound involving relationship. Relational wounds of alliance are symbolized in the violation of Draupadī or Ambā. The relational conundrum of blood and affection, that dual edged sword of family and emotional bonds made or betrayed, are symbolized in Karṇa and Dhṛtarāṣṭra. As a warrior and king of means—using stratagem as detailed in *Arthaśāstra*, engaging in rituals of battle—he is equal to his cousin and rival. But in the face of the ideal model king-advisor relationship, Duryodhana is continually flawed; he has not mastered himself. Yudhiṣṭhira by contrast is self-mastered,

and is receptive to counsel, and expresses a larger dharmic perspective, even as he goes forward into a doomed endeavor.

Reflections on Deliberative Dharma

Here we can see the deliberative impetus in the depiction of emotion and its effects in the moment of counsel (emotion in Duryodhana, not controlled; in Dhṛtarāṣṭra, felt and understood, but in the end, not acted upon; in Vyāsa, appealed to successfully as a point of moral reasoning). We have seen, too, the general assessment of emotion across all of these examples—that when uncontrolled, or when not appropriate to the context, the *indriyas* are dangerous. So, while one can perceive some compelling advantages in the *indriyas* of kings, the weightier assessment is that emotions—not properly understood—are detrimental to *dharma*, because they constrain advisory deliberations with kings. Herein lies the warning: the *Mahābhārata* retains the ambivalences around affections, familial and friendly—and marks for us the conundrum of emotion's necessity as a means to a change in perception, and the very obstacle to proper perception and discernment also needed for changes in perception.

Even while acknowledging the dark side of the complexities of dharmic deliberation, as exemplified in these famous stories of kings and advisors in the *Mahābhārata*, it is important to point out again that the dharmic deliberations in this scenario nevertheless provide models of dharmic reasoning and relationship for advisors and kings. The contingencies of life and limitations of human understanding lead us to expect unanswered questions regarding motives for action or inaction. It is important to a full understanding of deliberative *dharma* that there are negative and positive models of

deliberation and the kinds of results they might bring. Within the deliberative mode of

dharma, in every story where an advisor or counseling intimate engages a king through

the *māyā* of sentiment, characters remind advisors and kings to check their own

emotional continence, in order to gain the clarity that comes with emotional detachment.

They are also reminded of when to use the illusion-making powers of emotions such as

love to create or block a dharmic response. With all these, we also can expect the many

options to act as catalysts for advisors and kings to wend their way to a better dharmic

viewpoint. These are the realities that make being in relationship with advisors crucial to

dharmic rule and the benefits of them to sustaining royal power.

Thus, these stories of the difficulty of discerning *dharma* end where they began

and where all deliberative *dharma* leads, with multifaceted possibility: A king can be

dharmic and can rule dharmically by means of what he learns and develops through his

advisors, and what they teach him, or lead him to see and think. A net of relationships is

necessary to rule in these Brahmanical settings. Stories, themselves encapsulations of

multiple perspectives, teach and create the dialogic, relational, deliberative method of

dharma.

Relationships and the affections and losses associated with them are a source of

continual tension. In fact, they comprise a significant amount of the events of life itself

that not only make it hard to be dharmic, but even create moments when dharmic kings

no longer desire to be dharmic. *Dharma*—its efficacy and success—is called into

question in profound ways in the *Mahābhārata*. After the dicing match in the

Mahābhārata, Draupadī is chastising her husband for his patience in accepting the exile

to the forest, rather than acting to regain his kingdom. She declares Yudhiṣṭhira's loyalty

to *dharma* even above his concerns for family. In bitter irony she encapsulates the consequences of his husband's gentle, "*kṣatriya*" *dharma* (*MBh*, 3.31.1-7), chiding him for meekness. Though *dharma* is to protect and bring about the flourishing of subjects, Draupadī voices the limits of *dharma*: "The [*dharma*] when well protected, protects the king who guards the [*dharma*], so I hear from the noble ones, but I find that it does not protect you."[55] Draupadī proceeds with her challenge to the results of *dharma* (which echoes the struggle Arjuna will have with *dharma* and its results), landing in what her husband calls ignoble (3.32.1-4). Draupadī would have him be loyal to family attachments over the nobility of his *dharma*.

As we have seen, ideally, advisors and associates help or should help direct a king back to himself, and toward *dharma*. But in light of the king's super-networked personal status, for a king to be 'brought back to himself' means that he is brought back to his proper place of relationality to his subjects, starting with those intimate to himself. Yudhiṣṭhira is a model here, but so are his relationships: for his continual reliance on advice, his usual concern to honor his family members and their reliance on him, a conception of kingship that joins the concerns of king and subject, his willingness to rule even after a long depression and the counsel and assuagement it took on the part of all the jewels of rule to pull him out of it. These are the consistent qualities Yudhiṣṭhira possesses that make up his *śīla* as they are demonstrated and honed in relationship. In this state of things, he is the *samrāj* (paramount ruler) that includes the network of kings and kingdom in his rule and decision making. This is the corporately created and experienced notion of royal *dharma* that is the ideal of deliberative *dharma*.

Dharmic kings and characters are embedded in relationships, and this is the premise that needs to be added to the conceptions we might have about *dharma* and its characteristics in the *Mahābhārata*. While James L. Fitzgerald has taken great pains to identify the "new *dharma* traits" that Yudhiṣṭhira demonstrates and possesses, given the deliberative nature of *dharma* in other books of this *itihāsa*, Fitzgerald's three general "marks of habitual virtue"—benevolence, generosity, and altruism—can only stand alongside other qualities of character in the text.[56] These are qualities of a person that, if properly developed (especially) in relationships of rule, can transform someone into a ruler who can deliberate dharmically and thus act dharmically.[57]

The *Mahābhārata* leaves us with a parting experience of Yudhiṣṭhira to consider that demonstrates a movement toward a special level of relationality with respect to dharmic action. This well-known story occurs in his last test by the god *Dharma*, which happens on his journey to heaven. With all the other things it might demonstrate about *dharma*, the right thing to do and think, the story stresses that a king, a person must understand the importance of what is at stake when one asks the question: "Who will be with me in the end?" Stated simply for the purpose of summation, all other close companions fall on the way to heaven, yet Yudhiṣṭhira trudges on, with a dog as his companion. When he arrives at heaven, though he is celebrated for his arrival and for his right to be there, Yudhiṣṭhira refuses to enter. He does not enter because he is told that he cannot bring the dog with him. He knows the importance of his companion in this journey; the companion is so important that he would rather lose the reward of being dharmic than lose the relationship that had helped make him so. The example of the relationship between this dog and the king shows that the tensions borne of affection,

loyalty, and enduring trust remain—these can bind and blind one from proper action, dharmic action, as well as carry one toward it. And, advisors are at the center of this network.

As noted earlier, the *Mahābhārata,* because of its genre and form (as an epic) offers a seemingly endless range and extension of examples of deliberative *dharma*, in varying shades of success and failure, darkness and light. In is endemic to this genre, perhaps, to see how these dynamics of human nature and relationality play out in history, which (facilitated by the epic form) are best shown at length and in complexity. Thus, the *Mahābhārata* is perhaps the paradigm genre example for understanding deliberative *dharma*.

Before turning to consideration of the talismanic mode of *dharma*, we might pause to review and summarize briefly how other Brahmanical genres, analyzed in previous chapters, structure deliberative *dharma*. Śāstric texts, in their attempts to formulate sciences of rule, tend to formalize their own paradigmatic structures of deliberation, abstracting from narrative and relational contingency, and in doing so perhaps move toward conflating dharmic deliberation with dharmic outcome, as I previously pointed out. This is not a move toward talismanic modes, but rather is a related "fixing" of *dharma* (or at least an attempt to "fix" deliberations and their relationships of advising into patterned structures).

Other Brahmanical genres pursue other aspects of deliberative complexity, or fit into the mode of deliberative *dharma* in specific ways. The *Pañcatantra*, for instance, while engaging in narrative, offers encapsulated narrative exempla that one could easily see being used in the kinds of advising scenarios elaborated in the *Mahābhārata.* Thus,

they are much more explicitly tools of media of advice (as, in some ways, all these texts are). Court poetry, given its interests in the range of human emotions and expressions, fits perhaps in a slightly different place. We have seen how prominently emotion figures into advising relations in dharmic deliberations, both positively and negatively. Thus, poetry, perhaps in contrast with the śāstric texts which might tend to abstract away from such qualities, uses its genre forms to explore emotion, so important in shaping *dharma*.

Given my focus, however, on the *Mahābhārata* as the genre paradigm for exploring deliberative *dharma*, let me – as a means of transition to considering talismanic *dharma*—make a contrast with what we will see below as a characteristic element of talismanic *dharma*: That is, the far-reaching, comprehensive sight and insight of a Buddha. As we shall see below, such a vision has a *supra*-natural capacity to revolve the sorts of complexities and conflicts I have presented from the *Mahābhārata* in order to utterly transform kings in need. By contrast, the *Mahābhārata*, again in its very form, and in its content, seems to argue the opposite. The only way one can gain the long and broad view of the human condition is to walk through it, and the only way to gain a perspective on it is to examine it in detail, and to deliberate with others about it, perhaps all the way to heaven, as Yudhiṣṭhira did.

Talismanic *Dharma* in Buddhist Discourses

In contrast to the deliberative dharmic mode explained earlier, and moving beyond the "talismanic traces" suggested in the preceding section, the talismanic mode of *dharma* eliminates factors that complicate trust, power and royal relationships. This is not to say that the problems kings and advisors face in trusting each other—caused by behaviors motivated by greed, fear, anger, and love—are not engaged in talismanic

examples. Rather, their scope is changed and their confounding effects magically transformed by the effects of the *dharma*. Talismanic *dharma* affects the way that relationships function as well. *Buddha-dharma* changes the terms of the relationship between king and counselor and his circle of close associates. First, the implication of emotion in trust and creating relationships is narrowed to emotions of devotional attachment between the king and *one* counselor. Second, conflicts within relationships are simplified and formulaic, if based in greed, anger, or misunderstanding, they are always answered by the "sweetness" (*madhurassarena*) of discourse or *upāya* "skillful means" of the Bodhisatta.[58]

Furthermore, the conception of human structures is different in stories that favor talismanic *dharma*. As we have seen, Brahmanical perspectives on counsel created a structure of counsel and rule that utilized the multi-faceted net of relationships in which *brāhmaṇas* and *rājanyas* found themselves—a structure as intricate as the net of Indra. The net in which kings and counselors are imagined in Buddhist literature is different. The "talismanic" *dharma* net is made up of a complex of the kings,' advisors' and monks' karmic histories that extend into the past, present and future.[59] The Buddha sees all the factors of a personal history that are necessary to bring about transformation, which is observed over and over again in the frame stories of the *Jātaka*.

The Buddha/Bodhisatta resolves one problem after another with respect to monastic and personal character, which requires his special, time-immune knowledge (which he has is in the past, present and future). For instance, in the *Tittha-Jātaka* (No. 25), the Buddha explains that the reason one monk could not benefit from the task of meditating on impurity was due to his complex history; a history the Buddha knew from

his own births as counselor and his deep insight into the monk's former lives.[60] He also knew the meditation object that *would* bring the monk success. Certainly, the birth stories as a genre demonstrate the capacity of *Buddha-dhamma* to resolve doubts and answer questions raised in the frame stories, but the genre also stresses that there is learning *across* time.

The complex provenance of many of the base stories (present in *itihāsa*, *purāṇa,* and *Pañcatantra*) highlights the difference in the effects of the *dharma*/*dhamma*. There is unbounded confidence in the power of *Buddha-dharma* to transform persons. This is especially true in how the stories imagine their characters respond to the *dharma*/*dhamma*. The Bodhisatta's words bewitch queens, and calm demons bent on murder.[61] *Dharma*/*dhamma* in many variant ideals—such as forgiveness, *dāna*, *pañcasīla,* the virtues involved in the four-fold fast (*catuposatha*)—is used over and over again to solve social problems and problems of rule. *Dharma* is used like a talisman a devotee might carry in a pocket and wear smooth, repeated in story and used the same way as story—as a touchstone that transforms. At this point, the complexities of the advisor and his or her roles are reduced to the one who bears and displays *dharma*.

The instrumental relationship is the one the king has to the three jewels: Buddha, *Dharma*, and *Saṅgha*. Yet, this is not merely a shift from one instrumental relationship to another—where the relationship with the Buddha or Bodhisattva now mediates *dharma*. There is also a change in the nature of the obedience that a king would give to a Buddha's (or a Buddha equivalent's) knowledge and counsel. This change is shaped by the fundamental difference in how *dharma* works in the Buddhist examples considered in this book. The Buddha or Bodhisattva engages in dharmic intervention, not dharmic

deliberation. Being made to see things dharmically is achieved primarily through rhetorical display of *dharma* and the consequences of *dharma* and *adharma*.

If some counseling scenarios have the marks of deliberation, we should not be fooled—the kings that the Bodhisattva might counsel possess wisdom that only goes so far. Deliberative involvement on the part of the individual lacking or needing wisdom is relatively absent in discerning what is good or appropriate, or dharmic. The Bodhisattva may stand in for ultimate wisdom in his former life as an advisor counseling an errant king in a *jātaka*, or may reverse the advisor-king relationship and live as a king wise enough to counselor his own advisor. Whatever typical non-Buddhist *dhamma* a character may possess—such as Brahmanical expertise in things of rule and things of *dhamma* (*atthāñ ca dhammāñ ca*)—is sublimated to the omniscience encapsulated in the Buddha, Bodhisatta or the *Buddha-dhamma*. Kings and other advisors do not know as much as the Buddha or Bodhisatta in the Buddhist examples, or they defer to him with little, if any challenge to his perspective. And, if advisors or kings do happen to be reputed in a story as perspicacious as a Janaka, for instance, or as wise and even-tempered as a Yudhiṣṭhira, the story soon reveals them bested or transformed by *Buddha-dhamma* or the Bodhisatta.[62] In short, the participation of kings and other *rājanyas* is not necessary—beyond the required assent or conversion—in order to reach a dharmic conclusion. The *dharma*/*dhamma* is already decided—the other characters need only to see it. This is a significant difference from deliberative dharmic sequences, where *dharma* is decided in process and application.

Though there are many examples of talismanic *dharma* from which to choose, a few should suffice to illustrate the concept. Note also here that not all *Buddha-*

dhamma/*dharma* is talismanic. [63] My aim is to point out salient talismanic dharmic modes illustrated in the literature. It is a challenge to encapsulate in a few examples, the observations that grew into a sense of the narrative-field from having read many stories about ministers and kings. So, the examples are chosen across types of *jātaka*s. And, to provide some parallels for comparison, I will use examples from *jātaka* tales that engage some instrumental kings and counselors from the *Mahābhārata*.[64] As the Bodhisatta is depicted counseling kings in these examples, the *jātaka*s play with names and story elements familiar to those who know the *Mahābhārata*: Dhanañjaya (epithet of Arjuna), Vidhura-paṇḍita (Vidura, the advisor to the Kauravas), and Yudhiṭṭhila (king of the Pāṇḍava branch of the Kurus, in its Pāli spelling). [65]

These examples bear much more than coincidence of a name, since the stories describe these kings as residing in Indapatta (Indraprastha) in the Kuru region. Moreover, one of the *jātaka*s shares an important context marker that functions also as a key trope in *Mahābhārata* action—a king who likes dicing that wagers a member of his court and loses him. Beside this similarity, the creators of the tales attempt to give the Bodhisatta some temporal accuracy in his birth as Yudhiṭṭhila and Dhanañjaya. Since his births in the *jātaka* are from descendants of these Kuru kings, the story makes it possible that the Bodhisatta could be borne of their line, even while they separate him from it. Putting him into the lineage of the Kurus in this way makes him distinct from these characters and their dharmic flaws in their familiar *Mahābhārata* contexts.

Appearing as a *Mahābhārata* character in a Buddhist context, the Bodhisatta appears as Dhanañjaya, a king of Kuru lineage in *Jātaka* No. 276, [66] which was discussed earlier in the context of Buddhist ideas of dharmic royal conduct.[67] The Bodhisatta also

demonstrates his perfections in three birth stories as a *brāhmaṇa* advisor, named

Vidhura-paṇḍita to king Yudhiṭṭhila in the *Dasabrāhmana-Jātaka* (No. 495) and as

priest–counselor to king Dhanañjaya in both the *Dhūmakāri-Jātaka* (No. 413) and the

Vidhura paṇḍita-Jātaka (No. 545).[68] Finally, the Bodhisatta is born as the youngest son

(Sambhava) of an advisor named Vidhura, in the *Sambhava-Jātaka* (No. 515).[69] I will

restrict my analysis here to his birth story in the *Vidhura-paṇḍita-Jātaka* and the

Sambhava-Jātaka, since in one Vidhura Bodhisatta is a superlative advisor, and in the

other, the child Bodhisatta Sambhava surpasses a Vidhura wisdom-type advisor. The two

provide examples of the talismanic mode in *jātaka* that depict counseling scenarios.

In the *Sambhava-Jātaka*, a king named Dhanañjaya who otherwise rules

according to *dhamma* poses a question to his priest and advisor (Sucīrata) about what he

can do to further the *dhamma* (*dhammayāgaṃ*).[70] It is not enough that he rules according

to *dhamma* through consistent giving and other meritorious works;[71] he wants to establish

his renown and to conquer the earth (*mahattaṃ [mahantaṃ] pattum icchāmi vijetuṃ*

paṭhaviṃ imaṃ) (V, 57.138). But, unlike the customary means of vanquishing the world,

he wants to do so by means of the *dhamma*.[72] The king alludes to the royal dichotomy

that we have observed in kings in *Mahābhārata* settings—whether using martial means to

an end is acting in accord with *dhamma* or *adhamma*.[73] Since the authors are stressing

his dhammic nature, the king confesses that he does not find any pleasure in things that

lead away from the *dhamma*. To this end, the king queries his advisor in a manner that

stresses he anticipates new terms of action—by repeating *atthañ ca dhammañ ca*—as

something he always wants to do, and as the things he asks his advisor to tell him: *yo*

'haṃ atthañ ca dhammañ ca kattum icchāmi brāhmaṇa / taṃ tvaṃ atthañ ca dhammañ ca

brāhmaṇ' akkhāhi pucchito ti.[74] This rhetorical stress and separation—of what he wants to do and what he asks his advisor to tell him—becomes important at the end of the story, as will emerge below.

For now our emphasis is on the complexity of the question: Unfortunately for king Dhanañjaya, his advisor tells him that he has asked a profound question that only a Buddha or a *bodhisatta* of a particular kind (one who is seeking omniscience in a current life) can answer.[75] Acknowledging his ignorance, since he is not a Bodhisatta, the king's advisor Sucīrata tells him of Vidhura, who was his childhood friend and whose expertise was acquired in the family of the same teacher: *so pana tassa bālasahāyako ekācariyakule uggahitasippo*.[76] For his own part, Sucīrata demonstrates an important quality of a truly wise man, he does not pretend to more than he knows. As for the importance of choosing Vidhura at the social level, the authors demonstrate that they have a sense of the importance of *kula* and *ācārya* to evaluations of advisor qualities—two familiar categories of persons on which to base some trust.

This intersects with what has been demonstrated in chapter four—that advisors possess wisdom technologies that are value and conduct confined. To be truly excellent, while they may know what *dhamma* is, they must also act according to *dhamma*. So, for a king requesting the aid of someone well-established in the ways of conduct and virtue and the means to success (*attha-dhammānusatthiyā*), it makes sense that the king's advisor would choose someone superlative from his own branch of expertise. He would choose someone whose intellect he observed and respected as superior to his own. However, even though rooted in these Indic markers of royal trust and knowledge, this

jātaka also possesses an argument about the supremacy of the *Buddha-dhamma* in answering questions of royal conduct, and how a king should respond to it.

To this end, this *jātaka* sets out two realms of knowledge for readers and hearers of the *dhamma* to consider, through the very manner in which the king's question about attha and *dhamma* is posed. In prose we are told it is a profound question, pertinent to the range of powers possessed by a Buddha (*pañño gambhīro Buddhavisayo*), or barring him, a Bodhisatta on the quest for the highest omniscience (*sabbaññutañāṇapariyesakaṃ Bodhisattaṃ)* in his current life-time (V. 58.line 9-10). While the text contains an appeal to the authority of a Vidhura and the authority of someone from a teacher's *kula* to answer the question, it limits the question's answerability to the realm of *Buddha-dhamma* from the start.

Since he does not possess the proper expertise, the advisor is sent on a mission to Vidhura, and given gold tablets on which to record the answer. Since Sucīrata is wise, he first made sure that the wisdom did not reside elsewhere, by visiting wherever else sages tend to dwell (*yattha yattha paṇḍitā vasanti*; V.59). The advisor finds no one in the world as he knew it (Jambudvīpa) to answer the question. While the journey builds story pathos, it also sets the stage for the last word (and the right word) to be found in the Bodhisatta. Vidhura, though, is the original object of his search; the only person he deemed capable of answering the question. Yet Vidhura's assumption does not bring him success. Vidhura is daunted as he ponders the complexity of the question to himself in V.60, "I will have to be able to grasp the singular dispositions (*cittam*) of a multitude of people; discerning the distinctions among them will inundate my [mind] like the Ganges!" (*mahājanassa cittaṃ gaṇhissāmīti Gaṅgaṃ pidahanto viya vinicchayaṃ*

vicāreti).[77] Overwhelmed at the scope of the question, he realizes that there would be no clear way for him to answer the question.[78] The nature of the question is beyond his skills.

This brings us back to the problem presented to kings and advisors at the beginning of this chapter: In order to rule effectively and dharmically (according to *artha*/*attha* and *dharma*/*dhamma*), kings or advisors seem to need to know everything, even while the stories I have analyzed above and in previous chapters demonstrate that they cannot possibly know everything. The conundrum necessitates trust and reliance on others in deliberative modes of *dharma*. But for *dharma* as talisman, as *jātaka* or *kāvya* creators tend to engage the royal *dhamma* of kings, kings or advisors do not have to know everything since they have a talisman that can answer everything—the Buddha and/or his *dhamma*/*dharma*. Moreover, the terms of *dhamma* and how it operates changes along with the relationship *dhamma* wisdom has to the possessors and sharers of it.

This means that there is more to be overcome in this *jātaka* than the wise figure of a Vidhura; it is wisdom and *dhamma* itself. Certainly, Vidhura is wise enough to know when something is beyond him; but it exceeds him in a particular way in this *jātaka*. This qualitative difference is indicated in his sense of being overwhelmed by the task. The question has a radically enlarged scope by the time it is considered through Vidhura's eyes. Vidhura would have to be able to grasp and distinguish differences in the (*cittam*)—the seat of what makes a king or advisor evaluate and act in a particular manner in this context—not only of the *rājanya*s that exert themselves at court as one might expect of an advisor, but also in the multitude of people affected by royal decisions.[79] One could object that this is the duty of any king in this literature, if the

service is given to his subjects alone. Kings are imagined as knowing the minds and

hearts of their subjects. How else would the dharmic king know what to do? But the

Buddhist creators of the tale significantly changed what should be imagined of the

answers to questions of *dhamma*.

So what, then, could Vidhura mean by his assertion that he would have to grasp

the dispositions of multitudes of people (*mahājanassa cittaṃ gaṇhissāmīti*)? The

commentary takes the meaning of the phrase in a vocational direction, citing the

occupations that people are born into (*vyāpāvo uppano*) as the lexicon for the

mahājanassa and the simile for Vidhura's feeling inundated like the Ganges, to be

something like "calculating the paths of all kinds of hearts and minds,"

(*nānācittagatisaṃkhātaṃ gaṃgaṃ pidahisanti*).[80] Vidhura sees this as an impossible

burden. Indeed, the commentators think him able to apprehend only one path at a time.[81]

But the story suggests a different direction altogether. Rather than view Vidhura's

incredulity as referring strictly to the lexicon of vocation, the mechanism by which a

Bodhisatta develops perfect wisdom and uses it suggests another dimension. The text

reflects the importance of experiential wisdom that the Bodhisatta would have garnered

by this time, especially if we accept that the *Jātaka* corpus chronicles the perfection of

the Bodhisattva through his myriad births.[82] In other words, as the authors cast Vidhura's

perspective with respect to the king's question of what constitutes attha and *dhamma*, the

actions and attitudes that comprise these are not limited to present contexts for royal

action. The proper answer must consider present, past and future.

The argument of this section of the *jātaka* suggests that reaching decisions that

would further the *dhamma* require knowledge and mastery of more than the treatises of

rule and *dharma* (*artha-*, *nīti-*, *dharmaśāstra*) themselves. It requires more than the

context-specific, deliberative *dharma* at which kings and counselors would arrive through

the deliberative process. The creators of the *jātaka* rely on a *dhamma* suitable for all

occasions and times. This signals a change in the basis of expedience and virtue (*attha*

and *dhamma*); it encompasses royal situations and royal lives, but in infinite directions,

through each and every *cittam* and the actions and ideals that come from them.   In

Vidhura's response, the requirement of wisdom as well as the means and ways to dharmic

rule has been brought into the realm of the fantastic, if not impossible. Once in this

realm—of infinite possibilities of thoughts, bases of thoughts, dispositions and their

effects on decision-making and actions of human subjects—the talismanic becomes

necessary. *Dhamma* must be delivered with a force that would refract through all

situations and beings, and by a being capable of asserting that force.

Even if what I have just suggested as the reason for Vidhura' inability to answer

the question were restricted to present distractions and contexts alone, the need remains

for an advisor to answer a question about the means to *dhamma* that would meet these

infinite sets of conditions in royal contexts. And so Vidhura sends the *brāhmaṇa* to

another of his sons, who is supposed to be even wiser, which extends his quest to find the

answer. The journey takes him from one distracted son to the next one, whom he

imagines to be clear-headed or to have a "clearer mind" (*visadañāṇataro)*[83], and on to the

next until he comes to Sambhava, only seven years old, but old in wisdom (V.65.line11).

[84] Such contrasts in the Bodhisatta's wisdom to that of *brāhmaṇa* serves to set the

Bodhisatta's wisdom on a different plane. Observe here some of the Indic conceptions of

knowledge and expertise, which other characters might possess (like Sucīrata and his

elder sons). As the commentators construe it, the authors show that though Vidhura and his two sons are educated in the sciences pertinent to rule and advising kings. However, this knowledge is not enough, for the question itself is beyond this world (V.62).[85]

The passes through the different possible advisors and the distractions that make them unable to answer the question are notable, because each distraction points to the factors that can impede good advice and the ability to be dharmic—inappropriate desires or attachments as well as the inability to master them. Consistent with the argument for the supremacy of *Buddha-dhamma*, it is only the *brāhmaṇas* who are hindered in the ways described by these distractions. Congruent with the concerns expressed in other literature, the potential advisors exhibit the problems to good counsel created by uncontrolled emotions. Sucīrata finds each son to be under the sway of desire, expressed in their infatuations with other men's wives. One son is found pursuing his unhealthy aims, when he already has what is good (V.61, 150)[86]; and the other is pursuing his desires even at the risk of his life (V.62, 154). In light of these distractions they admit they cannot answer the question. With the trappings of desire duly stressed, the inability of their dharmic path to address them, the last son refers the *brāhmaṇa* advisor to Sambhava.

The action of the text stresses Sambhava's self-control, depicting the boy/Bodhisatta able to turn away quickly from his playful pursuits. Sucīrata catches the Bodhisatta at play, with his hands filled with dirt, which he drops right away in order to turn his attention properly to the question. His brothers on the other hand, cannot rise above their distractions. Even as a child the Bodhisatta in this level of his rebirths shows more self-mastery than a highly educated *brāhmaṇa*. The background experience of the

Bodhisatta's many lives gives cosmic depth to the wisdom of the Bodhisatta's youth, and alludes to the development of perfected knowledge through time.[87] In this *jātaka*, his wisdom is marshaled to its most practical application in answering a king's query about *attha*/*artha* and *dhamma*/*dharma*.

Anticipating Sucīrata's objections in being referred to a child, and nodding to the conceptual limitations in which Sucīrata is embedded, five verses dedicated to Sambhava's description contain the refrain, "even so the stripling Sambhava appears to excel in Wisdom far beyond his years" (V, 159-168).[88] Sharing terms both with *artha*- and *dharmaśāstra*, the *jātaka* shows wisdom can come from a child, and the repetition stresses his wisdom in spite of his youth. These assumptions about the extraordinary places where wisdom can reside share elements with other *śāstra*s, and so by themselves are not necessarily talismanic. But the manner in which the wisdom appears, the way in which it is delivered and received, distinguishes it as talismanic *dharma*, by the way in which the wisdom is demonstrated (V.63, 168): "An ox by strength, a horse by speed, /Displays his excellence of breed, /A cow by milk in copious flow, /A sage by his wise words we know."[89]

And so the child demonstrates, directing Sucīrata to ask his question, promising, "I will declare it with the playful mastery of a Buddha," *buddhalīḷhāya te kathessāmīti* (V.65, line 14). The question was posed as it had been throughout the *jātaka*, but to the Bodhisatta, "what he wanted became clear to Sambhava, as it were the full moon in the middle of the sky."[90] This is a talismanic declaration, one that shows that this dharmic figure knows all questions and answers. As Bodhisatta, a foundational dharmic figure, he knows the exact nature of Sucīrata's question and what he wants; the child also

demonstrates certitude about *dhamma* not observed in deliberative dharmic modes. As a supreme being, with particularly Buddhist superlative powers, the child sees directly into the *brāhmaṇa* and the situation and teaches his discourse accordingly. Buddhist tales such as this exhibit a kind of context specificity, but here context is specified to a particular individual. This kind of specificity is part of the Bodhisatta's mastery, based in the vision (rich visual powers, of hindsight, insight and foresight) provided by perfected wisdom.

In order to grasp the talismanic nature of *dhamma* here, it is helpful to keep in mind the implicit ideology of the Bodhisatta's power in these *jātaka* tales. The Bodhisatta is able to see into the *cittam*, the center of each individual's disposition. Given the many cycles of life a person can travel, these can be as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges (the reason for Vidhura's confusion, despite his wisdom). The scope and extent of the Bodhisatta's vision is as infinite as the beings before him, the "multitude" including the king, court, palace, and subjects who gather as he presents his *dhamma* instruction, *dhammadesanaṃ paṭṭapesi* (V.65). This vision is part and parcel of his playful mastery, if one considers the results that ensue from hearing his *dhamma*. We have seen uses of the divine eye throughout the literature; this special vision creates the specific nature of the *dhamma*, delivered without need for dialogue (*samvād*) to make it pertinent.

Moreover, once he does see, he displays also an uncanny understanding of what advising a king involves. The Bodhisatta cuts to the heart of the matter, answering like a man who is experienced (V.65, 172):[91] 'What the king may know is not [necessarily] what he may do.'[92] With this verse he calls a king to action that is dharmic, rather than

merely possess an understanding of *dharma* alone. He also shows the mercurial nature of royal power and circumstances, reminding us of the separation of action and knowledge mentioned earlier.[93] The Bodhisatta incisively marks the dichotomy, and then pours his *dharma* out to the king and other *rājanya*s present, with words as sweet as honey (V. 66).

The answer of the Bodhisatta/boy Sambhava to the king's question is relatively scant compared to the description of the Bodhisatta's qualities, involving only four *gathās* (V.66.173-177). 'Acting at the right time and place, not conducting himself contrary to *dhamma* if he should lose himself, not straying onto a wrong path,' is the terse answer he gives. Stressing the importance of acting on the good one may know, he declares that 'a king (*khattiya*) who knows to act according to these principles' (*yo ca etāni ṭhānāni kattuṃ jānāti khattiyo…*) will shine with fame.[94] The Bodhisatta asserts the power of dharmic behavior in bringing royal success. But the content of the *dharma* gains in the articulation of *dharma*.

Thus, the narrative weight lies with the Bodhisatta's power with words of *dhamma* and their effects. The boy gave his answer to the question, again with the beguiling mastery of a Buddha, *buddhalīḷhāya*, to which all present clap and cheer and shower money on him. Since the story presents *dhamma* in the talismanic mode, the Bodhisatta's answer is powerful enough to transform those present. Moreover, even though the *brāhmaṇa* Sucīrata recorded the answer on a tablet—which meant that the king did not hear his honeyed words directly—when the king of Indapatta eventually received it, the *dhamma* teaching was such that thereafter, the king observed the *dhamma* and entered a heavenly birth.[95] *Dhamma* as talisman turns the king in the proper direction, where he acts according to the principles he learns, once and for all. The talismanic turn is evident

even in the language the creators chose for the king's response to the *dhamma*: *vattitvā*, the Pāli gerund of *vattati* (Vedic $\sqrt{vṛt}$).[96] The king courses in the *dhamma*, turns his behavior in line with the *dhamma*, his conduct becomes aligned with dharmic character, like the wheel of *dhamma* so familiar in Buddhist imaginings of royal behavior.

Summary Remarks: Deliberative and Talismanic *Dharma*

These two modes of dharmic practice—deliberative and talismanic—form paradigms of relations in which kings and their various advisors work to effect dharmic outcomes. In both modes is a recognition of what we might call the "tragedy" of *dharma*; that is, these narratives and anecdotes recognize first, that dharmic power is situated on the king, but is effected collaboratively; and second, that such advisory collaborations depend on intimacy, but the emotional complexities of intimate advising relations themselves limit dharmic efficacy. Thus, each mode—either through extensive deliberation, or through talismanic presentation—attempts to resolve these tragic circumstances in which kings and advisors work toward *dharma*.

Identifying dharmic modes as either deliberative or talismanic (or both) helps explicate the process involved in how persons decide to be dharmic, the process that causes them to be dharmic, what shapes their analyses of when it is best to be dharmic (or adharmic), and how they prove that they are acting and/or thinking dharmically (through the eyes of others, and their evaluations). Considering modes of *dharma* also allows us to examine the power a dharmic or adharmic ideal, practice, or entity exerts its power. Whether deliberative or talismanic in nature, dharmic modes in these contexts are constituted by the network of relationships in which kings and advisors and other

*rājanya*s find themselves. Conceptions of emotion and their function in relationships and in dharmic and sectarian practice also shape the mode that *dharma* requires in a particular setting. So too, intimacies of family and friendship create obstacles or facilitate the trust that is foundational to the advising and counsel that occurs in royal relationships.

All these people, ideals and processes make up the net of *dharma* and the net of Indra, the net of life that holds the royal jewels in relationship to each other, which in turn mediates and creates (disallows) royal power and authority. These analyses give us a sense of the highly networked nature of Indic *dharma*, authority and power in the literature of this period. But what about the individual jewel in the net? What can be gained in our understanding of Indic individuals and how they are constituted as a result of thinking about *dharma* in relational, deliberative or talismanic ways?

I think the answers to these questions could lie in a deeper study of the ways the traditions imagine emotions; how their ideas of emotion change with their ideas of the self and relationships; how the talismanic function of a particular dharmic specialist's or deity's action plays out in ideas of self and selves and their place within/without traditions. Technologies of managing emotion—the ways to shape the self (or embrace the inconstancy of the self) develop in the traditions to include more than ritual or techniques of wisdom. The sage, the knowledgeable person does not only teach engagement in a process that can bring an expertise like his own. He can also step in to situations now, with this radical notion of the effect of *dharma*, and transform the king and the situation of action. What needs to be examined in greater depth are the ways that relationship, relationality, and inter-subjectivity shape notions of a self, being, or soul within a dharmic complex or religious tradition.

In the end, sometimes *dharma* as talisman is the most effective way to turn a king's face and action in the proper direction. Some emotions can be so strong as to require the ultimate power that a talismanic *dharma* exerts on a human actor. Whereas the talismanic success is greatest in conceptions of *dharma's* action in Buddhist *jātaka* tales, the pull toward an immediate dharmic transformation, an immediate answer is seen to emerge in theophanies of Kṛṣṇa, in the calls of the *sūta* Saṃjaya for the king to yoke himself to the power of Kṛṣṇa.

Chapter 8: Conclusion: The Aims of Comprehensive History and the Modes of Mediating Dharmic Power

Engagement with the intricacies of *dharma*—as historical concept, as lived reality—challenges the scholar of history just as it challenges the subjects of the dharmic traditions the scholar studies. Those challenges seem, as they did for Yudhiṣṭhira, to follow all of us to the gates of Heaven. Here too, for the one who studies *dharma* to the one who lives it, all possible dharmic resolutions (deliberative, talismanic, or otherwise) open into further deliberations and displays of *dharma*. Thus, to read through the lenses of the movements of advisors and moments of advice is to engage *dharma* in multiple dimensions—historical, political, psychological, relational, and metaphysical.

My purpose throughout this dissertation has been to demonstrate the dynamism of *dharma* that emerges as kings and their advisors (of many kinds) relate to each other in negotiations of the exercise of power. By the approaches I have taken and the analysis I have undertaken, I set out to make three critical contributions: (1) to show that *dharma*, and power expressed in relation to *dharma*, is refracted significantly through figures other than the king, i.e., through his advisors, who need to be understood in their great variety; (2) to demonstrate that these relations of various advisors and kings, and their media and technologies of royal influence were not the purview of Brahmins alone; (3) and to show that royal power is made more dharmically efficacious when shared by the king with his trusted advisors.

It may seem to the reader at this point that in taking on the great scope of materials assessed in this work, I have risked the hazards described by one of Lewis Carroll's characters: In an effort to map perfectly a kingdom, a map was made of the

same scale (one mile equals one mile) as the kingdom.[1] Carroll's caution that such a map was impractical is wise counsel—any conceptual representation of any reality must of course be "not to scale." Nevertheless, the scale and scope of this project reflects not just the great amount of material but it also reflects a methodological perspective I maintain is necessary to the aims of such a study. That is, a frank acceptance of the vastness of the data to be examined, and the specific comparative aims of this dissertation, require that the scope of power in early India be examined beyond the king, beyond the most obvious advisory roles, to consider to some extent the advisory contributions of various marginal others (e.g., queens and other women), beyond the Brahmins, and beyond the most "classic" textual examples. Engagement with the questions of *dharma* and power is an ubiquitous concern. The project of representing this ubiquity thus requires that I show this in as many places as possible, and in as disciplined and detailed comparative way as possible.

The dharmic spectrum for which I am arguing only becomes apparent out of detailed study of the moments of advice, advice giving, and attentions to the advisor relationships. Let me be clear: In articulating these distinctive modes of *dharma* I am arguing for continuity at the broadest culture level. Indeed, the very arguments for distinctiveness that particular Buddhist or Brahmanical texts make depend on such continuity of dharmic ideal. The components of advice giving—dialogue, emotion, and dynamics of trust—I have identified reveal the fabric of *dharma* on which these traditions weave their dharmic discourses. This is the case whether this *dharma* is expressed in modes deliberative or talismanic; both of these modes on this common spectrum wrestle with these components.

So, in these moments of advice, the elements of trust, emotion and relationality emerge as essential to the *dharma* deliberations and talismanic transformations to which advisors invite their kings. In the preceding chapters, I have studied the ways Buddhist and Brahmanical texts represent kings and their need(s) for advice, the persons that might advise such kings, and the structures in which they would carry out their advice. The methods in which these two traditions imagine influencing kings say a great deal about what they think their particular *dharma* can contribute to a king's understanding of himself, of his responsibilities to others and to the kingdom.

But, in addition to these factors, the manner in which these parties relate to each other involves more than simply the content of the advice. And, looking at the attempts throughout these examples to regulate king-advisor relationships through the values and social morals immanent to their *dharma* (whether *sva-dharma*, *kṣatriya-dharma*, *brāhmaṇa-dharma*, *strī-dharma*, *Buddha-dharma*, or otherwise) reveals something as fundamental to *dharma* as the content of a *dharma* itself. At the nexus of power—and thus of *dharma*—is not merely the figure of the advisor, but the advisory relationship itself. The delicate connection between the advisor and the advised—a close advisor and the king—is the true nexus of power and *dharma*.

