

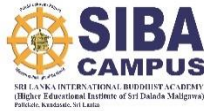
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**Did King *Aśoka* have the Qualities  
of a Wheel Turning Emperor?  
An Investigation with Special Reference to  
the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya***

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## **Did King *Aśoka* have the Qualities of a Wheel Turning Emperor? An Investigation with Special Reference to the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya***

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### **Abstract**

King Aśoka, was the third Emperor of the Maurya dynasty in the third century B.C. He is considered by some historians as the greatest ruler of ancient India. In accordance with historical and textual evidence, he was converted to Buddhism after conquering the country of Kāliṅga, eight years after his coronation. The most reliable evidence such as edicts shows that Emperor Aśoka had inspiration from Buddhist teachings to rule righteously. Moreover, the third Buddhist Council was also held under his patronage. Because of the righteous way he adopted to rule his kingdom, the Buddhists believe that he was the greatest emperor who possessed the qualities of a Wheel Turning Emperor (*Cakkavattirājā*) who is the ideal king described in Buddhism.

The *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* is the major *sutta* in which the Buddha has expounded the qualities of a *Cakkavatti* monarch. Hence, the prime objective of this research paper is to examine whether Emperor Asoka practiced the qualities of a wheel turning monarch and also how far he was successful in imitating the ideal of a *Cakkavatti* king. Therefore, the methodology used in critical examination of the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* and other relevant *suttas*, *aṭṭhakathās* (commentaries), chronicles and archeological evidence such as edicts, seeks to promote this message.

### **The Concept of Wheel-turning Monarch and the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta***

The *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* is an early discourse which is found in the Vol. III (the *Pāthikavagga*) of the *Dīgha-nikāya* as the 26<sup>th</sup> *sutta*. The *sutta* could be introduced as the major *sutta* in which the concept of *Cakkavatti* has been introduced. The ideal kingship which is introduced by Buddhism is the *Cakkavatti*-popularly known as the Wheel-turning Monarch. The *sutta* gives an account on the *Cakkavatti* concept through a legend which happened in the periods of the wheel turners, King Daḷhanemi and eight of his successors.

The story relates that a righteous king conquers the authority of the earth by practicing the *Dhamma*. According to the story, the wheel-turning monarch, Daḷhanemi<sup>1</sup> was a powerful sovereign who ruled the world. He was a righteous monarch of law, a conqueror of the four quarters, who had established the security of his realm and possessed the seven treasures. Those treasures are;

01. The Wheel Treasure (*Cakkaratana*)
02. The Elephant Treasure (*Hatthiratana*)
03. The Horse Treasure (*Assaratana*)

04. The Jewel/Gem Treasure (*Maṇiratana*)
05. Woman Treasure (*Itthiratana*)
06. The Householder Treasure (*Gahapatiratana*)
07. The Counsellor Treasure (*Parināyakarātana*)<sup>2</sup>

Further, he had more than a thousand sons who were heroes of heroic stature, conquerors of the holistic army. He dwells by the law of the *Dhamma*, having conquered this sea-girt land without stick or sword.

It is clear that the above treasures appeared as a result of his practicing the ‘noble codes of the wheel turner’ during his rule. In the afore mentioned legend, it is further explained that after thousands of years when the sacred wheel treasure slips from its position, the wheel turner should know that he had not much time left to live. Therefore, having the knowledge that he has already had all the human pleasure and that it is time to seek heavenly pleasures, he summons his eldest son, the crown prince and tells him to take over the control of the land. And, he is supposed to keep away from all the worldly happiness and become a homeless sage donning a robe, with his hair and beard shaved off. Then seven days after departure of the royal sage, the sacred wheel treasure disappeared.

Then the new king was instructed by the royal sage to practice ‘noble codes of the wheel turner (*Ariyaṃ Cakkavattivattaṃ*)’ for bringing back the *Cakkarātana* as follows;

01. Depending on the *Dhamma*, honoring it, revering it, cherishing it, doing homage to it and venerating it, having the *Dhamma* as your badge and banner, acknowledging the *Dhamma* as your master, you should establish guard, ward and protection according to *Dhamma* for your own household.
02. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your troops in the kingdom.
03. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your nobles and vassals in the kingdom.
04. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your Brahmins and householders in the kingdom.
05. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your town and country folk in the kingdom.
06. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your town and ascetics and Brahmins in the kingdom.
07. Depending on the *Dhamma*... for your town and beasts and birds in the kingdom.
08. Letting no crime prevail in your kingdom
09. Giving the property to those who are in need and,

10. whatever ascetics and Brahmins in your kingdom have renounced the life of sensual infatuation and devoted to forbearance and gentleness, each one taming himself, each one calming himself and each one striving for the end of craving, from time to time you should go to them and consult with them as to what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, what is blameworthy and what is blameless, what is to be followed and what is not to be followed, and what action will in the long run lead to harm and sorrow, and what to welfare and happiness. Having listened to them, you should avoid evil and do what is good.<sup>3</sup>

The *sutta* further says that after having performed the duties according to the above codes, when the king had washed his head and gone up to the verandah on the top of the palace on the full moon (*poya*) day, the sacred wheel treasure will reappear with the thousand-spokes, complete with felloe, hub and all appurtenances.

