

## Semantics of *Dharma*

V. KUTUMBA SASTRY  
Pondicherry University  
Pondicherry

The term *dharma* is unique in many ways. It is a word well understood and frequently used aptly by common people and yet found impossible to give a straightforward definition by the scholars. It is a word which signifies the law and force of regulation behind the movement of planets, stars and galaxies and yet signifies duty of any petty professional of this tiny earth. It is a word which is explained as the unseen cause behind rhythm and rhyme of the universe and yet is explained as the unseen cause for the behavior of a barber not to cut the throat of his customer while shaving. It is a word to explain which several hundreds of books of *Dharmaśāstras*, *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* were written and yet which remained unintelligible and unclear. It is a word which signified such principles, every one of which, at one time or the other, is clearly violated by people and yet such violation is also cited to be signified by it. It is a word which signified, at one and the same time, the universal principles and the sectarian principles. It is a word which defies any attempt to translate it into any other language both Indian and non-Indian.

According to the Samskrit grammar of Pāṇini, the etymology of the word *dharma* is as follows. It is a derivative form from root *dhṝ* of *bhṝ* meaning either to sustain, or to uphold, or to support or to wear. It is derived by adding the *uṇādi* suffix 'man' as per the *uṇādisūtra* 1-140. Most of the commentators explaining this word show its etymology as a principle which sustains the entire cosmos or a principle upheld by the people at large.<sup>1</sup> It is both in the masculine and neuter gender, though its use in the masculine gender is quite frequent. It is an a-ending (*akārānta*) word when it is used independently. However, sometimes when it is used in compounds it is seen as n-ending (*nakārānta*) word. In the *Vedic* literature, however, it is used as a n-ending word even when it is used independently. This fact gives us a clue that originally the word *dharma* used to have both a-ending forms as well as n-ending forms, but in due course of time the n-ending forms disappeared from usage in classical Samskrit language, while being retained, of course, in the compounds. Anyway, we need not show our concern towards these peculiarities as they do not have any bearing on its semantics.

A thorough understanding of the etymology of the term *dharma* helps us to understand its basic underlying character which runs through the several shades of meanings it expresses. The sharp and enlightened intuitive mind of great Indians of yore was able to see an underlying power and principle behind the order and rhythm of the cosmos, seasons, the planets and their movement, the day and the night, the behavior of the animal kingdom and humans and, for that matter, behind every thing in nature. They understood that it is that power and that principle which enabled the order and rhythm to continue. They named it *dharma* on the basis of its etymology '*dharati lokān iti*' (*dharma* because it sustains and holds up the worlds). Seen from this point of view, it seems very clear what *dharma* is and what is its nature: but, it eludes definite grasp since it is an abstract idea. They also grasped the exclusive characteristics and the principle responsible for the existence and sustenance of each and every minute component of the nature around us and named them also as *dharma* for obvious reasons of etymological significance of the term. To give light and heat is the *dharma* of the sun, to flow and to soak is the *dharma* of water. The principle which sustains, maintains or regulates human society and its various classes also came to be known as *dharma*. Hence, the *varṇadharmas*, *āśramadharmas*, *rājadharmas*, *manuṣyadharmas* and so on so forth. *Dharma* of the learned persons, *dharma* of the servants, *dharma* of various professionals so on and so forth. It may be noticed and appreciated that in all such cases the basic characteristic of 'being a power and principle of sustenance and holding up', which is reflected in the etymology of the term *dharma*, is common. This dynamic principle which sustains the worlds and their order is first termed as *ṛta* in the *Vedic* literature. *Varuṇa* is said to be the god of the *ṛta*. He is well known as the law-giver and as the god of the order of the cosmos and the seasons. Hence, the term *ṛta* meant the order of the worlds in the *Vedic* literature.

Of course, the intuitive mind of *maharṣis* did not stop with the apprehension of this dynamic principle *dharma*. It saw yet another still basic and still fundamental principle which is unchangeable in its nature because of which the changeable regulative principle (*dharma*) continued its sway. It is termed as *satya*. This is clearly stated in a *mantra* of the *R̥gveda*.<sup>2</sup>

*Satya* is the unchangeable primordial cause of the origination, sustenance and involution of the entire universe, whereas *ṛta* is the changeable primordial principle which holds up, sustains and regulates the universe. *Satya* is the cause of the universe whereas *ṛta* is the rhythm of it. In the later literature, the term *Brahman* replaced the term *satya* and

the term *dharma* replaced the term *ṛta*. However, it may be noted that both the terms *dharma* and *ṛta* are frequently used in the *R̥gveda*, which is supposed to be the earliest Vedic text. They were used more or less as synonyms in the post-*R̥gveda* Vedic literature too. But, in the post-Vedic literature, i.e. in the Smṛti and Purāṇa texts, use of the term *ṛta* slowly decreased and subsequently disappeared.