Thus, to argue that power is collaborative, or shared in some way, is not really sufficient. If power is indeed relational—then the dynamics of relationship must be the focus of the study of dharmic power. The argument of this dissertation is that advising relationships are the paradigms for demonstrating the collaborative nature of power. Advising relationships are the way that ideals of *dharma* and dharmic action are shaped. So, studies of power and *dharma* cannot "simply" study the formal structures of power in

a political system, and cannot simply study some conception of *dharma* as a set of rules (though it may include such). Rather, studies of power and *dharma* must focus on the dynamics of the relational exchange between a dharmic teacher, relative or friend and a king. For the personal conduct between a king and his close advisors to be described and studied as 'collaborative' means that we must maintain a focus on the dynamism of the relationship. This dynamism is the knowledge-creating personal familiarity particular to Indic pedagogy, where the dynamics of trust and emotion create room for social-dharmic understanding.

Within this rich collaboration are methods of practical reasoning about *dharma* that are always embedded in relationship. This is evident in the relational exchanges that exemplify deliberative *dharma*, but is implied as well in talismanic transformations, which themselves depend on relationships of trust, even as they resolve the psychological complexities and historical contingencies that complicate relations of trust. The challenges of knowing one's self, of knowing the good and doing the right thing, are heightened in the world of kings, not only because of the extent of the king's power, but because the king in the Indian context is the center of all networks of relationships. Here again, power and relationship are inextricably linked.

We have seen in all of these texts (across genre and tradition) that power and responsibility weigh heavily on the actions of advisors and kings, raising the conditions for danger or success exponentially. These greater responsibilities require, at the least, superior knowledge to meet the challenges of effective rule, just as much as superior awareness, and superior abilities to negotiate persons, personalities and personal characteristics are involved in royal relationships.

Perfect knowledge and the perfect grasp of relationships that such knowledge grants is identified throughout our examples as the ideal or the aim of effective advising and thus, effective kingship. Perfect knowledge and perfect relationality are thus linked. Hence the arguments I have presented throughout—across genre and tradition—that kings must rely on advisors of many kinds. And, advisors must be expert not "simply" in knowledge, but more so expert in relationality—in the knowledge of the vagaries of intimacy, emotion, and trust in relations of power. These relational dynamics constitute the challenge of meeting the context-sensitivity of *dharma*. As such, the intricacies of relationality as they converge on *dharma* are a fundamental impetus to depicting advisors influencing kings in these literatures. The deliberative and talismanic modes of *dharma*—and the ideal models of advisory relationship embedded in each mode— contend with these relational dynamics as they work to move or transform kings in the direction of a particular ideal of *dharma*.

Dharmic Rhetoric and Totalizing Histories

Methodical discourses at court struggle with *dharma*, subtle *dharma*-s, royal *dharma*-s, private *dharma*-s (as the most iterated discussions of the method of discerning what is dharmic). Even as *rājanya* and their *brāhmaṇa* or *bhikṣu* interlocutors may appeal to some extra-personal social *dharma* ideal—which many assume refers to some fixed transcendent value—these ideals are immanent to their experience. Even if kings and advisors are appealing to transcendental values, these are transcendental values arising out of "ordinary" life. I do not mean "ordinary" in the sense of "folk" values, "popular" values, or the values of the "everyday person," but the values of everyday life

at court. Looking at these values in this way illuminates and limits the extent of their scope.

Thus, my argument that power is relational and collaborative—and my approach to arguing this—leads to the following assertion: To study Indian history at the level of the largest most abstract ideas (*dharma*), or the largest conceptions of royal power, requires us to consider, to whatever extent we can access it (knowing that all of our texts are idealizations), the relational processes of every life at court. In the process we consider the ways in which these "ordinary" life relationships are both structured by large-scale ideas and processes, but also the ways in which these ordinary life dynamics (emotion, intimacy, trust) recursively shape the large-scale realities. In the end, it may be the case that moments of advice are the closest that we can get to depictions of everyday reality at court.

To work across these macro- and micro- dimensions of Indian history, and to show the immanence of transcendent values in "ordinary" life, and the mutual imbrications of these scales of historical experience in a systematic way is to attempt to write a complete or comprehensive history. Febvre and other scholars argue that historical actors are embedded within, limited by, and controlled by their own historical cultural structures. [2] My method acknowledges this embeddedness. My aim in attempting to write a complete or comprehensive history is to synthesize the synchronic and the diachronic dimensions of these relations in a way that maintains both the synchronic and diachronic. Ideally, in this approach to history, both will be in view.

By way of contrast, Indian philosophical and religious ideals have been regarded as if this historical cultural embeddedness were precisely <u>not</u> the case. Such

interpretations seek to create a complete history, but arrive at a totalizing history, one without the distinctions of actions and movement in history. Indeed this totalizing impulse has been a key Brahmanical argument in both pre-modern—such as the ninth century iteration via the eyes of al-Bīrūnī, for instance—and modern discourse (with the arrival of the non-Arabic imperial colonists beginning in the fourteen century). *Dharma* itself and its purported totalizing structures—*varṇāśramadharma* and *caturvarṇāśramadharma*, and *sanātanadharma*—is in some contemporary interpretations presented as its own totalizing history, encompassing culture and history but not touched by it.[3] *Sanātanadharma*, then, was/is some static notion akin to that articulated by the sages in the *Vedas* (as if they did not change through time), and then in the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu or the *Dharmasūtras* of Āpastamba and others.

However, these dharmic voices have strong internal arguments for systematization, consistency, punishment and expiation for breaking the codes of the system. In other words, they question the reality of their own totalizing structures. If the majority of people were indeed being dharmic in these ways, then why do the texts argue so forcefully about the nature of conduct and *dharma* and the relationship that conduct and *dharma* should have to society? Why the strong assertions to follow their particular *dharma*, and for the king to assure through coercion that their view of *dharma* be followed? In light of the complexity of *dharma* and the contingencies involved in its relational realization, it may be that such a systematic impulse was an innovation. Dharmic systematization may have been a trenchant by-product of new voices of authority, and its systems (including of coercion) a tool of maintaining new authority in its power.

Reflections on Genre

For scholars, the impulse to summarize a concept such as '*dharma*' through a broad cross-section of Indic sectarian history (Vedic through Vedāntic, through Theravādin, Mahāyāna, etc.) can obfuscate our understanding of it. It is not the inquiry itself that presents the problem: In our methods of comparing and following any particular idea of *dharma*, our notion of one genre's depiction of dharmic behavior may come to define *dharma* in other contexts. This method and its results suggest that an over-arching and over-determined definition of *dharma* could preclude consideration of counter evidence. As a result, we can make 'dharmic' literatures and the ideas with*in* and with*out* them more at odds with each other than they perhaps were, just as we might exaggerate the distinctions between *nīti* and other texts of idealized prudent conduct.

Seeing texts as *only nītiśāstra*, or *not dharmaśāstra*, or as *merely kāvya*, or as 'apocryphal,' or through other canonical qualifiers can prevent understanding how a tradition imagines story—in its various levels of cultural importance. This view also limits our understanding of how story can resolve dharmic problems. In other words, not just *dharma* texts are the source texts for *dharma*. If we consider these genres with the fluidity with which they are applied by counselors and advisors in royal settings, it is more fruitful to see these texts as comprising different sciences of conduct for particular spheres of influence and action. The sum of these or parts of these can constitute the dharmic process (deliberative or talismanic).

Royal concerns with action, power and *dharma* pervade genres of Indic texts across Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions, and these conceptions affect one another in inter-related ways. Across advisory scenarios, the discourses and stories demonstrate that

action and influence requires power, appropriate skill and means (*artha* and/or *upāya*) and dharmic sensibilities (personal nature, training, insight, and prescience). And, in light of these interlocking factors, power must be enacted with skill and means directed at dharmic ends. And, finally *dharma* implies and/or requires action and the expertise and means to carry it out. All are normative concerns (action, power and *dharma*) in royal contexts, all of which change according to the dharmic mode engaged in by royal interlocutors.

With these larger ideas in mind, we can see that moments of advice include rhetorical efforts designed to bring a king beyond incongruence between particular royal values. Such incongruence might make the king act inappropriately or paralyze him from action altogether. One example is Arjuna's confusion over not keeping a vow (one dharmic constraint) in order to uphold another dharmic constraint of not killing a relative or one's king. Jonathan Z. Smith's suggestion that ritual and myth work to rectify situations of incongruence is helpful here. One can presume that Kṛṣṇa is attempting such a rectification, but through a narrative exchange in the moment of counsel, instead of a ritual one. Consider another dimension: Smith's assertion that "*ritual*…provides an occasion for reflection on and rationalization of the fact that what ought to have been done was not, what ought to have taken place did not."[4] What if the same were said of *narrative* and other verbal media (given the link of narrative to the ritual sequence)? We may think of narrative in the moment of advice (frame stories in these moments) as marking off time for reflection on what a king should do, or should have done. The advisor in these moments uses demonstrative story to either rectify a king's shortfall of a

particular ideal of personal excellence or to reassert a new quality. In this way, one can use the media of counsel and moment of advice to assess, reassert, or transform values.

To illustrate this idea, consider the many voices of *dharma* that can occur in a discourse between ministers and kings in *jātaka s*cenarios. In these tales, visual metaphors parallel those used in moments of counsel depicted in *Pañcatantra* traditions, and characters of *Rāmāyaṇa* stories are retold with Buddhist karmic trajectories. When scholars study these, their tendency is to assume one path of influence, or derivation of one from the other. But these near synchronicities between Buddhist and Brahmanical tales, speak not of influence or derivation but of contiguous vocabularies in dharmic discussions, which are also shaped by the dharmic modes that they might share.

Just as we as scholars know the arguments of seminal interlocutors in the study of religion and literature, so it is with the advising figures to kings—advisors (monks, *bodhisattva*-s and Buddha-s, and various *rājanya*) are familiar enough to implement the dharmic and other conduct-related discourses of their communities, and those around them.[5] Hence, discourses of *dharma* can have contiguities across communities of thought and dharmic traditions that do not necessarily indicate religious "influence." In fact, often the communities of discourse are themselves concerned to separate themselves from influence or identification of similarity that would elide the distinctive identity of their *dharma*. Dharmic discourses are meant to be shared and to be influential, of course, but to do this they take care not to be confused with each other.

Dialogic Nature of *Dharma*s

As Wilhelm Halbfass has pointed out, we have painted histories of *dharma* from a very modern pallet of values.[6] But even as *dharma* is conceptualized and studied as 'religion,' or as 'way of life,' such conceptions nevertheless often do not let us see *dharma* as a complex process of moral negotiation, a process that entails being made able to see in a different way, to see through the obstacles that make the dharmic process difficult. As we think with *dharma* in advisory contexts and consider the many advisor-king relationships, it becomes evident that the nature of this moral system is inherently dialogic, and thus, relational. Studying *dharma* in an overly thematic way (as 'religion,' as 'way of life') does not reveal the recursive action and dynamic power of the discoursing community, the community that is working out its methods for being dharmic. Thus, the art of construing a dharmic scene is as complex as the various discourses considered above. The genius of these discourses lies in knowing the best ways to implement the Indic contextual epistemology.

It is typical of the deliberative dharmic mode that even when a dharmic notion is asserted as an ideal, the notion can be challenged in the next narrative turn. This means that for every moral, every appeal to "*dharma*" that may be demonstrated in these stories, what may be presented as static is used dynamically. This dynamism is true of the *nīti* of Vidura and of Bhīṣma that look like codes, or the *kṣatriya dharma* or story "as is said," to which queens and sages appeal. A reluctance to say the last word about *dharma* begets a frame story, a corollary or counter example moves the reader/audience into another demonstrative story, a repetition; an iteration from another perspective that is itself an object from which to learn, the basis for a dharmic decision. These movements create

another scenario with which to deliberate through to a dharmic solution, or to show that the terms of *dharma* themselves enlarge, complicate or refine a particular problem and the approaches that can/should be taken to it.

In contrast, the Buddhist traditions that created the *jātaka*, *avadāna*, and *kāvya* considered in this dissertation take other paths for thinking dharmically in the face of conflicting *dharma*s. They move into previous realms, previous moral contexts that decide hyper-structured dharmic responses now. They move in the "now" of the age of the Buddha and his disciples, such as Ānanda, Śariputra (Pāli: Sāriputta), or the Buddha's sons of the *dhamma*, monks such as Upagupta and Nāgasena. The traditions that composed these texts understood learning and teaching to span the cycles of *saṃsāra*; where learners such as kings and monks have karmic tendencies in past lives that affect their present, tendencies that the *Buddha-dhamma* can unlock so that kings can become good (if possible).

Yet, past karmic activities are not merely rationalizations of current behaviors alone—this is part of what sets them apart from many Brahmanical conceptions. Rather, they are explanations that serve as keys to unlock the tendencies of action that keep one bound to the cycle of life. Though Buddhist texts see most "typical" Buddhist practices as adequate to the job of bringing awakening, some of the Buddhist story traditions indicate that such practices must be integrated with the totality of personal experience— that is, including experiences from previous lives—in order for a change of consciousness to occur (*Tittha-Jātaka*, No. 25).[7]

In both Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions, karma is a function of temporal actions, and therefore "Time" is an interesting catalyst across Buddhist and Brahmanical

perspectives. Its role is to make room for dharmic reflection and choice and/or to give context to the nature of an individual's action, or inability to act. Time "cooks" persons and actions in the Brahmanical case. This "cooking" is a summative explanation of unfortunate results, as fruition for previous actions. Time's function as antiquity is also revealed in the constant references to "old stories" and their uses as dharmic deliberative tools. Yet even these stories are time bound—to the historical past to which they refer and to the present within which advisors and kings reside and act. In contrast, old stories are also an important tool in the dharmic modes in Buddhist examples, but these stories follow trajectories into the past, present *and* the future. So as limited as Buddhist proximity to kings appears to have been at court when compared to the ubiquity of Brahmanical presence, *Buddha-dhamma* is made ubiquitous throughout time in the stories and teaching moments with which the Buddha or his agents ostensibly teach kings and ministers to be good, living and acting in *dhamma*.

Implications for Future Work

Nearing the end of this dissertation, I would like to suggest that among the indicators of a success of a research project are the ideas it generates for future work. Looking forward from the perspective of this dissertation, I wish to highlight at least a few areas that I have discussed in the preceding chapters that would be fruitful for future research. First, the ways in which queens and other women at or near court function in advisory relations needs to be examined further. This rich subject could of course be approached in many ways, and at length. For instance, examination of the relationship dynamics as exhibited in queen (*mahiṣī*) activities in advisory scenarios would be a

crucial first step in expanding our understanding of *kṣatriya* lore and knowledge, *kṣatra-vidyā* and *khattiya-māyā* (Pāli). Also important to consider would be queens' roles as teachers and upholders of *kṣatriya dharma*s. While I have touched upon the roles of queens in this dissertation, because of the scope of this project, such sustained attention exclusively to them was not possible. Nevertheless, in the ways mentioned here, we can learn much more from sustained attention to the actions of queens in advisory relationships of royal power.

Second, Buddhist concerns with spies and their anxieties about the possible adverse impact of such activities on the authenticity of wandering ascetics provides more evidence with which to evaluate scholarly suggestions about responses to Aśokan *dharma* (as Hiltebeitel, Fitzgerald, and Olivelle have argued). The evidence I have presented in this dissertation, as well as my method, show us that the "anxieties" and "responses" of influence and impact both go to and come from both Brahmanical and Buddhist sides. Thus, we need to think about the emergence of dharmic narratives in more nuanced ways that presume a relational dynamism across these traditions.

Third, and related to the immediately preceding point about the dynamic relation between these traditions, the familiarity that the *jātaka* (those numbered in the five hundreds in the Pāli canon) have with *artha-* and *nītiśāstra* genres indicate dynamic Brahmanical-Buddhist relations and deserve further study. As with my preceding comment regarding women's roles, I have approached the *jātaka* genre of Buddhist literature through the interests of this dissertation. However, these *jātaka* provide significant resources to add to historical studies (such as studies like Johannes Bronkhorst's) of the religious cultures of Magadha and beyond. Moreover, the *Mahā-*

Ummagga-Jātaka deserves study its own right, not just as a Buddhist epic (*kāvya*) such as the *Vessantara-Jātaka*, depicting the heterodox *rājanya* milieu, but also for its use of *upāya*. This use of *upāya* in the *Mahā-Ummagga-Jātaka* should raise questions about the development of *upāya* as a key device of Mahāyāna traditions. The evidence of *rājanya* scenarios in Buddhist texts such as this one suggests that cultivation of the "perfection of wisdom" (commonly, *prajñāpāramitā*, but in this text, *abhisaṃbuddha*) could include *kṣatriya* and *brāhmaṇa* wisdom traditions.

Power and *Dharma* in Relational Networks

The relationality of dharmic deliberation has implications for our understanding of the self in ancient India. In general, the history of Euro-American studies of Indian philosophies and traditions, especially of important Indian concepts such as *ātman* or *anātman* has tended to see such terms entirely as a state of transcending the constraints of community and relationship, and thus has tended to see these traditions as moving toward such "transcendence." While there is some basis in the traditions for such interpretations, they have been over-determined by Euro-American concerns with the self as individual first and foremost. However, if we consider Indian traditions of *dharma* in light of my argument for *dharma*'s inevitable relationality, and if we keep in mind the relationally networked nature of dharmic selves engaged in these dharmic modes, then such conceptions of a constrained self, straining toward liberation should change. The dharmic ideals for which I have argued in this dissertation show a picture of "selves"

networked into and embedded into relationships that they strain toward perfecting, by means of one or another dharmic mode of relationality.

Perhaps this signals the ultimate irony of royal power in ancient India: The king—ostensibly the most powerful man of all in any conception of Indian polity—is the least insulated from these complexities and their contingencies, because of the plain fact that he is king, he is the center of all networks of relation in his realm. Thus, rather than insulating him from these relational necessities and their contingencies and complexities, he is of all men most embedded in relationships. Think for a moment of the great range of terms and roles for advising I have set out in this dissertation. The array of possible persons and their roles that provide or might provide access to a king and thus a claim on his power is vast. For starters, the array of "official" roles that might create moments of counsel ranges from fellow kings to all kinds of ministers to one's chariot driver. Add to this array, the range of ritual specialists and the royal relations they require. Then, recall the range of intimate family members (wives, siblings, parents, and children) who have access to and a claim on power. Then, add in various sages, seers, monks and other so-called "liberated" selves who participate in the king's power. Finally, as if all these other actors were not enough, even gods occasionally appear at court. Moreover, many of these roles intersect, complicating relations even further. How does a king ever know what to do, and whom to trust? How does he inhabit what is dharmic and effect *dharma* for his kingdom?

And of course, the texts that show us these ideals (positive and negative, successful and failed) themselves exist in collaborative and competing networked intertextual relations of "tradition" (which itself is another term for a network of relations

over time), on which kings and advisors depend to gain, and re-gain, their bearings in negotiating these dharmic networks. Thus, the longing for transcendence or transcendent perspectives that we see in Indian traditions (and that is expressed in the talismanic dharmic transformations I have argued for here) makes sense. However, those transcendent perspectives themselves are better understood as means of re-forming and perfecting relational networks. Thus, wherever the king turns, he turns toward one or another option for effecting his power through relations with others on whom he must depend for advice. While there may be individual *dharma*s, no *dharma* is actualized individually. This is most true for kings.

This argument may seem to be a long way to travel 'simply' to assert that in ancient Indian traditions, royal power—and thus, the realization of *dharma*—is collaborative and relational. Here, we return to the aims of writing a comprehensive history. The aim is not simply to assert <u>that</u> royal power is shared, etc., but rather to attempt through the methods of such historical study to show <u>how</u>—by what means— dharmic power might or might not be realized.

When one thinks of such large-scale questions in Indian history such as the nature of royal power and *dharma*, one may be inclined to think at that scale, as scholars have (quite rightly) always done, focusing on large-scale matters political, economic, social, etc. Such "structures of relevance" of course matter. Of course, in matters so complex, there will always be more to be known about the "structures of relevance" in which kings and their myriad advisors are embedded.[8] But this contribution to "complete history" has aimed to re-describe and re-cast the dynamics of royal power that are expressed in the contexts of experience more ordinary. Thus, I highlight again the prominent role of such

seemingly mundane aspects of life as emotion and the bonds of intimacy in these texts and traditions, and in the argument of this dissertation.

While terms we use such as "relationality" or "relational networks" are acceptable, what I have emphasized is that these relations and bonds are formed and expressed through human expressions of emotion and intimacy. *Dharma*, dharmic kings, and dharmic kingdoms are shaped at these intimate levels. As our texts show, dharmic kingdoms are made and unmade through the ways in which power is refracted through emotions in intimate relations. Thus, understanding the nature of Indian relationships (which include identity) goes beyond concerns with social structure; it must include an understanding of relational dynamics. The dynamics between kings and advisors are paradigmatic, for many reasons: The exaggerated power and consequences of action highlight what is stake in human relationships at all levels. Moreover, because of the intricacies of overlapping relations and roles (political, religious, family, etc.) we also see the way the concerns of these realms of human life interact.

We have spent more than two centuries as scholars seeking to understand praxis (orthopraxy and heteropraxy) and text (orthodox and heterodox) with respect to self, society and cosmos in Indian religion. And because of the complexity of the subject, we still are in search of understanding how the two—community and self—constitute each other at every level in these Indian traditions. Considering their engagement with the idea of the advisor and moments of advice, these traditions seem to want to remind us, in so many ways, that to understand the self fully one needs to understand everything. After all deliberations fall silent, and all talismans are presented, the human challenges of agency and responsibility remain with the Indian composers and their characters—and

with us. Scholars have shown the unavoidable contexts of human limitation and historical contingency that have shaped conceptions of human agency. My own contribution has been to highlight how deeply networked intimate relations inform these contingencies and contexts. Acceptance and understanding of these human facts is perhaps what it means to be dharmic. Short of that understanding, one must rely on trust in one's friends.

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Chapter Notes

Notes to Chapter 1

[1]   *sulabhāḥ puruṣā rājan satataṃ priyavādinaḥ*
         apriyasya ca pathyasya vaktā śrotā ca durlabhaḥ   (3.35.2)
Sanskrit text from GRETIL, Kyoto archive of Sanskrit E-texts in Unicode (UTF-8), Input by Muneo Tokunaga, et al, revised by John Smith, Cambridge.
http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ebene_1/fiindolo/gretil/1_sanskr/2_epic/ramayana/ram_03_u.htm.

[2] Young King Rāma's efforts to regain his wife eventuate in the creation and test of king Rāma's relationships with neighboring kingdoms, displays and tests of his own virtues and the virtues of allies, brothers and wives that people the narrative of the epic.

[3] In this case, the demon king wished the sage to disguise himself as a deer to lure away king Rāma so that Rāvaṇa could then go in his own disguise (as a wandering *brāhmaṇa*) to trick Sītā into serving him so that he could abduct her. In literature of kings, especially treatises of polity such as the *Arthaśāstra*, spies took on the disguise of wandering ascetics to serve as agents of the king. These ascetics can be most generally defined as those associated with Vedic praxis and doctrinal affiliation, (*brāhmaṇas*) and those that are non-Vedic in praxis and doctrinal affiliation (*śramaṇas*).

[4] The *Kīratārjuniya*, the *Arthaśāstra*, and, in this example, the *Rāmāyaṇa*. These texts are of the dramatic literature (*kāvya*), technical and instructional literature (*śāstra*) and epic literature (which contains both "legend," *itihāsa*, and "narrative," *ākhyāna*), respectively. Each of these devoted significant narrative energy to the interactions between kings and their advisors, counselors and spies.

[5] This is a paraphrase of Venkatesananda's summary of *Āraṇya* 36-37, in "The Forest Life," in Swami Venkatesananda, *The Concise Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 147-151.

[6] I discuss the reasons for the primary focus on kings in more detail in Chapter Two.

[7] Even today, fables of the *Pañcatantra* are redacted into children's books in India to demonstrate general principles for human relationships. For a sweet example, see *The Best from the Panchatantra*, (New Delhi: Book Land, Chunmum Children's Books, 2nd edition, 1983).

[8] For summary comments on the history of interpretation of the *Pañcatantra* in scholarship see Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature* 3, part 1: 308ff. Olivelle surveys more recent scholarship on the *Pañcatantra* in his introduction. Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Pañcatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), *xxxi-xxxiii*.

[9] *Ibid.*, 4. (Olivelle's translation)

[10] Olivelle (*Ibid*, *xxxiii*) suggests that before elaborating a theory about the function of the *Pañcatantra*, one should consider who the narrator is, as the stories are multivalent; there are moral winners and losers.

[11] Olivelle suggests (*Ibid, xxix*), but does not explore the implications of his suggestion that the *Pañcatantra* is written for ministers.

[12] The educational scenarios between a king and a sage and the relationship of the sage to his text are only now being examined. Alf Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahābhārata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 2001.

[13] The *Arthaśāstra* is generally attributed to the advisor Kauṭilya, who is considered to have served Candragupta Maurya, c. fourth century BCE. Recent studies suggest the text is a composite work, sections of which are from the first centuries CE. For instance, see Mark McClish, "Political Brahmanism and the State: A Compositional History of the *Arthaśāstra,"* PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2009. This fourth century BCE date makes the *Arthaśāstra's* redaction contemporaneous with the *smṛti* literature such as the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas* and Manu's *Dharmaśāstra*. Gerald J. Larson, *India's Agony Over Religion* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995), 77.

[14] The *Arthaśāstra* records two views on a "blind" king (8.2.9-12): the opinion of "teachers" (v. 9) and the opinion of Kauṭilya (v. 10-12). The teachers thought a king who was "blind" to the sciences, also willfully followed his inclinations or those of others (v.9) and destroyed the kingdom thereby. Kauṭilya did not conflate being blind to the sciences with bad behavior in the king. He states that "the blind king can be made to follow any course of action through the excellence of his associates (v. 11)." Kangle's translation, 391. Kauṭilya wanted to retain the possibility for a wise possessor of the sciences to enlighten this "blind" king into following the proper course of action.

[15] Van Buitenen translates an aphorism that sums up the dangers of being in relationship to a king: "…minds of kings have a way of revolving, after granting favors they slay with bludgeons…" J. A. B. Van Buitenen, trans. and ed., *The Mahābhārata*, *Book of the Assembly Hall and the Book of the Forest*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 134. A similar sentiment is recorded in the *Arthaśāstra*, where the king is likened to fire that can burn those close to it (5.4.16-17).

[16] For a discussion of the approaches to and the problem of perception among Buddhists and Vedānta logicians, see Srinivasa Rao, *Perceptual Error: the Indian* Theories, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 33-44; 45-58. See also J. N. Mohanty's discussion of general theories of perception, (17-21); false cognition (32-35), and theories of knowledge (35-36) in *Classical Indian Philosophy*, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000).

[17] The *Arthaśāstra* specifically addressed the problem of the king that is unable to perceive correctly for his lack of adherence to the śāstras and his being held sway by emotions and/or vices. Kangle translation, 391-2; *Aś,* 1.6.8 (the blindness to royal duty cause by emotion) and 8.2.11-12 (the blindness cause by ignorance of the *śāstras* and by impudence of royal will). The *Mahābhārata* also explores, in narrative form, the many misperceptions of Prince Duryodhana in the *Sabhā* and *Śalyaparvans*.

[18] *Upāya* is construed in particular ways in Buddhist texts, denoting the skill that a Buddha or bodhisattva has in creating the appropriate conditions and using the karmic tendencies and residues of sentient beings in the most efficacious way to teach the *Dharma*. In the context of Brahmanical literatures, *upāya* is a "technique," in general, and in royal settings, includes techniques that advisors and kings use in managing their relationships with other kings and sovereign powers.

[19] That is, before the advent of the Gupta Age, and the "Classical Age" of ancient India; Thapar, *Op. cit.*, 136. It also falls before the social, political religious consolidation that occurs in what Larson calls the Indic Period, *Op. Cit.*, 75ff.

[20] Though he aims to perform a historical study of the conception of the *cakravartin* in ancient India, often his discourse makes these conceptions appear at war with each other in the texts; especially page 310. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Cakravartin," *New Indian Antiquary*, (3) December 1940, 307-321

[21] Note especially pages 10-15. Dr. Yashpal, "Ideal of Kingship in the Pali Tripitaka," *Buddhist Studies in India*, 1967 Seminar on Buddhism through the Ages,"(Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 12-19.

[22] See especially J. C. Heesterman's suggestion that power and authority for the king or the priest are mutually supportive, so long as that which makes a king ("worldly relationships") powerful and that which makes a Brahmin powerful ("transcendence") remain exclusive from one another (page 156). J. C. Heesterman, "Power, Priesthood, Authority," *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society,* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 141-157.

[23] The *Arthaśāstra* according to Trautmann went through a third redaction around this time. Scholarly consensus according to Olivelle dates the *Pañcatantra* to c.300 CE. Olivelle emphasizes that this is only an educated guess. It should be remembered that dating of early Indic texts is highly conjectural.

[24] "Reasoned" advice is my designation for the method of deliberation and inquiry of users of normative sources, here in the context of royal advice: In *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, it is called *ānvīkṣikī*; in this example, Kṛṣṇa developed this idea for Arjuna through deliberation (*tarkeṇa*). The entire verse is: *duṣkaraṃ parama-jñānaṃ tarkeṇātra vyavasyati; śrutir Dharma iti hy eke vadanti bahavo janāḥ* [*Karṇaparvan* 49: 48] Kṛṣṇa's use of the term functions in the same manner as what Kauṭilya suggests.

[25] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 52.

[26] *Ibid*.

[27] This is one of Vidura's epithets in the epic. According to Ingalls, the importance of Vidura as a figure wanes with later interpreters of the epic due to the solidification of ideas about caste and attendant debates around Vidura's Śūdra origins. Daniel H. Ingalls, "On the *Mahābhārata*," in *Modern Evaluation of the Mahābhārata: Prof. R. K. Sharma Felicitation Volume* (Delhi: NAG Publishers), p. 5.

[28] In the *Jātakas* used for this dissertation, the Buddha—and by extension Buddhist values, *Dharma* and saṅgha—transforms any king or varṇa that he enters. For instance, in the *Sabbadāṭha-Jātaka* (Cowell, *Jātaka*, *Op. Cit.*, 241), the Bodhisatta takes on the role of a minister who outwits the power and efficacy of a Brahmanical mantra. The Buddhist materials of my study are engaged in a debate over whose values are most efficacious in conquering foes. I suggest this is a sectarian debate about the ultimate possessor or location of wisdom, not merely a rejection of social hierarchy.

[29] It is interesting to note that studies of advisors to kings have been completed through data in Islamic contexts, where the monotheistic worldview is mediated corporately. Though Muhammad is the true prophet, the tradition, structure and laws were established through the caliphate, and complex textual authorities (*Qur'an* and *Ḥadith*). As a result, a corporate epistemology of authority reigns over a singular, prophetic one.

[30] Shulman, *Op. cit.*, 1985.

Notes to Chapter 2

[1] *Atharva-veda-saṃhitā,* William Dwight Whitney, trans., Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. VII, First Half Books I to VII, Revised and Edited by Charles Rockwell Lanman, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Reprint 1996), 329

[2] As will emerge in my discussions of the idealized conduct of advisors to kings and the idealized relationships between them, what constitutes 'religious', efficacious, moral, and dharmic idea and practice goes through a process of emergence, and then through complex changes. Scholars have largely presumed a monolithic '*Dharma*' on both sides of the traditions of Brahmanism and Buddhism. Patrick Olivelle adds a very recent acknowledgement of the complexity of *Dharma* and *Dharma* texts in his discussion of the emergences of *Dharma* in Hinduism. See Patrick Olivelle, "*Dharmaśāstra*: A Textual History," in

Hinduism and Law, edited by Timothy Lubin, Donald R. Davis, Jr., Jayanth K. Krishnan, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28-57; especially his discussion of the "*Dharma* of the *Dharmaśāstra*s," pp. 32-37.

[3] The problems and scholarship of dating the concepts of early Buddhist texts are many. Recently and compellingly, Johannes Bronkhorst has evaluated the forces that shaped early India in the Gangetic basin, and its related environs in his *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, South Asia, Volume 19, (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2007). Bronkhorst identifies a "spiritual culture" of early Magadha, a culture he argues shaped the development in particular areas of religious culture; primarily religious culture that developed around karmic retribution and rebirth. Other common elements of this religious culture obtain, such as the source asceticism for the commonalities between the asceticism(s) of Buddhist, Brahmanical or Jain sources can be attributed to a "lost source" of greater Magadha culture on which these communities relied for their ideas about asceticism (260). According to Bronkhorst—pages 217 and 258-59 as examples—this spiritual culture can better explain some of the similarities in ideas between texts across the communities Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism.

[4] For an example of the Buddha Śākyamuni's awakening, using Brahmanical language as the *sutta* writers conceived it, see *Sela Sutta* in *The Rhinoceros Horn and Other Early Buddhist Poems* (*Sutta-Nipāta*), translated by K. R. Norman with alternative translations by I. B. Horner and Ven. Walpola Rahula, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 99. For example, this instance in the Sela-*Sutta* depicting the Buddha thanking the ascetic, Keniya, for his words of praise:

> The *aggihutta* [agnihotra] is the foremost among sacrifices; the Sāvittī is the foremost of metre(s); a king is the foremost of men; the ocean is the foremost of rives. The moon is the foremost of [lunar mansions; var. constellations]; the sun is the foremost of shining things; the Order is indeed the foremost for those who sacrifice [looking for; var. longing for] merit. (Norman, p. 99; 111 PTS)

[5] There is a passage in the *Milindapañha* that extols the intellectual attainments of the king, which he would have learned from his *brāhmaṇa* and *rājanya* teachers: *Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, and Vaiśeṣika darśanas, and purāṇas.* While some of these concepts, practices or schools have their own problems with respect to dating, they are all considered particular to "early India." For an alternative view, especially with respect to Nyāya, see Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha* (2007).

[6] The distance of the emergence and textualization of *buddhavacana* and *buddhadharma* from the time of Śākyamuni Buddha's life is great—more than a few hundred years. I choose these criteria in order to provide some diachronic limits to my study. These criteria are based on my study of a broad and deep range of inscriptions and texts of Brahmanical and Buddhist sources. The scope of my current project does not permit me to take to task the problematic ways in which scholars of "early Indian Buddhism" decide on what is "early" or "Indian," or "early Indian." However, I do discuss the problems of Buddhist sources in more detail in chapter three of this dissertation, where I discuss the occurrences of ideas/conceptions of the advisor across the sources of my study.

[7] For a view that sees the interconnections between Brahmanism and foundational Buddhism, in terms of their influences on each other in early foundational contexts, see Richard Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1997) Bronkhorst takes Gombrich's comparative chronologies to task in his *Greater Magadha,* 215-217. Also in this book, a discussion of the relative dating of Brahmanical and Buddhist texts and ideas, and the problems associated with accepted methods; especially 353-356; and a summary of his argument about chronology, 258-259.

[8] Patrick Olivelle discusses the use of Brahmanical ideology by Aśvaghoṣa in his translation, *Life of the Buddha by Aśvaghoṣa*, translated by Patrick Olivelle, The Clay Sanskrit Library, Richard Gombrich and Sheldon Pollock, et al. editors, (New York University Press and JJC Foundation, 2008), xxx.

[9] Knowledge of the self is a feature of the religious culture in the Magadha region in which the Buddhism of Śākyamuni arose. See Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha,* 28ff.

[10] Scholars are now considering the early formations of Brahmanism and Buddhism in early India in new ways. For other opinions on the relative Buddhist-Brahmanical rhetoric aimed at arguing themselves into royal courts see: Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Buddhacarita: Life of the Buddha* by Aśvaghoṣa, The Clay Sanskrit Library, Richard Gombrich and Sheldon Pollock, et al., editors, (New York University Press and JJC Foundation, 2008), xix-liii. Also, Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section II, South Asia, edited by Johannes Bronkhorst, vol. 24, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), especially,153-193. Also, for formative interactions in early Buddhist and Brahmanical texts, see Black, "Rivals and Benefactors: Encounters Between Buddhists and Brahmins in the *Nikāyas*," *Religions of South Asia* 3.1 (2009) 25-43; also his "Ambaṭṭha and Śvetaketu: Literary Connections Between the Upaniṣads and Early Buddhist Narratives," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, March 2011, Vol. 79, No. 1, pp. 136-161.

[11] This is especially true of historical constructions of *dharma/dhamma*. Collette Cox represents succinctly my point of view in her recent article discussing the changing role of *dharma* in Sarvāstivādin *Abhidharma.* The provisions Cox suggests, I think, operate in nearly all early Indian Buddhist scenarios. Collette Cox, "From Category to Ontology: The Changing Role of Dharma in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 32, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 544.

> "Certainly, these early traditions were complex historical phenomena, a tapestry woven in often unexpected directions as a result of both internal dynamics and external influences and events. Yet unraveling this historical interplay is complicated by the dearth of independent and contemporaneous, external sources and by the continuous recasting and reappropriation of prior materials by each tradition in order to facilitate an authoritative and yet unacknowledged reconstitution of itself. The convoluted pattern of doctrinal development is masked both by textual emendation that effaces perceived contradictions and by the retrojection of newly formulated interpretations. Attempts to fill in gaps in the historical record by reconstructing supposedly logical patterns of doctrinal development are fraught with danger: namely, that we project our own transparent values and premises or those of later tradition back onto a process that was driven by multiple factors now largely alien and opaque. Although provisional and incomplete, we must content ourselves at this stage with recovering the terminological traces left by the paths and byways of the now obscure historical interplay, and not jump to conclusions that preclude the results of further textual investigation."

[12] While discussing the purview of the *Aśokāvadāna*, John Strong asserts that the text is "certainly a Hīnayānist and probably a Sarvāstivādin work, it also, as we shall see, reflects the many influences of its pluralistic setting, including that of the proto-Mahāyānists." John Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka: A Study and Translation of the Aśokāvadāna,* Buddhist Tradition Series, Vol. 6, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1st Indian ed., 1987), 36. This need to designate "proto-Mahāyāna" begs a question: How effective is "Mahāyāna" then in describing the changes in conceptions of text and Buddha that are subsumed in the term? Jonathan Silk raises a related question in Jonathan A. Silk, "What If Anything is Mahāyāna Buddhism? Problems of Definitions and Classifications," *Numen* 49.4 (2002), 355-405.

[13] The Questions of King Milinda, *Milindapañha*, is also one of the most widely read Buddhist discourses by Theravāda *nikāya* and modern Buddhists, especially as it pertains to discussions of the self. According Strong, with whom I agree, there were other *nikāya* in the northwest besides the Sarvāstivādins, which should make us pause from thinking that the northwest was entirely Sarvāstivādin. Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka,* 30-31, 36-37.

[14] Johannes Bronkhorst ties the changes in religious culture to the introduction of Sanskrit, which he in turn argues is related to Brahmanical incursion into Buddhism. I am not convinced by his argument. For example, concluding his illustration about the use or non-use of "positive advice" in the *Gaṇḍatindu Jātaka* (No. 520) compared to advice given in the *Jātakamālā,* Bronkhorst states, "The general conclusion I

propose is, once again, that *Jātakas* composed in Sanskrit situate their stories against a Brahmanical background, while other *Jātaka* don't, or do so to a lesser extent" (161-162). Bronkhorst's qualifier, "to a lesser extent," undermines his argument more than he admits here. There are more than a few "other" (he means Pāli) *jātaka*s that engage Brahmanical backgrounds around *nīti* (treatises in royal prudential conduct). See my chapter seven. We hold different assumptions and conclusions about the process of interaction and influence in Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions. We also differ on the implications of shared topics and ideas between texts. See his, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, especially pages 153-168. Finally, the sectarian boundaries as Bronkhorst imagines them are not so rigid. He treats the movement of ideas between religious groups as if they were trading discrete intellectual portfolios.

[15] See Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, especially 99-130; and his *Greater Magadha* (2007).

[16] Timothy Lubin, "The Transmission, Patronage, and Prestige of Brahmanical Piety from the Mauryas to the Guptas," in Frederico Squarcini, ed., *Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia,* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2005), 78-103. See especially page 94, where he states also that "the shift to using Sanskrit, the brahmins' liturgical language, for the business of state was primarily the initiative of foreign rulers—Scythians and Kuṣaṇas—anxious to align themselves with a priestly class firmly rooted in Āryāvarta, the 'Land of the Aryas.'"