Then the new *Cakkavatti* monarch (*muddhābhisitto*), rising from his seat, covering one shoulder with his robe, took a gold vessel in his left hand, sprinkled the Wheel with his right hand saying: “May the noble Wheel-Treasure turn, may the noble Wheel-Treasure conquer!” The Wheel turned to the east, and the King followed it with his fourfold army. And in whatever country the Wheel stopped, the King took up residence with his fourfold army. And those who opposed him in the eastern region came and said: “Come, Your Majesty, welcome! We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty.” And the King said: “Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink strong drink. Be moderate in eating.” And those who had opposed him in the eastern region became his subjects.<sup>4</sup>

Analyzing the contexts of Buddhist canonical examples, the Pali-English Dictionary defines the word *Cakkavatti* as; ‘he who sets rolling the Wheel, a just & faithful king’<sup>5</sup>. It is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘*cakra*’, meaning the ‘wheel’ and ‘*vartin*’ one who turns it {*cakra*+*varti* > *cakravarti* = *Cakkavatti* (Pali)}.<sup>6</sup> The common translations of the term *Cakkavattirājā* are ‘wheel turning monarch or wheel rolling monarch. According to Wijesekara, who has done a critical analysis on the *Cakra* concept says that both the Pali and Sanskrit terms *cakkavarti* and *cakkavatti* mean the ‘turner of the *cakra*’ or ‘wielder of *cakra*’. However, the concept of the *Cakkavatti* has been brought into Buddhist context from the Vedic concept of ‘*Cakravarti*’ with the meaning related with dominion.<sup>7</sup> But there is no doubt that the Buddha has given an alternative interpretation to it as he has done with most of the concepts such as *Kamma*, Causality, etc. Although the Buddhist concept of *Cakkavatti* is also used with regard to the sovereignty of a ruler, it is obviously an attempt to drag the ruling system into the righteous path. The ‘Universal Monarch’ is also one of the English translations of the term *Cakkavattirājā*, yet it would not be used here as there are some controversial ideologies pertaining to it.

Considering all the contexts which explain the *Cakkavatti* concept, it could be said that there are three main ideas which include all the qualities of the *Cakkavatti* monarch. They are:

01. Thirty-two signs of his physical body
02. The seven treasures (*Sattaratana*)
03. The noble codes of the wheel turner (*Ariyaṃ Cakkavattivattaṃ*)

In the *Lakkhaṇa-sutta* and *Mahāpadāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* as well as in the *Brahmāyu-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, it is elaborated that the person who has 32 special marks on his body would become either a world monarch or a world renunciant.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the *suttas* further explain that, the teaching of 32 marks<sup>9</sup> is mentioned in the early Vedic texts too.<sup>10</sup> Most of the time, the Brahmins, when they wanted to know whether the ascetic Gotama is the real person who has been mentioned in the Vedic literature, have instructed their disciples to check the Buddhahood of him by studying the 32 signs of his body. For example, the *Brahmāyu-sutta* has stated that Brahmin Brahmāyu asked one of his disciples, Uttara, to check Buddha's 32 signs.

However, the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* has not illustrated the 32 signs of the wheel-turner other than the seven treasures and the noble codes. The *Mahāsudassana-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* III, which has a significant legendary account on one of the wheel turners, doesn't mention the 32 signs.<sup>11</sup> Elaborating all the accounts on 32 signs, Piya Tan has stated that "the passages on the universal monarch were probably composed or finalized during Asoka's time in response to its imperial culture, though the tradition of the 32 marks probably went back to an earlier date."<sup>12</sup> If 32 signs were compiled in the texts at a later time, here our point is that it would have been done as a result of the doctrine on the physical features of a king which are included in some of the *suttas*. The Buddha, especially in the *Aggañña-sutta* and the *Kūṭadanta-sutta*, has explained the importance of what physical appearance a king should have.<sup>13</sup> But, it is clear that the physical appearance with 32 signs could be less significant when a king practices the *Cakkavatti* qualities as stated in *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*.

However, as our main concern is to find out whether the king *Aśoka* practiced and cultivated the *Cakkavatti* qualities in his ruling system, the most important features of the above three facts will be further discussed. Before starting the discussion on that, it would be better to examine King *Aśoka*'s biography briefly.

### **King *Aśoka*, his Governing System and the *Cakkavatti* Concept**

*Aśoka*, referred to as Devānampiya piyadassi in his own edicts, was the 3<sup>rd</sup> emperor of the Maurya dynasty of ancient India in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. His ruling era was 304-232 BCE.<sup>14</sup> In accordance with the Pali chronicles and legends, *Aśoka* was born in a royal family as the second son of king Bindusāra among his 101 sons. Although he was not the crown prince, he was able to be the ruler after his father's death. The *Dīvyāvadāna*, the *Samantapāsādikā*, the *Aśokāvadāna* and several other works mention that he was a king who wanted to enlarge the territory by defeating the neighboring countries. As a result of his harmful way of capturing countries, he was named as Caṇḍāśoka. The Kālīṅga war was a remarkable turning point of his life. According to his own words,

“...When he had been consecrated eight years the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, conquered Kalinga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many times that number perished. Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practiced Dhamma, desired Dhamma, and taught Dhamma, on conquering Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind.”<sup>15</sup>

After winning in the Kāliṅga war, he stopped his policy of capturing countries and he was converted to Buddhism. The *Samantapāsādikā*, the *Vinaya* commentary states that the king heard the message of the Buddha *Dhamma* from novice Nigrodha.<sup>16</sup> As a Buddhist, emperor Aśoka rendered a commendable service to Buddhism. As the *Samantapāsādikā* explains, the third Buddhist council was held under his patronage. Because of his practice of the Buddhist principles to shape up the way of ruling the country and his righteousness, he was called ‘*Dharmāśoka Cacravartīn*’ in Buddhist Literature. His righteous vision and mission is broadcast by his own rock epigraphs which are found not only in his kingdom but also in some neighboring countries, too.

It is clear that there is a particular righteous practice to become a *Cakkavatti* monarch according to the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*. As stated previously, there are three sub concepts to identify the characteristics of the concept of *Cakkavatti*. As mentioned earlier, it is clear that the 32 signs were not considered as an important feature that a *Cakkavatti* king should have. Here, the most significant fact is, there is no evidence, apart from the *Tatīyasaṅgītikathā* of the *Samantapāsādikā*, to show that king *Aśoka* had a physical appearance endowed with 32 signs. The statement in the *Samantapāsādikā* also cannot be considered as reliable evidence because of its legendary pattern which tries to explain the idea. Hence, further attention will be paid to the discussion on the other two facts which are mentioned above.