Realization of Brahman is the liberation (*mokṣa*) whereas rigorous and meticulous observance of *dharma* leads to the orderly well-being of the individual, society and the world at large. Realization of Brahman, obviously, is of the nature of *jñāna* whereas observance of *dharma* is of the nature of *karman*. Thus, the entire life, activity and the ends of the individual, society and the world as a whole is placed between these two higher goals, *dharma* on one side and *mokṣa* on the other. Such life, activity and the ends of the individual, the society and the world as a whole is divided into two categories, namely, *artha* and *kāma*. Thus result four *puruṣārthas*, four ends of humanity, namely, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. It may be noticed that *artha* and *kāma* are fixed in between *dharma* and *mokṣa* thus making a hint that *artha* and *kāma* are *puruṣārthas* so long only as they do not violate the principles of *dharma* and remain congenial to *mokṣa*. Thus says Bhagavān Śrīkṛṣṇa that he is of the nature of such *kāma* which does not violate *dharma*.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the life is put in between *karman* and *Brahman*.

Though the understanding of the nature of *dharma* appears to be very clear and simple on the basis of understanding the etymology of the term *dharma*, it is too complicated and elusive on account of the fact that it cannot be uniform and single but countlessly varied. Though it is one and uniform in its essential nature, it is countless and varied in its details. That is why *dharma* is the concept which was discussed at length in Indian thought. Dr. Radhakrishnan says,<sup>4</sup> 'Next to the category of reality, that of *dharma* is the most important concept in Indian thought'.

On account of the varied nature of the details of the principle *dharma*, the term came to have several meanings. The meanings are so varied and diverse in their nature that they could not be brought under any single classification and hence the difficulty of defining the term. P.T. Raju in his glossary of Indian philosophical terms identifies the following meanings of the term:<sup>5</sup> '*Dharma*, law, nature, rule, ideal, norm, quality, entity, truth, element, category'. K.V. Rangaswamy Iyengar writes,<sup>6</sup> '*Dharma* is used in so many senses that it eludes definition. It stands for nature, intrinsic quality, civil and moral law, justice, virtue, merit, duty and morality'. J.A.B. van Buitenen writes,<sup>7</sup> 'It is as difficult to define *dharma* in terms of western thought as it is to define "culture" in

Sanskrit, and for the same reason both are all comprising terms including institutions, a way of thinking and living, accomplishments, characteristic of people.' Heinrich Zimmer opines<sup>8</sup> that the term *dharmā* 'comprises the whole context of religious and moral duties, but considerable misunderstanding results from the frequent rendering of *dharmā* simply as "religion"'. Paul Masson comments,<sup>9</sup> 'The distinction of religion and law can be justified only from the European point of view, the two notions are one in the Indian *dharmā*.'

Apart from the etymology, we have yet another source to grasp the meaning of the term *dharmā*. For our great advantage, the term is frequently used in all the divisions of Sanskrit literature starting from the earliest work the *R̥gveda*. By analyzing the contextual meaning where it is used, we can grasp its meaning in a better way. P.V. Kane, the doyen of the studies in *Dharmaśāstra* has exactly used this method. According to him,<sup>10</sup> the term *dharmā* is used:

1) In the sense of 'upholder or supporter or sustainer' in the *R̥g.* I.187.1 and X.92.2

2) It is used in the sense of 'religious ordinances and rites' in the *R̥g.* I.22.18, V.26.6, VIII.43.24, IX.64.1. and where refrain '*tāni dharmāni prathamānyāsan*' in the *R̥gveda* I.164.43-50, and X.90.16. He also identifies significant combination of words such as '*prathamadharmā*' in sense of the primeval or first ordinances in the *R̥g.* III. 17.1. and X.56.3., '*sanatādharmāni*' in the sense of ancient ordinances in the *R̥g.* III.3.1

3) In the *R̥g.* IV.53.3., V.63.7., VI.70.1., and VII.89.5. the term *dharmā* is used not in the sense of 'religious rites' but in the sense of 'fixed principles or rules of conduct.'