[17] While Peter Skilling's study, "King, Sangha, and Brahmans: Ideology, Ritual, and Power in Pre-modern Siam," (in Ian Harris, ed., *Buddhism, Power, and Political Order* (New York: Routledge 2007), 182-215) is of later Southeast Asian cultures, it is still compelling for other periods, as Bronkhorst suggests (110). For a full discussion of his thesis with respect to the giving of advice as a marker/non-marker of Brahmanical influence, see Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 100-113; especially 108-109; 234ff.

[18] Patrick Olivelle comes very close to my thinking here about how sectarian complexity is frequently subsumed by sectarian designations of "Hindu or "Buddhist" by scholars of Buddhism. See his discussion of the "theology and apologetics" of the *Buddhacarita*, *Op. Cit.*, xxvi-li.

[19] By means of the quotation below, Black helped me encapsulate the interchanges I have observed across Buddhist and Brahmanical uses of ideal advisor figures. Black—following Olivelle's ("Young Śvetaketu: A Literary Study of an Upaniṣadic Story," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119.1 (1999), 46-70) assertion about the stability of the character Śvetaketu across his appearances in *Jātaka* 377 and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*—states, "…the literary character Śvetaketu displays a remarkable *stability* [emphasis mine] despite appearing in widely differing contexts." (137). Although I proceed with my argument differently, I discuss another example of this stable-fluid interchange in character tropes from the *Mahābhārata* in my analysis of the *Vidhura-paṇḍita Jātaka* in chapter 6.

[20] For instance, Black demonstrates the shared use of motifs of engagement, such as "debate" (*brahmodya*), in Upaniṣadic and Pāli *sutta* uses of the interlocutor character types like Śvetaketu and Ambaṭṭha. Black surmises:

> "… the composers of the Upaniṣads and the Buddhist *sutta*s use the same literary framework to convey quite different philosophical positions, yet…these shared literary features are a significant aspect of the relationship between the Brahmanical and Buddhist narrative traditions." ("Ambaṭṭha and Śvetaketu," 139)

Black has identified here an aspect of the shared courtly rhetorical context with which I am concerned in this dissertation. He also suggests a shared audience for Buddhist *sutta*s of his study, kings and Brahmins. Black, (*Ibid*, 153), following the suggestions of Manné (1990) on Buddhist debating strategies.

Bronkhorst (*Greater Magadha*) has convincingly argued that Buddhists did not know of particular Upaniṣadic passages (*pace* Gombrich 1996), but did share a basic ideological culture. I do *not*, however, share his assumptions of a pristine Buddhism protecting itself from other ideologies; which emerges in his

discussion of the development in ideas of emptiness in phenomena: "…the non-Buddhist ideology that the Buddha had tried to keep out had now definitely found its way in to Buddhist doctrine and practice." Bronkhorst, *Buddhist Teaching in India,* Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), 126-127.

[21]   *bhīmārjunāv ubhau netre mano manye janārdanam*
         manaścakṣurvihīnasya kīdṛśaṃ jīvitaṃ bhavet // (*MBh*, 2.15.2; tr. Hiltebeitel)

Alf Hiltebeitel, "Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*: The First Known Close and Critical Reading of the Brahmanical Sanskrit Epics", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 34, (Springer: 2006), 266. This is Yudhiṣṭhira's incitement for success, spoken to his "eyes" and "mind"—Bhīma, Arjuna, and Kṛṣṇa.

[22] Kane suggests this is the most ancient term for this mediating figure. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra, Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law,* Vol. III, 2nd ed. (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1973), 104.

[23] Not until the Gupta synthesis do we see true systemization in ministers and advisors.

[24] Kane, 25.

[25] These are the ruler (*svāmin*), minister (*amātya*), territory and subjects (*janapada* or *rāṣṭra*), treasury (*kośa*), army (*daṇḍa*), allies (*mitra*), Kane, 17. Other terms for the minister and advisor include (*sacivān*), the most general denotation for those close confidants to the king; the *mantrin* (usually functioning as the primary advisor), and the *amātyas* (the oldest term for ministers in myriad realms of expertise). Kane, 104.

[26] A summary definition of *amacca* involves "intimate friends" and "helpers that advise one," especially those that advise kings. Rhys-Davids declares it distinct from "official ministers (*purohita, mahāmatta, pārisajja*)" PTSD, 73A. See chapter 3 of this dissertation for a detailed discussion.

[27] The seven jewels (*ratna*) of the king are: the Wheel, Elephant, Horse, Gem (a light for the army; a weapon of war), Woman, Treasurer (*gahapati*), and Advisor (*pariṇāyaka*). Yashpal, "Ideal of Kingship in the Pāli Tripiṭaka," *Buddhist Studies in India. Seminar on Buddhism through the* Ages, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 17. Jan Gonda also discusses the Buddhist perspective of these jewels or seven "treasures" in, "Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View," *Numen,* Vol. 3, Part II, (April 1956), 145.

[28] The five powers that are the bases of kingship [each translated from the Pāli as 'strength of x', x = member of this list]: arms (*bāhābalam*), wealth (*bhogabalam*), ministers (*amaccabalam*), high birth (*abhijaccabalam*), and intellect (*paññābalam*, and most important). Compared to the list of the *prakṛtis* in Kauṭilya—arms, treasury, and ministers are common to both. Balkrishna G. Gokhale, "Early Buddhist Kingship," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, no. 1, (November 1966), 17.

[29] Pāli, *…atthadhammānusāsakāmacco.* Gokhale, 18.

[30] Rhys Davids gives the same etymology; see PTSD, 73A. It occurs in the context of a discussion of the kinds of colleagues and friends a layperson might have in *Sutta* 31 (*D*III, 187-90). For multiple citations of Pāṇini's and Vedic use, see Kangle, 104; and MW 81B.

[31] These are the first three of the 'four sights'—visual realities of the truth of suffering that precipitated prince Siddhartha's departure in search of release from suffering. The fourth sight is the prince's encounter with a mendicant; the mendicant's path is so compelling, Siddhartha departs to emulate the path.

[32] John Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics,* (Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 1998), 403. Jan Gonda discussed the importance of the king's relationship with the *sūta*, (charioteer), whom he sees as "the

custodian of the ancient *kṣatriya* traditions…" (126). See Gonda, 125-126; as well as Irawati Karve's study of this relationship dynamic in her *Yugānta: the End of an Epoch,* second revised ed. (New Delhi: Sangam Books, 1974).

[33] MW 783A and 785C.

[34] This power is especially important in advising kings, given the proclivity of power for emotion (especially unbridled or destructive), and vice versa. The idea that mantra is conceived of as having powerful effects on emotions (especially dispelling them) is explored by Laurie Patton in "The Passions of Late Vedic Texts: Subsuming Emotions by Canonical Imagery (A Short Study of the Emotion of Fear in the Rg Vidhana), in *Notes on a Mandala: Essays in Honor of Wendy Doniger*, ed. Laurie L. Patton and David L. Haberman, (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2001). In another study, Patton asserts that mantras spoken outside the sacrificial arena affirm "the "real-life" possibilities of Vedic language outside sacrifice." In this way, mantra in other contexts (such as the advisory one) extends its power to these scenarios where they can "be an aid or weapon" in other arenas. See Laurie L. Patton, "Speech Acts and Kings' Edicts: Vedic Words and Rulership in Taxonomical Perspective," *History of Religions* 29 (3), (February 1990), 340-341 and 336.

[35] According to the PTSD, 426A in the *Dhammasangaṇi*, *Visuddhimagga*, *Atthasālinī*, and the *Puggalapaññati*.

[36] Recently, this attribution of the *Arthaśāstra* to Kauṭilya is being reexamined. Johannes Bronkhorst (*Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 2011) evaluated the mythos around Candragupta Maurya's reliance on a Brahmin minister, traditionally thought to be Kauṭilya, and in legend synonymous with a minister named Cāṇakya. That Candragupta Maurya relied on the assistance of a Brahmin minister does not hold up to his scrutiny. Even though he presents recent counter-arguments, the authorship of Kauṭilya-Viṣṇugupta, is not convincingly decided (66-74). See also Hartmut Scharfe, *Investigations in Kauṭalya's Manual of Political Science*, 2nd Revised Edition of "Untersuchungen zur Staatsrechtslehre des Kauṭalya," (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993).

[37] Kauṭilya states that only those men who test pure in all scenarios should counsel the king. Men lacking in some of the primary qualities, such as, remaining steadfast in tests of sexual continence, can still serve, but only in contexts that do not require sexual continence.

[38] The ministers (*amātya*) are the first people appointed to serve the king; though their good qualities must be vetted (*Aś* 1.10.1). Kangle, following 20th century convention in Indology, translates these terms as minister, councillor *[sic]*, and chaplain, respectively. "Chaplain" is inappropriate in this setting, so I will use "court priest" or "royal priest" for *purohita*. *Mantrin* is a powerful advisor that Kangle's choice hides. I tend to use "close advisor", or "primary advisor" to set the tone of intimacy or to represent a difference in power of this advisor over other interlocutors in the king's circle, if this distinction is evident. Scharfe accords special status to the use of "minister." It has a higher status than the many *amātyas* that pervaded the administrative structure of the *Arthaśāstra*. Thus, he translates *amātya* as "official" (German: *Beamter*), reserving "minister" for *amātyas* that function in ministerial roles, that is closer to the king and involved in governance of persons and affairs. Admittedly, the text itself is not as clear as one would like on the distinctions. Scharfe, 126.

The problem to which Scharfe's analysis alludes is pervasive in texts beyond the *Arthaśāstra*. As indicated above, I use minister and advisor interchangeably for these higher functioning counselors. When I know that *mantrin* is used (the closest advisor, usually translated by Indologists as "Chancellor" or "Councillors") and the sense of the text indicates some superiority in intimacy and authority, I indicate it as "primary counselor" or "closest advisor." Sometimes when the term *mantrin* is used, it does not reflect the closeness of the position. Again, I stress that the narrative uses of the terms are not systematic. The nearest examples to demonstrate a methodical use of the terms do not occur until Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra*. Inscriptional evidence from the Gupta period begins to show some standardization of nomenclature, but primarily with

respect to regional, "field" ministers, such as the *sandhivigrāhikāmatya,* "the Minister of Peace and War." These administrative distinctions are discussed in more detail in chapters three and five of this dissertation.

[39] The *Arthaśāstra's* arrangement of the *mantrin* and *priest* as crucial mediators for the king is shared with another text, the *kāvya* of the life story of the Buddha, *Buddhacarita* (9.1; 9.9; 9.52-82). See my Chapter Five.

[40] The *Arthaśāstra* devotes many chapters to the ways in which priests are to use 'illusion' making activities and other ritual subterfuges to increase royal powers, which I discuss in detail in chapter six. The relationship of the purohita to such practices, associated with *Atharva saṃhitā*, is not clear. For an attempt to clarify the corpus of texts that might be associated with the *purohita* and other categories of Vedic priesthood, and a reexamination of accepted scholarship on their synchronic progression in meaning (especially meaning that changes with developments in theism), see Ronald Inden, "Changes in the Vedic Priesthood," in *Ritual, State, and History in South Asia: Essays in Honour of J. C. Heesterman*, A. W. Van Den Joek, D. H. A. Kolff, and M. S. Oort, eds. (Leiden, New York and Koln: E. J. Brill, 1992), 556-577.

[41] Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 271. He also suggests that magic may be one element that set *brāhmaṇas* apart from other religious powers able to assist the king. See Bronkhorst "Is There an Inner Conflict of Tradition?" In *Aryan and Non-Aryan in South Asia: Evidence, Interpretation and Ideology,* in Johannes Bronkhorst & Madhav M. Deshpande, eds., Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora Vol. 3, (Cambridge: Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University, 1999), 52-53.

Bronkhorst has argued recently that the *brāhmaṇa* expanded the media of his power to meet the challenge of different religious communities seeking patronage. Bronkhorst imagines a "reinvented Brahmanism," where self-professed *brāhmaṇa* masters have command of supernatural powers, astrology, talismanic protection and cures, as well as counsel. Bronkhorst asserts advising as a new role, but does not examine the *brāhmaṇa* as counselors. See his, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 65-66 and 96-97.

[42] Laurie L. Patton discusses the problematic connotations of 'magic' in Indology and presents a solution in the use of the "theoretical framework" that "metonymy and associational thought" provides to understand the complexity of the activities and results engendered by priests. Still, the word 'magic' connotes more than we are able to describe without it. I concede, along with Patton, who states: "Of course, neither the lens of metonymy nor the focus on the term *viniyoga* can adequately describe all the phenomena in what has been called the "magical" part of Vedic rituals. Rather each is a helpful supplement to our present lexicon" (45). Laurie L. Patton, *Bringing the Gods to Mind: Mantra and Ritual in Early Indian Sacrifice,* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 38-58 and 84-87. See also, Johannes Bronkhorst's discussion of magic and its connotations in Vedic texts, and the misperceptions of earlier scholars who make Vedic "primitive" due to the use of magic. Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 255-257 and 271.

[43] This is a formulaic *dvandva* compound used to describe a family priest, usually hereditary in these texts, that acts to advise the king. As Gokhale has pointed out (18), it occurs as part of a phrase— *atthadhammānusāsakamacco.* (Pāli). This is typically translated by Pāli Buddhist translators as "advisor in all matters temporal and spiritual."

[44] In the Mahāyāna *sūtra,* the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (the *Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*) a simile of the king and his minister is given. The person who holds the perfection of wisdom holds responsibilities for all other Buddhist paths, just as a minister holds all responsibilities for the king. The *Perfection of Wisdom* (as ideal and practice) is analogized to the role of the minister to the king. This text was first translated into Chinese is from the 2nd century CE, and translated into Tibetan c. 850. Edward Conze has translated the Pala version of the text (c. 1000-1150 CE). See verse [281] in Chapter XIII of Edward Conze's translation, p. 181. The simile also occurs in the verse summary of this *sūtra*, the *Prajñāpāramitā-Ratnaguṇsaṃcayagāthā*. I consider both of these texts safely within the limits of my study (c. end of the epic period, 2nd and 3rd centuries, CE) given the presence of a Chinese translation of these texts in the 2nd century. Chinese dates are highly reliable. Though Conze asserts that there was an

"evolution" of the text through the centuries, his comments can be bracketed. First, he makes no substantiation for this claim. Second, his claims are based solely on those sections which he feels are not "wisdom" text. Devotional material is considered "later", philosophical material (which he privileges) is earlier and, thence, "original."

[45] In Chapter Six, I examine this scene in the lake in more detail, as one example of the various tricks and illusions that are the purview of royal activity, created by advisors and kings.

[46]The reading of the Sanskrit is difficult, as the editor states. In the text, it is clear that Duryodhana does not understand himself (*ātmānaṃ na buddhavān*) and that he relied on Śakuni and Karṇa alone (*yat tat karṇam upāśritya śakuniṃ cāpi*).   It is not clear, however, whether he thought himself to be like an immortal (*amartya iva...tvam)* out of ignorance (*saṃmohāt*) or that he chose Śakuni and Karṇa as advisors out of ignorance. This could be a deliberate ambiguity. The ablative could refer to Duryodhana's perceptual blunders in general, all of which culminate in his ignorance.

> *yat tat karṇam upāśritya śakuniṃ cāpi saubalam |*
> *amartya iva saṃmohāt tvam ātmānaṃ na buddhavān ||* 9.30.29

Ramchandra Narayan Dandekar, Ed. *The Mahābhārata, Vol.* 9, *The Śalyaparvan: Being the Ninth Book of the Mahābhārata the Great Epic of India,* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1961).

[47] The terms of this failure of the king also resonates with assessments of royal failures in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Duryodhana's behavior—so construed by Yudhiṣṭhira—also violates the ideology of the conduct of the "sage-like king," *rājaṛṣivṛttam* (*Aś*, I.7.1-8), that it upholds; namely, the king who is self-controlled (*indriyajayaḥ*) and therefore also self-aware (*Aś*, I.6.1-2).

[48] Van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata*, The Book of the Assembly Hall, p. 134.

[49] No doubt, someone will identify my own constraints and the limitations in this work caused by them.

[50] R. G. Basak is the most notable example. "Ministers in Ancient India," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 1 (1925): 623-642.

[51] Heesterman, 1957; Drekmeier 1962; Falk 1973 Gonda, 1966 Gokhale, 1966

[52] Basak, 1925; Kane, 1965; Drekmeier, 1962; Gokhale, 1966.

[53] Jan Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View," *Numen*, Vol. 3, Part 1, (1956), pp. 36-122. This article's citation spans two volumes, in four parts.

[54] Gonda, *Numen* 3.1; 41.

[55] *Ibid.*, 36 and 44.

[56] Gonda (36) took Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra* as his ancient authorities for the role of the advisor. I discuss these kinds of sources in chapter three.

[57] As he states: "In so doing, he acts on the advice of his purohita and the assemblies (*pariṣad*) of learned men." (*Ibid.*, 54)

[58] Gonda, (*Ibid.*, 54). Throughout his study, as in this part, the bases of his analyses are examples taken from *Mahābhārata, Dīgha Nikāya, Manu, Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, Jātakas, Kālīdāsa, Upaniṣads*, Ṛg Veda, to name only a few.

[59] See Gonda on the sacredness of *daṇḍa*; *Ibid.,* 57-58.

[60] Gonda, *Ibid.,* 59-68. Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer," *Wiener Zeitschrift fur die Kunde Sud- und Ostasiens* 8 (1964), 1-31. David Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[61] Gonda, *Numen* 3, Part 2, (April 1956), 144

[62] *Ibid.*, 152.

[63] *Ibid.*, 149-150.

[64] He cites Kauṭilya *Arthaśāstra* and Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra,* and *Hitopadeśa* as his sources. Gonda, *Numen* 4, Part 2, (April 1957); 157.

[65] Yet, Gonda considered the *purohita* to be the "most important among the king's counselors." *Numen* 3, Part 2;152. But as we shall see in chapter three, many sources did not reserve this position for the purohita or personal priest alone.

[66] Gonda, *Numen* 4, Part 2, (April 1957); 156.

[67] Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer," *Wiener Zeitschrift fur die Kunde Sud- und Ostasiens* 8 (1964), 1-31. Hartmut Scharfe, *Op. cit.* (1993); David Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

For a nuanced view of the associates of the king, and non-Brahmanical contributions to royal power, see A. A. Vigasin and A. M. Samozvantsev, *Society, State and Law in Ancient India*, (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Limited, 1985). Cf. Sharma (1953) for his expanded consideration of sources of power found if one considers material and labor cultures, as well as his refutation of scholars according primacy to ritual as a source of power over other sources of it. Sharma counters that power is "made acceptable to the people through rituals, legends, genealogies, marriage alliances, hierarchical ideology and various other means." Sharma, xxvii.

[68] Shulman, 15-39. See especially, the sections entitled, "The Problem: The Elusive King in the Transformational State," and "Paradigm and Transformation."

[69] K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity: A Constitutional History of India in Hindu Times*, 4th ed. (Bangalore: Bangalore Printing and Publishing Company, 1967).

[70] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Mauryan Polity," in *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, Nilakantha Sastri, ed., 2nd ed., (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967), 175.

[71] B.P. Sinha, *Readings in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, (Delhi: Agam Prakashan, 1976), 40-46; especially 44.

[72] Hartmut Scharfe raised similar questions about what can be known by looking only at the king at the end of a comparative analysis of kingship, nobility, and warriors: "a new approach is needed. We should not look to an (IE *rēǵ* as the source for early kingship but to the humbler heads of tribal units" (310). "Sacred Kingship, Warlords, and Nobility," in *Ritual, State, and History in South Asia: Essays in Honour of J.C. Heesterman*, A.W. Van den Hoek, D.H.A., Kolff, and M.S. Oort, eds., (Leiden, New York and Köln, 1992), 322-309.

[73] See Brockington's discussion of *tapas* in light of recent scholarship in the *Mahābhārata; The Sanskrit Epics*, 237-239.

[74] Brockington (167) is following Brajdeo Prasad Roy in noting their undifferentiated status.

[75] Brockington uses KA as an abbreviation of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*.

[76] *Ibid.,* 167-168.

[77] *Ibid.*, 168.

[78] *Ibid.,* 403-404.

[79] *Ibid.*, 168.

[80] There is also the obvious counsel of Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna that is the *Bhagavad Gītā* (MBh, 6.23-40).

[81] Angelika Malinar, "Arguments of a Queen: Draupadī's Views on Kingship," in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 79-96.

[82] Brian Black, "Eavesdropping on the Epic: Female Listeners in the *Mahābhārata*," in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, 53-78. Black suggests the beginning of a "female paramparā" resides in the instructions of the elder Kuntī, to Draupadī, and Draupadī to the new bride, Satyabhāmā in note 48.

[83] Laurie L. Patton, "How Do You Conduct Yourself? Gender and the Construction of a Dialogical Self in the *Mahābhārata,*" in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, 97-109.

[84] Diwakar Tiwary, *The Conception of the State in the Mahābhārata*, (Delhi: Vidyanidhi Oriental Publishers, 1990). This is a publication of Tiwary's doctoral dissertation, whose publication was financed by the Indian Council of Historical Research.

[85] The minister is mentioned in passing in Dr. Yashpal's simple overview of the king in the Pāli canon. According to Yashpal, the Buddhist view of the advisor (*pariṇāyaka*) is "more an instrument of royal will than wise advisor" (17). Dr. Yashpal, "Ideal of Kingship in Pāli Tripiṭaka," *Buddhist Studies in India: Seminar on Buddhism Through the Ages*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 12-19.

[86] Gonda*, Numen* 3, Part 2; 123.

[87] Gonda, *Numen* 3, Part 1; 42.

[88] Balkrishna G. Gokhale, "Early Buddhist Kingship," *Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no. 1(November 1966); 15-22.

[89] Gokhale, 17.

[90]Radhagovinda Basak, *Indian Historical Quarterly* (*IHQ*), Vol. I, No. 4, (Dec 1925); 623. This is Part II of Basak's article. R. G. Basak was a Bengali Sanskrit educator and scholar who published studies of ancient India and edited and translated Sanskrit and Prakrit manuscripts. Some notable works are: an edition and translation of the *Mahāvastu Avadāna* (1963-68); a translation of the *Rāmacarita* by Sandhyākara Nandi; a history of northeastern India, from foundation of the Gupta period to the rise of the Pāla dynasty (1934); published lectures on Buddhist and Jain epigraphy, as well as lectures on the statecraft of Kauṭilya (1965); and a study of Aśokan inscriptions in Prakrit, Sanskrit and English (1959).

[91] R.G. Basak, *IHQ* 1, No. 3, (Sept 1925); 522. This is the first paragraph of his article:
"Since the inauguration in 1921 of the Reforms in accordance with the Government in India Act of 1919, we Indians have been hearing much of ministers in the different provinces—their selection, appointment, service, duties, resignations, retirement, re-appointment and so forth" (522).

[92] Basak, *IHQ* 1, No. 4; 639.

[93] Ibid, 634. .

[94] These were the same treatises of rule on which Jan Gonda must heavily relied in his study of kingship a quarter century later, as discussed above.

[95] Basak, *IHQ* 1, No. 3; 522.

[96] See Robert Lingat, trans. J. D. M. Derrett, *The Classical Law of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany: SUNY, 1988). See also Partha Chatterjee, "History and the Nationalization of Hinduism" (59-90) in *Empire and Nation: Selected Essays*, Introduction by Nivedita Menon, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

[97] Basak, *IHQ* 1, No. 3; 522.

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] After Amarasiṃha, he then discusses the occurrences of these basic terms in Śukrācārya's *Nītisāra*, Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra, and* Vijñāneśvara's *Mitākṣarā* (medieval commentary on the Yājñavalkya's "Law-book). With the disparity in the meanings of the king's formal body of advisors, the *mantri-pariṣad,* Basak then revises the meaning to what "it should have been." Basak, *Ibid*, 524.

[100]Although Basak's articulation of ancient Indian history does not meet all the terms for Partha Chatterjee's definition of a nationalist historiography, it shares the common assent to European modernist historiography that marks civilization in terms of "classical" forms of knowledge. The historiography of ancient India of Basak's time puts Basak on guard, compelling him to prove India had a historiographic heritage, as I see it. For another, slightly different view, see Chatterjee, 68-79. Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World History,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) is an excellent source on the use and function of history, history-writing, and "World-History" for dynamics particular to Bengali-European historiography, of which Basak was a part, see pages 71ff.

[101] These are eighteen *tīrthas*, "positions" that subsume the intersection of place and responsibility, which find their first theoretical discussion in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra.*

[102] Chatterjee demonstrates the "strategic alliance of the state with historiography" (159), articulated in a manner that itself uses the *Mahābhārata* as a voice from history for dissent and change of the present. "A Tribute to the Master," in *Empire and Nation*, 153-160; and Guha (51-62) on the importance the *Mahābhārata* comes to bear for the intelligentsia.

[103] He continues, "*viz.*, that they should be able to put up with the sudden outbursts of kingly displeasure, reproof and wrath and even their degradation by him. Will not the king look up to such men on the next occasion for advice in all matters of state? (1: 4; 641)"

[104] For Kauṭilya, all ministers should possess twenty-five qualities, ranging from good family to various markers of insight, and more. I discuss the details of these in later chapters.

[105] The Junagaḍh inscription of Rudradāman, year 72 of the Śaka era. This inscription commemorates the restoration of a dam at Sudarśana Lake, after it was destroyed by heavy rain and flooding. This flood from the breach of the dam caused widespread devastation of land and lives. This dam and the disaster were (and are) important to local historical memory; constructed by Candragupta Maurya, some assert it was renovated or built by King Aśoka of the Maurya dynasty (3rd century BCE). For its summary and associated epigraphic publications, see *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VII, (1902-1903), 99-100. As of 2004, this inscription still was exemplary of the power of kings to protect the people and coordinate power. This was evident in the impassioned scholarly explanation of the event that occasioned the inscription, and the royal action the inscription memorialized given by the epigrapher, K. V. Ramesh at the Oriental Research Institute in Mysore, Karnataka, India. Ramesh was also co-editor of the revised edition of the pre-and Gupta Era inscriptions (Vol. III) of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.*

Basak discusses the decision process reported in this inscription at length; noting especially that even in ancient India, cabinet members could deliberate and decide against the king (who wanted to restore the dam) and the king could "veto" as necessary. (1:4; 638)

[106] Chatterjee reexamines the creation of Indian political identity and the complex 'nationalist autobiographies' of India. Note especially, "Whose Imagine Community," in *Empire and Nation*, (23-36). For another perspective, see also Romila Thapar, "Ideology and Interpretation of Early Indian History," (17-20) and "Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for Hindu Identity," (966-986) in the anthology of her published works: *Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000.)

[107] Chatterjee, *Empire and Nation*, 75. "Discovering" and defining ancient India was a project that served the British and Europeans in their efforts to document and prove via "history" the inferiority of Indians and their civilization. This documentation "constructed" an Indian subject that warranted control and subjugation by European and British powers. See Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1990)*, especially 165-170. See also David Lorenzen, "Imperialism and the Historiography of Ancient India," in *India, History and Thought: Essays in Honor of A. L. Basham*, S. N. Mukherjee, ed., (Calcutta: Subarnarekha, 1982), 84-102.

[108] We will never know if Basak's message was explicitly directed at the fighting within the Indian National Congress—and among the British conservatives and reformers British—about *just who* and *how* power should be mediated in self-rule; but his study, the context for it, and his final argument, spoken through the authenticating words of the past are compelling.

[109] Walter Ruben, "The Minister Jābāli in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*," *Indian Studies Past and Present* 6 (1964-65): 445. (Translated by Paresh Chandra Majumdar.) Described as a learned Brahmin, Jābāli is a twice-born, present along with advising ministers (amātyas) in the court of King Daśaratha to lament his death and the perils of a kingdom without a king (*Ayodhyākāṇḍa* 61). Jābāli is part of a group of twice-borns who, in *sarga* 61, voice their opinions on what to do once King Daśaratha was dead: (…*ete dvijāḥ sah'āmātyaiḥ pūtag vācam udīrayan,* 2.61.2-3). Ruben suggests, "only in the south Indian version is Jābāli first mentioned in the court of Daśaratha" (462). He indicates the general composition of the court for both northern and southern versions is comprised of two priests and eight *amātyas*. He points out that there are other *brāhmaṇas* (*śramaṇas?*) named as *mantrin* at court in the southern version that are not in the northern version (463).

[110] Ruben points out that the northern and southern versions of the text differ in their assessment of Jābāli's discourse. "In the Bengali version he is called here "the knower of morals" and both the north-Indian versions read that his (materialistic) speech is "moral" (as contrasted with "amoral" in the south-Indian manuscripts)." He also points out that Govindarāja, a southern-commentator, attempts to restrict the meaning "of the word "amoral" to mean "without Vedic moral." (Ruben, 451)

[111] Ruben follows Jābāli and the *rājanya* (Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata) and advisors (*brāhmaṇas* and *amātyas*) like Vasiṣṭha as they engage in a conversation that examines: the *dharma* of a son serving a father's destiny after death through ritual obligations (452 & 460); the responsibility to rule *(kṣatriya-dharma)* (453); Rāma's adherence to *satya* ("truth") "under all circumstances" (455, 457); the efficacy or "purposeless" of performing rituals for the dead (455-456); and insinuations that there is "no-place" to which fathers go after death (456). The latter is the nāstika position, according to Ruben. The sentences that function as *kathā-mukhā* of the story of his moment of counsel also mark Jābāli as *nāstika*.

[112] *Ibid.*, 449.

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] *Ibid.,* 452.

[115] *Ibid.,* 453. Ruben notes variants in northern and southern versions.

[116] Ruben (456) compares manuscript versions A and B, but both reflect views that are "materialist" or nāstika in his eyes: Version A—"Accept your father as lost, as transformed to nothingness and as beyond obligations;" version B, which states, "Stick to the idea that there is none beyond."[116]

[117] Ruben reports differences between the manuscript versions (B & C) and commentators over the compound that is the indirect object, and the object of Jābāli's scorn: …*arthadharmavidaḥ* or *arthadharmaparāḥ.* Sheldon Pollock translates this section as follows, where he construes the compound as a *bahuvṛhi* on a *tatpuruṣa* (Pollock, 550):

> "You are merely deluding yourself. The men I grieve for, and I grieve for no one else, are all who place 'righteousness' above what brings them profit (*artha-dharma-parā*) They find only sorrow in this world, and at death their lot is annihilation just the same."

Sheldon Pollock, trans., *Rāmāyaṇa, Book Two: Ayodhyā*, by Vālmīki, edited by Richard Gombrich, (JJC Foundation: New York University Press, 2005), 551.

[118] Ruben, 455.

[119] *Ibid.,* 457-458.

[120] *Ibid.,* 464. I suggest "discrete" as an option to Ruben's choice of "inconsistent."

[121] Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship," *Numen* 3, Part 2; 138. Gonda citations: *Atharvaveda* 4, 22,5 and ff.; 3,3,2; 4,22,I; 4. He suggests comparing to *Atharvaveda* 3,4,6, which is the header quotation at the beginning of my chapter.

[122] Alf Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahābhārata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001. Chapter Two, "The Author in the Works," provides a summary of Vyāsa's interaction with this character and the narrative, especially pages 46-91. Chapter Eight is a more detailed examination of the education of this king by Vyāsa. In general, these intercessions occur to teach the king. Hiltebeitel notes that Kṛṣṇa intercedes to educate the prince, Arjuna, the quintessential warrior.

[123] Franklin Edgerton, *The Panchatantra Reconstructed*, Volume 2, (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1924), 2-4.

[124] Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra*, xxxii.

[125] Olivelle, xxix.

[126] R. S Sharma refutes Heesterman's arguments about privileging ritual as the source of the king's power. Sharma counters that rituals "have their roots in reality," but that rituals are manipulated (usually) by dominant social groups [here the *brāhmaṇas*] to serve their own interests." Sharma, *Op. Cit.*, xxviii.

[127] Scharfe, *Op. Cit.*, 34.

[128] Two discussions are pertinent here: Ronald Inden, "Changes in the Vedic Priesthood," *Op. cit.* and Timothy Lubin, "The Transmission, Patronage, and Prestige of Brahmanical Piety from the Mauryas to the Guptas," in *Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia*, (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2005), 77-103.

[129] Tiwary, 136.

[130] In his discussion of the "council of ministers" in the *Mahābhārata,* Tiwary reflects that a "mutual understanding" between a king and his minister is the basis of their governance. He asserts that N. N. Law "is of the view that the blending of temporal and spiritual power ensured the law and order in the state. [And that] The ministers extended their unfailing co-operation to the king even of the battleground." Tiwary, 139.

[131] Ronald Inden points out in his reconfiguration of the polities of ancient India, the metaphysical configures the political, if these distinctions do indeed exist. Inden, *Imagining India* (1990) and *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Notes to Chapter 3

[1] Ram Sharan Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 4th Revised Edition, 1996; 2001 Reprint). For some examples of the differences in the terms and functions of ministers and advisors, see the chapters on Kuṣāṇa and Gupta polities; pages 291-348, and the Sātavāhana dynasty of the Deccan plateau, 275-290. The Sātavāhana were non-*ārya*, and yet appropriated the status of the *caturvarṇa* system, and as such are considered, "Brahmanized." (Sharma, 275)

[2] This is the opinion of Kauṭilya in the treatise on polity attributed to him, *the Arthaśāstra*. 1.8.29.

[3] Basak's study of ministers in ancient India is a good example of this phenomenon. He attempts to present the "clear precision missed by many commentators and writers," by giving the definitions of the terms for ministers and advisors as given by Amarasiṃha, the Buddhist lexicographer that he assigns to the "Gupta age." R. G. Basak, "Ministers in Ancient India," *Indian Historical Quarterly* (*IHQ*) 1, no. 3-4, (Sept-Dec 1925): 523-24.

[4] For instance, one could use family power to legitimate the advice. This is examined in detail in later chapters.

[5] According to Sharma (372), the *mahāmātras* (Sanskrit) or *mahāmattas* (Prakrit), which occur in the inscriptions of Aśoka and in Sātavāhana inscriptions, are equivalent to the *amātyas*. Notably, the term *amātya* does not occur in epigraphy until the Sātavāhana dynasties, beginning with the reign of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi (Sharma, 277).

[6] Sharma is the only scholar to chart in a consistent manner the terms and roles held by this figure (including advising) of "the minister" in significant early Indian polity formations, such as late Mauryan (Aśokan), Sātavāhana and Kuṣāṇa (both non-*ārya*), and Gupta dynasties. Sharma describes the Sātavāhana and Kuṣāṇa dynasties as the "two large kingdoms that preceded the foundation of the Gupta empire" (311). He follows the idea of a mediating minister or advisor from epigraphic sources to their appearances in normative and scientific Indian texts. Sharma, 275-348.

[7] Basak, "Ministers in Ancient India," 523.

[8] Sharma, 33. Sharma is quoting *Arthaśāstra (Aś)* I.9-10 and 16 according to his footnote, n. 2.

[9] According to Sharma, "the *amātya* of Kauṭilya is identical with the Pāli *amacca"* (33). He also states that "Kauṭilya's view of the *amātyas* is almost compatible with their position in the *Jātaka* (34)." Sharma, 33-34.

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] I discuss these qualities in more detail in chapter five.

[12] According to Sharma, the status of most ministers is *brāhmaṇa* or *kṣatriya*. This is the scenario of the *Mahābhārata*, but *varṇa* and *jāti* groups are made ambiguous here: Vidura (born of the *brāhmaṇa* Vyāsa and a *śūdra* servant, and the Pāṇḍavas (born of a union with deities and a *kṣatriyā* queen) are examples.

[13] These examples are from the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya: (1.8.1; 1.9.1); Sharma, 237-239.

[14] Sharma, 240.

[15] The *Arthaśāstra* explicitly describes how the king and his advisors should test other advisors and ministers (1.10). These tests are not restricted to this treatise; the practice is alluded to in other genres, Brahmanical and Buddhist.

[16] *Bodhisatta* (Pāli) or *Bodhisattva* (Sanskrit) generally denotes a "being" (*satta* or *sattva*) on the path to "awakening," *bodhi*. The Buddha Śākyamuni is the featured being on the path to awakening in *jātaka* tales. However, his most important disciples (Ānanda and Śariputra) and nemesis (Devadatta) feature prominently also. Each tale serves important constructive aims in these narratives: first, of demonstrating the Bodhisattva's supererogation in Buddhist virtues that result in his becoming the Buddha; second, of demonstrating the karmic constituents of the other key figure's personalities with which the Buddha had close relationship; and third, the web of karmic cause and effect that creates the protagonists and antagonists of the Indian Buddhist tradition and demonstrates the power of Buddhist doctrines and practice to transform individual karmas.

[17] Ronald Inden shares this view; see his *Imagining India*, (Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1990).

[18] Sharma, 31. There are variants in the terms to denote the minister in Pāli sources: *nāyaka* (literally, "leader", but it is a term used in to describe ministers that serve in remote border areas) is used is some texts, and *gahapati* ("householder") in others. *Nāyaka* has a military function in most uses of the term. In the *Milindapañha* as well as some lists of the seven jewels, the nāyaka is the king's advisor. Sharma suggests that in pre-Mauryan royal configurations, there would have been less specialization; therefore, a nāyaka could act as a general for the king, as well as advisor. This was certainly the case in Gupta formulations, where an advisor (*mahāmantrin*) could be a minister of peace and war *(mahāsāndhivigraha)*. Sharma, 394-395. For a counterpoint, see Rhys Davids who reports on the definition of *pariṇāyaka* as a general, distinction from "earlier" advisory role of the figure; *Milindapañha,* 259

[19] Most notable is R. G. Basak's two-part study of ministers: "Ministers in Ancient India," *Op. cit*. See also K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity: A Constitutional History of India in Hindu Times,* Parts I and II, 2nd and Enlarged Edition, (Bangalore City: Bangalore Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd., 1943); Hemachandra Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India: From the Accession of Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty,* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1923); and R.G. Bhandarkar's essays, in *A Peep into the Early History of India: From the Foundation of the Maurya Dynasty to the Downfall of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty, 322 B.C.-Circa 500 A.C.* (Varanasi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1978).

[20] Two notable exceptions are Ronald Inden's study of the circle of kings in medieval Imperial India, *Querying the Medieval (Op. cit)* and R. S. Sharma's studies of ancient Indian political institutions.

[21] For instance, there is a tendency to make the favored reading or text as early as possible: Early denotes 'original' and more authoritative. For discussion of this issue in scholarship on Buddhist texts, see Jan Nattier, *A Few Good Men: the Bodhisattva Path According to the Inquiry of Ugra* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003) and Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in* India (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).

[22] We must do this in order to say things, provisionally (or is this forgotten?): So one says, "the *Mahābhārata* says…" or "in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it is well-known that…" There are works that recognize the complexity of these textual and performative traditions: For instance, Paula Richman, *Many Ramayanas*: *The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

[23] Patrick Olivelle is careful, not only to state these limitations with respect to dating, but also makes sure not to over-stretch them.

[24] I refer to revisionist movements that seek to eliminate non-indigenous influences of any kind on data, or that seek to re-inscribe the more negative aspects of "Hindu" cultural ideals, such as *varṇa.*
[25] Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[26] It should be noted that even within these dynasties, there are fluctuations in production of cultures; so there is reason to take care when thinking with the cultural products of the Gupta period. For instance, though the Gupta consolidation begins with Chandra Gupta I, circa 320 C.E., it was with the ascension of Samudra Gupta in 325 C.E. that the dynasty experienced significant cultural efflorescence.

[27] K. V. Ramesh, (interview, India, 2004). I discussed with this epigrapher our frustrations with the use of ancient sources in historical writing on India. See also R. S. Sharma's discussion of the historiography of ancient Indian polity (pages 1-13) and also his discussion on sources and method (13-30). Ronald Inden interrogates "constructive" methods in his study, *Imagining India*. Though his ideas here were not known to me when I developed this project, Inden's re-imagination of the Imperial formations in India deepened how I think about authority.

[28] Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*, (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2007), 208-209; and 215.

[29] *Ibid*, 260.

[30] *Ibid*, 215, 258-259.

[31] For representative samples of epigraphic styles, language and scripts, historically important inscriptions, regional distribution and more, see Richard Salomon, "Appendix: Selection of Typical Inscriptions," in *Indian Epigraphy: A Guide to the Study of Inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Other Indo-Aryan Languages*, (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1998), 262-309. Salomon gives physical representation, purview, primary text, and translation for each sample.

