

ANCIENT NEPAL

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D. R. REGMI
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FIRMA K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY
CALCUTTA * 1960.

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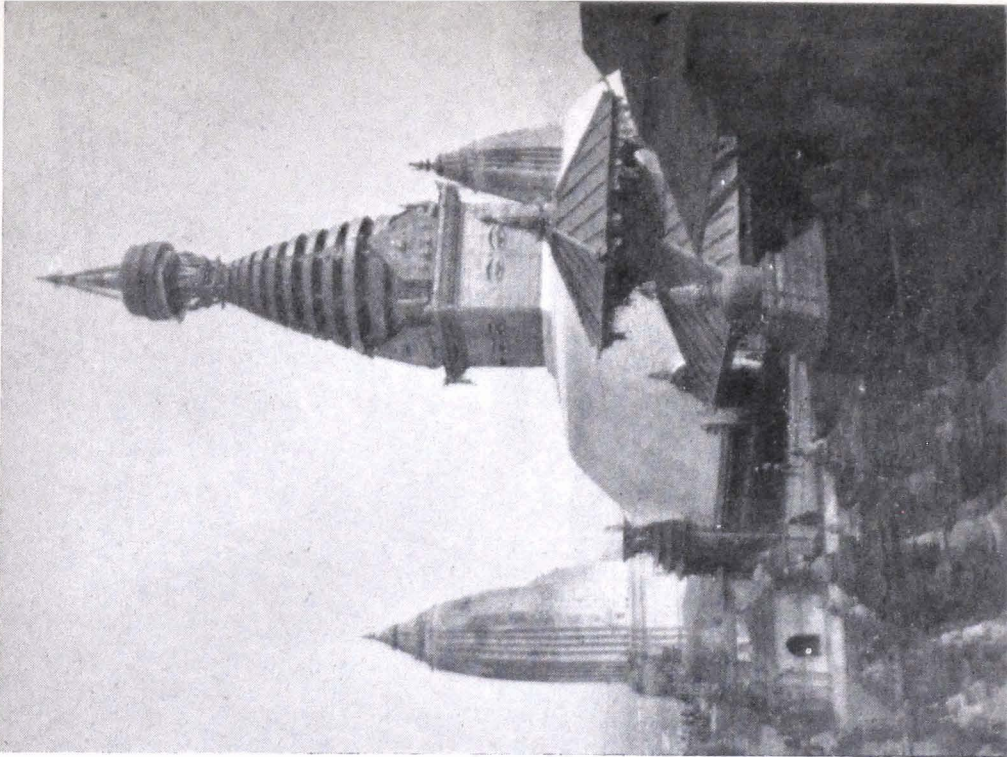
D. R. Regmi, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Published by
K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY,
61A, Banchharam Akur Lane,
Calcutta 12, India.

Price : Rs. 15.00

Printed by
R. Chatterjee, at the Binani Printers Private Ltd.,
38, Strand Road, Calcutta-1.

*To the memory of Darling
Kalyani,
My late wife*



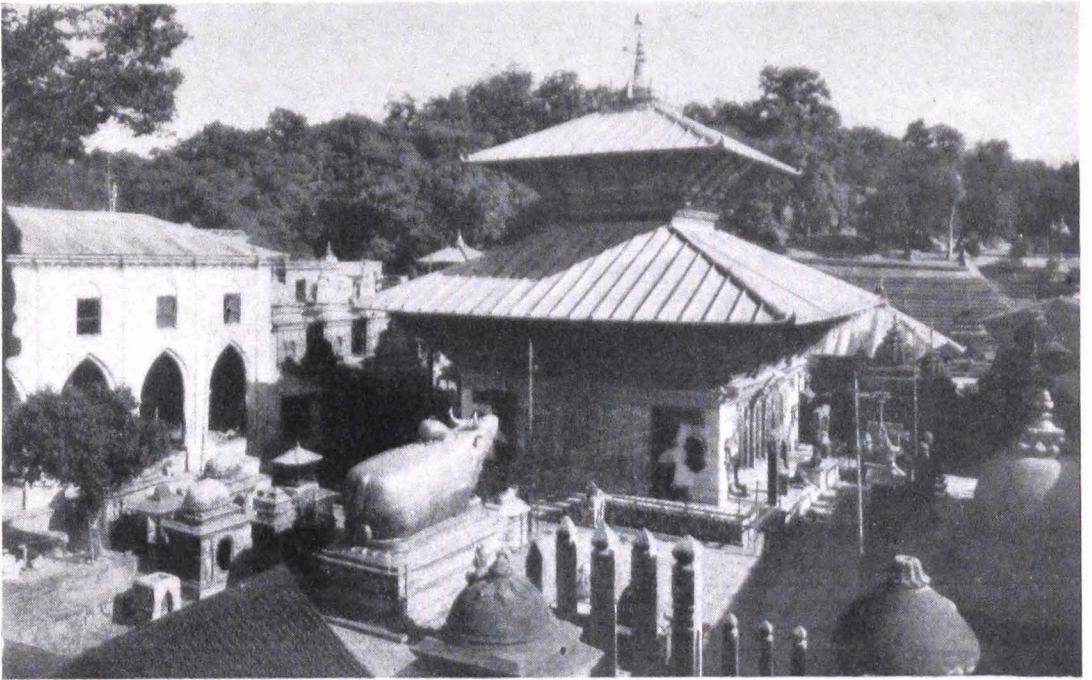
Swayambhunath



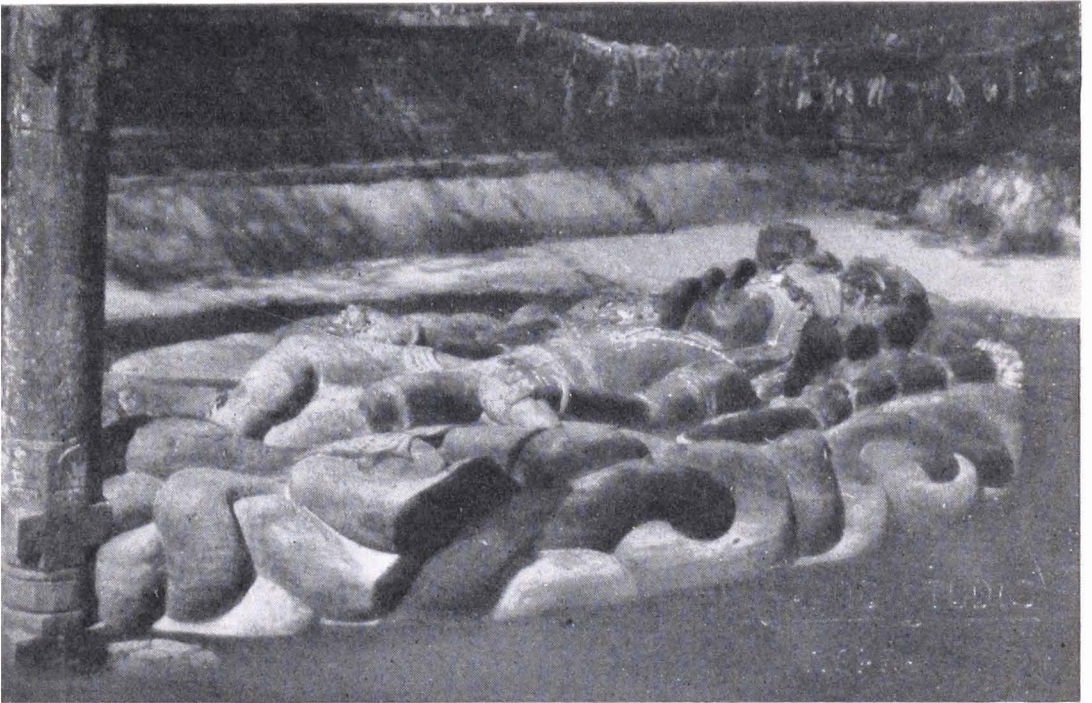
A King of Early Nepal
(unidentified)



An Image of the Queen
Early Nepal



The Shrine of Pasupatinath from the western gate



Jalasayana Vishnu (7th Century A. D.)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ABORI** .. Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Bendall, History** .. C. Bendall, A History of Nepal and surrounding kingdoms (1000-1600), in JASB, LXXII (1903), pp. 1-32; reprinted as Historical Introduction at the beginning of CPMDN, I.
- BGL** .. Bhagwan Lal Indraji and G. Buhler, Inscriptions from Nepal (IA, ix, 1880, 163 ff). Bombay, 1885.
- Bendall, Journey** .. C. Bendall, A journey to Nepal and Northern India, Cambridge 1886.
- BSOAS** .. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XX (1957); Furer-Haimendorf, the Inter-relations of caste and ethnic groups in Nepal.
- CBMC** .. C. Bendall, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, 1883.
- CPMDN** .. H. P. Shastri, Catalogue of palm-leaf and selected paper manuscripts belonging to the Darbar Library, Nepal, 2 Vols., Calcutta 1905 and 1916.
- CSBM** .. C. Bendall, Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the British Museum, London 1902.
- CSMASB** .. H. P. Shastri (et alii), A descriptive catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I ff. Calcutta 1917 ff. (the latest volumes out are XIV of 1955 and XI of 1957).
- CSPMIO** .. A. B. Keith, Catalogue of the Sanskrit and Prakrit manuscripts in the Library of the India Office, Vol. II, Oxford 1935.
- CIM** .. V. Smith, Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum.
- CAI** .. Cambridge History of (Ancient) India, Vol. I.
- CSMBM** .. C. Bendall, Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the British Museum, London 1902.
- Darb. Lib. Cat.** .. A Catalogue of manuscripts in Darbar Library, Kathmandu.

- EI .. Epigraphia Indica.
 Gnoli .. R. Gnoli, Nepalese inscriptions in Gupta characters (Serie Orientale Roma, X, 2), Rome 1956.
 GI(CII) .. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, III London 1888, edited by J. F. Fleet (Gupta Inscriptions).
 IHQ .. Indian Historical Quarterly.
 IA .. Indian Antiquary.
 Italiani Missionari, etc. .. I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal, 7 parts, edited by L. Petech (in Italian) Rome, 1953.
 J. As. .. Journal Asiatique.
 JASB .. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
 JBORS and JBRS .. Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, afterwards Journal of the Bihar Research Society.
 JIH .. Journal of Indian History.
 JRAS .. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
 Kirkpatrick .. An account of the Kingdom of Nepal, London 1811.
 KPJ .. K. P. Jayaswal.
 Levi .. Le Nepal, Etude historique d'un royaume hindou, 3 Vols., Paris, 1905-08.
 MMK .. Manjusrimulakalpa, edited by Ganapati Sastri, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series.
 Mss. .. Manuscripts.
 N.S. .. Nepal Samvat.
 RS .. Rahul Sankrityayan.
 S. S. .. Sanskrit Sandesa, a monthly magazine of antiquity (in Sanskrit).
 Tucci .. Preliminary Report on two scientific expeditions in Nepal (Serie Orientale Roma, 1956).
 V¹, V¹¹ V¹¹¹ .. The three parts of the Vamsavali in the Darbar Library discovered by Bendall. This is otherwise known as Gopalaraja Vamsavali.
 VK .. Vamsavali in possession of F. M. Kaiser.
 VS .. Vikram Samvat.
 Wright, Daniel .. History of Nepal, translated from Parbatiya, Cambridge 1877.

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7. J. F. Fleet .. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, III, Appendix, iv, the Chronology of the Early Rulers of Nepal.
8. Unpublished inscriptions traced by the author in Kathmandu and adjoining areas inside the Valley of Nepal.
9. Kirkpatrick .. An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal, London, 1811.
10. Francis Hamilton .. An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal and of territories annexed to this dominion by the House of Gorkha, Edinburgh, 1819.
11. Daniel Wright .. History of Nepal translated from Parbatiya, Cambridge, 1877.
12. Vamsavali V¹, V¹¹ and V¹¹¹ .. Discovered by Bendall in the Darbar Library, Kathmandu (Gopalaraja Vamsavali).
13. Vamsavali .. In possession of General Kaisar Shumsher.
14. Vamsavali .. In the possession of the author.
15. C. Bendall .. A History of Nepal and surrounding kingdoms (1000—1600) in JASB, LXXII (1903), Pp. 1—32, reprinted as Historical Introduction at the beginning of CPMDN, 1.
16. C. Bendall .. Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the British Museum.

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 - (a) K. P. Chattopadhyaya, An Essay on the History of the Newari Culture, Vol. 19 (No. 10, 1923).
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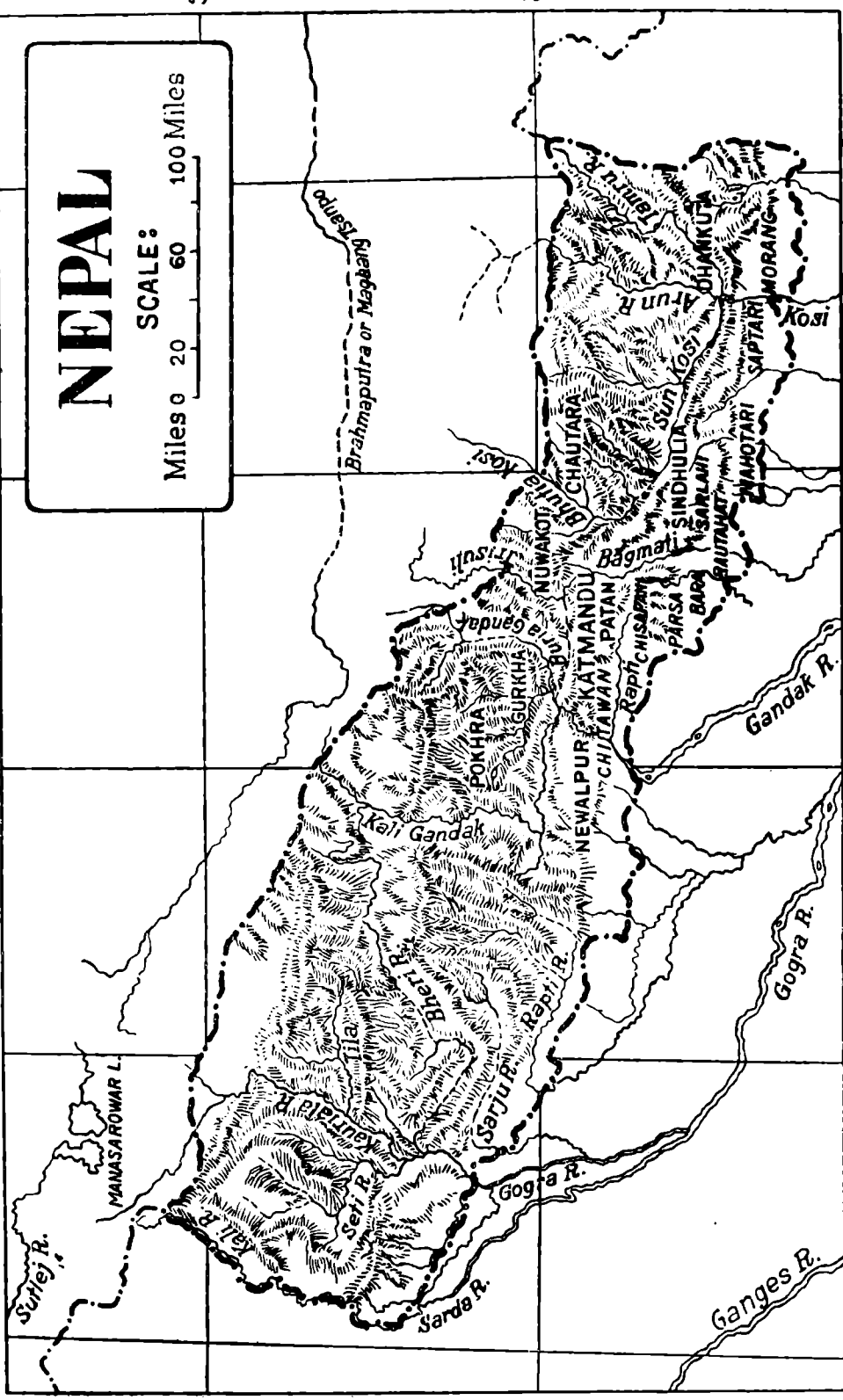
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F O R E W O R D

The present work is the first attempt of its kind to produce a connected political and economic history of Nepal from the earliest time to 1846 A.D.

It is now complete in three volumes :

- (1) the first takes up Nepal's history in general from the earliest time to the end of the Lichhavi period,
- (2) The second recounting events from the Nepal era of 879-80 A.D. to 1768 A.D. has two parts. Part I deals mainly with the early medieval history of Nepal and of the Karnali basin upto 1480 A.D. and Part II covers the period following till the expansive phase of the Gorkhas, thus dealing in continuation of the narrative with the later medieval history of the Nepal valley and of the territories in east central and west central Himalayas known as the Baisi and Chaubisi.
- (3) The third carries the main theme of the history of Nepal with the formation of the new state of Nepal under Prithvinarayan Shah down to 1846 A.D., the year when the Rana family secured de facto powers overshadowing the Shah dynasty.

The titles selected for the volumes are, (i) Ancient Nepal, (ii) Medieval History of the Nepal Valley and (iii) Rise and Growth of Nepal as a Great Power in the Eighteenth Century.

As far as the treatment of historical account goes all books appearing so far have the characteristics of chronological surveys, suffering also widely from inaccuracies of dates and facts. The only exception to this are the works of Sylvain Levi and L. Petch.

We have referred to these works and dealt at length with them at appropriate places while evaluating source materials for the history of the periods concerned. As we shall see it is only Kirkpatrick and Hamilton who also provide us abundant data of economic and commercial interest. One more book, Landon's 'Nepal', is a sort of encyclopaedic literature with very little of historical data, but possessing at the same time valuable information on Nepal's archaeology and coinage.

Levi's is a superb treatise on the history and culture of Nepal. Similarly Bendall's contribution has got to be acknowledged because he presented through the same a correct genealogical order of the royal dynasties of the middle ages with the help of the reliable data

obtained in the colophons of manuscripts available to him.

Nobody can grudge these scholars the gratitude which we owe to them. But their works also suffered from fundamental errors of facts which have been corrected in the light of newly discovered inscriptions. Even in regard to the main account of events, while Bendall's is just a chronology, Levi introduced only vaguely the subject of medieval history skipping over many important details of names and incidents. This is best seen from the fact that what has occupied a whole volume by itself in the present work does not go to cover even a space of full twenty pages in Levi's writings. Obviously at the time Levi wrote his book, the medieval history of Nepal was no better than a summary of the account provided in the chronicles.

Not so, however, is Petech. His history of medieval Nepal (c. 750-1480) is definitely a recognisable improvement on the treatment of the subject so far effected. He made use of the many documents newly deposited in several libraries of Kathmandu, which were not available to scholars ten or twenty years earlier. To his credit it must be said that he has corrected the many errors which have appeared in Levi and Bendall. His history presents by far the most reliable chronology of the period between c. 879-80 A.D. and 1480 A.D.

While my thesis was being finally typed I saw Petech's book and I did not hesitate to review the portion of my writing, which has been covered by his treatise but except in a few cases I did not mark anything that had not already come to my notice. I have acknowledged the assistance I obtained from his book wherever necessary by quoting him as my source.

Although I have in some places criticised Petech and tried to correct him in regard to some vague and hurried generalisations, his conclusions about the regnal data I have accepted in their main features. Wherever I have found it necessary to introduce new facts as available to me, that also I have done correcting his conclusions in that light.

But the work of Petech covers only a period of about six hundred years out of a long span of time since the very early age down to 1846 A.D., which is the subject matter of the present dissertation. There was already a need to rewrite the ancient history in the light of newly discovered additional documents and interpretations that concurrently arose out of these. Besides this, the latter part of the medieval history from 1480 onwards was not touched by any work so far undertaken. The account of the Baisi and Chaubisi and of the rise of Gorkha state assimilating in the eighteenth century all that is

now known as Nepal, came as a sequel to medieval history but this subject also was not up to date taken up for research and study. No original work has yet come to view on the history of Nepal of the period since the 15th century to 1846 A.D.

The first of the three volumes is a revised edition of my earlier work on the ancient history of Nepal. In a way the Part I of the Second Volume should appear as a supplement to what Petech wrote on early medieval history. But Part II of the second volume and the third volume, the two of them, are absolutely original contributions made by the author to the knowledge of the subject for the periods they deal with. I have also attempted to add matters of economic significance to the political framework of history. A thorough study needed to this end was not possible due to paucity of sources; but the gleanings from a few inscriptions and reliable chronicles as well as from foreign documents have enabled me to form some ideas about the general economic picture of the age dealt with in the history, which I have incorporated. All this may, however, be understood as a spadework, which in future will yield to a mature consideration as more and more data on the subject will unfold to our views.

The present work is a result of a strenuous research conducted during the last several years. The materials used in preparing the thesis are mostly inscriptions, numismatics, chronicles and old correspondence. A great many of them are yet unpublished. Some of these were originally traced by me and these as sources are brought to light for the first time in this work. Apart from the newly discovered documents, I have also put forward new interpretations of old materials. All the source materials have been examined in their right perspective each at the beginning of the volume with which they are associated.

I do not know how far the thesis is free from the usual shortcomings of a work started in the background of inadequate source materials. It is true that much in the first and second volumes is devoted to the problem of settling chronology and dynastic order as they stood before. Even in the portion of the medieval history, which has been claimed as original, the regnal data and chronological framework had had to be set right in the light of reliable materials come to hand at the moment. This was very essential as no political or economic history could be written without first settling the issue of genealogy and dynastic framework. Although this may not be the final shape of the chronology, yet if we say that the latest position as brought out in this work is tending to approach finality, it will not be very wrong. However, it is only the third volume where we come to no confusion

of dates, and the events and personalities are well ascertained.

In the first volume I have suggested new dates for the epoch year of the two sets of inscriptions of the ancient period. I have also recast the genealogy of the Lichhavi dynasty, and this has been verified by the data of the related inscriptions. We have in similar fashion examined and corrected various suggestions about the position of the Abhir or Ahir Guptas. In the second volume, we have been able to say some new things about Jayasthitimalla and his successors. For the history that follows these rulers, we have entirely an original account based on new and original data of inscriptions, coinage and foreign documents. This volume also contains original observations on certain other aspects of medieval life and culture of Nepal, more particularly its arts, literature and caste and religion. We have introduced these elements into the history with a view to enable the reader to understand the background of social life in Nepal in that period. In the second volume the early history of the Karnali basin is incorporated and this is what the reader will not find in books on Nepal published so far. The historicity of this place was brought to light just recently. We have in addition more than a hundred pages of narratives of diplomatic and commercial relations and transactions between Nepal and the East India Company. Here our history appears mainly economic. A perusal of the political history from 1500 to 1846 A.D. as it appears in volumes II and III will at the same time present details of new facts and figures hitherto not available to the readers.

More than these, the number of economic data introduced in the dissertation in a diffused form like this may not provide a sufficient ground to make it substantiate fully what the title should argue and connote but if at all the same goes to initiate a line of approach on the subject in order to help formulate new ideas and impressions about how economic life was shaped in the past in different phases of its history the search will not be in vain. It is hoped that additional information of the economic factors of the ages, here forming the burden of the main portion of the last chapter in each of the three volumes, will contribute to the knowledge of the subject in question, even if it be elementary and much too inadequate.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

A draft manuscript of the 'Ancient History of Nepal' was prepared in early 1942 after a three-year research into varied materials, most of them absolutely original. The book, however, could not be published at the time, as subsequently it fell into the hands of the Indian C.I.D., when the author himself was arrested and detained for extradition to Nepal. Even after the release of the author the publication had been ordained to be delayed by numerous other factors, particularly the illness of the author and later on, his preoccupation with the political movement in Nepal. Also, the portions of the manuscript on the latter period of Ancient Nepal was lost from the custody of the police, which necessitated rewriting and partly in its turn contributed to complicate the question of publication.

The author is sorry that the book is appearing after inordinate delay, but he is glad that this period of forced withdrawal of the publication provided him sufficient time to check up again and again the materials he had used, seek new sources and verify and supplement them and adopt changes in the light of further research. And the book which has emerged in that course has certainly advanced both in the finis and standard because it comes after making up the deficiencies of the original manuscript.

But I do not claim to have completed the research into the subject matter. There is a vast oceanic material on the history of Nepal. Much of it is still in dark. All the works thus far incorporated form a very tiny portion of the entire mass of undiscovered materials. It will not be a surprise if many of the conclusions reached in my work lose ground as new sources of the history of Nepal gradually unfold themselves. I draw the attention of the scholars all the world over to this common task of collecting materials for our history and of the Nepalese scholars in particular to devote themselves solely to the field of research into the past of their country. This is a task which has got to be taken up very seriously at the earliest moment.

The readers' attention is also invited to the incorporation into this volume of another chapter of Nepalese history written by the author. This has appeared with the title 'Medieval History of Nepal' and covers a period of history from 880 to 1650.

Lastly, let me extend my cordial thanks to all those who have cooperated in my work and also request the men of learning interested on this subject to help me by their valuable suggestions which can be incorporated in the next edition.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The second edition of the book was long overdue. This was not only because the copies of the first print had been sold out, but also because materials newly discovered had necessitated a revision of certain conclusions adopted earlier. The author, however, was so much pre-occupied with political activities that he hardly got time enough to devote to the task that came to his hand, with the result that the revision and consequent publication of the volume were delayed.

Under revision the previous volume had been much enlarged to assume double its original size. Consequently in the second edition it was thought desirable to divide the work into two separate volumes with different titles. The titles selected are variously 'Ancient Nepal' for the first volume and 'Medieval History of Nepal' for the second volume.

As two more volumes follow this publication, the four together shall constitute a series on Nepalese History designated 'Political and Economic History of Nepal from the Ancient Times to 1846 A.D.'.

The first edition was prepared while the author was living in exile out of Nepal. There he had to work under severe limitations. Source materials were limited. Inside Nepal the Rana rulers had almost a dislike for history writing and frowned on such activities. Since S. Levi made a search of inscriptions in 1900 or so, no attempt was made to discover original documents because of this attitude of our rulers. While I wrote the first edition of *Ancient Nepal*, the materials I used were mostly the same that had been traced by Bhagwanlal Indraji and Levi. Any one interested in research knew that more inscriptions lay scattered, and some were buried underground, and it required new efforts to seek them out. But until 1951 the undertaking of such a venture could not be entertained.

In early 1951 the Rana regime was overthrown, and consequently research activities could be undertaken without fear of victimisation. Although the number is yet small, we have both foreigners and nationals of Nepal working in the field. Eight years after that date till now the volume of work put up is certainly something to be envied.

A sizeable bulk of new data is now available for the historians. The author feels satisfied that he himself did the job of collecting his materials in so far as these were availed of from original sites in the valley of Nepal and adjoining regions. For the rest I am grateful to those

who have made things available to me in published or unpublished forms.

One special feature of the present edition is that I have added a new chapter to deal with economic problems to each of the volumes. In this way, the narration has also worn the character of economic history for the period concerned.

Broadly speaking, the most fundamental changes made in the first volume are in regard to the conclusions earlier reached about the origin and epoch year of the eras followed in the inscriptions of both the series. These have been placed at dates 68-78 A.D. and 568 A.D. respectively. We have determined these dates after thoroughly reviewing and examining the arguments for alternate dates suggested in this connection.

Two additional topics are more elaborately dealt with here than in the first edition. These are, (a) the regency of Jisnugupta and his son and (b) the restoration regime of Narendradeva and his successors. The history of ancient Nepal as delineated in the present volume carries the narrative of the events up to the eve of the Nepal era.

In the appendices the reader will find statements on castes, religion, the three chanceries and origin of the Lichhavi dynasty as they were found in ancient Nepal in the light of the data of the inscriptions.

The work has altogether six chapters and describes in different successive phases the political history of the country from the earliest time to the end of the Lichhavi period. The paleographic and archaeological data belonging to various reigns have been systematically described with reference to the evidence available through these records.

For the Second Volume, the title 'Medieval History of Nepal' has been adopted, but here we have again two divisions of the work, i.e. Part I. Early Medieval History of Nepal and Part II. Medieval History of the Nepal Valley and of the Territories of the Baisi and Chaubisi.

In the first edition our account closed with the event of Pratapmalla's father's reign (1632 A.D.). But this was an abrupt closing and any division of the periods coming in its wake will not be scientific. The present edition of 'Early Medieval Nepal' has covered the period of history between the founding of the Nepal era and the rise of Jayasthitimalla after the Muslim invasion. Part II of this volume with the title 'Medieval History of the Nepal Valley and of the Territories of the Baisi and Chaubisi' narrates the events leading to the rise and establishment of the three kingdoms in the valley of Nepal proper and of other principalities in areas known today as West and East Nepal.

The rise of the Baisi and Chaubisi dates from the early 14th Century

A.D. At about this time the Chronicle (Gopala Vamsavali) introduces into the main history events of Khasia and Magar invasions upon the valley of Nepal. For obvious reasons we can as well accept the facts of Rajput dynasties to have been firmly settled in parts of the Sub-Himalayas ranges in the west of the Nepal Valley at least a hundred years prior to the above date. In Karnali basin there was a flourishing Khasa Kingdom since early 11th Century A.D. We have no evidence to prove the suzerainty of Nepal rulers over these States. We do not know if ever the jurisdiction of the Central Kingdom in Nepal proper extended to the areas occupied by the Khasa Mallas and their neighbours of the Gandak basin. Of course, with regard to ancient history no political entity other than the one existing in the valley of Nepal has been traced for the entire stretch of the territories between the Sapta Gandaki and Sapt Kosi and this entity functioned more or less in Nepal proper and the areas immediately surrounding it in the four directions. Quite possibly the Nepal rulers in the climax of power ruled over a kingdom as extensive as the present-day Nepal, though we cannot say if the extent of territory covered the same areas as they have come to be under its jurisdiction up to date. Probably the same pattern of boundaries continued to exist in early medieval age so that excluding the region of the Baisi, farther west, the history of Nepal proper of the time could very well pass as the history of Nepal with its traditional frontier lines. But the same could not hold ground in regard to the later medieval period. The Sapta Gandaki *pradesh* had by this time become a scene of new activity and potentially rival political states had emerged to the detriment of the Power in the Nepal Valley. Now in this context the status of the usually functioning state of Nepal has greatly changed. This was the reason we no longer called the second part of our volume as the history of Nepal. Instead we specified the Nepal Valley proper to make it look distinct from the Chaubisi region in our account of the late medieval age.

It will appear later that from 1755 onwards the history of the entire central Himalayan region is in a way the history of Gorkha's ruling dynasty which had acquired immense resources and power to become sovereign in a new political unit with Nepal as capital. Now all these Baisi, Chaubisi and Nepal Valley states lose their importance as separate entities as well as positions of that nature. The development is eventful. In the nature of things the account has had to be incorporated in a separate volume, which is the third volume of our series. The narrative in the second volume covers events only up to the rise of Prithvinarayan, the Gorkha ruler.

CHAPTER I

Introductory

The political boundary of Nepal at the present moment extends to lines very much farther than what they used to be in the ancient times. In ancient times by the word, Nepal, only the Valley of Kathmandu was meant and the state which came into existence under the same name could just include areas measuring hardly a hundred miles on both sides. Again, surrounded on all sides by inaccessible mountains and forest belts Nepal was like an oasis of civilization and the wonder of wonders was the thick human habitation in it and the evolution of an advanced culture accompanying the same.

The valley of Nepal is approached from the south through the Sub-Himalayan chains of hills after passing two such, the Mahabharata and the allied ridge, at an interior site some sixty miles north of the Indo-Gangetic plain. Although all the ridges could be crossed on foot, the difficulties of the thoroughfare were not in any way less, and even at the time when the valley had advanced to a stage of civilization its inaccessibility was a factor that could obtain no easy solution. One of the Buddhist Jatakas gives a picture of the situation saying that Lord Buddha discouraged his disciples to undertake a journey across as the same was full of perils for reasons of wild beasts and tribes haunting the highways.

But the valley has a fertile soil with a fairly sufficient amount of rainfall and in addition, it is a flat surface of wide dimensions, the only one of its kind in the entire portion of the central Himalayas. It is washed by numerous rivulets with sources in the north and, though generally enjoying cold climate, is sufficiently vegetated. The mid country consists of black soil and alluvium and the earth of the region in its entirety is such as to make for a very durable and strong type of bricks. Consequently, stone had been totally out of use for buildings of any kind, and its place was taken by bricks, just as it was in Huang valley of ancient China and in some of ancient sites in Northern India. This is perhaps a novel feature to be found of an ancient community on this side of the Himalayas.

All these played an important part in determining the demography of the area. Not only the valley of Kathmandu came to occupy an important place as a populated area having attracted migration at a very early age of history, but it was repeatedly subjected to visitation by

emigrant hordes, which of course produced its repercussions in shaping the synthetic culture of the area at every phase of its development.

The immigration has been proportionately of a corresponding nature drawing its due from all directions. It is, however, possible that only the most adventurous of the migrants must have penetrated in the beginning. The outlet of the river Bagmati was probably the entrance, and to the south goes the credit of allowing the passage for the earliest settlers. But the earliest settlers were not those who belonged to Aryan race. As we shall observe later on in this book the people first settling down in the valley belonged to the same family as the Kols and Bhils in the plains of India. To this was added a significant number of Dravidians. Thereafter came the Tibeto-Burman emigrants and the section of them who had expanded in the north-east of India after being pressed by calamities at home. The process had been thus : the hilly interior of the Terai could readily absorb the migrating hordes, when some of them were pushed further west from Assam hills and again from there they seem to have travelled upwards to the source of the Bagmati.

Geological formation of the Nepal valley points to a stage of its existence totally submerged under water. The hillocks interspersing the valley at places were the only portions not exactly in that condition. The valley otherwise happened to be the bed of the lake now dried up. This accounts for the rich fertility of the soil, which nurtures several crops within twelve months of the year. The Nepalese culture evolved and advanced mainly through the topography and soil formation thus outlined. But for the cut provided by the river Bagmati's gorge, Nepal would also not come under superior cultural influences, which seem to have worked without much of physical contact. There has been not a single case of large-scale migration from the western India, the seat of culture at the time of our history. No doubt, we find a few Indian families of rulers and their entourage in the scene, which exerted a very powerful cultural influence but this did not modify in any way the racial composition of local inhabitants. Probably it was mainly due to the very meagre blood contact of the early inhabitants of Nepal with the Aryan stock of the plains, that the principal feature of the facial expression of the original stock of the Nepalese remains partly Indo-Mongoloid and partly Dravido-Austroid.

The valley reached an advanced stage of urban culture from a very long time. Its base was peasant economy like that of any other oriental culture, and the progress was retarded by social conflicts and by feudal forces resisting changes in the economy. And it was a prototype of

ancient Indian culture with slight variation which Nepal in that course brought out. The valley of Nepal was by nature very much favoured. It was free from very many natural calamities, like floods, drought, etc., and though winter was too cold it had a pleasant and working spring and summer. In the circumstances it could enjoy a surplus of production. It was in the nature of the Ganges basin economy that the development took place. Consequently, a culture of aristocracy was born; fine art, sculpture, etc. flourished triumphantly. But these bear the imprint of Indian influence, as from the southern side all cultural inroads were made when the invaders imposed their own polity and regime on the primitive Nepalese. It seems that Nepal while assimilating all race influences in its own way yielded to some aspects of Indian culture to incorporate the same in its broad outline. Also one has to remember that contact with India was direct and regular as much as it could be with the facilities offered by nature. The country was practically shut in the north for all sorts of contacts till early 7th century A.D.

The cultural tradition of Nepal, however, has its own peculiarities. Even if it has indelible impression of the Indian culture, it retained certain traits of the Indo-Mongoloid culture intact. This was at a later date supplemented by cultural contacts with Tibet to assimilate the very late cultural developments in the Lamaist country. Thus at a late period of history the culture of the Nepal valley had come to resemble to a certain extent partly the Tibetan and partly the Indian cultural tradition of the early age, though essentially it was the latter which had the largest influence. But combining the two the Nepalese culture developed its own features to a certain extent. And let it be understood that by Nepalese culture we mean the one nourished in the valley of Kathmandu. As till a very late period of history other tribes do not come into the picture, we also omit all the peoples except those enumerated above from the context.

In our delineation of the customs and manners of the Newars of Kathmandu we have in detail described the main features of this culture as far as it has survived. We have not been able to give the date for the first settlement in the valley. Archaeological investigation is practically not done. Nepal's pre-history is, therefore, a matter of a convenient guess. It is not even known whether the earliest immigrants entered the valley in a state of pastoral life or whether any of such ancient communities do really survive to-day. But some customs can be identified with those of the tribes in the farthest east of India. Possibly when they settled down in the valley, they were comparatively an advanced community. They manufactured certain pots of ornamented design by using a wheel

and worked on copper and bronze. They had also developed a taste for wood carving and metal works. The black soil obtained in Nepal might have enabled them to develop a high style of pottery. Their agricultural instruments were spade of a large size and wooden earth breaker, but they did not use bullocks for ploughing. The absence of method of ploughing by bullocks is attributed to the discovery at the early age that the soil penetrated deeper, and this could be only done by a spade, and bore fitness for multi-seasonal crops or they might have continued the hoe culture of the northeast region of India and later on found that ploughing did not fully serve the purpose. Other artifacts are not known. Amongst the domesticated animals the buffalo immediately comes to our notice, and the inhabitants took its milk as well as consumed its flesh. The foodgrains consisted of wheat, rice and maize, and fowls and ducks formed the birds domiciled by the mankind.

If the chronicles were to be believed, the class coming into being after a process of separation from the general population saw its light as soon as the migrating hordes from the Indian plains arrived. These came with an aristocratic culture with knowledge, instruments and better skill of warfare and the same even after mixing with the local populace gradually drifted to form a separate ruling class much probably with the help of the indigenous aristocracy with whom they mixed freely and intermarried. The cultural inroad from India seems also to have been accompanied by political influence, which sometime after was responsible for the setting of a class in a community hitherto tribal and free from class domination.

Bullock carts were not in use, nor any other conveyance driven by beasts of burden is traced out. For transport the inhabitants had made a peculiar artifact called *Khamu* still in use by the peasants consisting of two baskets tied in a swinging fashion bilaterally to a bamboo pole which rested on the two shoulders of the man carrying the same. Such a type of a basket-like thing was to be found in Indo-Chinese region as well. But in the whole of Nepal it obtains in the valley only. Horses and elephants did not exist during the very earliest phase of the Nepalese culture. They appeared with the Lichhavis.

Because the Kirata emigrants were the most powerful community, probably the Kirati culture was the primitive culture of the area. The advent of the Lichhavis introduced new forms. Horses and elephants then made first appearance but they would not be acclimatised. It was said that they appeared along with the Mauryan expedition in India but no evidence of the practice of riding these animals is forthcoming in regard to Nepal. Probably because the Lichhavis in the plains used

these animals for transport services, they carried their use to Nepal. But this did not seem to be operative till early first century A.D.

For the structure of the building the reader is requested to see the following article in this volume on art and architecture. One does not know when they ceased to bury their dead. About the dress it can be said that it answered to the description of the T'ang history (vide below). This must be the correct manner of the dressing for we know the type of a cover as outlined in that text for upper body is still prevalent in some portions of Nepal, and more specially amongst the primitive Kiratas and also the Gurungs and Magars. Urban centres have not been traced for the period back beyond the 4th century A.D.

The state of Nepal was originally a tribal republic and possibly ruled by tribal heads with the help of customary laws. It was, however, a settled community which we encounter as far as habitation in the valley comes to our mind, even the earliest of them seem to have been stabilised. The very original settlers as soon as they entered the valley seem to have shaken off their nomadic habits. This was what the situation of the valley determined. It provided a ground for a settled agriculture and surplus production for the commercial class of the urban areas. In that process Nepal's early civilization came also to be associated with the republican structure of Vaishali dominated by a cultured aristocracy without a ruling monarch. The same aristocracy was destined to become the ruling group when later on monarchy was introduced.

We are yet ignorant of the superstition and religious beliefs of the pre-historic Nepalese. From the earliest times the Nepalese imbibed Saivism and Buddhism. But it is not to be supposed that the Nepalese cultural tradition had no roots in the soil of Nepal. Much it imbibed from the materials as they existed in the valley and also developed along a course determined by the isolated character of the region, and we find some original features still persisting to confirm our conclusion. Even the Buddhist principles of life had come to be adopted much modified by influences of the local environment. As common to all the people of Neolithic cultures, the Nepalese primitive also built his beliefs on magical rites performed to enhance and maintain the fertility of the soil and protection of the crops from the ravages of nature over which he had no control. All elements of nature were regarded as spirits beneficent or working for evils and it was thought that they affected man's destiny and sacrifices including those of human beings were offered to propitiate them. It seems that what the legends convey is more or less correct and this cannot be incorrect because the practice

we refer to i.e., the sacrifice of human beings, continued as late as the beginning of the present century in some shrines inside the Nepal valley. The Nepalese also believed in an elaborate ritualism accompanying the funeral of the dead to ward off the possibility of its taking demoniac existence likely to haunt the area and it was also seen that death took place inside the house premises. Female deities were regarded more important than the male ones, and this is also a peculiarity of the Neolithic Nepalese culture as also of the same culture in Bengal.

We know nothing about the primitive art, the early mode of depicting images have not come to light. As for the writing of the period, the earliest script known happens to be Kharosthi (Asoka Pillar Inscription) but this is not available for the Nepal valley. How far the script affected the course of cultural development cannot be exactly said. Probably writing began along with the advent of the Aryan aristocratic stock, may be in the 4th century A.D., from India and all literary and cultural activity was confined to these people. That is why the local dialect, Newari, would not come up to the level of a language of a literature. This state is also mainly responsible for the total absence of records delineating cultural tradition of the age.

This is all for an introduction of the history of ancient and medieval Nepal. We have certainly introduced a pre-historic material to the general narrative of events of the historical period but this was very essential as without this particular item the beginning of the history of Nepal would not be clearly presented. The cultural tradition of Nepal as it existed at the time has thus been aptly described. For the development of the periods following Nepal's pre-history the reader is referred to the chapters forming the main portion of the book.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON SOME ASPECTS OF NEPALESE LIFE AND CULTURE

The Antiquity of the Newars of Kathmandu

The prevailing idea of the time in regard to the origin and antiquity of this people has been to consider them as only a late comer in the arena of the Valley of Kathmandu, despite the fundamental traits in ethnic and cultural sphere which they exhibit to contravene such a conception. The purpose of the present discourse is to show that the Newars existed as early as the sixth century B.C. and that they belonged to the confederacy of the Vrijji clans.

Before we take up the subject matter of the article, let it be made clear that the term Newar does not connote any particular racial type at the moment. It is purely a geographical concept. From the time this came to be adopted in general use, the Newar meant any one who lived in the valley irrespective of his racial origin and features. It is true that in the most ancient days the Newar conveyed the sense of an ethnic group, but then afterwards this group was subjected to multiple racial adjustments having adopted different types of emigrants, from Austroids to Dravidians and then to Mongols and to Aryans. It will be a mistake to call the Newars a tribal community. Nor, it will be correct to distinguish the identity of the primitive settlers from the mass of the submerged whole. Our comparison of the type in question with the race of Kiratas hereafter dealt with is valid to the extent of its relation with a section in its hoary antiquity.

It is possible that at the very earliest time the Kathmandu valley was the settlement of the people closely resembling the Austro-Mediterranean, and these got mixed up with the Mongolian emigrants from the south-east at the next stage. No one can say with certainty if the Dravidas had made their appearance in this area. But the probability of such an entry cannot be discounted, and in its antiquity the Newar community was a mixture of these three peoples before it came in contact with the Aryan invaders.

Kiratas in Ancient History

As the Kiratas were associated with the very dawn of Nepalese history it cannot be denied that they were much closely mixed up with

the evolution of the Newar community. The treatment of the Kiratas in their historical role should, therefore, be our, first concern. We have accordingly started with this subject.