4) In the *Atharvaveda.* XI.9. 17 it is used in the sense of 'merit acquired by the performance of religious rites.'

5) In the *Itareyabrāhmaṇa.* VII.17. it is used in an abstract sense viz. 'the whole body of religious (and moral?) duties'.

6) In the *Chandogya Upaniṣad* II.23.1. it is used in the sense of *āśramadharmas*. It states, 'there are three branches of *dharmā*, one is (constituted by) sacrifice, study and charity, (i.e. the stage of householder); the second (is constituted by) austerities (i.e. the stage of being a hermit); the third is the *brahmacārin* dwelling in the house of his teacher and making himself stay with the family of his teacher till the last, all these attain to the worlds of meritorious men; One who abides firmly in Brahman attains immortality.'

P.V. Kane remarks in conclusion that:<sup>11</sup> 'The foregoing brief discussion



establishes how the word *dharma* passed through several transitions of meaning and how ultimately its most prominent significance came to be 'the privileges, duties and obligations of a man, his standard of conduct as a member of the Aryan community, as member of one of the castes, as person in a particular stage of life.' It is in this sense that the word seems to be used in the well-known exhortation to the pupil contained in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* (I.11) 'speak truth, practice *dharma*'. It is in the same sense that the *Bhagavadgītā* uses the word *dharma* in an oft-quoted verse.<sup>12</sup> It is employed in this sense in the *Dharmaśāstra* literature. The *Manusmṛti* (I.2) tells us that the sages requested Manu to impart instruction in the *dharma*s of all the *varṇas*. The *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* (I.1) employs it in the same sense. In the *Tantravārtika* also we are told that all the *dharma-sūtras* are concerned with imparting instruction in the *dharma*s of *varṇas* and *āśramas*.<sup>13</sup> Medhātithi commenting on Manu says that the expounders of *smṛtis* dilate upon *dharma* as five fold e.g. '*varṇadharmā, āśramadharmā, varṇāśramadharmā, naimittikadharmā* (such as *prāyścitta*) and *guṇadharmā*' (the duty of crowned king, whether Kṣatriya or not, is to protect).<sup>14</sup>

Apart from the analysis of the contextual meaning of the term *dharma* as understood from its usage, we have yet another source for understanding the meaning of the term, namely, definitions. For example, Jaimini defines *dharma* as 'a desirable goal or result that is indicated by injunctive (*Vedic*) passages'.<sup>15</sup> The word *dharma* would mean such rites as are conducive to happiness and are enjoined by *Vedic* passages, *iṣṭasādhanatā* is the meaning of injunctive suffix. Kaṇāda defines the term as 'that from which results happiness and final beatitude'.<sup>16</sup> Harita defines it as '*śrutipramāṇaka*' (based on revelation).<sup>17</sup> Śābara says, 'whatever is means to the well-being of humanity and the world at large is *dharma*'.<sup>18</sup> The same is said in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*.<sup>19</sup> The *Taittirīyaśrutis* says, '*dharma* is the sustainer of entire universe, people approach a person who is set in *dharma*. By *dharma* one washes away the sins'.<sup>20</sup> Viśvāmītra defines *dharma* as follows: '*Dharma* is that performance of which is appreciated by the learned and proficient in the *āgamas*. *Adharma* is that which is condemned by them'.<sup>21</sup>

There are several other more or less one-sided definitions of *dharma* such as '*ahiṃsā paramo dharmah*' (*Anuśāsanaparvan*, 115.1), '*ānṛśaṃsyaṃ paro dharmah*' (*Vanaparvan*, 373.76) '*ācārah paramo dharmah*' (*Manu*, I.108)

In the Buddhist tradition, the term *dharma* stands for 'the whole teaching of Buddha' (B.B.E. Vol. X p. XXXIII) and for 'an element of existence, i.e. of matter, mind and force'.<sup>22</sup>

In most of the regional languages of India, two expressions are in

common usage amongst people at large. Whenever any petty quarrel takes place on account of cheating, one usually says to the other, 'Does it appeal *dharma* to you?' Similarly at an advanced stage of the quarrel quite often one says to the other, 'Do whatever you consider it to be *dharma*'. Such popular usage of the term *dharma* is very frequent. This, too, helps us to develop an insight into the nuances of the usage of the term '*dharma*'.