[32] For a discussion of the authoritative debates about the antiquity of writing in India, see Salomon (pages 10-14; and 140-141) for very early inscriptions perhaps attributable to the Mauryan period.

[33] Aśoka and other Mauryan inscriptions are concisely discussed by name, location and import for the study of early India in Salomon, 133-141. For historical context and discussion of the Mauryan dynasty, see also Romila Thapar, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

[34] For an up-to-date list of locations and map distribution of Aśoka's edicts see Salomon, 136-138. The general distribution of the edicts in Salomon is as follows: Major Rock Edicts (MRE)—set of 14 inscriptions, distributed across six locations, from north to south; Separate Rock Edicts—Jaugaḍa and Dhauli in Orissa and Sannati (Gulbarga, Karnataka); Minor Rock Edicts (MiRE)—seventeen sites, from north to south (many in Karnataka), Pillar Edicts (PE)—six locations in the north; and Minor Pillar Edicts (PEm)—two at Sāñcī and Sārnāth, and two in Bhairwa District in Nepal.

[35] Salomon has also observed that Aśoka's "style and content" are unusual; these are quite singular considering Salomon puts these inscriptions in the larger epigraphic history of India at his disposal. Salomon, 136.

[36] Jules Bloch, *Les Inscriptions d'Asoka: Traduites et Commentées*, huitième paru dans la série classiques indiens publiée sous le nom de Collection Émile Senart, sur le patronage de la Société Asiatique, et de l'Association Guillaume Budé, (Paris: Société d'Édition, 1950), 95-97. Epigraphic variations are: *rajuka, lajūka, lajuka.*

[37] *Ibid,* 101-105.

[38] *Ibid,* 121-124; for instance, *itthījjhakkhamahāmātā* , the Gīrnar version (page 124, line 20)

[39] *Ibid,* 163-165.

[40] *Ibid,* 168-172.

[41] There are notable differences—which Sharma does not acknowledge—in the names of each minister's, family deity associated with his name: e.g., Viṣṇu and Śiva. I do not know if Śyāma is named for the brother of Vasudeva, or named this way as a mark of beauty. See MW, 1094B/C

[42] Sharma, 277.

[43] *Ibid.* Sharma took his examples from D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, II, no. 83; 1.2 (for Viṣṇupālita), 83: 1.5 (for Śivadatta); no. 84, 1.1 (for Śyāmaka); no. 87, 1.2 (for Śivaskandila).

[44] The inscription is the official record of the procession and installation of an image of *MahāDeva Pṛthivīśvara* (Śiva), where the god is installed

> "with proper religious rites to (*Brāhmaṇas*) from Ayodhyā, of different gotras and charanas (and) conversant with penances, recitation of sacred texts, the mantras, the sutras, the bhāshyas and pravachanas…at the procession of the image…"

Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum (CII), *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings* 3, revised by Devadatta Ramakrishna Bhandarkar, edited by Bahadurchand Chhabra, Govind Swamivap Gai, (New Delhi: Archaeological Society of India, 1981), 282. It was standard for the image being installed in a location to be named for the patron installing it. Thus, in this case, this Śiva was MahāDeva Pṛthivīśvara, installed by the great minister, Pṛthivīṣeṇa.

[45] See the introductory essays to *CII* 3, Rev. ed., 90-91. The *kumārāmātya* could be attached to a king or a prince.

[46] *Ibid,* 281-282.

[47] For a discussion of the continuities and transitions with respect to names, titles, and structures around ministers between Aśokan and the Sātavāhana empires, see Sharma, 275-278.

[48] *Aś,* I.8.1-29 is a discussion of the kinds of men that should be chosen to be ministers (*amātyas*). I.8.14-23 contains views on the relative benefits of ministers, chosen from the father and grandfather's relatives of the king. These would not necessarily be *brāhmaṇa*, since they were from the king's family. I discuss these verses in detail in Chapter Five.

[49] *…kāryasāmarthyāddhi puruṣasāmarthyaṃ kalpyate* // 1.8.28

[50] The *mantri-putra*, a character of "ministerial stock," would be an adult member of a hereditary professional class, according to Patrick Olivelle, trans., *The Pañcatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom,* World's Classics*, (*Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), "Notes on Translation," xlvii.

[51] Translation (Tr.) Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra,* 59.

[52] The term, "scholastic," is how I will translate the exegetical interpretations, the *abhidharma (*Sanskrit*)* and *abhidhamma* (Pāli). This term is frequently translated as "higher" *dharma*.

[53] The PTSD (674A) defines *sattha* as "science, art, lore" and teaching. *Sattha* can also mean either "knife" or "teaching." This double entendre is appropriate given that such teachings are lauded when incisive, able to cut through ignorance and reveal *dhamma* (Sanskrit, *dharma*), or provide the conditions for *dhamma* to arise. All citations for the term in the PTSD occur in the *Sutta-Nipāta* (one of the oldest collections of discourses in the Pāli Canon) and the *Milindapañha* (a text exploring Buddhist doctrines in the context of a first century CE debate between a Śaka or Kuṣāṇa king and a Buddhist elder).

[54] Maurice Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature* 3, Part 2: Scientific Literature, translated by Subhadra Jha, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967, Reprint 1985), 455.

[55] Olivelle, ed. and trans., *Manu's Code of Law: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, South Asia Research Series, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 62-63; and "*Dharmaśāstra*: A Textual History," in *Hinduism and Law*: *An Introduction,* Timothy Lubin, Donald R. Davis, Jr., and Jayanth K. Krishnan, eds., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 29 ; and Sheldon Pollock, "Playing by the Rules: Śāstra and Śāstric Literature," (301-312) and "The Idea of Śāstra in Traditional India," (17-26) in *Shastric Traditions in Indian Arts*, edited by A. L. Dallapiccola and S. Zingel-Avé Lallemant, eds., (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1989.)

[56] Olivelle translates *nītiśāstra* as "treatise on government or political science," *The Pañcatantra*, x.

[57] Brahmins have diverse bases of authority, especially those who were also śāstric experts. For a good survey of these bases see Timothy Lubin, "Indic Conceptions of Authority," in *Hinduism and Law, Op. Cit.*, 137-153.

[58] Before accepting a man as advisor, he is tested for whether he possesses the eye of science, by experts in the same discipline: *samānavidyebhya...śāstracakṣuṣmattāṃ…*(*Aś*, 1.9.3). Kauṭilya argues that a king who denies the sciences (*calitaśāstra*) of rule is more dangerous than the king who is blind to them (*aśāstracakṣur andaḥ),* 8.2.12. According to Kangle, a *calita-śāstram* is "one who deliberately flouts the teaching of the *śāstra*." (Kangle, Part II, page 391)

[59] Rammohan Roy, an eighteenth century neo-Brahmanical reformer and progenitor of the *Brāhma Samāj*, describes *śāstra* as "authoritative tradition," though he transforms their use to accord, in part, with European conceptions of the social good. Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding,* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1988), 207.

[60] For a similar view, recently expressed, see Patrick Olivelle, ed. and trans., *Manu's Code of Law,* 62-66 and Lubin, *Op. Cit,* 138-141.

[61] When one considers a teacher of renown in ancient India (and the use of him today), the idealizations about him and his wisdom articulate more than he may have achieved as an individual. His students—imbibing his intellectual tradition—*themselves* become his teachings and expertise: Circulating and expanding among themselves, and importantly, transforming also notions about "his"/"their" collected knowledge in the royal court, and the limited royal public forum.

[62] Early debates in Indology accorded the development of theory out of practice to the purported development of the Indian sciences from their "original," "theological" concerns. This is like in kind to stereotypes that theory and philosophy develop out of sacrificial concerns. For an example of these earlier perspectives, see Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. III, pt. 2, 456 and J. C. Heesterman, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), as only a few examples. For an Indian scholar's hearty refutation of this early debate on

Indian sciences, particularly political sciences, emerging out of theological or religious concerns, see Ajit Kumar Sen, *Hindu Political Thought*, (Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 1926; 1986 Reprint), 25.

[63] For instance, the speeches of the counselor Vidura to his king and half-brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra were collated from the *Mahābhārata* (from the *Anuśāsana-* and *Sabhāparvans*) into a *śāstra*, specifically, a *nītiśāstra*. This collation reflects popular Brahmanical assumptions about the import of the counsel of Vidura. This collation was published by Brahmanical Indian scholars (Vidyaratnam P. N. Menon, editor) in the first decades of the twentieth century. For a contemporary example of this continuing interest and impulse, see R. Sampath, "The Greatness of Vidura Neeti in the Mahabharata," in Arjunsinh K. Parmar, editor, *Critical Perspectives on the Mahabharata* (New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2002), 55-62.

[64] The *Arthaśāstra* records the opinions of other teachers on a particular theory of *artha* or "advantage," and often ends these with the opinion held by Kauṭilya. The text gives a detailed summation of its own rhetorical methods in 15.1.1-73.

[65] "Teaching, instruction, direction, advice, good counsel," emerge as the senses for *śāstra*, in *Mahābhārata* and *kāvya* literature and genres forward from this era, according to MW 1069A-C.

[66] This term has been generalized in different ways through the history of Indology. An early example: "any instrument of teaching, any book or treatise, especially any religious or scientific treatise, any sacred book or composition of divine of divine authority." (*Ibid*) Currently, *śāstra* means "scholastic tradition," when used by recent scholars of *śāstra* as law (Davis, *Hinduism and Law*, 4). In this volume, Patrick Olivelle, discusses some history of the term, in its association with *Dharma*. "*Dharmaśāstra*: a textual history," *Op. Cit.,* 29ff.

[67] For a recent discussion of the normative weight that Manu exerted on treatise writers that came after him, see Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law,* 67-70. However, other treatises carry increasing normative weight in Indian politics. One example is the burgeoning importance of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. The text has become a referent of political expertise and power: It holds power in the public sphere for its antiquity, its encompassing treatment of politics, and its associations with the now mythical status of Kauṭilya as statesman extraordinaire. The power of his image is only increased by his association with the Mauryan imperial formation. The text's "recovery" in the kingdom of Mysore at the turn of the 20th century by R. Shamasastry and the establishment of a South Indian Indological center around its redaction into a critical edition only enhances its prestige.

[68] Apte, *The Student's Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 553-4; also, Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 1105A.

[69] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, in *The Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, edited by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, (Banaras: Motilal Banarsidass for Bharatiya Itihas Parishad, 1952), pages 3; 190-201; S. R. Goyal, *India as Known to Kauṭilya and Megasthenes*, (Prakashan and Meerut: Kusumanjali, 1985); R. G. Basak, *Some Aspects of Kautilya's Political Thinking. Three Lectures Delivered at the University of Burdwan,* (Burdwan: University of Burdwan, 1967); and Sharma, *Op. Cit.*, 69. Sharma is surprising in this regard, since he usually sees the ideological dimensions in early Indian polity.

[70] While Inden (*Querying the Medieval*, 13) critiques the use of this term, 'constructive,' I think its use is warranted in this sense and context.

[71] Though he takes a different perspective, Donald Davis recently argued that a similar constructive dimension is at work in treatises of *dharma*. *The Spirit of Hindu Law*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). I discuss Davis and his ideas about the theological construction of *dharma* in chapter seven.

[72] Recent scholarship suggests that the *Arthaśāstra* itself represents an attempt to Brahmanize it according to *varṇa-dharma* ideology. A critical study of the text identified a non-Brahmanical *prakaraṇa,* since it did

not fully incorporate *varṇa-dharma* ideology. Bronkhorst (citing Mark McClish, unpublished doctoral dissertation, 2009), *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 71-72.

[73] The trope of an advising minister or treatises of governance acting as the "eyes of the king" is so pervasive in the culture of the court, that Buddhist religious texts also use the metaphor. For one example, see Edward Conze's translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prājñāpāramitā-sūtra*, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines & Its Verse Summary,* 2nd printing with corrections, (Bolinas: Four Seasons Foundation, 1975; 1973).

[74] The reasons for this multiplicity are complex, as will emerge throughout this dissertation. Olivelle (2005, 2011), Hiltebeitel (2010), and Fitzgerald (2004) suggest *dharma*'s development *vis-à-vis* competing conceptions of *dharma* in Buddhist circles—especially these scholars' assumptions about 'Aśoka Maurya *dharma*'—provide a viable explanation. I am not compelled by the evidence for this as they are. More likely, this multiplicity of *dharma* has its roots in the diverse conceptions of it, in the equally multiple dharmic cultures. Though I am not compelled by Olivelle's location of the primary cause of *dharma* concerns, he does suggest, as I do: "[not Vedas] but 'community standards' prevalent in different regions and communities that were taken to constitute *dharma*" (32). Olivelle, "*Dharmaśāstra*: a textual history," in *Op. Cit*. The diversity ranges across genres and eras of textual production. We shall see that there are appeals to idealized *dharma* of various kinds, but there are also engagements in the texts of situational and intentional contradictions of *dharma*, or multiple demonstrations of good conduct (as in the *Pañcatantra*). *Dharma* can be problematized or enacted in *saṃvādana* scenarios (See discussion of Draupadī's dharmic self-creation below). There are also the subtle *dharma*s that women such as Kuntī possess in the *Mahābhārata*, see Chapter Seven. For Alf Hiltebeitel's nascent forays into scholarship in early Indian Buddhism, see *Dharma,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010); and James Fitzgerald, *The Mahābhārata*, *11 The Book of the Women, 12 The Book of Peace, Part 1*, Volume VII, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 135-149.

[75] *Pañcatantra*, Book I, 176; Tr. Olivelle, page 69.

[76] Indeed, Yājñavalkya seems to have used either *nīti* from some larger corpus of political wisdom: Or, following Sharma, Yājñavalkya may have used the *Arthaśāstra* itself. Sharma, 17

[77] *daṇḍa* means "rod" or "shaft" of punishment, which is the exclusive privilege of the king; in this regard it is also denotes "punishment," "coercion," and "force." Encompassing all these connotations, *daṇḍa* is also a symbol not only for a king's powers with respect to punishment and justice, but to his rule in general. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* contains a discussion of the importance of *daṇḍa* in maintaining order in a kingdom. After giving the views of the ancient teachers, (*ācāryas*) over how *daṇḍa* should be wielded (1.4.5-6), Kauṭilya suggests a middle ground: the one who [uses] punishment (*daṇḍa*) in proportion to what is merited is honored (*yathārhadaṇḍaḥ*)1.4.10; one who uses punishment harshly elicits terror in beings (1.4.8); and the one who is soft with punishment is treated with disrespect (*mṛdudaṇḍaḥ paribhūyate*) (1.4.9)

[78] *nīti* and *artha* as sciences often appear synonymous in meaning and use.

[79]   *…sāmargyajurvedās trayas trayī* (*Aś*, 1.3.1)

[80] Wilhelm Halbfass sees this *trayī* as "science of the Vedas," in the context of its use in the *Arthaśāstra*, as one of the several sciences in which those in court engage in order to reach understanding. In this regard it would refer to the methods of interpretation associated with the *Vedas,* not just their status as revelation. *Op. Cit.,* 274.

[81]   *atharvavedetihāsavedau ca vedāḥ* [1.3.2]

[82]   *catastra eva vidyā iti Kauṭilyaḥ* [1.2.8]

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[83]   *tābhir dharmārthau yad vidyāt tad vidyānāṃ vidyātvam* [1.2.9]

[84] The *Arthaśāstra* and *Dharmaśāstra* considered here both assert that Brahmins should receive lesser punishments for crimes, but texts allow that they may be branded as thieves (as other *varṇa*s may) under certain circumstances.

[85] Although in the *Pañcatantra*, these Brahmanical referents are frequently mocked, critiqued, or undermined. Brahmins are as often as not derided as lazy, ignorant, or rigid. This in spite of the claims that the reputed teacher of the text, as the text informs us, was himself a Brahmin. Given the extent to which the *Pañcatantra* relays intimate and embarrassing knowledge of these flaws of Brahmins, it is likely the case that they are written from firsthand knowledge of the *varṇa*, and likely from within it.

[86] R.S. Sharma would dissent from my assertion here. He sees the *Arthaśāstra* as being less "influenced" by "religion." Rather he sees Kauṭilya as making a rather conscious and "deliberate attempt to free politics from the influence of religion and morality." (Sharma, 22) I think that he is responding from his Marxist hermeneutic here. It makes more sense to think that these sciences developed and gained momentum topically, with a treatise of *Arthaśāstra* addressing artha, and so on. I think that the *Arthaśāstra* does indicate Brahmanical concerns, but they are consigned to royal success. The *Arthaśāstra*'s references to Vedic knowledge as the basis of all work, and its purported basis in logic and inferences from Vedic authoritative works do indicate Brahmanical concern. However, what constitutes "*Veda*" is more fluid in the case than what one might expect. Johannes Bronkhorst, relying on the argument of a recent unpublished dissertation by Mark McClish suggests that the core of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* was non-Brahmanical, and that the ideology of the *brāhmaṇa* was a "later addition to a text previously devoid of such concerns." Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 71.

[87] J. A. B Van Buitenen observed that the cultivation of *nīti* was the aim of a great number of stories in Indian story tradition. The *Pañcatantra*, the *Bṛhatkathā*, of the "great story" tradition, and the *Jātaka* tales of the Buddhist tradition. For a prosaic and inspiring interpretation of these stories as a genre see his discussion of this literature in, J. A. B. van Buitenen, "The Story Literature," in *The Literatures of India: An Introduction*, 203-4.

[88] These are persons who would affiliate themselves with no dharmic tradition so circumscribed; often derided as immoral for having no affiliation.

[89] Patrick Olivelle, in his introduction to his translation of the *Pañcatantra* asserts that the "*Pañcatantra* is a book by and for men, especially men of the court. The major players in court and in politics are kings and ministers." Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra,* xxviii. This does not mean that women did not have a role in court, or influencing kings and ministers. Women are present at court in the epic, *Mahābhārata*, and their presence as knowers of *dharma* and *nīti* is important, as I will bring forth in later chapters.

[90] According to traditional scholarship, these *śāstra* developed from intellectual sayings and aphorisms, "gnomic and didactic poetry." (Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. III, Part 1), 148-173. This assumption of development is based on an expectation that "well-spoken verses" that recur in treatises, with elaboration must originate from some core circulating wisdom. It seems this "epigrammatic" literature refers to different topics of wisdom, such as that associated with *artha, nīti, dharma*, and *kāma*. Presumably, around these sayings, commentary and prose develop. Such sayings as are present around an inchoate topical concern then become a developed *śāstra*. The epigrammatic poetry of Bhartṛhari is a case in point.

[91] Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature,* Vol. III, Part 2; 634. Though its placement in the tenth century CE takes it beyond the scope of this study, a Jain treatise, the *Nītivākyāmṛta*, also relies on Kauṭilya for theory of rule (Winternitz, 638). However, its format is different, and very interesting. Rather than being a treatise in verse and aphorism as Kauṭilya, it is "a pedagogical work" that is written as "fine counsels" for a king.

[92] *Ibid*, 634.

[93] Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra,* xvi.

[94] For instance, one treatise might explore the success and failure of one point of wisdom, with results dependent on context and on character. The *Pañcatantra* is one of the most poignant examples of this strategy, as its battles over ministerial virtues through the counsels of its two ministers, Damanaka and Karaṭaka (in the Book I, *On the Dissolution of* Friendship). The "battles" also demonstrate the outcome of taking the kinds of choices the characters make in the stories.

[95] See discussion below on scholars engaging inter-subjective functions of frame-story devices. For the function of telling dharmic tales in *Mahābhārata* narratives, see Alf Hiltebeitel, "Not Without Subtales: Telling Laws and Truths in the Sanskrit Epics," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 33, (2005): 455-511.

[96] The contextual nature of Indian morality and ethics, indeed, even epistemology, are well known. A. K. Ramanujan states the nature of this difference quite succinctly in his essay, "Is There An Indian Way of Thinking?" (See note above). The *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu, the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*, contains many examples of the importance of context in ethics in chapters dealing with righteous practice for extreme situations (*āpad dharma).* "Situational ethics" of Euro-American ethics are the closest approximation of early Indian ethics. Some of this context-specificity is created by framing devices that limit action and morals in narratives. For a discussion of the complexity of narrative devices as they operate in extraordinary circumstances in the *Mahābhārata*, see Adam Bowles, *Dharma, Disorder, and the Political in Ancient India: the Āpaddharmaparvan of the Mahābhārata,* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007).

[97] Several scholars have considered the dharmic effects of structured narratives and sub-narratives, especially as concerns Indic "frame-story" strategies. The scholarship on frame-stories is extensive, as discussed above. But in the context of dharmic effects of these structures, *Mahābhārata* scholarship has much to offer. For instance, in the same volume of essays, Emily Hudson (2007) and Brian Black (2007) consider gendered narrative structures and the space they provide for readers and audience, and (Black) what the placement of them can tell us about women as audience in *Mahābhārata* traditions. Emily T. Hudson, "Listen But Do Not Grieve: Grief, Paternity, and Time in the Laments of Dhṛtarāṣṭra," (35-52) and Brian Black, "Eavesdropping on the Epic: Female Listeners in the *Mahābhārata*" (53-78), in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). Interactions between characters in a frame provide opportunities within narratives to question *dharma*, especially gender differences in *dharma.* See Nancy Falk, "Draupadī and *Dharma*," in Rita M. Gross, ed., *Beyond Androcentrism: New Essays on Women and Religion,* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977). A recent example suggests that is some contexts, framing also points to alternate "readings" of the conduct in a story, and placement of the character within it to larger concerns with conduct, (Bowles, 304-306); or as a way of including characters into the transformative opportunities in moral narratives, that would otherwise be excluded (295-333).

[98] Two of these topics, conciliation (*sāma*) and dissension (*bheda*), are components of the four expedients (*upāya*) of polity found in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and other sources. The four expedients are: "conciliation and negotiation"(*sāma*), gifts or bribery (*dāna)* dissension (*bheda*), and force or punishment (*daṇḍa*) (Apte, 474A). These tactics are generally used against rival kings and princes. Other authorities (in the *Śiśupalavāda*) add three to the list: "deceit (*māyā*), a trick, deceit, neglect (*upekṣā*), and conjuring (*indrajāla)"* (Apte, 474A). According to Monier-Williams, the four *upāyas* in the *Hitopadeśa* are called the *catuṣṭaya* (215B).

[99] Tr. Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra*, 3-4.

[100] …*tenā ('pi) kathādvāreṇa //* (14). This description occurs at the end of the 'face-story' (*kathā-mukhā*) or 'introductory-story' to the *Pañcatantra* proper. According to Edgerton, these phrases may have had an entirely different phrasing or meaning in the "original" (*xv*). In this case, I am not sure what this would mean. Olivelle expressed no doubts about the phrase. Franklin Edgerton, *The Pañcatantra Reconstructed,*

Vol. 1: Text and Critical Apparatus, American Oriental Series 2, (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1924).

[101] Olivelle uses "emboxing" or "emboxed" (xiv-xv) in his discussion of this narrative structure in his translation.

[102] Christopher Z. Minkowski, "Janamejaya's Sattra and Ritual Structure," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 109, No. 3, (July-September), 413. Minkowski has suggested that it was likely through the *Pañcatantra* that this literary convention—the embedding of stories—spread throughout the world.

[103] Embedded story forms occur in other story genres; but Minkowski has convincingly argued that the embedding form of a "story, telling a story," is distinctive. The *Pañcatantra* is a variety of this form, given that its *kathā-mukhā* "echoes [the] same linking motif" (413) as the *Mahābhārata*. I discuss this particular form of embedded story below.

[104] Olivelle thinks that to understand the "primary message" of the *Pañcatantra* one must pay attention to the "winners" of the various nīti demonstrations or scenarios in the books (Olivelle, *Pañcatantra,* xxxiv). While a valid point, I don't think it necessary to reduce the treatise to a primary message, when it goes so far to present the complexities of polity formation and the relationships based on nīti that sustain, create and exemplify it—a complexity that Olivelle himself asserts. Preferring a "polyphonic reading," McComas Taylor voiced a similar reservation about a central message in his study of Pūrṇabhadra's version of the *Pañcatantra*. Taylor also takes Olivelle to task with respect to his analysis of "winners" as indicative of deception as the primary message of the text. Taylor suggests instead that "foolish failures outnumber successful schemers by about two to one. If we have to identify a single 'meaning' on this basis, then it must be that fools must suffer." McComas Taylor, *The Fall of the Indigo Jackal: The Discourse of Division and Pūrṇabhadra's Pañcatantra*, (Albany: State University of New York Press), 34. I am unconvinced that the rest of his text, especially his methodology in approaching the text, contributes to our understanding of Pūrṇabhadra's version of the *Pañcatantra* in particular, or to *Pañcatantra* texts in general.

[105] Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra*, xxxiv.

[106] Tie this directly in the media and rhetoric chapters to examples of when the mere appearance of a person in the role of advisor can cause a change (Upagupta to Aśoka; Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna; Bhīṣma's appearance in a room; a sage's entry to a story marks the speech to follow as a tool of change).

[107] Michael Witzel, "On the Origin of the Literary Device of the 'Frame Story' in Old Indian Literature," in *Hinduismus und Buddhismus: Festschrift für Ulrich Schneider,* (Freiburg: Hedwig Falk, 1987), 380-414. See also: Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusion, and Other Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), especially 197-205 for a discussion of frame stories; Minkowski, *Op. Cit.*, 401-420; Alf Hiltebeitel, "Conventions of the Naimiṣa Forest," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 26:2 (April 1998), 161-171. A source on frame stories in non-Indic literature is Bruno Bettelheim, "The Frame Story of Thousand and One Nights," in Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (NY: Vintage Books, 1976).

[108] Minkowski, 402.

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] *Ibid,* 403.

[111] *Ibid,* 404, 416-419.

[112] *Ibid,* 417.

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] *Ibid,* 419.

[115] For discussion of some of the effects of narrative frames on character in and readers of *Mahābhārata*, see Emily T. Hudson, "Heaven's Riddle and the Hell-Trick: Theodicy and Narrative Strategies in the *Mahābhārata*," in T. S. Rukmani, ed., *The Mahābhārata: What is not here is nowhere else* (*yannehāsti na tadkvacit*), (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2005).

[116] Hiltebeitel, *Op. Cit.*, 162.

[117] Minkowski, 420.

[118] Hiltebeitel, 162.

[119] This is a common trope in narratives concerned with relationships between advisors and kings.

[120] Hiltebeitel, 161.

[121] *Ibid,* 166.

[122] Laurie L. Patton," How Do You Conduct Yourself? Gender and the Construction of a dialogical self in the *Mahābhārata*," in *Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata*, Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 97-109.

[123] *Ibid,* 98.

[124] *Ibid*, 99.

[125] One illustration is Draupadī's dialogue with Satyabhāmā in the *Araṇyakaparva7* (3.222.1-57), the other with queen Sudeṣṇā in the *Virāṭaparvan* (4.8) of the *Mahābhārata*.

[126] I refer to Draupadī's understanding and negotiation of royal power relations, which Patton persuasively demonstrates. (Patton, 100-102). In these pages, note especially Patton's explication of the 'gentle-dangerous simile' that Draupadī uses to convey the nature of her devotion, as well as her state of alertness in doing so (from *MBh*, 3.222.34).

[127] Perhaps it could also be said, considering how Hiltebeitel demonstrates how *Mahābhārata* is reworking old conventions, that the place of the frame-story is also a place to rework ideas.

[128] Laurie L. Patton, *Bringing the Gods to Mind*, 151.

[129] *nīti-viḍhi-prayuktāṃ; that is, "performed according to the rule of nīti."*

[130] Tr. Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra, 11-12; v*erse 23 in his versification system.

[131] This gravity may have gained its density well after the time of Candragupta Maurya, since the *Arthaśāstra* contains only obliquely references his success in serving a king against the Nanda dynasty (that Candragupta defeated in his rise to control of the polities of the time).

[132] The traditional attribution is that Kauṭilya is Cāṇakya. Bronkhorst has argued, convincingly, that the text was not created by a minister to Candragupta (70). Bronkhorst suggests that the story of the minister Cāṇakya was later identified with Kauṭilya, as "propaganda" for *brāhmaṇa* participation in royal activities: "future rulers who heard it were reminded of the importance of finding a suitable Brahmin counselor." Bronkhorst, *Buddhism Under the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 68. The provenance of this text is still being debated. Indian scholars generally (except R. S. Sharma) associate the authorship of Kauṭilya to Candragupta's reign. (Sharma, *Op. cit.,* 20.) Trautmann's analysis of the *Arthaśāstra* text that Shastri

edited reveals three layers of redaction. The answer to this debate need not be settled for the terms of my concerns; which is how the text shows dharmic communities imagined the role of the advisor to the king. The advisor's/minister's association with various dharmic and dynastic group ideal is complex, as this chapter points out.

[133] *pṛthivyā lābhe pālane ca yāvanty 'rthaśāstrāṇi pūrva-ācāryaiḥ prasthāpitāni prāyaśas tāni saṃhṛtya ekam idam Arthaśāstraṃ kṛtam /* Kangle, *Aś*, I.1.1. All Sanskrit for the *Arthaśāstra* comes from Kangle's critical edition, unless otherwise indicated. Translations of these passages are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

[134] The teachings of the some experts/teachers are preserved only as quotations in Kauṭilya and in the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.

[135] Kangle suggests that *saṃhṛtya* involves "'bringing together' rather than abridgement," Kangle, II: 1. This translation upholds the continued applicability that the opinions and scenarios of different teachers might still have for those who might use the ideas of governance in the *Arthaśāstra*.

[136] Indeed, Kṛṣṇa, who acts as the counselor to the Pāṇḍavas in general, and particularly to Arjuna during the great battle of the *Mahābhārata*, goes to great lengths to impress upon the Pāṇḍava princes and king that a king's *dharma* is primarily directed to the flourishing of the kingdom (*Karṇaparvan*, 49), irrespective of the individual social dharmic cost. This will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

[137] *artha eva pradhāna iti Kauṭilyaḥ* (I.7.6) *arthamūlau hi dharmakāmāviti* (I.7.7)

[138] Interestingly, Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* does not mention a fourth path, *mokṣa*, as occurs in the "classical" conception of the stages of life appropriate to all males, which adds actions in the pursuit of release or *mokṣa*. They are different in schema, but Indologists, especially Brahmin scholars, make the commentary on the text (from centuries later), speak for Kauṭilya by adding or assuming the fourth path of release. See Patrick Olivelle, *The Āśrama System: The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1993). See also Bronkhorst who argues that the Brahmins were not originally associated with the *āśrama* as 'hermitage.' Rather, they created an "idealized vision" of what an *āśrama* should be, so that it would be an appropriate object of royal patronage, 74-97; especially 93-97. This "feature of renascent Brahmanism," is tied to his continuing argument for a fertile Magadha religious culture, from which Brahmanical and Buddhist ideational particularities emerged. This argument received its fullest articulation in his, *Greater Magadha, Op. cit.*

[139] This is so unless they remain *brahmacarya* (students of Brahman), after their instruction as young men.

[140] *avāptau pālane cokaṃ lokasyāsya parasya ca…* Tr. Kangle (modified); *Aś,* 15.1.71

[141] Bṛhaspati is considered the teacher of the gods (Olivelle, *Pañcatantra,* 3), as well as the "god of eloquence and wisdom." (167) He is praised along with the Gods in prolegomena to the *Pañcatantra* and *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya. The *Purāṇas* frequently refer to this figure, as does the *Mahābhārata*. Besides this mythological association, there is also a Bṛhaspati scholar of *vyavahāra*, "legal procedure," for which we have fragments of a *dharma* treatise attributed to him, *smṛti*. Olivelle, "*Dharmaśāstra*: A Textual History," *Op. Cit.,* 49-50.

[142] According to R. S. Sharma, *artha* had to have been established as a branch of knowledge since Kauṭilya "quotes from five schools and thirteen individual writers." Sharma, 22.

[143] Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature,* vol.3, part 2, 638-641. There are Jain sources on *Arthaśāstra*, but they are beyond the scope of this study. In these digests of *śāstra* devoted to royal aims, *nīti* is becoming synonymous with *artha*.

[144] C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's studies of Indian polity are an example of this phenomenon. "Indian Political Theories," The Rt. Honorable Srinivasa Sastri Lecture, 1936-1937, University of Madras, 1937; Reprint from the "Journal of Madras University, Vol. IX, No. 3. See also P. V. Kane, *Rājanītiśāstras of Bṛhaspati, Uśanas, Bhāradvāja and Viśalākṣa.* Also, I demonstrated this hermeneutic at work in Basak's study of ministers in early India, in the preceding chapter.

[145] My use of "*Arthaśāstra*" refers to Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra (Aś)* unless indicated otherwise.

[146] This chapter, "the Circle of Kings" or *maṇḍalayoniḥ* in Kauṭilya, has provided scholars with the greatest resources for demonstrating the complex system of rule in which Indians likely engaged in its ancient and medieval polity formations. Scharfe (1993), Inden (1990; 2000)

[147] The rhetoric of this *Arthaśāstra* is directed at creating a greater role for itself in governance. It is by no means clear that advisors and ministers had the importance they envision for themselves in the text. Johannes Bronkhorst suggests that "The Brahmins of the cities aspired to positions such as that of *purohita* or councilor to the king…These were the Brahmins who wrote and read the *Arthaśāstra*, the *Kāmasūtra*, the courtly literature, which has been preserved and no doubt much more beside…" Moreover, the positive picture presented of Brahmins in the text he states, "is undoubtedly due to the fact that Brahmins were involved in trying to influence public life at and around court." Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha,* 163.

[148] Kangle calls this figure the "would-be conqueror," (*Aś*, 6.2.13ff) and sees this objective in all recommendations of expansion of royal power. For example, see his critical note to 8.1.1.

[149] *Aś,* I.9.4-7.

[150]   …*deśakālātyayo mā bhūd iti parokṣam amātyaiḥ kāroyet / Aś,* I.9.8.

[151] I abridged the text slightly in my translation here. The text and a more literal translation are as follows:

> *sahāya sādhyaṃ rājatvaṃ cakram ekaṃ na vartate /*
> *kurvīta sacivāṃs tasmāt teṣāṃ ca śṛṇuyān matam //* (1.7.9)

> Kingship (*rājatvaṃ*) is rightly accomplished (*sādhyam*) with the help of companions (*sahāya*). A single wheel (*cakram ekam*) does not move forward (*na vartate*). Therefore, he should appoint (*kurvīta*) advisors (*sacivān*) and should listen (*śṛṇuyāt*) to advice (*matam*).

This is the only place in which *sacivan* occurs in the *Arthaśāstra*. I take it to refer to the close associates of the king that have occasion and authority to give advice to the king. The verse immediately preceding this verse warrants my choice, since it involves a discussion of the king's close counselor, the *mantrin*. 'Sacivan' occurs in the *Mahābhārata*, as a description of King Yudhiṣṭhira's four brothers; in Manu, it denotes "learned associates."

[152]   *prajñāśāstracakṣur hi rājā 'lpenāpi prayatnena mantramādhātuṃ śaktaḥ…yogopaniṣadbhyāṃ cātisaṃdhātum //* Aś, 9.1.15

[153] Bhāradvāja's notion of reliance on ministers is just the kind that Buddhist texts demonstrate their communities' fear, as we shall see in the next chapter.

[154]   …*chinnapakṣasyena rajñaś ceṣṭānāśa //* Tr. Kangle, modified.

[155] Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature,* Part 2, 576.

[156] *Ibid,* 582.

[157] .*Ibid.*

[158] *Ibid.*

[159] "Special duty" for *dharma* is Olivelle's choice for the term, which I think works when discussing the most general aspect of a king's *dharma.* Tr. Olivelle, "Vasiṣṭha" (19.1), *The Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Ancient India*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 299.

[160] This is a summary delineation of the *dharma* of kings from Baudhāyana's *Dharmasūtra*, 18.1-9; Tr. Olivelle, 159-161.

[161] "If the king fails to inflict punishment when it is called for, the sin recoils upon him." (2.28.13), Āpastamba's *Dharmasūtra*, tr. Olivelle, 72.

[162] Tr. Olivelle, Vasiṣṭha's opening verse (19.1) to his section covering the *dharma* of kings.

[163] Patrick Olivelle, *The Āśrama System: Op. Cit*, 17. According to Olivelle's study of the *āśrama* system, the *āśramas* were not considered to be *stages* of life until the first centuries of the Common Era, considered the classical period (p. 28). This means that the 'early' *Dharmasūtra* formulations of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiṣṭha present "four alternative [male] adult vocations" (p. 82) The *āśramas* are later presented as "stages" of life that a twice-born may choose.

[164] Olivelle, *Dharmasūtras*, xxxviii.

[165] In his translation of their *sūtras*, Olivelle assigns the relative chronology of these *dharma* writers well with respect to each other. See Olivelle, *The Dharmasūtras*, xxxi-xxxiii.

[166] Āpastamba 2:25.10 and Vasiṣṭha 16.2 and 16.20, respectively; Tr. Olivelle.

[167] Baudhāyana's chapter on "Kings," (18.1-18.8). Tr. Olivelle, *The Dharmasūtra*, 159.

[168] The *Dharmasūtra* of Vasiṣṭha provides: "It is stated: 'When a Brahmin has been appointed as the king's personal priest, the kingdom prospers,' for thus both sets of duties are taken care of, because he is unable to do both.'" (Vasiṣṭha, 19.5-6) Olivelle, 299.

[169] *Ibid.*

[170] *Ibid.*, 97.

[171] *Ibid.*, Gautama, 11.30

[172] Halbfass, 314.

[173] *Ibid*, 322.

[174] See also Wendy Doniger, with Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, xxxv. Doniger and Smith are themselves quoting N. C. Sen-Gupta, *Sources of Law and Society in Ancient India* (Calcutta: Art Press, 1914).

[175] Patrick Olivelle, "*Dharmaśāstra*: A Textual History", *Op. Cit.,* 40.

[176] *Ibid.*, 44.

[177] R. S. Sharma*,* 18. Sharma notes also that Y1jñavalkya's *dharma* treatise and its eleventh century commentary (the *Mitākṣarā* by Vijñāneśvara) "came to form the basis of the Hindu civil law" (17). Notably, the term for the king's closest associates (*sacivan*) that we see in the *Mahābhārata*, is not present.

[178] Doniger and Smith, xxxv-xxxvi.

[179] Olivelle, *Op. Cit*., 43.

[180] Lubin, "Indic Conceptions of Authority," *Op. Cit.,* 143.

[181] Indeed, this makes them the literature of the elite in ancient India. Although elite in nature, I do not fully share the critique of some that they tell us nothing of the rest of Indian culture. See also Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind*: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Chakradhar Jha, *History and Sources of Law in Ancient India* (New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1987).

[182] J.C. Heesterman, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

[183] I follow R. S. Sharma's assertion, taken as he claims from III.1.38 of the *Arthaśāstra*. Sharma, *Op Cit.*, 61.

[184] Patton, *Bringing the Gods to Mind*, 59-87.

[185] Patton, *Myth as Argument: The Bṛhaddevatā as Canonical Commentary* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996).

[186] *Ibid,* 211.

[187] *Ibid,* 211-212.

[188] K. Ayyappa Paniker, *Indian Narratology*, (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Sterling Publishers, 2003), 41. The entire statement includes the *purāṇas* (which Paniker translates as 'saga') as well: "*Purāṇas*, as a rule, deal with legendary matter presented as history, while the *itihāsas* are concerned with historical matter presented as legend."

[189] *Ibid*, 44 and 46.

[190] This is K. V. Ramesh's characterization of the *itihāsa*, *Mahābhārata*.

[191] Paniker, *Indian Narratology*, 44.

[192] The entire passage depicting the king's intellectual attainments is as follows: "Many were the arts and sciences he knew—holy tradition and secular law; the Sâṅkhya, Yoga, Nyâya, and Vaiṣeshika systems of philosophy; arithmetic; music; medicine; the four Vedas, the Purâ*n*as, and the Itihâsas; astronomy, magic, causation, and spells; the art of war; poetry; conveyancing—in a word, the whole nineteen." (T. W. Rhys Davids, translator, *The Questions of King Milinda*, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963), 6. In his footnote, Rhys Davids asserts, "The number of the Sippas (Arts and Sciences) is usually given as eighteen. In the *G*âtaka (p. 58, 1.29, Professor Fausböll's edition) it is twelve." (T. W. Rhys Davids, note 2, page 6)

[193] Rhys Davids*,* 6.