The second characteristic of the *Cakkavatti* concept is seven royal treasures (*Sattaratana*). There is no historical evidence to show that emperor *Aśoka* possessed the *sattaratana* which the king *Daḥanemi* and his seven successors had. But, it is important to find out the symbolism way of the concept of *sattaratana* in order to shed light on this aspect. The first of the seven treasures is the wheel treasure (*cakkaratana*). It is said to be the most valuable symbolic treasure of the king. As the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* stated,

“When a *Cakkavatti* is born into the world, the *Cakkaratana* appears before him from the *cakkadaha*, travelling through the air. It has its nave, its tyre and all its thousand spokes complete. An ordinary king becomes the wheel-rolling monarch with the appearance of the wheel treasure. The wheel executes authority only after the king sprinkles water. Then the wondrous wheel rolls onwards towards the regions of the East, South, West and North, in that order, with the king and his fourfold army, elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. As soon as the king takes up his abode where the wheel stops, all the regional kings come to him and request:” come, Oh Mighty king! Welcome. Oh, Mighty king! All is

yours, Oh Mighty king! Do, Oh Mighty king, be a teacher to us!" The wheel-rolling monarch fulfills this request earnestly by admonishing them to be ethically good. Then all the rival kings in the region become subjects to the wheel-rolling monarch. After winning the four comers of the earth to its ocean boundary in this way, the Wheel returns to the capital city and remains fixed on the open terrace in front of the entrance to the inner apartment of the king, as a glorious adornment."<sup>17</sup>

The *sutta* explains that the noble wheel is not a heritage (*na pettikaṃ dāyajjāṃ*) of the new king. After granting the kingship, it disappears within seven days and the king should practice the noble codes to get it back. Many scholars have interpreted the symbolic meaning of the noble wheel. Among those interpretations, there are some ideas to clarify that it represents the solar disk of the Sun as it asserts the entire operation of the system.<sup>18</sup>

However, it is clear that King *Aśoka* didn't have a *Cakkaratana*. But, if it symbolizes the authority and domination, it could be definitely said that he had adequate authority and power in his era. According to historical evidence, he ruled almost the whole of the Indian subcontinent under his authority. His dynasty stretched from the Hindukush mountains in Afghanistan to the areas of modern Bangladesh in the east. It means that his kingdom covered the entire Indian subcontinent except parts of present Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Although he captured the neighboring territories by war before converting to the Buddhism, there is some evidence to prove that he used the *Dhamma* mission to ask all rival regions to join him. For example, in the 13<sup>th</sup> rock edict, he has pointed out the places where he sent the message of the *Dhamma*.

"The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by Dhamma to be the foremost victory. And moreover the Beloved of the Gods has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of six hundred yojanas [i.e. about 1500 miles], where reigns the Greek king named Antiochus, and beyond the realm of that Antiochus in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas, and Alexander; and in the south over the Colas and Pandyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise here in the imperial territories among the Greeks and the Kambojas, Nabhakas and Nabhapanktis, Bhojasand Pitinikas, Andhras and Parindas, everywhere the people follow the Beloved of the Gods' instructions in Dhamma. Even where the envoys of the Beloved of the Gods have not gone, people hear of his conduct according to Dhamma, his precepts and his instruction in Dhamma, and they follow Dhamma and will continue to follow it.

What is obtained by this is victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by Dhamma yet it is but a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its results which pertain to the next world."<sup>19</sup>

Hence, it could be considered that he has used the same method to conquer the rival and subordinate countries according to his capacity and adjusting the concept into the contemporary period. The *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* mentions that the dhammic advice of the wheel turner contains the ethical based doctrines with the *Pañcasīla*.<sup>20</sup>

The main feature of his *Dhamma* mission is addressing the ethical behavior of the people of the country.

As the *sutta* explains, the king should apply the noble codes to redeem the wheel treasure. As Prof. Nandasena Rathnapala says, the noble wheel symbolized the public opinion by explaining five features of it.<sup>21</sup> If the wheel treasure has the meaning of public opinion, it illumines our discussion too. Caṇḍāshoka was the nick name was given by the citizens. Aśoka's expectation was to win back public opinion, by converting into the righteousness. Therefore, he has mentioned about the disappointment about the war in his edicts.<sup>22</sup>

As for the *Cakkaratana*, many scholars have tried to elaborate that the other six treasures also have symbolic meanings analyzing the interpretations of the *Bālapaṇḍita-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. As a summary of all the scholarly ideas, the following could be indicated as symbolic meanings of the other treasures.

- The Elephant Treasure (*Hatthiratana*) – Army, authority over the entire kingdom and fertility of the kingdom, favorable climate condition- clouds and thunder
- The Horse Treasure (*Assaratana*) - Army, authority over the entire kingdom and fertility of the kingdom, favorable climate condition- rain
- The Jewel/Gem Treasure (*Maṇiratana*) - natural resources which bring the light of prosperity to the kingdom and the financial basis of the country
- Woman Treasure (*Itthiratana*) - family life of the wheel turning monarch
- The Householder Treasure (*Gahapatiratana*) - economy of the country
- The Counsellor Treasure (*Parināyakarātana*) – advisor/s of the king<sup>23</sup>