The following passages from Sylvain Levi will prove enlightening for our purpose :

“The Kiratas are from a long date a name familiar to India. A Vedic formula (Vajasaneyi Samhita, XXX, 16) connected to the distant memories of the human sacrifice, despatches ‘The Kirata back to his caves’. The mountain is in fact his domain; it is there that he continues to live and dominate during the epic period; Bhima meets the Kiratas in leaving the Videha on his victorious march towards the Eastern regions (Mahabharata 11, 1089); Nakula also finds them on his track when he conquered the west (11,1199); Arjuna whilst he was ascending the Himalayas towards the north, is stopped and defied by a Kirata or rather by Siva under the features of a Kirata (111, Odhy, 38-41); it is the famous episode which Bharavi has taken up and treated with all the resources of smart poetry in the Kiratarjuniya classics, often the Kiratas figure in the lists of the Mahabharata in company with foreign tribes which border the frontiers of India, Yavanas, Yaksas, Pahlavas, etc;¹ it is especially to the Cinas that they are associated; Kiratas and Cinas fraternise under the banners of the glorious Bhagadatta, Emperor of the Pragjoutisa (Kamarupa); they form the contingent of the Yellows. ‘The Cinas and Kiratas, soldiers seemed to be of gold; their troops had the appearance of a forest of Karnikaras (with yellow flowers)’ (VI, 584). In the Ramayana (IV, 40, 26, Bombay) tribes are not organized as a nation and formed several kingdoms; Bhima subjugates the seven kings of the Kiratas (11,1089); the figure is in accordance with the usual nomenclature of the ‘Seven Gandakis’ and the ‘Seven Kosis’ in the Nepalese Himalayas. Several of these kings are particularly designated; Subahu (111, 10863), who commands to the Kiratas and Tanganas and who receives as a friend the wandering Pandavas (111, 12351); Pulinda (11, 119), Sumanas (11, 120). The customs of the Kiratas are simple; they live on fruits and roots, dress in the skin of animals (11, 1865), raise their hair in a pointed knot; they are nevertheless amiable looking (Ramay, IV, 40, 26) their knife, like the Nepalese Khukri is a dreadful weapon (M. Bh. 11, 1865). Such are at least, the Kirata clans which live in the most remote part of the Himalaya towards the mountain where the sun rises in the Karusa which is at the extremity of the Ocean and in the region of the Lauhitya

¹ B. M. Barua, *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, P. 100-01.

or Brahmaputra.

“Other Kiratas who live with the populations of the littoral (11, 1002) and who dwell in islands are ferocious, they feed themselves on raw fish, move about in water; they are called tigermen (Ramay, IV, 40, 26). This portrait is perfectly applicable to that of the Periplus (62).² Tribes dwelling to the North of the Dosa rene, near the mouths of the Ganges, ‘These kind of men have their noses flattened on the visage; they are barbarous.’ Their immediate neighbours, the Head of Horses and the long heads, are even understood to be cannibals. Ptolemee places the country of the Kiratas at the mouths of Ganges³, to the East of the most important mouth (VII, 2, 2); it is from them that one can obtain the best quality of malabathron.’ But they are only intermediaries, we know by the Periplus (65) that the malabathron comes from the country of the (Cina); they sell them to those who are a race of small statured men with large faces, soft characters and altogether similar to animals; these are evidently identical to the one which Ptolemee (VII, 2, 15) almost exactly described in the same terms, borrowed from a common source and which he places exactly on the limits of the (VII, 2, 16) commerce, thus connected the Kiratas and the Cinas. In epopee, the Kiratas bring most varied objects as gifts to the joyous accession of Yudhishthira in loads of sandal wood and agar wood and odoriferous black wood (Kaliyaka, eagle wood), skins of animals, precious stones, gold, a heap of perfumes, a myriad of Kirata girls as slaves and still other charming presents, animals, foreign birds and splendid gold, drawn out from the mountains (11, 1866, 1869). In his famous list of 64 writings the Lalita-Vistara attributes a special writing to the Kiratas.

“In fact the Kiratas attribute to their hero Srijanga, the invention of a special writing. (Sarat Chandra Das mentioned in Vansittart, P. 195). The parallel lists in the Chinese versions are worthy of mention, the most ancient (P’ou-Yeo king, Translated in 308) replaces the name of the Kiratas by ‘Yi-ti-Sai’, expression which means from a Chinese point of view the ‘barbarians bordering on the North’ it is an exact equivalent by transposition. The second (Fo-pen-Hing-tri-king translated in 587) transcribes Ki-lo-to and adds as a floss ‘the naked men.’ The third (Fang-Koang ta tchoang Yen king translated in 683) simply gives the transcription Ki-lo-to”.

² *The Periplus of the Erythraen sea; Travels and Trade in the Indian Ocean by a Merchant of the First Century, London (Longmans' Green & Co., 1912), Translated by H. Willfred Schoff.*

³ Airrhadoi refers to a wide area (McCrimdell's *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, edited by S. N. Majumdar Sastri, Pp. 191-94).

(See the final note of Levi's article; the country of Kharostrā and the Kharostri writing in the *Bulletin Ec. Fr. Extr-Or.*, 1904).

Not alone these, there are other references to Kiratas in historical treatises, and in relation to ancient peoples.⁴ Thus in certain inscriptions of Nagarjunakonda of Ichhaku times, we have amongst others Kiratas (Chilata) visitors come (EI XX, 22) to attend the religious discourses of the arhats. One of the stone railings at Sanchi has the expression 'Chiratiya bhicchunodānām' meaning Kirata monks (Lekhāmālānukramani, Part I, No. 210, P. 99 by R. D. Banerji).

In the history of Kashmir the Kiratas figure as one of the low caste groups along with 'Kaivartas and Chandālas'. Kalhana speaks of the Kiratas living in forests in a primitive stage (Rajatarangini, VIII, 358).

It is assumed that the Kirata tribes had at one time spread to the very border of Dardistan and Balkh. The Kiratas (cirradioi) are located 'near the Arsanians' in the account of Dionysiaka as people adroit in naval warfare using boats of skin (*Ancient India as described in classical literature* by J. W. McCrindle, 1901, P. 199). The Arsamans lived in Urasa (the present Hazara district of the Punjab)⁵.

Now the antiquity of the Kirata tribes is fully established.

There is an opinion that the Aryans had encountered in their eastern expansion heroic resistance from the Kirata settlers who had spread all over the Terai region as far as the Ganges. In the Rig Veda there is a reference to a battle between the Aryans and Kiratas fought at Allahabad, the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuna in which the latter were totally vanquished.

The Kiratas withdrew to the vicinity of the eastern Himalayas as the Aryans victoriously marched on to the territories in east and north-easterly directions. But ultimately the Aryans secured predominance even in their mountain habitat.

Towards the sixth century B.C. the eastern Himalayas and the Terais thereunder were the only areas left to the Kiratas.

In the mountainous tracts the Kiratas, however, were supreme though under cultural influence of their victors.

There was enough of intermingling of blood with the original settlers of the soil while the Kiratas had expanded into the lower reaches

⁴ Pliny and Megasthenes mention them under the name Skyrites.

⁵ For a detailed study of this tribe in ancient history read James Long in *J A S B*, XIX, 1850, Pp. 536-37, Lassen's *Indisches Alterthum*, III, Pp. 235-37, also *Ethnic settlements in Ancient India* by S. B. Chaudhuri, *Ethnography of Ancient India* by Robert Shafer; *Kirata-Jana-Krti* (The Indo-Mongoloids: Their contribution to the History and Culture of India) by S. K. Chatterji in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XVI (1950), Part I, P. 143 ff.

of the Gandak, Kosi and the Assam rivers.

Their First entry into the Nepal Valley

It appears that the valley of Nepal, which was approached through the course of the Bagmati, was inhabited by a people of Austroid origin at the dawn of History. The Dravidians must have also sent their quota, however small, and they had influenced ethnological make up of their predecessors.

The channel of the Bagmati provided a convenient route to penetrate into the valley from the south. Evidently the Kiratas had taken this route to reach the valley. In the beginning they had settled down in the areas in the south of the valley. Later, they expanded east and west touching a topographical straight line from Sanga to present Thankot.

The demography of the area shows that the ancient sites of villages and townlets are marked all in the areas in the south and west of the valley. The heaviest concentration was at a point around the confluence of the Bagmati and Visnumati, leaving aside Bhatgaon at the western extremity of the valley, which was comparatively a new settlement.

The facial expression of the huge majority of the people of region betrays features which are not wholly akin to those of the upper section of the original Newar community, such as the Shrestha, Udai and like castes following the calling of trade and commerce diffused all over the Valley. Obviously the Kirata emigrants of the lower professions had mixed up too deeply with the local population of peasantry and artisans to have lost their distinct features.

The many names of locality occurring in the early inscriptions could be Mongoloid or Pre-Mongoloid in origin. The evidence has got to be sifted properly. We shall not be surprised if on examination a great many of them have been found emanating from a Pre-Mongoloid source of languages.⁶

The Kiratas and the Newars

It is admitted by all that the Kiratas were the sole occupants of the valley for a long time, from the earliest time ever recorded in history. The same is said of the Newars, and is claimed by them and lent support to by various ethnic and anthropological findings. But whereas the former, the Kiratas, have to their support the evidence

⁶ The author hopes to write a book on the Kirata Tribes of Nepal to deal with all aspects of the question raised above.

of the chronicles further confirmed by the Puranas, the Newars have not come up for any sort of notice in the above-mentioned treatises, though curiously they happen to be the people to have been closely associated with all that the country has stood for, its name and fame and its grandeur and brilliance. Nobody can deny the very ancient association of this people with the valley. We have definite linguistic and archaeological proofs for the existence of this people as early as the fifth century A.D. by a reference to the Newari names in the inscriptions, which are maintained intact up till today. The various names like Dulung, Khepung, Dunprung, Haspring, Khenam in a Deopatan inscription, Khripung in Sivadeva's Bhatgaon inscription, Katung, Phiring in Sivadeva's Satungal inscription and Gun Vihara (Levi III, 74), Tegwal Narayan (IA., IX, p. 168), Buga yumi (ibid, p. 169) and Thambugangulamula (ibid, p. 171) are pure Newari derivatives. The language of the inscriptions being Sanskrit, it may be inferred that Newari was then thrown into background as up till now it is. Due to the preference of the Lichhavi Kings under Gupta influence or even before and also as a language of the cultured few, Buddhists or Saivites, Sanskrit was the medium adopted in the court. But under no circumstances it had ousted Newari as a language of the mass of people who read and wrote in their common dialect. The priority of the Newars over the Lichhavis in matter of dates is quite obvious and we can doubtlessly assume that the Newars were inhabiting the valley long before the Lichhavis stepped there.

The *Vamsavalis* write that the Kiratas were conquered by the Lichhavis. Are they the people speaking the Newari dialect?

This is the moot point of the present discourse. The Kiratas today occupy a region cut off by huge undemarcated forests and mountain ranges from the rest of the country and from the Newars of the valley of Kathmandu. The question is whether they migrated wholesale in this region after their defeat or stayed on there despite. To an ordinary mind the idea of a wholesale migration involving the summary removal of hearth and home from a place where the settlement is of thousand years is inconceivable. No conquest or repression can dislodge them. The same may be said of the Kiratas who when subjugated by the Lichhavis must be taken to have confined themselves to the valley. We must also note that the Kiratas are placed, according to *Manusmriti*, in the position and status equal to the Lichhavis, which shows their distinguished place at that time. Now if the fact of civilisation were to be brought to bear on this problem, the Kiratas on no account can come up to the level of the Newars

who have to their credit a very ancient and rich culture, while they themselves have been steeped in age-long darkness and ignorance. Curiously enough, therefore, the Newars seem to approach the description assigned so long to the old Kiratas. There is yet another point in favour of the Newars. The chronicles and the *Puranas* assert that *Kiratadesa* was in touch with the *Madhyadesa* from a very long time. If this is the case, the influence of Sanskrit would not have been so rare in the *Kirati* language as is not the case with Newari which betrays profound influence of Sanskrit in its vocabulary.

The penetration of Mauryan influence in Nepal is another point connected with the problem. Although of late, it has been subjected to doubts by scholars, and we have insufficient ground to believe the entry of Asoka into the valley; but at least, there is no reason to minimise its influence on Nepal of the contemporary period. We have Asoka's pillars not only in Lumbini and Niglihaha, but also some on the bank of the River Bagmati in the Nepalese Terai, appearing like a chain of links between Magadha and the Nepalese Terai through which Asoka might have traversed to reach Kapilavastu. The stupas in the valley resemble very clearly those in the plains, in Sarnath or elsewhere and by no stretch of imagination they can be attributed to other influences. The fact that the modern Kiratas do not betray the least sign of having adopted Buddhism must mean that they were not the people to come under its influence at a very early age. We cannot take them as representatives of the people inhabiting the valley 2,000 years ago, who were definitely Saivo-Buddhists. They probably are not the people meant in reference to the Kiratas of that time by the *Vamsavalis*, though distantly they may have ethnic identity with the other group who later became known as Newars.

We now come to the old thesis that the Newars were the first people to come under the influence of Buddhism and this they retained in conjunction with the Lichhavis for a long time. The language factor may stand in the way of proper identification between the Newars and the Kiratas but on proper analysis it appears that Newari is not entirely unconnected with modern *Kirati* both having various features of resemblance. The dissimilarity in physical features might be explained with reference to the age-long isolation both sustained in course of the past one or two thousand years or to some type of interfusion with the primitive dwellers both underwent during this long span of years.

The legend in the same way may support the identification of the Newars with the old Kiratas. It is commonly believed that

the first ruling dynasty in the valley was that of the Kiratas. This must be an allusion to the first settlement and humanisation of the valley by a stock of the Kiratas whose identity with the Newar we have just traced. There are circumstances which definitely go to show that the Newars were not the same as the Lichhavis. No one will admit that the language spoken by the Lichhavis was of the nature of modern Newari. The very currency of a group of languages, non-Aryan and unrelated to those spoken in the plains, in the Himalayas and laterly the adoption of Sanskrit attributed mainly to Indo-Aryan influence have supplied proofs against identifying the Newars with the Lichhavis, though culturally they might have allied features. The assertion of the *Vamsavalis* that the Malla rulers were Newars similarly seems to be not only wrong but contradictory in view of their admission that the Mallas were emigrants from the plains, whereas the Newars are the original settlers of the valley. The Newars must be identified with the old Kirata settlers to explain their hoary past. It may be observed here that in ancient treatises everybody living in the Himalayas was called a Kirata.

First Settlement in the Valley

From a deep anthropological study it has been gathered that many of the tribes now inhabiting the hilly regions of Assam and Bengal belong to one race and all of them had migrated to this region in the sixth or seventh century B.C. This swarm of migration is quite unrelated to the pre-Dravidian race of India, for the Kiratas as also the Assamese and Newars, while agreeing in their own main features and manners, differ fundamentally from the Negroid element which is given a priori the foremost antiquity in Indian settlement. The pre-Dravidian or Dravidian is definitely a non-Mongolian stock, with curly hair, swarthy complexion and tall and slender stature. The Kiratas are a fair people flat cheeked with long cheek bones, short nose and scanty beards and also with small black eyes and short stature—all obvious characteristics of Mongoloid origin. The attempt, therefore, to connect South India with the Newars must be discarded in as much as the affinity they bear to the Mongoloid race of the north-eastern India is too apparent to lend colour to any attempt of approximation by conjectures with other races. An inspection of the physical feature of a large number of Newars will reveal in sufficient manner his close affinity with the tribes of North Eastern India, so that the same period of migration and adjustment through that course must be taken to have brought the Newars to the valley of Kathmandu. This, however,

should not lead one to think that the Newars agree in toto with these people. As Sylvain Levi says, 'compared to their less civilised neighbours they are distinguished by a larger face, larger eye, and a better shaped nose; this is here the mark of intermarrying with the Indians'.⁷ But Mongolian characteristic is still recognisable in their features. Another people who possess striking resemblance with the Newars in their primitive stage now inhabiting the base regions of the lower Himalayas are the Rajvansis and Tharus who have, however, totally submitted to Hindu culture as to merge in it.

Why they were called Newars

There is no doubt that the Newars are the only people to have been closely associated with the origin of the word Nepal, the name of the country, either in prospective or retrospective way. The word Nepal occurs, for the first time in Indian literature in the work of Kautilya who writes of certain blankets made in that country. As to the origin of the word, various interpretations have been suggested, the most absurd of which is to connect it with an imaginary sage, called Nemuni whose existence save by the fantastic assertion of the chronicles has not yet been traced out. Sylvain Levi has cited another authority to have enunciated the origin by attributing the derivative to the name of the Asoka tree which was called *NE* in Nepal. The only trustworthy conclusion, however, seems to refer the word to classical *Kirati* vocabulary.⁸ According to the north-eastern inter-

⁷ I. p. 224, he further says :

The Mongolian type, described by Hodgson, on the faith of numerous observations, is still recognizable on the features of the Nevara and of the populations which surround them, Magara, Gurungs, Sounawars, Kachars, Haiyons, Chepangs, Limbus and Lepchas. Head and face very large, particularly large between the cheek-bones; large foreheads often narrowed on the top, receding chin; large and protruding mouth, but the teeth vertical and the lips without abnormal thickness; heavy views, heavy jaw, widely separated eyes on a level with the cheeks more or less shaped obliquely pyramidal nose fairly long and raised except at the bridge where it is often deeply sunk into the point of allowing the eyes of meeting, but out of a coarse form, thick set, especially at the top, with large round nostril, abundant and flat hairs, the face and body without hairs, the stature rather long, but muscular and vigorous.

⁸ Sylvain Levi, *Le Nepal*, II, P. 66. He writes: Mr. Waddel (Frog worship amongst the Newars) has proposed an etymology of the word 'Nevar' by the help of the Tibetan. The first syllable Ne would correspond to the written form 'gnas' which signifies 'place, spot' and 'par excellence' 'sacred place or place of pilgrimage'. The Lepchas give the name of Ne to the Eastern Nepal and to Sikkim and they interpret it by 'place of barracks for shelter or residence'. In most of the connected Indo-Chinese dialects 'ne' signifies residence. The Newars would be the inhabitants of 'ne', of the country of sacred places and par excellence in the Himalayas. And again, the syllable 'pal' would be the equivalent of 'Bal' name which Tibetans give to Nepal (Bal — po = Bal-Yul : Boe country). The word 'Bal' in Tibetan signifies wool. Nepal then would

pretation, *Nepa*, (they do not pronounce LA,) is a name applied to the country occupying the central portion of the Himalayas or as Levi suggests the foot of the same chains, which fits in with the geographical position of the country as covering just the central part of the great mountain at its foot. *Newar* is another form of expression to denote the inhabitants of Nepal, *ra* and *la*, not sounding in pronunciation to have assumed the changed form which betrays only a slight alteration probably on account of a long usage. According to one author they were originally known as *Nepara*—this word changing from *Nepara* to *para* and *wara* through long usage lost its old tone to become the present day current *Newar*⁹. At any rate, the close association may incidentally produce an evidence for the antiquity of the Newars prior to the time of Kautilya whose utterance indirectly supports the existence of the Newars in the valley before his time. The chronicle alone persistently calls that period as one of the *Kiratis* under a wrong notion that the Newars came from South India late in the ninth century A.D. The word, *Newar*, however, is not very ancient. It was first used by Capuchin Fathers in the 17th century and by Poet Lalitaballabh in his victory poems in 1768.

The Newars and the Lichhavis

Let us now proceed to consider how far the Lichhavis fit in the context as to have borne deep racial or cultural relationship with the Newars of the valley of Nepal.

Much ink has flown on the question whether the Lichhavis are Aryans or non-Aryan Mongoloids.¹⁰ Dr. Jayaswal (Pp. 171-84, *Hindu Polity*) and Prof. Ray Chaudhuri (*Political History*, Pp. 103-05) have produced lengthy arguments to show that they were Aryans. The arguments may not be repeated here, but may be briefly dealt as follows :

(1) That the Lichhavis had entered into a confederacy with the Aryan settlers like the Videhas and the Mallas.

(2) That the Ramayana and many other Sanskrit texts connect their rulers with the main stock of the Vedic Ksatriyas. [In their inscriptions the Nepal Lichhavis have addressed themselves in terms which

signify the sacred place of the 'Bal'. All this etymological combination seems to me greatly suspicious (I, P. 224 f.n.).

⁹ Nepal Sanskrit Parishad Patrika, I, i.

¹⁰ B. C. Law, *Some Ksatriya Tribes in India*, Pp. 26-29, *Modern Review*, 1919, p. 50; Watters, II, P. 83, s; *The Book of Kindred saying, Samyuttanikaya* by Mrs. Rhys Davids, Pp. 257-89, *Rockhill's Life of Buddha*, Pp. 62-63; IA, 1908 (Smith's article): E.H. P. 155 (3rd edition); *Beal's Romantic Legend of Sakyamuni*, Pp. 158-60.

indicated their descent from the traditional Ksatriya class. Hiuen Tsang's statement that the ruler of Nepal of his time was a Kshatriya of the Lichhavi dynasty showed that their Kshatriya status was accepted by all concerned.]

(3) That they were regarded as *Vratyas* because they did not subscribe to Brahmanical rules of life.

(4) That the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* makes the Lichhavis claim a portion of the Buddha's relic on the ground of their Ksatriya lineage.

(5) The Jaina canons place the Lichhavis in the ranks of the families deriving their ancestry from the descendants of Kuru and Ikshvaku.

Against these contentions the following are offered :

(1) That the mere fact of confederacy with the Aryan tribes may not be in itself an evidence for Aryan lineage of a confederate member.

(2) That, moreover, the confederacy came to be established only when monarchy in Videha had ceased to function, which also weakens the argument of the dynastic analogy of rulers, as in the same period the same Ksatriya dynasty, if there was any, had followed suit of their Videhan contemporaries.

(3) That so long as the seat of the confederacy was at Vaishali, they were known as *Vrijjis* under the name of the Greater Member and immediately when there was dissolution of the confederacy, only the separate designation was retained and that perhaps this explains the reticence of Panini (in IV, 2131) about the Lichhavis and their subsequent comment at the hands of Kautilya.

(4) That they were regarded as *Vratyas* not merely because they were Buddhists but also for their queer social customs like endogamy, chaitya worship, etc.

(5) That as many other non-Aryan tribes also had demanded relic of Buddha, the ground for calling the Lichhavis Ksatriyas on that account alone is most unsatisfactory.

It would appear that a single instance of any evidence is no final proof in support of the argument. The above will show how the mere sharing of Buddha's relic was no factor to determine the Aryan origin of the Lichhavis as there were also people of non-Aryan stock sharing it. Similarly Manu's statement must not be taken without reserve, firstly because he has placed the Lichhavis with Khasas and Dravidas, the latter definitely non-Aryan and secondly because he says that these people and certain others like the Kiratas had deviated from their original position owing to their non-Brahmanical beliefs. *Vratya* may mean impure or barbarous or anything worse without even denoting

the sense of deviation from a high rank, but the fact that confirmed non-Aryans like the Dravidas and Kiratas were deemed as Ksatriyas shows how elastic is the classification of Manu. It shows how social infiltration amongst all sections of people had taken place as to imbibe definitely foreign blood at the time when Manu wrote his treatise. Just as the Buddha is claimed as one of the ten incarnations of Visnu, similarly the various powerful tribes—pre-Aryans or non-Aryans, Dravidas or Mongols, were included in the family of Ksatriyas. By Vratya or “Vrsala Ksatriya” no sense short of non-Brahmanical beliefs is implied, whether it be a case of deviation or a case of traditional non-Aryan observances. Manu simply stresses the original position of these people who, he says, were the Ksatriyas now degraded into filthy life.¹¹ He does not, however, make a distinction between the Aryans and Dravidas and between Aryans and Mongols, which destroys the attempt to base the origin of the Lichhavis to Aryan Ksatriya stock on his admission.

No definite proof exists as to the Mongolian origin of the Lichhavis, the so-called points of resemblance being rightly declared incomplete as conclusions on this subject. But Manu’s branding the Lichhavis as ‘Vratya’ must have some significance and when we see that in that class he puts the non-Aryans and Aryans alike, the treatment the Lichhavis received at his hands is obvious and distinctly confusing the issue of their real origin, which we have just noted. The Vratyas ordinarily were a despised people. They required a rigid kind of ceremony to go through to come to the other fold (Katyayana’s Srauta Sutra). They had to renounce their old affiliations and past after being sworn in the new mode of living. There is nothing like extraordinary in this as applied to Lichhavis. Katyayana or anybody else had no hesitation to extend the same to Chinas and Kiratas, and Khasas and Dravidas. Wherein is the proof that Manu’s statement implies the Aryan lineage of the Lichhavis? In fact there is none.

There may be a partial truth in the statement that a body of foreigners who were unfriendly towards the Brahmans could hardly have been accepted as Ksatriyas. But what explanation is there to justify the admission of the hostile tribes like the Khasas and Kiratas into the Ksatriya community? The legend contained in the *Paramaththa Jotika* as to the origin of the Lichhavis from a queen of Kasi may be compared to similar legend of the Kiratas, by which they claim their descent from Kasi Ksatriyas. This is due to the common tendency amongst the people of India to try to show themselves to have descended

¹¹ Manu, X.

from a Ksatriya stock of Kasi.

That the Lichhavis were a late comer in the comity of independent peoples is shown by the omission of the Lichhavi republic in the Brahmanical list. Perhaps this may be due to the predominance of the Videhan rulers in those areas, for only so soon as Videhan monarchy dies, the Lichhavis figure as independent, but not until then and this fact has found expression in Kautilya's treatise.

It is now a common knowledge that the Lichhavis ruled Nepal for several centuries in early times. Obviously not only the ruling dynasty of the Lichhavi but also the warriors and traders must have settled in the Valley. Later, all these must have been assimilated in the broad stream of humanity along with the upper strata with the merchant class and artisans.

To day the Lichhavi is lost in the Newar community as is the Kirata emigrant.

It could never be suggested that the Lichhavis had migrated en-masse from the original home at Vaisali and they were the people who pass for the historical Kiratas. But surely both the Kirata and Lichhavi emigrants had merged together as against those in the lower strata, who hewed woods and drew water, those who toiled in the fields, made earthen pots, worked at the foundry and leather and slaved for the master.

But till such time as the Lichhavis did not leave their domain Vaisali their relation with the Newars had not developed to make for a racial consanguinity. What was the relationship then?

Evidently the Lichhavis were different from the Kiratas. They were not the ancient Newars. But Nepal was in close proximity to Vaisali. Later, because of Vaisali's nearness to Nepal the Lichhavis advanced thither bag and baggage to conquer and settle down.

What is gathered from the above discussion is the close cultural affinity of the Newar community with the Vrijji republic, of which there were as many non-Aryan members, a position, which cannot be dismissed as inadmissible on the ground that they were Mongols, or despised as such in the ancient texts. We know from Kautilya that they were existing in his time, and though he is reticent as to their political structure or their connection as such, he has nevertheless located all the eight members of the Vrijji Gana in the vicinity of the central Himalayas, so that the probability of the Newars to have been one of them is not far in as much as many of the confederates still remain to be unidentified. Hedged in all sides by the Vrijji clans, the Newars would not have maintained isolation or been allowed to do so on any other

consideration.

Any one conversant with the social structure of the Newars would believe that the Newars were originally animist tribal people, had no slave caste, shoemaker and untouchable blacksmith amongst them—it is admitted that whoever there are came mainly from outside and that also within comparatively recent times. The Buddhist Newars, though caste ridden have no class corresponding to Brahmans, the former monks now having left monasteries performing this function on the blind influence of the Tantric and Saivaite doctrines. At the same time the old titles, even formally, of the monks, like Sakyabhiksu, Vajrachary, etc., which are more indicative of the original casteless nature of the society are retained. In such circumstances no feasibility of a monarchical form of Government, a prototype of one man's rule, was least entertained. The word *Juju* used for the King at present expresses a sense of mere nodding apparatus without any power or executive prerogatives, for *Ju* in Newari means an expression of approval revealed in the nodding of head. The Newars probably believed in the Sangha deliberation as in Vaiśali. It is really unique that an originally turbulent people had disciplined themselves as Buddhists and become liberal and undergone a change in their social behaviour to live with the most progressive sections like the Videhas and the Lichhavis.

We have three more pieces of evidence to support the view that the Newars were included in the Vrijji clans. The first is that they still retain the designation of Vrijji. The lower class people, mostly the untouchables, who reveal definite racial type of feature of Dravidas or pre-Dravidas, call the Newar as Vajje, which is peculiarly used to them alone in the most respectful sense. The second and third are the Chaitya worship and the Yaksa superstition. As these two features of the Newari social life are still preserved, our task is rendered easier in the matter of comparison. We should observe here that these were present in Vaisali also. The Chaitya is the oldest form of place for worship. It was meant either to contain certain relics associated with the ancestors or to convey the very presence of the spirit of the dead, which inhabited the structure incarnated as Yaksa. It was said that during Asoka's entry into Nepal, there were many Chaityas and it was probably due to the influence the Newars derived from the common culture which they shared with the Lichhavis.¹² The Yaksa is now called Khya. There is a belief in Nepal that the devil, called Khya, is endowed with the capacity of bestowing on his favourite whatever

¹² The worship of the Yaksas was prevalent also in Ceylon.

amount of money the latter desires to possess. His picture with two big jugs holding money appears along with that of Laksmi, the Goddess of Wealth. The devil is still offered sacrifices. One does not know whether the Yaksa or Khya is a superstition mainly belonging to and originating in non-Aryan people. Kuvera is certainly an Aryan demi-god who figures commonly in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. He is also one of the four guardian deities of the Mahayana Buddhist pantheon. He is given the royal position in the Himalayas and as such his association with the Aryan people is close. If he is not racially connected with them, he has at least a tie of culture with them. Nor the idea of ugliness is intended with reference to the Himalayan people as seems to be the conclusion of Dr. Jayaswal, while he attributes the snubnosed relief images of Sanchi and Bharuth to the social types identified with the Kiratas. The very romance about the Yaksa as appears in our poetic literature must dispel such ideas. Like V. Smith, K. P. Jayaswal also bases his reading on the alleged ugliness of the Northern dwellers. They were, however, not coarse and ugly. We have a Chinese account on the subject (Levi, I, pp. 157-61) which has spoken highly of the physical beauty of the people of the valley of Kathmandu. It was no ordinary compliment as it comes from one of the acknowledged beautiful races of the world like the Chinese. Whatever that may be, we have to bear in mind that the Yaksa is only a superstition and no idea of racial affinity from relief images can be obtained or adduced for purposes of any sort of identification. The only argument it offers is the close cultural collaboration between the peoples of Nepal and Vaisali, who as the Newars and Lichhavis were existing as early as the sixth century B.C.

The antiquity of the Newars is a subject of much controversy. But from the above it will appear that if they are identified with one of the original emigrants of the valley, the controversy can be settled.

The Newars of Kathmandu

One of the most ancient communities which has made itself famous by a deep, varied and voluminous contribution to the cultural heritage of man is the semi-civilized Newar community of Nepal. Very obscure in origin, possessing a peculiar culture mixed with many tribal crudities, the Newars constitute a most complicated racial type. The Newars form one of the oldest living groups, not only in Nepal but in the whole of India. Their civilization goes back to a period older than some of the very old sites in India. Their contribution to the particular variety of Asian art and architecture, popularly known as

Indo-Tibetan, is very profound. They gave Nepal a name and fame without which that mountainous country would have been unknown. No wonder, therefore, that such a community has attracted the attention of historians and Indologists.

The Newars have been living in the valley of Kathmandu for centuries; nobody knows when they first settled down. If some of the ancient Sanskrit works were to be relied on and if it can be proved that the reference therein about Nepal implied reference to Kathmandu, the presence of the Newars in the valley even in that period cannot be doubted. From the time of the Mahabharata to the time of the Lichhavis whose entry into this mountain principality opened a new vista for further advancement the Newars seem to have been known by a different name. This only can explain the absence of any mention about these people in the books and anecdotes of that time. It is also very difficult to surmise how this word came into use. Even after the Lichhavis, there is nothing to shed light on this point. Nepal gets its name from Naimeni, according to legends, but if its antiquity were to be established as early as the Mahabharata, Naimeni, or whatever be the name of the name-giver, cannot belong to the third or fourth century A.D. Some historians erred in attributing the name, Nepal, to a king named Nimishi who flourished in the third century A.D. What seems to be nearer to fact has been already dealt with in the preceding pages. Nepal's inhabitant could become Newar after some time by a process by which similar other words undergo a change; Nepal, Nepara, Newara or as we suggested earlier they were Newar because they lived in Nepal. It is, therefore, entirely absurd to think that the Newars are the same people as the Nairs of Malabar or that they were immigrants from North-Western India or they were a tribe by themselves. There is still a legend in Nepal that the Newars came from the plains. These legends, however, are not entirely false, but they seem to have misconstrued certain important facts. The Newars did come from the plains and certain families of Aryan emigrants such as the Lichhavis of Vaiśali and Mallas of Pawapuri, have been absorbed in the Newar tribe and very likely legends speak of these families, when they link the Aryan race with the Newars of Kathmandu. The Newars are a composite people as we observed in the foregoing article. They contain within themselves types of three main racial groups. These have manifested sometimes concurrently and sometimes separately. And Nepalese culture was such as assimilated all other cultures and tribes. These are matters, however, to be decided by experts; I have merely hinted at them. We can only say with assurance and beyond any doubt that the

Newars are a very old people.

It should be noted that the Newari culture assimilated settlers from outside as late as the thirteenth century A.D. In this particular century alone, certain immigrant families from Mithila and Bengal were absorbed in Kathmandu. The Devabhajus, who are most probably from Uttar Pradesh and who are responsible for the revival of Sanatani Hindu religion in Nepal in the reign of the Mallas, have lost their old character and have been absorbed with the Newars in all aspects of life. They have been, however, able to preserve their caste individuality by a rigid isolation in matrimonial affairs. The Jhas from Mithila who migrated during the invasion of Sultan Shamsuddin of Bengal have also suffered a change towards absorption in the Newari mode of life. But whereas the Devabhajus were completely absorbed and have become part and parcel of the Newari communal life, by assuming the priestly function of the Saiva section of the Newars, the Jhas have still dealings with their brethren in Mithila. They have marriage relations outside and are still regarded as Maithils, but that the Devabhajus are from outside no Newar believes, and this shows how closely united they are at present.¹³

Origin

The origin of this tribe is little known outside or inside the city of Kathmandu. Certain people have attempted to unravel this origin but in vain. The greatest mistake has come from hurried generalisation without a study of Newari physiognomy.

It cannot be established that the Newars are Mongolian or Aryan people or that they came from Tibet or India. While there is much to lend colour to the Mongolian origin of a large section of them, Tibet cannot be set up as the homeland of even that section of the Newars. The confusion in this direction is due to the absence of any documents and relevant local legends. We have only to take recourse to anthropological study to arrive at a correct estimate of things. If we analyse the Newar facial expression, the Indo-Mongol origin is found indelibly imprinted on many of them. But the Newars bear affinity more to the tribes of the North-Eastern India than to the Tibetans. I have seen the Assam hill-tribes and also the Manipuris; and the Rajabansis of Purnea and Jalpaiguri, on close scrutiny I could not note any difference in features. So if the Newars came from anywhere, it is more probable that they came from the North Eastern India at a period when the tribe in that region expanded all over India. Very lately, some historians have told us that the

¹³ The total population of the Newars may be roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ million and the area over which they have spread is roughly 18×22 sq. miles.

Kols and Bhils who represent the oldest type of Indian civilization belong to this group and also that they embarked on their migratory career in the same period. The Newar tribe is an offshoot of that expansive race.

Not all Newars are of this type, and there is a smaller section of them owing allegiance to the Aryan race. As we have already referred to them, these are the descendants of the Lichchavis and the Mallas. This section has also imbibed certain Mongol characteristics, but it is by way of admixture with the original settlers; in return they have transfused Aryan blood in some Mongolian families. This section has prominent Aryan features. But manners and language are proof of their affinity, though of late, mixing has practically ceased.

There is, however, no watertight barrier between these two sections. Certain names amongst the castes and sub-castes bear testimony to an Indian origin; for example, some families have still the Malla appendage in their family titles; others, however, have been completely submerged.

Religion

Nowhere does a complete harmony prevail between divergent forms of worship as in the valley of Kathmandu. It is as if all sections understood the significance of this basic unity of all shades of belief. There are no Mohammedans amongst the Newars. But Buddhists and Sivamargis have been living together in perfect harmony throughout the ages. And to the surprise of all, it is only in the valley of Kathmandu that a complete harmony of worship has been possible and instances of hostile camps coming together in the temple are pretty common. A Sanatani Hindu Newar pays as much respect to his own deity as to the deity of the other sect and *vice versa*. All temples in Nepal have removed the taint of segregation. Taken as such the Newars may appear neither wholly Buddhists nor wholly Saivites. They have been able to eliminate all discord from their social life and to maintain amity and concord between themselves. This is an example which should draw the attention of the diehard communalists.

The harmonious adjustment in the field of religion can be traced to the trend of historical development. The Newars have always been subjected to invasions from outside both culturally and politically and Kathmandu has been visited by all kinds of reformers. The tradition of teaching dissimilar dogmas is too indelible to be brushed off. And today this has led to a mixed form of worship where a perfect type of communal understanding prevails.

Yet a stronger factor has been the effort of the Tantrists who have welcomed devotees irrespective of caste and creed. The Tantric influence in Kathmandu has not been a force of discrimination and isolation. It is all embracing and pervasive. Thus almost all temples have come to adopt the mode of worship in accordance with the Tantric system.¹⁴ People of all castes, not excepting the untouchables, and of all creeds, including the Saivite Hindu Newars, have tenaciously revered the Tantric rules. And in return they have been granted equality of rights to worship in the temples, sometimes even in the face of deep seated caste prejudices. It would be a matter of extreme satisfaction to social reformers to learn that for hundreds of years the untouchables in the happy valley of Kathmandu have been enjoying the right of entry into the temples and that in some cases they are installed as temple worshippers.¹⁵ All that is due to the sole influence of the Tantras.

Of course Tantrism is not an unmixed blessing. Tantrism has in some respects vitiated the simplicity and beauty of Newari life. It has brought about very wild forms of violence and cruelty in sacrifice; one of the most cruel modes of sacrifice requires fresh blood from the throat of a living buffalo. The throat is gradually pierced with a dagger so that the blood flows slowly over the image of the deity, while at the same time the buffalo in extreme agony is kept alive till the last drop of blood leaves the body. The Tantric mode of worship and sacrifice is at the root of this. Again much of the undesirable complexity and rigidity now dominant in the religious life of the Newars is due to the Tantras. The Mudra formations and some other quaint actions seem all nonsensical formalities, but they have to be followed strictly in matters of worship. Devil dancing is also a part of the ceremony and masked heads when in worship are a common sight in Newari festivals. Medievalism in worship as in many other aspects of their life has come as a blot in contrast with the artistic and cultural achievements of the Newars. Considering that whatever is incongruous there, is partly due to the Tantric distortion, the blame falling on the Tantric Pandits should be great. But even then the other side of the problem cannot be dismissed. That Tantric influence has tended to unify opposite religious forces should not be dismissed without further thought; and it should not be forgotten that, with all its regrettable results, Tan-

¹⁴ The deities like the Tara of Sankhu, Mahankal of the Parade-ground, the Dakshina Kali—all in the valley, have commanded the respect of all. The Pashu-patinath and Lokesvara, one of Saiva sect and another of Buddhist Mahayana group, are universally respected.

¹⁵ However, entry into certain secluded temples is barred.

trism has given a special distinction to the religion of the Newars who hardly find a place among the Buddhists of other countries. Tantrism has taken them nearer to Tibet.

Newari Festivals

The Newars celebrate all Saivite festivals, but they have their own special festivals celebrated in accordance with the Tantras. Of all peoples the Newars have the greatest number of festivals. At one time or other, each fortnight or week, they have festivities accompanied by the most splendid display of ceremonial rites and observances. The home of a Newar always wears a festive appearance and not a single day passes without some pomp or ceremony or without old style music and the ringing call of all sorts of medieval instruments and in an ecstasy brought about by overdoses of liquor. Each ceremony is marked with the offering of liquor bowls and sacrifices of buffaloes, liquor and meat being distributed to keep the devotees aglow with joy.

Devil dances are very common. Masks of demons and of gods and goddesses are worn by the dancers and symbolic dances involving artistic poise and movement are exhibited. These dances are full of meaning and are performed with delicacy and perfection. In addition to devil dances, certain other dances, mainly classical, accompany ceremonies, the chief dances being the Mahakali, the Tara, and the harvest dance. Some of these dances retain realistic traits in them. One such dance, generally held along as a part of the eight-day ceremony of *Indrajatra* which occurs in September, celebrates the fight of the God Bhairav with the buffalo demon; the special feature of this dance is that a living buffalo figures as one party to the battle. Sometimes a very ferocious buffalo has to be encountered by the dancing party symbolizing the Bhairav and his two menials, called Bhakkus in Newari, and it is not without strenuous efforts of hands and swords that the fight is ultimately decided against the demon; eventually the chief dancer who represents the Bhairav kills him with his sword. This dance is part of the nocturnal amusements provided in the *Indrajatra* and is witnessed and enjoyed by the Nepal nobility.

The Newars are a very superstitious people and, therefore, festivals involving rites and ceremonies designed to thwart the evil influence of the demons are very many. It is a common belief in the Kathmandu valley that demons are almost omnipresent. This is, of course, due to the prevailing influence of the Tantric cult. Ceremonies are still rigorously performed in pursuance of the above superstition. The *Shala Jatra* in March and the *Ghanta Korna* in August are

held with all pomp and splendour to drive away the invading devils. The belief is that discontinuance would have untoward results.

Festivals begin each year with the New Year's day in Chaitra.¹⁶ The new month is the occasion of annual ceremonies in honour of the family deities. Goats and buffaloes are killed in great numbers. The Newars irrespective of castes are buffalo eaters. This is also the occasion for a rendezvous of all the members of the family, as the ceremonies are held in congregation. Then there is *Sithinakh*, the 6th day of bright fortnight of Jyaistha. This time the nearest temple in the vicinity is the object of veneration. *Shaparu* or *Gaijatra* is celebrated for cow worship in honour of the just departed. Processions of decorated cows and bullocks are taken round the streets. The *Maghajatra* is the occasion for widely prevalent kirtans or songs of prayer in praise of Visṇu. This festival occurs in January and is held for a month. Each *Toli* or *Mahalla* individually celebrates this festival. Processions of devotees, singing the sacred name of Hari, are the chief features. During the *Bandejatra* in Bhadra the Buddhist priests go round the city and beg alms of their followers.

These festivals have come down from past ages and have been maintained intact without the least diminution in feeling. This, however, would not have been possible but for an institution which has alone fostered the tradition of the Newars. This institution, called the *Goothi* is a veritable treasury for the Newars and it has endowed the Newari culture with the effective and necessary backing, the financial grants. It has been the custom of the Newars to reserve a certain portion of their property as sacred endowments for the upkeep of the family rites and observances. This endowment is not transferable or divisible. The family holds it jointly. Of late certain family feuds have afflicted this institution owing to the fast splitting up of the joint-family system; but that it has enabled the Newari family to keep up their tradition, nobody can deny. Moreover, it provides maintenance for many families who get their income out of the joint property as part of their share. As the joint property is indivisible and unsaleable, the flow of income is uninterrupted. In this environment of fostering care and with full financial backing, the Newari medieval tradition could save itself from the forces of destruction.

Customs and Manners

Some customs and manners have already been dealt with. Let us

¹⁶ Although according to almanac, the new year begins with Kartik bright fortnight.

take a few more of them, e.g. peculiarities in the marriage system. The Newari marriage ceremony is marked by the absence of the bridegroom in the proper rite, the bride alone performing all the rituals. There is no child marriage among them, but they have protected their women from perpetual widowhood by establishing the wifhood as something divine and permanent. The first ceremony towards marriage is performed as early as the sixth year of the girl and in the ceremony the girl is married to Subarnakumar in the form of gold with the *Bel* (wood-apple) fruit. It is maintained that human relationship entered through marriage later on is a subsidiary and violable contract; only the divine marriage is taken as indissoluble. The Newars allow widow marriage. Against the benefits conferred on women, however, should be considered certain social disadvantages attached to them, e.g. the Newars have a crude system of divorce but women have no choice in the matter. Another peculiar manner of the Newars is their adoption of the caste title of the mother in the event of cohabitation between two people of different castes. This appears like a matriarchal feature and is found in Newari society alone. The Newars have also enjoyed a thorough type of communal life and though the body of this life has been much impaired influences of modern civilization the spirit is preserved through annual gathering.

Caste System

It should be noted that the caste structure has been built upon the principles of non-violence and renunciation. This is noticeable in the names of the various castes, like Sakyaviksu, Vajracharya and Udasin, all connoting a sense of disgust with worldliness and temporal affairs. It is probable that a major section of the Newars had no caste system so long as they resisted outside pressure. But when that pressure came with cultural and political domination, the underlying high ideals succumbed except the name which has been kept up. The Newar castes at present are as much subject to mutual prejudices and ill-feelings as castes in India. There is a caste complex and a caste hierarchy. There is also a priest class. If the Newars were to be classed as Buddhists, the caste system is peculiarly their own. There is however, a class immune from philosophical upheavals. This class of peasants, called Jyapu, has been all along a source of sustenance to the other three classes. It is not known whether the old structure acknowledged their important position, but today they are downtrodden. There were no slaves amongst the Newars and there is no Ksatriya caste as such at the moment. Also, the untouchables at Kathmandu have come from outside and though assimi-

lated in the society have preserved a distinct feature. One proof is that even now there are no cobbler and untouchable goldsmith and blacksmith castes amongst the Newars.