The above analysis of etymology, usage and definitions of the term *dharma* only confirms our view that though it is easy to comprehend, it is rather difficult to define. The vast varieties of its meaning cannot be brought under one umbrella. Mackenzie Brown says, '*dharma* is more than laws for it is what underlies law and creates law in the universe. Basic to *dharma* is this view of order or law pervasive in the universe.'<sup>23</sup> Betty Heimann isolates five meanings of *dharma* centering around a concept of fixed position:<sup>24</sup> (1) fixed position of duty, (2) right, (3) religious observance, (4) secular law or one's legal status in the community and (5) a general principle or law of nature. The underlying concept she finds to be everything which is fixed and to which an individual is bound. Van Buitenen says that '*dharma* is all that activity that a man, if he is to live fittingly, is required to contribute to the fixed order of things, to the norm of the universe, which is good and should not be altered'.<sup>25</sup>

Another interesting aspect of *dharma* is that it is divided into several divisions such as *sādhāraṇadharmā* (general *dharma*) and *viśeṣadharmā* (particular *dharma*) *sanātana dharmā* (eternal *dharma*) *āpavāda dharmā* including *āpad dharmā* (emergency *dharma*) so on and so forth. On account of this, what is *dharma* under one division is perceived not to be so under another division. Non-injury (*ahiṃsā*) which is one of the important component of *sanātana dharmā* is quite often violated by the Kṣatriyas and others under various circumstances. Yet, such violation also came to be recognized as *dharma*. Thus the entire exercise of the *Bhagavadgītā* is to induce Arjuna to wage a war which is considered to be the highest *dharma*.

Therefore, *ahiṃsā* which is supposed to be a very basic *dharma* is also a relative concept, not applicable to all living beings in a single manner. That is why we have the saying '*ahiṃsā paramo dharmah*' on one hand and on the other hand another contradicting saying, '*jīvo jīvasya jīvanam*'.

In fact, the etymological sense of the term '*dharma*' gets violated if we perceive *ahiṃsā* as an absolute *dharma*, because, it is not possible for animals to sustain themselves without *hiṃsa*. It is so to a large extent with humans too. To prepare life-saving medicines and conduct research in biological sciences, untold *hiṃsā* on rats and rabbits in unavoidable. For

Arjuna also *himsā* is unavoidable in the battle of Kurukṣetra, after every effort for peaceful co-existence failed, in the light of the long story narrated in the previous five *parvans*. Therefore, in these cases, the *himsā* is considered not as *himsā*.

Another important *sādharaṇadharmā* or *sanātana dharma* is to speak the truth: '*satyaṃ vada*', says the *Upaniṣad*. There are several illustrations in the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* glorifying the act of speaking the truth. Even with regard to such a fundamental *dharma* there are several exceptions which are quite obvious.

*satyaṃ brūyāt priyaṃ brūyāt na brūyāt satyamapriyam |  
priyaṃ ca nānṛtaṃ brūyāt eṣa dharmassanātanaḥ ||*

'One should speak the truth. One should speak about such things which are pleasant to hear. One should not speak the truth which is not pleasant, neither should one speak lie which is pleasant.'

This dictum is captioned at the end as '*sanātana dharma*'.

Hence, *dharma* is neither uniform nor absolute nor static according to Hindu tradition. It varies from situation to situation, age to age, caste to caste so on and so forth. That is why it is to be judged very carefully. Several books such as the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and numerous *Purāṇas* came into being precisely to explain the complexity of *dharma*. They declared that the ways of *dharma* are, indeed, hard to comprehend (*dharmasya tattvaṃ nihitaṃ guhāyām*).

However, it is interesting to note that the etymological meaning of the term holds good, in each and every minute shade of the meaning of the term *dharma*. *Sanātana dharmas* and *sādharaṇa dharmas* are *dharmas* on account of their role in sustaining the humanity and its values. Caste *dharmas* and *āśramadharmas* are also perceived to be the upholding principles to sustain that particular caste or *āśrama*. The *apavāda dharma*, which often appears to be a violation of *dharma*, is also aimed at sustaining the community or humanity when it is closely observed. Thus, a common definition to all sorts of *dharmas* is possible only on the basis of its etymology, however loose such definition may be. Hence, it is said, that *dharma* is called *dharma* because it sustains and upholds the individual, society and the world at large (*dhāraṇāt dharma ityāhuḥ dharmo dhārayate prajāḥ*).