It is certain that King Aśoka had the expected symbolic treasures and he tried to develop them in his country. No doubt that he could conquer other countries because of the strong army he had. On the other hand, he launched a program to plant trees and developed a suitable surrounding for people and animals not only in his country but also the other neighboring countries such as Coḷa, Pandyas, Satyaputras, Keralaputras.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the financial basis and the natural resources of King Aśoka's country were highly established as historians indicate that he was the best and ideal king who ruled in the Mauryan Empire India. According to the Sri Lankan chronicle, the *Mahabodhivaṃsa*, his chief consort was Vedisamahādevī. Her son and daughter, Mahinda and Saṅghamittā, were granted to the *Buddhasāsana* and they became arahants. Arahant Mahinda brought the Buddha's message to Sri Lanka and established Buddhism in the Island. Arahant Saṅghamittā brought a branch of the sacred Bodhi tree to Sri Lanka. They both did a commendable service to Buddhism. After his conversion to Buddhism, King Aśoka had as his advisors Buddhist *saṅgha*. In his edicts, he clearly points out the change which he achieved after his association with the *saṅgha*.<sup>25</sup>



The *Samyutta-nikāya* Commentary introduces another interpretation of the Sattaratana in accordance with the Buddhist view point of the seven awakening-factors as follows;<sup>26</sup>

Treasure	Factor
The Wheel Treasure ( <i>Cakkaratana</i> )	Mindfulness
The Elephant Treasure ( <i>Hatthiratana</i> )	Dhamma-discernment
The Horse Treasure ( <i>Assaratana</i> )	Effort
The Jewel/Gem Treasure ( <i>Maṇiratana</i> )	Zest
Woman Treasure ( <i>Itthiratana</i> )	Tranquility
The Householder Treasure ( <i>Gahapatiratana</i> )	Concentration
The Counsellor Treasure ( <i>Parināyakarātana</i> )	Equanimity

As a good dhammic follower, it is no doubt that King Asoka had the above qualities which should be practiced and cultivated by a wheel turner.

According to the noble codes stipulated in the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*, the king must protect the country depending on the *Dhamma*, honouring it, revering it, cherishing it, doing homage to it and venerating it, having the *Dhamma* as his badge and banner, acknowledging the *Dhamma* as his master. The protection of the country, according to the *Dhamma*, has been interpreted in the *sutta* as “*Dhammikaṃ rakkhāvaraṇaguttiṃ*”. The commentary of the *sutta* has indicated the meaning of the term as ‘when the king has the *Dhamma* it says the *rakkhāvaraṇaguttiṃ*’. Therefore, the king protects people by practicing the patience, non-violence and loving kindness. Then, the people protect the king vice versa.<sup>27</sup>

In his edicts king Aśoka proclaimed the victory of the *Dhamma* and explained the significance of victory by *Dhamma* more than the victory by war. In the 13<sup>th</sup> rock edict he says that “The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* to be the foremost victory.”<sup>28</sup> The king has attempted to explain about the significance of the *Dhamma* and his practice in the 1<sup>st</sup> Pillar Edict as follows.

“Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years, I had this inscription of *Dhamma* engraved. It is hard to obtain happiness in this world and the next without extreme love of *Dhamma*, much vigilance, much obedience, much fear of

sin, and extreme energy. But, through my instructions, care for Dhamma and love of Dhamma have grown from day to day, and will continue to grow. My subordinates too, whether high or low or of middle station, endorse it and practice it sufficiently to win over the wavering, and likewise do the frontier official. For this is my principle: to protect through Dhamma, to administer affairs according to Dhamma, to please the people with Dhamma, to guard the empire with Dhamma.”<sup>29</sup>

Further, he wished to convert his citizens to *Dhamma*. In the Dhauili inscription he says that all the citizens of his country are his children.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, he taught them to practice *Dhamma*, considering it as discharging of the debt of the king.<sup>31</sup> The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* mentions that a wheel turning monarch is born into the world for the benefit, happiness and welfare not only of humans but also of gods.<sup>32</sup> There is some evidence to prove that King Aśoka also had attempted to be such a king. In the 6<sup>th</sup> Rock edict, king says that, whether he is having meals, or he is in the woman’s apartment, or in the inner apartments, or at the cattle-shed, or in his carriage, or in the garden- wherever he might be, his informants should keep him in public businesses. By practicing that policy, the king wanted to promote welfare of the world. And, he says that he works for the happiness of citizens in this life and the next life.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, it can be said that he was a king who could sacrifice his own pleasure for the public welfare of the country.

The 7<sup>th</sup> pillar edict is the most significant proof of the king’s attempt in serving people by *Dhamma* as *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* recommended with the noble codes of a wheel turning monarch. In accordance with his own words, he had found his own method to transmit *Dhamma* and to increase the interest of it among country people. He made the arrangement to hear the proclamation of *Dhamma* and instruct them with *Dhamma* and let them have the progress in their lives with the *dhamma* education.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, he had introduced a systematic way of serving people and for the mission of *Dhamma*. *Dhamma* ministers (*dharma-mahāmātras*), surveyors (*rajjukas*) and other officials have been appointed to audit the progress every five years. The state officials were systematically trained and empowered with the necessary resources and competencies. They were also authorized to read out the king’s words on regular public gatherings.<sup>35</sup> In the *Sārānāt* pillar edicts, the king has let his officers spread the way to solve the *Vinaya* matters of the Buddhist order. Specially, the banyan trees were planted to provide shade for humans and beasts, mango groves were planted. Wells were dug and rest houses were built at every eight kosas. Also, the watering places were made everywhere for humans and beasts. He said that he had done the above things in order that the country people might confirm *Dhamma*.<sup>36</sup>

Apart from those, the above mentioned 7<sup>th</sup> pillar edict further shows the evidence for how King Aśoka attempted to protect his kingdom by the dhammic way as suggested by the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* with the rest of the points of noble codes of a Wheel Turning Monarch. First, he had appointed officials to provide public benefits for both ascetics and householders. As the commentary of the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* indicates he had instructed his ministers to arrange all the meritorious deeds including the *dāna* with the participation of his household. And,

they were asked to endorse his household about mercy, charity, truthfulness, purity, gentleness, and virtue.<sup>37</sup>

The King's attention was not only for Buddhist monks but also for all the other sects such as Brāhmins, Ājīvakas, Jains and other sects. There were many categories of offices with a variety of duties.<sup>38</sup> In the 12<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict he clearly points out the religious tolerance which was practiced by the king.<sup>39</sup> He directly intervened for religious harmony in the country even if it occurred in the order of Buddhist monks. For example, Sāñci and Barbarā inscriptions inform of his mission for cleansing the order of Saṅgha and correcting their conduct in strict terms.