Occupation

On the whole the Newars except the *Jyapus* of them are a people mainly adopting trade and commerce and crafts and industry as their profession. They have a monopoly over the whole of Nepal's commercial and industrial activities. Their position is duly acknowledged by the whole country and their name as *Bhaju* is a byword in Nepal. *Bhaju* means trader (like Seth) and is appended to the name of every Newar. The Newars, thanks to their wisdom and discretion and also skill and adaptability, have captured a position of vantage in the civil administration. Today the upper strata of them are at the top. At the same time, with dexterity and cunning they have protected their field from outside pressure. They have covered the whole country as traders, though they betray a lack of adventurous spirit. They were not taken in the army under the Rana regime.

Language and Cultural Achievements

Linguistic and cultural development of the people of the Nepal valley has been singularly great. The Newari language and the Pagoda style of architecture stand as testimony to their greatness. To begin with the language, it is admitted that Newari reveals admirable characteristics of beauty and polish, of richness and refinement. It is one of the oldest languages of the world but even in its palmy days possessed little valuable treasury of high class literature. The language, however, has lived on and has shown a strong capacity to resist outside influences. The cultural supremacy enjoyed by Sanskrit could alone affect it to some extent, but not so as to alter the linguistic structure.

The language of the Newars does not come into the category of the Indo-Aryan languages. It belongs to the Tibeto-Burman stock of Mongol origin. The monosyllabic nature of the words establishes its only connection with the above mentioned stock. It is, however, not admissible to deduce from this that Newari is an off-shoot of Tibetan. Such inferences are not admissible in the light of deep research. A study of the two languages concerned has shown that behind the apparent unity as expressed in the monosyllabic nature of words there lies a fundamental disunity of meanings and idioms. More than 75 per cent of the words in Newari have no affinity with Tibetan, as will be proved by the following table, even if a few words are identical; it will appear

that besides some identity between Tibetan and Newari, Sanskrit influence is also to a great extent manifest.

(1) <i>NEWARI</i>	<i>TIBETAN</i>	<i>ENGLISH</i>
Juju	Galpo	King
Nibha	Nga-mo	Sun
Jujuni	Chhingmo	Queen
Shapu	Pechha	Book
Sha	Bhalang	Cow
Shin	Shin	Wood
Lha	Lha	Hand
Khwa	Khwa	Face
Mi	Mi	Fire

As many as fifty per cent of the words in Newari are derived from or related to Sanskrit, but all these have been shaped into monosyllabic pattern to fall in line with the basic structure of the language.

(2) <i>NEWARI</i>	<i>SANSKRIT</i>	<i>ENGLISH</i>
Nau	Nama	Name
Duru	Dugdham	Milk
Manu	Manusya	Man
Ghyo	Ghrita	Ghee
Bhaye	Bhasa	Language
Dhau	Dadhi	Curd
Jya	Karya	Work

Nobody can deny the mutual influence of languages. If the Newars gave Tibet the Gupta script in conjunction with the Kashmiris, which shows that Tibetan renaissance is of a later date, the talk of grave Tibetan influence on Nepal might appear almost absurd. Let Tibetologists enlighten us!

In the matter of scripts, however, Sanskrit influence is very clear. The Newars took India's script and they have exhibited a tendency to admit all kinds of scripts, even Bengali and Maithili. A glance at the scripts of Gomu, Bhujimu, Ranjana and modern Newari will corroborate this view. Tibetan influence, on the other hand, is practically hidden beyond finding; only the monosyllabic nature of words may prove it, if proof it can be. In these scripts have been written many valuable works now in the Nepal Library.

The Pagoda style of architecture is common to all Buddhistic countries. Much controversy existed as regards the origin of this style. But now it is admitted that the Pagoda style is Newari; temples constructed in this style existed in Nepal earlier than elsewhere. For a

description of it one can view a picture of a Burmese Pagoda where each story has got a roof of tiles—in Nepal metal sheets and tiles and this is a distinguishing feature—and where the main body of the temple looks like a tower of wide dimensions.

The Newars were great builders. A network of temples covers the three cities of the valley; Kathmandu itself is a city of temples. These temples have beautiful architectural and sculptural decorations and reveal a high standard of taste and refinement. The famous temples in Nepal are the Changunarayan, the Dattatreya, the Krisna, the Taleju and the Durbar Square temples—all of the 16th and 17th centuries.

The description of cultural achievements would not be complete without reference to the contribution made by the Newars to Tibetan culture which has followed Buddhist tradition since Buddhism had been introduced in that country in the 7th century A.D. The modelling of Tibetan script closely following the Gupta character is also partly a gift of the Newars; the valuable works of Sanskrit origin which found their way into Tibet and were written in Tibetan script greatly contributed to the Tibetan renaissance. The recent exploration and finds prove that Tibet owes much to these books. They also establish the inalienable connection which existed between Tibetan and Indian cultures, the latter acting through the medium and agency of the Newars.

Relation with India

The valley of Kathmandu was never regarded as outside India's sphere of influence; all forces, cultural or political, seem to have affected it. Geographically and economically the valley was inseparable from the Indo-Gangetic plain. There was no natural boundary to separate the sub-Himalayan tract where the valley was situated from the Gangetic plain. Kathmandu did not stand in splendid isolation and at every period of history its relation with India had been intimate. There is a legend that as early as the Mahabharata days, the ruler of Nepal figured in the great fight. Buddhism entered Kathmandu if not at its very birth surely long before the Christian era started. This may be dismissed as imaginative, but there cannot be any doubt that the Maurya Princes and the Lichhavis were at the head of administration. Temporarily even the Kushans and the Guptas held sway over the country. Then there is the fact of Indian dynasties ruling in the valley; all ruling dynasties of Nepal—the Mauryas, the Lichhavis, the Thakuris, the Karnatakas, the Mallas and the Shahs, were emigrants from the plains.

This, however, should not be misconstrued as to mean domination from India. Nepal's autonomy is traditional; this autonomy was respected by external rulers, even by the Guptas, and was scrupulously maintained by the ruling dynasties with a feeling of complete identity with the ruled. There is no truth, therefore, in the statement that the valley was a Hindu colony, owing allegiance to the mother country. The intimate geographical, cultural and economic relations subsisting between Nepal and the Indo-Gangetic plain would not by any standard reduce Nepal to a colonial status *vis-a-vis* India under any circumstances.

One point has to be stressed. This tiny valley of Kathmandu with 18×22 square miles of territory was the centre of all Nepalese activities and controlled the destiny of the whole mountainous kingdom. But in ancient days at the peak of its glory at several stages the kingdom was not reaching the present boundaries, and Nepal proper meant the valley only.

At present the Newars have lost much of their past glories and have entirely receded from the tradition of arts and architecture. But in the midst of the medieval environment still persisting—in the many quaint customs and manners, the Newars have much to interest the outside observers. And who can turn his eyes from the glorious temples and monuments vying with the best that man has created elsewhere? Kathmandu always breathes the skill and artistic dexterity which the Newars long enjoyed.

Art and Architecture in Nepal

That the womb of the central Himalayas, the smiling valley of Kathmandu, could possess such glorious past endowed with the most exquisite development of art and architecture is something which puzzles an ordinary reader. Yet there is nothing more simple to account for, if we consider the various physical and psychic factors coming into play. Nepal has recorded a high stage of development in this particular line, and naturally therefore the Newars hold a high place amongst civilised men, a place which nobody can deny to them so long as these monuments of glory stand as witness to their unique achievements.

Yet Newari culture is in contrast with the material side of the Newar's life and with his present contribution to culture.

The valley of Kathmandu is itself an abode of all cultural excellences, manifest through simple but marvellous stupas, lofty and beautifully designed pagodas, richly carved doorways and windows, finely gilt roofs, magnificent pillars and awe inspiring Buddhist images, which are the pride and glory of that little land. Under the blue bright sky, in the soft cold of the morning, in the painted brilliance of the evening,

with the background of the sky-kissing whiteness of the Himalayas in the far north, surrounded by the green and eye pleasing hills, the valley spreads in resplendent grandeur. The way to Kathmandu is really hard, but to one who has once felt the inspiring thrill at the sight of the old stupas and majestic minarets, the valley has always held an irresistible glamour, all the rigours of the way vanishing like darkness before the sunlight.

The importance of the valley of Kathmandu lies in its geographical position. It occupies a central place in the middle and eastern Himalayas. It connects by the shortest route, viz, the Banepa-Kuti route, two great countries of the world, India and China. It is the biggest place for human habitation in the whole of the Himalayan region, the biggest valley, and the most cultivable plain. Nature has endowed it with almost all the rich soils requisite for cultivation and with rich materials, like clay and timber. There is, therefore, no wonder that the valley could nurse a rich civilisation.

Climatically the valley enjoys the best conditions to preserve monuments, which are mainly constructed out of the two materials, wood and brick, wrought into architectural excellence and refinement.

Historically the valley is as old as the very oldest parts of India. The first settlement was that of a tribe of Aborigino-Mongols from the eastern Himalayas, who are now known as the Newars and in shape and built they got mixed with others. Originally these people were animists, the trace of which is visible among the tribes of the eastern Himalayas in their various superstitious doctrines and vulgar pantheism. Later Buddhism threw a philosophic veneer over animism and endowed it with the best of aesthetic taste. The grotesque Chaitya changed into a simple and massive Stupa, the *childish* workmanship of an aboriginal grew to the highest expression of the inspired art, and absurd impulsive creations rose to profuse and elaborated designs and symbols.

The Stupas

The earliest specimen of this form of structure and perhaps the most ancient devotional monument lies in the south-east of Kathmandu, in one of its suburb towns, called Patan. Except for relics in Tilaura and Piprawa, the stupas are the oldest monuments of architectural importance. These are five in number, four in the cardinal squares of the citadel and one at its centre known as Pimbahil. These are attributed to Asoka. There is a stupa at Kirtipur, a fort town at the southeast of Kathmandu on a tiny ridge, but its origin cannot be traced out on account of the decorations and alterations

adopted in course of time.

These stupas are of the shape of a hemisphere, constructed out of bricks on a plinth of the same (two, however, on a pavement of stone) and devoid of any architectural decorations. They are very simple and present an appearance of the very primitive edifices that took birth along with Buddhism. At the top there is a small chapel, which is the only ornament, but this is also so simple and of elementary execution that the usual environment is unaffecting. The chapel is dedicated to Vairochana. The hemisphere contains in its innermost recess a chapel, entered through a by-door, now a depository for ceremonial purposes. At each lateral chapel attached to the hemisphere, which has changed from a simple stone vault into a multiple Pagoda, the images of the four of the meditating Buddhas, Amitabha, Ratnasambhava, Akshobya and Amoghasiddha betray a deep interfusion of the influence of the other sect, viz., the Mahayana which, of course, represents the pre-Tantric sculptural work. The central stupa is more like a Chaitya and stands on a tier of brick and stone platforms, unlike the mere mass of bricks characteristic of the other stupas. The summit is a canopy cube-shaped and in the form of rings like the *Toran*, which maintains a parasol (Chhatra) standing on a tripod of metal. The Asokan stupas are respectively called Laghan Tanda, Traitas Tanda, Phulcha Tanda and Zimpi Tanda.

Smaller mounds of earth supporting a Buddhist structure have also been found in different parts of the valley. Besides these, there are miniature stupas with a courtyard, of the description of larger works and essentially of the same design and execution. These are called Chaityas in Nepal and the site they occupy is known as Chibahal (small monastery). They belong to comparatively recent times and as such do not necessarily belong to an early type of non-conventional structure or of a pre-image conception of worship. They are iconographic like the latter images, as the five symbolic figures of the Buddha reveal. Yet the simplicity of structural design and taste have the bearing of an earlier iconography and sculpture and generally resemble the central stupa.

Swayambhunath and Baudha

Not far from Kathmandu and at its western end overlooking the spacious valley, stands the four hundred feet high hillock which rears the Chaitya of Swayambhu with a multitude of miniature chaityas, pagodas, shrines and chapels all around. One travels only a mile over a terraced highway to reach the base of the hill leading to the top by a

stony staircase, nearly three hundred steps, very steep and narrow, from the eastern side. From down below where one accosts three grand images of Buddha in meditative posture, one sees on both sides a masquerade of deities mainly in meditation and of stupas and chapels of simple and beautiful design. The sanctity of the place is fully heightened by the peaceful poise of the images under the shade of the tall green trees which spread their branches as if in deep reverence towards the spirits dwelling in the images, the whole symbolising in a glorious manner the fundamental structure of the Newari social life permeated with Buddhist peace and harmony. The soft murmuring of a cool breeze, and the song of the birds impart a lulling sensation; the devotee in a trance as it were, merging himself in the prayer, while he counts up his beads and enraptured by the occasional shouts of '*Buddha Dharma Sangha*' coming from lips equally placid, feels himself in tune with nature and his environment, where all have combined to give an effect of a deep aesthetic quietness to the sacred monument of the Swayambhu.

The hillock is a continuation of the Bhimdhunga hill, a curved jutting towards the east and is separated by a chasm from another hill on which stands the chapel of Manjusri, according to local legend the Chinese incarnation of Buddha, to whom the chronicle ascribes the humanising of the valley and installation of the Self-Existent therein out of a lotus flower—the common belief is that the hillock was a lotus flower, by a supernatural feat of drainage of the great lake that hid the beautiful valley in yore. This Manjusri passes as a female deity, viz. Sarasvati, in Saivite worship, and the belief has gained ground in spite of the image which definitely reveals a prominent feature of the Bodhisatva with a book and sword in hands. The summit where Swayambhu is situated is a flat surface, some thousand square yards in area, almost every inch of it studded with religious images of the Great Buddha and his satellites, the Dhyani Buddhas and numerous Vajrayana deities. At the centre stands a monument on a plinth of stones, hemispheric in shape, completely whitewashed to look like an egg but which is bulging out in the middle and flattened narrowly at the northern pole to give the top the shape of a grove, which forms itself the base of a gilt *Toran* with projecting cornice and with eyes painted on each side, which according to legend cast a benign look over the valley to protect it from destruction and sacrilege. Over the *Toran* there lies a big sloping mass of wooden rings coated with gilt copper which hides the surface to match the whole perfectly with the brilliance of the *Toran*. The finial is a copper gilt bell-tower

fenced in by a tripod with a broad metal base circular in shape and dexterously adorned with artistic pendants. Between the cupola and the smaller shrines there is a vacant space for processional rounding but so narrow as to lean against the iron framework which contains the prayer wheels with Tibetan symbols of *Mani Padme Hum* and a pair of flags. Attached to the dome are four chapels, mainly of bricks and plaster, with finely worked trellis and bell crowns.

The gilt Vajra (thunderbolt), called Dorjee locally, lies just at the end of the staircase on the eastern vicinity of the stupa, and guarded by two lions of stone erected by Pratapamalla at the entrance. The basement is a stone disc standing on a drum carved in stone, the outer walls of which contain in bold relief the images of serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, goose, pig, rat, bull and hare—symbolic of astronomical cycles for Tibetan calendars. The disc is called *Vajradhatumandala*. Nearby the twin footmarks on a blackstone are also objects of veneration. A flame of sacred oil is always burning as if to keep up the glory of the lord, or perhaps to remind the world that the Great Light, the Buddha consciousness, is never put off.

The stupa of Bauddhanath is another marvel of simplicity and undecorated beauty, which has been preserved to us for ages on a site near Pasupati between Kathmandu and Sankhu. The little village which forms the surrounding of the stupa lies on the way leading to Lhasa, which has led scholars to think that its antiquity is mixed up with Lamaistic preachings. Be what it may, this place is a centre of pilgrimage to the Bhotiyas as well as to the Newars and attracts a large number of the former during winter. Unlike the *Swayambhu* stupa, the site of the Bauddha has little of the elaborate decorations. The stupa is a central shrine around which are the dwelling houses of the *Lamas* and *Sherpas*. The stupa is enclosed by a wall. The base is of three successive pavements, on which the *Garbha* rests, and is approached by a flight of stairs. At the corners of the terrace stand small stupas in harmony with the main dome: they contain a row of niches. All other features exactly resemble those of *Swayambhunath*.

According to Waddel's information the Bauddhanath contains relics of Buddha Kasyapa, the fifth Buddha in succession.

Such stupas are numerous in the valley, half a dozen in Kathmandu, a dozen in Patan and a quarter in Bhatgaon with a few more in other townlets like Chobhar, Bungmati, Harisidhi and Thecho. The main stupas are in Kathesimbhu, Mahabauddha, Tebahal, Yatkha and Lagan in Kathmandu and in Nagbahal, Pimbahil and Pulchok

(large Asokan stupas) and Yagbahal in Patan. Many go back to early times, to times when the idea of representing deities in human form was largely discountenanced. They have nothing extraordinary about them, but Nepalese stupas betray the highest expression of a creative genius, of a keen and sensitive mind, which was destined to leave a rich legacy. Stupas of smaller size are called Chaityas, and the precinct is known as Chibahal. The Chaityas again harbour the Dhyani Buddhas like the stupas. In decoration there is not much difference, and except in size both look alike.

The site of the stupa was originally designed so as to contain relics in honour of the dead or a place of worship or a rendezvous for the monks who occupied the shelters around the main shrine. Apparently the main features of the original monastic settlement totally disappeared by the thirteenth century A.D., when the monastic order dwindled into comparative insignificance owing to the metamorphosis it sustained at the hands of the Saiva reformers who bluntly subjected the priest class to the rigid influence of caste and marriage. The present form is a large courtyard bordered by houses where live not monks but laymen. In the centre of the western side, which faces the stupa and reminds one of Kapilavastu, the house assumes the dimension and shape of a temple commonly of three stories, each roofed with tiles, which rise in diminishing proportions to the uppermost roof which supports the crownwork of a pinnacle. We shall deal later with the style of building. For the present it suffices to note that the central house is a temple and consists of the ground floor of a hall with a cage shut in by wooden or iron bars. The image is generally a Bodhisatva in shining bronze.

The Temples

Kirkpatrick has rightly remarked that the valley consists of as many temples as there are houses and of as many idols as there are men. Kathmandu is a city of temples and so are Patan and Bhatgaon. Every inch of the sacred soil supports a shrine or an image. We have a few specimens of temples built purely on Indian style, specially medieval, like the Radhakrishna temple of Patan, which closely resembles the buildings in Fatehpur Sikri and Rajputana. There is the Mahabaudha temple of the same city, which was constructed on the model of the Bodhgaya temple and looks a little awkward. Many others of recent origin also exist in certain places. But the majority of temples in the valley have their own individuality of design and structure, which have no parallel in India.

The Nepal Style

It is a mistake to take the temple style in Nepal as one deriving from the Pagoda style, since temples of the style existed in Nepal earlier than elsewhere. It is, therefore, not proper to consider the temples as derivatives and to call them Pagodas. They should enjoy in all justice a name which is attached to the place of their birth, and the style should be named as the Nepalese style.

At first sight the temples in Nepal look like Pagodas. The body is a square entablature of bricks rising in diminishing proportions to a great height, sometimes to the sixth storey, with a roof on four sides of the wall at each storey, which are sloping and conforming in regularly diminishing proportions to the size of the entablature. The roofs, either of brick tiles or of gilt copper are quadrangular and the uppermost roof is always of gilt copper. The entablature may stand on a terraced platform of stone and of as many stages as there are storeys, as is the case with the Nyatpola temple. Ordinarily the entablature rests on a colonnade of wooden pillars. The roofs are connected with the entablature by struts, which are set up in a projection at an angle of 45°. These struts form in many cases symbolic images of the deities of the main shrine. Sometimes the underparts are the object of vulgar carvings, with ridiculous pictures of sex life, which according to superstition are regarded necessary to resist lightning or other attacks of nature on the temple. The cornices in the window or above the door and the outer beams are finely decorated with elaborate carvings, rich pictographs of deities or foliage or designs in arabesque. The windows are nearly square and screened by a trellis ornamented by carving. They are also provided, specially on the front side, with balconies which project forward and give the whole window a slanting appearance. The doorway is surmounted by an architrave with a gilt copper finial (Kalasa) at the middle point and containing carved images of deities in bold relief on the surface, where the principal figure, that of a mythological *Sarava*, holds two serpents in his hands, to bite them off. Round the edges of the roofs hang a series of small and thin bells with slender clappers which a mild rush of wind sets tinkling. The interior of the temple is as magnificent. Elaborate and beautiful carving is a common element of the decoration. The chapel occupies the hall, and there are no rooms, and around on the smooth red bricks of the wall are hung all sorts of vulgar collections of old swords, shields, pans, spinning wheels, rings, jars and horns.

Wood carving has reached a very high degree of excellence in

Nepal. Every cornice, every lintel and every sill, every door, every window and pillar have the richest decoration of images and foliage. In point of form and style, in the perfection of control and balance, in the high degree of technical skill manifested, in grace and beauty, they have no rival. The images of deities in struts and doorways, the variegated projections of arches, the ornamentation of doors with intricate designs of flowers and fruits, gracefully tapered pillars, the ornamental architecture—all present a most enjoyable sight to the scholars and artists.

Amongst the famous buildings of the Pagoda style are the Mahankal, Talejus, Durbar square groups, and the Matsyendranath in Kathmandu, temples of the same name and a few others in Patan and Nyatpola, Dattatraya and the Malla palace in Bhatgaon, with the sacred monuments of Pasupatinath and Changuarayan in between. The Nyatpola stands on a plinth of five platforms in tiers, the staircase at each level provides symbolic figures as guards: first, two men having ten times the strength of an ordinary man; second, two elephants with ten times more strength, then other lions and two varieties of deities with increasing strength in the same proportion. The roofs of the temples in Durbar Square are not curved and are of a shape and design to resemble an umbrella. To be singled out are the magnificent golden door of the Bhatgaon Palace and the doorway of Changuarayan, in the most exquisite style; nowhere in the whole of Himalayan region such richness and grandeur are visible.

Much of what has been handed to our generation is of the Malla period, but the same draws its inspiration from the very early years of Nepalese history. To those who attribute the style of Nepalese buildings and architecture to Tibet or China, this may seem strange. But they would do well to note that Chinese annals admit that the Pagoda style of temples was unknown in China or Tibet before the 7th century A.D. whereas every phase of it was adopted in Nepal as early as the 6th century A.D. The Chinese Missions which visited Nepal in 646 A.D. and 665 A.D. acclaimed the high artistic sense and taste of the Nepalese.

The stupa is a copy of its Indian prototype, but the temple is essentially a Nepalese invention in design and structure. India has inspired Nepalese craftsmen in many other respects, and examples of close affinity between the architecture of the two countries are not rare. But the Pagoda style of temple is of Nepalese origin. It is a speciality and a grand one of the Nepalese master builder, where he has shown himself as an adept in symmetrical planning, richness of articulation and in happy blending of wood and bricks.

The temples of the usual Nepalese style should not be taken as simply an embodiment of one culture. We have here to guard ourselves against taking the style as purely Buddhist. In Nepal Buddhist and Saivite temples exist side by side touching and brushing one another, in perfect concord and harmony. Some have sheltered even the deities of different sects in their chapels. This was what Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) remarked, while he visited Nepal and a tradition has been in progress since then to build a happy unity of cultures expressed through artistic and architectural adaptations, which temples and sculptured images evidence.

Not only the temples, but many of the old palaces and houses have carved ornamentations in wood. The adoption of the temple architecture in ordinary houses was perhaps due to these being formerly inhabited by monks. They have the appearance of a shrine and the same style and serenity. Not so tall, they have yet not less than three storeys. They are badly ventilated with thin short storeys and small windows. Their outward appearance is impressive. The three old Palaces of the three cities with spacious halls, carved columns and brackets, courtyards, pillars, and water sprouts, remind one of the designs so gloriously depicted in the T'ang annals.

The Nepalese images in gilt copper are also worth studying. The delicate poise of the images, the soft outline, the serene outlook, the simple but splendid garments make them superior to Chinese or Japanese images of the medieval age. Occasionally they are studded with precious stones, coral, amber, pearls and rubies, turquoise, etc. According to S. Levi, they have no equal. As early as the seventh century A.D., the taste for decoration with jewels had attracted the attention of the Chinese travellers and the later works bear the continuation of the same craftsmanship and taste. The most prominent gilt figures are of Dipankar Buddha, Tara, Laksmi, Sarasvati and Krishna, etc. Candleholders, *Aratipatram*, and jugs used for worship are equally rich in decorative appearance.

Sculpture

Stone work in Nepal has closely followed developments in India. The earliest stone work, the sculptured image of *Lingam* in the Pasupati temple, is a prototype of the *Bharasiva Linga* in Nachna though in detail the Nepalese sculpture had shown an ingenuity of individual expression. But the most brilliant contribution of Nepal of this time is the pillar work. The Lichhavis under the Gupta influence popularised the conception of an all prevalent Deity, Siva or Visnu,

who in abstract stood for anything, great and large, and was reduced in concrete to a beautifully shaped massive monolith or image. Such was the pillar of Changunarayan. The uppermost portion with the Garuda originally shaped has now given place to a disc and a lotus. The lower portion consisting of the shaft and the summit is, however, unchanged, which gives us an idea of the simplicity and elegance of the ancient sculpture. The lower part of the shaft is square but the upper one is octagonal while the summit is round. We have also the conventional lotus on a pillar at Harigaon, which has the same elegance and dignified expression of later pillar works.

Amongst the very early image works, the statue of Pasuparekha submerged on the bank of the river Bagmati, down below Pasupatinath, is worthy of note. The image lies partly broken; only the head is visible. The head shows a pensive mood, eyes half-closed, face calm and quiet.¹⁷ The image of Garuda at Lajimpat is another example; but it is also damaged. In the same area at the centre is a carved image of Vaman Visnu over a flat stela with his divine emblems, conch, disc, lotus and reclining in a posture indicative of perfect equilibrium. In the outer circle are carved in small but bold relief a group of scenes portraying the whole story of his incarnation in the form of Vamana, from his birth to the final conquest of Bali. The representation is real, spontaneous and free.

There are other innumerable carvings in stone, on pillars, walls and *Chaityas*: the Jalasyana Visnu at Buddhanilakantha of the 6th century A.D., the Nyatpola images, the images of Soorya and Chandra on the gate of Siddhapokhari in Bhatgaon and in Harigaon—both belonging to the 14th century, the Garuda image in front of the Krishna temple at Patan, lions in the Kumaristhan, the pillar at Attacknarain, the elephant with the royal group at Ranipokhari: all except a few belong to the medieval school of Nepalese arts but look as simple and magnificent as the earlier works. The three colossal statues of Buddha on the way to Swayambhunath are later specimens which also show the influence of Pala sculpture.

Painting

The Chinese have profusely spoken of the high standard of Nepalese painting. Painting on the walls of a house in the valley was common in those days; the custom has died down and even almost all of the wall paintings have disappeared. Happily, painted covers

¹⁷ Some say that it is the image of a Kirata King.

of manuscripts have been preserved. These works on wood-surfaces are most brilliantly executed and contain stories from Jatakas and the life-portraits of the eighty-four Siddhas; bear an imprint of the high skill in drawing and colouring.

The Nepal school of painting, as also the unconventional Tibetan painting of the Yellow Sect, is allied to the Gujrati and Pala schools in pictorial arrangement and design. The stories, pictured in Bendall's manuscripts as dealt with by Dr. Coomaraswamy and reproduced by him in his book, reveal the same influence and interfusion. The high and thick eye-brows and the pointed lips, in the picture showing the gift of the white elephant and in that depicting the Green Tara who is regarded as Princess Bhrikuti reveal a keen affinity with the Pala painting. In general they show a high technical knowledge, a rich imagination and a realistic expression of gesture, which is a speciality of Nepal. The colouring is remarkable.

The temple banners of a triangular shape in deep yellow or red or green also show a like mastery of colour. The banners are called *Thanka*; they are generally of canvas or silk, rarely or never of wool or thick cotton. But *Thanka* does not belong to Nepal. It was adopted in imitation of Tibetan Custom.

Gift to Asia

We have already remarked that the Pagoda style originated in Nepal. As early as the seventh century A.D., this country had established diplomatic and cultural relations with Tibet and China. To Tibet, Nepal imparted a varied and rich cultural outlook and gave her a religion and a script. Tibetan social and religious life is partly a Nepalese mould. Lhasa owes its existence to the Nepalese. The stupas and chaityas, pagodas and their painted walls, monasteries and temples with carving in wood and stone—all reveal Nepalese inspiration and craftsmanship. From Tibet, Nepalese artists could carry their mission to China and Japan, Burma and Siam, and even to Ceylon where some at least of the old relics betray an influence of Nepalese art. Unfortunately for us no record of these missions is available today. But the life of A-ni-ko preserved by the Yuan history sufficiently proves that Nepal's contribution to art and architecture of Tibet and China was great. A-ni-ko was a Newar who was called in by the Emperor Kublai Khan in 1246 A.D. to build chapels and images in China. He impressed the court with his ability and skill and received the highest honours.

This is what the Yuan history says about A-ni-ko :¹⁸

'A-ni-ko quitted Nepal in 1243 A.D. in the reign of Abhayamalla with a troupe of artists, sculptors and painters. He arrived at the court of Kublai Khan in 1263 A.D. His journey opened a new chapter in the history of the relation between the two countries.

'A-ni-ko was a Nepalese, the inhabitant of the country known as Pa-le-pou. While very young he showed signs of extraordinary intelligence not to be found in ordinary children, when a little older he could recite all the Buddhist texts by heart and could understand the meaning of them from beginning to end. Among his school fellows there was one who was a drawer, designer, painter, modeller and decorator and who recited all the texts called canon of proportions. As soon as he had heard it once, A-ni-ko was able to repeat it. A little later nobody could excel him in designing, modelling and moulding metal images. In the first year of Tchong (1260 A.C.) an order was given to the teacher of the Emperor (Ti-che) Pa-K'o Se-pa (Phags-pa) for elevating in Tibet one Pagoda in gold. One hundred choice artists from Nepal were demanded to execute the work. Only eighty were available. There was a need of a leader artist but none could be found. A-ni-ko who was then only 27 asked permission to start. There was the difficulty on account of his tender age. But he said: I am young, my mind is not. They being allowed, therefore, departed.

'The teacher of the Emperor in observing that he was being charged with the superintendence of the work was greatly astonished. But when accordingly the Pagoda was completely built within one year, he was so impressed with A-ni-ko's ability that he took him (A-ni-ko) to China to present him to the Emperor. Before that he was also baptised. The Emperor having observed him for a while interrogated: 'You arrived in the celestial Empire. Do you not get frightened?' He responded: 'Our stately trade is as a son of ten thousand countries. For a son to arrive before his father, what reason is there to fear?' The Emperor interrupted: 'Why were you so?' He replied: 'My fatherland is in the country of the occident. I had received the order of the sovereign to erect a stupa in Tibet. In two years I have executed that order. There I have observed disorder and war, the people are incapable of protecting their life.' The Emperor then

¹⁸ Levi, III 187-89; G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, pp. 272-80; L. Petech, *Medieval History of Nepal*, pp. 99-101. The last authority bases his argument on the article of Ishida (Moko Gakuho II, 1941, Pp. 244-60). The funeral inscription of A-ni-ko in village Hasiang in the district of Yuan p'ing, west of Peking has the name spelt without r.

asked: 'What is that you know making?' He replied: 'I know well how to design, model and mould metals'. The Emperor then ordered to restore a statue of copper dedicated to the Soong Emperors.

'In 1265 the statue was ready; the openings, the solid parts, the veins, the channels, nothing was missing. The artists in metal were amazed at this talent; there was not one of them but felt ashamed and humiliated. In all the monasteries of the two imperial citadels a large part of the statues came from his hands; also a Wheel of the Law in iron with the seven jewels, which when the Emperor was visiting other places was carried before him to announce his approach; the portraits of different Emperors which he painted on silk, no other painter could achieve his perfection. In about the tenth year of the Tche Yuan (1274 A.C.) he was given for first time authority supreme over all the artists working on metal with a silver seal marked with a tiger. In 1279, by an imperial decree, he was called back to the state of a layman, he received different appointments, such as Controller of the Court of Imperial Manufacturers, etc. He enjoyed incomparable favour. After his death, he was granted posthumous titles with the name of Ming-hoei (Prompt intelligence). A-ni-ko who had married a Chinese lady left six sons, two of whom followed the calling of their father'.

Modern Art

The Pagoda style and the A-ni-ko tradition have ceased to influence Nepalese art today. They have given place to vulgar and conventional unartistic emblems. The carving in wood is a diminishing feature in Kathmandu, except in the temples which contain past creations. It is regrettable that the noblemen of Nepal do not think it desirable to preserve a faint trace of our traditional art in their stately palaces of western design: almost all the new houses in Nepal copy western models, unartistic and pretentious.

Great was the past of Nepal, magnificent its marvels. But they are gone. The decay after the sixteenth century A.D. is due to a state of political disruption and anarchy. A new valuation of the artistic and cultural aspect of life was born. The old ideal of a unified monarchy, the ideal of cohesion and concord built on conscious pantheism and toleration had died out. The rulers refused to act themselves as guardians of national culture and civilisation. Embroiled as they were in petty feuds and strifes, they lacked that broad mentality which was needed to keep up and weld together the various national forces. On the other hand, they had developed a greed which

at its worst stage had not spared the very national interest. Royal patronage to art was lacking. People lost their individuality and self-respect. Too much reliance was put on a decadent aristocratic culture. And this has swept away what our forefathers handed down to us; it has undermined the very tone of our national distinction and glory.

CHAPTER II

EARLY NEPAL

Sources

For the history of Nepal of this period we have as sources some inscriptions and foreign accounts but they exist only for the period after the third century A.D. The earlier part of the history has had to be, therefore, referred to the accounts of the chronicles called *Vamsavalis* in Nepal, of which there are altogether three in our hands including the more authoritative find of Captain Kirkpatrick. Hindu mythological works available in the plains have almost without exception left Nepal out of their elaborate discourse. Only a few of them have passing reference, but these are quite unhelpful for our purpose in as much as they relate to the very dawn of the Nepalese history, and no amount of efforts would facilitate their verification. The value of the chronicles on that account is so great that although the narrative is fantastic yet as the only available material for the period under review, they are indispensable. We shall now proceed to consider the extent to which the references in *Purana* and the *Vamsavalis* provide a source for the history of our period from 600 B.C. to 450 A.D.¹

Before considering the authenticity or otherwise of the chronicles, let us now refer to some other treatises belonging to the Indian plains as different from those traced in the Nepal valley proper. But as we have also a small Puranic literature originating in Nepal, let us, at the outset, deal with the same here. We have two principal treatises of this type apart from many others which give only brief references. These two, the *Nepal Mahatmya* and *Swayambhu Purana*, have extensively dealt with the description of the Nepal valley, but like other sources of the type they are valueless for our purpose. The dynasties of rulers they purpose to show seem as much fictitious as those of the chronicles. The earliest reference to Nepal is in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* where the author talks of a woollen Nepali blanket to have been selling in Pataliputra.² *Attharva-*

¹ Wright, *History of Nepal*. Translated from the *Vamsavali*, 1867; Captain Kirkpatrick, *Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*; Sylvain Levi, *Le Nepal*, Vols. II, III, and *Vamsavalis* in possession of some individuals in Kathmandu; Bendall's find of the chronicles in 3 parts called the *Gopala Rajvamsavali*.

² Kautilya: *Astaplauti Sanghatva Krsnabhingisi Varsabarana Mapasarka iti naipalikam* (*Arthashastra* 2 Adhikarana 11 Adhyaya 30 Prakarana).

Paristha has placed Nepal alone with Udumbara and Kamrupa (Weller, *Ind. Studien*, VIII, 413, X, 319). In the *Brihatkatha Paichasi* of Gunadya there is a line about one Raja Yasaketu who was ruling in the city of Siva in Nepaladesha (Somadeva, *Kathasartisagara*, XII, 22, V. 3; Ksemendra, *Brihat Kathamanjari*, IX, V, 728). In the sixth century A.D. Varahamihira has mentioned Nepal along with certain other hill principalities (Levi, II, p. 63). Bharata's *Natyasastra* has also a like reference (XIII, 32). The *Mulasarvastivada-vinaya* which was traced out by I-tsing in 700 A.D. gives a story about how Buddha persuaded some of his disciples not to enter Nepal, as in his conception the country was impassable, and full of ferocious tribes (Levi, II, p. 181). But all these references are as much inadequate in points of historical data as they relate to persons and places not identified, and therefore, the whole trend of findings as to the chronology and incidents is inconclusive. It may be noted here that the first reference to the country by its name in Nepalese records is³ available in an inscription of Visnugupta dated Samvat 64, where the expression used is *Nepala bhubhujo*.

The only source of information for the very early period of Nepalese history is the group of chronicles which we have already referred to in the beginning. These serve as excellent materials so far as they provide a clue, however defective, to the chronology of the period. The long list of names appearing like an unbroken chain is a very valuable contribution of the chronicles towards framing a chronology. But unfortunately these lose much of their significance in view of their undue emphasis on the numerical strength of the genealogy, which they have pushed to a limit unwarranted by facts. They suffer mainly from inaccuracy of dates and inexactitude of regnal years which have been carelessly inserted to render the whole work fantastic and consequently unreliable. The very basis of a factual chronology is undermined under a false notion that the history of a country has had to be connected with the episode of the Mahabharata, if it had to inspire faith and reverence in the readers in respect of the country's past achievement. But this gave a result which proved itself on verification basically wrong, as it involved undesirable manipulation of names and years contrary to all factual presentation. An analysis of the account of the Vamsavalis shows beyond doubt that they have allotted fictitiously long years of rule, introduced imaginary dynasties, reversed the order of succession and sacrificed contempora-

³ Gnoli : *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta characters*, LXI. p. 81.

neity of events to effect a wrongly detailed adjustment.⁴

In two places the error has been too glaringly manifest to escape our notice, which may be taken as almost a general example of chronological fantasy. Here we find that Amsuvarman who according to Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) flourished in about the time he visited India figures in the list of those who ruled the valley some seven hundred years earlier.

According to the chronicle he ascended the throne in 3100 years past Kaliyuga corresponding to 101 B.C., whereas his inscriptions have put that date in between 568-613 A.D. In the same strain all events preceding and following Amsuvarman have been wholly misplaced earlier than warranted by factual evidence, though the divergence of years seems to narrow down as the chronology approaches the thirteenth century A.D. But there too it is only a case of narrowing down and misplacement does not disappear, as in many instances contemporaneity has been sacrificed to fill the gap, and the two rulers who should have come in one place at the same time come one after the other. This method of juxtaposition and transposition has been very generally followed by the chroniclers for almost every period of the Nepalese history.

Of course, the chroniclers were hard put to it to follow such a course of action. As inadequacy in the numerical strength of the ruling dynasties would have it, they had to resort to a process of filling by imaginary dynasties, but this also not being widely possible they thought to mend matters by remoulding the entire order. So they lengthened reign periods, and the order of contemporary names was entirely recast to make them succeed one after the other. It follows that the chronicles have generally allotted sixty or seventy years to one reign, and in one particular instance, for six successors of Amsuvarman, a reign of hundred years each, an instance of exaggeration, which beat down all the cases of fantastic enumeration. In this strain even a few fictitious dynasties of rulers had to be introduced, and the most prominent example of such insertion is provided by the Ayodhya stock which is indisputedly proved to be only a product of the chronicler's imagination. Likewise the Ahirs, the successors of the Guptas, whose contemporaneity with some notable Indian Princes of the period has been incontrovertibly established by the *Manjusrimulakalpa* and local inscriptions, were put in the early years of Kaliyuga some three thousand years earlier.

⁴ Levi, II, Ch. II; IA, XIII, 412c; IA, XIV, 345 ff; Kirkpatrick, 260 ff; Hamilton, Ch. IV; Wright, Ch. I; IA, VIII, p. 89.

Notwithstanding these errors the Vamsavalis have invariably supplied names in regard to the history of the period, which had to go without them for lack of authentic materials given by the inscriptions or foreign accounts as the case may be. To this extent they have proved immensely helpful to the historian of Nepal.^{4a}

Incidentally as far as the research material available up to date is concerned, there is little glimpse into the time in question in inscriptions or available narratives. These are traced to belong to a very late period of our history to the 4th century A.D., and as such one has to depend exclusively on the chronicles for the history of the entire period previous to that century. Our conclusions, therefore, are independent of the universally acknowledged evidence of inscriptions or like data for the history of that period.

We may note here that all the Puranas except the Swayambhu which is a very recent product have maintained cryptic silence in regard to the history of Nepal.⁵ It is possible that the absence of any sort of mention in these might have been due to ignorance about the country which, because of the insurmountable barriers of the mid-Himalayan ranges, was virtually closed to outsiders for a very long time. The chronicles have tried to trace the history of Nepal to the very early years of world history, but in the absence of authentic records, the account they produce loses much of its significance as far as it remains to be corroborated by factual evidence. Yet there is no other way save to form an outline of the early history on the materials supplied by them, and we have to guard ourselves against taking very seriously the order of events they have so laboriously presented. In any case some anecdotes have come as a link between important events of proved reliability, and we have used them in probable details as we give the following narrative for the dawn of Nepalese history and culture.

The Dawn

The chronicle begins the history of the Nepal valley from the time when it was totally submerged under water. It is said in Buddhist chronicles that at the dawn of Satyayuga there was a self-grown lotus in the middle of the lake, which flowering later on transformed itself into a hillock. This was the very God appearing on earth, and the great

^{4a} The chronicles though all of them agreeing on the main point of chronological order do differ in details, but this alone does not make any difference as to their utility as historical treatises. Some of them have also pursued a particular theme in the story of a deity which differs from the one to the other.

⁵ Swayambhu Purana was written at the time of Yaksamalla (latter half of the 15th century).

Vipaswi Buddha and Viswa Buddha were attracted to the valley mainly on that score. But they could not dry the land, which was left to Manjusri Bodhisatva who cut the gorge in Chobahar, and thus dried the lake. This Boddhisatva was responsible for humanising the valley, and the first settler was the Gauda King whose descendants ruled for a long time. The chronicles assert that Nepal under these rulers had maintained occasional intercourse with India and Ceylon which helped this country to build up trade and commerce. The last descendant of the Gauda emigrant lost his possession to the King Dharamdutta of Kanchi.

The Saivite *Vamsavalis* proceed to depict another stage of the valley under water which was caused by the furious demon Devasur who was later on killed by Lord Krisna. The lake again was emptied, and human life returned with the coming of the Matatirtha dynasty of Nemi who is said to have given the name Nepala to the country. Here both the types of chronicles bring in the Ahir dynasty to succeed the Matatirtha rulers, but we shall see that the Ahir dynasty belongs to another period, some one thousand years⁶ later.

With that exception the legend has passed as a historical narrative for an account of the dawn of the Nepalese history. The part of the account where mythological figures are given prominent role may appear only a fantasy, but as genealogical research has shown, the valley of Kathmandu was at one time simply a lake. Much below the surface of the land some leaves and petals almost fossilised have been traced, which again points to the existence of a plant life before the submersion. If originally the valley was a lake the petals in the subterranean region do only indicate the valley being under water for the second time.

The Kirata Dynasty

After the Neminites, the valley came in the possession of the Kirata tribes who had invaded the country from the east. It is said that the first part of the country to come under them is the present site of Thankot. It, however, appears that the capital Matatirtha being situated in this area, Thankot was the last exploit of the Kiratas. As is natural in the case of an invasion from the east, the penetration might have begun at a point near Sanga, and ended with the westernmost point at Thankot.

The *Vamsavalis* bring in the Ahir Dynasty in between the Nemin-

⁶ The same Neminites according to Wright's authority were of the stock of Chandravansis.

ites and Kiratas, but as we have already observed, it is a wrong presentation, the Ahirs on all evidences being a group of late comers whose association with the history of Nepal begins from the late fifth century A.D.

The first date of the Kiratas must occur near about the 7th century B.C., although the chronicles put them in 3100 B.C., the initial year of the Kaliyuga.

The history of the Kirata period and for a few centuries thereafter goes so far without any inscriptions, colophones and coins and similar other reliable data. It is entirely based on chronicles. Inscriptions begin only from the middle of the fifth century A.D. Till then, the writing of history has to be done on the basis of the statements of the chronicles, we have already quoted as sources. Howsoever incomplete and inadequate and sometimes confusing as source materials for a great many centuries of history, they are unavoidable. But it must be known that we are here just treading for an unknown region with an uncertain and complicated genealogy.