[194] *Ibid,* 247.

[195] Ajit Kumar Sen, *Hindu Political* Thought (Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 1986 Reprint), 26-27.

[196] I am inclined to think this has more ideological weight in the political climate of contemporary India, than perhaps was true of Kauṭilya's time. However, that the epics are perceived as sources of knowledge for kings and as literature of reflection on *artha* and *dharma* is undeniable. Alf Hiltebeitel suggests that

King Yudhiṣṭhira is receiving his education as a righteous king through the re-tellings, and writings, of the *Mahābhārata*. Moreover, he points out that the text invites Yudhiṣṭhira to "glean alternate meanings." See his *Rethinking the Mahābhārata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King,* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 4-5.

[197] Kangle tr., *Arthaśāstra*, 1.5.16.

[198] In his edition of the text, Kangle notes that the gloss of *itihāsa* in the *Arthaśāstra* is likely marginalia brought into the text.

[199] 1.5.13: "In the later part [of the day], (he should engage) in listening to *itihāsa*." 1.5.14: "The Purāṇas, Itivṛtta, Ākhyāyikā, Udāharaṇa, *Dharmaśāstra* and *Arthaśāstra*—these constitute Itihāsa." Kangle, tr., 11. In his note to verse 14, Kangle notes that this verse "is not unlikely ...a marginal gloss...which later go into the text." He aids the reader with what is meant by the rest of these terms by giving mss. variants and commentary. In (Cj) we learn that *itivṛttam* may refer to the "*Rāmāyaṇa* and *Bhārata* [*Mahābhārata*]," in (Cb) "*ākhyāyikā* is *divyamanuṣyādicaritam*;" in (Cj) *udāharaṇam* e.g. *Tantrākhyāyika,* etc.'" *Arthaśāstra* is not present in the list from two mss. *Tantrākhyāyika* likely refers to a version of the *Pañcatantra*. Both commentaries are in southern, Dravidian languages, Tamil and Malayalam, from the 12th centuries CE.

[200] Patton, *Myth as Argument,* 196-198.

[201] *Ibid,* 207.

[202] *Ibid.*

[203] Diwakar Tiwary, *The Concept of the State in the Mahābhārata* (Delhi: Vidyanidhi Oriental Publishers and Booksellers, 1990), 3.

[204] Kane cites *Ādiparvan* 2.83 and 62.23. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. I, Part 1, page 349-350.

[205] Winternitz reports that the *Mahābhārata* calls itself the "best of *itihāsa*," a "textbook "of the three aims of life (*artha*, d*harma, kāma*), and "a triumphal charm...a king who desires victory shall hear it, and he will conquer the world and defeat enemies." Translated by V. S. Sarma, *A History of Indian Literature*, Volume I: Introduction, Veda, Epics, Purāṇas and Tantras, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1996 reprint of 1981 edition), 304.

[206] As Hiltebeitel's study of this *itihāsa*, *Rethinking the Mahābhārata* suggests.

[207] For *ākhyāna,* see Emil Sieg Die Sagenstoffe des Rgveda und die indische Itihasa-tradition, (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1902), 20-22.

[208] *kathā* has slightly different senses in Pāli Buddhist compositions.

[209] Winternitz, "The Beginnings of Epic Poetry," in *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I, 295. I should note that a Brahmin Sanskrit scholar, M. A. Jayashree, refuted the description of Sañjaya as a *sūta*: to Jayashree, Sañjaya was a *brahmacarya*, a student. M. A. Jayashree Personal communication, February 11, 2004.

[210] D. R. Bhandarkar, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, Rev. ed., (158) criticizes Bühler for basing the distinctions around interspersing of verse and prose, and calling them both (along with the praśasti of Hariṣena) *champū.*

[211] Paraphrasing D. R. Bhandarkar; *Ibid.*

[212] *Ibid, 159.*

[213] For *Mahābhārata* as *itihāsa* see Emil Sieg, *Op. Cit.,* 22-24.

[214] Part of the training of the king—"*paścimam itihāsa-śravaṇe*" (Kangle, 1.5.13)—includes purāṇa, which is an element of *itihāsa* in this *Arthaśāstra*. Purāṇa is part of a list of literature, given as examples of *itihāsa*: "*purāṇam itivṛttam ākhyāyikodāharaṇaṃ Dharmaśāstram Arthaśāstram cetītihāsaḥ*" Kangle, *Arthaśāstra,* 1.5.14. As stated above, Kangle thinks this definition of *itihāsa* is a "marginal gloss" on the text. Marginal voices have much to contribute however to textual traditions; moreover, the gloss is not out of line with the spirit of those who would use these texts—elite advising Brahmins of some variety, or other teachers at court.

[215] The scholarship on the provenance of *Mahābhārata* is enormous. John Brockington gives an excellent survey of this scholarship, as well as his own stage-stratification of both the text of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*. See his *Sanskrit Epics*, (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1998).

[216] There are many analyses of *Sāṃkhya's* influence on religious ideas in the *Mahābhārata*, see Brockington*,* 302-303; Gerald Larson, "Sāṃkhya and Yogācāra Buddhism." Unpublished Paper shared at Indiana University, 1992.

[217] Nicholas Sutton, *The Religious Doctrines of the Mahābhārata* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000), 61.

[218] Laurie L. Patton, "Trita's Tumble and Agastya's Ancestors: On the Narrative Construction of *Dharma*," in Federico Squarcini, editor, *Boundaries, Dynamics and Constructions of Traditions in South Asia* (Firenze, Italy: Firenze University Press, 2005), 133-157.

[219] Personal communication, Dr. K. V. Ramesh, July 2004.

[220] K. V. Ramesh, "The *Mahābhārata* in Inscriptions," paper shared at Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, Karnataka, India, 2004.

[221] J. A. B. Van Buitenen, in "The Indian Epic," *The Literatures of India: An Introduction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 70.

[222] According to Van Buitenen (54), the *Rāmāyaṇa* is a "morality tale of a single hero," where the "moral and social arbiters [the Brahmans of the first centuries] of Hindu tradition found in Rāma the epitome of *dharma*, and in the *rāmarājya*, the kingdom of Rāma, the mirror of the ideal society."

[223] The Hazara Rama Temple at Hampi in Northern Karnataka is a prime example, where bas-reliefs on the temple exterior recount the life, romance, and military trajectories of the Rāma.

[224] Sheldon Pollock, "Ramayana and Political Imagination in India," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (May 1993), 282.

[225] Pollock (*Ibid*) suggests there is a "bifurcation" of two *dharma*s, one of "righteousness," symbolized by Yudhiṣṭhira, and one of *kṣatriya* power, symbolized by Arjuna. Though compelling, there are other *dharma*s in conflict in the *Mahābhārata* than these two.

[226] *Ibid,* 281.

[227] *Ibid,* 261-297.

[228] *Ibid,* 263-264.
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[229] *Ibid,* 264; 281-283.

[230] Van Buitenen, 54.

[231] Of course, it is important to be precise with respect to statements such as this. Hindus do see the *Rāmāyaṇa* as a positive inscription of political realities of the past into the present. As Pollock (292) has suggested the "past is something constantly practiced." A less cryptic version of the same idea: "Furthermore, literary meaning is historical, not essential, at the end of the millennium no less than at its beginning; it is generated by interpretive communities, not by texts in themselves, and these communities are always changing and repositioning themselves." (*Ibid,* 288-289)

[232] As one contemporary Indian lexicographer points out, "*kāvya* is defined by writers on Poetics in different ways." Apte, *Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 568B.

[233] Edwin Gerow, "Indian Poetics," in *The Literatures of India: An Introduction*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 119-120. These sources are within the purview of this study since, according to Gerow, Aśvaghoṣa (c. first century CE) attests to presence of both *kāvya* and *nāṭya* as courtly styles.

[234] Van Buitenen, 17.

[235] David Smith asserts that *kāvya* as a courtly form was developed as the intellectual counterpoint, "almost a counterculture" to the authority of the *Vedas*. David Smith, *Ratnākara's Haravijaya: An Introduction to Sanskrit Court Epic,* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, India, 1986), 96.

[236] Van Buitenen, 17.

[237] Gerow, 119. David Smith thinks that the *kāvya* traditions "arouse more or less naturally around the regal discourse of charter and proclamation along with panegyric." Smith, 96.

[238] Van Buitenen, 18.

[239] *Ibid,* 17.

[240] In the first centuries CE this had become a refined science, *alaṃkāra-śāstra*. Gerow, 120.

[241] Gerow suggests as much in his discussion of "Visual Immediacy" in dramatic forms (128-129). The visual evokes a mood (in Gerow's discussion, the visual elements in plays evoke distinct *rasa* (formalized emotional tones) that each have their "correlative consequents" (128). These consequents are directed to a particular aim in royal scenarios of counsel, which are to be discussed later in my analysis of modes of influence.

[242] In this way, the refinements of poetry are at odds with some Buddhist theories of cultivation and language, which understands the provisional nature of language. Brahmanical poetics is refined, even "perfected"—*saṃskṛtaṃ* (like the language of Sanskrit itself) when poetic forms are in their most lauded expression. Some Buddhists would see *saṃskṛtaṃ* as fundamental error in understanding.

[243] Gerow, 128.

[244] *Ibid,* 120.

[245] Scholars argue over where to place Kālīdāsa's in time: Traditional assignations place him in the first century BCE, while other scholars assign him to the fifth century CE.

[246] Van Buitenen, *Two Plays*, 5.

[247] However, Indian political culture and politicians appeal to Kauṭilya and his *Arthaśāstra* as authority and resource, especially for the text's war and espionage technologies. Though the antiquity of the *Arthaśāstra* may only extend back to the first centuries of the Common Era, the traditional definition of its date is the fourth century BCE, the relative time of Kauṭilya's career. This claim to antiquity plays an important factor in the timeless authority Kauṭilya and the *Arthaśāstra* possesses in certain circles of contemporary Indian political culture. However, the content of the *Arthaśāstra* and the nature of Kauṭilya, as the two are used in Indian political culture, are based in medieval uses of these icons *and* on medieval political treatises: such as and the medieval political treatise the *Nītisāra* (eighth century CE) of Kāmandaka, and the figure of Kauṭilya created in the drama, the *Mudrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta (ca. sixth century CE, if he is a contemporary of Kumaragupta I, and not Chandragupta II, as earlier surmised), respectively. For revision of dates and texts associated with the composer, Viśākhadatta, see *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings, CII 3*, rev. ed., (1981) 46-47. For one example of a general trend of Indian political historians' conflation of genres and ages in their discussions of the ideas of Indian political treatises, see K. P. Jayaswal, *Op. Cit.,* 311ff. For a more temporally nuanced description of Indian polity and its narrative and technical genres, see R. S. Sharma's discussion of Indian historiography (pp. 1-13), "Sources and Methods" (pp. 15-30) his chapter, "The Saptāṅga Theory" (pp. 31-48), in *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*.

[248] Hariṣena, the great poet and great minister to Samudragupta is a particularly noteworthy example.

[249] Many primary texts and secondary studies consider this. Though it is dated and is as impassioned as the primary text examples, see Nakamura for the prevailing version of the king's obligations in Buddhist thought and scholarship. Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, Vol. 1 Buddhist Tradition Series, edited by Alex Wayman, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989 Reprint; First Edition: Japan, 1980), 291-293.

[250] The king is frequently "converted" from another tradition.

[251] The *Questions of King Milinda (Milindapañha)* was added to the *Khuddaka-Nikāya* of the Burmese canon, one of the five basic divisions of the textual canon.

[252] *Buddhavacana* has been an important indicator of canonical authenticity within the Buddhist tradition. The desire to put another person's words into the mouth of the Buddha resulted in an enlarger corpus of literature, and even significant schism or shift in tradition. An attendant result is a process called "sūtrafication." This process has been discussed in many places. For an interesting twist, see Nattier, *A Few Good Men* (2003), 10-16.

[253] Norman, 32. "The *vaggas* (chapters) differ in content and character, but they all contain a mixture of older and later material." Norman asserts this of the *Dīgha Nikāya* in particular, but the assertion is true of other genres of Buddhist normative literature.

[254] Gombrich is discussing the limits of delineating dates from texts from "oral tradition," such as the *suttanta*, using methods designed for critical study of "written texts." In spite of the difficulty of dating texts, Gombrich will, on the one hand, analyze texts and extract the words of the Buddha from Buddhist prose to get a sense of "the earliest Buddhism" (6; 8-9); while on the other hand assert that "Texts…do not represent his precise words (or if they do we can never know it), must have been composed during his lifetime" (20). There is no evidence that these were composed in his lifetime. The evidence from *difficilior potior* [i.e., the idea that "the more difficult reading is the stronger"] (9) may locate a composition before others, but does not provide the data point necessary to claim composition during the life of the Buddha. Other than the relative comparisons of texts that show a R. F. Gombrich, "Recovering the Buddha's Message," *The Buddhist Forum* 1, Seminar Papers 1987-1988, (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1990), 8-9.

[255] Gregory Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions," in *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 3.

[256] *Ibid*.

[257] Norman (*Pāli Literature*, 30) points out that these "are ascribed to the Buddha, or (rarely) a disciple."

[258] The correspondences between the Sanskrit *āgamas* and the Pāli *nikāyas* are not direct. They are arranged differently, and the Sanskrit collections are larger, with different and more *sūtras*. Given these differences, *āgama* seemed "originally" to refer to different genres of Buddhist utterances and literature. Traditional lists vary, but twelve is the number for which there is the most agreement. I am paraphrasing Lamotte's discussion of the differences here: See his complete discussion in, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the /aka Era,* trans. Sara Webb-Boin, (Louvain-la-nueve: Institut orientaliste, 1988), 151-156.

[259] Some sources use *suttanta* or *sūtantra* to encompass all the *nikāyas* or *āgamas*. The generally accepted basic division of the textual canon today is that of the "three baskets," the *Tripiṭaka*: The *Sūtra-piṭaka* (the basket of discourses); the *Vinaya-piṭaka* (the basket of discipline or conduct); the *Abhidharma-piṭaka* (basket of technical treatises). Lamotte, 149. Not all of the Buddhist schools in antiquity divided apportioned the texts into the "three baskets," the *Tripiṭaka*, nor into the five *nikāyas* in the same manner. Norman, *Pāli Literature*,15-17.

[260] Norman, *Pāli Literature*, 40 (*Majjhima*—traditionally translated as "middle length" discourses; 50 (*Saṃyutta*—"grouped" sayings from various speakers, by subject/content); 54 (*Añguttara*—enumerated qualities); 57-58 (canonical extracts, "later").

[261] The correlate groups (*āgamas*) occur in the "Sanskrit canons [as] *Dīgha-Nikāya, Madhyama-, Saṃyutta- and Ekottarika-*," respectively. *Ibid*, 31.

[262] Ibid.

[263] Tr. Walshe, 311-312.

[264] Buddhaghosa tells us that the "words of the Buddha is *five*-fold with respect to the five Collections (*nikāya*)." As Lamotte interprets Buddhaghosa, the "*Pañcanikāya* denotes the teaching as a whole, not just the five *nikāyas* of the Pāli *Sutta-piṭaka*." Lamotte*, 143. One could say that Lamotte interpreted the meaning of *Pañcanikāya* in this way due to his focus on Northern Buddhism, which included the larger conception of canon and *nikāya* that obtained in this region (originating perhaps in the first centuries of the Common Era) through the patronage of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty. However, there has been variety within the Southern schools (which included the Sthaviras) as well, over the contents of the *nikāyas*. See Norman, 31-32.

[265] The history of this collection is uncertain, made so by disparate sources and different attestations with language and region. This *Khuddaka* is roughly equivalent to the *Kṣudraka* collection in the Sanskrit texts, sometimes considered a fifth collection of the *sūtrapiṭaka* or a fourth *piṭaka* altogether, "distinct from the *Tripiṭaka* collection." They are considered "minor" texts; their importance (and location in the *piṭaka*) varying with schools. According to Lamotte (159), the constituents of the Sanskrit *Kṣudraka* "was and always remained the most fluctuating [collection], even more so that the Pāli." The distinctions seem largely based on genre differences, not whether they are authoritative *buddhavacana.* Some sources, especially in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, define the collection as *buddhavacana*.

[266] *Khuddaka* or *kṣudraka* means "small," "diminutive," or "minor." These are considered "miscellaneous" or "minor" within the tradition, but not with the same dismissive sense that it means to those steeped in New Testament textual hermeneutics. The discourse in these collections were moved around into the other *piṭakas* (such as *Abhidhamma piṭaka*) or given various statuses by the ancient schools. Lamotte, 150-151; 154-156.

[267] Luis O. Gomez, "Buddhist Books and Texts: Exegesis and Hermeneutics," in Lindsay Jones, editor in chief, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, *2nd ed.,* (Detroit: MacMillan Reference, 2005), 1268-1278.

[268] This is not to say that the other four *nikāyas* do not contain dialogues between the Buddha and other interlocutors; they do. I am emphasizing those interlocutors who are not Buddha.

[269] Or the declarative words of the Buddha in the mouth of his disciples. See *Majjhima-Nikāya, Sutta* 76, "The *Sutta* of Sandaka," 513-524, in which Ānanda answers questions on behalf of his teacher's *dhamma*. Ānanda spoke about the kinds of questions that [wandering]mendicants should be asking—rather than the material, social, and ideal world-gossiping titter in which they were engaged—and acts as the voice of the Buddha for a mendicant named Sandaka, and also for an aged king.

[270] This presumption is widespread, and the examples numerous. Some salient examples are: K. R. Norman, "Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism: Brahmanical Terms in a Buddhist Guise," *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. 2, (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1992), 193-200; Greg Bailey in his comparative studies of the *Mahābhārata*, including "The *Mahābhārata* as Counterpoint to the Pāli Canon, *Orientalia Suecana LIII* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2004), 37-48.

[271] Richard Gombrich discusses how the Buddha Śākyamuni accomplishes this through various rhetorical strategies. *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings,* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt., Ltd., 1997; London: Athlone Press, 1996), especially 1-27 and 65-95. Gombrich lays out several debates with Brahmanical ideologies and praxis in the Pāli (which is "early" for him) canon, such as the transformation of the notion of *karma* (*kamma*, Pāli) to reflect the Buddhist rejection of efficacy of sacrificial and ascetic action for cultivation and transformation of "mental" or "psychological" actions (intention and transformation of the basis of action). The Buddha is called *aṅgīrasa* (a powerful Vedic *gotra*, lineage of priests), which Gombrich sees as a "takeover" bid for the status of Agni, the Brahmanical *deva* of fire. Gombrich (1997); 71-72. It is not unusual for someone who has mastered a specialty (of text or praxis) to take on the *gotra* of the teacher. This is especially true of kings, who would take on the *gotra* of their teacher. See *CII 3, rev. ed., (*1981); 109 for the custom of adopting a *brāhmaṇa's gotra*.

[272] Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha, op. cit.*

[273] The Buddha or Buddha dhamma/*dharma* frequently supplants the goodness and power of deities in all realms. See the *Sakkapanha-Sutta*, "Sakka's Questions," Walshe, *Dīgha Nikāya,* 321-334.

[274] Gombrich sees a singular contribution here: "the Buddha's redefinition of 'action' as 'intention'…," Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 51.

[275] Higher forms of action are not driven by intentions or thoughts shaped by desire; actions typical in the Buddhist realms of form and no-form. Paraphrase of Gombrich's discussion of the distinctions Buddhaghosa makes between 'typical action' and 'boundless' action. Gombrich prefers 'typical' and 'dogmatic' karma, and suggests that Buddhaghosa has "lost the original metaphorical structure" of Buddha's notions of *karma* (85). Note Gombrich's assumption that later (Buddhaghosa, fifth century CE) has "lost" the "original" teachings.

[276] Walshe, *Dīgha Nikāya*, 42-43; Gombrich (83-86) points out that this realm is where experts in *Brahmā-vihāra*—a metaphorical re-appropriation and supersession of Brahmanical practice—go at death: a realm just above the world of desires, below the highest Buddhist cosmological realm.

[277] Births in the world of form and formlessness reflect mastery of the corresponding *jhāna* levels of meditation, which is the formulation of Buddhaghosa.

[278] "*Mahāsamaya Sutta*," Tr. Walshe, *Dīgha Nikāya ,* 20.11

[279] Gombrich considers occurrences of *nāgas* such as these in Buddhist narratives as "allegories of religious rivalry." See his discussion of debates with *nāgas* (72-75), and "Metaphor, Allegory, Satire," (65-95) for a full discussion of the rhetorical debates in Buddhist literature.

[280] The three fetters of this path to the fruit of steam-entry are: "personality view, i.e. the view of a self among the five aggregates; doubt in the Buddha and his teaching; and adherence to external rules and observances, either ritualistic or ascetic, in the belief that they can bring purification." The fruit attained is to reach *nibbāna* in no more than seven births. Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Introduction," in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha. A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya,* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 42.

[281] The entire *Milindapañha* is designed to explain points of doctrine to a king: he shows his doubt only in private with the monk Nāgasena. Until his conversation with the monk, the king's doubt is manifested publicly through his question competitions with other dharmic specialists, which he and his doubt defeat.

[282] Kings in dialogues often experience more complex doubts, for the number of views they are able to hear. Milinda is a case in point: The dialogue between Nāgasena and him addresses conflicting doctrinal views, of the Sarvāstivādins and other *nikāyas*. *Nikāya* means "groups" of early schools in this context. Specifically, "Nikāya Buddhism" refers to monastic Buddhism after the initial schism into the Mahāsaṅghika and Sthavira schools had occurred." Hirakawa Akira, 105-126; 105 and passim. Most sources record that these eventually grew to eighteen different schools.

[283] See Uma Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism,* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987), 65-121 especially, for an astute discussion of the social system and stratification in P1li and Sinhalese sources.

[284] Other collections of discourses must engage other groups: there is a shift from focus to *brāhmaṇas* to householders in some literature. These figures argue themselves as viable groups associated with Buddha *dharma*, as many Mahāyāna *sūtras* do from at least the first century CE onward.

[285] The conception of the Buddha as an opponent of the varṇa system is well known. See Gomez, "Buddhism in India," in Joseph M. Kitagawa and Mark D. Cummings, eds., *Buddhism and Asian History* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987, 1989), 51-106, especially pp. 57-58.

[286] *Sutta* 4, *Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta*. Tr. Maurice Walshe, *Dīgha Nikāya*, 125-132.

[287] Uma Chakravarti, *Social Dimensions of Indian Buddhism,* 100-101.

[288] Norman, *Pāli Literature,* "Glossary of Pāli, Prakrit and Sanskrit Terms," 190.

[289] *Amacca* is usually accompanied by an adjective to elaborate the sense of the *amacca's* role: Two of the most common constructions are *paṇḍito-amacco* or *atthadhammānusāsako amacca ahosi*: (For e.g., see the *Pādañjalijātaka*, Book II, 263.

[290] Gombrich discusses Buddhist theories of action and consequences as a reaction to Brahmanism. "How, not What: Kamma as a Reaction to Brahminism," in *How Buddhism Began*, 27-64; especially 48-64. According to Gombrich, "…Upaniṣadic soteriology centered on the static self, the Buddha's on dynamic moral agency. To realize the self as the only reality is to realize what has always been the case: change and movement were an illusion. In the Buddha's world, by contrast, one has to make things happen." (58)

[291] Strong, 22.

[292] The nature of Buddha Śākyamuni's so-called omniscience is far more complex than I can show here. For a detailed exposition of the complexities of Buddha Śākyamuni's omniscience and its relation to religious and rhetorical authority, see Sara L. McClintock, *Omniscience and the Rhetoric of Reason:*

Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla on Rationality, Argumentation and Religious Authority, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2010), 11-42; especially 38-39ff. The conception of omniscience that I am using here is perhaps closest to McClintock's 'dharmic omniscience.'

[293] Indeed, many stories of the *jātaka* are reworked myths and tales from a larger Indic story corpus, reworked to reflect Buddhist sentiments and mores.

[294] The King of Kosala is depicted as needing frequent Buddha dhamma: in terms of war and dealing with his emotions.

[295] This term—*dīrgha-darśivān—*is frequently used to describe Vidura, brother and a chief advisor to the Kaurava king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. See *MBh* 5.128.17 as one example. See also editor's discussion of the advisory epithet of "looking far-ahead" like Vidura in Gupta inscriptions. Gai quotes the Mandasar Stone Inscription of Vishnuvardhana, ln. 16-17 of the original J. F. Fleet edition of the Gupta inscriptions, *CII* 3, (1888). See Gai, etal. *CII* 3, rev. ed. (1981); 129.

[296] In the Brahmanical contexts, this involves the use of mantra, *Atharva Veda* remedies and talismans (see the *Arthaśāstra* 14.2 for instance) . The Buddhist setting involves *buddhadharma*, relics, and establishment of images. *Jātaka* No. 176, "*Kalāya-muṭṭhi-jātaka*. "It is not only in things of the future life that our Master protects me [King of Kosala], but he protects in the things which we now see." Childers, *Jātaka Tales*, Book II, 51)

[297] There are several versions of the legend of King Aśoka, in Sanskrit, Pāli and regional languages, such as "Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan and Tibet." (Strong, 19) Pāli versions of the tale can be found in the *Mahāvaṃsa*, a fifth "chronicle" of the Theravāda tradition in Sri Lanka, in the "*Dīpavaṃsa*, and in Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the Vinaya." (Strong, 19) The *Mahāvaṃsa* version of the legend legitimates both the monastic and royal lineages. It does this by tying the Buddhist sect in Sri Lanka to King Aśoka's converted son, the elder Mahinda who went on to establish a Buddhist community in Sri Lanka, and is their founding elder. (Strong, 25)

[298] Lamotte claims that in "all Buddhist literature, there is no systematic attempt to explain or prove, as a whole and in detail, the doctrines professed by a given sect. The great authors display absolute freedom in the choice of theories they describe, and reveal themselves, in general, to be eclectic. They are not sectarians working for a school, but scholars giving their personal opinions." (Lamotte, 522) However, if one considers the affiliations that develop around a particular book or text—such as develops around the *Lotus Sūtra* or other Mahayana *sūtras*—one may see a sectarian (textarian?) impetus analogous to doctrinal disputations: I refer to the "cult of the book" as argued by Schopen (cf. Boucher). Lamotte presents several examples of writers of particular Buddhist groups holding views not typically of the group, then concludes: "It ensues from these statements that, working from documents, the authors of the disputations designed an ideal table of the doctrinal position of the sects. Followers were not expected to adhere to these disputations and scarcely took them into account in their own personal works." Lamotte, 523.

[299] Lamotte, 591. Nakamura describes him as "one of the most prominent poets in Sanskrit literature…an important predecessor of Kālīdāsa." He is also considered to be one of the "founders of Mahāyāna Buddhism" in Tibetan and Chinese traditions (Nakamura, 133).

[300] See Jan Nattier, who problematizes assumptions such as these and demonstrates that a simpler and shorter text (the *Heart Sūtra*) was later than its elaborate predecessors. Jan Nattier, "The Heart Sūtra: A Chinese Apocryphal Text?" *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies,* 15 (2), (1992), 153-223.

[301] A notion of a substantial and autonomous *ātman*, as posited in different relationships to reality (*Brahman* or God) in Brahmanical systems is rejected by the Buddhist *nikāyas*. There is no *ātman*, but rather they posit a "series of aggregates" that make up a human in the present (I provisionally use

"personality"). Lamotte, 606 (671). This "personality" is made up of inter-related and fleeting processes of mind, senses, constructions out of both, all in relation to impermanent temporal processes.

[302] There is some dispute over who actually Milinda was in the dialogue. Most agree that he was the Indo-Greek King Menander. According to Lamotte (425), he is one of the few Indic Greeks (*yavanas)*, those who came with the conquests of the Gerodosian plains in the northwestern region of India.

Notes to Chapter 4

[1] Buddhist *sūtras/sutta*s also refer to members of the *saṅgha* as *āryas*. They also have concerns over the emblems of difference associated with being foreign, *mleccha* (Pāli and Prakrit: *milakkhu*). Their use of the term may also signify maintaining distinctiveness in dress; as indicated in Vinaya proscriptions against wearing *mleccha* colors in their robes (*milakkhu-rajana*). *Pāli Text Society Dictionary*, *PTSD* 533B and 561B (*rajana*)

[2] *Op. cit.,* Jan Gonda (1966). See also, Timothy Lubin, "Indic Conceptions of Authority," in *Hinduism and Law, Op. Cit.*, 137-153. With the *Rāmāyaṇa,* authority moves from sacrificial to divine, see Sheldon Pollock, "The Divine King in the Indian Epic," *JAOS*, (1984) 505-528. For the perspective of kings and their relationship to their community using social contract theory, see Charles Drekmeier, *Kingship and Community in Early India* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

[3] In addition to Gonda's survey above, see also J. C. Heesterman's landmark work on the subject of royal and sacrificial authority: *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration: The Rājasūya Described According to the Yajus Texts, Disputationes Rheno-Trajectinae*, Vol. 2, (The Hague: Mouton), 1957 and "The Conundrum of the King's Authority," in *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*, Madison Publication Series No. 3, J. F. Richards, ed., (Madison: South Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, 1978), 1-27. David Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); J. C. Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual, and Renouncer," in *Wiener Zeitschrift fur die Kunde Sud-Und Ostasiens und Archiv fur Indische Philosophie* 8, (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 1-31. Ronald Inden, "Ritual, Authority, and Cyclic Time in Hindu Kingship," *Kingship and Authority in South Asia,* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998 reprint; 1978, 1981 Department of South Asian Studies at University of Wisconsin), 42. Particular to *Rāmāyaṇa* contexts, Sheldon I. Pollock, trans., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki: An Epic of Ancient India*, Vol. II: *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, Robert P. Goldman, ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 69-71 especially.

[4] Though he does not suggest an "emblematic" function of Rāma as I do here, Pollock does suggest that in the *Rāmāyaṇa* "the political and spiritual spheres may now converge in a single locus: the king" (70). Still, the focus on Rāma does not reveal the agency of Brahmanical and Buddhist communities in engaging *kṣatriya* such as Rāma in dharmic concerns. Nor does the focus on Rāma reveal their particular efforts at resolution through their depictions of advisor and minister activity. Pollock, *op. cit.*

[5]
> *yathā rājan prajāḥ sarvāḥ sūryaḥ pāti gabhastibhiḥ*
> *atti caiva tathaiva tvaṃ savituḥ sadṛśo bhava // (MBh,* 3.34.69)

J. A. B. Van Buitenen, translation. *The Mahābhārata*, Volume II: 2 Book of the Assembly Hall, 3 Book of the Forest, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 289. Jan Gonda, citing the Bombay edition (*MBh,* 3,33,71) translates this saying as: *"[Kings] behave like the sun which protects (pāti) and destroys all creatures by its rays." (*page 38) Jan Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View," *Numen* 3 (1956), part I, 36-122. All other translations of *Mahābhārata* passages are mine unless otherwise indicated, as here.

[6] For an alternate interpretation of the paradox of royal power, see J. C. Heesterman, "The Conundrum of the King's Authority," *Kingship and Authority in South* Asia, ed. by J. F. Richards, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20.

[7] For a collaborative study of an important ritual to Agni, (*agnicayana,* "large fire sacrifice"), see Frits Staal, C. V. Somayajipad and M. Itti Ravi Nambudiri, *Agni, the Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983). If interested in the discursive power of *agni* as an idea, see Laurie Patton who examines the associative elements of fire in early discourses, particularly the movement of fire as element of public sacrifice to its individual associative power as digestion. In the course of her analysis, Patton's beautiful translations of *Ṛg Veda* 7.I and 10.I-5 demonstrate some of the breadth of Agni's perceived functions and powers (101-108). See Laurie L. Patton, "Fire, Light and Ingesting over Time," Chapter 4 in *Bringing the Gods to Mind*: Mantra and Ritual in Early Indian Sacrifice, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 91-116.

[8]   *rājantam adhvarāṇāṃ / gopām ṛtasya dīdivim / vardhamānaṃ sve dame // RV*, I.I.8
          sa naḥ piteva sūnave 'gne sūpāyano bhava / sacasvā naḥ svastaye // RV, I.I.9

Ṛg Veda Saṃhitā, Maṇḍala I, Online source: GRETIL – Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages. http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/1_veda/1_sam/1_rv/rv_hn01u.htm

[9] See also *RV* I.26.7-10 where Agni invokes gods to the sacrifice, especially I.26.9, which is suggestive of the mutuality that can flow between the gods and humans, as Wendy Doniger suggests, note 4, to verse 9. Wendy Doniger, translator and annotator, *The Rig Veda*: *An Anthology* (London: Penguin Books, 1981).

[10] I find Patton's work very helpful to thinking about the ways that images may be working in texts attempting to articulate the power of kings; see especially "Viniyoga as Metonymy," in *Bringing the Gods to Mind,* 74-83.

[11] Patton, *Op. Cit*., 79-80.

[12] Olivelle corroborates my understanding of the ideology of *MDh*. He sees Manu's "agenda" as "two-fold: he wants to tell Brahmins how to behave as true Brahmins devoted to Vedic learning and virtue, and he wants to tell kings how to behave as true kings, devoted to Brahmins and ruling the people justly." Olivelle, *MDh,* 41.

[13] Olivelle, tr., 154. "(v.3b)…to protect this whole world the Lord created the king (v. 4) by extracting eternal particles from Indra, Wind, Yama, Sun, Fire, Varuṇa, Moon, and the Lord of wealth."
          rakṣārtham asya sarvasya rājānam asṛjat prabhuḥ // (MDh, 7.3b)
          indrānilayamākārṇām agneśca varuṇasya ca /
          candravitteśayoś caiva mātrā nirhṛtya śāśvatīḥ // (MDh, 7.4)

Olivelle suggests that these are the "eight guardian deities of the cardinal points, beginning with Indra in the east and ending with Kubera, the lord of wealth, in the north." (Note to verse 4, page 293)

[14] Olivelle, tr., 154.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*

[17]   *so 'gner bhavati vāyuś ca so 'rkaḥ somaḥ sa dharmarāṭ /*
           sa kuberaḥ sa varuṇaḥ sa mahendraḥ prabhāvataḥ // (MDh, 7.7)

[18] *Ibid,* 154.

[19] This element of the risk stresses that the advisor/close associate of the king should learn well, as this image of the king as fire from the *Śāntiparvan* indicates. It is spoken by the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya in his advice to a king:

> "He who has learned well approaches a king as he would a blazing fire. A man should always approach his master, the lord of life and wealth, with care, the way he would a poisonous snake that is angry, with the thought 'Now I'm dead'; always fearful that he has said something wrong, done something wrong, managed something badly, been sitting badly, or walking badly; always suspicious of the indications the king gives by the movements of his body. Maya said, ' A king who is pleased may fulfill every wish, like a God; but life fire, the king who is angered my burn everything right down to its roots.'" *MBh*, 12.83.29-30; (Fitzgerald's translation; 377-378)

[20] In Śrī Ganapati Sastri's commentary, the anujīvin is positioning to be a counselor (*mantry-ādayaḥ*). *Arthasastra of Kautalya*. N. P. Unni, trans., with the Śrīmūlam Commentary of Mahamahopadhyaya T. Ganapati Sastri. 3 vols. Trivandrum Sanskrit Series. New Bharatiya Book Corporation, 1984.

[21]   *ātmarakṣā hi satataṃ pūrvaṃ kāryā vijānatā |*
         agnāv iva iha samproktā vṛttī rājopajīvinām || Aś, 5.4.16

[22]   *ekadeśaṃ dahedagniḥ śarīraṃ vā paraṃ gataḥ |*
         sa putradāraṃ rājā tu ghātayed ardhayeta* vā || Aś, 5.4.17.

[23] This is not to say that the *Pañcatantra* did not depict kings as mercurial, it is one of many qualities assumed by the text: "The minds of kings are mercurial; and they are difficult to comprehend…" Olivelle tr., page 42; *Pañcatantra* (I, 98).

[24] Olivelle, "Introduction," to his translation, xxv.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] Olivelle, xxxv.

[27] *Pañcatantra,* II, verse 17; Olivelle, tr., 77.

[28] The image of a king as a snake is engaged in myriad ways in *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* traditions. This example occurs in a dialogue between the queen (*mahīṣī*) Draupadī and Kṛṣṇa's new wife Saulabhā. See Laurie L. Patton, "How Do You Conduct Yourself," *Op. Cit*., especially 102, for a discussion of this example and the polysemic similes of the snake in *Mahābhārata* traditions, in the context of this women's discourse about proper ways to conduct oneself with respect to husbands. See also *Rāmāyaṇa* 7.19-7.26, especially 7.24-25 where Manthurā likens Queen Kaikeyī's husband king Daśaratha to a viper, the fear of whom leads her to make her terrible demands that her son be consecrated king and Rāma be banished. The same scene is part of the précis of the story of Rāma in *MBh,* 3.261.16-17. Here Manthurā incites Kaikeyī by analogizing her king's announcement of Rāma's succession to a snake bite: "A fierce and furiously poisonous snake is biting you, unfortunate woman." Van Buitenen, op. cit., volume 2, page 732. It is telling of the power of the image of the king as snake that it was used even in the précis of this story (when so many other narrative elements part of the story trajectory were left out.)

[29] Damanaka is known to the king in the tale as being of "ministerial stock," as Olivelle translates *mantriputra*, literally, "the son of a counselor." Moreover, as such, he is known to the king's family for a long time […*ayam asmākaṃ cirantano mantriputro Damanakaḥ (samāgataḥ).]* **Note, there is uncertainty that *samāgataḥ* occurred in the original. See Edgerton's typographical summary, page xi.] As Olivelle correctly points out, this suggests a hereditary advisory structure. Damanaka is already in "the second circle" (*dvitīyamaṇḍalabhāg*) around Piṅgalaka, the featured king in the tale; but he seeks a more intimate position, which will give him more prestige. (Sanskrit reconstruction; Edgerton, page 26.) According to Edgerton's nomenclature for his reconstructed edition of the text (on which Olivelle's translation is based), most of the matter in this passage is in italics, indicating Edgerton "do[es] not feel

certain that it literally corresponds to the original text." Franklin Edgerton, *The Pañcatantra Reconstructed*, Volume 1, Text and Critical Apparatus, American Oriental Series, Volume 2, (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1924), xv.

[30] Olivelle, tr., 12. The observation about the double-entendres in Karaṭaka's speech about the king is Olivelle's. See his note to prose section before verse 27.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Olivelle, tr., 12. As in the preceding prose to Karaṭaka's verse [27], Edgerton is not confident it corresponds literally to the original.

> *bhoginaḥ kañcukāsaktāḥ krūrāḥ kuṭilagāminaḥ /*
> *phaṇino mantrasādhyāś ca rājāno bhujagā iva //* [27])

[33]   *rājānam api sevante viṣam apy upabhuñjate*
> *ramante ca saha strībhiḥ kuśalāḥ khalu mānavāḥ* [28]

[34] Olivelle notes a parallel discussion of the "evils" which can entrap kings in *Aś*.8.1-3

[35] Olivelle, tr., page 27.
> *upāyena hi yac chakyaṃ na tac chakyaṃ parākramāiḥ /*
> *kākī kanaka sūtreṇa kṛṣṇasarpam amārayat //* [60] Edgerton Skt., page 64.

[36] James Fitzgerald, *The Mahābhārata*, Volume 7: *11, The Book of the Women, 12, The Book of Peace*, Part One, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 109-139. I am not convinced by his argument, especially his characterization of Aśoka's *ahiṃsā-Dharma*, on which his argument depends.

[37] Fitzgerald, *Ibid.*; Nick Sutton, "Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira: a Historical Setting for the Ideological Tensions of the *Mahābhārata*?" *Religion* 27, No. 4 (1997): 333-341.

[38] Fitzgerald postulates a sort of revisionary effort at work in the back and forth dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhira's advisors—representing the *kṣatriya-brāhmaṇa* view—and his own intransigence after his *kṣatriya* victory and attachment to the fantasy of release. In the introduction to his translation of the *Śāntiparvan*, Fitzgerald states that in figure of Yudhiṣṭhira is "scripted what Brahmins think is wrong with Aśoka." James Fitzgerald, *Op. Cit.,* 137. I am not convinced by his argument.