Although the edicts do not mention everything about his method of governing the kingdom, such evidence shows *Aśoka's* systematic way of ruling the country by sharing all the benefits among the members of every social class. Like a wheel turner, first of all he was concerned about his own household. According to the 7<sup>th</sup> pillar edict, he had appointed chief officers for distribution of charity on behalf of the king, queens, his harem, his sons, and princes.<sup>40</sup>

It is clear that the king was not concerned with the social hierarchy when he served people. He always expected happiness and comfort of the citizens. He paid equal attention to all the social classes. Even the prisoners were also given the chance to be released from the prison. The king expected self-control and distribution of charity as the major *dhamma* practice of people.<sup>41</sup> In the 4<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict he mentions that he appointed *Rajukas* for the welfare and the happiness of the country people. Therefore, it could be pointed out that he expected to provide protection of all the classes of the society as included in the doctrine of noble codes of the *Cakkavatti* king.

As stated in the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*, the *Cakkavatti* king protects not only the people but also birds and beasts of his country. The commentary of the *sutta* mentions that protection of beasts and birds means protecting their lives without killing.<sup>42</sup> There is a lot of evidence to prove that King *Aśoka* took measures to protect animals. Especially in the 5<sup>th</sup> Pillar edict the king has commanded that animals not be killed,<sup>43</sup> not only by the citizens, but also, he stopped the killing of animals in his palace, too.

In addition, he had made arrangements to reduce crime in his kingdom as a *Cakkavatti* king does. His officers were instructed not to harass people but to develop the *Dhamma* practice to cultivate the charity, nonviolence and all the righteous practices. Although there is no considerable evidence to show that the king had given property to poor people as the noble codes points out, there is no doubt that he had collected taxes from his people. He was asking people to practice the *dhamma* considering it is discharging of the debt of the king.<sup>44</sup>

As previously indicated, according to the last noble code, the Wheel turning monarch should go to ascetics and Brahmins to consult them on righteous practices. In the 6<sup>th</sup> Pillar edict, the king had mentioned that although he provided them with all the requisites, he wished to meet them personally from time to time.<sup>45</sup> And, he

has declared in the Rupnath edict that he had been a Buddhist layman for more than two and a half years, but for a year he had not made much progress. Then for more than a year he had moved closer to the Order and become more ardent in his faith.<sup>46</sup>

By way of this discussion based on the *Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta*, the other relevant texts and Aśoka's edicts here, our attempt was to find out whether King Aśoka followed the Noble codes of the Wheel-turning monarch and tried to build up the qualities of wheel-turner.

### Conclusion

The Buddhist concept of ideal kingship is the wheel-turning monarch. As previously observed, Emperor Aśoka had been honored as the ideal king who practiced the Buddhist ideals to rule the biggest ever empire in ancient India. The prime objective of this research paper was to examine whether Emperor Asoka displayed the qualities of a wheel turning monarch and also how far he could demonstrate by practice the qualities of *Cakkavatti* king.

It has been pointed out that there are three basic characteristics of the *Cakkavatti* Concept that could be traced in the *suttas* such as;

01. Thirty-two physical signs
02. The seven treasures (*Sattaratana*)
03. The noble codes of the wheel turner (*Ariyaṃ Cakkavattivattam*)

Out of these three, the last two features were examined as they are included in the *Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta*, the inner and outer characteristics and qualities which a wheel-turning monarch should observe and practice. When compared with the ideas of King Aśoka the evidence is clear that he endeavored to cultivate noble codes and the qualities expected in the seven treasures as much as possible.

### Abbreviations

D	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
M	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
A	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
S	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
DA	<i>Dīgha-nikāyaṭṭhakathā</i>
SA	<i>Saṃyuttanikāyaṭṭhakathā</i>
PTS	Pali Text Society