The Kirata tribe occupies at present the portion of the eastern territories of Nepal, between the rivers Sunkosi and Arun. Nothing is known about these people in relation to ancient Nepal beyond the vague estimate of the Nepalese chronicles. But it has been inferred that the Kiratas spoken of by the *Vamsavalis* and legends were an offshoot of the tribe now living in that part of the country called Kiratadesa. As a section of the Newars happen to be the oldest inhabitants of the valley, their identity with the historical Kiratas as their own descendants may not appear far-fetched. Some scholars, and amongst them Hamilton, have identified Newars with the Khat Bhotiyas implying thereby the Tibetan origin of this people, but except on some common linguistic features the conclusion seems to have been too far-fetched. It will suffice to note here that the very antiquity of the Newars is a proof of identification and close affinity of the two communities and we may state with much surety that the references about Kiratas in Mahabharata (II, 1089) and Ramayana (IV, 26D) are implied for the Newars and similar set of peoples⁷ inhabiting the north-east Himalayas.

The Pre-Kirata Period

As we have observed earlier the Brahmanas and Upanisadas, and the Epics and Puranas do not throw any light on Nepal or its condition in ancient time. We have found the same attitude in the

⁷ J B R S, 1938, article by Dr. Jayaswal.

Jatakas and Nikayas and there is complete silence as to this country⁸. The Mahabharata occasionally refers to it but not under a name by which it is known today. The great Epic calls the country as Kiratadesa. But from this no idea about the location of the country can be formed. On the other hand it may give the impression that the Kiratadesa is not the valley of Kathmandu, as we have a country of that name in the extreme east of the Himalayan range.⁹ Also in the list given by the Brahmanas and Upanishads, Nepal does not find a place, as will appear below :

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Gandhara | 2. Kaikeya | 3. Madra |
| 4. Usinara | 5. Matsya | 6. Kuru |
| 7. Panchala | 8. Kashi | 9. Kosala |
| 10. Videha. | (Rai Chaudhury, p. 49). | |

The list gives a country near about Hardwar, but no territory beyond that is signified, thus the compiler is ignoring one of the most important part of the Himalayas.

From various discourses it is now gathered that after the Mahabharata War, the centre of the activity shifted from Kurudesu to Videha.¹⁰ In its palmy days the Kingdom of Nepal occupied the portion of territory between the river Gandak and river Sunkosi and its southern boundary touched the outward stretch of the Terai at the lower reaches. There is no precise evidence whether Videha included the Himalayan ridges as well.

It would appear that in the above account we have not noticed the principality of the Sakya clan with their capital of Kapilavastu with which the present Taulihawa in west Nepal terai has been identified.

Kapilavastu was tiny dependent state under the hegemony of the King of Kosala whose capital Sravasti was not very far from the border of the Sakyan country. Sakyan Kapilavastu covered an area around the capital city, a portion of which now lies within the present frontiers of Nepal on that side.¹¹

Kapilavastu had nothing to do with Nepal as it features in ancient history. It harboured a people that was definitely not of Kirata origin. The language it spoke was Pali in common with countries in North India, unlike Nepal where the people spoke a type of Indo-Mongoloid dialect.

⁸ Levi, II, pp. 175 ff.

⁹ There are two districts of the name incorporating the regions between river Tama Kosi and river Dudh Kosi.

¹⁰ Ramayana, I, 71, 3; Vayu Purana 89, 25; Gaina Uttara Adda Yaas, S. B. E., XLV, 97; Majhimanikaya, II. 74-83.

¹¹ A thick stone pillar, of the shape and size of Asokan pillars of Lumbini and Niglibaba, has been unearthed at a place called Gottihawa, about 3 miles south west of Taulihawa (ancient Kapilavastu).

Kapilavastu ceased to exist after the death of Buddha. Since his time we do not hear anything of the Sakyan principality as a separate unit.

It is difficult to say what territorial units lay in the tracts now known as the Gandak Pradesh on the side of Nepal. Was it a part of Kosala? It might as well be a part of Videha.

But it would not be entirely incorrect to attempt to establish a link between Videha and Nepal, if what we have drawn as to the identity of the Newars with the Kiratas is not incorrect, for not only the link in the time of the Lichhavis but the nearness of the valley of Kathmandu to that region might prove as well that there was, at least, a rough line of collaboration between the two countries from a very ancient time.

The Kirata Rulers

There were three main hordes of Kiratas, which invaded the valley in the course of three centuries preceding the beginning of the history of Nepal, which we have fixed at C 700 B.C., and of which the first and second definitely preceded that year and the third, the last of them, seems to have settled down during that century. The names of the Kings appearing in the *Vamsavalis*, 29 in number, which I have given herewith show a close affinity with the modern tribal appendage of the present day Kiratas, e.g. Kulung, Thulung, etc., which bears a close resemblance to Yellung forming the name of the last stock migrating into the valley of Kathmandu. It may also be noted here that the Newari name for Patan, Yellai, is no doubt a changed form of Yellung and implies the earliest association of that town with the Newars who were most probably the Yellung Kiratas themselves.

The time assigned to the twenty-nine rulers by the *Vamsavalis* which amounts to 1118 years seems, however, a gross exaggeration (according to Levi 1178 and 1581 according to Kirkpatrick) as has been already hinted as also the attempt to place them in 1739 B.C. This of all the exaggerated estimates is yet the least corroborated item and to the contrary has been disproved with reference to the time of Gautama Buddha (600 B.C.). Taking the dynasty as one with a regular and unbroken period of reign and ascertaining the total at the average rate of 25 years for each reign we have 25×29 equal to 725 years. On the basis of the date of Asoka's visit, which we may put roughly in the year 240 B.C.¹² and which according to the chronicles

¹² About Asoka's entry in the valley, the Rock Edict No. 13 does not mention Nepal in the list of the countries visited by him (Smith, E. H., pp. 365-66); but the pillars and Stupas in Nepal point out that he visited the valley (JBORS, *ibid.*,

was also the year of Sthumko, the fourteenth of the Kirata line, we may take the early 6th century B.C. as the initial period of the Kirata rule. It, however, does not seem proper to include the two names omitted by Kirkpatrick for although there was a Kirata revival during the last reign of the first Lichhavi dynasty, it is not at all certain that the revival was affected by the Yellung Kiratas. It is possible that the revival in question signified a series of raids carried out by a ferocious tribe rather than any event of historical importance.

The following is the list of names according to the *Vamsavalis* :

WRIGHT	KIRKPATRICK	LEVI	ITIHAS PRAKAS ¹³
1. Yalambara	Yellung	Yalamba	Yalambhang
2. Pavi		Pambi	Yauchihang
3. Skandhara	Dush Khan	Dhaskan	Skandhahang
4. Valamba	Ballancha	Valamba	Balambhang
5. Hriti	Kingly	Hritti	Hritihang
6. Humati	Hunanter	Humati	Humatihang
7. Jitadesi	Tuskah	Galimja	Jitadastihang
8. Galimja	Sroopust	Jitadesi	Galinjhang
9. Puska	Gitadestry	Tuska (Puska, Indraji)	Kuskahang
10. Suyarma	Punchem	Suyarna	Suyaswahang
11. Pava	Kingking King	Parba	Parbahang
12. Bunka	Soonand	Pancha (Thouka)	Panchhang
13. Swananda	Thomoo	Kemke (KPJ, 12)	Kikehang Thaukohang
14. Sthunka	Jaghru		
15. Gighri	Janreo	Thumko	Gidbrihang
16. Nane	Suenkeh	Nane	Nanyahang
17. Luk	Thoor	Luk	Lukehang
18. Thora	Thamoo	Thora	Thorhang
19. Thoko	Burmah	Varma	Thokohang
20. Varma	Gunja		Brahmahang
21. Guja	Kuskkoon	Puniska	Gunjahang
22. Puskara or Puska ¹⁴	Teeshoo	Gumja	Puskahang
23. Kesu	Sooghree		Kesuhang
24. Suja	Joosha	Sunsa Sunga	Sungahang
25. Sansa	Gontho	Sammu, Samsu	Sansahang
26. Gunam	Khemboo	Gunam, Gunja	Ganjahang

p. 260). Monahan disbelieves the annal altogether. (*Early History of Bengal*, p. 221). He might have or might not have visited the valley. The chain of pillars and stupas northwards from Pataliputra connecting the foot of the Himalayas, is not a clear proof of his visit, but shows at least the direction his message had travelled. And if the stupas in the valley which on all evidences happen to be associated with Asoka were to come as a determinant, we shall not be wrong to establish the fact of his visit.

¹³ From a chronicle lying in Mrigasthali, *Itihas Prakash*, I, 133.

¹⁴ Dr. Jayaswal believes that Sungas also exercised sovereignty over Nepal (p. 261). He does so on the basis of silver coins dug out from Western Nepal (Almora Coins, JBORS, XX, p. 301). The Sungas might have exercised their Sovereignty during the reign of Puska.

WRIGHT	KIRKPATRICK	LEVI	<i>ITIHAS PRAKAS</i>
27. Khimbu	Gully Jung	Simbu	Swanandhang
28. Patuka			Pimbuhang
29. Gasti ¹⁵			Gastihang

An attempt is being made to identify certain images as belonging to the Kirata age of our history. By this, they want to establish the fact of Kirata rule in the Valley of Nepal.

A legend of the modern Kiratas tries to connect the history of their early rule over the valley with the population in the areas at the middle reaches of the Bramhaputra and its westerly tributaries in Assam, which had another settlement of the Kiratas in antiquity. The entire expanse of territory from the Bramhaputra to the Gandak was populated by the Kiratas who had ousted the aborigines.

Whatever that be, this much is certain that the early history of Nepal was associated intimately with the Indo-Mongoloid people.

The possibility of a horde of Kirata invaders making their way to the Nepal valley through the course of the Bagmati appears very near to facts.

It was not merely an attack by a few warriors who had successfully beat down local resistance. The fact that the Kiratas had dominated even culturally by way of introducing their linguistic hegemony shows that something wide and comprehensive had come to affect the texture of social life in the valley of Nepal.

Surely it must have been a tribal expansion that swamped our country at the time. Not only the ruling tribal heads, but also their warriors, peasants and artisans might have constituted the hordes of emigrants. In the valley of Nepal the new entrants had accosted a people of mixed Austroid and Dravida blood, who had their own type of primitive culture.

We have no idea of their life and society. But the Newari language and culture shows certain features that are distinctly pre-Mongoloid. The Kirata emigrant certainly overwhelmed them, but the lower strata of them had also been in turn submerged with the toiling humanity of the land.

If the identification of the Newars with the oldest emigrants, the Kiratas of the legend, is correct, then in that case the Kirata rule may pass for a real self rule of the indigenous people. But this will be to stretch the imagination too far. The Kirata tribe on the understanding that it is the same as a section of the Newars was the ancestor of all those residents in the valley who betray Indo-Mongoloid features. But they

¹⁵ Levi, II, Pp. 78-79, Jayaswal, JBORS, XXII, Part III, Pp. 260-61. Wright, p. 100, Kirkpatrick, p. 259; IA, XIII, P. 412.

do not form a majority in that region, and any variation can safely be attributed to the non-Mongoloid emigrants from the Indian plains. As a minority the Indo-Aryan stocks might not have entered the valley in hordes, but a few families of conquerors seem to be the inevitable choice, who might have lived in regular state of inter-marriage with the vanquished. The original settlers, like the Austroids and Dravidians formed the bulk of the populace, to which the mixed Kirata section was added. We find therefore, little truth in the statement that the valley of Nepal had ceased to enjoy self rule as soon as the Kiratas disappeared from the scene as rulers. Even otherwise this is not wholly true, for all the rulers from the earliest time to the present day, though nevertheless emigrants from the plains, had completely identified themselves with the ruled. The legend speaks all of them as Newar rulers, and the popular belief handed to the present generation does not confirm otherwise. Accidentally the ruling families since the Kiratas had been those who had claimed Indian caste of Ksatriya without exception.

The Lichhavi Dynasty

The chronicles do not mention the Lichhavi dynasty as to have belonged to the Nepalese throne. They note the dynasties of the Moon and the Sun known as Chandravanshis and Suryavanshis. But only one authority, the Gopala Raja Vansavali has noted the Lichhavi dynasty of the solar race to have entered Nepal after conquering the Kiratas (f. 19 b). The chroniclers provide genealogy of the rulers coming one after the other. These are so confusing that no one stock is distinctly identified. Each contains an interfusion on that score and this is all the more galling. The very early dynasty is linked with the recent one, and blood relationship is established between those who do not share anything common excepting the throne they occupied. Out of so many chronicles only one authority, that of Kirkpatrick, has given a list which approximates the probable numerical strength of the royal genealogical order, but even that suffers from numerous irregularities, and cannot be accepted without amendment. But we have, absolutely no use of the chronicles at this stage of the Nepalese history except that the list of Suryavanshis may be passed for the Lichhavis who ruled Nepal for about eight hundred years with short breaks at regular intervals.

According to the inscriptions and a few reliable authorities like *Manjusri Mulakalpataru* and *Sumatitantra* it is now unanimously ascertained that the period of Nepalese history from the early years of the Christian era down to the end of the eighth century was the Lichhavi period, and there is no reason to accept the classification of the chronicles

which omits the Lichhavis altogether.

Except Kirkpatrick's authority all other chronicles give a dynasty naming it Somavansis as successors of Kiratas, which includes Bhaskarvarman and his predecessors. Bhumivarman is given a new dynasty to begin with, which they designate as the Sooryavansis. This classification as already referred to is inadmissible, as according to other data we have a continuity of a single regnal dynasty in this period. Kirkpatrick's authority, however, puts the lists together, and is more reliable.

Kuveravarman	Kakavarman	Pusparekha
Bhaskaravarman	Chandravarman	Bhumivarman

Jayavarman is given as a successor of Chandravarman but the Inscription no I. places him at the initial stage of Lichhavi rule, if he is identified with Jayadeva I; so we have again the same confusing items of statement.

Here the main problem is to present an arrangement fixing regnal data for the names mentioned in the chronology. In the next instalment we will deal with all the debatable points and try to ascertain factual dates for these in relation to more reliable records other than the chronicles available to us.

The period beginning after the fall of the Kiratas to the accession of the Lichhavis whose identity has been proved with reference to the inscriptions (1 & 15)¹⁶ is being called the dark period of the Nepalese history (Jayaswal, p. 261). Indeed as far as reliable data are concerned, this particular period is conspicuous by their absence. But so far no attempt has been made to improve on the usually vague interpretation of the epoch-year of the era of the earlier inscriptions. Our historians with the exception of Levi have all fixed the epoch-year at some period after the second century A.D., which complicated the whole situation by creating a gap in the royal chronology for that period. We are not entering into the merits or justifiability of these opinions at this stage; this we have reserved for a subsequent discussion, but there is no doubt that on the epoch-year being pushed earlier to somewhere in the early first century A.D., the gap is readily filled up. The chronicles come to our rescue in regard to this particular information as they not only supply a list of names in adequate numerical strength, but also delineate events which indirectly explain the cause of the silence of the above inscriptions about them. It is quite possible that the author of the inscriptions thought it improper to mention names which did not

¹⁶ Dr. Indrajī probably ascribes the style to the Guptan period, or to the one just after, when comparing it with the Mathura and Bhilsa lingas. The shrine of Pasupati came under the Saivas since that time (166).

belong to an independent period of Nepalese history. According to the chronicles, the kings lost independence from the initial period of their occupation on account of Indian invasions which probably meant Kushan encroachment. As the coinage of the period which has a great resemblance to the Yuluchi coinage shows, the influence exerted from India was not insignificant. On this understanding the so-called dark age will give continuity to the history and chronology of ancient Nepal.

The actual point in discussion, however, is the very basis fixing a datum as to the various names from the end of the Kushan rule down to Vrsadeva whose reign we have pushed to 350 A.D. or so, following the observation of the inscriptions. It appears by an average calculation of the regnal periods of the fifteen kings after Asoka that the Kirata rulers were no longer ruling in the valley during and after the fifties of the first century A.D. The calculation has proceeded under the assumption that the average reign of each is 20 years, and that Asoka had visited the valley in the year 240 B.C. From 50 A.D. to 350 A.D. i.e., for a period of three hundred years, Nepal seems to have lost its independent status under regular domination from Pataliputra except for a brief interval at the very initial period under Jayadeva I, which explains the omission of many names from the list of the inscriptions. The Lichhavis had probably migrated into the valley during the early years of Kushan rule out of fear of invasion, and had found easy shelter there on account of the withdrawal of the Sungas who had to give in to the Kushans. But they were pursued even in the fastness of the sub-Himalayan region, and consequently they had to surrender the valley as well. It is possible that the remaining portion of the Lichhavis in Vaisali were wiped out or migrated elsewhere alongside. As coins in the name of Kadphises I and II, which were dug out in the valley support the conjecture, it is much probable that these two Kushan Emperors had Nepal under their control.¹⁷ The Kushan Kings had their capital at Sarnath, while they had established a viceroyalty in North Bihar, and the nearness of the valley of Nepal to North Bihar was what probably brought the country under Kushan domination at their time.

After the Kushans came the Satabahanas in the domain of Pataliputra. But while Kushan coins were dug out in the valley, for the Satabahana influence there is no trace of evidence so that their rule in the valley seems an improbability and this was perhaps because they controlled Magadha only for a short time (Jayaswal, *History*, 150-350

¹⁷ Walsh, *JRAS*, 1908, p. 677; V. Smith, *Catalogue of Indian coins*, p. 179; Rapson, *Indian coins*, pp. 10, 32 (*I.A.Ph.* and after *Tunuskunda*); Cunningham, *CAI*, p. 12.

A.D., p. 113). Similarly the probability of Yaudheya rule seems remote on account of the distance intervening between the two countries.

We have a piece of evidence for the history of this period from a book called *Sumatitantra* which will be referred to in another connection. The evidence it notes appears to relate to the main current of Indian history, but as *Manadeva* is put in that list as to have followed the predecessors, amongst whom the chronicle mentions *Nandas* and *Mauryas*, the inference that certain rulers in *Pataliputra* were recognised as overlords in the valley may not be entirely inadmissible and to this *Asoka's* entry into the valley and the existence of *Kushan* coins therein may lend some colour.

The *Bakataka* kings who destroyed the *Kushan* rule seem to have wielded a good deal of influence in the valley. It was not, however, in the field of politics or by way of aggrandizement that the influence was made felt. The penetration rather came through cultural contact with *Pataliputra* where the *Bakatakas* had shifted in that century. The valley of *Nepal* in those days, as naturally under the non-Brahmanic *Kiratas* and *Lichhavis* and under the *Kushans* who seem to have propagated ritualistic Buddhism with wonderful figures, in wood carvings and sculptures, obeyed the tenets of Buddhist religion. But as soon as the *Bharasivas* and *Bakatakas* ousted the *Kushans*, there was an all round revival of *Saivite* faith. *Nepal* did not stand isolated from the touch of this revival. Perhaps the revival of the cult of *Pasupati* under *Pasuparekhadeva* was the symbolic expression of that religious regeneration. According to the legend, the sanctuary of *Pasupatinath* was at one time controlled by the Buddhists and the image then set up was a *Bodhisatva*. But after the *Lichhavis* were converted into *Saivite* worship possibly during this reign, the cult of *Bodhisatva* as the state patronised religion disappeared from the court, though the general population by a huge majority had still adhered to the old system. Apart from the cult of *Siva*, the influence of art and sculpture was also very striking. The image of *Pasupati* has a close resemblance to its prototype *Mukhalinga* of that age in *Nachna* (Pl. I, x and xi, *JBORS*, 1933, p. 218). The four faces of the *Linga* are ingrafted on a hard stone appearing as jutting forth from the surface though very imperceptibly and with the hands shown with *Rudraksa* beads, which is quite in tune with the facial projecture. The image forms on the whole a beautiful masterpiece of the early third century sculpture (*K.P.J.*, *ibid*, Pp. 161-62; *IA*, XIII, p. 113).¹⁸

¹⁸ The original *Linga* now lies amidst ruins of a temple near the Sanctuary in front of the Western gate.

In Nepal there is a dearth of ancient monuments dating as far back as the period in review, most of them having been demolished in course of centuries; but the phallus image of Pasupatinath has an importance of its own to have outlived those ruinous ages and if properly interpreted may shed some lustre on the contemporary history of that period. The Anka coins of Manadeva and Gunakamadeva have also resemblance with the Vikramanka coins of Chandra Gupta II.¹⁹

One such historical association which the image maintains has rendered it easier to correct the genealogical chart of the chronicles as it stands there. If Pasuparekha, the founder of the Pasupati temple, be identified as belonging to the Bakataka period, a large part of the blank page of the Nepalese history can thus be filled up. In this case Jayavarman, as hinted, should be transferred to the very earliest place at the head of the dynasty. Jayadeva I is identified with him and as such he must be given as near a place to Nimisha, the founder of the dynasty in Nepal, probably intended for Jayadeva himself who was the first Lichhavi. It should be borne in mind that Nimisha is a corrupt form of Lichhavi (Nichhivi, Nimishi) which is supported by Kirkpatrick's authority (page 260) in calling the dynasty "Nivesit".²⁰ Nimisha comes some twenty generations before Vrsadeva and on the allotment of 15 or 16 years for each generation, his date coincides with that of Jayadeva I, rendering identification almost factual.²¹ Now from the evidence of the Bakataka images, the same conclusion can be arrived at. Pasuparekha occurs in the fourth generation and taking some fifty years at the interval between Jayadeva I and the Kirata revival he can be placed without doubt in the beginning of the third century A.D. His father Kuveravarman might have seized the domain after the Kushan withdrawal.²²

The five or six names belonging to the first branch of the Lichhavi dynasty must thus precede the date of Vrsadeva of the second list so that the whole may textually agree with the numerical strength of the entire list. The names previous to Kakavarman should come from the front portion of the second list and placed earlier to Vrsadeva.

After the end of Kushan rule, India was overrun by a new wave of religious and cultural awakening amongst the people, which was further pushed and extended with unwavering zeal by the Saiva Guptas who had now freed the court from its age long attachment to Buddhism.

¹⁹ CIM, p. 281, Levi II, p. 108.

²⁰ JBORS, OP. Cit, p. 258.

²¹ Wright, pp. 113 ff.

²² The list contains, besides Kuveravarman, persons like Kakavarman, Pushavarman, Bhaskarvarman and Jayavarman.

But Nepal had so far remained aloof from the major current of revivalist forces working in the plains, and here unlike in India the court was the first to be affected by these changes. The result was that Buddhism never ceased to influence Nepalese social life, even at its worst, and with the Saivite revival it worked out a novel form of union between the two faiths. Nepal had thus shaken off sectarianism from the very early period of its history and could develop a distinct mode of worship peculiar to itself.

How the court was metamorphosed under Saivite influence is shown by a legend of Sankaracharya which wrongly brings the southerner to indicate the revival at the time of King Sankaradeva, the son of Vrsadeva (IA, XIII, p. 95 ff), who was earlier a confirmed Buddhist and whose emblem as such in his dedication of a trident at the altar of Pasupati stands till today so prominent but in the form of a Saivite metamorphosis. Till the time of Pasupadeva, Buddhism had not ceased to be popular in the court, as individual Kings extended their support and patronage to it alongside Hindu revivalist culture. But this flourishing of two modes of worship side by side paved the way for interfusion between the two, and we find that the spirit of isolationism so long attached to Buddhism in the valley now evaporated. The culture, and the belief thus emerging were supported by a state of amity and concord amongst the followers of both sects, who completely subscribed to this unified cult of worship. Since then the feud once so common in the camps died a natural death, and the valley of Kathmandu was purged of the evils of sectarianism. This was, however, not a product of this particular age. The process of amalgamation which had started since the days of Asoka had only reached a happy culmination at that period. At the interval it was nurtured and nursed by other teachers, and it ended in a happy synthesis in the revivalist age. But unlike the past it was, now, not a partial amalgamation. While the court alone in the earlier age happened to be influenced by Saivite cult the people remaining aloof from the main current of earlier renaissance, this time the revival affected the whole populace, and the animist mass of the people with the Buddhist middle layer, underwent a rejuvenation through the interfusion of the two modes of worship. The present day blend of Saivite and Buddhist cultures originates from the Gupta Revivalist movement.

That the people unhesitatingly adopted the common culture at that time is obvious from various inscriptions where Sivamargi Kings have tendered their homage to Buddha and other Mahayanist deities and *vice versa*, which shows the harmonious relation between the followers

of the two sects. It may be added here that the other vehicle of Buddhist worship, the Hinayana, was equally respected till the seventh century A.D.

The Gupta renaissance in India was preceded by a very glorious period of events and achievements in Nepal, which was responsible for giving a lift to the Guptas later on in the Indian history (JRAS, 1881, p. 55). The person who shone as the Sun of this glory was no other than Bhaskaravarman, the head of the then existing Lichhavi state to whom the chronicles have attributed the conquest of the whole of Northern India. We may not accept the validity of the estimate which seems much exaggerated in its application to that extent, but there seems little doubt that at the height of his power he was little less than the head of a state comprising at least a considerable portion of Northern India extending from Saketa to Pundravardhana. That the Lichhavis were one of the most important ruling dynasties of India at that time is well evidenced by the coins of Chandra Gupta I,²³ the reverse of which shows in clear letters the legend *Lichhaviyah* as possibly expressive of the King's acknowledgement of that position and of the fact of his having come to the power through their help. It is now generally admitted that Chandra Gupta I and his son Samudra Gupta could consolidate their positions in Magadha mainly on account of the strong support they received from their relatives, the Lichhavis. At the time he succeeded to the throne of his father Samudra Gupta could not claim more than what then comprised Magadha and Saketa, the latter known at present as Ayodhya, and according to *Kaumudi Mahotsav* if Chandrasena is to be identified with his father, he obtained Saketa from his maternal grandfather.

Now if one could establish that the same Lichhavis happened to be the ruling dynasty in Nepal, the problem of Bhaskarvarman's identification would be solved for we have on the basis of Samudra Gupta's Saketa acquisition that the territorial expansion of the Lichhavis was as wide as to cover a big kingdom in North India. For this we shall have to find out if a separate kingdom of the Lichhavis existed at Vaisali, which, however, seems quite improbable in view of the silence of Gupta records about that region altogether. The conclusion, therefore, is obviously to take the rule of Lichhavis in Nepal, and its continuity during the whole of Gupta period as a fact, and even if the later Guptas happened to encroach on the territories of their Lichhavi rela-

²³ Jayaswal, op. cit., p. 259. *The Gupta Empire* by Radhakumud Mukherji, pp. 32-33. The obverse of the same coin has Sri Kumaradevi along with the name of Chandra Gupta.

tions, we can believe Samudra Gupta to have upheld their prestige and power over a large part of the areas which comprised their empire. Vaisali in all probability formed a part of Nepal till the death of Samudra Gupta.

As the absence of any reference to Vaisali in the inscriptions of Samudra Gupta leads us to imagine, the grandson of the Lichhavi emperor might have acted with solicitude of one to whom the very idea of pushing his frontier on that side was unpalatable. He could not, of course, finish those who had helped him to the kingship of Magadha. There was such a thing as gratitude. It is quite possible that he left Nepal in control of Vaisali with exactly the same status as enjoyed by the Bakatakas under his son. According to Harisena's estimate (Allahabad Pillar inscription) Nepal was one of the independent states on the Gupta Empire's northern border and this country along with the other two constituting the frontier kingdoms paid tributes and attended the imperial durbars to tender homage to him in person.

We, however, look in vain for Vaisali to continue in that state in the next reign. Vaisali not only does not occur in the list of kingdoms, frontier or Vassal, but the whole region wherein it was situated is indicated to have come under the rule of Chandra Gupta II who had absorbed it in the viceroyalty of North Bihar. In Samudra Gupta's pillar inscription, on the other hand, Nepal has received a reference as a frontier kingdom, and this coupled with the complete absence of evidence as to his conquest of Vaisali may be taken to mean that as long as Samudra Gupta was in power the empire of the Nepal Lichhavis did not undergo any diminution of territories. It is possible that Vaisali was lost to the Guptas in the next reign.

Chandra Gupta I's contemporary was Bhumivarman, and his son's probably, Vrsadeva. The exact date of the introduction of Gupta supremacy over the Lichhavis cannot be ascertained, but it seems that the latter had acknowledged the overlordship of the Guptas sometime during the reign of Chandra Gupta II. The chronicle asserts that the Guptas had extended their influence in the valley before the ascendancy of Vasantadeva. We have, however, neither the evidence of local inscriptions nor of any parallel records relating to Guptas to prove their domination of the valley except that a section of the Guptas are shown by the *Vamsavalis* to have been ruling in Nepal during the next two centuries, which the MMK also confirms. But the cultural influence of the Guptas had penetrated earlier, which seems to have been cast indelibly on the then prevailing mode of art and architecture. The pillar and Garuda image of Changunarayan which belong to this period are living

examples of those cultural inroads, of which every sculpture and carved relief tells a Gupta story.

In political ideology the Gupta period produced a profound change. It introduced the system of monarchy in the country and amongst the people who had so long resisted the monarchical institution (*Hindu Polity*, I, p. 59). It must be noted here that the Lichhavis had been from the very beginning a republican community, a characteristic which they did not relinquish even after migrating wholesale to Nepal. Manadeva I was the first monarch under the new constitution and as such he naturally adopted royal titles and issued coins in his name. That he took a very modest beginning in deference to the long standing tradition of his people is illustrated in the way he addressed himself. The more grandiloquent forms of addresses had not yet been deemed as proper epithets for the ruler of the country and *Nripati*, a word, which as Jayswal says conveys a lesser dignity, was still in vogue. Only at the time of Vasantadeva, his grandson, the pompous titles appear to be in use, probably significant of the growing ideal of absolute kingship adopted in his time when the libera constitution had already received the death warrant. But towards the end of his reign Manadeva himself adopted the title of Maharaja, and this shows that the process had started earlier.

From the time the impact of Gupta cultural influence was felt in Kathmandu, the oldest structure of tribal democracy collapsed, but not to the extent to have been completely put out of work, as monarchs had not yet ceased to respect popular feeling even in their most absolutist days. It might be that the new feature introduced under the influence of Gupta ideology tended to resemble despotism with the most concentrated power in a single individual, but there was always uppermost the thought of promoting the popular well-being in the minds of the rulers, and dread of the past tradition which certainly limited that absolutism, although obedience to precepts of benevolence was voluntary rather than ordained by any sort of democratic and legal usage. To the credit of the despots of those days we have it that they had even restored fallen republics and respected the decision of the local assembles as the Guptas did in case of the Malwa principalities.

Examples of how the local assemblies were not ignored by the Nepalese autocrats are provided by very many references to decrees in the names of kings who had strictly prohibited official encroachment on the jurisdiction of such assemblies. It appears from these that the head of the village was always consulted on matters affecting the well-being of the inhabitants, and the village assembly was addressed in very respectable terms (*Sanga, Levi*, III, p. 100). This term amply

shows the difference with which the ruler considered the privileges attached to liberal institutions. The king, however, was absolute in his sphere of action and responsibility, could even supersede the assemblies and legally constitute criminal and civil courts, and ask for gratuitous service compulsorily on occasions he chose—those definite limitations on individual liberty, which happened to be the contributions of the Gupta system of absolutism.

The so-called Lichhavi Character of the Nepal Constitution

Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, the eminent author of *Hindu Polity*, has more than once referred to the Lichhavi constitution as the origin of the Nepalese Government in general, and of the present structure of administration of this country in particular. He is of the opinion that the form of Dwairajya, by which he meant the existence of the two executive heads corresponding to the Lichhavi Raja and Uparaja is peculiarly fitted so as to conform to the social texture of a country with juristic notion of the Mitaksara family.²⁴ But it is difficult to conceive as to how the particular ideas affecting the joint family system and its harmonious adjustment can have a bearing on the character of Government and that least of all of a Lichhavi type. The Dwairajya implies either a division of territory with separate administrative machineries, which may be friendly or inimical or a division of functions in the same government without equality of power but with a nominal identity of status as was the case in Nepal in the time of the Thakuris of the later period. Ordinarily as the principle of the joint family system would decree the Dwairajya may convey the idea of an undivided holding of powers of government by the members in equal position, but in all cases the results had been either a joint regency without sovereignty or alternate sharing of power, two common characteristics of the position obtaining during the same period of Nepalese history. The form of government then or even thereafter had no resemblance with the Lichhavi constitution which had definitely a republican background having an elected head, and elected executive council. The Raja and Uparaja enjoyed power by the willing consent of the people who under the system are taken as the ultimate sovereign. But the position is entirely reverse in any other case where regency or joint holding of kingship by one or more persons prevails. Here the people are the dumb spectators having only one choice before them that of tamely submitting to the pretensions of divinity to which the rulers lay

²⁴ *Hindu Polity*, P. 86 (Second edition); *History and chronology of Nepal* in JBORS (1936).

claim by virtue of their illustrious birth. Amsuvarman or any other person in his capacity would not easily allow himself to be subjected to the caprices of popular vote, as his ascendancy had never been a matter of public choice.

We do not know how Jayaswal mistook the administrative structure of Nepal obtaining in the time of The Rana Prime Ministers to be a peculiar development of the Lichhavi constitution merely on the basis of the double kingship prevalent as a common feature of both. In fact the experiment in this direction was not confined to a single system, but covered many such as suited the temperament and genius of the age. Nor the various stages of political progress and the different phases of structural development were exclusively Nepalese peculiar to this country. We have found that even the then government machinery had nothing exceptional to call it a Nepalese mould. The position of the king may look somewhat anomalous, but as he had been virtually overshadowed by the Prime Minister, the anomaly dissolves itself; on the other hand as far as the relationship with the British Government is concerned, the latter had acted like an Indian Prince with the British title of 'His Highness' so that his loyalty to the British was the more pronounced. There was no sharing of power whatsoever with the figurehead on the throne. Likewise, the Maharaja Premier had come to assume gradually the same dignity and royalty as by the king himself. If it were not, therefore, for the nominal allegiance which he paid to the throne, the Premier would have singly passed as the real sovereign of the country.

There is no similarity between the *Dwairajya* type of government as thus conceived and a democratic Lichhavi constitution and also between the form and spirit of the working of the two.

The Nepalese idea of kingship as we have noted is Gupta in origin though it would be a mistake to suppose that the development in later times travelled in the line of Gupta ideology. The political constitution depended on traditional conception only to a certain extent and is mainly subjected to the ideas of times to a great extent, according to which it is finally shaped. The constitutional development in Nepal similarly followed that course. Admittedly it has never embodied any single force. The dictatorship of Amsuvarman and the regency in the time of the Mallas were only respective products of their times. Nothing was common between these two governments and between them and the Lichhavi government. While in one the dictator was supreme and assumed the royal position later, in the other the regents were real rulers behind the puppets although for a

long time the function and power of the executive were all along being centered on a single authority. It was in both a case of complete eclipse of a less effective figure by a great and powerful figure, wherein no feasibility of identical power was conceived. There is absolutely no ground to compare them with the Lichhavi executive heads.

The worst part of Jayaswal's thesis has appeared with regard to the comparison he institutes between the Rana family dominated political structure of Nepal and the ancient Lichhavi Republic. All admit that there is no trace of the working of any republican constitution in this country since the tribals ceased to function as rulers with their own type of democracy. The fact that the Lichhavis had abandoned politics as a result of Gupta ideological influence explains the growth of absolutism in the country hitherto liberal in the main structure. The Rana family dominated Government of Nepal was as absolute as any feudal dictatorship and claimed the power on the basis of hereditary rights as well as offices and functions thereof. The government apparently consisted of two heads no doubt and perhaps this led Dr. Jayaswal to build his thesis, but we must know that of the two sovereigns one is as emasculated in power as the other is the real man to wield it. And there is no basis of a theory to identify them as to real position, if we take into consideration the actuality of situation. In the political structure that functioned the Maharajadhiraja is only a figurehead having not even formal courtesy functions, worse than the Maratha King in the Peshwait period. The real ruler is the Maharaja who apparently passes as the Premier, but combines in himself all the duties of a premier de jure and the king de facto. As he holds his power by virtue of hereditary rights, the mass of the people had looked upon him as their sovereign in the same way as they looked to the other head.

Genealogy and Chronology

We have said above that Vrsadeva was a contemporary of Samudra Gupta. About this Vrsadeva, however, we have a record supplied by one inscription of Manadeva, which gives a genealogy commencing with his name. There is yet another inscription, that of Jayadeva II, which gives the same list with the addition of three more names including that of Manadeva, the author of the earlier inscription. As Manadeva figures in both in similar order of chronology there is not the least doubt that the reference is to one and the same person, and according to the same he is the son and successor of Dharmadeva and an ancestor of Jayadeva II. The date of Manadeva of Ins. No. 1 and No. 15 is a very important topic of ascertainment, and any conclu-

sion arrived at in this connection will be a determining factor for all other successive events and chronology. In the following pages we have attempted to discuss the point in detail with reference to all relevant data available.

Before proceeding to consider the data of the inscriptions, let us deal with the genealogy of the chronicles for this period. In the list which follows we find that this part of the chronology is divided between two dynasties, the one a continuation of the early Sooryavansis, and the other entirely a new line of Kings called the Thakuris. The latter is headed by Amsuvarman whose regnal date has been indubitably ascertained with reference to Yuan Chwang's observation. As Amsuvarman's reign finds an elaborate discourse in the new chapter, we will devote the next article to the Suryabansis.

The Suryavansis²⁵ are listed as follows by Kirkpatrick and Wright :

KIRKPATRICK.	WRIGHT.
(a) 1. Chandravarman	Bhumivarman
2. Jayavarman	as in K.
3. Brishvarman	Chandravarma
4. Sarvavarman	Varshvarma
5. Puthivarman	as in K.
6. Jeestvarman	as in K.
7. Kubervarman ²⁶	as in K.
8. Harivarman	Harivarma
9. Siddhivarman ²⁷	Kuveravarma
10. Basudutta or Basudevavarman	as in K.
11. Shripatty or Pativarman	as in K.
12. Shivabridhivarman ²⁸	as in K.

After the 12 earlier names are given, the successors whose names are in the chronology stand in the following manner in the order of suc-

²⁵ Kirkpatrick, P. 260. Wright, Pp, 113-16. His list is most confusing. Kirkpatrick's authority is more or less a reliable one with one correction. Jayaswal, Pp. 196 ff; Levi, II. P. 92; Bhagwanlal, IA, XIII, 413.

²⁶ He belongs to the list of Prabhakaravarman given earlier.

²⁷ He has been identified with Sivadeva I, who is wrongly mentioned immediately after and Vasantadeva is wrongly repeated.

²⁸ This list leaves out Haradatta to whom the four Narayan temples and Budha Nilkantha are attributed by other chronicles (Wright p. 313).

cession (also Levi. II, Pp. 92-93) :

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|--|
| (b) | 1. Brishadeva | Brishadevavarman, Levi has |
| | 2. Sankaradeva | Shankaradeva, Dharmodeva
(Varman affix is dropped). |
| | 3. Dharamdeva | Manadeva |
| | 4. Manadeva | |
| | 5. Basantdevo | Vasantdevo Varma |

This part of the list does not find a separate place in Wright (p. 313). Vasantadeva, Sivadeva and Rudradeva follow immediately after Sivabridhi according to the same authority.

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|
| (c) | 7. Udyadeva | Udyadeva Varma |
| | 8. Manadeva | Manadeva Varma |
| | 9. Gunakamadeva | Gunakamadeva Varma |
| | 10. Sivadeva Varman | Sivadeva Varma |
| | 11. Narendradeva Varman ²⁰ | Narendradeva Varma |
| | 12. Bhimadeva Varman | These three names are omitted |
| | 13. Visnudeva Varman | by Levi, and he identified Gu- |
| | 14. Viswadeva Varman | nakamadeva with Ganadeva of
the inscriptions. |

Wright also puts the names of 7 to 14 of the above as predecessors of Amsuvarman but with him, the author begins a new dynasty of the Thakuris. Amsuvarman was the son-in-law of No. 13 above, who was identified with Sivadeva.

While considering the names in the above list we have to be careful to avoid confusion as regards the amalgamation of the diverse families of rulers, which the chronicler has not thought fit to classify separately.

This long list in the genealogy supplied by the chronicles suffers from many inaccuracies of names and of the order of succession. For a correct chronology we will have to recast the whole list in accordance with the more reliable estimate of inscriptions and like records, which we have done in the following pages.

As the list (a) is for the period already dealt with we proceed to consider the (b) and (c) lists which give names for the period between the Gupta age and the accession of Amsuvarman two centuries later.

The list (c) is very much confusing, apart from the fact that the list preceding has again been misplaced as to occur just before Udayadeva. We have repetitions of names like Manadeva and

²⁰ Levi thought that nos. 11 and 12 above did not rule at all, and that their names were preserved just to maintain a link in the order with the future kings.

Sivadeva, and the order of succession in these as verified by other data appears to have no relation with facts. At the very outset we face the problem of identification of the names repeated and to determine whether they stand for one person or several. Jayaswal has identified Sivabridhivarman of the list (a) with Sivadeva I of inscriptions, a contemporary of Amsuvarman whose date is a matter of certainty in view of Yuan Chwang's observation. Manadeva in another list who is to be regarded as a predecessor of Sivadeva, is the first Nepalese King of that name according to the same author, and he has also accepted the existence of two more persons bearing the same name. But as many other points are still not cleared off Jayaswal's finding is not wholly conclusive. Let us take the question of Manadeva's identification. We have two rulers of that name as also accepted by Jayaswal. The one who is referred to in a copy of the *Sumatitantra* in possession of the Rajguru of Nepal has an ascertained regnal date in his favour, thus rendering identification almost factual.³⁰ Unlike the copy in the British Museum, the Rajguru's unpublished work notes Manadeva's reign in the year 498 Saka, which has again been connected with the Nepal era by an anotator to fix it in the year 304. The Saka 498 is 576 A.D., which corresponds to the same year exactly in terms of the Nepal era 880-304, that is 576 A.D. It was said that this is really a new discovery on one of the much debatable part of ancient Nepalese chronology. But can it be a fact that the Manadeva of *Sumatitantra* is the first ruler of that name in the Nepalese history? It was said that the identification of another Manadeva, contemporary of Jisnugupta is also a difficult proposition although his reign period with reference to Jisnu's inscription is again a settled fact. But this problem does not exist at the moment, because the very reading of the name Manadeva has been found wrong. Similarly we shall find that Manadeva of *Sumatitantra* was also not a very illustrious name. About Manadeva of *Sumatitantra* there is not much divergence of opinion as on either argument, he comes to occupy a place in conformity to the date as indicated by this Ms. which can be adduced without breaking the identity between the names concerned. But about the other one there is much confusion on account of the divergence of era to which his inscriptions have been variously referred. Our task here will be, therefore, to determine the exact epoch of the earlier inscriptions and their relation with

³⁰ Jayaswal, Op. Cit., Pp. 193-195; catalogue of British Museum Pp. 193-94. 467 No. 3564.

युधिष्ठिर दुर्जोधन उभी राज्याव्द २००० नन्द राज्याव्द ८०० चन्द्रगुप्त राज्याव्द १३२
शूद्रक देव राज्याव्द २४७ शक राज्याव्द ४६८ मान देवस्य राज्याव्द ३०४ शुभम्

reference to the names in the Vansabalas, so that we can fix regnal dates for the rulers occurring in the list of these inscriptions.

Later, it will appear that the chronicles have left out Mahideva in the list No. (a), whose reign period is an incontrovertible certainty because of his place in the two inscriptions cited. The omission of Ganadeva whose inscriptions undoubtedly place him immediately after Vasantadeva is another flaw. Similarly, judged with reference to the reliable order of names projected by the inscriptions the list stands recorrect in its entirety.³¹

This work was written in the year 495 of Nepalese era.

³¹ Dr. R. C. Majumdar in his article about the chronology of the Early Kings of Nepal contributed to the B. C. Law volume tries to recast the list of the chronicles, but he commits a fundamental error in placing Narendradeva before Amsuvarman and Sivadeva (P. 635).

CHAPTER III

Early Lichhavi Rulers

(Continued)

We have made some observations about the early Lichhavi rulers in the preceding chapter. But conclusions about their date and chronology have been, however, more or less tentative. Therefore we propose to pursue the subject matter of their regnal data in the following pages. Now as reliable data of the rescriptions of proved date have come to our notice our judgment in regard to the problem has to be made in their light. Below is a study based mainly on inscriptions.

We begin the discourse with the study of the inscriptions as the very initial topic of discussion.