Now, I look back at the apparent dichotomy between *sādhāraṇa dharmas* and the *viśeṣadharmas* and make a few observations which I consider to be of greater relevance. It is usually said 'there is an exception for every law'. It holds good with regard to *dharma* also. Humanity is so

large and complex in nature that no universal law can be made to bring an order into it. Hence, it is necessary to identify certain values of life to be values of very high order and universally applicable at all given points of time. Surely, *ahimsā* (non-injury) *satya* (truth) *asteya* (non-stealing) etc. are such *dharma*s that no one would contend their position and relevance at any given time. But, within the framework consisting of such principles, we have to make provision for their violation also, so as to suit the exigencies of context. Such provisions are called *viśeṣadharmas*. For example *himsā* is unavoidable for fisherman, for butchers, for Kṣatriyas, and for Brāhmins also during sacrifices. For all of these, to fulfill their occupational obligation *himsā* becomes unavoidable. Hence, *viśeṣadharma* prevails over the *sādhāraṇadharma*. Further, if *viśeṣadharma* does not prevail over *sādhāraṇadharma*, it loses its application in all cases, and as a consequence, it loses its significance being codified as *dharma*.

In my opinion, the *Mahābhārata* story and various episodes in it will be better intelligible if we consider them to be *viśeṣadharmas*. However, in several of its discourses, it deals with the *sādhāraṇadharmas*. Violation of principles like *ahimsā*, compassion and considerations of being teachers, grandfathers, kith and kin is held to be *dharma* in the context of the Kurukṣetra war. This is clearly one of the main teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Coming to the point of *varṇadharmas*, we should understand them also as a kind of *viśeṣadharmas* prevailing over the *sādhāraṇadharmas*. That is why, it is accepted that the butcher does not violate the principle of *ahimsā* as long as he kills animals for his occupational obligations. At the same time, he is considered to have violated the principle of *ahimsā*, if he murders a human. Therefore, murder as such is neither *himsā* nor *ahimsā*, but it is assessed to be *himsa* or *ahimsā* on the basis of its context. Unless we maintain this position, we cannot explain the wars of liberation and capital punishments. Nor can our Marxist-extremist friends justify their killing of the bourgeoisie. The discriminatory punishment given by the judges to murderers who have committed the crime under different circumstances would be similarly unjustifiable.

Just as ethics is classified into various categories, such as, ethics of doctors and other professionals, ethics of businessmen, ethics of politics etc., *dharma* is also classified as *varṇadharmas*, *āśramadharmas* etc. We should be very clear that all these *dharma*s of *varṇa* (caste) *āśrama* are mere arrangements (*vyavasthā*) to bring an order into the society and to protect the interests of all the castes. They are like different parts of a single piece of land carefully bifurcated by the farmer into small plots so that water would irrigate and nourish them equally. It is obvious that in



the absence of such internal boundaries, the entire water would flow swiftly down to the lowest part of the land. As a consequence, only the plants in that lowest part would get nourishment while the rest would be deprived of it.

An interesting feature of *varṇadharmas* is that the more one community or caste holds responsibility towards society, the greater are the sanctions of *dharma* upon it. Thus, in the *Dharmaśāstras* the highest number of dos and don'ts are prescribed for the Brāhmin community. Next comes the case of Kṣatriyas, followed by Vaiśyas. Among all the *varṇas*, the lowest number of dos and don'ts are prescribed for Śūdras. The greater number of prescriptions for women in the *smṛti* texts should also be construed similarly. Likewise, *brāhmacārins* have fewer sanctions than all other *āśramas*, while the *gṛhasthas* have the most. This is the textual position. Of course, deviations from the text did occur in practice. These, however, only point towards human weakness rather than to the in-built nature of the system. Various movements of *Bhakti* and the preachings of hundreds of *sants*, *gurus*, and *svāmīs* have continuously and successfully rectified the social evils in India throughout the centuries.