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- DA III*, *Cakkavattisuttavaṇṇanā*, *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā* version 04.
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- <http://www.dhammadfarer.org>, *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta*, Translated by Tan, Piya (2008), 06. 09. 2016, 10.30 a.m.
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## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Meaning of the name is strong wheel.  
<http://www.dhammadfarer.org>, *Cakkavattisihanādasutta*, Translated by Tan, Piya (2008), 06. 09. 2016, 10.30 a.m.
- <sup>2</sup> *D III, Cakkavattisihanādasutta*, <http://www.palicanon.org/en/sutta-pitaka>, 13. 09. 2016, 11. 00 a.m.
- <sup>3</sup> *D III, Cakkavattisihanādasutta*, <http://www.palicanon.org/en/sutta-pitaka>, 13. 09. 2016, 11. 00 a.m.  
 However, Piya Tan has given 12 codes in his critical translation on the *Cakkavattisihanādasutta* as follows;  
 “From the *Cakkavatti Sihanāda Sutta*, we can list a total of twelve duties of the wheel-turner, constituting the wheel-turner’s code of duties (*cakka vatti vatta*), that is, as follows (put in somewhat modern terms)  
 (1) the supremacy of the Dharma (*dharm’ādhipateyya*), or supremacy of the law  
 (2) providing just care, shelter and guard for his own household (the royal family)  
 (3) providing just care, shelter and guard for his armed forces;  
 (4) providing just care, shelter and guard for the nobility (including the civil service);  
 (5) providing just care, shelter and guard for his colonial administrators;  
 (6) providing just care, shelter and guard for the socioeconomic elite (the learned and the affluent, especially the propertied);  
 (7) providing just care, shelter and guard for city-dwellers (especially business class) and the rural populace (the source of food and labour);  
 (8) providing just care, shelter and guard for the monastic and religious communities;  
 (9) providing just care, shelter and guard for living beings and nature (the environment);  
 (10) not conducting himself “against the Dharma” (*adhamma*), ie, unjustly or immorally [§5.3];  
 (11) providing welfare for those who are subject to him [§5.3]; and  
 (12) from time to time consulting the wise and morally virtuous for the sake of high moral and spiritual standards in society”  
<http://www.dhammadfarer.org>, *Cakkavattisihanādasutta*, Translated by Tan, Piya (2008), 06. 09. 2016, 10.30 am
- <sup>4</sup> *D III, Cakkavattisihanādasutta*, <http://www.palicanon.org/en/sutta-pitaka>, 13. 09. 2016, 11. 00 a.m.
- <sup>5</sup> *Pāli – English Dictionary*, Ed: Davids, T. W. Rhys., Stede, William., (1989), P. 491.
- <sup>6</sup> *A Sanskrit- English Dictionary*, Ed: Williams, Monier., (1899), Delhi; Motilal Bnarsidass Publishers.
- <sup>7</sup> *Buddhist and Vedic Studies: A Miscellany* by O.H. De A. Wijesekara, Edited by: Jayasuriya, M. H. F., (1994), Pp. 267-272
- <sup>8</sup> “*Imehi kho ayaṃ devakumāro dvattiṃsamahāpurisalakkhaṇehi samannāgato yehi samannāgatassa mahāpurisassa dveva gatiyo bhavanti anaññā, sace agāraṃ ajjhāvasati, raja hoti cakkavatti dhammiko dhammarājā caturanto vijitāvi janapadattācariyepatto sattaratanasamannāgato. Tassimāni swattaratanāni bhavanti: seyyatīdaṃ cakkratanam hatthiratanam assaratanam maṇiratanam ithhiratanam gahapatiratanam parināyakaratanammeva sattamaṃ. parosahassaṃ kho panassa puttā bhavanti sūrā viraṅgarūpā parasenappamaddanā. So imaṃ paṭhaviṃ sāgarapariyantam adaṇḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijaye ajjhāvasati. sace kho pana agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajati, arahaṃ hoti sammāsambuddho loke vivattaccho ‘ti.”  
*D. III, Mahāvagga, Mahāpadānasutta*, Buddhajayanti Tipitaka Edition, P. 28.*
- <sup>9</sup> Many of the suttas has been stated the following marks as 32 signs of the physical body of a great person such as the Buddha and the Cakkavatti monarch’

1. He has feet with a level sole.

2. He has the mark of a thousand-spoked wheel on the soles of his feet
3. He has projecting heels
4. He has long fingers and toes
5. His hands and feet are soft-skinned
6. He has netlike lines on palms and soles
7. He has high raised ankles
8. He has taut calf muscles like an antelope
9. He can touch his knees with the palms of his hands without bending.
10. His sexual organs are concealed in a sheath
11. His skin is the color of gold.
12. His skin is so fine that no dust can attach to it
13. His body hair are separate with one hair per pore
14. His body hair is blue-black, the color of collyrium, and curls clockwise in rings.
15. He has an upright stance like that of brahma
16. He has the seven convexities of the flesh.
17. He has an immense torso, like that of a lion
18. The furrow between his shoulders is filled in
19. The distance from hand-to-hand and head-to-toe is equal.
20. He has a round and smooth neck
21. He has sensitive taste-buds
22. His jaw is like that of lion's
23. He has a nice smile
24. His teeth are evenly spaced
25. His teeth are without gaps in-between
26. His teeth are quite white
27. He has a large, long tongue
28. He has a voice like that of Brahma
29. He has very blue eyes
30. He has eyelashes like an ox
31. He has a white soft wisp of hair in the center of the brow
32. His head is like a royal turban

<sup>10</sup> *M II, Majjhimaṇṇāsaka, Brahmāyusutta*, [http://www.sati.org/wpcontent/uploads/mn.91.scan\\_.pdf](http://www.sati.org/wpcontent/uploads/mn.91.scan_.pdf), 13. 09. 2016, 11.30 a.m.

<sup>11</sup> *D. III, Mahāvagga, Mahāsudassanasutta*, Buddhajayanti Tipitaka Edition, PP. 266-305.

<sup>12</sup> <http://dharmafarer.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/36.9-Lakkhana-S-d30-piya.pdf>, P. 147, 13. 09. 2016, 11.45 a.m.

<sup>13</sup> “He was handsome, pleasant in appearance, inspiring trust, gifted with great beauty of complexion, fair in colour, fine in presence, stately to behold.”

*D. I, Silakkhandhavagga, Kūṭadantasutta*, Translated by: Rhys Davids, [http://what-buddha-said.net/library/Wheels/wh\\_120.pdf](http://what-buddha-said.net/library/Wheels/wh_120.pdf), 14. 11. 2016, 9.30 a.m.

“...*abhirūpo dassanīyo pāsādiko paramāya vaṇṇapokkharatāya samannāgato brahmavaṇṇī brahmavacchasī akhuddāvakaṣo dassanāya...*”

*D. I, Silakkhandhavagga, Kūṭadantasutta*, Chatṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.