Inscriptions

For the ancient history we have up-to-date availed of nearly one hundred inscriptions, divided into two distinct sets each following its own *era* and epoch year. Of these inscriptions only three remain to be published. A collection of 18 inscriptions has been published in different issues of a monthly 'Sanskrit Sandesh' and at least two of these constitute new find. The rest including 15 of Bhagwanlal Indraji, 3 of Bendall and 21 of Levi (a few of B.G.L. are included) and of the monthly *Sanskrit Sandesh* and *Itihas Prakas* have been recently compiled and published by R. Gnoli under the title 'Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta characters' (Rome, 1956).¹

As the date of these inscriptions form the basis of our history writing and also the only means for correcting the errors of the chronicles, we propose to write here a few words more specifically about them.

It is to be observed here that inspite of a large number of inscriptions traced out, the ones actually being enumerated to be of any historical value do not exceed more than two dozens.

The first group of inscriptions show date figures ranging from Samvat 386 to 535. We have twenty of such inscriptions for the

¹ Bhagwanlal Indraji, G. Buhler; *Twenty-three Inscriptions from Nepal*, 1885 (Bombay).

Cecil Bendall, *A journey of Literary and Archaeological Research in Nepal*, etc. (184-85), Cambridge (1886).

S. Levi, *le Nepal*, Vol. III, 1908 (Paris); *Sanskrit Sandesh* (monthly) VS 2010, 2011; *Itihas Prakas*, I, 1 (2012) VS).

reigns upto Ganadeva. About ten of these go to Sivadeva I, contemporary of Amsuvarman.

The second set has inscriptions showing date figures from 30 to 172. All of these except ten of Amsuvarman are in the name of Lic'havi Kulaketu Narendradeva and his successors Sivadeva (II) and Jayadeva II down to the year 159.

If the colophon of an old palm leaf Ms. Sivadharm Sastra is to be included, the last item will belong to a later date, that of the document which is Samvat 189.²

We now enter into the consideration of both the groups of inscriptions. While considering about the first group we have excluded the items belonging to Sivadeva I, the contemporary of Amsuvarman, to take up again along with those of the latter.

About the scripts used in the inscriptions, it may be said that in the earlier epigraphy it is Gupitan as used in the documents of the 4th and 5th Century in North India. Besides the year of the Samvat, in the date figures, all inscriptions in general give only the month, the fortnight (Paksa) and the day of the fortnight. A few, however, give in addition to these the constellation (Naksatra), yoga and moment (muhurta). No day of the week is specified in any of the inscriptions of the period.

We have seen how the writing of the history for the period before 450 A.D. was done mainly with the help of the confused and uncertain data of the chronicles. But now we are on a surer and firmer ground, although the discovery does not help for more than a period of three centuries. This is a great achievement as far as ancient Nepal goes. These inscriptions have enabled us to present to the reader an authentic and verified account of the ruling dynasties of Nepal of those days, though it is much confined to chronology. Together with this, the inscriptions throw some light on different aspects of social, economic and cultural history of the age.

At this stage it is well to refer to Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) who happens to be the first authority to provide an account about this country, which could be tested with reference to a well ascertained date.

Hiuen Tsang left China in 629 A.D. and by way of Central Asia and Karakoram reached India where he wandered ceaselessly from one end to the other till his departure in 645 A.D. In about 637 A.D.

² *Itihas Prakash* 1, i, p. 159.

नवोत्तराशीति शतेब्दे आषाढ शुक्लस्य त्रिंशो तृतीये
श्रीशङ्कराख्ये जयति क्षितीन्द्रे श्रीयङ्गलेश्वरोत्तर टोल्लकेय

he had arrived in Vaisali. It is not definite whether he crossed over to the valley of Nepal. But his account has a few lines to say about Nepal. Amsuvarman is mentioned in this account as 'a king who had lived in the time just passed'.

The reference to Amsuvarman is the only item useful for the purpose of Nepalese chronology. If the account was written in between 637 and 648, and surely it was written during that interval, the reference will fix a reasonable date for Amsuvarman. In all certainty the pilgrim's reference to Amsuvarman makes him his early contemporary by implication.

We shall deal in details with Hiuen Tsang in relation to Nepal while we come to narrate the history of the period of Amsuvarman. For the present we shall find that Hiuen Tsang has facilitated our efforts to determine the epoch year of the era of the first group of inscriptions.

Fa-hien was in India in between 399 and 414 A.D. He, however, has nothing to say about Nepal. He had visited Lumbini and Kapilavastu about which he wrote in detail, but as Nepal is omitted in his account, it can be presumed that he had not even heard of the country by that name or by any other name.

We are concerned here with the account of the reign periods from the time of Vrsadeva to that of Ganadeva untill the rise of Amsuvarman. It is, therefore, essential that here we enter upon a discussion about the first group of inscriptions which invariably touched these reign periods.

The first group of inscriptions :—These are twenty in all, but the relevant ones are of Manadeva, three of Vasantadeva, one of Ramadeva (date 469) and three of Ganadeva. According to Jayaswal, all these inscriptions have followed the epoch of the Gupta era of 320 A.D. This was also the view put forth by Dr. Fleet. Levi set up a new era called the Lichhavi era beginning with 110 A.D. The Saka Salivahan era of 78 A.D. is suggested by some as the era to be referred to in all these documents. R. C. Majumdar attempts to argue in favour of the Saka era.³ Dr. Bhagwanlal Indraji who has been closely followed by recent writers like Dr. R. G. Basak and others referred them, however, to the Vikrama era of 57 B.C. We have, therefore, here a fundamental difference of opinion as to the epoch of the era adopted in these inscriptions. If Gupta era were to be accepted Manadeva and his successors who have found mention in Jayadeva II's inscription (No. 15 of IA, IX) must be placed after the seventh century A.D.; otherwise according to Indraji, they occupy a place in

³ *B. C. Law Volume*, Vol. I, Pp. 626-41 (Indian Research Institute, Calcutta).

the fourth century A.D. This is the central point of the theme and we must proceed now with the consideration of the epoch year of the inscriptions concerned.

Details of a few relevant documents. :—(1) The Changuarayan Pillar inscription of Manadeva: It is dated Samvat 386.⁴ Its importance lies in the fact of the list which has given a chronology of the author's predecessors. The names are successively—Vrsadeva, Sankaradeva and Dharmadeva. The place of issue is not mentioned. The epigraphy of the inscription according to Dr. Indrajī is early Guptan.

(2) Manadeva's wife Ksemasundari inscription dated Samvat 390.⁵

(3) The inscription of Jayavarman incised in the reign of Manadeva, wherein is written '*Shri Manadeva Nripate Prasadat*'. It is dated Samvat 413.

(4) Another Changu Stele of Manadeva dated 427.

(5) The one issued by Vasantadeva from Managriha. The author addresses himself as Maharaja. The dutaka is Sarbdanda nayaka Mahapraihara Ravigupta. It is dated 435. Two more inscriptions of Bhattaraka Maharaja Vasantadeva are dated 428 and 454.

(6) Another one incised on a stone slab with dutaka Rajputtra Vikramsena. The author is not known. It is dated S. 535.

(7) Ganadeva's inscriptions are dated 482 and 489 respectively.

The (6) of the series refers to the royal personage so far unidentified. Vasantadeva above is the same personage as Vasantadeva of Inscription No. 15 (IA, p. 178), son and successor of Manadeva, who succeeded Manadeva of Inscription No. 1. There cannot be any doubt about Mahideva being a son of Manadeva, for the genealogy of Inscription. I tallies in toto with that of Inscription No. 15, which has given a list of the earlier Lichhavis. As the latter inscription makes it clear that these were descendants of the first Lichhavi Supuspa of the solar race, we can easily adduce as to Manadeva's Lichhavi paternity, although his inscriptions do not refer to it. Curiously enough, none of the above noted documents mention anything about the Lichhavi lineage of the rulers concerned. The first inscription to designate the King as Lichhavi Kulaketu was that of Sivadeva dated Samvat 515. But no other names find mention in his inscriptions. The Lichhavi ancestry of these kings has been traced from the genealogy provided by Jayadeva II in his inscription (No. 15).

⁴ Recently a Nepalese writer read 389.

⁵ Unpublished.

The date of Manadeva

Who is Manadeva I, the one of Sumatitantra or of Inscription No. I? We shall see later that there is not much to say about Jisnu's contemporary Manadeva, because after ascertainment of the reading of the inscription concerned we can easily dismiss his existence. Similarly Manadeva of Sumatitantra will come to occupy the first or second position on the same basis, as his date is no more subjected to doubt. The most controversial point therefore under discussion is the identification of the person in the Inscription No. I with reference to his date. But this has become a subject of much controversy in view of the lack of unanimity of opinion on the epoch year of the eras the inscription has adopted. Dr. Jayaswal while recognising the validity of the legend of Mananka and Gunanka in the coinage of Nepal attributes the same to Manadeva of 576 A.D. whom he gives the first place in the order (JBORS. op. cit).⁶ As to the epigraphic evidence he dismisses it as entirely valueless for reasons of the many irregular and indistinct features in the epigraphy of the coinage. He also fails to note the dissimilarity in the epigraphy of the inscription in question and of those of the 7th century A.D., to which period he assigns the list of names occurring in the Inscription No. I. Levi and Indrajai agree as to the defective language the inscriptions of Manadeva and his successors contain and as also to the difference in the epigraphy of these inscriptions and Amsuvarman's inscriptions, which shows definitely certain alteration in orthography to approach the Gupta character of the later period (Levi, III, Pp. 83 ff.). But here we face certain irregularities. If Amsuvarman's inscriptions precede them there is no reason that Manadeva's inscriptions should betray the defects common to the epigraphy of the earlier centuries. Dr. Jayaswal again asserts that the Thakuris of the scion of Amsuvarman's family ruled over Nepal during the latter part of the 7th century A.D. and the Lichhavis were their vassals, a fact which according to him accounts for the existence of these inscriptions along with records of the Thakuri rulers. He argued that Manadeva's assumption of a less dignified title is significant of his comparatively less important role under the Thakuris. This, however, is not a valid assumption, for the word 'Nrippati' carried as much a sense of high royal dignity as the word Maharaja. Kumara Gupta I is referred to with that title and, therefore, it would not be wrong to infer that Manadeva was as independent

⁶ Some authors have read in these coins Kushan resemblance in matters of structure and image.

as his successor or predecessors so far as the evidence of this inscription is concerned.⁷ It is quite possible, as we alluded to before, that Nripati was adopted in view of the past political affiliation of the Lichhavis, which was definitely democratic. But even this conjecture seems to be far fetched. Besides that, this inscription also is silent as regards the place of issue, unlike the one which characterises the successive records. If the ruling family would have been occupying Managriha, there is no reason that Managriha should be omitted. Managriha had not ceased to wear the dignity of the royal palace in the seventh century or even in the eighth, for we have inscriptions issued from that place for that period (cf. IA, IX, p. 167). But if we push off the date of Manadeva of Inscription No. 1 to 705 or so this is just the position the evidence disproves. The absence of Managriha in this inscription or in any other of the same order can only mean that this place did not exist while the epigraphy was being recorded. The place most probably originated posthumously with Manadeva of this inscription, who as will appear subsequently is the first Manadeva of the Lichhavi dynasty, his date being pushed back to the 5th century A.D.

There is an expression in the Inscription No. 15 (IA, IX, p. 178), which has led to much confusion in relation to the date of Manadeva of Inscription 1. This expression consists of a compound 'asyantare' which ordinarily means 'at the interval of.' Fleet and Jayaswal have interpreted it as to mean the interval of time when the Thakuris were ruling jointly or individually and make the whole list down to Vasantadeva contemporaneous with Narendradeva's successors as mentioned in the lines following that expression in the inscription, and at the same time giving Thakuri parentage to these rulers. The chronicles have not omitted Udayadeva who precedes the second list and who on the basis of the above interpretation should be a contemporary of Vrsadeva. By placing the latter as a contemporary of Narendradeva a possible way of escape has been found. But as we have observed earlier, this is inadmissible and the expression would clearly indicate either the priority over or the contemporaneity with Udayadeva or Vrsadeva and in no case with Narendradeva. Further the T'ang history has no mention of the other Lichhavi King ruling in the valley in the reign of Narendradeva; if at all Narendradeva's dynasty were to be accepted as Thakuri. This fact should not have escaped the notice of the Chinese visitors. Nor it can be true that Dharmadeva killed the Tibetan King

⁷G. E., Chandra Gupta I calls himself Maharaja in Radhapur plates (J.A. S.B., 1924, p. 58ff).

in 705 A.D.⁸ The Inscriptions No. 1 and No. 15 do not mention him as such and had he been instrumental in defeating the Tibetan ruler and this was no ordinary occasion but was an event of unusual importance marking the end of a foreign rule, his valour should have unfailingly found reference in that connection. But according to Inscription No. 1 it seems that he himself met disaster in some battlefield and it was not a fight with Bhatta, i.e. Tibet, which makes the whole basis of that inference very weak. By no stretch of imagination the list common to Inscriptions No. 1 and 15 can be fixed up as contemporary of Udayadeva and his successors.

Those who tried to explain the anomaly of the situation have taken shelter behind an argument that Udayadeva is not of the Lichhavi dynasty. As we have just noted, this point alone is insufficient to meet the requirement of the argument in favour of the Gupta epoch of the inscriptions, apart from the incongruous result it leaves in regard to Vrsadeva's time. But the foremost question which puzzles us is whether omission of Amsuvarman's name in that list is justifiable, while the genealogy of the inscription (No. 15) mentions with a sense of pride the Lichhavi list, which according to this view was not the dynasty of the chronicler (Jayadeva II). Amsuvarman as the founder of the Thakuri dynasty and the immediate predecessor of Udayadeva deserved naturally, at least, a mention in the chronicle which was composed by his son.⁹ The fact that he did not figure in the inscription proves that Jayadeva II did not belong to Amsu's dynasty. In the other case the reference could not have been avoided. Nor, what Fleet says as regards the different stock of Udayadeva's Thakuri line can alter the premises in any way, for even then one does not see any reason for the omission of a prominent personage like Amsuvarman Thakuri, while at the same time we find that the Lichhavis who were in no way allied with the Thakuris have received honourable place there. The inscriptions of Narendradeva style him as the illustrious Lichhavi (Gnoli,) and also shows at one place that the seat of the king was no longer Kailashakuta, another fact which certainly indicates a break with the past and a change in the status of the sovereign, probably significant of the Tibetan domination of the last fifty years and its withdrawal in 705 A.D.¹⁰

⁸ G. I., 186-87. If we refer the inscription to the Gupta era, the date for Vrsadeva will come to the year 705 A.D., the year which according to the Tang annal saw the defeat of Tibet by Nepal.

⁹ Jayaswal takes him as Amsu's direct successor and his son. Levi (II, p. 169), however, regards him as a Lichhavi.

¹⁰ In the writing of Ins., No. 15 Udayadeva and Narendradeva have been mentioned to belong to the line of Jayadeva, the Lichhavi King.

No purpose would be served by attributing these factors to a desire on the part of the later Thakuris to be called the Lichhavis, because the Lichhavis themselves by that time had fallen into disrepute or at least into insignificant position in other parts of India and secondly because the Thakuri dynasty was as much respectable in view of the pinnacle of glory Amsuvarman pushed it to, apart from the fact that the name of Amsuvarman, as one of the greatest kings of his time, imparted honour rather than disgrace to be remembered by his descendants. Udayadeva's Thakuri paternity is therefore an impossibility and it is also absurd to deny the Lichhavi character of Jayadeva II's genealogy.

It was also said that the interval of time as conveyed by the expression '*asyantare*' should be understood with reference to the following lines of kings headed by Udayadeva, who was the thirteenth successor of Vasantadeva. According to this opinion the interval shown here constitutes a long line of twelve kings intervening between Vasantadeva and Udayadeva. But this contention is equally erroneous. There cannot be such a long interval between Vasantadeva and Udayadeva. This is clearly intended by the words coming after in the next quarter of the verse.¹¹ The reading, however, has been much controversial; Bhagwanlal Indrajī reads '*Jatasetrayodasatatascha Narendradeva*'¹² to take Udayadeva as the immediate successor of Vasantadeva and place him twelve generations previous to Narendradeva, which in fact he is not as his immediate priority over the latter is generally admitted. Fleet and Levi who read the rubbing in original read *Jatas trayodasa sutascha Narendra* etc.¹³ Basak read after *trayodasa nripascha Narendradeva*. The exact reading is rendered difficult owing to the illegible letters in between jata and Narendra. But as *ya* after *na* is very clear, the reading *troyodasa* has a greater chance of acceptance.

Besides, the whole construction making Narendradeva as the son of Udayadeva without trying to explain the '*ya*' after '*na*' is ill fitting with the harmony of the whole verse and is only forcibly thrust in the context despite ugly adjustment. The right reading is most probably '*jatas a troyodasa itasch*'¹⁴ *Narendradeva*' so that Udayadeva becomes

¹¹ Basak, op. cit., Pp. 280-83; I.A., IX, p. 178.

Another reading is '*jatata nam namyost Narend Deo*'.

¹² Tucci and Gnoli read *itasca* (*Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta characters*, P. 116). So does M. Naraharinath (*Sanskrit Sandesh*, i, i, P. 3).

R. C. Majumdar, (Op. cit. Pp. 30-) inclines to accept this version but not so surely.

¹³ CII, III, Intro. p. 187, Levi, II, p. 162.

¹⁴ Singular.

the thirteenth ruler of the second Lichhavi List, and Narendradeva, his son. Udayadeva in all probability came as the thirteenth successor of Vrsadeva. The few (Ganadeva and Sivadeva) kings preceding him were probably omitted on the ground that they had not the independent existence to have been honorably noted. But how is it that Sivadeva I, the contemporary of Amsuvarman, was left out? Is it because he was existing on the sufferance of the High Feudatory? According to the Chinese history, the date for Udayadeva corresponds to 638 or 39 A.D. It is suggested that the period before him was full of turmoil. According to Levi Vasantadeva's reign was followed by a critical period leading to usurpation of power by Amsuvarman until it was restored by Narendradeva, son of Udayadeva (II, p. 163). Probably Nepal's personalities then in power belong to the Thakuri dynasty which itself seized power from the Ahir; who had again staged a come back with Jisnugupta and his son Visnugupta. The Manjusri history in the particular instance has supplied facts abundantly explanatory of the situation of this period. It says that Manadeva ruled for eighty years and, thereafter, 'the country was subjugated by the Mlechhas and others'.¹⁵ From a parallel account of the *Vamsavalis* it seems that the allusion to the various names in the list of the MMK applies to the Kirata and Gupta rule preceding Amsuvarman. These should not be construed as representing contemporary dynasties, otherwise the whole series of names up to Udayadeva including the Gupta family and Amsuvarman would appear to belong to contemporary dynasties of the same period.¹⁶ We know from the inscriptions that Jisnugupta was a successor of Amsuvarman, but on the authority of Fleet and Jayaswal, Vrsadeva and others also did follow Amsu, which seems quite a contradictory estimate of the MMK's clear assertion. The verse now in question has, however, clearly put the names one after the other, which indicates the order of their succession and not their contemporaneity and the fact that Udayadeva and Jisnugupta are placed in the last order is what would confirm the above view. There is no doubt that

¹⁵ जाताः त्रयोदशः ततश्च नरेन्द्रदेव but आ in the line is not visible.

भविष्यति तदाकाले उत्तरां दिशिमाश्रुतः नेपाल मण्डलेख्यति हिमाडेः कुक्षिमाश्रिते ।
 राजा मनवेन्द्रस्तु लिच्छवीनां कुलोद्भवः सोपि मन्त्रार्थं सिद्धस्तु महाभोगी भविष्यति ॥
 सोपि मन्त्रार्थं सिद्धस्तु महाभोगी भविष्यति विद्याभोगवती नाम तस्य सिद्धा न राधिदे ।
 अशीति वर्षाणि कृत्वासौ राज्यं तस्कर वर्जितम् ततः प्राणात्पये नृपतौ स्वर्गलोके जजग्मसु
 शस्त्रसम्पाह विध्वस्ता नेपालाधिपतिस्तदा विद्या लुप्ता लुप्त राजानो म्लेच्छ तस्कर सेविनः
 (edited by Ganapati Sastri, 1920, Pt III, pp. 621-22).

¹⁶ Jayaswal wrongly takes them as contemporaries.

the MMK by its references beckons to a turbulent state of affairs in the reigns following the list of six names, of which Manadeva's with his three important epigraphic records is the most famous. Accordingly, Udayadeva and not Vrsadeva is the next ruler after Amsuvarman. Now therefore the whole list of Inscription No. 1 should be transferred to the earlier period.

The eighty years of Manadeva I should not mean the reign of a single monarch. The whole comprises also the two reigns following him. After a few years' rule by the successors of Vasantadeva, the valley was invaded by the Kiratas led by Vabisha whose successor Subhasu was dethroned by the Guptas. But it will be a mistake to suppose that these rulers had totally ousted the Lichhavis. Their identity as Kiratas also rests on weak grounds. The MMK calls them just Mlechhas. This may mean anything. But it is probable that the newcomers belonged to tribal areas. The Lichhavis had continued to rule in a part of the kingdom, while the Kiratas came to overpower them. A portion of the Nepal valley must have gone to be under the Kiratas. Bhakrama was the first ruler of this dynasty. About this Bhakrama nothing can be said but the next one Prakrama, can be identified with Paramagupta of the chronicle. The list according to MMK is as follows.¹⁷

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Bhakrama, | 3. Kamala, |
| 2. Parakrama, | 4. Bhagupta, |
| 5. Batsaka. | |

The list of course includes a few unimportant names as well, which are also given in the *Vamsavali*. These five rulers including the four Kiratas ruled in regular order of succession in some parts of Nepal until the last of them was subdued by Amsuvarman. Including Amsuvarman and Dhruvadeva we have, therefore, eleven rulers between Vasantadeva and Udayadeva, which agrees also with the numerical strength of the Inscription No. 15. Accordingly, Manadeva of Summatitantra must fall in that line of unnamed kings omitted by Jayadeva's inscription. He must have surely gone through troubled times and disturbances.

We have another evidence corroborating our conclusion and that is the coinage of this period variously called Mananka, Gunanka and

¹⁷ Ibid.

शास्तु पूजकास्तेपि म्लेच्छ राजा न है । वविषः सुवृषश्चैव भावसु शुभसु स्तथा
भाक्रमः पदक्रमश्चैव कमलैश्चव कीर्त्यते भागुप्तः वत्सकश्चैव पश्चिमः
उदय जिहनुनो सन्ते म्लेच्छानां विविधास्तथा अम्भोधे भ्रष्ट मर्यादाबहिःप्राज्ञोप भोजिनः

Vatsanka. The coins of this period have two special features. First, they follow quite closely the structure of the Kushan coinage (Walsh, J. R. A. S., 1908, p. 677). The deity on a lotus seat in both the Mananka and Juviska coins (CCIMC, I, p. 82) and also the elephant facing the right are drawn in both. But another feature reveals an imitation of the legend of Gupta coinage and there seems to be a very close affinity between the Nepalese coinage of this period and the Gupta coinage (Levi, II, p. 108). The Sri Bhogini, the deity of Mananka coins, agrees in toto with the same expression used as epithet for Manadeva I by the MMK. Bendall confusing Sri Bhogini for Sri Bhagini whom he took for Amsu's sister attributed the coin to Amsuvarman (*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig, 1882, Vol. XXXVI, p. 51). But now on correct reading it has been ascertained that the expression applies to the goddess seated on the lotus.¹⁸ Prof. Rapson identifies the Mananka coin as that of Manadeva I,¹⁹ who is definitely the author of Inscription No. 1, the Lichhavi prince.

Now if Amsuvarman's time be fixed in c. 600 A.D. or even earlier as is suggested according to one of his inscriptions, the Kirata revival seems to have occurred during a period at least a century and half before him, so that the last date of Vasantadeva would be somewhere in the third decade of the sixth century. The first date of Manadeva I in this way would come to 460 A.D. or near about that date, which is supported by the coinage of the period with a close resemblance to its prototype of Guptan image and structure. We shall have exact dates for these rulers after ascertaining the epoch year of their inscriptions.

The date for Manadeva of Inscription No. 1 cannot, therefore, fall in the 7th century A.D. as argued by certain scholars. He comes, definitely to occupy the first position so far as the regnal year of the rulers of the same name is concerned. As according to our reading of Inscription No. 15 the six names previous to Udayadeva are to be put somewhere in the fourth century A.D., twelve generations earlier to 640 A.D., their repetition in the Inscription No. 1 has made it easy for us to refer the epoch year of the era of Inscription No. 1 to a date in that period. The moot point in controversy can likewise be settled with the first place assigned to Manadeva of Inscription No. 1, whom henceforward we designate as Manadeva the First. Manadeva of Sumati-

¹⁸ JASB., March 1888, article on the Nepalese coinage.

¹⁹ *Indian coins*, 1898, p. 32. In the coins of Chandra Gupta II we have Vikramanka.

tantra should again be identified with another personage of the same name mentioned in the chronology (list C) who probably reigned as a stop gap sovereign between Ganadeva and Sivadeva I without any memorable events of life under the thumb of the powerful Gupta Mahasamantas.

Now from the same it is clear that the continuity of the line of the Lichhavi kings was maintained throughout without any wide breach; as even in the worst days of the dynasty, it was only interrupted for a period covering not more than one or two generations. But except at the initial stage when it seems to have been overshadowed by foreign rulers for a century and half the Lichhavi dynasty had not been usurped. If there was a Kirata ruler in the scene, it could not be that the Lichhavi Monarch had been totally ousted. Perhaps he continued to adorn the throne at one or another part of the country. The genealogical order of the chronicle giving an unduly long list of names and dynasties is now proved to be a complete myth.

The Era of the Earlier Inscriptions.

From the above it is now proved that the epoch of the earlier inscriptions must agree with some year towards the middle or the end of the first century A.D., by which premise alone we can make Manadeva's reign contemporaneous with the Gupta period.²⁰ We have M. Levi's Lichhavi era of 110 A.D., which he obtained by attributing the phenomenon of the Inscription No. 1 (Levi, III p. 49) to the first day of May 496 A.D.²¹ He also has tried to justify his stand by a reference to another inscription (No. vi, pp. 48-70), which has shown an intercalation in the month of Asadha of the year 449 of an unknown era but which he says has followed the year 110 A.D., as the epoch year, as to him the phenomenon in the corresponding year 559 A.D. appears of like nature. The epoch of the era thus ascertained may appear a little far removed, but on no account the epoch can be placed after 80 A.D. From the inscription of Sivadeva I and Dhruvadeva, we have Samvat 520 preceding Samvat 48 by at least thirty years. According to Levi and others the epoch of the latter inscription falls on the year 595 A.D. and according to this calculation, the corresponding year for 48 is c. 643 A.D. just 350 years after Jayadeva I and the corresponding year for 520 is c. 613 A.D. or so, so that the epoch of the latter may find its place in any year after nineties of the first century A.D. or very near about that date. But

²⁰ According to Fleet, 28 April 705 A.D., G.I. Text, p. 195.

²¹ Dr. Indrajit supported by C. V. Vaidya and R. G. Basak refers them to the Vikrama era (Basak, p. 275).

as there is no intercalation in the immediate vicinity of that year, we have to go back or forward for the search to a year which agrees with both. Leaving this point aside, we have a more difficult problem of the epoch year of the second group of inscriptions. It will appear subsequently that for all these inscriptions the epoch year can never be 595 A.D. as generally supposed. With new materials traced it is now established with a degree of certainty that the epoch year must fall somewhere near about 570 A.D. Thus the old assumption of equating 520 with 613 A.D. becomes entirely inadmissible. The corresponding date will have to be searched much earlier than 613 A.D. Accordingly the epoch year of the earlier inscriptions will also fall earlier than 110 A.D. It is now certain that this year has got to be somewhere within a distance of 30-40 years back from 110 A.D. Further, Bendall's reading of one of Sivadeva's inscriptions has been woefully defective as he has read 300 in place of 500²², which would confuse the whole situation. It will serve no useful purpose in connecting the two sets of inscriptions if that reading is maintained. But now it is generally accepted that the inscriptions upto Sivadeva I have to be referred to one era. The intercalation of the year 449 may be interpreted to correspond to the year 483 A.D., so that Manadeva himself of Inscription No. 1 would be placed in the period between 403 A.D. and 447 A.D. just 300 years after Jayadeva I²³, whom we have to assign the very earliest year of the Lichhavi settlement. But equating 449 with 483 A.D. pushes Manadeva's reign period back by at least 50 years, which cannot be accepted in view of the other authoritative evidence.

The *Vamsavalis* has made confusion worse confounded in three places. In the first it has made unwarranted transposition of names from one list to another. Secondly, some contemporary rulers are put in order of succession as seemingly to have ruled not simultaneously but successively one after the other. Thirdly, the transposition has been done at the cost of corresponding dates established by the Inscription No. 15. The five names headed by Vrsadeva have to be adjusted in the way we have arranged in the above connection according to Levi's authority. Udayadeva should have followed Amsuvarman but in the list of the chronicle precedes him, thus necessitating the transference of the whole list of succession to Vasantadeva. One name Vasantadeva is twice repeated, Sivadeva I's place is antedated. Gunakamadeva who comes after Manadeva II in the list of the chronicle should follow Vasantadeva. The order of the next two, Sivadeva and

²² Levi's reading is correct.

²³ There is no intercalation in Samvat 449 on both counts, Vikram or Saka.

Narendradeva, should have been reversed, on the other hand these are repeated ad nauseam in the fictitious list of Thakuris. Visnudeva Varman and Viswadeva Varman should have gone to the Gupta chronology. Manadeva of Sumatitantra is definitely second of the order identified as Manadeva II whose regnal year should come just previous to Sivadeva I.

The Epoch Year of the First Series of Inscriptions

Before we settle the question of the epoch year of the Samvat followed in the first series of inscriptions let us now proceed to read what S. Levi has to say about his own proposition. From the following paragraphs it will appear that he regards the year 110 A.D. as the epoch year of the Samvat (496-386=110 A.D.). The contention, however, is unconvincing, and he himself admits that it 'does not satisfy the astronomical data of the inscriptions'. We shall consider the flaws Levi made in respect of this matter after reading his passages. They contain a detailed analysis of the phenomenon appearing in the two inscriptions, the No. 1 of B.G.L.²⁴ and XIV of Gnoli. Although the analysis is wide of the mark and not purposive, we have brought it here to give to the reader an idea of the problem involved as Levi viewed it. Let it be observed here at the outset that Levi's argument is too much strained, and the effect is no doubt just the opposite of what it was intended to be.²⁵

According to Levi :

"The inscription of Changu Narayan is dated from Samvat 386 in the month of Jaistha, clear fortnight, first day of the Moon, the moon being associated to the asterism Rohini in the auspicious moment of Abhijit. Bhagwan Lal without stopping at the details of the date had examined the interpretation of the year in the point of view of the chronology supplied by the Vamcavalis. He had reduced on the one hand to the Saka era (464 J.C.), on the other to the Vikrama era (329 J.C.), then finding that the average of the reigns between Mandeva and Jayadeva was more probable in the second system than in the first, he had preferred the Vikrama era. The procedure is always a delicate matter; applied to the Vamcavalis of Nepal, so whimsical in their chronological speculations, it was already doomed to failure. M. Fleet has taken up the examination at a later period of the ancient chronology of Nepal basing himself on the data 316 of Civa Deva (I) given by the inscription of the Golmadhitol that Mr. Bendall had recently

²⁴ Abbreviation of Bhagwan Lal Indrajit.

²⁵ *Le Nepal*, III, Pp. 7-10.

discovered and published. I leave aside the discussion of this system which I have already criticized in an article of the Asiatic Journal in 1894. Mr. Fleet, admitting that the inscriptions of Nepal are divided into two parallel series using different eras mentions the inscription of Changu Narayan in the Gupta era; he thus obtains 386 Gupta=705-706 J.C.=628 Caka current or 627 Caka lapsed. Starting from this datum Sh. B. Dikshit has verified the details of the date for Mr. Fleet, he found that "the given tithi ended on Tuesday the 28th April, 705 J.C. at 57 ghatas 12 palas after the rising of the Sun; that the nakshatra Kritika lasted till the 11 ghatas 3 palas after the rising of the sun the morrow Wednesday, and that consequently the muhurta Abhijit, which is the eighth in the series of the muhurtas and which begins then with the 15th ghata reckoned from the rising of the Sun has been produced as is wanted by the text of the inscription whilst the nakshatra Rohini was current" (*Gupta Ins.* Introd. 93-95).

"As often is the case of the so-called scientific arguments introduced in the researches of history and of philology the proof proves nothing. The details of the date, in spite of their number leaves nothing precise to verification. The position given far from being accidental is almost even or at least very frequent. In fact the month of Jyaistha is the month in which the Moon must be full in the constellation of Jyaistha; then at the New Moon that precedes the longitude of the Moon must be 180° less. The space between Jyaistha and Rohini being 187° and the displacement of the Moon being 12° by tithi there are good chances that the Moon may pass in Rohini in the course of the first tithi (pratipad) of Jyaistha. Further the Muhurta Abhijit (Vidhi or Brahma) is the eighth of the fifteen muhurtas of the day or of the thirty muhurtas that go from the rising of the Sun to the next rising; each muhurta lasts 48 minutes. Then at the moment when begins Abhijit $7 \times 48' = 336$ minutes = 5 hours and 36 minutes have elapsed since the rising of the Sun and the distance of the Moon from Jyaistha has thus reduced by a little less than 3° and its position has more chances again of being in the region of the nakshatra Rohini. Besides if it concerns astronomical arguments it must be observed that the solution calculated by Dikshit and adopted by Fleet is irreconcilable with the intercalation of Asadha in 449 supplied by one of our inscriptions. If 386 Samvat is equivalent to 628 caka current 449 is equivalent then to 691 caka current; then on that year there is an intercalation of Jyaistha in the true system of vaicakha in the average system but none of Asadha. If as I believe 449 with its intercalary system corresponds to 482 caka current 386 would answer to 419 caka current. Then the first Jyaistha

of 419 caka current at the moment the Sun is rising is found in Rohini and there remains for it to 189/10000 lunations in this nakshatra otherwise expressed it must still remain in it 12 hours 23 minutes. Since the muhurta Abhijit commences 5 hours 36 minutes after the rising, the Moon is still in Rohini during this muhurta. The date of the pillar of Changu Narayan corresponds in this hypothesis to Tuesday the 1st May 496 J.C.

“The capital interest of the inscription of Kisipidi (Levi, vi)²⁶ mutilated as it is, lies in its date. The donation is made in the course of a month doubled by intercalation ‘in Samvat 449 the first Asadha the clear fortnight the 10th. The mention of an intercalary month is a stroke of good luck to the chronologists; the intercalation is regulated by considerations of theoretical astronomy which is easy enough to calculate. A lunar month in the course of which the Sun does not change its sign (in the Zodiac) is redoubled; the motive is clear. The application admits of fairly serious divergences; 1st, the calculation can be based either on the average motion of the planets, or on the apparent motion; 2nd, the intercalated month can either receive by anticipation the name of the month normally awaited but delayed by exception or repeat the name of the month in the course of which it happens, thus according to the system in use the supplementary month tacked on in the course of the month of Jyaistha can be called either Asadha I or Jyaistha II. Luckily these difficulties are partly removed in the case of ancient Nepal. The mention of a pausa I (prathama paksa) in an inscription of Amsuvarman year 34 suffices to establish that the Nepalese astronomers calculated the intercalations on the average motion; because in the system of the apparent motion pausa is never intercalary, elsewhere the designation applied in this same case to the supplementary month shows well that the intercalation receives the name of the month normally awaited and not of the current month. Then the month mentioned here must happen in a year in which according to a calculation based on the average motion of the Sun and the Moon there must have lapsed after normal month of Jyaistha a lunar month begun when the Sun had already passed in the sign of Mithuna and ended before the Sun had entered in the sign of Karka. The phenomenon irregularly takes place in each century. From 400 to 499 J.C. four times; from 500 to 599 J.C. three times; from 600 to 699 J.C. once; from 700 to 799 J.C. four times. If the year 386 Samvat of Mandeva really corresponded,

²⁶ III, Pp. 49-51.

as M. Fleet wished it, to 628 current caka, the year 449 should necessarily correspond to $628+63=691$ current caka (768-769 J.C.). Now no method gives any supplementary Asadha to this date. The combination proposed by the learned epigraphist is then to be entirely rejected.

“On the other hand, I have for a long time shown the year 34 of Amcuvarman with its intercalary pausa should correspond to 629-630 J.C. (*Asiatic Journal*, 1894, II, 55 sq.). Amcuvarman is at first the minister then the successor of Sivadeva whose inscriptions are still found beyond 520 Samvat. The date of 449 Samvat is anterior to this term by about 70 years; it must then fall towards the middle of the VIth century of J.C. Now during the whole duration of the VI century of J.C. the system of the average motion only gives three intercalations of asadha; in 482 current caka (559-60 J.C., in 501 current caka (=578-79 J.C.) and in 520 current caka 597-98 J.C.). My personal results concord for that century with the Tables of Sewell and Dikshit. The last two results are to be sidetracked since they would throw the end of the reign of Sivadeva right under the successors of Amsuvarman ($578+70=648$ J.C.; $597+70=667$ J.C.). The first alone is to be considered because it takes Sivadeva, in Samvat 520 to the very epoch of Amsuvarman ($559+71=630$ J.C.) and that the two reigns must precisely coincide in part. The date of the pillar of Changu Narayan gives us another means of control. Now we have seen that in taking for starting point the equivalent of Samvat 449-482 current caka the details of the inscribed date on the pillar verify themselves completely for 386 Samvat-419 current caka. We thus obtain for the starting point of the Lichhavis era $419-386=33$ current caka=110 J.C. I ignore to which event this era can be related to if in the neighbourhood of the caka era. The number of reigns lapsed, which is 19 from the origin of the Lichhavis to the accession of Manadeva (according to the unanimous agreement of the traditions, *key*, 11, 91 sq.) is surely very small to cover up a stretch of four centuries. Perhaps the Lichhavis had brought their own era from the Indian cradle, perhaps they perpetuated a local era of Nepal that dated back to the expulsion of the Kiratas.”

Levi has trodden his ground cautiously, and his conclusion is made to appear as only one of a kind of several possibilities in the direction. But we may not at all touch the consideration of this matter for our purpose to arrive at a solution of the problem. We must understand that astronomical data are least decisive in determination of the dates for chronology, as these are subject to numerous conditions, some of them quite shifting their ground from one assumption to another. This

is a further drawback and a risk inherent in the very utility of a method of astronomical interpretation. So if we could avoid dependence on astronomical data altogether, we should find out means to that end. Fortunately for us we have materials enough for the ancient history of Nepal, which will enable us to ignore the factor of astronomical datum altogether. In the following paragraphs we shall show how even without taking recourse to the consideration of this factor, we tackle the question of interpreting the data to fix up dates for our chronology.

As we have shown by way of discussion in the pages above, the precedence of the rulers who are known also by the first group of inscriptions over those of the second group is clearly established from the Inscription No. 15. If any doubt was there, it was about the reigns coming after the last ruler of the series, Vasantadeva. So at any rate these inscriptions must antedate the reign of Narendradeva who was a King ruling in 645 A.D. as confirmed by the T'ang Annals (See below). Without repeating the arguments about Udayadeva, let us now bring out a tentative order of genealogy for the early Lichhavi rulers down to Vasantadeva.

Vrsadeva
Sankaradeva
Dharmadeva
Manadeva
Mahideva
Vasantadeva

Obviously Manadeva's date of 386 of the Inscription No. I has to be placed at least three, four or five generations earlier somewhere in the previous century, calculated $645-100+545$ A.D. On this argument, the epoch year must go to $545-386=159$ A.D. To this extent there is no controversy. But the matter does not end here. We have quite irrefutable evidences to show that the date for the epoch year can be pushed still further back by another eighty or ninety years.

The data of such evidences are certainly provided by some more inscriptions of the series under discussion, that have recently come to our view. These inscriptions together push the last date figure of the first series of inscriptions to Samvat 535. We have four or five more inscriptions belonging to this series, but as their date figures are peeled off, we are leaving them out of our account taking into consideration only those which have the date figures intact.

While enumerating the inscriptions of the first series we had placed alongside in the group all inscriptions of Ganadeva and Sivadeva, all

of which appear to show dates in continuation. The discussion, which follows in the next section, will solve the question of the era for the entire series. We have envisaged the existence of only one era for such inscriptions. It could not be imagined that of this set there will be different eras for different dates. Such inference will be unwarranted. As facts stand there is no room for a view which brings out two eras in the field. As it will appear the solution of the problem of ascertaining the era is much facilitated only because the last of the documents represent a link in the chain running from 386 to 535.

Date in Sivadeva's Inscriptions : It is true as Dr. R. C. Majumdar says that no final solution of the problem of reading symbolic date figures will be possible until these are available in words.²⁷ But we may not wait for this sort of eventuality in order to achieve correct reading of the date figures in the inscriptions of Sivadeva I. Unlike the time Levi wrote his book, we have at the moment not one but several inscriptions belonging to Sivadeva I and all these show very clearly the symbols for date figures in identical forms. Consequently our reading of the date figures in these inscriptions is much facilitated. In Levi the reading of the symbol for 500 was based on the rubbings of the three inscriptions, one from Bhatgaon, one from Khopasi, and another from Dharampur respectively.²⁸ Levi's reading of the date figures in all these is quite correct. Earlier Bendall had introduced some confusion by wrongly reading the first of the three figures in one of the Bhatgaon (Golmodhitol) inscriptions as a symbol for 300.²⁹ As this was the only inscription then available for Sivadeva's reign, this reading had further in the absence of any knowledge of Chinese notices on the subject tended to lend support also to a wrong reading of certain other lines. To day, however, the very discussion of the point becomes superfluous in the face of irrefragable proof establishing Sivadeva's reign period at ascertained dates.³⁰

It does not lie within the scope of the present work to discuss the orthography of the inscriptions concerned. Nor we stand in need of such a discussion for our present purpose as without the help of orthographical data we can conclusively prove our case. But it will suffice to observe here that the symbolic figure for 500 in these inscriptions has followed a set pattern observable not only in one but also in all the documents of the series. Therefore there cannot be any doubtful reading of the date figure in one particular inscription while

²⁷ Op. Cit., P. 628.

²⁸ Levi, III, Inscriptions IX, XI, XII. He does not give the one of Bendall.

²⁹ Journey, etc., Pp. 72-74; R. C. Majumdar, *ibid*, Pp. 628-29.

³⁰ 𑀓𑀲 = 500 and 𑀓𑀲 = 300

the series is there. Just a scrutiny of the date figure in the Golmodhitol inscription reveals a clear sign for 500, which is expressed in the shape, in common with similar symbols in other inscriptions of Sivadeva. This is as distinct from, the symbol for 300, commonly visible in all the six inscriptions bearing dates between 386 and 399 both inclusive. Now any controversy in regard to the reading of the date figure must cease in view of the indubitable signs of the inscriptions in this respect.

Apart from above, let us now proceed at this stage to consider the points in regard to the regnal data of Sivadeva I, so that we weigh the evidence fully well if the same will have a bearing on determining the era of the above cited inscriptions.

This monarch's reference to Amsuvarman as his Feudatory in several inscriptions of his makes the date figures in his inscriptions conterminous with those in the inscriptions of Amsuvarman. In addition to this factor we should also note that as from Hiuen Tsang's observation Amsuvarman's time could be ascertained, without any fear of contradiction, similarly Sivadeva being his contemporary, the date figures in the latter's inscriptions must be determined with reference to the estimate formed on account of the Chinese pilgrim's accounts. Sivadeva's reign period is therefore a settled affair. If there is a variance, it must be only of a few years. Whether Sivadeva's dates preceded or both ran parallel is a moot point to be tackled. Thus far, our authors have taken the view of placing Sivadeva's figures earlier above Samvat 30 of the first inscription of Amsuvarman. We have fixed the epoch year of the second series of inscriptions at 568 A.D. (see below). This will make Sivadeva's last dates just precede 600 A.D. (568-69+30). But we cannot brush aside the question in this manner. It will appear from the arguments produced in the next chapter that Amsuvarman could never adopt royal titles for a long time. That meant the sovereign was living all these years though his position was no better than that of a marionette. Let us now look into the last inscription of the series with Rajputra Vikramasena as witness.³¹ This is dated Samvat 535. This Vikramasena appears also in one inscription of Amsuvarman³² dated 34. Both these inscriptions appear to be of the same time. The former probably belongs to Sivadeva I, but the few letters showing the name of the ruler are unintelligible. At any rate, one can have an estimate about the contemporaneity of the two inscriptions. Now on that supposition if we put 535 at Samvat 34, we have 602-03 in terms of the Christian era. This would place the epoch year of the first

³¹ B.G.L. IV.

³² B.G.L. VI.

group of inscriptions at 68 A.D. So we come to the old hypothesis of an era, the epoch year of which occurs in any year either 68 or 78 A.D. or between these two.