Therefore, arrangements towards social order (*vyavasthas*) keep on changing according to the necessities of the society. If we carefully study the texts of *Dharmaśāstras* in a historical perspective, it is evident that these details of *varṇadharmas* went on changing periodically. In the light of the spirit of the *Dharmaśāstras*, there is every scope for throwing out the existing *vyavasthā*, and for bringing in a new one provided such new *vyavasthā* should satisfy the etymological sense of the term *dharma* and should result in sustaining the society and social order. We should remember that we require people who are totally disinterested and detached from the bondages of society; who keep a distance from it and yet have an in-depth vision of humanity and its welfare; whose minds are not influenced by temporary, contextual, socio-politico-economic exigencies. We need people who are, in short, *jīvanmuktas* (comparable to the *maharṣis* who wrote the *Dharmaśāstras*) as architects to build such a new *vyavasthā*.

How many such people are there in and around us? This question deserves to be pondered over.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 'dharati lokān, dhriyate vā janaiḥ iti dharmah'. *Sudhā* on the *Amarakośa*.
2. 'rtaṁ ca satyaṁ cābhīddhāt tapasodhya jāyata / tato rātryajāyata tatassamudro arṇavaḥ / samudrādarnavādadhī samvatsaro ajāyata / ahorātrāṇi vidadhadvīśvāsya miśato vaśi /

- sūryā candramasau dhātā yathāpūrvamakalpayat/divam ca pṛthivīm cāntarikṣamatho svah. Rgveda, 10.190.1-3*
3. 'dharmāvīruddho bhuteṣu kāmosmi bharatarṣabha'. *Bhagavadgītā*, 7.11
  4. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1923-27, Vol. I, p. 52.
  5. P.T. Raju, *Idealistic Thought of India*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953, p. 445.
  6. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, *Some Aspects of the Hindu View of Life According to Dharmaśāstra*, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1952, p. 63.
  7. J.A.B. van Buitenen, 'Dharma and Mokṣa', *Philosophy East and West*, 7, 1957, p. 33-40.
  8. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, Joseph Campbell (Ed.), Pantheon Books, New York, 1951, p. 40.
  9. Paul Masson-Oursel, *Ancient India and Indian Civilisation*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, London, 1934, p. 71.
  10. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1930, pp. 1-4.
  11. *Ibid.*
  12. 'svadharme nidhanam śreyah paradharmo bhayāvahaḥ', *Bhagavadgītā*, 3.35.
  13. 'sarvadharmasūtrāṇām varṇāśramadharmopadeśitvā', *Tantravārttika*, p. 237. As quoted by P.V. Kane.
  14. See P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, pp. 1-4.
  15. 'codanālakṣaṇortho dharmah'. *Mimāṃsādarśanam*, 1.1.2.
  16. 'athāto dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ / yatobhyudayaniśśreyasasiddhiḥ sa dharmah'. *Vaiśeṣikadarśanam*, 1.1.1-2
  17. 'athāto dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ / śrutiprmāṇako dharmah / śrutīśca dvidhā vaidikī tāntrikī ca. Quoted by Kullūka on *Manusmṛti* 2.1.
  18. 'ya eva śreyaskaraḥ sa eva dharmasabdenocyate/' *Mimāṃsādarśanam* with *Śābarabhāṣyam*, Vol. 1, Anandasrama Press, Poona, 1976, p. 20.
  19. 'dharmah śreyah samuddiṣṭam śreyobhyudayasādhanam'. *Bhaviṣyapurāṇam*. As quoted in the *Vācaspatyam*.
  20. 'dharmo viśvasya jagataḥ pratiṣṭhā/loke dharmiṣṭhaṁ prajāḥ upasarpanti/dharmeṇa pāpamaṇudati.' As quoted in the *Vācaspatyam*.
  21. 'yamāryāḥ kriyamāṇāni hi śamsantyāgamavedināḥ/sa dharmoyam, vigarhanti tamadharmam pracakṣate/' As quoted in the *Vācaspatyam*.
  22. Vide. Dr. Stekerbatsky's monograph on the central conception of Buddhism, 1923, p. 73.
  23. Donald Mackenzie Brown, *The White Umbrella: Indian Political Thought from Manu to Gandhi*, University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1953, p. 15.
  24. Betty Heimann, *Indian and Western Philosophy: A Study in Contrasts*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1937, p. 68.
  25. J.A.B. van Buitenen, 'Dharma and Mokṣa', p. 36.