- <sup>14</sup> Voss, Thomas. *King Aśoka as a Role model of Buddhist Leadership*, <http://philpapers.org/archive/VOSKAA.pdf>, 30. 08. 2016, 1.30 p.m.
- <sup>15</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Rock edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>
- <sup>16</sup> *Samantapāsādikā*, Chatṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.
- <sup>17</sup> [http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/19031/11/11\\_chapter%201.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/19031/11/11_chapter%201.pdf), 19. 11. 2016, 2.30 p.m.
- <sup>18</sup> *Dialogues of the Buddha*, tr. Rhys Davids, Vol. II London: P.T.S., p. 202-203.
- <sup>19</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Rock edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 25. 11. 2016, 11.30 a.m.
- <sup>20</sup> “Come, Your Majesty, welcome! We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty.” And the King said: “Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink strong drink. Be moderate in eating.”
- D III, Cakkavattisihanāda-sutta*, <http://www.palicanon.org/en/sutta-pitaka>, 13. 09. 2016, 11. 00 a.m.
- <sup>21</sup> 1. The celestial wheel is the symbol of public opinion or wishes of the people.  
2. When a ruled or ruler strays away from public opinion, the wheel automatically moves away thus symbolizing the absence of people's support for the ruler.  
3. The people themselves kept vigil over the celestial wheel, and whenever the ruler or rulers acted contrary to public wishes, they reacted immediately, indicating their displeasure. There were ways and means of expressing their reactions to their rulers on such occasions when the law of the land was flouted.  
4. A king or ruler could not ignore such public opinion.  
5. A ruler or king was able to make his exit (when not wanted by the people) in a manner that does not hurt or damage his position in life. Very often the king or ruler would go to the forest to a life of quiet meditation after abdication. As a result of his exit, he does not lose the respect and honour he once enjoyed as the ruler. On the contrary, by being ancestor, respect and veneration for him naturally increased over that which he enjoyed as sovereign monarch. When not popularly desired by the people, a king, thus could graciously retire to the forest, keeping his status, respect intact, and suffering no humiliation.
- Ratnapala, Nandasena, *Buddhist Sociology*, New Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1993, pp.7 5-76.
- <sup>22</sup> Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practised Dhamma, desired Dhamma, and taught Dhamma, On conquering Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind.
- 13<sup>th</sup> Rock edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 21. 11. 2016, 2.10 pm.
- <sup>23</sup> [http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/19031/11/11\\_chapter%201.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/19031/11/11_chapter%201.pdf), P. 29
- <sup>24</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Rock Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 30. 11. 2016, 3.30 p.m.
- <sup>25</sup> “Beloved-of-the-Gods speaks thus:[33] It is now more than two and a half years since I became a lay-disciple, but until now I have not been very zealous.[34] But now that I have visited the Sangha for more than a year, I have become very zealous. Now the people in India who have not associated with the gods do so. This is the result of zeal and it is not just the great who can do this. Even the humble, if they are zealous, can attain heaven. And this proclamation has been made with this aim. Let both humble and great be zealous, let even those on the borders know and let zeal last long. Then this zeal will increase, it will greatly increase, it will increase up to one-and-a-half times. This message has been proclaimed two hundred and fifty-six times by the king while on tour.”
- Maski rock edict, <https://www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/ashoka.html>, 20. 11. 2016, 1.30 p.m.
- <sup>26</sup> SA, III, PTS, P. 154



<sup>27</sup> *“Tattha ‘paraṃ rakkhanto attānaṃ rakkhatī’ ti (saṃ. ni. 5.385) vacanato khantiādayo rakkhā. Vuttañhetam ‘kathañca, bhikkhave, paraṃ rakkhanto attānaṃ rakkhati. Khantiyā avihiṃsāya mettacittatā anuddayatā’ ti”*

*DA III, Cakkavattisuttavaṇṇanā, Chatṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.*

<sup>28</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Rock edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 22. 11. 2016, 7.40 p.m.

<sup>29</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Pillar edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 22. 11. 2016, 8.15 p.m.

<sup>30</sup> “All men are my children, and just as I desire for my children that they should obtain welfare and happiness both in this world and the next, the same do I desire for all men.”

Dhauri Inscription, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 24. 11. 2016, 3.30 p.m.

<sup>31</sup> “You should wish to avoid such faults. The root of all this is to be even-tempered and not rash in your work. He who is slack will not act, and in your official functions you must strive, act, and work. So he who approves this should say to you, ‘Think of clearing the debt- thus and thus, does the Beloved of the Gods instruct.’ There is great advantage in conforming to this instruction and great loss in not conforming to it. For by disregarding it you will gain neither heaven nor the favor of the king. Why do I devote my mind to this matter so extensively? Because by conforming you will reach heaven and will discharge your debt to me.”

Dhauri Inscription, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 27. 11. 2016, 11.30 p.m.

<sup>32</sup> *“Dveme, bhikkhave, puggalā loke uppajjamaṇā uppajjanti bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya, bahuno janassa atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ. Katame dve? Tathāgato ca araham sammāsambuddho, rājā ca cakkavattī. Ime kho, bhikkhave, dve puggalā loke uppajjamaṇā uppajjanti bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya, bahuno janassa atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussāna’nti.*

*A. I, Dukanipāta, Chatṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.*

<sup>33</sup> “And whatever may be my great deeds, I have done them in order to discharge my debt to all beings. I work for their happiness in this life, that in the next they may gain heaven. For this purpose has this inscription of Dhamma been engraved.”

6<sup>th</sup> Rock Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 30. 11. 2016, 2.45 p.m.

<sup>34</sup> “Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi. In the past, kings searched for means whereby people's interest in Dhamma would increase, but the people did not respond accordingly with a greater devotion to Dhamma. Hence the Beloved of the God the king Piyadassi says. This idea occurred to me. In the past kings sought to make the people progress ... but they did not. . . How then could people be made to conform to Dhamma and increase their interest in it? . . . How could I elevate them through devotion to Dhamma? I shall make them hear proclamations of Dhamma, and instruct them with the knowledge of Dhamma. When they have heard this, the people will endorse it and will be elevated, and will progress greatly in Dhamma..”