At any rate it looks that Sivadeva was ruling in Nepal towards the end of the sixth century A.D. On no account his reign could have extended back beyond 580 A.D. All this, however, follows only when the era of the inscriptions is referred to as explained in the above paragraph and the date figures in them read to cover all dates 510 to 535. Any variation to reduce the period by a long margin will not be tenable. If the date figure is read 320, either this era must be abandoned or Sivadeva's reign will occur two centuries earlier to Amsuvarman's dates against all admitted evidences. It is as well impossible to find another era for Sivadeva's date as expressed in Golmodhitol Inscription. The very suggestion of the era for only one record or even for the matter of that for a few more while there is already an era in existence to fit in the context is absurd. As we have said, there is no reason for Sivadeva to follow an era in discontinuation of the one adopted in his predecessors' inscriptions. Had it been his own era, then the matter would have been different. And certainly the era which was supposed to have been 320 years old at the time this inscription was issued could not be Sivadeva's.

Agreeing with Levi, we shall push the dates of Sivadeva I right in 630 A.D. (=520+110) and if another inscription with 535 date figure is attributed to his reign it will be further removed to 645 A.D. Taking duly the former figure, we have now to disprove the contention put forth in the next chapter that Sivadeva had ceased to rule in that year. But the contention is so strong that it is wholly irrefutable. If we follow Levi we have only ten to twelve years left in the interval after Sivadeva I's death to the restoration of the Lichhavi family. But inscriptions show at least forty eight years of rule by different personage for the same period. In all probabilities Lichhavi restoration occurred some years before 643 A.D., when the Chinese mission had visited Nepal. We can well place this event in about 638 A.D., or a year or two later or earlier. Now by a process of subtracting 48 or 49 from 637 or 638 we can arrive at some date of Sivadeva I. In no case we can push the date of Sivadeva I beyond 612-613 A.D. Therefore, Levi's hypothesis of the era of 110 A.D. is quite unsound. Whatever be the origin of era, the epoch year must be sought at a date which would equate 520 with 589-90 and go even farther backwards round about a year between 68 and 78 A.D., definitely within these ten years.

Could the Samvat of the inscriptions be referred to the Saka year? We have found it from different sources that the Saka era of 78 A.D. was currently adopted in North and South India in the third and fourth and fifth centuries A.D. After the middle of the 4th century for about two hundred years the Gupta era was also concurrently followed.³³ In this context the suggestion would readily come to refer the era of the inscriptions to the Saka Samvat. But the intercalary asadha recorded along with the date figures in each of the inscriptions, dating 449, 489 and 520 cannot be verified in this way.

Levi's analysis labours under two fundamental errors. In the first place he proceeds under an assumption, which always excluded any era either the Saka era or prior to it the one in his consideration. Secondly, he never brought to his mind the Bharadvaja system to verify the intercalary year. It never occurred to him that an intercalation in any month of the first half year was called Adhika Asadha as was suggested by Bharadvaja.

According to Narada-Bharadvaja system, quoted from *Dharmannirname Tirthasarasangraha* by L. Petech, we have "When a Sankranti is raised (i.e. missing) in one of the months beginning with Caitra and ending with Bhadrapada, let there be an additional Asadha month according to the precept of the Narada. When a Sankranti is raised (i.e. is missing) in one of the months beginning with Asvina and ending with Phalgun, they increase (i.e. duplicate) Pausa and thus the addition of a month is prescribed."

"Now, how is the addition of a month in relation with the half-years (*ayana*, the interval between two solstices)? When the passage of the Sun in Cancer, Leo Virgo, Libra, Scorpio or Sagittarius is non-existent (in a lunar month), an additional Asadha is prescribed when the passage of the Sun in Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, and Taurus or Gemini is non-existent (in a lunar month), the wise men make it an intercalary Pausa. The intercalary months if they consider well the two half-years of the non-existent (*sankranti*) are a second Asadha and a second Pausa according to the precepts of Bharadvaja. Thus the chapter on the intercalary months in the *Dharmannirname Tithi saraSangraha*."³⁴

Further, in the 11th and 12th centuries Jimutavahana writes

³³ Pande, *Indian Paleography*, Pp. 186ff.

Also Report of the Indian Calender Reforms Committee.

³⁴ Petech, *Medieval History of Nepal*, Pp. 17-20, Darb. Lib. cat. I. 1634.11 (ff 21b-22a).

to confirm what Narada said for the first half year 'when there are two full moon in (one of the Solar year) months from Vaisakha to tula, this must be known as a duplicated Asadha, with Visnu going to sleep.'*

Unfortunately the Bharadvaja system also proves of no help in this matter. No one system of reckoning, whether it is Surya siddhanta or Arya siddhanta as well as Brahma siddhanta of both schools, brings out an intercalary month in the first six months of all the three years in question. The determination of the era of the first series of inscriptions is, therefore, not an easy affair. We do not want to labour this point further. It would require expert knowledge of Astronomy to arrive at a correct result. This we leave to the astronomers. But for the present we can fix a tentative date to suit our convenience between 68 and 78 A.D. as suggested in the last paragraph.

Is it a Lichhavi era? Sylvain Levi was the person to give currency to the notion of a Lichhavi era. But an era of the Lichhavi is not within our knowledge for any time. So this era has got to be set up only in the background of the inscriptions we have discussed above. But Sylvain Levi's premises for such an era are not likely to hold ground in view of the epoch year being fixed up round about 78 A.D., which is obviously the first year of the Saka era. It is very difficult to introduce the existence of a new era, as this would again go to coincide with the date of the Saka era. Even if it may not prove answering to the phenomenon as we have calculated, one has to get round to the view that the era of these inscriptions was Saka. But for this a little more search may be necessary, if only to explain the astronomical phenomena indicated by the inscriptions. If we accept the possibility of a Lichhavi era, we shall have to base our conclusion on two assumptions, (i) that Manadeva and his successors were unaware of the existence of such an era, and (ii) that the epoch year never coincided with that of the Saka era but it rather preceded the latter with not a narrow margin.

The Lichhavis came into the arena of Nepal after subjugating the Kiratas. The Lichhavi era if at all it was there must commemorate an occasion which gave them initially a victorious entry into the valley of Nepal as Levi suggests in the passage we quoted above.

The evidence in hand does not support the attempt to calculate the date in the inscriptions of Manadeva according to a supposed Lichhavi era of the first or second century B.C.

* Ibid.

*Facts of History as cited by Manadeva's Changu Inscription**I*

1. The Crivatsa is imprinted on the graceful resplendence of his large and vast chest; his chest, his breasts, his arms (of lotus) shine; he feasts . . . the three worlds are the machines of rotation which (he) turns for his continuous distraction, he the imperishable. The Doladri is his residence. Victory to him Hari who is worshipped always by the immortals.

2. by his majesty, by his riches he diminished his troubles, such as King Vrsadeva, the incomparable; his promise was kept by his performances; like the Sun encircled by a mass of dazzling rays, he was surrounded by his well behaved sons, clever, very proud, without caprices and subdued to discipline.

3. His son, master of a prosperous empire, invincible to his enemies in fights, was the King named Cankaradeva . . . very liberal, sincere hearted . . . by his valiance, his charity, his happiness, his riches he acquired a great renown . . . he protected the land by esteemed lieutenants similar to the King of wild beasts.

4. His son excellent in virtuous acts . . . clever, law-abiding or rather the law himself, aspiring to sagacity, excellent in qualities, was the King Dharmadeva. The law itself had nominated him as heir to a great kingdom; his wisdom enriched the history of royal saints, and helped in rejoicing the heart of men.

5. He shone well; . . . to the gods his aims, his successes, were perfect; he possessed purity of body and heart; this prince shone like the Moon. His spouse who was born of a pure race and enjoyed grandeur of riches was the good Rajyavati . . . like the good Laksmi of Hari.

6. After having . . . with rays of his fame illuminated the whole world, the king of men left to the sojourn of heaven as he would to a walk in the park; as if beaten, tormented with fever . . . she languished, she who loved to perform the rites in honour of the gods, before she was separated from him.

II

7. Queen Rajyavati who bears the name of spouse of this king was really Cri in person come after him searching for an occasion to look at him, she in whom was born the irreproachable hero King Manadeva, who . . . like the lunar star in autumn . . . refreshed the world at all times by his beauty.

8. She came to him with a sobbing voice and deep sighings, the face all in tears and she said to her son tenderly "your father is gone to heaven. Ah! my son now that your father has departed what shall I do with life? Exercise, my son, the royalty. I from today will follow your father.

9. What will I do with the chains of hope wrought by the infinite variety of pleasures to live without my husband in this world in which the meeting again appears like an illusion or a dream? I am going." Thus resolute she was and her sorrowful son pressed her feet with his head by affection and spoke to her thus not without pain.

10. "What will I do with the pleasures? What will I do with joys of life if I am separated from you? I wish to be the first to stop living, after me you can go to heaven." Thus speaking the threads of his words strung inside the lotus of his mouth and mingled with the tears, enveloped her like a small bird, that is captured in the net.

11. In company with her son she accomplished in person the funeral rites for her husband; virtue, charity, chastity, abstinences, the holy abstinences had purified her heart; she entirely distributed to the Brahmans her fortune in order to increase the merits of her husband; she only had him at heart during the sacred ceremonies; like Arundhati in person.

12. And this son, treasure of virtue and of nobility, patient, loved by his subjects, acts without speaking, he smiles and while speaking he is always the first to wish, he is energetic without pride; one cannot say that he has not attained the highest knowledge of the world; he is the friend of the afflicted and of orphans; he loves his guests; he causes his petitioners to forget their susceptibilities and fears.

III

13. Throwing offensive and defensive weapons which he wields with skill, he makes known his real bravery; his arms are majestic and graceful; polished gold is not more smooth or clearer than his complexion; his shoulders are broad; the blooming of the petals of the dark lotus rival with his eyes; one would believe that he is the visible and incarnated God of love; this King that causes the merry-making of the coquetry of loved ones.

14. "My father has embellished the land with elegant pillars that he erected; I myself received the baptism of the Ksatriyas in the practice of battles; I embark on an expedition to destroy my enemies towards the eastern land very soon and the princes who will recognize my suzerain authority, I will establish them as vassal kings."

15. It is in these terms that the King spoke to his mother, freed from her mourning and bent before her. "No, my mother, I cannot discharge the obligations which I owe to my father by means of penance and self-mortifications however free from blemishes, it is in the use of weapons to which I am destined that I will be able to pay honour to his holy memory." His mother all joyful gave him her consent.

16. The King then departed by the eastern road and there, all that there existed of disloyal Princes in the provinces of the East had to prostrate themselves and bow their heads letting fall festoons and diadems; he made them obedient to his orders. Then undaunted like a lion shaking his profuse mane he proceeded towards the Western lands.

17. Hearing that the chief of that place was behaving badly he shook his head, touched his arm slowly, which was like an elephant's trunk and said proudly "If he does not come to my call he must, however, submit to my valour. What need is there for a long discourse? I speak in short.

18. "Today, O! my mother's brother, you who are dear to me, cross the Gandaki which is so large, so choppy as to vie with the ocean, with its dreadful whirlwinds and its undulating billows.

Escorted by hundreds of excellent and caparisoned horses and elephants I follow your army in crossing the river". His decision taken, the King carried out his words.

19. Having conquered the town of Malla, he returned to his country by gradual stages; and then the heart happy he gave the Brahmans his inexhaustible riches. And Queen Rajyavati was thus spoken to with a firm voice by his virtuous son : "With a serene heart, O ! my mother, give you also devoutly this as an offering. (Translated by an anonymous writer from Levi's French.)

It appears from the above that during the span of three generations the Lichhavis had consolidated their rule in the valley of Nepal and in the adjoining areas in the Himalayas. In Manadeva's time more territories were annexed to the domain. This inscription has recorded tales of the raids which he had successfully carried into the areas beyond the Gandak and subdued chiefs both in the west and east. The Lichhavis had not only acquired possession over an extensive Kingdom, they had also at the same time entrenched themselves as a strong power in the region.

A Nepalese author has attributed to Manadeva the conquest of the present Gorakhpur district, which he identifies with the Mallapuri

of the Changunarayan Pillar Inscription. But the wording of the inscription does not seem to denote a place like Gorakhpur situated in the plains. According to the inscription Manadeva crosses the turbulent Gandak to invade Mallapuri. The description of the waters of the river suggests that it must be one of a stream flowing along a terrain in the mountainous region. Mallapuri should be either Palpa or a town further west in Piuthan or Dailekh. It must have been a citadel of the Mallas identified with the Khasa tribes of the region.

To quote Dr. R. C. Majumdar :

'It is interesting to recall in this connection that a Maukhari King (either Isvara Varman or Isanavarman) and the later Gupta King Jivita Gupta I are said to have fought against some enemies in the Himalayan region. It is not unlikely that they fought against the Lichhavis of Nepal early in the 6th century A.D., and we may well believe in that case that Manadeva had already established a strong political authority in Nepal, which proved a menace to the safety of the neighbouring regions in the south.'³⁵ For obvious reasons Manadeva's Kingdom does not appear to have extended to areas beyond the outskirts of the present Terai towards the south.

Queen Rajyavati seems to have been a powerful female personality of the time. Manadeva was quite devoted to her. He has dedicated two images of Tribikram, the fifth incarnation of Visnu (Vikrantamurtih), one at Lajimpat and another near the Pasupati shrine,³⁶ with a view to 'enhance the virtuous deeds of his mother' as the inscriptions attached to these iconographs purport to say. In the Victory Pillar Inscription Rajyavati is being presented as a guardian of her son, whose survival was quite essential to instil courage into the despondent heart of the youthful King who was also equally overwhelmed with grief as his mother due to the sorrowful incident of the death of his father. When he returns from his victory march, he offers to his mother all that he has gained. This is an example of a profound regard entertained by a son for his mother. In order to deserve such a deep love and reverence from her son, Rajyavati must have been a loving mother. But she also must have surely wielded much influence over King Manadeva.

Manadeva was not only a great conqueror but he was also a great builder, and a patron of arts. At one place above we have referred to his pillars and sculptures, which happen to be excellent pieces of art creations, and uniquely marvellous for that age. Because Manadeva's

³⁵ C. Cit. *B. C. Law Volume*, P. 637.

³⁶ Levi, III. No. II; Gnoli, III.

records are the first of those with ascertained dates, the value of these brackets and sculptured panels is all the greater to a student of Nepalese history.

While we come to the time of Manadeva we find that for the first time the dynasty in power has victory pillars and records of their achievements and glorious deeds inscribed on slabs of stones. It was left to Manadeva to expand his Kingdom and by other conspicuous deeds to establish the foundation of the greatness of his family.

As for this greatness, the bas relief of Tribikram Visnu (Vikrantamurtih) set up by Manadeva leads a Nepalese author to try to read more than what is warranted by authenticated evidence.³⁷ This man *felt* that the conception of Vamana in the bas relief was inspired by Manadeva's patriotic love for the glorious past of the Kirata age in the history of Nepal. He put forward a contention that Vamana metaphorically conveyed an idea of shortness of stature and hence supported the Kirata affinity of the principal image in the relief. With this premise set up, he then proceeds to imagine that the statue of a horse in the capital over the Asokan pillar at Lumbini said to have been broken to pieces on account of natural calamity or man's vandalism was represented by another horse image accompanying the panel of the sculpture of Trivikram. He tries to show that Trivikram with his horse represented the Kirata King Thunko of Nepal, contemporary of Asoka, who had successfully resisted Indian encroachment on the Nepalese territory at Lumbini by felling the horse statue from the capital of the pillar no sooner than it was erected by the Magadhan King.

To reinforce his argument this man gives his own interpretation of certain lines of the inscription of the pillar. He calls erroneous all other interpretations in this regard. His own interpretation is that Asoka had prohibited animal sacrifice in Lumbini and commended to the inhabitants of the area the Buddhist eightfold path for them to follow.

We do not intend to enter into an acrimonious debate over this issue, for the very premise so built up is so fantastic that any debate will be futile. But one fails to understand how this kind of interpretation of the bas relief image of Trivikram could be linked to Asoka and thereby to the Kirata history of this country.

In Puranas and in other treatises Vamana meant a dwarf.³⁸ In Yajurveda as explained by Swami Dayananda³⁹ Vamana also meant a

³⁷ *Nepal Guardian*, A Miscellany, Pp. 11-21.

³⁸ प्रांशु लभ्ये फले मोहाद् द्वहृत्वि वामनः (Raghuvamsa, 1.3).

³⁹ वामनं प्रशस्तं विज्ञानं विद्यते यस्य स

ritual sacrifice undertaken with wisdom. In Kautilya's Arthashastra there is an expression *Tritiyasyam Kubja Vamana Kirataih*, meaning Kubjas (hunchbacks), Vamana (dwarf), and Kiratas who were to keep watch over the royal compartment. Our author wrongly takes Vamana as a race of the same class as the Kiratas. But any conception of Vamana and Kubja as races of people is incomprehensible.

To our knowledge the word Vamana as it applies to the avatar of Visnu does not even distantly imply any idea of racial affinity with the Indo-Mongol Kirata of supposed dwarfish stature and physical features. Neither the Kiratas in any way could be called dwarfish in height nor they even were bracketed with dwarfs in any ancient treatises as made out by the writer.

I do not know how his interpretation of the expression *ubalike Kate atha-bha-giyecha* in the Lumbini Pillar Inscription is going to help the author to establish the achievement of the Kirati King Thunko represented by the Vamana over Asoka represented by King Vali! This creates an impression that he has the habit of introducing irrelevant considerations to the issue just to make it look imposing. Not to talk of other vital evidences going against his hypothesis we have yet to find out historical data for Thunko, and other rulers of the Kirata dynasty. It is not even ascertained if Thunko was Asoka's contemporary.

But of all the persons why should Thunko, a Buddhist on the author's own admission, commit a sacrilegious act of breaking the pillar which was erected to honour the memory of the Lord? Why Thunko thought fit to strike only the Lumbini pillar, and not the Rampurwa and Lauria Nandangarh pillars that lie much closer to his seat of power in the Nepal valley? Does our author then maintain that Nepal's present international boundary line on the south was the same as it is today? And then of all the persons why Manadeva, a devotee of Visnu, and a Kastriya par excellence who was also not in anyway disrespectful to Buddha* should take upon himself the task of commemorating the occasion to glorify a Kirata? Equally he has also failed to explain why Thunko himself left no trace of his exploits, as it was open to the Kirata King to inscribe in the same pillar whatever he wanted. Manadeva has not a word to say about this event or about the Kiratas in the inscriptions. But our author readily offers his explanation, although at times in the same article he has rejected many

* According to this author Manadeva who had constructed a monastery after his own name must have been a devotee of Sakyamuni.

a theory because these had not been corroborated by the data of Inscriptions.

The iconographic representation of Vamana is not a particular creation of Nepal. Whenever the Trivikram-Vali episode is found depicted, the scene may have a horse in the background amidst other objects of the entire paraphernalia of Asvamedha Yajna. How will our author account for the existence of a horse in a similar panel of Trivikram traced in India?⁴⁰ As a matter of fact the bas relief in question does not look different from such reliefs available in India, and the agreement exhibited in features between these is down to the minutest point in details.⁴¹

The theme of the bas relief is very simple. This is an ordinary theme of Indian classical sculpture. The representation depicts the exploits of Vamana as the fifth incarnation of Visnu. King Manadeva, the donor, in his inscription says that 'having a mind to do good to his mother, and always to enhance her virtues he caused to build the temple as Laksmi and set up the image of Visnu Vikrantamurtih, the Lord of the Universe, who was exalted by gods and sages. The object of constructing the temple with Vikrantamurti as the principal deity is clear. It was to honour his mother's memory. In the Inscription No. I Rajyavati has been compared with Laksmi (Sri). So, here the temple was conceived in the likeness of Laksmi. There is nothing allegorical in the representation. The very basis of our author's imagery is illogical and fantastic.

Manadeva's reign was certainly eventful as we suggested earlier. But why should one build a hypothesis of supposed eventfulness and all on false premises?

Towards the end of his career Manadeva appears to have assumed a full royal title of Maharaja as appears from an unpublished inscription.⁴² (427 Samvat). He is also the first king of Nepal to have to his name records of inscriptions that are dated. These factors together with the pillars and images speak eloquently about his outstanding position in the history of Ancient Nepal. He did not need to invoke the so called glory of the Kirata King to prove his own greatness.

Referring to the era of Manadeva's inscriptions, the same author wrote 'this new Lichhavi era of Nepal is unlike any other contemporary eras of India in that it records the year, the month by name, the

⁴⁰ JBRS, XL, 4, Pp. 300-02.

⁴¹ J. N. Banerji : *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Plate, XXIV.

T. A. G. Rao: *Elements of Hindu Iconography* in 2 volumes, Vol. I, p. 161 ff.

⁴² In the possession of the Archaeological Department.

fortnightly phase of the moon, and the actual date on which the event has taken place. Paleographically this (Manadeva's) inscription can be safely assigned to second and third century A.D.' He further says, 'On the authority of Dr. Buhler the Indians divided their year into three seasons consisting of four months each, and the months were expressed in numerical order. . . . This system prevailed in India from the age of Asoka down to the fifth century A.D. and till considerably late in South India.'

But all this is absolutely wrong. As early as the first century A.D. we have an inscription of the time of Rudradaman, which has *Varse dvipanchase (50+2) phagun (Phalgun) bahulasa (dark fortnight) dvitiyabare (second day)*.⁴³ The Indo-Bactrians also mentioned the month and day in their records.⁴⁴ All Saka Pahlava (Scytho-Parthians) inscriptions except the earliest two have the name of the month, fortnight according to the phase of the moon and the day. One inscription, that of Gondapharnes, reads *Mahatayasa Guduvhrasa Vasa 20+4+1+1 samvatsarayeti satimaye 100+1+1+1 Vesakhasa masasa divase prathame pure bahale pakse*.⁴⁵ It is true that a few inscriptions of the Indo-scythians and Kusanas have Greek or Macedonian months. But this does not detract from the usual mode of reckoning followed in records of the period. After the Kusana period, all inscriptions, whether following Vikrama, Krita, Malava or Saka eras, mention in particular month, fortnight and day by name.⁴⁶ The Nepal King Manadeva's predecessors, the Guptas in the Indo-Gangetic plain without exception followed the same rule.⁴⁷

Now it appears that our author has no intimate knowledge of the inscriptions of ancient India, he wrote with half digested materials he received from alien scholars and these also written half a century ago. Naturally the conclusions reached on that basis appear quite inconsistent with facts of our history.

But this is a clue to understanding the working of our author's mind which was responsible for distorting some of the simple and clear data of the documents of our history. Obviously the man who tried to create a fuss out of 'Thunko's achievement' proceeded to argue his case from an insufficient knowledge of Indian and Nepalese history.

⁴³ Andhau Stone Inscriptions, EI, XVI, 23ff.

⁴⁴ Shinkot steatite casket Inscriptions of the reign of Menander, EI, XXIV, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Takht-i-Bahi stone, CII, II, p. 62; Also Indian Paleography by R. B.

⁴⁶ Nandayupa Inscription, EI, XXVII, Banala and Badva Yupa Inscriptions, EI, XXIII, p. 52.

⁴⁷ XXI, p. 8ff; CII, III, Pp. 25-31.

It may be casually mentioned here that not only the system of reckoning but also the orthographic and etymological data in the inscriptions of Manadeva and his successors are very much allied to those of the Indian inscriptions belonging to the Gupta period.

Chronology Rectified

From certain verses of the Inscription No. I, we have an idea of the personalities of Manadeva and of his predecessors. In some of the paragraphs above we have also in a way defined the regnal data of Manadeva, which should be interpreted as suggested in terms of an era beginning from a certain year in between 68 and 78 A.D. (both dates inclusive). It is now the stage to fix even though tentatively the various regnal years of these rulers vis-a-vis the date of the inscriptions. We have prepared a table for this purpose, which would also include some of Manadeva's successors upto Bhimarjunadeva. This table would bring in 13 names of the Lichhavi dynasty in verification of the order stated by Jayadeva's inscription (BGL's 15). For the allotment of regnal years, we start with Manadeva. The first available date of Manadeva has been rendered $386 \div 68 - 78 = 454 - 464$. If we allot 25 years each on the average to the predecessors of Manadeva, the first date of the reign of Vrsadeva would be placed somewhere in 386-90 A.D. Dates of other rulers would follow consecutively in that order and where inscriptional data are available they would tend to be determined in the light of the evidence provided in them. Now to the table proper,⁴⁸

	Dates of inscription	Probable dates of reign.	In terms of C.E.
Vrsadeva		305-330	387-412
Sankaradeva		330-355	412-437
Dharmadeva		355-384	437-462
Manadeva	386-427	384-427	462-505
Mahideva		427-428	505-506
Vasantadeva	428-454	428-465	510-543
Ramadeva	469	465-482	543-560
Ganadeva	482-489	482-500	560-578
Sivadeva	510-520	500-535	575-86-
	-535		616-17

Udayadeva who died a Yuvaraja—613 A.D.

Dhruvadeva Bhimarjunadeva

⁴⁸ We have calculated the figures in the C. E. column according to the epoch year of 78. If one has to follow 68, ten years will have to be deducted.

Manadeva of Sumatitantra with his date Saka 498 could be accommodated in between Ganadeva and Sivadeva I.

Manadeva's Successors

The above list differs much from the one that would emerge if the same was framed on the basis of the genealogies provided in the Inscriptions, Nos. 1 and 15 when they are put together. Three names which prominently figure as rulers in some other inscriptions are not mentioned at all in these two inscriptions. One name, that of Mahideva, stands in the Inscription No. 15 in spite of the absence of any records of inscriptions in his name. The interval between the last record of Manadeva and the first record of Vasantadeva is not of more than a year. Quite possibly this monarch had a short reign. He was probably too much engaged in internal squabbles to think of activities worthy to be engraved in stones. As the Mahasamantas of the Gupta family appear to be dominant in the scene after him it can be guessed that he was ousted, because of their conspiracy. In one inscription the chief Samanta of the day Kramalilah arrogates to himself the title of Maharaja as did the Rana Prime Ministers since 1846 for about hundred years. This shows the extent of their powers. But Mahideva is respectfully noted in one of the inscriptions by Jisnugupta. The expression used is Bhattaraka Maharaja Sri Vasuraja, Sri Mahideva, Sri Manadeva, Sri Ganadeva, Srmat Pitamaha Sri Bhumagupta *ity etaih purvarajavih asmadgurubhih* etc.⁴⁹ Jisnugupta places his grandfather Bhumigupta in the same status and order with the Lichhavi monarchs. It was certainly intended to convey the impression that his Gupta ancestor enjoyed rank and power equal to those of the Lichhavi Kings who were then seated on the throne. Indeed for about half a century the three Gupta personalities, Ravigupta, Kramalilah and Bhaumagupta were all in all. As we search in vain about them in Sivadeva's inscriptions, we conclude that with Sivadeva on the throne the Gupta family could no longer maintain their advantageous position in the state. There is an interregnum of about 25 years between Ganadeva and Sivadeva I, 489-515, which is not filled by any data of inscriptions. Could this be explained by referring to a protracted civil war between the Samanta Guptas and Amsuvarman's collaborators?

In the beginning Vasantadeva probably ruled without the aid of the Gupta Prime Minister. But the dutaka is a Gupta potentate,

⁴⁹ Gnoli, LIV: Itihas Prakas, I, Pp. 58-59.

Virochanagupta.⁵⁰ That means the Gupta family was gaining in strength in the palace, the Gupta dutaka of the first inscription is simply Yajnika, the performer of sacrifices. The next two inscriptions (435 and 449) have as dutaka Sarvadandanayak Mahapratihara Ravigupta.⁵¹ The style is changed. The all powerful Gupta Prime Minister is functioning in full glory and power. Ravigupta must have been appointed a few years earlier than S 435. If Sarvadandanayaka and Mahapratihara mean Generalissimo and Prime Minister, then there is no doubt that this man enjoyed all the powers of a dictator behind the throne. In another inscription discovered at the village of Balambu (4 to 5 miles west of Kathmandu) there is one more figure Maharaja Mahasamanta Kramlilah along with Ravigupta with the usual designation,⁵² who stand as advisers of the King for the decree. Obviously Ravigupta even as Prime Minister was not able to ignore this particular Mahasamanta who had grown to stature. We are not in a position to trace the genealogy of this man. But when we see the word Kusali used after his name in an inscription of Ramadeva in the same manner as it is done in all cases where there are royal names,⁵³ we cannot refrain from saying that Kramalilah with the title of the Maharaja acknowledged by the ruling sovereign had enjoyed the most advantageous position to overshadow the throne and function from behind as the sole ruler of the country.

It appears that as time passes the Gupta Prime Minister grows in strength, appears alongside of the sovereign in inscriptions as an adviser to overshadow him and finally as in the case of the last two reigns of the period adopt pompous titles in contrast to show the puppet—like position of the person on the throne. As for example, *Parama daivata Bappa Bhattaraka Maharaja Sri Padanudhyata Srutanaya daya dana daksinya punya pratapa vikasita kirtih bhattaraka Maharaja Kusali* (Gnoli XII, XIII) is the usual title adopted by Vasantadeva but in none others whether in inscriptions of Ramadeva or Ganadeva we have more than the usual simple designation, Bhattaraka Maharaja.

From another inscription of Chowkitar Balambu,⁵⁴ which is the first of Ganadeva, we have the last of such Gupta figures of repute, by name Sarvadandanayaka Mahapratihara Bhaumagupta identified as Jisnugupta's grandfather's elder brother (vide his inscription).

In the inscription of Tyagal tole Deopatan Bhaumagupta is known

⁵⁰ Gnoli, XII.

⁵¹ B. G. L., III, Gnoli, XIII; Levi, III, vi; Gnoli, XIV.

⁵² Gnoli, XV. ⁵³ Gnoli, XVII.

⁵⁴ Gnoli, XIX.

as *Parama daivata Sri Bhaumagupta padanudhyata vidita vinaya Saswat Kusala Karmani Upahita paramanugraha prakrista kulajanma*, which is in contrast to the simple address of the ruler.⁵⁵ This confirms our statement of the last paragraph.

We shall say more about these Guptas in the next section.

As already observed the two decades since Samvat 489 are unfilled by inscriptional data. But it does not seem to have been covered by a new regime. To Sivadeva who appears under a new designation of Lichhavi Kulaketu can be ascribed a mutilated stone inscription of S 515. He has twelve others, and all these are decrees of his issued with the advice of Mahasamanta Amsuvarman.⁵⁶ None of his inscriptions have omitted to mention Amsuvarman, and in all he is so highly praised that one is sometimes tempted to treat the statement as being made by a weak monarch to humour his superbly powerful minister. It is said that King Sivadeva unlike his compatriots in the history who have left records in stone or copper says little about himself except to call himself Bappa Padanudhyata and the banner of the Lichhavi family, the only adjective Sivadeva has used for himself, and this invariably in all inscriptions.⁵⁷ But this is not wholly true. Although he does not use competing titles, he has at least some epithets such as *aparimita guna Samudayobhuasita Yasah or in absence Sruta nayavinaya Saurya dhairya virryadya sesa Sadguna ganadhara*⁵⁸ or in absence of both *prasastanekaguna ganadhara*.⁵⁹ Even so, there is no doubt that all expressions signifying praise and glory are as it were reserved for his Mahasamanta. At one place he is designated as Maharajadhiraja,⁶⁰ at another he is *Pranata Samanta Siromani*. Jewel of the Samantas, their destroyer and whose glories shine in the firmament by dint of his own deeds.⁶¹ We have dwelt on this aspect of the problem in the next chapter where Amsuvarman's life and character have been considered in detail. For the present it will suffice to say that from the very start of his reign Sivadeva I was under the tutelage of Amsuvarman who was the power of the realm and guided the destiny of the nation in the King's name. The following extract from one of Sivadeva's inscriptions is reproduced here, and it is hoped that a convincing proof of the domineering position of the High Feudatory is obtained thereby :

⁵⁵ Gnoli, XX.

⁵⁶ Gnoli, XXII to XXXIV.

⁵⁷ Levi, III. ⁵⁸ B. G. L., V, Gnoli, XXVII.

⁵⁹ Gnoli, XXXIV. ⁶⁰ Gnoli, XXXIII.

⁶¹ Bengal, I; B. G. L., IA, XIV Pp. 97ff; Gnoli, XXIV; Levi, IX; Gnoli XXV; Gnoli, XXXIV.

aparimita guna sampat Lichhavi Kulanandakaro bhattaraka maharaja Sri Sivadeva Kusali Svagunamanimayukhaloka dhvastagnanatimirena bhagvat bhavapada pankaja pranamanustana tataparyyopattayatihita Sreyasa Svabhujayuga balotbata khila bairi barggena Sri mahasamanta Amsuvarmana Vignapitena (Levi, XII; Gnoli, XXXI).

The Ahir Guptas

The Goala or Ahir dynasty of Nepal is placed at the beginning of the Nepalese history. These kings as having the Guptan appendage after their names have been traced to the Gupta chronology and according to Dr. Jayaswal they form only a branch of the Imperial Guptas.

Their position in the history, however, has been wrongly antedated. The Gupta influence dates in the fourth century A.D. and, therefore, there is absolutely no ground to push them off to the period previous to the Lichhavis. They must come sometime after the fifth century A.D. as confirmed by the MMK, which depicts a stage of anarchy after Manadeva and a situation mainly dominated by these Guptas.⁶²

Though M. Levi and others have tried to dismiss the existence of this dynasty as a mere chronological figment, we have from the MMK and from several other sources reliable evidence as to their inhabitation and rule in the valley. We have also a reference to some Gupta personages in Nepalese inscriptions (IA, ix, p. 16 ff.). But no one can say with certainty that they ever ruled from the throne.

The question now to be discussed is, are they a branch of the Imperial Guptas? On this question Jayaswal's learned opinion is most conclusive. The only point we like to add here is that the chronicler has further clarified the position by the caste distinction of the Guptas as Ahirs, which not only supports the identification between the two lines but also confirms the nature of the caste of the Imperial Guptas who have been mentioned as Ahir or Abhir in the Indian Chronologies.

We have an inscription of the mother of Bhaumagupta, where she calls herself as Ahiri.⁶³ This Bhaumagupta appears as Generalissimo and grand usher in Ganadeva's inscriptions. Now all doubt is cleared about the Abhir family of the Nepal Guptas.

The kinetic identification rests also on the close resemblance of the coinage of the two stocks, the expression being noticeable in the images as Garuda in the coin of Jayagupta, which is significant of their

⁶² *Sastrasampata bidhwasta vidyalupla luptarajano mlechha taskara sevinah.*

⁶³ Gnoli, XVI.

Guptan origin and an acknowledgment of that to a common emblem (JBORS, 1936, iii, p. 244).

Fleet has calculated the first date for the dynasty taking the initial year of the Gupta era and adding to it 88, which is calculated as 407-08 A.D. Our calculation, however, has shown that the dynasty must have come to power sometime in the fifties of the fifth century A.D. which are the probable dates for Manadeva and his successor. For the first time the Gupta personages figure as important officers of the State⁶⁴ in Vasantadeva's inscription and thereafter for the next three generations of rulers.

Bhumigupta seems to be the same person as Bhugupta whose name the MMK has noted. He is Bhaumagupta in all inscriptional records⁶⁵ except in Jisnugupta's reference to him as his grandfather, where he spells Bhumi. He might be an earlier contemporary of Amsuvarman and according to Kirkpatrick's authority his son and successor was the last ruler of this line. The chronicle mentions the present day little village of Matatirtha on the north west ridge of the valley as the capital of the Ahir Guptas.

According to chronicles the following is the list of powerful personages belonging to this dynasty who preceded Bhugupta. K. P. Jayswal allocates the following probable dates for their reigns :—

Paramagupta	...	C. 500	A.D.
Harsagupta	...	C. 525	A.D.
Manigupta	...	C. 550	A.D.
Visnugupta	...	C. 575	A.C.
Yaksagupta—Jayagupta II(K)		590	A.D.

Paramagupta is identified with Parakrama of MMK, who wrested power from the Lichhavis. He is probably Kramalilah,—The Maharaja Samanta of the reign of Vasantadeva and Ramadeva.⁶⁶ His grandson Bhismagupta had two sons, one of whom ruled from Simraongarh, twenty miles south east of Raxaul. The other son Visnugupta had to leave the Nepal valley under pressure of invasion by Manadeva II identified with the one of Sumatitantra, but the final expulsion of the dynasty took place some years later at the hands of Manadeva's successor. There was a short lived revival under Yaksagupta who is identified with Vatsaka of MMK. There is also a coin with the legend Vaisravana, which is ascribed to Yaksagupta. The coin which has the

⁶⁴ I. A., XIV, P. 345, *Bhuktmana Guptabarsh* and not *Guptam Jatvarsh*, according to Fleet, signifies the calculation according to Gupta era. Levi regards the earlier Guptas as mere fictitious names (ii, p. 158).

⁶⁵ Gnoli, XIX, XX.

⁶⁶ Inscriptions, Gnoli, Op. Cit.

image of a man with a bull has, on all opinions, been declared to belong to Pre-Amsuvarman era and therefore to the reign of Yaksagupta.

Historians have said that there was another line of the same dynasty seated in the Terai, which had branched off from the main line since the time of Jisnugupta. Its foremost representative was Jayagupta II whose coins, gold and copper, were dug out from the ruins in Champaran. These coins give inscriptions in Guptan character of the age of Harsa. A clay mould also has been traced to him out of the Nalanda excavated store (JBORS, *ibid*, p. 215). But whether it will be proper to connect him with Jisnugupta cannot be said with certainty, for the above is just a guess work.

The chronicles give yet one more line of three rulers following Jayagupta II. It is not at all improbable in view of the coins of Varasinha available in the Terai that Jayagupta's dynasty was superseded by that of Varasinha. It may be that this line continued to rule in the Terai as feudal lords upto the accession of Amsuvarman to power, who finally liquidated the Gupta dynasty.

However, before they were ousted, the Guptas appear to have held the most predominant place in the affairs of the State. The account of their having set up their own regime must not be true. But there cannot be any doubt that for about a period of 75 years they constituted the real power behind the throne. In all records of inscriptions issued by Vasantadeva, Ramadeva and Ganadeva they enjoy the same status as goes to Amsuvarman and Jisnugupta under their respective sovereigns. If Amsuvarman and Jisnugupta have been designated as *de facto* rulers, there is no reason that the same designation should be denied to Ravigupta, Kramalilah and Bhaumagupta who figure in the earlier inscriptions. The author of the *Manjusritantra* had probably accepted his story from a biased source. It shows bias against the Gupta family.

Religion in Early Nepal

Although no idea of the time while the earliest aboriginal beliefs played the part of religion in early Nepal could be obtained from records, we get a glimpse of the prevalence of the cult of Visnu and Siva from the very earliest inscriptions available to us.

Manadeva invokes the blessing of Hari in his Changu Narayana Pillar Inscription.⁶⁷ He also constructs a temple in honour of Visnu Vikrantamurti and worships his image.⁶⁸ His queen Ksemasundari builds

⁶⁷ Levi, No. I.

⁶⁸ Gnoli, III.

with devotion a temple to harbour a Sivalinga.⁶⁹ Another queen of his, Vijaya Swamini, honours goddess Vijaya Sri whose image she set up in a temple.⁷⁰ By Manadeva's order Naravarman sets up a Sivalinga.

During his reign Ratnasangha establishes a shrine of Ratnesvar⁷¹ and Guhyamitra, the leader of the merchant community, erected an image of the Sun-god (Divakara) by name Indra.⁷² Others followed suit in setting up Sivalingas and building temples.⁷³ One Abhiri princess worshipped Siva Anuparamesvara⁷⁴ in a temple of her own construction. Ganadeva announces that Bhaumagupta performed a great act of piety by erecting an image of Sankara-Narayana combining in one the two manifestation of God, Murari and Isvara.⁷⁵ With a few exceptions all these inscriptions are full of devotional themes of songs and praise to one or either of the two supreme deities of the Siva-Visnu Sect.

In the seventh century A.D. one of Nepal's most illustrious Lichhavi Kings, Jayadeva II, referred in his inscription to all his ancestors as devotees of Siva.⁷⁶

Thus the old thesis that the Lichhavi rulers while entering Nepal had carried the the cult of Buddhism does not hold ground. The message of Buddhism influenced the Lichhavi rulers of Nepal only at a very late stage.

From the Inscription of Manadeva it looks quite certain that he and his predecessors were all followers of Siva and Visnu. There is not a line or a word to suggest that any one of them accepted the Buddhist cult. There is not even a distant reference to Buddhism in these documents. Probably the monastery named after Mana(deva) came into existence much later, and it might have been constructed by one of his successors who wanted to pay homage to his memory in that way. As Manadeva Vihara figures in the contents of the Inscriptions of the time of Amsuvarman, it is also quite likely that Manadeva II was the person meant to have been associated with the monastery of that name.

The omission of any reference to Buddhism also in the later inscriptions issued in the time of Manadeva's successors indicates that the early Lichhavi rulers were all of them out and out followers of Saivism and Visnuism.

⁶⁹ Lazimpat Stone Inscription, also published in *Itihas Samsodhan*, 41.

⁷⁰ Palanchok Stela.

⁷¹ Gnoli, VI.

⁷² Levi, No. III.

⁷³ Gnoli, X (Te-bahal).

⁷⁴ Gnoli, IV.

⁷⁵ Gnoli, XX.

⁷⁶ B. G. L. 15.

It is possible that Buddhism in this period had been totally overshadowed. But it may have continued to be as much popular with the masses as Saivism. Nevertheless it is difficult to ascertain the position of Buddhist faith in ancient Nepal in view of the lack of any kind of materials bearing on the subject. The question is, did it ever appear as a major religion in the very early centuries of Nepalese history?

For the first time the reference to Buddhism as such is available from an inscription of Amsuvarman dated Samvat 32 (Levi, XIX) which records donation of some money to certain monasteries (Vihara).

Both Mahayana and Hinayana had obtained considerable following during the time of Amsuvarman.

There is no direct evidence of the time when Buddhism was introduced into Nepal. While Hiuen Tsang wrote about Nepal Buddhism seems to have been widely practised. This is the only reliable evidence of the prevalence of this cult in the 7th century coming from an alien source in addition to the contemporary reference of the Nepalese inscriptions. If a legendary tale is to be cited then there is the *Mulasarvastivada Vinaya* (vide below) which talks of Ananda, the Lord's own disciple, paying a visit to the Nepal valley. This meant that the inhabitants of Nepal were converted into Buddhism during the time of Lord Buddha himself. Recently some persons have tried to draw an inference from certain undefined sources attributing to some of our ancient stupas intimate associations with Buddha Kasyapa and Krakuchhanda. The Swayambhu Purana, a work of the 15th century A.D., has the very Primordial Buddha in the valley blossoming as Primal energy in the shape of a hill and this was long long before Sakyamuni was born. But one does not know how far to give credence to these accounts.

Undoubtedly, if the earlier group of inscriptions are non-communicative on this point, we are apt to read more than an ordinary significance in their silence. But any attempt to try to jump to a conclusion without the adequate evidence in support should be discouraged. There is no doubt about the prevalence of Brahmanical cult since the very beginning of our history. As such if ever a suggestion was made ascribing Saiva influence to the advent of Gupta Samantas, this should also be discarded. But nothing about Buddhism as it obtained in ancient Nepal should be entertained without definite evidence to confirm or to contradict.

CHAPTER IV

AMSUVARMAN AND HIS GUPTA SUCCESSORS

I

For the history of Nepal upto the time of Amsuvarman we have to wholly depend on a weak structure of insufficiently proved evidence supplied by the confusing data of various inscriptions and exaggerated and contradictory accounts of local legends. The reign of Amsuvarman, however, can be established by correct historical references from the contemporary accounts of Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) and from locally traced inscriptions, which are nevertheless conclusive and, therefore, there is all truth in the statement that his date is a pivot in the history of Nepal to move up and down for several centuries.¹

From local evidence gathered through inscriptions of himself and of Sivadeva I², Amsuvarman is known as early as Samvat 30 as the contemporary of the latter and as his Mahasamanta (High Feudatory). The last of the series of such inscriptions have indicated also a changed status, popularly ascribed to his royalty which he assumed towards the end of his reign. But the epoch of these inscriptions is still being wrongly attributed to Harsa era in complete ignorance or disregard of foreign evidence, which has confused the main basis of Amsuvarman's history. We have now to see how the reference to Harsa era or any other era is resting on weak grounds.

According to views ascribing the epoch to 606-07 A.D.³ to which almost all the authors⁴ up till now with the exception of M. Levi and Jayaswal have unanimously subscribed, the following causes supply sufficient grounds for not taking it as otherwise.