[39] For the most sober discussion of patronage patterns in early India see, R. S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, *(op. cit.)* 291-311; 371-402. The kings cited in my text, including Aśoka Maurya, patronized the religious traditions of their kingdoms widely. There are inscriptions that attest their support, of *brāhmaṇa*, *śramaṇa*, Ājīvika, and Jains inclusively during their reigns. Such donative support is evident in the Gupta period as well. Direct consideration of the inscriptions is best to get a sense of the wide patronage, since most scholars tend to exaggerate sectarian affiliations. See *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. 1-3, *Op. cit.* There is a tendency to exaggerate the opposition of these religious groups to one another, as well as over-imagine the rigidity with which a king might be affiliated to one group over another. The allegiance of one king to the *Buddha-Dharma* and saṅgha like Aśoka Maurya) or to *brāhmaṇa ācāryas* or Jain *tīrthānkaras* does not mean the persecution or neglect of other groups.

[40] Pollock, trans, *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki: An Epic of Ancient India* 2: *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, Robert P. Goldman, ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 70-71.

[41] There is certainly disdain in the texts over the power of *kṣatriya* to exterminate so many people in the course of war. I realize that disdain does not suggest that *kṣatriya* values are waning, necessarily. It seems their power is being redirected, beyond typical *kṣatriya* aims. Van Buitenen suggests that the *kṣatriyas* in

the time of Yudhiṣṭhira were a remnant of *kṣatriyas* that Rāma Jāmadagnya exterminated. See *MBh*, 3.13.1ff; van Buitenen, tr., *Op. Cit.*, Book 3, page 57ff.

[42] Many values can converge in one warrior character, such as Karṇa in the *Mahābhārata,* who becomes agent of them all (warrior, Brahmin, or renunciant); see William S. Sax, "In Karṇa's Realm: An Ontology of Action," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 28: 295-324, 2000. Though Sax examines Karṇa in a contemporary context, he locates him in early narratives and makes some provocative suggestions about the way power values are negotiated. Pollock (64-73) has discussed Vālmīki and his work of inverting *kṣatriya* values in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. More could be learned however, by looking particularly at the dialogical nature of the *dharma*s Rāma and his court are employing; even as the figure of Rāma unifies them into Vālmīki's revision of *dharma*.

[43] Pollock, tr., 124; …*ath' anujaṃ bhṛśam anuśāsya darśanam // Rām*, II.18.40

[44] Pollock, tr., 121

[45] Or "implacable enmity" as Pollock translates …*vairam anuttamam…*

[46] Pollock, tr., 123.

[47] It is the narrative aim of the figure of Rāma to obviate any such struggle. Pollock, 17-24.

[48] See Pollock's discussion of Vālmīki's narrative inculcation of a code of behavior (Rāma's submissive example) to counter the interregnal power struggles, 19-21.

[49] Pollock, tr., 126. *pāpayos tu kathaṃ nāma tayoḥ śaṅkā na vidyate? santi dharm' opadhāḥ ślakṣṇā dharm' ātman kiṃ na budhyase // Rām*, II, 20.8

[50] Pollock, tr., 126.

[51] Van Buitenen, tr.; Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, 121).

[52]   *lokavṛttād rājavṛttam anyad āha bṛhaspatiḥ*
   tasmād rājñā prayatnena svārthaś cintyaḥ sadaiva hi (MBh, 2.50.14)

[53]   *kṣatriyasya mahārāja jaye vṛttiḥ samāhitā*
   sa vai dharmo 'stv dharmo vā svavṛttau bharatarṣabha (MBh, 2.50.15)

[54] Duryodhana stresses that he wants to feel this way, in answer to his father's counsel that he should *not* feel it (*MBh,* 2.50.1-5), which the prince amply conveys by *kāmayāmy aham.*

[55]   *asaṃtoṣaḥ śriyo mūlaṃ tasmāt taṃ kāmayāmy aham*
   samucchraye yo yatate sa rājan paramo nayī (2.50.18)

[56]   *mamatvaṃ hi na kartavyam aiśvarye vā dhane 'pi vā*
   pūrvāvāptaṃ haranty anye rājaDharmaṃ hi taṃ viduḥ (2.50.19)

[57]   *dvāv etau grasate bhūmiḥ sarpo bilaśayān iva*
   rājānaṃ cāviroddhāraṃ brāhmaṇaṃ cāpravāsinam (2.50.21)

[58]   *vidyāvinayahetur indriyajayaḥ kāmakrodhalobhamānamadaharṣatyāgāt kāryaḥ* (*Aś*, I.6.1)

[59] These (*Aś,* I.6.11-12) are my adaptations and paraphrases of Kangle's translation, not literal translation s of the Sanskrit.

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[60]   *kṛtsnaṃ hi śāstram idam indriyajayaḥ* (*Aś*, I.6.3)

[61] In advisory manuals such as the *Pañcatantra*, unruly royal emotions are the perfect opportunity for ministers to press themselves into the service of a king. The king's need is the ministers' solution. See *Pañcatantra* I.50-52; I.64-72; I.90-91, as examples.

[62] The *Pañcatantra* also has a discussion of its version of the affective enemies of kings. The *Pañcatantra* discussion of the evils of addiction is especially resonant of *Aś*, I.6.7. See I, v. 58-60; especially prose section after (I, v. 59); Olivelle, tr., 27-27.

[63] See Kangle's notes to his translation of *Aś*, I.6.1-2 for his understanding of the meaning of each of the six enemies. Kangle, Vol. II, 12

[64] Literally: "The king of the Bhojas, named Daṇḍaka, who was obsessed on account of [his] desire for the daughter of a Brahmin, was destroyed along with his relatives and kingdom; just as Karāla of the Videhis [was]."

      yathā dāṇḍakyo nāma bhojaḥ kāmād brāhmaṇakanyām abhimanyamānaḥ sabandhurāṣṭro
      vinanāśa, karālaś ca vaidehaḥ   *Aś*, I.6.5.

[65] See pages 12-13 of Kangle's translation where he identifies and discusses parallels and/or sources for these references to errant kings in his notes to *Aś*, I.6.5-12.

[66] It also conveys the tragedy attendant on the emotion for these two kings.

[67] Monier Williams (809A) conveys this sense of *māna*, but cumulatively through his entry: 'self-conceit, pride arrogance; wounded sense of honor; anger or indignation excited by jealousy.' For a discussion of Rāma's own concern for his *yaśaḥ*, see Pollock, *Op. Cit*, 66. The problem in these instances involves misplaced pride, not the experience of pride itself.

The commonality of a king's arrogance and the extent to which it is perceived as typical of the *kṣatriya* persona is also attested in Buddhist texts that depict royal *māna*; as we shall see in the example of King Pasenadi in the discussion about advising the "King with Misconstrued Aims" section below.

[68] The question of self-control or the utter lack of it pervades the *Udyogaparvan*, with many examples particular to Duryodhana. His relatives and elders attribute his pursuit of his rival's kingdom, Indraprastha, at all costs to envy, anger, and other emotions (*MBh,* 5.126.1-5 and 5.126.29-39). Van Buitenen, tr., *Mahābhārata* 4, O*p. Cit*., 421-423. In *sarga* 99 of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa,* Rāvaṇa's chief Queen Mandodarī attributes his demise to emotive causes encompassing more than this wounded pride (VI.99.9, 14; and 22). Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman, and Barend A. van Nooten tr., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki 6, Yuddhakāṇḍa*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 441-443. One of Queen Mandodarī's postulates—as she reasons with herself about Rāvaṇa's demise—is his inordinate desire (*abhikāmaḥ*) for Sītā (VI. 99.14).

[69] Kings who are "self-possessed," *ātmavān*, are important in genres besides the śāstric. According to *Rāmāyaṇa* 6.51.11-12, self-possession is a quality that enables kings to take advice. Goldman, Sutherland Goldman, and van Nooten, 274; see also the translators notes to these verses on pages 974-975.

[70] Pollock, tr., 121.

[71] See Pollock, 15-19, where he discusses the audience of the *Rāmāyaṇa* with respect to more than the instruction contained in it for kings (*kṣatriya*); rather, Pollock sees instruction embedded in it for the social world beyond the royal court.

[72] Because of the importance of demonstrating control of emotion, even *kṣatriya* emotion, Rāma is shown recovering himself (usually). His control in this regard may also be due to the "talismanic" conception of *Dharma* that Rāma exemplifies, which I discuss in Chapter Seven of this dissertation.

[73] "Simile of the Mountain" (*Pabbatupamam Sutta*, PTS I.100-102) of the *Kosala-saṃyutta*; the "discourses connected to Kosala" in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (*SN*), III.25 (III.3.5, GRETIL). Bhikkhu Bodhi, translator, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 192-194. I also use a PDA version of this same translation, using location numbers, rather than page numbers (a limitation of the technology and Wisdom Publications' accommodation of it in their PDA version.

[74] Rhys Davids' entry on *rājā* observes correctly that in Pāli texts, all kings were *khattiyas*, but not all *khattiyas* were kings. See PTSD 569A

[75] Recall that these senses are to be controlled, as in the *Arthaśāstra* discussion above. The appropriate use of senses is common to the cultural milieus around these texts. See Manu 2.5: "By engaging in them properly, a man attains the world of the immortals and, in this world, obtains all his desires just as he intended." Olivelle, tr., 94.

[76] Pāli source: GRETIL–Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (III.3.3; 136)
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/2_pali/1_tipit/2_sut/3_samyu/samyut1u.htm

> *yāni tāni bhante raññaṃ khattiyānaṃ muddhāvasittānaṃ issariyamadamattānaṃ kāmagedhapariyuṭṭhitānaṃ janapadatthācariyappattānaṃ mahantaṃ paṭhavimaṇḍalaṃ abhivijiya ajjhāvasantānaṃ rājakaraṇīyāni santi, tesvāhaṃ etarahi ussukkaṃ āpannoti.*

Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation is as follows:

> …I have been engaged in those affairs of kingship typical for head-anointed *khattiya* kings, who are intoxicated with the intoxication of sovereignty, who are obsessed by greed for sensual pleasures, who have attained stable control in their country, and who rule having conquered a great sphere of territory on earth (Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Op. cit.,* 192)

This translation is significantly different than mine. Such a disparity merits comment since the reason driving the difference informs the rest of my translations, where appropriate. The difference is due, in part, to his choice of a more narrow doctrinal lexicon rather than the *khattiya* voice of action that I think is expressed in the text. Certainly, Bhikkhu Bodhi's lexical choices have compromised readability in English; but I think also that they obscure what may have been intended by the author(s). For instance, consider Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of

> *...issariyamadamattānaṃ kāmagedhapariyuṭṭhitānaṃ ...*

> "… intoxicated with the intoxication of sovereignty, who are obsessed by greed for sensual pleasures…"

This rendering is a bit ponderous, even for a Buddhist *sutta*. I think a better translation can be had by using the lexical context in which the *sutta* is situated, and to which it is addressed. My choices comprise an equally appropriate lexical range for the Pāli terms (below):

> "…assessing the condition of the domain, with the exhilaration of [royal] ambition and the enjoyment [of it]"

Though doctrinal interpretations particular to monastic and other trained specialists within the *saṅgha*— such as Bhikkhu Bodhi's—are possible here, I think this discourse is explicitly directed at kings (warrior kings, *khattiyas*, here). Thus, given a khattiya audience, terms like *mada, matta, kāma* and *gedha*— members of the compounds just translated—need to be considered for what they mean with respect to

khattiya scope of action, even within this particular Buddhist *sutta*. Its location in the *Kosala Saṃyutta*, discourses particular to Kosala, and its use of warrior ideals from the larger social context are not entirely sufficient to substantiate my claim. However, considering the narrative progression of this particular text within the *Kosala Saṃyutta,* my choices here are warranted by the fact that King Pasenadi's attitude about his obligations and the appropriate use of his royal power are the primary object of the discourse, since these are the factors that change by the end of the *sutta* as a result of Buddha Śākyamuni's advice.

Alternatively, Bhikkhu Bodhi generalizes beyond this particularity; he considers the discourses in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* "not targeted at outsiders or even at the newly converted, but were intended principally for those who had already turned for refuge to the Dhamma and were deeply immersed in its study and practice." *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the* Saṃyutta Nikāya, PDA edition (Boston and Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2000), Location 741.

Now, this also could be an apt description for King Pasenadi's function here, but Bhikkhu Bodhi does not name a royal audience in his discussion of the audience of the *SN*. Rather, he thinks the discourses are directed at monks and nuns with advanced attainments within the monastic community. *Ibid.,* 742-760. However, I think that in the discourses connected to King Pasenadi of Kosala, the more likely audience is this king—a specialist layperson needing special counsel. However, I do not assert this categorically of all *sutta*s directed at kings in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* nor the *Tipiṭaka*.

Certainly, as Bhikkhu Bodhi made translation choices, *matta* and *mada* both can mean "intoxication" (PTSD 516A-517B); but they both can mean other things. For instance, *matta* can be conveying the sense of "measuring" or "measure", which is how I use it. As for *mada*, it is a complex term used to denote attitudinal states: For instance, there are twenty-seven such states in the *Vibhanga formulation*, according to the PTSD, 518B. But I think that its driving sense, which is connected to all these different states, denotes "a settled disposition toward action." Still, I think even this rendering of *mada* is more doctrinal than the text and context requires. The royal context matters here because in the *sutta*, king Pasenadi is depicted assessing these states as they pertain to his realm, *issariya-*, the first member of the compound.

Retaining the royal lexical context gives more depth to this compound that functions to particularize the khattiya behavior here: *kāma-gedha-pariyuṭṭhitānaṃ*. The PTSD (203) renders the first two members (*kāma-gedha-*) of the compound as "craving for pleasure," and which Bhikkhu Bodhi construes as …"greed for sensual pleasures." Certainly it can mean these things; yet, *kāma* has a broad semantic range, and can mean simply, "enjoyment." While *gedha-* denotes "greed, desire, jealousy, and envy," (PTSD 25), in this context "'ambition," or a sense like it, is the better choice. Giving *gedha-* the sense of ambition is the better choice since the context requires a rendering appropriate to the *kāma* of kings in this context—namely, expansionary desire for the land s of other kings and tribal leaders, as well as the wealth of resources and subjects of such. Thence my version is "ambition and the enjoyment of it." Overall, I take this compound as a *tatpuruṣa* on a *karmadhārya* that describes the king's attitude about the work he just described, based on its position as well as its final member of *pariyuṭṭhitānaṃ*. Bhikkhu Bodhi translates *pariyuṭṭhitānaṃ* as "obsessed by," which would be a good choice to modify his interpretation of *kāma-gedha*. However, given the context as I re-describe it here, it is more likely that Pasenadi, like other kings, is "exhilarated" (*pariyuṭṭhitā,* as 'deeply set' or 'imbued with') by his ambition; or my optional rendering, "zealous" in his ambition to conquer.

[77] I am paraphrasing here my translation of this *Mahābhārata* passage used earlier in this chapter (*MBh*, 2.50.18):

> *asaṃtoṣaḥ śriyo mūlaṃ tasmāt taṃ kāmayāmy aham / samucchraye yo yatate sa rājan paramo nayī*

[78] This is also consistent with ideas of royal communication in the cultural context beyond the saṅgha. For instance, see *Arthaśāstra,* I.13.1-26 on ideas about surveillance over a king's own subjects and realm. I wonder at the creator of the text's use of the more familiar second person imperative (*karohi)* than the more formal address of the third person imperative. Could this be a choice governed by the familiarity of the king with the community? While the drive behind this choice cannot be known, still it is intriguing. I am

paraphrasing here the passage below, where Śākyamuni Buddha asks the king to think about four scenarios. This is the first of the four scenarios, each attending the four directions.

> *idha te puriso āgaccheyya puratthimāya disāya saddāyiko paccayiko. So taṃ upasaṅkamitvā evaṃ vadeyya: yagghe mahārāja jāneyyāsi: ahaṃ āgacchāmi puratthimāya disāya. Tatthaddasaṃ mahantaṃ pabbataṃ abbhasamaṃ. Sabbe pāṇe nippoṭhento āgacchati. Yaṃ te mahārāja karaṇīyaṃ taṃ karohīti*

The same formulation proceeds through three more trustworthy men, but with changes of direction from the east *(puratthimāya disāya),* to the south *(dakkhiṇāya)*...to the west *(pacchimāya)*…and to the north *(uttarāya).*

[79] …*kimassa karaṇīyaṃ aññatra dhammacariyāya samacariyāya kusalakiriyāya puññakiriyāyāti.*

[80] The text repeats the king's manner of action each time, as consecrated king, etc. (as above), in relation to his battle implements: *hatthi-yuddhāni* (repeated*), assa-, ratha-, patti-*, elephant battles, horse battles, chariot, and infantry, respectively.

This list may invoke for some the implements of power associated with kings—primarily the 'wheel-turning king,' *cakkavati*)—and encapsulated in the doctrine of the seven jewels or 'seven royal treasures' (*satta-ratana,* PTSD 536B). However, this standard list is not present in this discussion of the king's powers. Only two powers occur here that coincide with the typical Buddhist list of the Seven Jewels— the treasury and counsel (*dhāna-* and *manta-*). The conceptual referents are similar, but even the terms here are different than the usual members of this list of powers, which can be: *kośam* or *gahapati* ("householder") for royal treasury; and *pariṇāyaka, amātya,* or *amacca* all for advising minister.

[81] *tesampi bhante [hatthi-yuddhānaṃ*; *assa-yuddhānaṃ,* etc.] *natthi gati natthi visayo adhivattamāne jarāmaraṇe.*

[82] *SN (*III.25*),* III. 3.5. GRETIL, *op. cit.*
> *santi kho pana bhante imasmiṃ rājakule mantino mahāmattā ye pahonti āgate paccatthike mantehi bhedayituṃ. tesampi bhante mantayuddhānaṃ natthi gati natthi visayo adhivattamāne jarāmaraṇe.*

[83] This example reveals one dimension in which *buddha-dharma* is context-specific, a mode typically associated with dialogic (deliberative modes of dialogue) forms of religious engagement. Now that the king has the correct understanding of the nature of things, he now is made able to apply the appropriate course of action, serving and gaining merit. Even so, this example is one of many that present the same course of action for this particular context. The ways of the dialogic or deliberative, the particular and the universal modes of religious engagement are discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation.

[84] Note the shared framing for the powers within the royal court to the text about *mantino* above:
> *saṃvijjati kho pana bhante imasmiṃ rājakule...tesampi bhante dhanayuddhānaṃ natthi gati natthi visayo adhivattamāne jarāmaraṇe.*

This last phrase is shared across all the powers of the king in this *sutta*. The first phrase is shared only between the powers of counsel and treasury only. (Note the structural correspondences are identical but for the verb change from *santi* to *saṃvijjati*). These two (counsel and treasury) each have distinctive descriptions of the nature of their exercise within the court.

[85] The perception of the Buddhist communities represented in these texts appears to be that kings respond to any problem with money and the exercise of power and influence. See the stories in the *Jātakamālā,* such as *Sutasoma-jātaka,* 31.40 or *Śreṣṭha-jātaka,* 20.13 where this assumption is concisely stated [in a king's response]: "What is wrong, that you should wish to set out for the forest while I am still alive—I

who am closer to you than friends or relatives? *Surely I can put it right, either with money or through diplomacy or by means of force*?" [Emphasis mine]

Peter Khoroche, transl., *Once the Buddha was a Monkey: Ārya Śūra's Jātakamālā,* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 128. Khoroche's translation is based on Hendrik Kern's edition of the text, as are the Sanskrit excerpts I provide in this discussion. Hendrik Kern, *The Jātaka-mālā: Stories of Buddha's Former Incarnations, Otherwise Entitled Bodhisattva-avadāna-mālā, by Ārya-çūra*, Harvard Oriental Series 1, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1870; reprint 1943). The translations are mine, unless indicated as Khoroche's.

[86] Khoroche characterizes lines 50-51 (Kern, page 152) of this *Mahābodhi-Jātaka*—along with several other stories in the *Jātakamālā*—as being critical of "worldly wisdom (*nīti*), as taught in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*." (Khoroche, 259) See his footnote 2 to *Jātakamālā,* No. 6, "The Hare." Although I agree with his characterization of *nīti* here, Khoroche conflates the various kinds of wisdom treated in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra.* I would add that *nīti* in Kauṭilya's text includes ("coercive techniques") *daṇḍa-nīti,* ("royal management") *rājanīti,* and *artha* ("success-oriented") that function as various *modes* of *expeditious* wisdom for royal contexts. It is important to note also that "worldly wisdom" is also taught in the *Pañcatantra*. I discuss these and other distinctions in advisory use of *nīti* in royal contexts in Chapter Three.

[87] (Kern, page 143; line 7-8).
> *bodhisattvo…enaṃ…dharmyābhiḥ kathābhiḥ śreyo mārgam anupratipādayamānaḥ pratyaham anujagrāha*

Khoroche's translation of   *…śreyo mārgam anupratipādayamānaḥ pratyaham anujagrāha…* as, "In this way he gradually set the king on the path to final bliss" (154) merits comment. I think Khoroche's translation of *śreyo mārgam* overstates the path to which the king is brought by hearing the *dharma* at this point. It is sufficient to translate *śreyo mārgam* as the "better path."

[88] *…śiṣya ivācāryaṃ paricaraṇaparyupāsanavidhinā…* (*JāMā*, Kern; 23.143, ln. 3) The student-teacher relationship is a significant Brahmanical advisor ideal, which is discussed in the next chapter.

[89] Paraphrase of Khoroche's translation; *Ibid.*, 154-55.

[90] *…abhājanatvaṃ tu gato 'si śāṭhyād Dharmasya tena…* (*JāMā*, 23.7; Kern 144, line 18).

[91] Khoroche, 156

[92] *Ibid.*, 157.

[93] The devices of the bodhisattva in this and the many, many other *jātaka*s that I have considered are sometimes indicated with *upāya* ('expedient' in Brahmanical contexts), but also by *māyā* (illusion) or *yoga* (technique). This seems to suggest that such devices do not bear the semantics (yet?) of *upāya*, 'skillful means' seen in texts like the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra* ("Lotus Blossom of the Fine *Dharma*" or "Lotus Sutra") or the *Vimalakīrtnirdeśa-Sūtra* ("Sūtra Containing Instructions of Vimilakīrti").

[94] Khoroche, 153.

[95] *Ibid.,* 154.

[96] Khoroche, 156-57.

[97] In the next two chapters we will see that doubts could be raised in kings using the very things that contributed to their power—the advisors and significant members of their courts.

[98] *…nārhati devo bodhiparivrājake viśvāsam upagantum /*   Kern, 143, line 18.

[99] Khoroche, 155; Kern, 143, ln. 21-25.

[100] The text is playing into royal cultural knowledge about *Arthaśāstra*, specifically invoking its suggestions that secret agents from rival kings could be sent to undermine a king using religious power and espionage. *Aś*, 11.13.1-2; 1.13.15, specifically refers to different ascetics used as spies. See also 5.1.33 and 5.1.19 in the text, which also advises the use of female *parivrājikā*s (renunciants) as spies in the *rājakula* (royal household). These and other secret techniques used by advisors, ministers and their agents to create, bolster, or undermine royal power are the subject of Chapter Six of this dissertation.

[101] *…dharmaprasaṅgam amṛṣyamāṇāś ca rājñas tena tena kramena…*

[102] Khoroche, 155.

[103] *Ibid.*

[104] The role that the concept of *dṛṣṭi* (literally, "view") plays in various schools of Buddhist epistemology is complex and beyond the scope of this discussion. Rupert Gethin has gone a long way to help expand the scope of our own understanding of early *nikāya* use of the concept of *dṛṣṭi* in their epistemologies. See Gethin's helpful contextual exposition of *dṛṣṭi* in Theravāda Abhidhamma traditions—Rupert Gethin, "Wrong view (*micchā diṭṭhi*) and Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) in the Theravāda Abhidhamma," *Contemporary Buddhism* 5, No. 1 (2004), 15-28. In this article, Gethin addresses some of the limitations of Padmanabh S. Jaini's analysis of *dṛṣṭi* (see note below).

[105] "Views," *dṛṣṭi* (Pāli; *diṭṭhi*), are an important cause of "suffering" *duḥkha* (Pāli, *dukkha*), hence the community around the text's concern that king adheres to the right view. Being of "correct view," (*sammādṛṣṭi*)—a factor of developing wisdom (*prajñā*)—is inextricably linked to cultivating 'wholesome conduct,' *śīla* (Pāli: *sīla*), itself a complex concept. Thus, the semantics of *dṛṣṭi* cut across various traditions of Buddhist teachings. For *sīla* as an organizing principle and its role in Theravāda traditions, see George D. Bond, "Theravāda Buddhism's Two Formulations of the Dasa Sīla and the Ethics of the Gradual Path," in *Pāli Buddhism*, edited by Frank J. Hoffman and Deegalle Mahinda, Curzon Studies in Asian Philosophy, (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996), 17-42. A representative range of hermeneutics of the *dṛṣṭi* can be found in Jaini's study of Vaibhāṣika *Abhidhamma* connotations see Padmanabh S. Jaini, "Prajñā and dṛṣṭi in the Vaibhāṣika Abhidharma," in *Prajñāpāramitā and Related Systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze*, edited by Lewis Lancaster and Luis O. Gómez, (Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977), 403-415; for the use of dṛṣṭi in Śūnyatā systemizations see Y. P. Kim, "The Problem of a Drsti as Truth Claim in Sunyata Hermeneutics, *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture*, 14 (2010) 91-104. Again, see Gethin*, op. cit*., for a balance to Jaini and Kim's discussions.

[106] *Ibid.*, 162.

[107] *Ibid.*, 163.

[108] *Ibid.*, 163-64.

[109] *Ibid.*, 165.

[110] *Ibid.,* 164-65.

Notes to Chapter 5

[1]   *agninā tāmasaṃ durgaṃ naubhir āpyaṃ can gamyate /*
          rājadurgāvataraṇe nopāyaḥ paṇḍitā viduḥ // MBh, 12.83.40

Unless otherwise indicated, all Sanskrit texts are the UTF-8 formatted versions of online texts at GRETIL, *Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages*, and related Indological materials from Central and Southeast Asia.

[2]   *…hi bhavatāpi na viśvasitum śakyaṃ…* (12.83.4)

[3] He calls himself an *amātya*. The muni's full self-description is:
        …dadāty asmadvidho 'mātyo buddhisāhāyyam āpadi // 12.83.32

Fitzgerald, translation (tr.). "A minister like me gives intellectual assistance in a time of crisis." James L. Fitzgerald, trans. and ed., *The Mahabharata.* Vol. 7, *11 The Book of the Women, 12 The Book of Peace,* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 378.

[4]   *…kīdṛśe viśvased rājā kīdṛśe nāpi viśvaset //* (12.81.2)

[5] Fitzgerald tr., 376;
        … itihāsaṃ purātanam muniḥ kālakavṛkṣīyaḥ kausalyaṃ yad uvāca ha // 12.83.5

[6] Fitzgerald, tr., 376. The 'king's employees*, [rāja] yuktaḥ,* is a blanket term here that includes ministers; it was the also the most basic term for Aśoka's many officers in the realm.

[7] Fitzgerald, tr., 376.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.* 380.

[10] *Ibid*., 377.

[11] Recall my discussion of narrative efforts of religious communities to insinuate themselves into royal courts, with contentious manners against their competitors in Chapters Two and Three. Also in this regard, see Johannes Bronkhorst, *Great Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India, Op. Cit.;* as well as his *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, O*p. Cit.*

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] Moreover, the suggestion that Kālakavṛkṣīya saw the same ministers inside the *gṛham* as out in the realm suggests a realm smaller in scale. These hints at the scale of Kṣemadarśin's domain are consistent with the scale of the royal structures depicted in *itihāsa* like this one *Mahābhārata* traditions. See Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics, Op. Cit.*, 198-200; 214-15; 162-175, *passim*. See also Michael Witzel, "Early Sanskritization, Origins and Development of the Kuru State," *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies*, 1-4 (1995): 1-26.

[14] My suggestion of the role of close associates is echoed in Fitzgerald's rendering of MBh 12.84.4, *āvartayati bhūyiṣṭham* "as "who can bring you back to your main self, " rather than use *bhūyiṣṭham* adverbially (his note to 12.84.4). Fitzgerald, 738.

[15] Hemachandra Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India,* 5th edition, (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1950), 280.

[16] R. S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, Op. Cit.,* 323-325, 386-387; A. S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1949; 2001 Reprint)*,* 336-337, 345; Raychaudhuri, *Ibid.,* 280, 515, 520.

[17] Sanskrit is used for these terms in later literature and early medieval inscriptions. Hulztsch transliterated the Brāhmi into Sanskrit for his edition of the inscriptions for the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*.

[18] For example see the 6th rock edicts (at both Dhauli and Jaugada, more remote regions beyond the king's ability to see them), the king institutes "reporters" to tell him if mahamattas are amending or changing his proclamation, or if disputes arise among his officers. *CII* 1, 107.

[19] Third Rock Edict of Shahbazgarhi; *Ibid.*, 52-53.

[20] The nature of Aśoka's *dharma* has been discussed in many studies, and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter. John Strong (*Legend of King* Aśoka*, 13*) is correct to suggest that these scholars interpret the edicts in strictly Buddhist terms: See, for instance, Jules Bloch *Les Inscriptions d' Aśoka,* and Nikam and McKeon, *The Edicts of* Aśoka. For a more materialist view of the edicts, see Thapar (1997), 137-181; or Sharma, 372ff. For a study that argues that Aśoka may have instituted a non-sectarian *Dharma*, but that his policy itself was an act of royal piety on his part, see my unpublished M.A. thesis. V. R. Dishitar, *Mauryan Polity* (1932) stresses the more Brahmanical dimensions of Aśoka's *dharma*. Jayaswal (348-349), if he considers Aśoka's *dharma* at all, sees it as an "imperial system" characterized by royal "Justice;" Raychaudhuri sees Aśoka's *dharma* as one that is respectful of all groups. And, as mentioned in Chapter Four, there have been the attempts to link Aśoka's *dharma* to the rise of *dharma* as the principal organizing structure of value in *Mahābhārata* traditions (Fitzgerald, Sutton, and Olivelle*, Op. Cit.).*

[21] First Separate Rock Edict at Dhauli; Hultzsch, tr., *CII* 1, 95-97.

[22] *Ibid.,* 97.

[23] Aśoka was careful to warn other officers ruling other regions that he would be watching for dharmic behavior. See the Third (103) and Sixth Rock Edict at Dhauli and Jaugada, (107). Perhaps the ultimate check on officers came from the people themselves: In the Ninth and Eleventh Rock Edicts at Girnar, "father, son, brother, friend, acquaintance, relative, and neighbors" are encouraged to watch that they follow the king's *dharma*. Ibid, 17-19.

[24] Raychaudhuri, 460-465.

[25] Udayaguri Cave Inscription of Chandragupta II; *CII* 3, Rev. ed, 256-257.

[26] There is no indication that at this point in the inscriptional record that "*loka*" is "normative custom" as it is used in the *Dharmaśāstra* literature. For a discussion of what the term later means see Patrick Olivelle, "Explorations in the Early History of *Dharma*śāstra," in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*, South Asia Research, University of Texas South Asia Institute and Oxford University Press Series, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 174-176.

[27] The meaning of *tarka* has shifted through time. In its complex developments in Indian rhetorical sciences*, nyāya* as a conceptual term, as well as *śabda* and *artha*, occurs in classical Indian theories of meaning and sound, but this is not the likely meaning in royal declarative contexts.

[28] *Nyāya* occurs in contexts where it means "justice" or "law" (even in epigraphy found in Laos). It can mean "polity" or simply "logic," as it appears to denote here. These clarifications provided through personal communication with K. V. Ramesh, March 31, 2004. Note that logic is not necessarily meant in a formal sense, such as in terms of the structured argumentation that we see in other philosophical contexts; Indian as in *Nyāya Vaiśeṣika*, or the various schools of European logical epistemology. In fact, it does not carry the contextual force of deliberation prevalent among the *Nyāya Vaiśeṣika* schools at all.

[29] There are many examples of these points in inscriptions, spanning many Gupta dynasties. A representative example is an inscription at Sāñchī in Gupta era 93, (411-12 CE), where an *anujīvin* (retainer at court) of Candragupta II puts up capital for feeding Buddhist monks there.

[30] *CII* 3, Rev. ed.; 90.

[31] Altekar, 161-162.

[32] Altekar, *Ibid.* Ron Inden give as brief history of the ratnins, for the context of their occurrence in the *Vājapeya* ritual; Ronald Inden, "Ritual, Authority, and Cyclic Time in Hindu Kingship", in John Richards, ed., *Kingship and Authority in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 41-91. The ratnin were part of the ritual legitimation of the "new Kuru order," a significant consolidation and expansion of royal power in Vedic India. See Michael Witzel, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 8-9.

[33] K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity: A Constitutional History of India in Hindu Times,* Parts I and II, 2nd and Enlarged Edition, (Bangalore City: Bangalore Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd., 1943), 193; Sharma, 143; J. C. Heesterman, "Power, Priesthood, and Authority," in *Inner Conflict of Tradition*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985),144.

[34] Sharma, 142.

[35] I paraphrase Sharma (153) herein. The seven limbs of power or *saptāṅga* is usually given from its most developed form as found in the *Arthaśāstra*: the *svāmī, amātya, janapada, durga, kośa, daṇḍa, and mitra*. But, as Sharma points out some of the elements occur in *Dharmasūtras* as well. Sharma, 31.

[36] Sharma (Ibid.) reports this of the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* and the *Maitrāyaṇī Brāhmaṇa,* respectively.

[37] Sharma (144) provides a list (based on list/study provided by Ghosal) of ratnins present at the ratnahavīṃṣi for each text in which they occur: *Taittirīya Saṃhitā, Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā, Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.*

[38] Sharma, 155.

[39] Altekar (313) presumes the *ratnin* comprised an advisory board that assisted a king in ruling; Jayaswal (196), looking through the interpretive lens of parliamentary structures of power, viewed them as "high functionaries of state." However, I agree with Sharma who suggests that such distinctions—of 'high functionaries' from other nascent terms of stratification—may be pushing the evidence too far. (Sharma, 154-155)

[40] This list is taken from Sharma's study of the ritual and discussion of ratnin functions. Sharma, 144-153.

[41] Jayaswal, 197; Altekar, 161-163.

[42] Altekar, 163.

[43] According to Sharma (145), the *brāhmaṇa* is replaced by the *purohita* in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

[44] Altekar (161) claims that in the age of *Brāhmaṇa* texts, "Gods would not accept oblations from king…who did not have a competent [chaplain, *sic*] priest."

[45] Sharma, 145.

[46] Altekar, 161.

[47] Jayaswal, 35.

[48] Heesterman, 144-145.

[49] Sharma, 145.

[50] This is the ritual act sensationally explained in most discussions of royal ritual activity. Nicholas Wyatt, "Aśvamedha and Puruṣamedha in Ancient India, *Religion*, Vol. 19, Issue 1 (1989), pp. 1-11; Steven E. Lindquist describes this sequence as "vulgar" in "Enigmatic Numismatics: Kings, Horses, and the Aśvamedha Coin-type, *South Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (2001), 105-115; ' Wendy Doniger, "Sacred Cows and Profane Mares in Indian Mythology," *History of Religions,* Vol. 19, No., 1, (August 1979), pp. 1-26;

[51] Jayaswal, 194.

[52] Sharma, 146.

[53] *Ibid*.

[54] *Ibid,* 145.

[55] Sharma, 146. Heesterman (142-144) obviously did not consider the Queen as possessing any authority as he does not include her in his discussion of the ratnin-s as the source of authority for the king, although he does discuss the rest of the jewels.

[56] Sharma, 146-147. See also my detailed discussion of the *sūta* in the context of his role and relationship with the king in Chapter Two.

[57] The *sūta* is also considered the "teller of stories", specifically "old stories" (*purāṇas)*. See Velcheru Narayana Rao, *The Hindu World*, Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby, eds., (New York: Routledge, 2004), for the *sūta's* particular role in telling these stories (103), discussed in his survey of "indigenous concepts of purāṇas" (97-118). Though it seems the *sūta* consistently served as charioteer and chronicler (or "bard"), the *sūta's* fortunes as the reciter of a king's deeds seem to change in time and across genres. There is consensus that the *sūta* played an important role in preserving Indic oral histories. John Brockington provides a survey of scholarship about the *sūta's* changing role as a result of the expansion of *brāhmaṇa* hegemony over traditional stories. Brockington, *Sanskrit Epics, Op. Cit.,* 19-20, 155-56; 403 & 470.

[58] Sharma suggests that the chronicling function of the *sūta* is a phenomenon in the epics. Rather, since the king offers the sacrificial fee of a horse to the deity, Varuṇa at the home of his *sūta*, he thinks the *sūta* is the charioteer, not chronicler. Sharma, 146-47.

[59] Sharma, 155; Altekar, 161; Jayaswal, *Op. Cit*.

[60] Heesterman, 144.

[61] Sharma, 152-153. Romila Thapar mentions household members only in passion in her description of the *ratnin*: "his ministers, members of his household, and certain sections of the population." Thapar sees this as an offering that recognizes their support of the king. Romila Thapar, *A History of India, Op. Cit.,* 54.

[62] *Ibid*, 153.

[63] Heesterman, 146.

[64] *Ibid*, 149. Heesterman also sees the basis of this reliance shift from command in sacrifice to command over death in his study "Veda and *Dharma*," in *The Concept of Duty in South Asia,* ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty and J. Duncan Derrett, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1978), 87-91.

[65] Patrick Olivelle, *Upaniṣads*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), xxiv.

[66] This assertion comes from the mouth of Satyakāma to his father in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 4.9.3; Olivelle, 133.

[67] Brian Black, *The Character of the Self in Ancient India: Priests, Kings, and Women in the Early Upaniṣads,* (Albany: State University of New York, 2007), 107.

[68] Black, 110-112. Brian Black's recent analysis of early *Upaniṣads* features a rhetorical mapping of the literature through the interlocutors of the *Upaniṣads* and their strategies through the subjects of the texts. Black stresses the "*kṣatriya* orientation" of the dialogues, by which he means martial and courtly metaphors, the way in which many of the dialogues seem to frame teachings "specifically for the interests of his royal audience." Black, 71-72.

[69] *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*, 4.1 to 4.19 and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.1.1 to 2.1.20

[70] *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* 4.1; Olivelle, 221.

[71] See Olivelle's (xxix-xxxv) introduction for discussion of the presumptions made about authorship as a result of *kṣatriya* victories in *brāhmaṇa* debates. See also Black's (101-105) opinion on what he calls the "myth of *kṣatriya* authorship."

[72] Black, 128-129.

[73] Olivelle, xxxv.

[74] Olivelle, tr., 53.

[75] Black (68) notes this in his discussion of rhetorical strategies in the *Upaniṣads*. However, the practice is not exclusive to this corpus of literature. Kauṭilya is placed in the same position in the *Arthaśāstra*. For Black's general discussion of Upaniṣadic strategies, and those he considers particular to Yājñavalkya, see 67-80.

[76] Olivelle, tr., 57. In Buddhist *Abhidharma, āyatana* is also a classificatory term for speculations on phenomenal *Dharma*; *āyatana* is one of twelve (and other configurations) "bases" of consciousness. Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, *Op. Cit*., 29 and 594-601.

[77] BU 4.2.1, (Black, 111) is a bit strong in his interpretation, stating that Janaka "abdicates his position of authority to recognize Yājñavalkya's superiority." I do not agree with Black here; I think that Janaka is showing the respect due to someone who knows more—Submitting to the knowledge of someone, does not necessarily mean one's own authority is not eclipsed in such a submission.

[78] BU 4.3.1, Olivelle, 58.

[79] Olivelle, xxxix.

[80] BU 4.3.33. Olivelle, 63.

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] BU 4.2.1, Olivelle, 57.