7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 15. 11. 2016, 6.30 p.m.

<sup>35</sup> “For this reason there have been proclamations of Dhamma and many instructions of Dhamma were ordered, and my administrators were appointed over many people; they will admonish them and explain Dhamma to them. The rajukas [rural officers) are appointed over many hundreds of thousands of people; I have instructed them duly to encourage those people devoted to Dhamma.”

7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 20. 11. 2016, 9.30 p.m.

<sup>36</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 20. 11. 2016, 9.40 p.m.

<sup>37</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 20. 11. 2016, 9.50 p.m.

<sup>38</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 20. 11. 2016, 10.00 p.m.

<sup>39</sup> “The Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, honours all sects and both ascetics and laymen, with gifts and various forms of recognition. But the Beloved of the Gods do not consider gifts or honour

to be as important as the advancement of the essential doctrine of all sects. This progress of the essential doctrine takes many forms, but its basis is the control of one's speech, so as not to extoll one's own sect or disparage another's on unsuitable occasions, or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. On each occasion one should honour another man's sect, for by doing so one increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man; whileby doing otherwise one diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's. Again, whosoever honours his own sect or disparages that of another man, wholly out of devotion to his own, with a view to showing it in a favourable light, harms his own sect even more seriously. Therefore, concord is to be commanded, so that men may hear one another's principles and obey them. This is the desire of the Beloved of the Gods, that all sects should be well-informed, and should teach that which is good, and that everywhere their adherents should be told, 'The Beloved of the Gods does not consider gifts or honour to be as important as the progress of the essential doctrine of all sects.' Many are concerned with this matter - the officers of Dhamma, the women's officers, the managers of the state farms, and other classes of officers. The result of this is the increased influence of one's own sect and glory to Dhamma."

13<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 27. 11. 2016, 7.30 p.m.

- <sup>40</sup> Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi.: These and many other chief officers are busy with the distribution of charity both on my behalf and on that of my queens; and in all my harem, in various forms, they . . . assist in the recognition of virtuous deeds, here and in all regions. And I have ordered them to be concerned with the distribution of charity, on behalf of my sons, and of the other princes, that they may glory in Dhamma and conform to it.

7<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 22. 10. 2016, 4.05 a.m.

- <sup>41</sup> "This is my instruction from now on. Men who are imprisoned or sentenced to death are to be given three days respite. Thus their relations may plead for their lives, or, if there is no one to plead for them, they may make donations or undertake a fast for a better rebirth in the next life. For it is my wish that they should gain the next world. And among the people various practices of Dhamma are increasing, such as self-control and the distribution of charity."

4<sup>th</sup> Pilla Edict, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 10. 11. 2016, 2.30 pm.

- <sup>42</sup> *Migapakkhino abhayadānena samassāsetabbā.*

*DA III, Cakkavattisuttavaṇṇanā, Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā version 04.*

- <sup>43</sup> "Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years I forbade the killing of the following species of animals, namely: parrots, mainas, red-headed ducks [?], cakravaka-geese, swans, nandi-mukhas [birds encountered in rice fields?], pigeons, bats, ants, tortoises, boneless fish, vedaveyakas, pupulas of the Ganges [fish?], skate, porcupines, squirrels, deer, lizards, domesticated animals, rhinoceroses, white pigeons, domestic pigeon and all quadrupeds which are of no utility and are not eaten. She goats, ewes, and sows which are with young or are giving suck are not to be killed, neither are their young up to the age of six months. Capons must not be made. Chaff which contains living things must not be set on fire. Forests must not be burned in order to kill living things or without any good reason. An animal must not be fed with another animal.

On the first full moon days of the three four-monthly seasons, and for three days when the full moon falls on the star Tisya, and the fourteenth and fifteenth of the bright fortnight, and the first of the dark, and regularly on fast days, fish are not to be caught or sold. And on these same days in the elephant-park and fisheries, other classes of animals likewise must not be killed. On the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the fortnight, on the days of the star Tisya and Punarvasu, on the three first full moons of the four-monthly seasons, and on festival days, bulls, goats rams, boars, and

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other animals which it is customary to castrate are not to be castrated. On the days of the stars Tisya and Punarvasu, on the first full moon days of the four-monthly seasons, and on the fortnights following them, cattle and horses are not to be branded.”

5<sup>th</sup> Pillar *Edict*, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 16. 11. 2016, 2.05 pm.

<sup>44</sup> “You should wish to avoid such faults. The root of all this is to be even-tempered and not rash in your work. He who is slack will not act, and in your official functions you must strive, act, and work. So he who approves this should say to you, 'Think of clearing the debt- thus and thus, does the Beloved of the Gods instruct.' There is great advantage in conforming to this instruction and great loss in not conforming to it. For by disregarding it you will gain neither heaven nor the favor of the king. Why do I devote my mind to this matter so extensively? Because by conforming you will reach heaven and will discharge your debt to me.”

Dhauhi Inscription, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 25. 11. 2016, 5.20 pm.

<sup>45</sup> “Thus do I provide for the welfare and happiness of the world - in the same way as I bring happiness to my relatives, both close and distant and work for it, so do I provide for all sects. I honour all sects with various kinds of reverence, and I consider visiting them in person to be most important. When I had been consecrated for twenty-six years I had this inscription of Dhamma engraved.”

6<sup>th</sup> Pillar *Edict*, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 30. 11. 2016, 8.15 pm.

<sup>46</sup> Rupnath Inscription, <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/tibet/asoka1.html>, 30. 11. 2016, 2.30 pm.