(1) The account of the *Vamsavali* (chronology) purports that Vikramaditya conquered Nepal just before Amsuvarman founded the Thakuri dynasty, which must be an indirect allusion to Harsa's conquest of Nepal.⁵

(2) According to the same authority we have the existence of

¹ K. P. Jayaswal, JBORS, 1936, III, p. 161.

² IA, IX, Pp. 170-78; Levi, III, Pp. 61-69.

³ Cunningham, *Indian Eras*, Pp. 64ff, 157ff.

Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, (CII, III), p. 178.

⁴ IA, XIII, 412ff; XIV, p. 349ff; Basak, *History of N.E. India*, Pp. 239-302; H. C. Ray, *Dynastic History of India*, Vol. I, Pp. 786-92.

⁵ Bhagwan Lal Indraji; IA, XIII, p. 420; Wright, p. 130; Archaeological Survey Report, i, p. 280.

the Vaisya Rajput dynasty at Nawakot which the chronicler referred to in connection with his lineage, which must be taken to show Harsa's establishment of his kinsmen in the hills after his victory over the Lichhavis. The word Panchalika in his inscriptions is a reference to his origin from Panchala.⁶

(3) Sri Harsa was a Vaisya Rajput as also confirmed by Yuan Chwang who calls him Feshe and therefore Amsuvarman, a Vaisya Rajput, must be his relative and nominee to the throne in Nepal.⁷

(4) The passage in *Harsa Charitam* of Banabhatta, which literally means 'the taking of Tushara Shaila' is a reference to his conquest of the hill kingdom of Nepal.⁸

(5) The statement of Yuan Chawang that Amsuvarman was a past sovereign is wrong and must have been based on hear-say information, as his note was taken in Vaisali and not in Nepal.⁹

(6) The identity between their respective paleographs of the two rulers means that one is the subordinate of the other.¹⁰

(7) The fact of Pausa intercalation which shows such a phenomenon only in 640 A.D. as applicable to Amsuvarman's period confirms the Harsa epoch of Amsuvarman's inscription from astronomical and inscriptional data.¹¹

(8) Aditya Sena, the great-grand-father of Jayadeva II of (S) 153, has used Harsa era 88 and it is but natural that his grandson should have followed the same era 73 years later, which will put again Amsuvarman's inscriptions to similar position as belonging to the same series of lower dated epigraphic evidence.¹²

Against the above we have the following :

(1) The account of Vikramaditya's invasion of Nepal is quite wrong as not only no Vikramaditya came to Nepal but also Harsa's

⁶ IA, IX, IV; Levi, III, No. 13, IA, XIII; Fleet IA, XIV.

⁷ Vaisya as Feshi is identified by A. Cunningham in his *Ancient Geography of India*, Pp. 432-33. Also see Buhler, EP. Indica 1, p. 68, note 4; Hoernlé, IP AS, 1903, p. 35.

⁸ IA, ix, pp. 342-51, GI, pp. 177-91; XIII, p. 420 ff.

⁹ IA, IX, Pp. 342-51, GI, Pp. 177-91; IA, XIII, p. 420ff.

In *Naisadha* there is a line *nīpeya Nepala Nripala palaya* (12, 43).

¹⁰ IA, XIII, p. 421; Levi, Le Népal (II, 65) also believes in this assumption, though his grounds of doing so and his conclusion are different.

¹¹ R. D. Banerji in EI, IX, Pp. 286-87, Pannikar supports the Harsa Era in *Sri Harsa of Kanauj*, p. 57 (1922). V. Smith (*Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, p. 280) and Ettinghansen also support the same view.

¹² G. Buhler in IA, XIX, 1890, p. 49. Also see the views of Prof. Schram of Vienna as quoted by him in IA, XV, p. 338. He obtained the mean intercalation of the Pausa in 640 A.D. so that the epoch of the era in the inscription dating Samvat 34 (Bendall Journey, p. 74) fell in 606-07 A.D.

¹³ Arch. Survey, Report, XV, PL XI, XVI, Pp. 73-76; EI, VIII, p. 40 for his Junagarh Inscription of 72 A.D. The above are from Apsan inscription.

conquest never extended beyond the present boundary of the Gorakhpur district. The chronicler on whose veracity of accounts our scholars have relied to suit their own convenience misinterpreted the term Samvat in Amsuvarman's inscriptions to have followed the epoch of the Vikrama era. But even he (Amsuvarman) does not mention Harsa who in his turn did not use the title of Vikramaditya.¹³

(2) His (Harsa's) settlement in the valley is equally wrong as he never visited it. On the other hand the alleged settlement of the Vaisya Rajput in the valley is anterior to Harsa's accession to power (IA, IX, p. 168; Levi, III, pp. 55-68). Panchalika does not indicate allusion to the region of Panchala, nor his (Amsuvarman) visit to Prayag as mentioned by the chronicle stands valid with reference to the place at the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuna.¹⁴ In Nepal such places of pilgrimage have only local connotation and they refer to areas inside the valley. Panchala is modern Panauti¹⁵ and Prawag is near the pond of Godavari, six miles south east of Kathmandu; Panchalika, therefore, should be understood as meaning inhabitants of Panauti or alternatively a committee of management as rightly interpreted by Bhagwanlalji.

(3) Amsuvarman, though stated to be a Rajput by the chronicler, was not of the stock to which Sri Harsa belonged, as no reference to the Vaisya Rajput clan is made in his connection,¹⁶ while the inscriptions are silent about his lineage to dismiss any such inference.

(4) The passage in the *Harsa Charitam* has no other signification than what is intended for literally and there is no justification to interpret the story as something connected with Harsa's conquest of Nepal, when we find that not only the reference is vague but it also is capable of an entirely different interpretation and perhaps the only right interpretation is the one by which Turusa may stand for the country of the Rishikas in the North-Western frontier.¹⁷

(5) The statement of Yuan Chwang is not based on hearsay evidence, for not only there is adequate reason to support the fact of his visit in this valley but there is also no ground to disbelieve it as well as to dismiss his observation as mere hearsay, when we find in him an actual observer of things and men in all respects and it is only logical that he might have written his note on Nepal on correct information if not by personal investigation on the spot. M. Julien maintains on the basis of

¹³ EI, VIII, P. 313; EI, IX, No. III, P. 313; R. C. Tripathi, History of Kanauj, Pp. 96, 135.

¹⁴ Wright, p. 133. E. A. Pires, The Maukharis, p. 134.

¹⁵ Levi, II, p. 144.

¹⁶ Wright, p. 133.

¹⁷ Levi, II, Pp. 143-44. Also read M. Ettinghansen 'Harasvardan et Poet', 1906, p. 47.

Siyaki's translation of the pilgrim's memories¹⁸ that he visited Nepal as he has expressly omitted this country from the list of those not visited by him, which were those lying beyond Samatata.¹⁹ Amsuvarman is referred to in his note as a King ruling just before 637 A.D., the year of Yuan Chwang's visit to Vaisali and Nepal. We have, therefore, no tenable ground to take him as alive till 645 A.D.; which is the only conclusion to be arrived at, when his inscription of the year 39 is referred to the Harsa era.²⁰ There is yet another proof against regarding Amsuvarman as alive in 645 A.D., for in that year the T'ang Annals tell us that the ruler in Nepal was some body else 'Na-lini-famo' by name, which certainly is not the same as 'An-chu-Famo'²¹, the name used by the pilgrim for Amsuvarman.²² Similarly the attempt to connect him with Yasodharman of Malwa must be dismissed as Amsuvarman is referred to in Yuan Chwang's notes as a recent King.²³

(6) As regards paleographic evidence not only the paleograph in Nepal has a retardaire characteristic, but also on R. D. Banerji's own admission it resembles much like that presented in Yasodharman's Mandar inscription, which shows the inconclusive and deceptive nature of such evidence.²⁴ Paleographically the significance of contemporary Nepalese inscriptions is much helpful and one such of Jisnugupta's inscriptions definitely puts his death much earlier than 639 A.D.²⁵ by its reference to the former as the ruler ruling before 639 A.D. (Thankot Inscription).

(7) The intercalation in Pausa must be referred to only one year, the year 629 A.D. and not to any year beyond that²⁶. Bendall's calculation was based on Brahma Siddhanta (journey, p. 8) which according to Sewell (Siddhantas and the Indian Calendar, P. X) is too far-fetched as Brahmāsiddhanta was of a period definitely post Amsuvarman and therefore, cannot be said to have held the field in 629 or before. This also negatives Levi's statement that according to Brahma

¹⁸ Julien, *Memorie*, Tome I, p. 408; Beal, II, Pp. 81-82; IA, IX, p. 419.

¹⁹ Watters, II, p. 187; Cunningham, *AGI*, p. 646; *JRAS*, XVII, p. 126.

²⁰ IA, IX, p. 170.

²¹ Levi, I, Pp. 154-55. The statement as to Amsu's death at the time when Yuan Chwang took his note is obvious from his reference to him as a past King.

²² Levi, I, Pp. 160, 165, 166; II, Pp. 165-66; IA, 1894, Pp. 60-67; IA, 1900, p. 304.

²³ According to the author who likes to bring Narendradeva's rule in 636 A.D. and who thinks it unlikely that Narendra would have ruled for 70 years to 712 A.D. Amsuvarman began his era in 538 A.D. We have seen how fantastic this assertion is in view of the clear statement of Yuan Chwang who certainly meant Amsuvarman and he alone by the Chinese version of Ang-chu-fa-mo. For the author's views read *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1933, p. 308.

²⁴ EI., IX, Pp. 286-87.

²⁵ *JBORS*, III, p. 206.

²⁶ Levi, III, p. 104; p. 117.

Siddhanta we have an intercalation in 629 A.D.²⁷ for in that year we have such a phenomenon only according to the old Arya Siddhanta. If Brahma Siddhanta is brought to bear on the argument, then the inscription must be referred to make the year 34 correspond to 602 or 621 A.D. but not to 629 A.D.²⁸ We also have to bear in mind that ordinarily intercalary months are regarded inauspicious unless the second month is intended for the celebration of the occasion.²⁹ Brahma Siddhanta, therefore, was no longer followed in Nepal at that time, for we have just the very celebration in the first month contrary to what it lays down. We have, therefore, to calculate the date in accordance with the old rule of Arya Siddhanta.³⁰

(8) Adiyta Sena's inscription is entirely unrelated to the epoch of Amsuvarman's era, for the former came after him and in circumstances quite different.

The above arguments have shown that the epoch of Amsuvarman's era must not fall in 606-07 A.D. and there cannot be two opinions on this subject.

The Tibetan Era of 595 A.D.

Prof. Levi has tried to attribute the epoch of the inscriptions of Amsuvarman to a supposed era of 595 A.D. stated to have originated from Tibet. He put forth two arguments for supposing so, (1) the alleged conquest of Nepal by Srong-Tsang-Gampo and (2) the founding of the era in Tibet in the year 595 A.D.³¹ Let us now consider the two of these separately.

Almost all the authors till now except Dr. Jayaswal have relied on the assertion of the Tibetan chronicle that Nepal was absorbed in the Tibetan Empire at the time of Amsuvarman.³² The year 629 A.D. was the year of accession to the throne by Srong-Tsang-Gampo.³³ This king was very powerful and at one time seems to have extended his conquest far in the north and south at the cost of China and Nepal.

²⁷ Sewell—Tables.

²⁸ IA, 1894, p. 62; I.H.Q., p. 307.

²⁹ K. P. J., Ibid, p. 167.

³⁰ The intercalation takes place when two lunar months end within a solar month, which presupposes the existence of a Ksaya month previously, but this is the rule obtained by calculation of true motions.

³¹ Levi, II, Pp. 148-50.

³² JRAS, 1880, p. 438; Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 438; *The Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, II, p. 83.

³³ His father unified the scattered clans of Tibet into one empire. The Chinese called him Tchic-Tsoung Loungtsan. According to Tibetan sources he ruled till 698 A.D., but Chinese sources put his death at 650 A.D.

According to Tibetan legend he penetrated into Balpo.³⁴ and Shinkuni,³⁵ to districts of Western Nepal. *Geschite...Ordus* (translated by J. J. Schmidt, p. 328) says that his ministers entered in to relations in the east with the Chinese and the Minak (Tabgoytes), in the south with Hindusthan, in the west with Balpo, and in the north with the Hor and the Gugi.³⁶ The Nepalese King offered his daughter to him in marriage. This marriage proved a boon for the cause of renaissance in Tibet, as the Princess from Nepal took with her a contingent of Buddhist preachers and artists who helped to build a new culture for that country. The name of Silamanjusri occurs in the list of Nepalese teachers who went to Tibet in that connection. The wife of the Tibetan King was Lha-gcig (Princess) Bhrikuti called Bribtsun and her father's name was Go-cha.³⁷

The Ladakh chronicles on the other hand do not mention the conquest of Nepal³⁸ by the Tibetan King before 703 A.D. and this point is confirmed by the T'ang history.³⁹ Yuan Chwang also has not mentioned anything about the alleged conquest of Nepal by Tibet in his memoir, wherein Nepal is proudly referred to as an independent country.⁴⁰ Levi, however, under a curious conception of the Tibetan history accepts the statement of the Tibetan annals and reads in it a reference to correspond to the Vikramaditya episode of the Nepalese chronicles. Go Cha according to him can be only Amsuvarman, whereas the literal translation of the word may mean Jyotivarman or Prabharvarman or Udayavarman as the case may be (JASB, bix, 54, L. 200). But as it is not possible to rely on the legendary evidence of the chronicles in disregard of the authoritative statements of the T'ang and Ladakh histories, Levi's opinion may be discarded and the question of Tibetan suzerainty should not arise, at least, for the time of Amsuvarman as on the authority of the same he was in a position to defeat the Tibetan invader or any other attack from whichever quarter directed. The T'ang history records that before Narendradeva the kingdom of Nepal obeyed no other power on earth.

Prof. Levi has drawn an unwarranted inference from the alleged conquest of Nepal by Tibet that the era of 595, according to him the epoch of the era in Amsuvarman's inscriptions falls in that year, was

³⁴ Palpa about 150 miles west.

³⁵ A place in Mustang district, the source of R. Gandak.

³⁶ Petersburg, 1829. See Levi, II, footnote p. 148. His Chinese wife was called Wen-tcheng.

³⁷ *The Antiquities of Tibet*.

³⁸ LA, VII, Pp. 89-92; JBAS, LVIII, p. 150.

³⁹ The T'ang history BKs Pp. 256-57; Levi, I, Pp. 151-57.

⁴⁰ Beal, II, p. 82; Smith, E. H., Pp. 365-73.

a Tibetan creation.⁴¹ But this inference has been made without any basis whatsoever. The year 595 he obtained as a result of a wrong identification between the words San (Persian) and Tsan (Tibetan), by which he was led to assume the origin of the Bengal era in that year and from Tibet, though the assumption is fundamentally wrong as neither the Bengal era originated in 595 A.D., nor it had any relation with Tibet being as it was set up by Akbar in 1556 A.D. out of a process of transfusion of Hindu eras.⁴² The Tibetan conquest of Bengal is another impossibility which is not based on historical facts. The existence of an era in Tibet before 1686 A.D. has been disproved by the findings of scholars whose opinion is unanimous.⁴³ Till that year the system of reckoning in cycles and periods (Loka Kala) obtained there as the only rule, the era followed by the Tibetans as in the letters to Kirkpatrick (1203 and 1206)⁴⁴ referred to the year 586, if it should be regarded as an era at all, although there may be an indication against regarding it as such. His attempt to connect the figure 430 in a transposed form of 403 (Me-kha-Jya) is wrong inasmuch as the transposition is unjustified and does not refer to an era counted by years in addition to an entirely different date which it may give rise to. Similarly Prof. Levi's attempt to make out a figure of 596 by deducting 430 out of 1025, the year of another supposed era, seems to rest on sheer imagination.⁴⁵

The Epoch of the Era

It has been found that the dates in Amsuvarman's inscriptions are unaccountable with reference to the eras originated outside Nepal. The epoch, therefore, will have to be sought in the valley itself and in a year not in or after 595 A.D. There is no doubt, now about the date and origin of this era, thanks to the researches conducted in the field about the founder of the era who can be no other than that 'Shining Splendour', Amsuvarman.⁴⁶ His reign is marked with remarkable events, and nothing would be nearer to truth than to state that as one of the great rulers of his time he deserved the position of a founder of the era and all name and fame attached with it.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Levi, II, Pp. 153-54; III, Pp. 70-81, 82-90; J. A. 1894, Pp. 55ff.

⁴² Prinsep's Essays, II, Pp. 167-69; Fleet in Ency. Britannica, XIII.

⁴³ Prinsep, Ibid, Pp. 160, 289; Waddel, Lhasa (1909) p. 449.

⁴⁴ Kirkpatrick: Appendix II, these letters were sent in appeal to the Governor General of India against Gorkha encroachment in 1789 A.D.

⁴⁵ JBORS, III, 1936, Pp. 174-75.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The assertion of the *Vamsavali* that Vikramaditya came to Nepal and founded the era is only one of the fantastic and inconceivably wrong inferences by which Gautama Buddha and other personalities of the plains were directly connected with the history of the country.

It is argued by K. P. Jayaswal and others that the initial year of his era, likewise, can now be fixed with certainty as the correspondence of the phenomenon of the Sundhara Inscription (vide, Bendall, *Journey*, p. 74) with that of 629 A.D. is now in their opinion incontrovertibly established. There is yet one more possibility which has been considered in the light of the above discussion. At the beginning it has been inferred that the year 621 A.D. records an intercalary phenomenon in the month of Pausa according to Brahma Siddhanta. But as on Sewell's authority we have to exclude the application of this astronomical method for times before 629 A.D., the question of an adjustment for that period does not arise at all, and, therefore, it had been said that the epoch of the era falls only in or before 595 A.D. (629-34) and not eight years after.⁴⁸

However, more materials of proved authenticity have come to light since Levi's theory was put forward and today his hypothesis has lost its ground and in view of the new documents we tread a new ground altogether. The inscription dating Samvat 49 is no longer the last available document for the interregnum before the reign of Narendradeva as was previously supposed. Now amongst a series of new discoveries belonging to that period we have come across one dating Samvat 65.⁴⁹ This is the Sonagothi Stone Inscription of Visnugupta. In this year Jisnugupta's son Visnugupta was ruling with Lichhavi Bhimarjuna-deva on the throne. Narendradeva's first available inscription dates 69. In the T'ang annals he has been referred to as ruling at the time while Li-I-Piao visited Nepal. Obviously the year 69 of the inscription first quoted must precede the year of Li-I-Piao's visit. Although we may find it a bit difficult to make the year 69 correspond to 643 or 644 A.D., we have no doubt as to the precedence of Samvat 69 over 643 A.D., the year when the first Chinese Mission passed through Nepal. From the T'ang history we know that Narendradeva owed his restoration to the assistance he obtained from Tibet a little time earlier and that he had lost his throne after the deposition of his father by his uncle. The year 69 of his inscription must be the year while he was already settled. This date must precede 643 A.D. the year of the visit of Li-I-Piao. It is well nigh impossible to fix an exact date figure for the event. But it may not be going far from such exactitude if we try to push it backwards by four or five years even. Rather as we shall see later it will tend to agree with all the elements we come

⁴⁸ Other dates corresponding to this phenomenon lie outside the probable date of Amsuvarman as testified by Yuan Chwang.

⁴⁹ Gnoli, *Ibid*, LXII.

across in course of the agreement. So 69 can be equated with 637-38 A.D. With this calculation the epoch year of the second series of inscriptions must fall somewhere near about the year 570 A.D.

For confirmation let us come to the intercalary year of 34 of one of these inscriptions which has *adhikamasa* in the month of *Pausa*. Ordinarily there can not be an intercalation in the month of *Pausa*. But by *Brahma Siddhanta* mean system we have an intercalation in this month at some dates in the first half of the 7th century A.D. e.g. 602-03, 621-22, 640-41.⁵⁰ The *Ārya Siddhanta* mean system shows an intercalary month in *Pausa* in only one year 629-30 A.D., to which Levi has drawn our attention.⁵¹ Now we shall see that the only probable date which corresponds to the date of the inscription is 602-603 A.D.

We have seen that 629-30 cannot correspond to 34 as this would push the first available date of *Visnugupta*, 65 of his inscription, to 660 A.D. Likewise, it can also not be 621-22 because if we accept this date this would mean a difference of eight years only from the above whereas we can on no account show *Visnugupta's* regime to have extended beyond 640 A.D. But 602-03 has every likelihood of being an agreeable date. By calculating the time according to the correspondence of 34 with 602-03, we come to the first date of *Visnugupta*, which will now correspond to the year 635-36 A.D. (+31 or 32). In this way *Narendradeva's* date of restoration can be fixed at 638 or a year earlier or later. It is quite possible that *Yuan Chwang's* observation about the *Lichhavi* prince on the throne of *Nepal* at the time of his visit in *India* applied to *Narendradeva*. If we could agree to say that in 638 or 39 while the Chinese pilgrim jotted down from *Vaisali* his notes on *Nepal*, the *Guptan* tutelage had just ended, it would not be going too far. If the note was taken in *Jisnugupta's* lifetime, then certainly *Yuan Chwang's* informant would not fail to refer him to the pilgrim. *Jisnugupta* was no less a powerful personality of the age than *Amsuvarman*. It is strange that he was omitted in the pilgrim's note. So this omission can be a proof of the fact that *Jisnugupta* was not living while *Yuan Chwang* came to *Vaisali*.

The usual theory of an era of 595 A.D. has fallen. We have seen how the epoch year must be a date to correspond to the evidences of outside authorities. With the discovery of inscriptions that have taken the history of the *Gupta* family down to *Samvat* 68, the epoch year has gone back farther from 595 A.D. at least by 25 years. Thus

⁵⁰ Sewell : *Siddhantas and the Indian Calendar*, p. 526.

⁵¹ Levi, III (see quotation above).

it should be fixed undoubtedly in about 570 or so A.D.

The year 568 could be the exact year of the epoch year of Amsuvarman's inscriptions. But we shall not categorically declare that at this stage. This year has one distinct advantage. If we reckon the the Samvat year 34 of the Sundhara Inscription (Bendall, No. 2) in terms of the epoch of 568, then we have solved the question of bringing out the identical year with intercalary Pausa of the said document. As already shown, the year 34 added to 568, which reduces to 602-03 A.D. has an intercalation in Pausa both ways in our S. 34 and in 602-03 A.D. This is certainly much helpful for determining the epoch year through a verification of astronomical data. Apart from this the year 568 gives 637-38 A.D. as the date of restoration of the Lichhavi exile Prince Narendradeva. But any time between that date and 643 A.D. may be suggested for the purpose. This may not at the same time affect the position as we have shaped in the final analysis. The astronomical data are also often elusive and in Nepal they have not been at all helpful except in the present case. In the circumstances we can as well skip over this point. Let us consider whether 643 A.D. could be presented as the final year of Visnugupta. The epoch year under this assumption is obviously brought down to 578 A.D., and the difference is now of ten years, which may mean that it is an inconsequential difference carrying little significance. But herewith one difficulty will arise. It will mean that Visnugupta was overthrown after a short career. We shall have also to think that the Chinese Mission had chosen the occasion of a disturbed year to pass through Nepal. There might be psychological as well as political reasons before the Chinese for not doing so. They should have waited for Narendradeva to settle down and consolidate himself before he invited them. There is again the fear that some more inscriptions of Visnugupta might be available and if that happened to bear a date figure of 66 or 67 or 68. We shall have to come back to the old position. Anyway, there is no harm in accepting 643 as equivalent of 65. But by this we reach the limit beyond which we cannot push the epoch year. If we do so then in 643 A.D. we shall not have Narendradeva much against the observation of the T'ang history. The year 578 A.D. is the last date upward for locating the epoch year in terms of the Christian era.

Having fixed up a date at one end it is essential that we find out a date also at the other end. Possibly 568 A.D. will be the other end. In view of the observation of Yuan Chwang the last year of Amsuvarman cannot be pushed back to the year beyond 615 A.D. We have seen that reckoned in terms of the Saka era Sivadeva's inscriptions place

him sometime towards the end of the 6th Century. Again if we take Amsuvarman further backwards Narendradeva's regime shall be likewise pushed back and will not correspond to the evidence of the T'ang annals. Thus it will appear that 568 A.D. will be the 'lowest' possible date for the epoch year of the inscriptions.

We still have preference for 568. This is the most convenient date and satisfies all doubts. But this should have no finality about it at the moment. We expect more materials to be available in near future, which shall help in confirming what we have tentatively concluded. After all the gap is only of a few years, and this has not materially altered our position. We can wait for a conclusive date. Until then the epoch year must appear to have fallen in between 568-78 A.D.

The Epoch Year of The Era

It has been often said that the epoch of the era is connected with the year of the first appointment of Amsuvarman as the Mahasamanta. The absence of inscriptions, however, for such a long interval militates against attempts at pushing such conclusion further. If he was crowned as a Regent in 602 A.D., there is no reason whatsoever that he should choose the year of his vassalage which was an insignificant post, to commemorate his glorious regime. It is much probable that he dates his inscriptions from the year of his birth.⁵² We must not attach too much importance to the assertion of the chronology that Amsuvarman ruled for forty-three years. His accession to higher position before 602 A.D. must be taken not without disbelief, for the Manjusri history⁵³ and certain Vamsavalis⁵⁴ both speak of Gupta sovereignty in the valley before that date. Amsuvarman's rise probably occurred simultaneously with the Lichhavi restoration and it does not seem that he could have otherwise reached that position under Gupta supremacy.

Amsuvarman's Documents

The following inscriptions and records are some of the 13 documents that belong to Amsuvarman.⁵⁵

⁵² Almost all the inscriptions assign him a reign period of 42 or 43 years; Kirkpatrick, p. 262; IA, XIII, p. 413; Wright, p. 133.

⁵³ MMK, p. 40.

⁵⁴ Kirkpatrick, p. 262.

⁵⁵ About the epigraphy of his inscriptions Levi observes: Before Amsuvarman the Lichhavis have as a constant practice of reiterating the consonant which follows the letter of either in the body of the same word or in the meeting of two words. Panini (VIII. 4, 46) teaches that this practice is discretionary, it is however followed most often in epigraphical texts. Amsuvarman on the contrary constantly withholds himself in this case, of reiterating the consonant in a combina-

(a) Harigaon⁵⁶ Grant. (I) This is one of the earliest inscriptions for Amsuvarman's reign. It was discovered in Harigaon, a few miles north-east of the present city of Kathmandu. It consists of twenty-four lines incised on a slab of stone at the wall of a temple in Harigaon. The language is Sanskrit and the content is in prose. The inscription begins with *Svasti Kailaskuta Bhavanat*⁵⁷ as all other inscriptions of his do, which denotes a change of the seat of government from Managriha, the place from which the inscriptions of the previous rulers are issued. Amsuvarman uses there the usual title of Mahasamanta following the inscriptions of Sivadeva 1 (vide later) with the epithet, *Bhagvat Pasupati bhattaraka bappa padanudhyata*, which is common in all his inscriptions.

He has described himself as one always looking to others' interests. It has also noted a list of donations to various deities and state officers requiring them to receive the same from their people. It is dated Samvat 30=C. 598-608 A.D. The donations are :

Pu—Purana, Pa—Pana, both silver coins⁵⁸ (in the units of)
(the latter also copper).

Sridevi Pu 3 pa 1

Sasthidevakula pu 3 pa 1

Sribhattarakapadanam pu pa (worshippers of Pasupati or worshippers attached to temples)

Mahabaladhyaksya pu 20 (Commander-in-Chief)

Prasad Krita pu 25 (Head of the Department of Donations)

Abhisekahasti chaswa pu 3 pa 1 (the department of elephants and horses for annointment).

Paniya Karmantikasya pu 2 pa 2

There are other donees like the four door-keepers of his palace and those of Managriha and those who blew the conches and rang the bells. Levi thinks that the donation was made on the occasion of his coronation.

(b) (II) Harigaon Plate Inscription. The epigraph contains an

tion, the change appears in his name also. Sivadeva, the Lichhavi, writes Amsuvarman with an 'm' reiterated, Amsuvarman in his charts writes Amsuvarman with a single 'm'. His successor, Jisnugupta is faithful to this graphy, but the ordinary folks remain attached either through negligence or routine, to the ancient usage. In an inscription dated in the last years of Amsuvarman but which commemorates a private foundation, the name of the king is written, Amsuvarman with the 'm' double as also the names of the donor Vibhuvarman. (Levi, II, 140).

⁵⁶ Levi, III, No. 13, Pp. 85-88.

⁵⁷ According BGL this site is Madhya Lakhu of the chronicle. The remains of this place are to be seen in the high mound of earth now resembling almost a hill of the same name near Pasupati Temple; Levi, II, p. 138.

⁵⁸ K. P. Jayaswal opines that these Silver coins were meant only to facilitate calculation into Karasāṇanas.

address issued to the peasants and families of the said village asking them to contribute certain donations to the religious organisation defined therein (*Maryyada bandha kritan*).⁵⁹ Amsuvarman is spoken of as the person ever devoted to the welfare of his subjects *Prajahitartha dyota Suddhachetasa; Katham praja me Sukhita bhaveyh*.⁶⁰ The record dates Samvat 32=600-605 A.D. The organisations belong to various sects and forms of worship.

Donations in monetary units of Purana and Pana:

Saivism: Pasupati 7, 2; Rameswara 3, 1; Maneswara 3, 1; Dharamaneswara 3, 1; Parvatewara, 3, 1; Kailaseswara 3, 1; Bhattarakka Padah 7, 2; Vaisnavism: Dolasikharanarayan 7, 2; Samba pura 3, 1; Bhum-bhujika Jalasayana (Budha nikantha) 3, 1; Buddhism: Gumvihara 7, 2 (Mani Chuda Chaitya); Manavihara (Chakravihara in Patan) 7, 2 Ravivihara 7, 2; Kharjurikavihara 7, 2; Madhyama Vihara 3, 1 and Samanya Vihara 3, 1. This inscription indicates that up till his time the tantric Mahayana and Vajrayan deities had not made appearance in Nepal; in this very inscription the various constituent units of the committees of management also are noted to have been provided for (lines 16-19).

(c) Sanga inscription discovered in 1902.⁶¹ The date is Samvat 34. This is in the form of an address to the heads of the village conceding to them the privilege of certain remissions in the matters of taxation on account of their contribution of oil to the Government. The Dutaka is Rajaputra Vikramasena, probably brother or son of Rajaputra Surasena (of IA, No. 7). He also figures in the Bungamati inscription (IA, IX, p. 169) of Amsuvarman dated Samvat 34.⁶² He has his own inscription dated Samvat 535 (IA, IX, No. 4, p. 168).

(d) The same stone-slab of Bungamati referred to in the above paragraph. This is an order of the Mahasamanta to his officers for the preservation of animals and fishes. (BGL, 6)

(e) The inscription of the year 34, which has already been dealt with (vide ante). This was discovered by Bendall (Sundhara, Patan). The dutaka is Vinduswami (Mahabaladaksya).

(f) The Pasupati inscription incised on a stone slab (IA, IX, No. 7 p. 170). In this inscription Amsuvarman leaves the title Mahasamanta and merely adds to himself as a prefix the Sri. It appears that he now became the President of the Republican state, a Regent. We have here his

⁵⁹ Levi, III, No. 14, Pp. 92-96; Basak, p. 254.

⁶⁰ Lines 21 and 22.

⁶¹ Levi, III, No. 15, Pp. 99-101.

⁶² Basak, Ibid, p. 255.

sister and nephew as donors of certain grants to the Shaiva gods. The dutaka is prince Udayadeva. He is according to Fleet and Indrajī, a Lichhavi personage⁶³, but Jayaswal makes him a Thakuri⁶⁴. The record dates in Samvat 39=C. 608-610 A.D. There is a reference to his nephew, Bhogavarma, who is wrongly identified with the Maukhari King of the same name, though the times of the two in no way agree.

(g) There are a few more inscriptions, about four, which provide information of economic importance in addition to those of ordinary type. As there is a separate section in this volume surveying the economic life of the day, we propose to bring them into full consideration at the appropriate place.

Let us now proceed to reproduce the passage of Hiuen Tsang's (Yuan Chawang) statement: It has been unanimously held that the Chinese pilgrim visited Vaisali, if not Nepal, in C. 627 A.D. He wrote about Nepal "The kingdom of Nepala (Nipolo), is 4000 li north (about 1300 miles). It is situated over a mountain. The Capital is about 20 li in circuit. The country is full of mountains and valleys. It is favourable for the production of grains and abounds in flowers and fruits, also copper, yaks and birds of the name of mingming (Jivamjiva). In commerce copper coin is used.⁶⁵ The climate is cold, the people are rude and deceitful and naturally unsociable. They do not know the value of time and justice and have no learning but they are much skilled in arts. Their body is awkward and their appearance is ignoble. There are amongst them both heretics and followers of true religion. The Buddhist monasteries and temples touch each other. There are two thousand monks living in monasteries, belonging to both vehicles (Hinayana and Mahayana). The number of Brahmans cannot be said exactly. The King is of the caste of Ksatriya (T'sa-ti-li) and belongs to the race of Lichhavi (Li-tchi-po). He is of pure feeling and eminent of science. He is a loyal Buddhist. In the time just passed (Dansices derniers temps) there was a king called Amsuvarman (Yan-chou-fa-mo) who was distinguished by the soundness of his knowledge and sagacity of his spirit. He himself composed a treatise on connaissance of sounds (shabda vidya sastra). He esteemed knowledge and respected virtue; his reputation had travelled in all places."

To the south-east of the capital there is one small spring on the surface of which a brilliant flame rises if one throws fire there. If one

⁶³ Fleet I.A. XIV. p. 344.

⁶⁴ JBORS. *ibid.* p. 229.

⁶⁵ Levi. I. Pp. 154-55; Beal. II. p. 81; Watters. II. p. 81. The last two slightly differ from Julien.

throws other objects, they change their nature and become fire" (*Memoires sur les countries, etc. vide Ante, Julien*).

Parallel to Yuan Chwang's observation rises a question, and let us have dealt with it here, as to when Amsuvarman died (whether in 639 or 637 A.D. or much earlier) for the pilgrim has mentioned him in terms of a deceased and in past tense. The most important point in this connection is whether his description of Nepal is true of the year of his visit or of the time he left India or of the time when he reached China. Jayaswal holds that this observation is true of the year 643, when he had just left India.⁶⁶ It is clear that Amsuvarman's successor was a Lichhavi, Dhruvadeva, who had acceded the throne after Sivadeva. We have references about them in Jisnugupta's inscriptions (IA, IX, p. 171 ff; Levi, III, p. 104), but nothing can be said about Amsuvarman's death year, as only one inscription of Jisnugupta has preserved the line mentioning Amsuvarman as a late King (Maharajadhiraja) and this is certainly the last date, for we cannot push the year of Narendradeva's restoration beyond 642 A.D., which is also the corresponding date in view of the information supplied by the T'ang history on this question.⁶⁷ Jayaswal bases his conclusion on the existence of two sets of inscriptions, all about Amsuvarman himself, the one dating Samvat 44 or 45 (IA, VIII, 171)⁶⁸ and the other constituting the group issued in the name of Sivadeva I, of which the two have ascertained date figures of 518⁶⁹ (516?) and 520. The former (the Satdhara Inscription) records the building of a conduit by varta Vibhuvarman under favour⁷⁰ of Sri Amsuvarman while he was reigning. Sivadeva's inscriptions are all issued from Managriha with the usual title of *Bhattaraka Maharaja Lichhavi Kulaketu* and describe in high terms the achievements of his High Feudatory.* The last inscription of his is dated 520 (Khopasi).⁷¹ Bendall wrongly read 320 and according to Jayaswal who follows Fleet in this respect, this year should be referred to the Gupta era so that Sivadeva's last date is made to correspond to $319 + 320 = 639$ A.D. (March), the same year which was also said to be the last reignal year of Amsuvarman according to the Satdhara inscription and the Thankot inscription⁷² of Jisnugupta of the same year

⁶⁶ JBORS, Op. Cit., p. 162.

⁶⁷ JBORS, Ibid.

⁶⁸ Fleet, IA, XIV, p. 343; Gnoli, XLVIII.

⁶⁹ Fleet reads 318, *ibid*; Bendall 316; KPJ, 316; Basak, 318.

⁷⁰ Vijaya rajye.

* Levi, III, No. 12, p. 79.

⁷¹ Sivadeva's inscriptions Ins. No. 5 of IA, p. 174. Nos. IX and X of Levi (III) and Gnoli, XXIII, XXVIII.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 107. Levi reads 500. Basak reads 300.

(KPJ., OP. Cit. p. 169). This coincidence of the end of both Amsuvarman and Sivadeva I, of course, may have a meaning generally attached to accidental happenings; but it is difficult to accept the proposition that Amsuvarman was a sovereign over the whole kingdom in 639 A.D. when in that very year Amsuvarman is on his own advice treated as the High Feudatory by Sivadeva I. The coins of Amsuvarman leave no doubt as to his supreme power and foremost position in Nepal of that time.⁷³ His inscriptions have also indicated that he had dropped the title of High Feudatory from Samvat 39. There is no justification to continue to hold him as such till some years after, unless we mean that his position even according to the last was no longer of a full sovereign as inferred by Fleet (IA, XIV, p. 412 ff.). But the latter part of the argument has no solid ground to stand on, for in no case we can learn of a political division in the valley at that time.⁷⁴ We cannot, therefore, establish that Amsuvarman was dead only in 639 or 40 A.D. on the mere convenient identity displayed by Sivadeva's inscriptions with the Gupta era. It is argued that as asserted by Cunningham (KPJ Op. cit., p. 646) and confirmed by Dr. Tripathi's researches (vide, ante) Amsuvarman seems to have died much earlier before 637 A.D. and this is quite logical and natural in view of the fact that the pilgrim would in no circumstances have postponed his taking note till 643⁷⁵ A.D. Moreover, he speaks of Amsuvarman to have been dead in the time just passed, which if referred to 643 A.D. may also mean that he died only in 642 A.D. much against other evidences. So far as Sivadeva's inscriptions are concerned, they can be referred to the period while Amsuvarman was a High Feudatory and not to the period while he became the head of the State, whether regent or president. The inscription depicts a stage wherein Amsuvarman had certainly gathered immense power as a High Feudatory and as such may be placed near about the year Samvat 32 (=C. 600 A.D.) but not after that and this will certainly confirm the finding that the Gupta epoch of his inscriptions must be declared as for good dismissed.

The existence of an epoch in 319 A.D. has led people to assume that the dates in Shivadeva I's inscriptions must be referred to that year only.⁷⁶ While not taking such assumption as entirely impossible, we

⁷³ Walsh, JRAS, Pp. 680-81.

⁷⁴ Fleet in GI discusses at great length the possibility of the valley to have been ruled in two parts under the Lichhavis and the Thakuris respectively. This, however, is negated by another evidence revealed by the existence of Amsu's records both in the west and the east as far as Sanga at the east of the valley.

⁷⁵ Jayaswal also admits that he took down notes in 637 A.D. It is surprising as to how Jayaswal pushed the death year of Amsu to 639 A.D.

⁷⁶ K. P. Jayaswal, Op. Cit.

must realise that there is no paucity of eras in India or anywhere within India, and, therefore, it is not indispensably necessary to cling to one era, specially, under circumstances when the divergence amounts to twenty years or more. In our case there is one more reason to drop the epoch of 319 A.D. even without recourse to paleography. Why should Sivadeva I adopt the Gupta era? He did not owe allegiance to the Gupta rulers. Besides this, if any occasion had to be commemorated it should have the reign of Bhaskara Varman of the Lichhavi dynasty, a great conqueror who was at one time the overlord of at least a major portion of north and north-eastern Gangetic basin, the type of a person, who would inspire the creation of an era deserved to be esteemed by his descendants and in his time also we may venture to find out a suitable occasion for the era of Sivadeva's inscription.⁷⁷ Sivadeva I who calls himself a Lichhavi Kulaketu i.e. the banner of the family, should not have allowed any other era when dealing with a base year of his reckoning. The Gupta era accordingly does not hold ground and the death of Am-suvarman should now be put much earlier before 637 A.D. to a year about 615-20 A.D.

As regards the Thankot inscription the objections are very many, in regard to the acceptance of the date, the most important being the reading of the date which has not yet gone correct and may offer people different dates ranging from 40 to 44. There is also the statement of this inscription which by recording the grant as having accrued from Sri Am-suvarman has made the acceptance of his existence at the time of issue somewhat doubtful. Even when we interpret it as to have vouchsafed his existence, no conclusion can be formed till the figure is read correctly. Consequently the inscription should be left out of account for the matter of date.

All these points have been, however, discussed much earlier in this book, and all doubts in regard to the era and dates cleared thereby. Although it was not relevant to have discussed the question here, yet we did it to clear certain more points that cropped up at this stage in course of the narrative. With this, the conclusion reached about the reading of the date figure should be regarded as final as far as the present volume is concerned.

The Thakuris.

The term Thakuri is by present usage applied to the Ksatriya settlers of the Himalayas, whose origin is commonly believed to have been somewhere in Rajputana as distinct from the class of the Khasa

⁷⁷ Wright, p. 113.

Ksatriyas who by popular understanding are definitely debarred from using this term for reasons of inferior origin. Thakuri is a common word in Rajputana as well and this is generally applicable to denote a status of the class in question as meant in Nepal, but the form is slightly different as there, Thakur, which is a term used for Brahamans in Bihar and Bengal, is generally used. The identity of the two forms, however, definitely signifies their common origin and affinity of meaning and also the fact of the word having been used in Nepal is an importation with closely terminological identity, so that the two could appear as almost the same expression with identical signification.

The Nepalese Vamsavalis have used the term in the same sense to denote the fact of Amsuvarman's original stock to have emigrated from somewhere in the plains. We have no authority to confirm this position save the most probable inference that Amsuvarman was not an exception to the traditional and almost universal application of outside nationality to the rulers in Nepal, who without a single exception, have shown a community of origin in this respect. But the particular clan or dynasty he belonged to is still a matter of undecisive speculation as his inscriptions have no word to shed light on this point. In the Brahmanical chronicles he is a Vaisya Rajput, probably meaning indirectly that he was of the dynasty of Harshavardhana but then the question comes as to why he did not use the common family appendage *bardhana* after his name. He may be a Maukhari as his appendage and the rise of his ancestors in Nepal coincident with the rise of the Maukharis in the plains show. But this inference also goes wide of the mark.

Amsuvarman's status.

His status has been already commented upon. It is said that the inscription referring to him variously depict the stages through which Amsuvarman passed to reach the ultimate position to have called himself '*Sri Amshuvarman*'. We have just hinted that he was merely a High Feudatory in Samvat 518. After two years his status rises in importance and the King addresses him in a more dignified term, if Sri were to express higher status. Those who regard him as the sovereign of West Nepal take the title Mahasamanta as conveying a status equal to that of the King. In support of this the example of Samudra Sena and Pusya Sen is cited. The co-ordinate nature of the titles is shown in the Nirmund plate of the former (JBAS, XLVIII, Proceedings, P. 247 ff) and in the Waladay seal of the latter (ibid. xii, 212, Dr.

Buhler's restoration).⁷⁸ But such examples may also confuse the true status of Amsuvarman, as similar titles deemed to be equal with kingship have been assumed by less important personages (Levi, Ins. No. VI Kisipidi; Bendall, No. VII) in the Nepal history. According to the inscription of Pusyamitra Sunga who calls himself *Mahapratihara* and *Sarvadandanayaka*, it appears that the title *Maharaja* falls in line with these.⁷⁹ In Nepal, however, such a comparison would belie the real position of the ruler; for on a proper study, Amsuvarman's supposed kingship cannot be ascertained to bear out the fact, apart from the confusion resulting from the identity between his and Ravigupta's titles (Ins. No. 3, IA, IX). We have seen that in the year Samvat 520 Shivadeva I was the Maharaja of Nepal and a sovereign. In this year he calls Amsuvarman a Mahasamanta and though the reference is certainly respectful, it, however, fails to show a sovereign status of Amsuvarman. His continuation of the title as late as 534 also proves that he till then recognised the overlordship of the Lichhavi king, however nominal it may appear to be. In the inscriptions issued by him, he does not mention the figure on the throne. The fact that he had been using *Sri* from Samvat 30 (=600 A.D.) would not make him completely independent.⁸⁰ Shivadeva's ascetic life and his indifference to worldly affairs was one of the main reasons which secured for Amsuvarman an unchallenged position in the realm. Even while it was a reference by Shivadeva, the same was couched in dignified and colourful expressions, which shows that the personality of Shivadeva, the monarch himself, paled into insignificance before his Mahasamanta who appeared to have commanded a greater stature than himself. Shivadeva denied to himself all such expressions of praise as would place him in a viable position with Amsuvarman. But it was not such as to establish a position which might have led the High Feudatory to have revolted to overthrow the dynasty altogether, which is also supported by the existence of another sovereign of that line occurring in the inscriptions of Jisnugupta⁸¹, and confirmed by Yuan Chwang's observation⁸². Amsuvarman continued to use this title up to Samvat 39, when he dropped the title of High Feudatory and retained only *Sri* before his name. This is taken by some as the indication of

⁷⁸ Fleet, IA, XIV, P. 345. Pushyamitra Sunga calls himself Senapati even after he became king (JBORS, XVIII, p. 311).