[83] *Vidyā* is not the referent used in this particular discussion; I use it in a general sense of the things taught in these early *Upaniṣads*. My use would be consistent with the texts. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* lists a number of vidyās. Some of them seem to be of importance to kings, such as *kṣatra-vidyā* ("science of

government") *and bhītavidyā* ("science of spirits") (7.1.1-5). Olivelle attempts to translate these terms in ways not "anachronistic." See his note to 7.1.2; Olivelle, 351-52. Perhaps "science of power" is a better translation of *kṣatra-vidyā.*

[84] KaU 4.20.; Olivelle, tr., 225.

[85] Olivelle, *Upaniṣads,* xxxv. This has resonances to a statement of the collaborative relationship of power between kings and *brāhmaṇas* in *Arthaśāstra*, 1.9.11.

[86] Other royal officers are mentioned in Āpastamba's sūtra; but their role is one of security, which requires they be "āryas who are upright and honest (*āryān śucīn satya-śīlān*) (2.26.4-6)." Patrick Olivelle, *Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Ancient India,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 69.

[87] Āpastamba's principle will provide subsequent *dharma* theorists the 'legal fiction' of the 'lost Veda' to grant the conduct of venerable *brāhmaṇa*'s the authority their actions would have if based in "the Veda" (33) Patrick Olivelle, "*Dharma*śāstra: A Textual History," in Lubin Davis, Jr. and Krishnan, *Hinduism and Law, Op. Cit.*, 28-57.

[88] According to Olivelle, Āpastamba is likely the earliest author of *dharma* texts in the *sūtra* mode. Texts written in *sūtra* form Olivelle now considers merely another form of *śāstra*. Āpastamba also does not use the designation, "twice-born," *dvija*, to refer to the top three *varṇa*. This article also contains the most recent representation of Olivelle's thought about *Dharma* genres. *Ibid.,* 39.

[89] Olivelle (69) reconstructs *gurūn amātyāṃś ca na [atijīvet]* to read: "The king should not live more opulently than his elders and ministers."

[90] The sūtras reflect rhetorical attempts to create this royal reliance, if it did not exist in fact. See Sibesh Bhattacharya for an examination of the ways in which *brāhmaṇas* envisioned their relationship with kings and growing royal formations, especially pp. 9-12. "Political Authority and Brāhmaṇa-Kṣatriya Relationship in Early India," *Indian Historical Review,* 10, no. 1-2 (1983): 1-20.

[91] Olivelle, tr., (Gautama 8.1-8.3), 90.

[92] Vasiṣṭha is a good example. In *sūtras* at 19.4-6, the priest fulfills the king's ritual duties as a householder, while the king rules.

[93] Bhattacharya argues *brāhmaṇas* arrogated the responsibility for maintaining *dharma* from *kṣatriyas*, *Op. Cit.*, 6-9.

[94] Olivelle, tr., 96.

[95] At least Gautama *Dharmasūtra* asserts so: "A man who knows the Law, by his knowledge of and adherence to the Law, obtains the heavenly world to a greater degree than those who follow the law." Olivelle, 126.

[96] Olivelle, *Dharmasūtras*, Introduction, *xli*.

[97]   *vākovākyaitihāsapurāṇakuśalaḥ.... /*(8.6)
        tadapekṣas tadvṛttiḥ… / (8.7)

[98] Olivelle, note to Āpastamba 1.1-3, page 353, where Baudhāyana is given as his source for the definition of *śiṣṭa* (Baud, 1.1.5-6.).

[99] Baudhāyana asserts that persons of good families lose respect when they enter the service of the king. The kind of service is not clear. 10.28 (Olivelle, 148)

[100] Emphasis mine.

[101] Olivelle, *xli-xlii*.

[102] Olivelle, 353.

[103] Olivelle, tr., Āpastamba (2.29.11-14), "Conclusion to the Study of Law," 72-73.

[104] There is also the *traividyavṛddha* in Gautama 11.27, who helps the king interpret the law.

[105] However, if an appropriate assembly cannot be gathered, what is dharmic can be decided by a *brāhmaṇa* knowledgeable of the Vedas. (Gautama, 28.50-51)

[106] Āpastamba 1.20.6; Olivelle, 31. See also Olivelle's related comments in his introduction, page xl.

[107] The *pariṣad* appears in various normative genres. The term is often translated as "legal assembly" or "king's council" or just "council." "Legal assembly" highlights the interpretive role that members would play in deliberations of *dharma*. Since the assembly did not always use the dictates of *dharma* as their guide, I favor the use of "assembly" to represent the term.

[108] Olivelle, tr., 126.

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] Patrick Olivelle's opinions about the relationship between *Dharma*sūtra and *Dharma*śāstra literatures and traditions have recently changed. Olivelle now considers *Dharma*sūtra to be earlier "modes" of the *Dharma*śāstric genre. See his "Explorations in the Early History of *Dharma*śāstra," in *Between the Empires, Op. Cit.,* 169-190; and his most succinct iteration of the development of the *dharma* genre: "*Dharma*śāstra: A Textual History," in Timothy Lubin, Donald R. Davis, Jr., and Jayanth K. Krishnan, eds., *Hinduism and Law: An Introduction*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28-57.

[111] Patrick Olivelle suggests something similar: Manu is a "watershed" in the history of the *dharmaśāstra* genre; providing the "frame" within which subsequent authors of *dharmaśāstra* work; "*Dharma*śāstra: a textual history," 40-41. Though we share many ideas about the development of *dharmaśāstra,* we came to our conclusions individually.

[112] Olivelle, *Manu*, 157. Complexity of the social world that the *śāstra* brings under its umbrella is also indicated in the chapters on "the justice system" and the structures named for litigation (Chapter 8, especially Stated grounds for litigation (8.47-178), punishments for crimes, fines and levies have all increased, (8.124-162) exponentially, in detail over the *dharmasūtras.*

[113] Olivelle, *Manu*, 16 and 39-40.

[114] "Manu [at 10.44] presents the *mleccha* (pejorative sense of "outsider," or "alien") groups such as Yavana, Śaka, and Cīna as sunk to the level of Śūdras, although they were *Kṣatriya* by birth." Olivelle, 41.

[115] Olivelle, 38-39. Theodicy is an appropriate term to use with respect to the claims that these kingdoms were founded by Śūdras, because a shift from twice-born rule is in a sense the end of the word—for these *brāhmaṇas* is an evil that must be explained. Jain and Buddhist sources both assert *śramaṇa* affiliations for the kingdoms, and that Aśoka, at least, was a *kṣatriya*.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] Smith and Doniger, *Op. Cit.*

[118] Olivelle, "Explorations in the Early History of Dharmaśāstra," in *Between the Empires, Op. Cit.,* 177-180.

[119] "*śraddha*" in this context is meant to denote "generosity" rather than "faith," as it is often translated. See Olivelle's discussion of the nature of this term in his note to 3.202 (p. 265).

[120] Olivelle, tr.,

> *samam abrāhmaṇe dānaṃ dviguṇaṃ brāhmaṇa-bruve |*
> *sahasra-guṇaṃ pradhīte* anantaṃ vedapārage* || 7.85

> *pātrasya hi viśeṣeṇa śraddhānatayaiva ca |*
> *alpaṃ vā bahu vā pretya dānasya avāpyate palam* || 7.86

[121] Description of the ideal *brāhmaṇa* does not include *"kulodgata,"* but since he is chosen from among those who are, so this quality is assumed. *MDh*, 7.55-58; Olivelle, 157.

[122] Dr. M. A. Jayashree pointed out that your family background—namely, a "good birth"—is a guide in your affairs; for yourself as actor and for others as interpreters of your behavior. Personal communication, Dr. M.A. Jayashree, July 07-08, 2004. While there is no historical relevance of Jayashree's remark to the early sources, I cite Jayashree here since this statement of hers made me look closer at references or allusions to family background in the early texts.

[123] Sharma, 221.

[124] See Jayaswal (285-86) for one discussion of the envoy/*dūta* in ancient India (from *Mānava*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Arthaśāstra* and Gupta inscriptional sources). See my Chapter Two above; and also Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*, *Op. Cit.*, 19-23.

[125] *Mantrin* as a term is not used in the section describing the qualities of the advisors (7.54-59). When it is used, it is only in the plural to refer to the body of counselors engaged in advising the king as part of his morning and afternoon routine (7.146). For instance, at 7.146, the king, after dismissing his subjects, "should confer with his counselors," *mantrayet saha mantribhiḥ*. Olivelle, 162.

[126] Olivelle, tr., 156.

[127] Notably, it is not Āryāvarta to which they must belong. See Patrick Olivelle for the import of *Āryāvarta* to the history of *Dharmaśāstra* in "Explorations of the Early History of *Dharma*śāstra," *Op Cit.,* 180-182.

[128] Doniger and Smith follow Bühler in translating the terms as "hereditary." (Doniger, *Laws of Manu,* 134*)* Olivelle describes and takes these to task in his discussion of the term in his note to translation of 7.54. Olivelle, 295.

[129] Olivelle's note to translation of 7.54; Olivelle, 295.

[130] Olivelle, tr., adapted; 154.
> …*chāstravidaḥ śūrāṃl labdhalakṣān kulodgatān …prakurvati parīkṣitān //* MDh, 7.54

[131] Olivelle, 157.

[132] Apte, 514C and MW, 974B.

[133] "He should appoint a chaplain and choose his officiating priests. They are to perform on his behalf the domestic rites, as well as those requiring three sacred fires" (7.78) Olivelle, tr., 158.

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[134] The last two, *pratyakṣa* and *hetavaḥ,* are two *pramāṇas* (aspects) of cognition in Vaiśeṣika doctrine. M. Hiriyanna, *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy,* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995, 2000 Reprint), 99.

[135] Olivelle, tr., 157: *ṣāṅguṇyasaṃyutam*

[136] *Ibid.*, 234-35.

[137] There is an obvious textual fault-line between *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* aims in the chapters devoted to the key mediators of king at I.8 and I.9 devoted to the ideal minister (*amātya*) and counselor (*mantrin*) that has troubled translators through the years. Between these two *prakaraṇa*, there is an inclusion of the *mantrin* as superior to *amātya* that does not match the logic of the discussion of the attributes of *amātya*. McClish attributes the confusion to the rearrangement according to the "political Brahmanism" of the redactor of the original prakaraṇa text. Using text critical methods, McClish argues that the organizer of the *Arthaśāstra* into the *adhyāya* structure betrays a *brāhmaṇa* hand; the smaller *prakaraṇa* that make up the *adhyāya* that of non-*brāhmaṇa* creators. Mark McClish*, Political Brahmanism and the State: A Compositional History of the Arthaśāstra*, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, (University of Texas at Austin, 2009, 75-76.

[138] McClish convincingly argues that the ideology of Brahmanism present in the text is a later addition to this *Arthaśāstra*. Rather, he considers the redaction of the text to "be part of a broad re-assertion of Brahmanical privilege in a new political context." McClish*, vi.*

[139] Kangle, tr., 7.

[140] These are trade, agriculture, and cattle raising (1.4.1); Kangle, tr., 7. Sharma translates *vārttā* as "material resources."

[141] Kangle, adapted tr., 11.

[142] Kangle, 11.

[143] Loyalty and affection can complicate a king's discernment in the best course of action to take, as becomes evident below. The paternal affections that Dhṛtarāṣṭra has for his errant *kṣatriya* son Duryodhana, is one narrative engagement with the problem posed by love to proper action in Chapter Seven.

[144]   *tasmād abhijanaprajñāśaucaśauryānurāgayuktān amātyān kurvīta guṇaprādhānyāt iti // Aś*,I.8.26

[145] Ministers are to have originated from the kingdom (note *vṛddhi* strengthening to *(jāna)* on *jana* in *janapada,* stressing that this is a place of origin). For a discussion of the "moderate size" of the janapada with respect to other ancient Indian polity formations, see S. R. Goyal, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra, Its Author, Date and Relevance for the Maurya Period,* (Jodphur: Kusumanjali Book World, 2000), 111-112. For a more convincing view see Sharma*,* 38-39 and 364. Vigasin and Samozvantsev note the stratification within "noble" family as *hīna* (low or base), *tulya*, (equal) *and viśiṣṭa* (superior or distinctive). A. A. Vigasin and A. M. Samozvantsev, *Society, State and Law in Ancient India,* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private, Ltd., 1985), 95.

[146] The qualities of persons that Kauṭilya enumerates here are often obscure. Kangle is no help in understanding what some of the minister's personal qualities could mean, such as translating *svavagrahaḥ* as "easy to hold in check." Shama Shastri's translation of *svavagrahaḥ* as "influential," elides the reflexive dimension and the implication of 'continence' in the term (Shama Shastri, 14). Shama Shastri relied on many of the same commentaries as Ganapati Shastri in his Ś*rīmūlam* commentary, Part I, 1 & 2 Adhikaraṇa, 45. I think that *svavagrahaḥ* denotes a quality of "self-managing" or "self-correcting," important to royal contexts of behavior: someone that does not need direction or correction from outside himself to assure self-control in social settings at court.

[147]   *svavagrahaḥ śobhanabandur iti sāmpradāyikāḥ,*
       sukhenāvagrahituṃ prāmādikākārya-pravṛtter vārayituṃ śakyaḥ
              (Sastri commentary on 1.9.1; Part I—1 & 2 Adhikaraṇas, Vol. 1, , page 45)

[148] In his commentary on the text, Ganapati Sastri glosses these as the "four-fold test of purity," *caturvidhopadhāśuddhaḥ*.

[149]   *brāhmaṇenaidhitaṃ kṣatraṃ mantri-mantrābhimantritam |*
       jayaty ajitam atyantaṃ śāstrānugama-śastritam || Aś, 1.9.11

[150] It is the case that in the later Gupta period, a *kṣatriya* king would assume the *gotra* name of his *brāhmaṇa* teacher; which indicates some heterogeneity, but it is not indicated in the inscriptions that *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* boys were pupils together. *CII 3,* Rev. ed., 113. According to Dr. K. V. Ramesh, the *kṣatriya* student would frequently take the *pravara (*cover of his ancestry*)* of his *purohita*. Personal Communication, ASI, Mysore; August, 20, 2004. We have the narrative evidence of the relationship between Droṇa, a *brāhmaṇa* expert in the arts of war that trained the *kṣatriya* Pāṇḍava and Kaurava *rājanya,* but no indication that they assumed his *gotra*. The relationship of reliance on him seems most important.

[151] McClish's research substantiates my opinion*; Op Cit*., especially his chapter seven on the structures of *adhyāya* versus *prakaraṇa* and chapter eight, "Political Brahmanism." Although his work needs to be situated in the scholarship of the history of early Indian religion, I think the structural evidence McClish provides indicates that even though the *brāhmaṇa* voice may have been made to override others through Sanskritization that happened in royal courts of the *Arthaśāstra's* provenance, it is evident that *brāhmaṇas* were not the only contributors to idealized royal praxis.

[152] Olivelle, "Introduction," to his translation of the *Pañcatantra*, xx.

[153] *Ibid.*, xxxv.

[154] Olivelle (xlvii) points out this can be translated "sons of ministers." I suggest extending the sense a little beyond what is stated in Olivelle's introduction. I think that the use of *mantriputra* is a reference to the ministers' being from "families" of ministers, stressing the hereditary nature of ministerial positions in the eyes of the text.

[155] See Olivelle's translation, 55 [130]; 58 [143] and 69 [173-176] as examples. See also Olivelle's comments about deception as a valued strategy, xxxv.

[156] *Ibid.,* 47.

[157] *Ibid.,* 16.

[158] As in the case of the lion king, Piṅgalaka allowing the *mantriputra*, Damanaka, to pass his sentries because he knew he was from "good ministerial stock." (Olivelle tr., 13)

[159] *Ibid.,* 111.

[160] *Ibid.*

[161] *Ibid.,* 109.

[162] *Ibid.,* 58.

[163] *Ibid.,* 11-12.

[164] *Ibid.,* 13.

[165] This is a position that is analogous to the *anujīvin* (court retainers), who aspire to positions of minister and advisor in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Though aspiring to be the advisor to the king and so of the body of retainers, he is called a *mantri-putra* by the king and his fellow minister in the text. This demonstrates that the distinctions of advisory and ministerial positions in this text are based on action, not merely position (hereditary or otherwise). However, there was obviously, to the writers of the text, a sense that heredity and position were a source of friction, if not a point of debate and contention.

[166] Olivelle, tr., 56.

[167] *Ibid.,* 56-57;

[168] Ciraṃjīvin gives the four strategies (that occur in Manu and Kauṭilya as well): "making peace, bribery, sowing discord, and armed conflict." Olivelle, tr., 122.

[169] *Ibid.*, 71.

[170] *Ibid.,* 100.

[171] *Ibid.*

[172] *Ibid.*, 103.

[173] Heredity—ministers coming from families of ministers—becomes an important marker of advisor excellence in the high functionaries of the Gupta period; Sharma, *Op. Cit.*, 325. For instance, select inscriptions laud the heredity of a *mantrin*, *saciva*, and *amātya*; see D. C. Sircar's, *Select Inscriptions of the Gupta Era, Op. Cit.,* 3, Inscription No. 17 and ff.; See also note 2, page 325 for discussion of those positions.

[174] *Ibid.,* 111; the prose section between śloka 32 and 33.

[175] Olivelle, tr., 56.

[176] *Ibid.,* 10.

[177] *Ibid.,* 30.

[178] Saṃjaya not only acts as envoy between courts of the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, and he is described as a special minister (*mahāmātra*) to Dhṛtarāṣṭra (*MBh*, 15.22.4). The *mahāmātra* denotes one of the most important functionaries in the Aśokan inscriptions, and occurs frequently in *Pāli Jātaka* and *Vinaya Piṭaka* texts. They are also present in Sātavāhana dynastic inscriptions, but without the same prevalence. Sharma, 219, 276, and 364ff

[179] This story is named a "jaya" history by Kuntī, which she uses to try and prompt Yudhiṣṭhira to take up his responsibility to engage in war as *kṣatriya* king (*MBh*, 12.134.16-21). The powers achieved through recitation of this "jaya" are enumerated here, which includes encouragement in the face of enemies, victories for kings, bringing on the birth of a heroic son.

[180] Fitzgerald, tr., 377.

[181]   *rājadharmān avekṣasva pitṛpaitāmahocitān /*
    naitad rājñām atho vṛttaṃ yathā tvaṃ sthātum icchasi // (*MBh*, 12.76.20)

[182] Ganguli's translation says that he should make "*brāhmaṇas*" his counselors; (Kisari Mohan Ganguli, *Āśramavāsika parva, The Mahabharata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa*, Vol. 12, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt., Ltd, 5th ed., 1991), 10. I translate *dvijān* as "twice-born" men; since there is evidence that advisors from more than the *brāhmaṇa* varṇa advised kings in the text. *mantriṇaś caiva kurvīthā dvijān vidyāviśāradān vinītāṃś ca kulīnāṃś ca dharmārthakuśalān ṛjūn.* (MBh, 15.9.20)

[183] *amātyān upadhātītān pitṛpaitāmahāñ śucīn /*
dāntān karmasu sarveṣu mukhyān mukhyeṣu yojayeḥ // (*MBh*, 15.9.14).

[184] 12.81.3: *caturvidhāni mitrāṇi rājñāṃ rājan bhavanty uta sahārtho bhajamānaś ca sahajaḥ kṛtrimas tathā*

[185] Fitzgerald (372) translates this subhāṣita as follows: "'Of the four, the middle two are the best; the other two are always suspect.'"
caturṇāṃ madhyamau śreṣṭhau nityaṃ śaṅkyau tathāparau sarve nityaṃ śaṅkitavyāḥ pratyakṣaṃ kāryam ātmanaḥ

[186] *Ibid.*

[187] *Ibid.*

[188] *Ibid.,* 373.

[189] Both Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions equate beauty in color of skin, quality of voice, and body to dharmic power, ritual and dharmic expertise, and religious merit.

[190] *sa te vidyāt paraṃ mantraṃ prakṛtiṃ cārthaDharmayoḥ /*
viśvāsas te bhavet tatra yathā pitari vai tathā … (12.81.24).

[191] Fitzgerrald, tr. *Ibid.,* 372.
naiva dvau na trayaḥ kāryā na mṛṣyeran…ekārthād eva bhūtānāṃ bhedo bhavati sarvadā (12.81.25).

[192] Monier Monier Williams distinguishes *jñātir* from *saṃbandhi* as intimate paternal relatives or kin (MW425C), and close relatives created by marriage (MW1177C), respectively.

[193] *jñātibhyaś caiva bibhyethā mūtyor iva yataḥ sadā /uparājeva rājardhiṃ jñātir na sahate sadā //*

[194] Fitzgerald, 373.

[195] *Ibid.*, 373-374.

[196] *…viśvastavad aviśvastas teṣu varteta sarvadā…* 12.81.39

[197] Fitzgerald takes these first three—wealthy, warrior/heroic, and Brahmins—as representative of the four varṇas, but I think this pushes the text further than it should. Fitzgerald, note to 12.84.2, page 380 of his translation.

[198] Paraphrasing Fitzgerald, 381.

[199] Fitzgerald, tr., 380.
*…śaktāḥ kathayituṃ samyak te…syuḥ…*12.84.1

[200] *Ibid.*, 381;   *…āvartayati bhūyiṣṭham tad ekaḥ anupālitaḥ …*

[201] *…prasannaṃ hy aprasannaṃ vā pīḍitaṃ hṛtam eva vā …āvartayati…*
The entire verse: *prasannaṃ hy aprasannaṃ vā pīḍitaṃ hṛtam eva vā /*
āvartayati bhūyiṣṭhaṃ tad eko hy anupālitaḥ // 12.84.4

[202] Śreya is a polysemic term which generally denotes "attributes of power and majesty." Monier Williams suggests 'majesty,' 'power' and' might,' etc. (MW 1098C) For our purposes here, as a substantive noun, I choose 'the most exemplary of men.'

[203] *Ibid.*

[204] Fitzgerald translates …*paryāptavacanān…*as "abundant." I think senses in English such as "eloquent," or sophisticated in use of speech, or "erudite" is the sense intended here.

[205] *…deśakālavidhānajñān bhartṛkāryahitaiṣiṇaḥ…*

[206] *…anāyaka iva acakṣur muhyati.*

[207] Fitzgerald uses "deliberation" alone to denote *ūhyeṣu (*from √*ūh.* I chose "complex reasoning" as an attempt to encompass the powers of inference, the inductive and deductive reasoning skills that *ūhyeṣu karmasu* suggests here. The implication is that a narrow mind-set (*alpaśrutaḥ*) cannot always achieve this level of reasoning.

[208] In times of crisis, a minister (of our kind) like me gives discerning help.
dadāty asmad vidho 'mātyo buddhi-sāhāyyam āpadi (*MBh*, 12.83.32)

[209] According to R. S. Sharma (31), there are variants in the terms to denote the minister in Pāli sources: *nāyaka* (literally, "leader", but it is a term used in to describe ministers that serve in remote border areas) is used is some texts, and *gahapati* ("householder") in others. *Nāyaka* has a military function in most uses of the term. In the *Milindapañha* as well as some lists of the seven jewels, the *nāyaka* is the king's advisor. Sharma suggests that in pre-Mauryan royal configurations, there would have been less specialization; therefore, a *nāyaka* could act as a general for the king, as well as advisor. This was certainly the case in Gupta formulations, where an advisor (*mahāmantrin*) could be a minister of peace and war *(mahāsandhivigraha).* Sharma, 324-325. For a counterpoint, see Rhys Davids who reports on the definition of *pariṇāyaka* as a general, distinction from "earlier" advisory role of the figure; *Milindapañha,* 259.

[210] The seven-treasures of the king occur in the *Mahāsudassana Sutta*, (*Sutta* 17). In this *sutta*, the Buddha was this cakravartin king, who ruled dharmically with the help of his seven-treasures. Walshe, *Op. Cit.*, 279-290.

[211] *saptāṅga* ("seven limbs/branches") in the Brahmanical traditions

[212] Chakravarti, *Op. Cit.,* 69.

[213] *Ibid.*, 166.

[214] From the *Bālapaṇḍita Sutta*: "Fools and Wise Men," in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima-nikāya*, translated by Bhikkhu Nāṅamoli and revised and edited by Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Boston: Wisdom Publications in association with the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, 1995), p. 1026.

[215] *The Jātaka, Birth Stories of the Buddha*, Vol. I., (PTS), 5.

[216] *Ibid.* Pāli text, page 182.

[217] Pāli text translators usually translate *purohita* as "chaplain".

[218] …*purohita ahosi …akhaṇḍa pañcasīlo…* (*Jātaka*, I, 214)

[219] *ahosi dānādimutto sīlajjhāsayo … (Ibid.)*

[220] *Jātakamālā* (*JāMā*), No. 23; Khoroche, *Op. Cit.,* 154; the bodhisattva earns the resentment of the king's other ministers due to his superior virtues. *JāMā*, 23.2-23.4.5

[221] *JāMā,* 23, lines13-16; Kern, 142.

[222] I. B. Horner, tr. *Milindapañha* , PTS, 29.

[223] Horner, 29-30.

[224] Strong, *Op. Cit.,* 239.

[225] Just as we encountered the *kṣatriya* Pasenadi reveling in the excitement of his fame; we see Aśoka, directing his energies to enshrining the body of the Buddha; the relics spreading the *dharma* in the Buddha's absence, Aśoka conquering his world, Jambudvīpa.

[226] Strong, tr., 242.

[227] Ibid., 241.

[228] Ruth Cecily Katz describes this as one of Arjuna's "kshatriya-oriented names, connected with victory: it means 'wealth winner.'" See Katz, "Appendix: The Names of Arjuna," in *Arjuna in the Mahabharata: Where Krishna Is, There is Victory* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 288.

Notes to Chapter 6

[1] Ganguli's translation, 184. Ganguli's translation of *Śāntiparvan* 84.47-49 is more fluid than I was able to create from these awkward and pithy verses. Kisari Mohan Ganguli, trans., *Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva* 8, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt., Reprint 1998). Ganguli's translation is also more comprehensible than James Fitzgerald's translation of them. *The Mahābhārata: Book 11 The Book of the Women, Book 12 The Book of Peace, Part I,* Vol. 7, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 383.

Structurally, *mantram* here is cast through several compounds, stressing their multivalent function.
> *mantragrāhā hi rājyasya mantriṇo ye manīṣiṇaḥ*
> *mantrasaṃhanano rājā mantrāṅgānītaro janaḥ* (12.84.47)
> *rājyaṃ praṇidhimūlaṃ hi mantrasāraṃ pracakṣate*
> *svāminaṃ tv anuvartanti vṛttyartham iha mantriṇaḥ* (12.84.48)
> *sa vinīya madakrodhau mānam īrṣyāṃ ca nirvṛtaḥ*
> *nityaṃ pañcopadhātītair mantrayet saha mantribhiḥ* (12.84.49)

[2] …*rājyaṃ praṇidhimūlaṃ hi mantrasāraṃ pracakṣate* / (12.84.48a)

[3] Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* recommends setting spies on all officers, even though vetted by the "trial" (*upadhā*) of integrity. The *mantrin, purohita, senāpati*…and *nāyaka*, used to denote the minister here; *amātya* is not used in this list (1.12.6). In addition, spies are set on the people of the realm and people of the hinter lands (*paurajānapada*) 1.13.1.

[4] *sa vinīya madakrodhau mānam īrṣyāṃ ca nirvṛtaḥ… mantrayet saha mantribhiḥ*

[5] According to the polity conveyed by creator of this *Pañcatantra*, this is a fifth strategy "not mentioned by the authors of authoritative texts." Patrick Olivelle, *The Pañcatantra,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 122. According to Olivelle, "the central message of the *Pañcatantra* is that craft and deception constitute the major art of government" (xxxv).

[6] *Ibid,* 171.

[7] Olivelle suggests "six constituents of good policy" for (*ṣaḍguṇa*) for the occurrences of the concept in the *Pañcatantra*. Olivelle, page 59 (Book I) and 121 (Book III); see also Manu 7.160-180, where it is the *brāhmaṇa* who is to help the king exercise these; Olivelle, 38-39. See the *Arthaśāstra*, Book III, 7.1.2; and in *Mahābhārata* 12.116.22 and 12.57.16; Fitzgerald, 460.

[8] Olivelle, tr., 160.

[9] Van Buitenen, tr. *Mahābhārata* 3, *Op. Cit*., 430.
> *pitryam aṃśaṃ mahābāho nimagnaṃ punar uddhara*
> *sāmnā dānena bhedena daṇḍenātha nayena ca* (5.130.30)

Kuntī then illustrates her own use of *upāya* by recounting a *saṃvādana* dialogue, which is also an ancient story (*MBh*, 5.131-134).

[10] For instance, in the *Pañcatantra,* the primary character in Book 4, "On War and Peace," is the senior minister named Ciraṃjīvin, who states: "When a man is anchored [in these] is there any doubt in his success?" Olivelle, tr., 110. Book 4 is organized around the *upāya* of *daṇḍa,* the times and places for using force and coercion (or their absence, which is "peace").

[11] According to Kauṭilya, each earlier *upāya*s in the list is "lighter than each later one," with force being the heaviest in its consequences (9.6.57); Kangle, tr. 425. Manu also suggests that advisors should begin with conciliation and then, in succession, proceed through the *upāya* until adversaries submit (*MDh*, 7.107-108). Manu then attenuates it by reporting on experts who argue that conciliation and force are preferable to the king who wants to "enhance his realm" (7.109); Olivelle translation, 160. It seems to me that Manu betrays a decidedly expansionary bias, which may be worth pursuing in the future for what it might add to our understanding of the historical context of Manu.

[12] *Aś*, 9.6.70. Kauṭilya suggests establishing a relationship by giving girls for marriage. Though cryptically suggested, it appears also that marriages can also be used to separate persons. Creating royal alliances by means of marriage is ubiquitous in human history.

[13] Kangle, tr. 428.

[14] Kangle, tr. 421.

[15] Kangle, adapted tr., 428. Sanskrit from GRETIL, accessed 08/13/2012 at 2:30pm.
> *dhārmikaṃ jātikulaśrutavṛttastavena sambandhena pūrveṣāṃ traikālyaupakārān apakārābhyāṃ*
> *vā sāntvayet // Aś*, 9.6.21

[16] Kauṭilya indicates that while force is useful against traitors and enemies, the presence of non-combatants make it difficult to use on a large scale basis. And, even if it is used, it might not achieve its aim and bring other "disastrous results" in its wake. (9.6.3-4). Kangle, 422.

[17] See his note 35 that glosses the occurrences of the four *upāya* in the *Sundarakāṇḍa,* 5.2.27; 5.34.16, cf. 5.39.23. Goldman characterizes concerns with *upāya* as "typical of nīti and arthaśāstra" genres and cites Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* 9.6.56-61 and 9.7.68-80. Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman, trans., and eds., *The Rāmāyaṇa* 5, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

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[18] Brockington affirms the incidental occurrence of the strategies in the two epics, excluding the "later" sections of the *Mahābhārata.* John Brockington, *Sanskrit Epics, Op. cit*., 402.

[19] The six *guṇas* according to Hartmut Scharfe's study of Kauṭilya's use of the *guṇas* are particularly to manage the "circle of kings," since it deals "with the factors or basic matters of internal and external politics: one's own officials, provinces, cities, etc., those of enemies, allies and neutral powers and the kings of these political entities themselves." As discussed in previous chapters, the circle of kings is a śāstric moniker for early Indic large scale polities. Hartmut Scharfe, *Investigations in Kauṭalya's Manual of Political Science*, English translation, 2nd rev. ed., (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 107-108.

[20] Olivelle defines, but does not discuss the six *guṇas* in the course of his translations of the *Pañcatantra* (on pages 59 and 110, Book I, "Sowing Dissension," and Book IV, "War and Peace," respectively) and the *Dharmaśāstra of* Manu (7.107). It is notable that each text alludes to these *guṇas* as foundational to royal tactics for success. According to Kangle, "guṇa has a technical sense of a measure to be adopted as policy." Part 2; 321.

[21] The six *guṇas* and *upāya* are the foundational structure of the *Arthaśāstra's* conception of royal advisory means and strategies. See *Aś,* 9.7.68-72ff for the *upāya* as a means of overcoming dangers.

[22] The sense of *upāya* wielded by the Bodhisatta/Buddha Śākyamuni in the *jātaka* is very different than the *upāya* that becomes so important to Mahāyāna textual production.

In the *Mahāhaṃsa-Jātaka,* the Bodhisatta is described as being a king that "conciliates by using the four kingly virtues called *saṃgāhavatthu*." Childers tr., *The Jātaka* 6, note to 191:3 of (*Jā*, 534). In the PTSD (666B), these involve "dāna, peyya vajja, atthacariyā, samānattatā; liberality, kindly speech, life of usefulness, and sagacious conduct or impartiality." A perhaps more preferable translation might be: "generosity, constructive speech, public service, and even-tempered." The way in which it is used is intriguing (for its use of *atthacariyā*). Could this be a "dis-analogy" to the four royal *upāya* here (as in the Kauṭilya formulation I recount here)? The idea of the *saṅgahavatthus* (*Jā*, 532) or *saṃgāhavatthu* (*Jā*, 534), occurs in the *Sona-Nanda- jātaka,* and the *Mahāhaṃsa-Jātaka* respectively. According to Edgerton in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit (BHS) Dictionary* (548B), these four *saṅgahavatthu* functioned "as a means by which a Buddha or (more often in BHS) a Bodhisatta attracts or draws to himself and to religious life, creatures."

[23] Senaka aims to discredit the Bodhisatta, who had replaced Senaka in his counseling intimacy with his king. To do this, Senaka seeks to discredit the Bodhisatta, the sage Mahosadha, by making the king (Vedeha of Mithilā) think him a thief. Senaka and his associates each steal an item belonging to the king, which they then plant in the bodhisattva's home, using their servant girls as carriers of the items. See E. B. Cowell and W. H. D. Rouse, trans., *The Jātaka* 6, *Op. Cit*., p. 185-6; or PDA location 4383.

[24] Cowell and Rouse, tr. *Jātaka* 5; 219-220.

[25] Self-deception may be a species behavior, if we consider the practices in Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions directed at counter-acting self-deception. These practices involve varieties of cultivating one's perception of reality and the self. Aspects of both religious traditions could be marshaled to say that self-deception is most destructive of all the varieties of deceits in which a person can engage. One can hardly see clearly enough to advise the correct path of action, if one deceives oneself. Moreover, given the arguments for kings to rely on advisors to help them see clearly, advisors that "see clearly" or are "far-seeing" use these abilities to militate against royal self-deception.

[26] There is a similar technique mentioned in *Arthaśāstra*, 13.1.3.

[27] Ganguli, *Śalyaparvan*, 86. Ganguli deviates a bit from the critical edition, which is: *māyāvina imāṃ māyāṃ māyayā jahi bhārata māyāvī māyayāvadhyaḥ satyam etad yudhiṣṭhira.* The text does not quite say "for you too have these powers at your disposal", but since Kṛṣṇa is telling him to use such powers, we can

presume he has them. A more literal translation would be "Use the power of illusion to defeat the illusion created by this person who possesses the power of illusion, O Bhārata. One who possesses such powers of illusion must be vanquished by the powers of illusion. This is the truth, Yudhiṣṭhira."

[28] In this context, I take *māyā yoga* to mean the "the application or employment of illusion, employed of magical arts." (MW811A) This translation is preferred since illusion and magic are the topics, for both *Mahābhārata* and the *Arthaśāstra* in these contexts. I use "illusions" to denote these practices in the most general sense. I use "tactic" or "practice" or "application" to translate *yoga* when it occurs in compounds that describe the tricks that the king and his agents might use. Kangle suggests *yoga* carries a technical meaning in the *Arthaśāstra*, ranging from "practical application" to "secret remedy" or "trick." Kangle, Part I, 329. I prefer "tactic" or "means" to convey the utilitarian sense of *yoga* in the *Arthaśāstra*.

[29] Bhīṣma asserts as much in *Śāntiparvan* 110.5-7; Fitzgerald, tr., 445.

[30] The focus of the *Arthaśāstra* is indeed *artha*, which means that the end does justify the means, and notions of *dharma* are suspended in order to bring about a particular aim for a kingdom, and for a king. Nevertheless, examples from the *Mahābhārata* reveal that even these tactics are dharmic, in the right context: where being dharmic would be adharmic. See my discussion of *Karṇaparvan* 8.49 in Chapter Seven of this dissertation.

[31]For Kangle's comments on this term; see *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, *Op. Cit.*, Part 2, page 24. There may well be an indication of magical spells implied by the term *jambhaka.*

[32] Perhaps there is more detail in the text due to the level of artifice involved in enlisting such spies. The text lays out the deception of the role in detail, perhaps due to its being so risky, or so innovative.

[33] Kangle uses "wandering monk" or "apostate monk" to denote this apostate *(udāsthitaḥ)* or former religious renunciant. I will use primarily "wandering mendicant" or "mendicant spy" to name this role.

[34]Kangle, tr., 21-22. The presence of royal inscriptions of Aśoka in various religious sites—Ājīvika caves and Buddhist saṅgha locations—may have to do with more than his pious interests. Inscriptions may have been functioning in their role as part of the web of observation of his kingdom, if the *Arthaśāstra's* use of the religious orders was part of his system of observation. Moreover, tales of the schisms that occurred in the early nikāyas speak also of the infiltration of their orders by such false monks.

[35]MW185 C.

[36] Kangle, tr., 21-22.
> *vṛttikāmāṃś ca upajapet etanaiva veṣeṇa rājārthaś caritavyobhuktavetanakāle ca upasthātavyaṃ iti* (1.11.7) *sarva-pravrajitāś ca svaṃ svaṃ vargam evam upajapeyuḥ.* (1.11 8)

[37] MW198A, offers "bring over to one's party" and "instigate to rebellion or treachery" as alternative translations.

[38] One can presume that if they desire subsistence in this way, they would also be willing to turn away from the mendicant life (*pratyavasitaḥ*). This term is an adjective for the monk-spy, since it denotes one who has given up life of a religious mendicant. MW 676.

[39] King Aśoka Maurya (d. 232 B.C.E.) was said to have cleared the religious orders (particularly Buddhist) of such corrupt mendicants from the religious communities. These were members of the communities merely for the food, shelter and clothing they were provided. The *Arthaśāstra* seems to be targeting persons prone to the same vices.

[40] MW1019B.

[41] *samiddha-yogaiḥ*: *samiddha* literally means "blazing." This may indicate that such practice should be publicly performed, but the phrase is rather obscure.

[42] Kangle, tr., adapted; I substituted "endowed with the strength of truth" for (*sattva-śakti-sampannam*).

[43] Kangle, tr., 22-23.

[44] *muṇḍa-jāṭilāntevāsī:* the reference to disciples is not explicit, but is implied from the context. Literally it means, "living with those with shaven heads or matted-locks."

[45] In many ways, the hermit spy not only creates or bolsters the power of the king; he also empowers the king to mollify individuals. He is to use money, appeal to one's sense of honor, and punishment, if necessary, to deal with those resentful or inimical to the king. I do not examine this aspect of his role here since it is not within the specific dimension of tricks and illusions; certainly however, his ongoing deception as an ascetic allows for his ability to make things smooth for the king.

[46] According to the text, the primary priest is "…capable of counteracting divine and human calamities by means of Atharvan remedies: "Those who know the three Vedas also help the king assess matters involving men of illusion (*māyā-yogavins*) and ascetics (*tapasvins*)." 1.19.32.

[47] *Yoga-vāmana* is an adjective used of the means to draw out the enemy Book 13, Chapter .2. *Yoga* in this context means "tactic" and *vāmana* is something that is "base" or vile in nature; hence "base tactics". Just how sneaky the tactics the *Arthaśāstra* recommends are in this chapter is hidden by Kangle's use of "stratagems" for the term *yoga-vāmana*.

[48] In his study of Vedic literature, Jan Gonda mentions Atharvan charms of a "more special destructive, deterrent effect" that the primary priest used on behalf of the king (286-87). There is no reference in Gonda's study to baseness of the use of such charms. Gonda's study notes that war charms are "one of the most interesting peculiarities of the *Atharvaveda-Saṃhita.*"(p. 285) Though beyond the scope of this study, the *Arthaśāstra*'s use of "base tactics" and the Atharvan remedies and war charms of the *Atharvaveda-Saṃhita* and of the *Kauśika sūtra* deserve further comparative, study.

[49]   *daivatasaṃyogakhyāpanaṃ tu*…(13.1.3) Kangle rightfully makes this phrase govern all the deceitful means that the king's associates use in 13.1.3-6 to project the king's power in relationship with deities.

[50] *…agnicaityadaivata…*13.1.3*,* in Kangle's first *pada*.

[51] Emphasis mine; Kangle, adapted translation, 474. *…tair varuṇāgakanyāvākyakriyā saṃbhāṣaṇaṃ ca*…(13.1.6)
My adaptations to Kangle's translation of 13.1.6 are in square brackets [ ]. My changes better reflect the agency of the secret agents' in using these deities at the (*caitya*) sanctuary.

[52] The phrase *saṃbhāṣaṇaṃ pūjanaṃ ca* occurs twice in *Aś*, 13.1.3. The royal agents are enjoined to use the same approach—to verbally supplicate and to honor—other agents acting as these divine powers. The implication seems to be that the king has power successfully to summon divine beings and attain his aims in the worship of them.

[53] The precise nature of these tactics is difficult to ascertain in the Sanskrit clause (13.1. 3, in the final clause) that describes them, as Kangle states in the note for verse 3. The Sanskrit is:
        yudakabastinā jarāyuṇa vā siro 'vagūḍha-nāsaḥ pṛṣa-tāntra-kulīra-nakra-śiṃśumārodra-
        vasābhir vā śata-pākyaṃ tailaṃ nastaḥ prayogaḥ.

Kangle points out that the Sanskrit *śiro-va-gūḍha-nāsaḥ* is obscure, but seems to refer to the practice that makes one able to move through water—perhaps an animal bladder is put over the head to move through water, since the nose is somehow covered, along with the head. Kangle also suggests that the hundred-fold evaporated oil *(śata-pākyaṃ tailaṃ)* is inserted in the nose to make it glow like those of creatures of the night. Kangle, 475.

[54] Kangle, tr., 474: The two key strategies for deceptive action here are conveyed in 13.1.1: "…by getting his omniscience and association with divinities proclaimed" (*…sarvajña-daivata-saṃyoga-khyāpanābhyām).*

[55] Tricks and illusions used in times of duress, such as in war (here in attempts to regain a lost fortified city or to repel a rival king) are necessarily more destructive due to the dangerous condition of the king's life and power.

[56] *Ibid.,* 475.

[57] Kangle, adapted translation; 477.

[58] Kangle, tr., 478.

[59] *Ibid.*, 473.

[60] Kangle, tr. 479.
   etān vā yogān ātmani darśayitvā pratikurvīta pareṣām upadeśārtham (13.2. 36)
   tataḥ prayojayed yogān (13.2. 37)

[61] *kaṃ cit kālaṃ vihṛtyaivam anubhūya parāṃ mudam…*

[62] *…anekair abhyupāyais tāñ jighāṃsanti sma pāṇḍavān…*

[63] Duryodhana was aware of Vidura's double allegiances, but did not think he could harm the Kauravas "on his own" (*MBh*, 1.130.17-18). Perhaps Vidura could not overtly harm the Kauravas. Nevertheless, Duryodhana underestimate the covert harm that Vidura could have on Kaurava schemes against the Pāṇḍavas.

[64] After the trench is dug, the Pāṇḍavas nightly slept within it, hidden from Purocana. They hid this way because Purocana always monitored the Pāṇḍavas' movements with two aims: to prevent them from escaping, and to alert Duryodhana if they did.

[65] Van Buitenen, tr., 289.

[66] Ganguli, tr., *Ādiparvan;* 302, 310; 312.

[67] According to Brockington the destructive treatment of slaves, low and mixed-castes persons—as in the Pāṇḍavas' use here of the Niṣāda family as substitutionary victims for the lacquer-house fire—was common place (205). Niṣāda and other 'mixed-castes' in the epics are also part of the narrative conflicts around birth (*jāti*) depicted in the texts. Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*, 204-214.

[68] However, there is some ambivalence in the text about burning the six people alive. While Yudhiṣṭhira tells Bhīma that they will put six people in the house (in *śloka* 4), a few *ślokas* later the text rationalizes the burning of innocent victims, who "happened to come…hungry and prompted by Time" (their fate). They also became drunk and slept as if they were dead in the house. Van Buitenen, tr., *Op. cit.*, 290-291.

[69] Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira, Fitzgerald, tr., 372.

[70] *Ibid,* 387.

[71] I am paraphrasing here the verse that classifies royal affairs according to what the king can perceive of them. The verse: "For the affairs of a king are (of three kinds, viz.,) directly perceived, unperceived and inferred." (1.9.4)

[72] It should not surprise us that the king will set spies on them, even as they are proven trustworthy by the tests. The trust of the king is stratified and never absolute.

[73] The qualities I.9.1-2: Kangle's translation: "a native of the country, of noble birth, easy to hold in check, trained in the arts, possessed of the eye (of science), intelligent, persevering, dexterous, eloquent, bold, possessed of a ready wit, endowed with energy and power, able to bear troubles, upright, friendly, firmly devoted, endowed with character, strength, health and spirit, devoid of stiffness and fickleness, amiable (and) not given to creating animosities these are the qualities of the minister [*amātya*]." It should be noted that only the name of the section heading (*pañcamaṃ prakaraṇam—mantripurohitotpattiḥ*) indicates that the qualities enumerated are those of the close advisor, the *mantrin*. In the body of this section, the term *amātya* is used. Mark McClish argues that this is a structural irregularity that reflects the hand of *brāhmaṇa* redactors, aimed at elevating the *mantrin* (who would be *brāhmaṇa*) above the rest of the *amātya*. This is part of his argument for the existence of an original prakaraṇa that did not reflect *brāhmaṇa* concerns.

[74] *Dharma* is a multivalent term. In its use in this test, I suggest *dharma* refers to proper comportment with respect to religious practices, that of being just (if the king) and able to recognize justice and *dharma* (if a minister).

[75] *Aś*, 1.10.5-6; Translation mine.
> *senāpatir asatpragrahena avakṣiptaḥ sattribhir ekaikam amātyam upajapet lobhanīyena arthena rājavināśāya, ' sarveṣām etad rocate, kathaṃ vā tava ' iti // prayākhyāne śuciḥ / [ity arthopadhā] //*

[76] *Aś*, 1.10.19: *kṛtā ca kaluṣā buddhir upabhābhiś caturvidhā / na āgatvāntaṃ nivarteta sthitā sattvavatāṃ dhṛtau //*

[77] Stephanie Jamison has a slightly different view of the *parivrājikā* as this renunciant woman might function in this passage and the emerging efficacy of women as agents (206-209). Stephanie Jamison, "Women 'Between Empires' and 'Between the Lines,'" in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*, edited by Patrick Olivelle, South Asia Research Series, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 191-214. Not all *parivrājikā* (female mendicants) would act as spies, as Jamison seems to suggest (206-207), just as all *parivrājaka* (male mendicants) would not, nor any other class of person assuming a particular social role.

[78] Not to mention the persistent inscriptional refrain of Aśoka that all subjects should respect *brāhmaṇa* and *śramaṇa* in their midst.

[79] Walshe, tr., *Op. Cit.*, 791. Sāriputta's discourse betrays some anxiety about persons who are not from good families, as he notes that this minister also "married a woman of no faith from a clan of no faith."

[80] John Strong, tr., 209-210.

[81] *Jātaka* 1, *Op. Cit.*, 129.

[82] Its narrative aim is evident in its frame-story—to show the supremacy of Buddha Śākyamuni in crushing "heretical doctrines," and converting *brāhmaṇas*, *śramaṇas*, and *devas* with his superior wisdom. *Jātaka* 6;156.

Parenthetical textual references in the body of the text are to Cowell and Childers English translation (PTS tr.) of the Pāli *jātaka* text, unless otherwise indicated. Pāli text page numbers are enclosed in square brackets [...].

[83] The *Mahā-Ummagga-jātaka* (*MUJā)* employs śāstric ideal means against royal śāstric ideal aims of success at all costs. Numerous strategic means are employed by two *brāhmaṇa* protagonists, in two separate royal courts, in which the Bodhisatta Mahosadha serves over the life of two kings. Intrigues devolve on the kings' foibles, the *brāhmaṇa* advisors' exploitation of them, and the Bodhisatta Mahosadha's perpetual antidotes—śāstric in their cleverness, non-violent (largely) in their execution—to royal *guṇas* and *upāyas*. Its familiarity and clever use of these strategies is remarkable and deserves further research.

[84] The Bodhisatta cleverly resolves eighteen tests of his wisdom (*MUJā,* 160-169*)*, most of which involve adjudicating community disputes over theft of property (such as the god Sakka's theft of a chariot), and family (as in the case of two men claiming the same wife). The theft resolution occurs in "The Chariot Test," which involves Sakka's—Buddhist *nikāya* construal of Indra, king of the Vedic gods—theft of a man's chariot in order to provide another opportunity for the Bodhisatta to prove his superior wisdom. Pāli [338B-339]; *MUJā*, tr. 165-166. The Bodhisatta Mahosadha's resolution of the true husband problem occurs in the "Black Ball Test," Bodhisatta Mahosadha resolves a disagreement over which of two men is properly married to one woman. While attempting to cross a river with his wife, one man releases his wife to another man who pretends to help both the man and his wife across the river. However, once the rescuer gets the woman to the other side of the river, he leaves the other man and takes off with the other man's wife. The woman becomes complicit, deciding she likes the other man better, so the two contend that the rescuing-thief man is the true husband. *MUJā,* 164-165.

[85] Pāli [335]; *Jātaka* 6, *Op. Cit.*, 160.

[86] *Ibid.*, 169.

[87] The Bodhisatta in this *jātaka* is the son of an extremely wealthy merchant, a *vesiya*. (The analogue in Sanskrit to this varṇa is *vaiśya*.) Some variety of this merchant/agriculturalist/trader varṇa attends their epithets for the Bodhisatta Mahosadha; derisive refrains voiced by his *brāhmaṇa*-advisor-opponents throughout the *jātaka*.

[88] The Bodhisatta orchestrates these tests as he would tests of new ministers for kings. The tests of Amarā's purity in the *MUJā, Jātaka* 6, 184-85 [367-68] bring to mind the four *upadhā* testing scenarios in Kauṭilya *Aś,* 1.10.7-20.

[89] *Jātaka* 6, 186 [369].

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] *Ibid,* 186 [370].

[92] I recount in my analysis only two of the three narrative antidotes to this bheda scheme of the four *paṇḍitas*. The third involves the *devī* (goddess) that resided in king Vedeha's royal parasol of power. The goddess of the parasol became lonely for Mahosadha's discourse at court (*MUJā*, 186-91) [PTS 370-378]. When the *devī* learned the reason for Mahosadha's absence was the king's reliance on lying *paṇḍitas*, she contrived her own plan to restore Mahosadha to the court. She posed four riddles to the king, and gave him an interval of time with which to answer (*Jātaka* 6, 187). The king's four *brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas* were unable to answer, to which the goddess retorted, "What do they know? Save the wise Mahosadha, there is none can solve it. If you do not send for him and get him to solve these questions, I will cleave your head with this fiery blade." (*MUJā,* 187; [371]) In fear for his life, the king sent four courtiers to find Mahosadha. It is the result of this search that leads to where the Bodhisatta is sitting in disguise; soiled with clay (impure) and eating a poor man's food at his potter-wheel. The courtier derides Mahosadha for his position there,

and his purported wisdom that has led him to this lowly position, *MUJā,* 188; [373]. In spite of the courtier's castigation, the bodhisatta knew that the courtier had come to restore him to the king.

The intervention of the goddess of the parasol deserves further scrutiny. For now it suffices to note this salient mythological argument for Buddhist advisors at court: Power itself longs to hear the *dharma.* So necessary is a Buddha figure to royal power that mythical power figures contrive to restore Buddhist influence at court.

[93] The Buddhist narratives elide the distinctions that exist in Brahmanical perspectives on the relationship between varṇa and supreme wisdom. Buddhist depictions of Brahmanical opponents are largely ones of caricature.

[94] [373] "Is it true, as they say that you are one of profound wisdom? So great prosperity, cleverness, and intelligence does not serve you, thus brought to insignificance, while you eat a little soup like that." *Ibid*, 188.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] The Bodhisatta had diffused the enmity between these kings (Vedeha and Cūḷani-Brahmadatta), which had been incited towards war by Cūḷani-Brahmadatta's *brāhmaṇa* advisor, Kevaṭṭa. Notably, the advisor wanted to use Cūḷa-Brahmadatta's daughter as bait to lure king Vedeha into a murderous trap. The Bodhisatta's success at neutralizing the *brāhmaṇa* advisor Kevaṭṭa's machinations resulted in a marriage of Cūḷani-Brahmadatta's daughter and king Vedeha. For the sub-narrative that culminates in the marriage alliance (and use of the daughter as marriage-bait), see *MUJā*, 210-230. This entire section of the *jātaka* involves the use of love and other *sneha* relationships in the negotiation of royal power. This section also deserves further consideration in its own right.

[97] The queen had set spies on the Bodhisatta Mahosadha out of revenge. Spies were necessary since the queen was looking for evidence to discredit him, since the Bodhisatta had once used her as a hostage to leverage his king's and his own protection from Cūḷani-Brahmadatta (*MUJā,* 233-235). It is interesting that the text presumes that queens have access to spies just as advisors do.

[98] *Jātaka* 6, *Op. Cit.*, 241; [468]

[99] *Ibid,* [468; ln. 19-20]

[100] *Ibid,* [468-69]

[101] *Ibid.*

[102] The Bodhisatta Mahosadha also uses a parrot to perform reconnaissance of the activities of rival kings at another point in this *jātaka* (*MUJā*, 198-200; [391-93]). For a śāstric example of birds (parrot) being used for spying, and the corollary of their being a threat to secret counsel, see *Arthaśāstra*, 1.15.3-4.

[103] Tr. adapted, *Jātaka* 6; 241: *….Bheriparibbājikā ñāṇsampannā, sā eken' upāyena jānissatīti…*[469, line 4]

I cannot recall any instances where the Bodhisatta was in a *jātaka* scene and praised the wisdom of another ascetic in this manner. It is also notable that the Sinhala canon removed the female ascetic Bherī from the *jātaka*, and replaced in her role a male ascetic.

[104] *Jātaka* 6, *Op. Cit.*, 241; [469]

[105] Ibid, 242; Cowell and Rouse translation.

...cintesi, evaṃ kir' assā ahosi: "carapuriso viya ahutvā upāyena rājānaṃ pañhaṃ pucchitvā 'p-assa suhadayo vā na vā' ti jānissāmīti'...[469, ln. 12-13]

[106] The ascetic Bherī works to prove Mahosadha's innocence and perfect wisdom by asking the king several questions that force him to evaluate and rank the relative worth and trustworthiness of all his closest associates at court—including the king's own person—in comparison with Mahosadha. See *Jātaka* 6, 242-246; [470-478].

[107] *Ibid*, 157-158.

[108] *Ibid*, 158.

[109] The *Arthaśāstra* provides another ironic dimension of trust in the royal sphere. In its discussion of the various *upāya* used by advisors and agents of kings, the lack of trust is named as one of the hindrances to royal success or gain. See *Aś*, 9.4.25.

[110] See 23.22ff. *Ibid,* 158

[111]   *svasminn āśramapade mahāntaṃ vānaram abhinirmāyar iddhaprabhāvāt tasy carmāpanīya* 23.147, ln 18.

[112] *Ibid*, 159.

[113] Khoroche, 163; his translation of 152, ln 14-15, before section 53.

[114] *Ibid*, 158; end of verse 20.

[115] *Ibid,* 163; section 54-55.

[116] *Ibid*, 164.

[117] *Ibid,* xi.

[118] Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[119] McClintock, 109.

[120] *Ibid*, 107-108.

[121] I refer to "modern Buddhism," as described by Donald Lopez; see his "Introduction," *A Modern Buddhist Bible: Essential Teachings from East and West*, (Boston: Beacon Books, 2002).

Notes to Chapter 7

[1] Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna of the *dharma-rahasyam* ("secret" *dharma*, on 'lying,' in this case) in *Karṇaparvan* 8:49.25-33. This only one example, there are others.

[2] PTDS 584B. *Līḷhāya* is said to be an abstraction from *līḷha* (Skt. *līḍha*), pp of the root *lih*, which literally means "polished." It is used only of the Buddha as a means of describing his mastery and eloquence. Rhys Davids and Stede suggest, "grace, ease, charm, adroitness" as translations. Other instances use *līḷāya*, which they consider a misspelling of *līḷhāya.* I think it is not likely a mistake, but rather a slip that reveals a shared denomination of transformative play, such as that exhibited by Kṛṣṇa in his divine playful interactions with humans. However, they do note that *līḷāya* occurs in combination with *vilāsa*, and is "not

used of the Buddha." This does not eliminate the possibility that *līḷhāya* in VvA 217 is the intended word for the Buddha's transformative discourse, not a misspelling.

[3] According to Chakravarthi Narasimhan, Dhanaṃjaya is also the name for a *brāhmaṇa* sect. Chakravarthi Narasimhan, trans., *The Mahābhārata*, *An English Version Based on Selected Verses*, Revised edition, with a new preface, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, 1965), 221. Given that this is the name for a king and the name of a sect, both are re-inscribed through Buddhist *Dharma* in the *jātaka*.

[4] Wilhelm Halbfass, "*Dharma* in Traditional Hinduism," in *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 318.

[5] Wendy Doniger [O'Flaherty], "The Clash Between Relative and Absolute Duty: The *Dharma* of Demons," in Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty and J. Duncan M. Derrett, eds., *The Concept of Duty in South Asia*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1978), 96-97. The *dharma* discussions in *Mahābhārata* scenarios considered in this project do not poise *svadharma* against an eternal *dharma* in this way. Doniger uses Medhātitti's commentary as the basis of this taxonomy of *dharma*s. While appropriate for a consideration of *dharma* in the Purāṇas, Medhātitti's (825-900CE) taxonomy is from a commentarial era of *dharma* interpretation that takes us far afield of the nature of *dharma* and dharmic concerns of the literature considered in this project. For brief statement of dating and purview, see Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law: A Critical Edition and Translation,* 368.

[6] The omniscience or prescience, and other varieties of Śākyamuni Buddha's wisdom reflect the diversity of Buddhist traditions, as Sara McClintock has pointed out in her consideration of the history of ideas about this so-called omniscience in scholastic contexts (such as *Dharma*kīrti and his interlocutors). Sara McClintock, *Omniscience and the Rhetoric of Reason*, *Op. Cit.*

However, the 'far-seeing' qualities of those who are wise—such as Śākyamuni Buddha in his birth-stories to which I refer here, as well as this similarly laudable wise-vision in the advisors and kings at court in advisory genres considered in this dissertation—seems a contested quality within some sixth century CE (circa and forward) scholastic contexts. Differences or contestations of them obtain in both Brahmanical (McClintock suggests the Mīmāṃsaka, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa) and Buddhist (Dharmakīrti) scholasticism. I find McClintock's discussion of the context for the varietal nature of a Buddha's knowledge, or 'omniscience,' suggestive of this. That is, if one considers the remarks of Dharmakīrti (7th century CE) as Sara McClintock quotes his "well-known…remarks dismissing the significance of supersensible knowing— stating that if seeing far is the mark of wisdom, then we might as well worship vultures." *Op. cit.*, 24.

[7]   *sumantrite sunīte ca vidhivac copapādite / pauruṣe karmaṇi kṛte nāsty adharmo yudhiṣṭhira //* This is spoken by Vyāsa to Yudhiṣṭhira during his attempt to persuade Yudhiṣṭhira to rule, in spite of his guilt-ridden grief at the destruction of the war. (Tr. Fitzgerald.) *The Mahābhārata*: *11: The Book of the Women and 12: The Book of Peace,* Part One; *Op. Cit.*, 217.

[8] J. A. B van Buitenen, trans. and ed., *The Mahābhārata*: *4: The Book of Virāṭa and 5: The Book of the Effort,* Vol. III, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 424.

[9] I chose these passages over the attempts to persuade Yudhiṣṭhira to resume rule after the war (12.7-38), since the dialogues before the war show the deliberations leading to royal action. The discussions between Yudhiṣṭhira the king in the *Śānti* foreground the dharmic paths—ascetic or warrior informed rule and the authorities a king could chose—and the authorities he might use to substantiate them.

[10] Van Buitenen anchors the texts four embassies before the war in śāstric protocol. He discusses the embassies and protocol with respect to Manu's *Dharmaśāstra* and Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, respectively. As he notes, it is circumscribed for Saṃjaya to convey information with no mandate to act, and full mandate to interpret and act is accorded to Kṛṣṇa. *Ibid.*, 134-137.

[11] *Ibid.,* 180.

[12] *Ibid*, 181.

[13] Recall from my discussion of emotions in chapter four, "The King in Need," the narrative elaborations of uncontrolled senses (*indriyas*) into the permutations of the "six enemies" to rule and success, all affectively driven vices in nīti and artha śāstra, such as in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and the *Pañcatantra* of Viṣṇuśarman.

[14] J. A. B van Buitenen, trans. and ed., *The Mahābhārata*: 2*: The Book of the Assembly Hall, 3 The Book of the Forest,* Vol. II, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), 115.

[15] Adaptation of van Buitenen translation; *Ibid,* 110-111. Duryodhana repeats that he thinks fate (*daivaṃ*) reigns supreme (v. 32 & 34). I see Duryodhana wrestling with the extent to which Fate governs his actions. Stating once, that fate must be involved, and confirming with resignation in v. 34, that indeed, fate reigns supreme.

[16] Śakuni chastises Duryodhana for perseverating and threatening suicide if his father allows the Pāṇḍavas to return from the forest (*Āraṇyakaparvan*, 3.8.5-10). *Ibid*, 235.

[17] Tr. van Buitenen, *Op. cit.*, Vol. 3, 424.

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] Van Buitenen, *Op. cit*., Vol. 2, 112.

[20] *Ibid.*   *sthito yasyāsmi śāsane tena saṃgamya vetsyāmi kāryasyāsya viniścayam (2.45.41)/ sa hi dharmaṃ puraskṛtya dīrghadarśī paraṃ hitam ubhayoḥ pakṣayor yuktaṃ vakśyaty arthaviniścayam (2.45.42)*

[21] *Ibid*., 114.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] "Vidura has in mind"…*vidurasya mataṃ jñātvā…*

[25] Van Buitenen translation, adapted; Ibid, 115.

[26] "friends and aims" (*samānārthaṃ tulyamitraṃ);* 2.50.2

[27] "Ritual achievements" (*yajñā*).

[28] These differences around the relative value of joint rule and assets show that the conception of a circle of kings was by no means established or beyond scrutiny.

[29] …*asaṃtoṣaḥ śriyo mūlaṃ tasmāt taṃ kāmayām aham…*

[30] Tr. van Buitenen; *Ibid*, 122.

[31] It seems as though '*kṣatriya*' for Duryodhana does not include the duty to rule, as well as the duty to be a warrior.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid,* 123.

[34] The entirety of Book 12 of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* is devoted to the "weaker" king (*ābalīyasam*). An intriguing discussion of enacting a 'dual' strategy (*dvaidhībūtaḥ*) through the aims of both the strong and the weak king also occurs in *Aś,* 7.7.3-31.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] …*anartham arthaṃ manyase rājaputra*…

[38]   *vākyaṃ na me rocate yat tvayoktaṃ; yat te priyaṃ tat kriyatāṃ narendra /*
           paścāt tapsyase tad upākramya vākyaṃ; na hīdṛśaṃ bhāvi vaco hi dharmyam

[39] …*nāham apy etad rocaye dyūtasaṃstavam*…

[40] …*manye tad vidhinākramya kārito 'smi* (3.10.1).

[41] …*parityaktuṃ na śaknomi duryodhanam acetanaṃ putrasnehena*…*jānann api yatavrata,* (3.10.3)

[42] Tr. van Buitenen; *Ibid.*, 237.

[43] *yadi putrasahasraṃ me sarvatra samam eva me / dīnasya tu sataḥ putrasyābhyadhikā kṛpā* (3.10.16).

[44] Tr. van Buitenen; *Ibid.*, 237.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] Duryodhana is considered perceptive, but he loses it when he is carried away with his grief and frustration over the splendor (*śrī*) of the Pāṇḍavas (2.46.16-17).

[47] *Ibid*, 125.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.,* 126.

[50] His abject despair at the war, and the efforts of family, friends, and sages to persuade him to rule occurs in *Śāntiparvan* 12.6 through 12.39, where in 12.40 "the king's fever and affliction" (Fitzgerald, 259) which his advisors helped him clear.

[51] *Ibid,* 281.

[52] Tr. van Buitenen; 126.

[53] …*dhṛtarāṣṭreṇa cāhūtaḥ kālasya samayena ca*...

[54] The cattle expedition was a ruse to gloat over the Pāṇḍavas, destitute in their exile. Instead, Duryodhana and his associates were routed by the Gandharvas, and rescued from their assault by the Pāṇḍavas. 3.227-234.

[55] *Op. Cit*., Vol. II, 279-281.

[56] Fitzgerald sees "new *dharma* traits" in the *Śāntiparvan*, and uses 12.124.64-65 to substantiate his opinion. The embodied qualities (*śīla*), that stand out for him are benevolence, generosity and altruism

(134-135). Fitzgerald considers these the new *dharma*, the marks of habitual virtue, that are the contribution of the *Śānti* to the *dharma* of the text James L. Fitzgerald, trans. and ed., *The Mahābhārata: 11: The Book of the Women and 12: The Book of Peace, Part One,* Vol. 7, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 480-481.

[57] This project has led me to think about the development of character in more general terms, beyond that which advisors attempt to develop in their kings. I thank George Maxwell, Jr. who—using Freedman's systems theory for relationships—expanded my grasp of the extent to which we are good, to which we are who we are, we become through relationship (inter-subjectively and intra-subjectively). Over several conversations, he brought me to more personal insights into the reasons for writing my book. What emerged was the beginning of awareness—that we need others to remind us who we are; that who we are is a function of character; that character develops through habits and practice; and that over the years we can develop that character into someone who can do what it is we are to do. I see a similar process in the ideals for advisors, for kings, and for advice-giving in the Brahmanical and Buddhist examples used in this book. And if not, then I see that I used this book to try and understand this process of becoming good. In the end, I find it is only the beginning of an understanding what makes a king, a person—good. George Maxwell, Jr., "Be Who You Are," May 16th, 2010 and personal communication from June 22, 2010.

[58] For instance, in *Jātaka* 528, the Bodhisatta demonstrates his superiority in *upāya*, and refutes five different doctrines, represented by five different adversarial advisors.

[59] There are echoes of the growing concerns with karma in creating dharmic histories in some *Mahābhārata* characters (such as Ambā and Karṇa), but not to the same extent as in *jātaka* examples. However, the Brahmanical imagination had not yet extended karmic histories into the future.

[60] *Tittha-Jātaka* 25. (Pāli 184-185). The monk's karmic history was deeply involved in understanding purity and impurity. He had been a jeweler, familiar with dross, and had been a horse and afraid to bathe after other horses—showing a concern with purity from multiple experiential perspectives.

[61] *Vidhura-paṇḍita-Jātaka*, No. 545.

[62] A near exception to this occurs in the *Aśokāvadāna*, where King Aśoka is shown besting his ministers and advisors in dharmic wisdom. Note especially the story where he teachers his primary minister, Yaśas, that caste is not to be considered in terms of *dharma*. (John Strong, *The Aśokāvadāna,* 232-236.) This is in part due to the genre of which this text is a part, lauding the power of this Buddhist king. But, he remains an exception because of the reliance he has on Upagupta, and the nature of his transformation—from murderer to patron.

[63] It should be noted that not all Buddhist *dhamma*/*dharma* is talismanic. The deliberative process in the *Diamond Sūtra* is a notable example.

[64] There are uses of *Rāmāyaṇa* characters as well, such as the *Dasaratha-Jātaka*. Unfortunately, studies of it have been limited to pondering the direction of influence of the texts on each other (*Jātaka* to *Rāmāyaṇa*, or the reverse). See Richard Gombrich, "The *Vessantara Jātaka*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Dasaratha Jātaka*," *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 105, No. 3, Indological Studies Dedicated to Daniel H. H. Ingalls, (July-September, 1985), pp. 427-437. Richard Gombrich's comparative analysis is based in different ideas about the nature of *dharma*, *svadharma*, and their relationship to each other in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (436). His hermeneutic over-emphasizes the relative importance of object-specific versus general demonstrations of generosity than the context warrants, with regard to Rāma and Sītā and that of Vessantara (430).

[65] The denominations of the Kuru line are 'Korabiya' and 'Kaurava' only in these *jātaka*. They do not contain uses of 'Pāṇḍava' at all. The importance of this philological limitation, if there is any, would merit some exploration for what it might tell us of the provenance of these stories. Were there any other regions that knew only of the Kurus (in Java or Laos), for instance?

[66] He and his court (made up of the seven jewels of rule plus four) live according to a "*kurudhamma,*" (here this *dhamma* consists of the *pañcasīla)* that makes their kingdom prosperous. The basic structure of the royal court is presented as living according to the *Kurudhamma*, which is comprised of the five virtues (*kurudhammo nāma pañcasīlāni*). The persons include the seven jewels, plus four (in verse *gātha*) after an enumeration of eight more (in prose section). The list, as translated by Cowell, is: "[King, Bodhisatta], queen-mother, queen-consort, younger brother, viceroy, family priest, Brahmin, driver, courtier [sic, *amacca*], charioteer, treasurer, master of the granaries, noble, porter, courtesan, slave-girl." E. B. Cowell, ed., *The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births, translated from the Pāli by various hands,* W. H. D. Rouse, trans. volume II (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1995 reprint), 251. The entire passage is as follows:

> *Kurudhammo nāma pañcasīlāni, tāni Bodhisatto parisuddhāni katvā rakkhi, yathā ca Bodhisatto evam assa mātā aggamahesī kaniṭṭhabhātā uparājā porohito brāhmaṇo rajjugāhako amacco sārathi seṭṭhī doṇamāpako mahāmatto dovāriko nagarasobhaṇā vaṇṇadāsīti evam ete* (*Jātaka* No. 276; 367.10)

[67] This synopsis of the "*Kurudhamma Jātaka*," and its relevance to " Dhanañjaya," is from the Online "Buddhist Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names," http://www.palikanon.com/english/pali_names/dic_idx.html. This dictionary takes "most of the entries…from the Dictionary of Pāli Names by G F Malalasekera." For more accurate details, see the tale in the W. H. D. Rouse's translation in volume II of the PTS. The Bodhisatta was the son of Dhanañjaya's queen, educated in Takkasilā, as ideal kings should be in this aspect of the tradition. Takkasilā is the northern education center for kings, merchants, and foreigners. The Bodhisatta ascended to the throne after his father's death, and the story of his *dhamma* ensues in the rest of the tale. Rouse, *Op. Cit.*, 251-260.

[68] There are links to brief synopses of these *Jātaka*, under the entries for "Vidhura," "Dhanañjaya," and "Indapatta," Online "Buddhist Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names," *Op. Cit.*

[69] Though king Yudhiṭṭhila had sent his own counselor as emissary to the wise Vidhura to find out how to conduct his life by *dhamma* (*dhammayāgaṃ*), Vidhura was surpassed in wisdom by his seven-year old son.

[70] Volume V. page 57, line 10-12. V. Fausbøll, ed., *The Jātaka, together with its commentary,* (London: Luzac and Company, Pali Text Society Reprint, 1963), 57.

[71] *…rājā dānādīni puññāni karonto dhammena rajjaṃ anusāsi…*

[72] Commentary gloss V.57.138: *vijetuṃ ti imaṃ paṭhaviṃ dhammena abhibhavituṃ ajjhottarituṃ icchāmi.*

[73] His means of conquest have been transformed, ideologically at least: *Buddha-dhamma* must be his "weapon."

[74] These are my cursory translations. For a full translation, see H. T. Francis' translation in *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births.* E. B. Cowell, ed., Volume V, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, Reprint 1995), 31-32. However, in his translations he sacrifices verse content to his need for rhyming in couplet; and his diction constrained by sectarian concerns (as well as dated).

[75] *ayaṃ pana pañho gambhīro buddhavisayo, sabbaññubuddham ev' etaṃ pucchitum yuttaṃ, tasmiṃ asati sabbaññutañāṇapariyesakaṃ bodhisattaṃ.* [V.58]

[76] PTSD translation, 33: "a friend of his youth," and "educated in the family of the same master."

[77] This is a difficult verse and prose section (V.60.146). The translation by H. T. Francis was garbled and so of little help. *Op. cit.*, 33. I think the authors were using a familiar simile—of the sands or torrents of the Ganges—of extreme degree to convey the confusion Vidhura anticipated in answering the question in the depth required to understand what is necessary to promote the *dhamma*.

[78] *…nāssa pañhavissajjane okāso atthi.* (V.60)

[79] "I will have to be able to grasp the singular dispositions (*cittam*) of a multitude of people; discerning the distinctions among them will inundate my [mind] like the Ganges!" (*mahājanassa cittaṃ gaṇhissāmīti Gañgaṃ pidahanto viya vinicchayaṃ vicāreti*). (V.60)

[80] Lines 9-10 of commentary on V.60.146; *Ibid*, 60.

[81] …*iti cittekaggatañc' eva okāsāñ ca alabhanto na te sakkomi akkhātuṃ atthaṃ dhammañ ca pucchito ti.* The entire commentarial passage: *tass' attho: brāhmaṇa mayhaṃ mahājanassa nānācittagatisaṃkhātaṃ gaṃgaṃ pidahisanti, vyāpāro uppanno, tam ahaṃ mahāsindhuṃ apidhetuṃ na sakkomi, tasmā kathaṃ so okāso bhavissati yasmiṃ te ahaṃ pañhe vissajjeyyaṃ, iti cittekaggatañc' eva okāsāñ ca alabhanto na te sakkomi akkhātuṃ atthaṃ dhammañ ca pucchito ti.* V.60, lines 9-13.

[82] Though more could be done in considering the structure and import of the *jātaka* to the Buddha's maturation, Sarah Shaw has made a start at seeing the tales as more than the "infatuation of the lay-people" (as Lamotte and others have characterized them). See her introduction to her translation of select *jātakas,* where she sees in the higher number *jātakas*, "sustained" and complex engagements of the Buddha's "preparation for enlightenment." For Lamotte's opinion on the *jātaka* tales see Sara Webb-Boin, trans. of Etienne Lamotte, *Op. cit.,* 445-6, 762.

[83] "clearer mind" (*visadañāṇataro).* The use of *visadañāṇataro* as an adjective to describe the next, better son contains the authors' perspectives on the distractions of lust and its effects. First, the brother imagines the next one will be comparatively more *(-taro)* clear-headed. *ñāṇa* itself is a complex word, at the theoretical level it is implied in theories of cognition. In its most general terms (of many given) it can mean "knowledge, intelligence, insight, conviction." See PTSD 287B-288A for its complex "scope and character" as a term in Pāli Buddhist texts. Since we are dealing with the conception of the Buddha's wisdom in the face of Indic wisdom that royal advisors might possess, I will use "mind," here, in its deepest sense of body of knowledge, that comprises the intelligence of the man, which is a considerable basis of his insight, shaping the nature of his convictions; all the senses given above.
The term *visada* in PTSD 639B can denote "clean, pure, white;" or in other uses, "clear, manifest," as in "making [something] clear" (in understanding). Given that the two brothers are pursuing adultery (*paradāra-*), the text intends both meanings. So, the brothers with their dirty and unclear minds are unable to answer the question about attha and dhamma for the king.

[84] …*ahaṃ ñāṇena mahallako*. "*mahallako,*" 'old, venerable, of great age; an old man…(opp. to *dahara,* 'young')," 527A. Rhys Davids suggests this term is a "distorted" form of *mahariyaka*. 'noble, distinguished, high birth (77B). The bodhisatta as the child Sambhava then is likened to a great venerable person in terms of his wisdom.

[85] Commentary on Sucīrata's exclamation and recitation of two *gāthas*, V.62, lines 13-15, and *gāthas,* 156-157; Fausbøll, *Op. Cit.,* 62.

[86] "Good venison I leave, a lizard to pursue." *Ibid.*, 34.

[87] PTSD 287B: "*ñāña* as faculty of understanding is included in *pañña* (cp. wisdom=perfected knowledge). The latter signifies the spiritual [sic] wisdom which embraces the fundamental truths of morality and conviction (such as *aniccaŋ anatt dukkhaŋ: Milñ,* 42; whereas *ñāṇa* is relative to common experience."

[88] Francis, *Op. Cit.,* Vol. V; 35.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] *Ibid.,* 36.

[91] *taggha te ahaṃ akkhissaṃ yathāpi kusalo tathā, rājā ca kho naṃ [taṃ] jānāti yadi kāhati vā na vā ti gāthaṃ āha.* V.65.172.

[92] PTS translation of *rājā ca kho naṃ [taṃ] jānāti yadi kāhati vā na vā* is "The king shall know the Good and True, but who knows what the king will do?" *Ibid.,* 36.

[93] This is a similar perspective with respect to action and knowledge which Kṛṣṇa demonstrates in the deliberations leading up to the war.

[94]   *āttānaṃ nātivatteyya, adhammaṃ na samācare, atitthe na-ppātareyya, anatthe na yuto siyā* (V.66.175)

[95]   *…rājā tasmiṃ dhamme vattitvā sagga padaṃ pūresi…*V. 67, line 21-22.

[96] "*vattati,*" entry in the *Pāli Text Society Dictionary; PTSD* 598B.

Notes to Chapter 8

[1] Lewis Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* (New York: Dover, 1988 [1893]). Perhaps we should note, in relation to this dissertation's subject, the character who reports on the scale of 1:1 map, "Mein Herr," also reports that in the land he is from, they have a thousand kings for every subject.

[2] I base my comments on John Corrigan's discussion of the methods of Fernand Braudel and the Annales school in writing "total history," which paved the way for considerations of emotion as veritable structures of study. Corrigan states:
> But the new endeavor made its most dramatic appearance in Fernand Braudel's study of the Mediterranean world in the age of Philip II, and eventually took shape as a species of social history characterized by its attention to everyday life, or what once was called "total history." Braudel also articulated one of the cardinal verities of the Annales school: events, or actions (*histoire événementielle*) not only were to be distinguished from the historical structures that limited and controlled events (*histoire de la longue durée*), but actors themselves were considered to be imprisoned within those structures and thus determined in their possibilities….In line with Febvre's call for an inventory of the "mental equipment of people," annalistes surmised that not only political, economic, and social activity, but mental activity as well was constrained and compelled by historical structures. Thus *mentalités collective*, or cast of mind, was ratified as an object of historical study, and the historical study of emotion was placed on firm ground.

John Corrigan, *Religion and Emotion: Approaches and Interpretations,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 28.

[3] Wilhelm Halbfass discusses the ideological importance of *sanātanadharma* as an "all-encompassing," "inclusive" *dharma* (343) and it uses before the encounter with the West (344). *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[4] J.Z. Smith, *To Take Place*, 110.

[5] There may be some stratification here in how 'permeable' are the boundaries between communities of tradition and dharmic discourse, which would impact how willing participants would be to use elements of dharmic discourses from other communities. For instance, the boundaries that ritual specialists may draw around their discourses and traditions are more rigid because of the prescriptions of ritual activity and the need for accurate performance. The boundaries that specialists draw around traditions and discourses of other social activities, such as martial arts are less stringent (though the problem of Karṇa demonstrates that such boundaries were under negotiation).

[6] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Op. cit.*

[7] E. B. Cowell, *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births 1-2, Op. Cit.,* 184-185.

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[8] A. K. Ramanujan, speaking of the context-specific mode of Indian thought states:

> Such a pervasive emphasis on context is, I think, related to the Hindu concern with *jāti*—the logic of classes, of genera and species, of which human *jātis* are only an instance. Various taxonomies of season, landscape, times, *guṇas* or qualities (and their material bases), tastes, characters, emotions, essences (*rasa*), etc., are basic to the thought-work of Hindu medicine and poetry, cooking and religion, erotica and magic. Each *jāti* or class defines a context, a structure of relevance, a rule of permissible combinations, a frame of reference, a meta-communication of what is and can be done. Ramanujan, *Op. Cit.,* 53.

I consider it also to be a context-specific way of life.