⁷⁹ *Malavikagnimitra*, Act V, P. 131 (S. Pandit's Ed.). Ayodhya inscription, JBORS 1924, pp. 202-08. Rudradaman called himself Mahaksatrapa (EI, VIII, pp. 40-45).

⁸⁰ IA, IX, Pp. 168-69; Bendall, P. 74; Levi, III, Pp. 65, 90, 97.

⁸¹ IA, IX, P. 71 ff; Levi, III, P. 105 ff.

⁸² Op. Cit.

his sovereignty from that year. While not rejecting the possibility of his adopting the supreme position in the State at a later date, we have, however, no reason to believe that Amsuvarman adopted the title of kingship at any time of his career. Had it been otherwise he should not have hesitated to use the more obvious term of connotation than *Sri* by adopting the title of *Bhataraka Maharaja*. The possibility of his being another type of head for the state of Nepal, probably in the nature of a President of a republic, seems to be nearer to fact, while at the same time his power was unchallenged and unequalled with any autocratic king and there was no lessening of status by an inch even, as his assumption of the authority and royalty by which he could issue command to other Feudatories and injunctions to future kings (*Svayam ajna*) would convey. His assumption of the title, *Sri*, without *Mahasamanta* from that year shows that before this time he was only a Regent but with fullest equipment of executive powers and all the affairs of the State were subject to his order (*prajnyapitena*). It appears that in Samvat 39 (=607 A.D.)⁸³, however, he ceased to be a Regent and became the formal head of the State. He issued coins with *Maharajadhiraj* as his title. There are also coins of his name, which have only *Sri* affixed and prove thereby that the real status assumed by Amsuvarman was certainly of a nature bordering on Presidentship of a State.⁸⁴ But the title *Maharajadhiraja* in one coin may suggest that he assumed actual kingship. We realise that the mere fact of coinage with the title suggested is insufficient to expound the status of kingship, as we have in Nepal similar coins in the name of the Regents as well. If Amsuvarman had not assumed a *de jure* royal dignity, then such a title implied by a reference in the coin should be interpreted to convey a meaning other than intending full royalty. We have, therefore, to agree with Dr. Indrajit and Dr. Fleet that Jisnugupta's reference to him as sovereign (*Maharajadhiraja*) has the only significance of posthumous title and conferred so as to base one's own claim to suzerainty on his regnal power (IA, IX, P. 171) or a mere courtesy reference to a sovereign authority. It is possible that he was just the Regent enjoying absolute powers of the sovereign.

A point which so far had escaped the attention of scholars is that Amsuvarman never enjoined on the future kings to maintain his works as those issued from a king himself, which was a conventional expres-

⁸³ IA, IX, P. 170.

⁸⁴ Walsh, JRAS, 1908, P. 681; Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in Indian Museum*, 1906, I, Pp. 281-83; Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, P. 112, Plate XIII. His coins have the image of a cow (*Kamadohi*).

sion employed at that age (*Purbaraja Krita prasadanuvartibhi*)⁸⁵ even used by Jisnugupta. But Amsuvarman always issued them in the name of a respectful person *Guru Krita Prasadanuvartibhi*.⁸⁶ At one place he has used the old expression but qualifies it with the expression *dharma gurutaya* wherein the emphasis is laid, though the future kings are styled as those who fulfil the wishes of their royal predecessors. By the new expression he certainly showed himself to have issued them under religious sanctity. But all this goes to prove that Amsuvarman was content to assume a role, which could on no account be compared with that attached a potentate seated on the throne.

Amsuvarman's achievements

From Yuan Chwang⁸⁷ we learn that he had attained a high military and literary glory. This is no mean compliment to his attainments, coming as it does from the Chinese pilgrim who was as much scrupulous in bestowing praises as he admired very few. Amsuvarman, however, was a man of uncommon talents and Yuan Chwang, with all his scruples for avoiding exaggeration and undeserving compliments would not have left him out of his account.

His military feats commenced earlier when he carried his army to the east and south against the unruly feudal lords. Like its parallel organisation in India, feudalism in Nepal meant the rule of local feudatories called the Samantas, who lorded it over the vast mass of humanity under the shadow of a weak monarch. They were military governors in another way and were also responsible for the conduct of administrative affairs in their respective areas. These Samantas owed loyalty and allegiance to the king at the centre but at times when opportunity presented itself to enable them to shake off that loyalty, they did not feel any hesitation to seize it by the forelock. The Ahir Gupta domination of the valley had come in that way and so followed Amsuvarman's dictatorship at this stage. But Amsuvarman's time was a time of unusual crisis. His predecessor Shivadeva I, the Lichhavi sovereign, was a weakling and naturally failed for sheer lack of kingly qualities to rise to the occasion to have been able to meet the dark forces of feudal chaos. On the other hand the century old Guptan regime was as strong as ever. Besides, there were autonomous principalities in the east and west, over one of which Amsuvarman was a ruler. The whole of eastern Nepal on the authority of the MMK was

⁸⁵ IA, IX, P. 169.

⁸⁶ See all his inscriptions in IA, IX, Pp. 168-71; Levi, III, Pp. 81-97; Gnoli, *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta characters*.

⁸⁷ Vide, Ante.

ruled by the Mlechhas.⁸⁸ The Terai was ruled by a king of the Gupta dynasty from Simraongarh.⁸⁹ The only portion of the country which still acknowledged the overlordship of the Lichhavis was the land of the Thakuris and here probably the former had found shelter in their worst days in the care of Amsuvarman.

The common people nurtured a hidden grievance against the Gupta usurpers and there was a longing in their heart of hearts to welcome the old Lichhavi dynasty whose position in the realm was regarded as the only legal royalty by the populace. This rendered the Lichhavi restoration a matter of public concern and Amsuvarman at the head of the army had only responded to this long felt want of the people in waging a war with the Guptas to drive them out.

The course of battles waged by him is unknown, as we have no account, local or foreign, of this particular subject. His inscriptions do not help us at all to add to our understanding in this direction. Whatever slight description is there about his achievements we have in very vague and general terms. Yet the following will give some knowledge of his prowess, and of the hold which he had over the country and people of Nepal at the time.

According to one inscription of Shivadeva I, dated 518 (Bendall, *Journey*, P. 74, I.A., XIV, Pp. 97-98) Amsuvarman rose to heights of glory by his acts of victories over the enemies. As to over whom these victories were won the inscription is silent. It merely puts that Amsuvarman enjoyed a great influence by his immense powers and thereby crushed his enemies (L. 6 *Bipula parakrama prasamita*). But the same may be admitted as a testament to prove the restoration of the Lichhavis in that year. Perhaps this also stands as the first record of Amshu's military exhibits. His activities have been further noted in the next inscription, though with the same vagueness of description. In this inscription (No. 5 of Indrajai) he is the complete master of the situation (*Hata sakala shatru paksa prabhava aneka... Vijayadhigata*) and this shows that the war of his conquest did not last long, which is further confirmed by the next inscription (Levi, *Insp.* IX) with a short statement about his valour shown in quelling the enemies. By that time he had also earned a reputation for his administrative sagacity. Also, Amsuvarman was the first ruler of the country to have struck coins in his name.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ MMK, P. 42.

⁸⁹ Kirkpatrick, P. 262.

⁹⁰ The following from Levi about his coins is worth quoting:

Alike the inscriptions the coins testify to the power of Amsuvarman. The first of Nepal's Kings he stamps the coins in his name. There exist several types

The above, however, is not itself sufficient to support his conquest of the Gupta Ahirs unless these inscriptions were to be considered as partly complementary to the accounts of the chronicles which in spite of the erroneous nature of the whole, have shown approach to truth on certain segregated points of individual estimation and this part of the geneological history taken along with the anecdotes of the inscriptions and the story of Amsu's reputation in India may be taken as approximately correct.

Extent of the Kingdom

Some people have lent unusual stress to the minimised estimate of the extent of Nepal's boundary in those days by which they maintain that it covered only the valley of Nepal with some areas in the east. Nothing would, however, be so erroneous as to readily accept such views without examining the evidence supplied to us by geneological anecdotes. Even excluding the Kiratas who held sway over a large part of the country, almost all the ruling dynasties of the valley have controlled the other portions as well so that Nepal always had come to be known for that stretch of Himalayan territories which lies between the river Gandak and the river Dudh Kosi, probably in keeping with what three hundred years later *Nepal Mahatmya* calls the same *Nepala Khanda*.⁹¹ The boundary line must have been subject to changes in relation to the political structure of the countries in the vicinity, but the two rivers were acknowledged as the natural frontier lines of the Kingdom. Amsuvarman had added a greater portion of the Terai to the dominion and if what the Vamsavalis write with reference to the Guptas is correct, their defeat must have led to the absorption of all territories touching the Vrizzis and probably the line travelled along the River Gandak up to the point where it leaves the hills, so that

described by Cunningham. The diameter is about 0.025 mm., the weight very irregular is of 11 grammes to 16-20. The constant emblem is a kind of winged griffon turning towards his right proper a fore foot raised in the attitude of walking; on the camp the legend Sri Amsuvarman, Sri Amsho; on the reverse sometimes the same lion with a moon crescent above its head, sometime the sun radiated with *Mahavaja Dhivaiashya*.

Perhaps it is useful to see here an allusion to the name of the king which contains the word Amsu'rays. In fact the legend on this coin exactly occupies around the solar disc the place which in certain of Pasupati's coins is occupied by the prolongation of the solar rays. On another series, the reverse, shows a cow turned towards its right proper with a legend which has so far been read: Kamadevi or (Bendall) Kamandehi. But on the one hand the anuswara is missing clearly on the facsimiles published and this kind of prayer 'give the desire' is hardly justifiable either by analogies or by arguments. It seems more natural to each in it for a designation of the cow of abundance currently called Kama-dugh "which allows itself to be in everything wished for". (Levi, ii, p. 143).

⁹¹ *Nepal Mahatmya* (Prabhakari Company), Benaras, P. 6.

Nepal could safely exercise its sovereignty over the present Bettiah district as well to make the frontier contiguous with that of Sri Harsa. To keep Harsavardhana at arms length close in the plains was not an uncommon task, which only speaks of him as the true hero of extraordinary strength, a corollary estimate which follows from a consideration of the extent of his vast empire.⁹² Equally his stand against the Tibetan menace is praiseworthy and as it follows from the Chinese annals Amshuvarman's independent position must surely reflect a veritable credit on him for his glorious and statesmanlike action to have kept aloof the banner of Nepal so high in the critical circumstances. Ofcourse, no particular connection with Tibet can be established for lack of any authoritative sources of information of the time, but the admission of the T'ang history and Yuan Chwang must dispel all doubts about his acceptance of Tibetan suzerainty or about a case of surrender voluntary or otherwise by Amsuvarman out of a sense of apprehension. If at all some weight be attached to the Tibetan chronicles, the Tibeto-Nepalese war alone may appear a reality, but without any adverse consequences falling upon the combatants the incident seems to have been closed. At any case this much was certain that Amsuvarman's position was unchallenged from any quarter.

Amsuvarman was not merely a military adventurer. He was also a man of high literary talents. In one inscription he is addressed as *aneka shastrartha vimarsavasaditya saddarshanataya* (BGL, vii). He seems to have composed a book on etymology, the work which is now lost but which has been referred to in high terms of appreciation by the Chinese pilgrim. Amsuvarman had a concourse of scholars around him including that great grammarian Chandra Varman who had made a name in the Nalanda University as a talented scholar. In conjunction with him Amsuvarman helped a great deal to give effect to the use of correct Sanskrit language in all written works which so long were subject to the odd type of defective language current in the locality. In his time the language used in inscriptions appeared purified and recorded a seemingly improved style over the one contributed previously. His literary pursuit was carried with the best of feeling and courage and though himself a public figure Amsu never allowed the least lack of zeal or interest on account of diversion to affect his activity in that sphere. No wonder that under such a man Nepal banished the evils of illiteracy from its border.

⁹² G. Buhler, A Note on Harsa Vardhana's Conquest of Nepal in IA, XIX. (1890), pp. 40-41.

His character and Administrative capacity

Amsuvarman was always guided in his action with the highest patriotic motives. He was a man of character and integrity par excellence. He was unique of all the dictators kings or regents of the age, who behaved strictly as a true servant of the people having always before him the only one desire and that was how to serve the best interest of the people. One inscription of his time speaks of him as one who was ever prepared to solve any problem of public welfare (*Prajahita samadhana tatpara*).⁹³ That he was so without doubt can be inferred from the compliments of Yuan Chwang independent of all inscriptional or chronological considerations. The Chinese pilgrim whose strict sense of duty as a hermit made him immune from all political bias, must be relied on to have told nothing but the truth in this respect and his pen has depicted an authentic account of Amsu's personality. He has singled the Regent of Nepal not only out of the coteries of his hill contemporaries or out of the long list of names belonging to the plains to whose individuality a reference could have been made, but out of the whole series of trans-Himalayan Kings, a fact which testifies to the high place the potentate enjoyed amongst the fellow royals of those days. It was not merely a military achievements as we know, that endowed Amsuvarman with such high reputation. Foremost of all, he was an administrator of great talents and of high moral strength and of broad mentality and magnanimous spirit, built up to perfection of all the high ideals of public service and shorn of the blemishes of narrow religious zeal and bigotry. To him no orthodoxy appealed and to him no vain glory or pride could approach, and him no self interest could touch, says a chronicler.

Attitude towards Religious Sects.

In spite of the fact that he was a Saivite Hindu, Amsuvarman was also all attentive to the requirement and need of other forms of worship including Buddhism. Under him no religion was persecuted. On the other hand, his consideration was bestowed on all forms of religious worship irrespective of his own attachment. From one of his inscriptions we learn that his contributions to Buddhist monasteries were equally magnificent as they were towards Saiva institutions and followed the only rule of responding to need of each for royal beneficence. His adoption of the title of *Pasupatibhattaraka Padanudhyta* may lead some to interpret it as a sign of his allegiance to Shaivite cult. Cer-

⁹³ Sanga Inscription, Levi, III, Pp. 97-98.

tainly he was devoted to Shiva and this is further confirmed by the image of a bull (Nandi) in some of his inscriptions (IA, IX, Pp. 169, 170, 171). It appears that his principal deity was Lord Pashupati, and he performed sacrificial rites and acts of piety in his honour. But in them there is no trace of partiality or prejudice in favour of the one to the exclusion of the others. He was in no way a bigot of a Shaivite. If honouring deities were the criterion, he could by any standard be called a Buddhist as well. How he revered the Buddhist religion is expressed by his adoption of the symbols of the wheel of law between two deer (Bungmati Inscription)⁹⁴ in his inscriptions, which is certainly expressive of his intention to protect all religions from unlawful encroachments and harassment by the one enjoying undue royal munificence. It was really a big achievement to have successfully improved on the much deteriorated condition of the last reign, which seems to have been characterised by communal quarrels and disturbances. The Gupta rulers being of orthodox Shaivite faith would not perhaps tolerate the freedom enjoyed by the other sects and persecution was rife on that account, and this was so much resented by the people that it necessitated the change of ruling dynasties. Amsuvarman with his keen insight of human behaviour and laudable conception of public duty reoriented the policy pursued by the Lichhavi Kings, himself helped to restore the Lichhavi throne and willingly and sincerely put his own faith in the order of the Buddha as a measure of harmonious understanding between the rulers and the ruled between different sects and communities. Under him the sanctity of Buddhist images and monasteries was well preserved and honourably maintained.⁹⁵

The repercussion of this non-committal and tolerant policy was far reaching. An atmosphere of good-will and trust amongst the different sections of the people and of veneration to all types of religious beliefs irrespective of caste and creed enveloped the land of the Nepalese to an extent that the whole envelopment is still casting its impact on the social life of the people in this country, the same feature of society which was so markedly noted by the Chinese pilgrim when he spoke of the Hindu temples touching the Buddhist convents, the same structure of harmony and complete fraternal adjustment

⁹⁴ I.A., IX, P. 169.

⁹⁵ The many Saivite Sects were (1) Varahaswamidharma, (2) mundasringa (No. 11, IA, IX, p. 174). There was no official interference.

Many inscriptions of the time are addressed to citizens with Brahmanas as their leaders (*Brahmanas purassarah*). This is a proof positive of the fact that the castes had consolidated at the time, and in the hierarchy the Brahmanas occupied the first and most supreme position.

which are indelibly passed on to the present generation unaffected by any sort of political bickerings and incitement to communal animosity. The message of toleration, the gift of Amsuvarman's reign, rings sweet in the ears of every Nepalese even today and blends him with all his fellowmen in the perfect bond of brotherhood and amity the world has ever seen. Amsuvarman has certainly raised his fame to the zenith as a man of the people to have dissociated himself and his politics from religious prejudices and to have looked upon all with no partiality or reserved feeling in which policy Asoka alone can be his equal.

Incidentally we may refer to the nature of interference on religious endowments, which was used only to the extent of ensuring the obedience to the Government's order, but it was mainly on the personal initiative of the ruler that any step in that direction was taken, the convention being that the sovereign had alone the privilege of investigation or supervision in such matters. All endowments were managed on behalf of the people by a committee called *panchalika* whose immunity from all official interference was equally guaranteed. All religious orders had their own organisations as noted in inscriptions. There was one such country-wide organisation of the Buddhist monks, known as Bhiksu Sangha, which co-ordinated the activities of the monasteries and was very powerful and sometimes in a position to issue its own decrees and edicts to the constituent members⁹⁶ (Sankhu Inscription, Levi, III, p. 112).

II

Jisnugupta and Visnugupta

Jisnugupta's name is entirely omitted by the vamsavalis, of the later date. The oldest authority, however, cited by Kirkpatrick (p. 262) introduces Gupta dynasty just after the Lichhavis. In the last chapter we have shown the wrong order of the names of the later Guptas as given in the Chronicles and while discussing also denied the occupation of the throne by them. Bhumigupta must have flourished in the early part of the seventh century. His successor Kisnugupta is identified with Jisnugupta and as the identification of the next name is easily adduced on account of the same name occurring both in this list and in inscriptions, we have no doubt as to this point. According to Levi, K is only a misreading of V (Levi, II, p. 156). Jisnugupta was not a Lichhavi as some have wrongly taken

⁹⁶ The text of the inscription is 'eyadharmo Yam Sridharmarajikamatyasu Samghikabhiksu Sanghasya'.

him to be⁹⁷ (Ray: *Dynastic History*, I, P. 191). His very name and his reference to the Lichhavi occupant of the throne dismisses such suggestion and Thakuri he was not, so that his Gupta lineage cannot be questioned. In one of his inscriptions Jisnugupta mentions Bhumi-gupta as his grandfather (Gnoli, LIV). This means that there was a revival of the family to power. Jisnugupta was a Vaisnavite and all his dedications are made to Visnu (Levi, II, P. 157).

His Inscriptions and Coins.

We have ten inscriptions of Jisnugupta including one which does not mention the Lichhavi rule but has his own Vijayarajye (BGL, Ins. No. XI).

(a) The Thankot inscription.—It was discovered in the said village, situated about 7 miles west of Kathmandu. It consists of thirty lines. The subject matter deals with the partial remission of certain public dues. There is a reference to Managupta Gomin, his great grandfather.⁹⁸ Jisnugupta describes himself as belonging to Chandravansa (*Somanvaya bhusana*) and has added almost all the epithets of Amsuvarman, like *bhagvat pasupati bhattaraka padanugra-hita*, etc. This expression showed that like other rulers of Nepal he also tendered unqualified devotion to Lord Pasupati. But he has acknowledged the overlordship of the Prince occupying the throne in Managriha (*Managrihat sinhasanadhyasikulaketu bhattaraka Bhimarjunadeva tatpurassarah*). The Lichhavi King referred to here is Bhimarjunadeva. Quite wrongly Levi read Manadeva. The record is dated 59, wrongly read 500 by Levi (III, Ins. No. XVI, Pp. 101-07).

Dhruvadeva is mentioned in all the inscriptions dating from Samvat 48 to 55. Bhimarjunadeva is mentioned for the first time in an inscription dated 55. This Lichhavi sovereign was continued on the throne also by Visnugupta. He figures in the two available inscriptions of the latter.

(b) Patan Charter.—This is incised in a stone slab in the temple of Chhinnamastika in Patan (B.G.L. Ins. No. IX). There is a reference to Sri Maharajadhiraja Amsuvarman about one of the conduit built by him now undergoing repair. Managriha and the King Dhruvadeva Lich-

⁹⁷ Walsh, JRAS, 1908, P. 181, for his coins.

⁹⁸ According to Taranath (Pp. 151, 193) Kamala Gomin and Kamarandu Gomin, two upasakas, lived in Nalanda in contemplation of Mahayana. Gomin translated in Tibetan by the word *btsun-pa* signifies respectable, noble, venerable in the observance of religious duties. 'Mahavyutpath' about Chandra Gomin (177) says that the scholar himself in his work exclaims Gomin to mean honourable (Pujya) — (See Levi, II, P. 130).

havi are also noted. The record is now available in its full. The date is Samvat 48 (=616 A.D.). The dutaka is Yuvaraja Visnugupta, his son, who is identified by Kirkpatrick's authority and by his own inscription.

(c) Minanarayan Charter⁹⁹ incised on a stone-slab.—This was discovered near the temple of Minanarayan on the southern side of Kathmandu. The details are somewhat mutilated. Lines 3, 4 and 5 mention Managriha and *Bhattaraka Maharajadhiraja Lichhavi kulketu Dhruvadeva*. Fleet says that the reference does not imply the overlordship of the prince, as the term is not *Managriha*, and is merely a courtesy address signifying the lineage residing at Managriha. Bhagwanlal believes in the possibility of Lichhavi overlordship. Next comes the long phrase, Dhruvadeva describing Jisnu as one who freed the people headed by himself, *Dhruvadeva purassarah sakala janu nirudravopaya sambignanapitam manasa sa nripate jagato hitaya*, which most certainly is not meant for a courtesy reference only. The subject is as of the previous inscription, the repair of *tilamakam* (a canal) built by Sri Mahasamanta, whose name is mutilated. Basak identifies him with Amsuvarman. The name of the dutaka and the date are peeled off and lost.

(d) Pasupati record.—It simply records grants of land made in favour of *Munda Srinkhalika Pasupati Acharya Parisad* for repairing the temple of Chandeswara in the victorious reign of Sri Jisnugupta (IA, IX, p. 174). No Lichhavi sovereign is noted.

(e) Maligaon Stele.—It is dated 59. The sovereign is probably not noted. The 2-8 lines are peeled off, but Kailasakuta is the first word in the inscription. The dutaka is Sri Yuvarajah Sridharaguptah.

(f) Coins.—His coin bears a winged bull with raised paw on the observe, but it differs from the lion on Amsu's coins in having the tail hanging down and not curved over the back. The reverse is an elaborately ornamental form of the trident, and there is no date (Pl. 1, Fig. 1, Walsh, op. cit.).¹⁰⁰

(g) Two inscriptions of Visnugupta with Bhimarjunadeva, dated 64 and 65 respectively.¹⁰¹—The dutaka is Sridharagupta. The form of address is the same as used by Jisnugupta. For the first time the word *Nepala* is used here for this country.

All the above noted inscriptions and some others also talk of tax-remissions and one or the other kind of duties levied, which have

⁹⁹ IA, Ibid, P. 173.

¹⁰⁰ Op. Cit., P. 261. Their diameter is 0.025 mm. and weight 12 gr. 37.

¹⁰¹ Gnoli, LXI, LXII.

been referred to in the next chapter where we deal with the questions of economic nature.

If Jayaswal's reading of the Thankot inscription is correct, then Jisnugupta may be taken to have been ruling in the year 44 = 618 A.D. under Manadeva III. But the reading is wrong, and therefore we drop the consideration of Manadeva altogether and go over to Dhruvadeva, the name now correctly read in the inscription. This Dhruvadeva who is described as the banner of the ruling family, *sinha sanadhyasi kula ketu*, was probably the usurper (referred to in the T'ang history, vide Ante). It can be inferred from the Chinese account that there had arisen a political trouble in 617 or 18 with the result that the father of Narendradeva who is identified by the Pasupati inscription (No. 15, IA, IX, p. 179) was forced to abdicate and flee to Tibet. The name of the usurper does not occur in the Chinese account. One of Jisnu's inscriptions, however, describes him to have ascended to power owing to the favour of the people and by dint of his high lineage *punyah vayadagata rajasampad*,¹⁰² which may go to show that the succession after Amsuvarman was not determined by constitutional rights but by other fortuitous factors in its favour. In the list of the Vamsavalis one Manadeva comes just after Udayadeva and Dharmadeva is omitted, a fact which is corroborating the name of the successor of Udayadeva also makes the evidence tally with the account of the inscription and the Chinese history if we replaced him by Dhruvadeva. It seems that Dhruvadeva had played himself in the hands of Jisnugupta by forwarding his claim to the throne and this was the reason that we find in him in the list of MMK also (vide Ante) so that the few years from 44 backwards may be assigned to him.

There is a controversy as to the lineage of Manadeva. Dr. Indrajit and Dr. Basak have dropped him out of their lists altogether. Fleet also in following the former leaves him out. Dr. Jayaswal is of the opinion that he is a Thakuri, son and successor of Amsuvarman. But Manadeva does not find any mention in the inscriptions of Amsuvarman. Nor the fact of his appearing only in the Thankot inscription of Jisnugupta is true. The reading is now correctly verified as Dhruvadeva. The reference to the ruler as 'the banner of the ruling family' has led Dr. Jayaswal to infer that he is not a Lichhavi. But we have the evidence of Yuan Chwang that in his time the ruling prince was a Lichhavi.¹⁰³ Coupled with this, there is the proof of Dhruvadeva Lich-

¹⁰² IA, IX, P. 173.

¹⁰³ Some say that Yuan Chwang's statement that the King was a Lichhavi Buddha applies to Udayadeva alone.

havi ruling from Managriha, the place where Manadeva once resided. If any ruler of that time had been a Thakuri, the residence would have been Kailasakuta. We know from the inscriptions of Amsuvarman that the sanctity of Managriha was well preserved and there is no reason to believe that Jisnugupta had reversed this policy and set up a descendant of the Thakuri ruler there. More important than these is the evidence of inscriptions which have invariably called the sovereigns on the throne as 'the banner of the Lichhavi family.'¹⁰⁴ The two rulers must belong to the dynasty of Lichhavi on all accounts and only then alone the evidence of the Inscription No. 15 can be reconciled.

The voluntary acceptance of Tibetan suzerainty by Nepal probably dates from 638-639 A.D., when Udayadeva as an exile entered into a treaty with that country for securing back his dominion. He was probably the person named Go-cha, father of Bhirkuti of the Tibetan chronicle. The T'ang history is, of course, reticent about the marriage; but it may be taken to have happened during the exile of Udayadeva, if at all the story of such a marriage could be deemed true.

While Udayadeva was setting up a friendly alliance in Tibet, Jisnugupta was busy consolidating his power in Nepal. Jisnu had no legal claim to the regency or presidency created by Amsuvarman. He had, therefore, to lean on behind the Lichhavi puppets, and in this process he created two nominal rulers in succession, while he himself enjoyed the most autocratic and unchallenged powers.

That he did not hesitate to express himself in the most possible royal style may appear from the way he refers to himself, which comes as some stunt to overshadow the personage on the throne. In this attempt he went farther than Amsuvarman, as almost all his inscriptions have addressed him in royal epithet and speak of him to have been ruling by virtue of his high lineage and meritorious services to the country, which convey a sense of usurpation of the royal throne rather than of the regency or premiership. He also refers to his son, Visnugupta as the crown prince, which equally shows his tendency to regard himself as the virtual ruler of the soil. But with all this Jisnu had not the daring to ignore the Licchavi puppet, at least, in matters of formal acknowledgement of his suzerainty, which in the end brought in forces for his own destruction. He stands, therefore, a little different from his predecessor inasmuch as the latter had definitely assumed the role of the Head of the State towards his last reign, though his beginning unlike Jisnu's was very humble. Jisnugupta ruled for nearly

¹⁰⁴ Gnoli, LI-LV, LVIII, LXI. All discovered recently except two.

20 years with a strong hand. The fact that he could bequeath to his son his rank and power undiminished to any extent after his demise is a proof positive of the all powerful position Jisnugupta enjoyed till the last moment of his life.

The period just after 637 A.D. seems to have been attended with a good deal of commotion and upheaval in the political arena of Nepal. According to the Vamsavalis Amsuvarman was succeeded by Kirtivarman as to begin a new line of rulers in virtual supersession of the other. But this is not true. In the absence of any kind of authentic records, however, we have no way but to accept some evidence of the native chronicle as a fact. But to talk of a Thakuri dynasty of rulers at this stage is going too wide of the mark. The 'Thakuri dynasty from this time onwards till Raghavadeva' succession appears in the scene either as a mere feudatory existing without having enjoyed the formal importance of regnal glory or just a mere fiction of the chroniclers as far as its royal position goes enumerated just to make out an adjustment of the high divergence of years so far unfilled up. The probability of the second factor is more to the point, for the chronicle has always a tendency to care more for years than for names or personalities, as it appears in the particular instance when it has allotted 600 years for six generations coming after Amsuvarman, which cannot be established as true by any stretch of imagination. Jisnugupta's omission is equally inexplicable.

As we shall see in course of the narrative, Amsuvarman never founded a dynasty. None of his family had ever afterwards succeeded to capture power. After Amsuvarman was gone, we hear no more of his progeny. So the suggestion of the chronicle that the Thakuri dynasty had ruled for several years more is quite inadmissible.

About who followed Amsuvarman in the position he occupied we have come to know from the pages we have just gone through. As for those who came after 637 A.D., we do not need to seek information from the chronicles. There are inscriptions which bring out clearly in the most unambiguous language the name and family tree of the rulers, who were no other than the Lichhavis themselves. So it appears that the account of the disappearance of the Lichhavi dynasty was not true even for the interval while Amsuvarman, Jisnugupta and Visnugupta exercised absolute political powers. The sovereigns on the throne had been only reduced to a phantom by the overwhelming authority of the personage who, however, had not usurped the throne. It, of course, implied that puppets sat on the throne according as it suited the authority, and rightful claimants had been sacrificed, but in all

these the claim of the Lichhavi dynasty as a whole was not disregarded. So when the change came it so happened that the throne had passed from a puppet Lichhavi occupant on to another member of the same family, who had contrived to successfully assert his claim.

While we talk of restoration in 637 A.D. it should be borne in mind that by this no idea of restoration to the throne was intended to be conveyed. What we have in mind is that since 637 A.D. the Lichhavi sovereigns came once again to rule by themselves by doing away with power usurpers and the puppets they set-up.

More about Amsuvarman and Jisnugupta.

It is certain that Amsuvarman by himself could not have overcome the enemies without the help of his allies and collaborators. However, none of his inscriptions throw any light on the sort of persons he had round him. The utmost we could say about them is by the witnesses mentioned in the inscriptions. The following will show a list of personalities, who figure as witnesses in inscriptions and who were probably behind Amsuvarman while he fought the Gupta potentates and rose to power after vanquishing them.

Witness (Dutaka)	Dates	Inscription number		
		Gnoli	Levi	BGL
Vrsavarma	489	XXI	VIII	
Rama Silavarta	517			
Bhogavarmagomi	517	XXIV		XIV
Bhogavarma	517	XXV	IX	
Vipravarmagomi	518	XXVI		
Vipravarmagomi	518	XXVII		V
Vartaputra Gunachandra	519	XXVIII		
Vipravarmagomi	519	XXIX	X	
Vartta Bhogachandra	520	XXX	XI	
Desavarmmagomi	520	XXXI		

Vrsavarma who figures in an inscription of Ganadeva is the first personage of the order, the Guptas disappear from the scene until the time of Dhruvadeva who had, however, Jisnugupta for his all-powerful Prime Minister. In the above list Bhogavarma is identified with the person of the same name in an inscription of Amsuvarman (BGL, 7), who is called there as the latter's nephew, son of his sister Bhogadevi by Rajasura Sena. Mahabaladhyaksa Vinduswami of one of Amsuvarma's inscriptions who as the expression goes functioned as the com-

mander-in-chief¹⁰⁵ is unidentified. All these names, however, belong to feudatories who had rallied to Amsuvarman.

About Rajaputra Vikramasena (see above) nothing can be said. He might be the elder son of Sivadeva, who, however, died in the life time of his father. Yuvaraja Udayadeva of two of Amsuvarman's later inscriptions¹⁰⁶ (probably he figured as a witness in other inscriptions as well) must have died as the crown prince towards the end of Sivadeva's reign. We have already discussed the question of his parentage. In all certainty he cannot but be a son of Shivadeva. Jayadeva's inscription does not give the name of his father but he is there as the father of Narendradeva in the long list of the Lichhavi rulers. As he is a witness in Amsuvarman's inscriptions, some have taken him as the latter's son. But his Lichhavi lineage cannot be doubted. Amsuvarman in his most glorious days treated the crown prince as his junior while he had him as his witness in decrees issued towards the end of his career. It appears that Udayadeva became the crown prince at a later stage. But when Amshuvarman died, he was probably exiled and the throne went to Dhruvadeva. It is quite possible that the T'ang annal's reference to the usurper applied to Dhruvadeva, who was an uncle of Narendradeva as suggested by the T'ang history.

But Dhruvadeva was a puppet. Jisnugupta was the de facto ruler for all the time. All charters of the time have been issued by Jisnugupta himself. The ruler Dhruvadeva or after him Bhimarjundeva is just referred to as the sovereign leading the nation (*taipurasarah*). We have five records of Dhruvadeva of which the date figures in three are lost. In two inscriptions the address given to Dhruvadeva by Jisnugupta is not colourful as befitting his royalty e.g. *aneka digantara pratitha prithuparakrama Lichhavi Kula Ketu* (Gnoli, Ins. No. LIV) and *Sakala Satvanugrahita Manohirabhimana ramaniya Charita Lichhavi Kulaketu*. (Gnoli, LIV; Ithihasprakas, I, P. 7) embody the most unostentatious form of address ever ascribed to a sovereign. It appears that Jisnugupta began his regime with Dhruvadeva on the throne. He must have succeeded to Amsuvarman's post, and then managed to overthrow the rightful Lichhavi king and had him replaced by his own nominee. Jisnugupta enjoyed from the very beginning absolute powers of a regent. His chancery was Kailashakuta from where all decrees were issued, while the Lichhavi puppet resided in Managriha, to which a courtesy reference was implied. There is no record of a grant or charter or any document in the name of the occupants of the Managriha. Obviously,

¹⁰⁵ Gnoli, XXXVIII.

¹⁰⁶ BGL. 7. Gnoli, XLI, XLII.

this shows a more powerful position than that enjoyed by Amsuvarman, who for a while figures as an adviser in Shivadeva's inscriptions. In dealing with the status of Jisnugupta, we observed that he behaved as if he was the sovereign himself. The Lichhavi king was being reduced completely to the position of a nominal ruler. Jisnugupta never addressed himself as mahasamanta as Amsuvarman did in his earlier records. Right from the outset Jisnugupta assumed the role that fell to Amsuvarman at the end of his glorious life. Towards the end of his regime he had grown so powerful that the people regarded him as the real sovereign. One of the inscriptions of these days has the expression *Pravardhamana Vijaya rajya* to suggest that he was actually reigning. Even while he issued his charter and mentioned the sovereign's name he no longer had the word *tatpurassah* but used another expression *tatsahitah* meaning along with: he had placed himself on equal footing with the puppet on the throne.

But in spite of this one thing made him less conspicuous than Amsuvarman, and although Jisnugupta issued coins in his name, there is no such item which has his name inscribed with the epithet *Maharajadhiraja* as we have in the case of Amsuvarman. Less than that, Jisnugupta passed as the most exalted and de facto ruler of the country as long as he lived.

Dhruvadeva seems to have died near about Samvat 54,¹⁰⁷ and was succeeded by Bhimarjunadeva. He is the last Lichhavi sovereign on the throne set up by the Gupta dictators, the first available record of Jisnugupta which has a reference to this monarch is dated Samvat 55.¹⁰⁸ He is addressed in the inscriptions in terms, *abhiravodita divasakara Karadhikatara dipta Yasomshumali Lichhavi Kulaketu* (Gnoli, Ins. No. LVIII). But this does not indicate any enhancement of status or power. After Jisnugupta, his son Vishnugupta who succeeded him followed the practice of his father, and the Lichhavi Maharaja was no better placed.

Visnugupta with the epithet Rajaputra or yuvaraja figures in all the inscriptions of Jisnugupta except in two of the later period where Sridharagupta is the Dutaka. This Sri yuvaraja Sridharagupta also is a Dutaka while Vishnugupta issued his own charters. It is quite likely Sridharagupta was a brother of Visnugupta.

The Bhrikuti Story

Before we proceed to narrate the history of the Lichhavi restora-

¹⁰⁷ Gnoli, LIV (Kevalpur Inscription).

¹⁰⁸ Gnoli. LV. LVIII & ff.

tion, we propose to add at this stage a few lines more to what we have already written about the legend of Bhrikuti.

The story of a marriage of the Tibetan King Srong-Tsan-Gampo with the Nepalese princess Bhrikuti might be untrue, but it is so widely circulated to day that the same has become a part of our history. Right or wrong, the writers and a great number of our intellectual readers have been led to take the event of a marriage of a legendary tale as a historical fact.

We have said that it was the work of the Tibetan chronicles to have given currency to the legend.

The Tibetan chronicles aimed to flaunt a past of glory and prideful achievement for their country. They thought that by incorporating a story of a marriage with the princesses of Nepal and China by a Tibetan King, they would enhance the prestige of their country.¹⁰⁹ In legends the Tibetan King became the incarnation of Avalokiteswar and the two princesses were passed on as the two Taras, his wives in the pantheon.

This is just an attempt to introduce a mythical story into the realm of history. But as it goes Bhrikuti occupies the place of a historical figure in the shape of a princess of a famous civilised kingdom, who was given in marriage to the Tibetan King. It is no matter which king of Nepal is associated with the legend of Bhrikuti as her father. What we have here is a myth gaining the force of a historical fact and this has got to be carefully examined.

But any kind of historical evidence is wanting in support of Bhrikuti's existence in history either from Nepalese or Chinese source materials. The T'ang annals (618-907) by Thang Chu speaks of the Chinese princess, a daughter of the Emperor, Thai-tsung to have been given in marriage to Srong-btsan-sgam-po.¹¹⁰ The question arises, if it was such a great event in the history of this country how is it that the inscriptions or any other historical documents of the time have totally omitted any kind of reference to Bhrikuti.

Even otherwise the prospect of a marriage of a princess of a family taking pride in its illustrious lineage of a mighty solar ksatriya stock with a ruler who was for all purposes a Mlechha living beyond the Himalayas in an unfamiliar and unorthodox surrounding was not ordinarily to be entertained.

¹⁰⁹ For Tibetan historical anecdotes read L. Petech's 'A study on the chronicles of Ladakh', 1939 (Calcutta), Pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁰ Rockhill, *Life of Lord Buddha*, P. 613; Saratchandra Das, *Op. Cit.*, P. 220. According to these scholars the Tibetan account of Bodhimur substantially agrees with that of the T'ang annals.

The chances of Bhrikuti's marriage in circumstances of distress and exile are not entirely impossible and therefore while discussing Udayadeva's identity we have made out a point to push a person other than Amsuvarman off in the situation. But even this suggestion is such as can be accepted only against a historical perspective. Again the question will come, if the account of a marriage was true why the T'ang annals which speak of the Nepalese king's exile in Tibet and of his restoration to power due to the latter's assistance fails to mention about the marriage. Considering Bhrikuti was a person of no mean importance, who later came to be looked upon as the incarnation of the green Tara, there was no reason that a reference to her should have been avoided.

Obviously the Bhrikuti story is imaginative, and lacks historical basis.

CHAPTER V

The Lichhavi Restoration 1.

Visnugupta's rule did not last long and he had to give in before a combined attack on his power by Narendradeva and his allies.¹ This event most probably occurred in 640-42 A.D. as appears from the T'ang history. Narendradeva brought to his aid his Tibetan and Chinese friends attacking Nepal in his behalf and it was correct to say that because of him the Chinese now could establish, for the first time, an amicable political settlement with Nepal and thence with Kanauj whose first Envoy had already reached the court of the Chinese Emperor in 639 A.D.² Li-I-Piao led another Mission to Harsa Siladitya and his cortege crossed the Kerroung Pass and reached Nepal. After two years the second Chinese political mission passed through Deopatan in 646 A.D. under the leadership of Wang Huen T'se and possibly through the Banepa Kuti route. The T'ang annals say that next year Harsabardhana being dead the Chinese Embassy was molested and tortured by one Arjuna or Arunasva of Magadha (or Kanauj?) who was probably a Gupta prince ruling in Tirhut at the time and was able to seize power in that area after Harsa died.³ It is said that Wang fled to Nepal and from there made a united attack on the usurper to avenge the assault. According to the same source Nepal was the most helpful ally and its 7000 soldiers and horsemen marched hand in hand with the Chinese and the Tibetans to destroy the enemy. The T'ang history writes that Arjuna was heavily defeated and was taken prisoner to be deported to China for punishment.⁴ In 651 A.D. China received presents from Nepal at the hands of Narendradeva's son.⁵ His son's name, however, is not noted.

Narendradeva

We have ten inscriptions of Narendradeva's reign starting from Samvat 69 and ending with 108, but the date figure of the last one is

¹ We have a few inscriptions of Visnugupta (Gnoli) as above enumerated.

² Levi says he passed through Nepal via the pass of Kerong.

³ Levi, II, Pp. 163-67.

⁴ JASB, VI, Pp. 69-70; E. H. Pp. 366-67; JRAS, 1869-70 (No. IV), Pp. 55-60; IA, IX, P. 20 (Translation of Julien's Matwalin). According to Matwalin, Tibet sent 1,000 soldiers, Kamrup 30,000 oxen. IHQ, III, 792.

Monahan : Bengal, Past and Present, XIII, p. 61. C. V. Vaidya disbelieves the episode (i, pp. 334-35). The king of Nepal was Narendradeva and not Amsuvarman as stated by Fleet and others in GI, i, 190; Levi, II, p. 161 ff.

⁵ Levi, II, P. 161.

worn away and illegible. Some of these inscriptions were being attributed to Sivadeva and as in the first edition of this volume are placed in the section dealing with such records as belong to the latter. The last readable date of the series is Samvat 103 of the inscription No. XIII of Bhagwanlal Indrajī, this inscription also finds place along with Sivadeva's records as its date figure wrongly read as 143 led the discoverer to attribute it to Narendradeva's successor and not to him. Gnoli reads the name, though by conjecture, as Narendradeva. As Shivadeva figures in the role of a witness, the record should on no account belong to Shivadeva. It is strange that Bhagwanlal misinterpreted the expression *Bhattaraka* preceding the *Dutaka's* name, and could not imagine that the expression commonly applied both to the king and the crown prince as well as to the God in devotion. We have numerous instances of this expression being employed in the above sense in inscriptions of the series itself.

Bhattaraka Shivadeva in this record is no doubt the name of Narendradeva's successor, as Sri Jayadevoh Bhattaraka in another inscription (Gnoli, Ins. No. LXXVI)⁶ was meant for Sivadeva's successor. All of Narendradeva's inscriptions as far as they were traced were being incorrectly read and most of them are recently traced. This is the reason that uptill now Narendradeva was given comparatively an insignificant position in the history of the Lichhavi family of Nepal. Narendradeva's inscriptions come at frequent intervals up to the last date above determined.

We now take up the consideration of such of them as have come to notice in recent times. Any reference to economic data available in the records is avoided here to be specially mentioned in the last chapter along with such data of inscriptions of the earlier and later dates.

(1) Kailasalinga inscription dated Jyaistha Krisna 7 Samvat 69. It has simply *Paramabhattaraka Sri Narendradevasya Sagram Varsasatam Samajnapayatah*. It notes a grant of land in favour of certain schools of Saiva faith.⁷

(2) Yangahiti (Kathmandu) slab of stone⁸ dated Samvat 69 Bhadrapada Sukla 2. The record is issued from Kailasakutabhavana. This is the reaffirmation of the arrangement and regulation made for the maintenance of certain temples by Sri Bhumigupta. Narendradeva has a verse in *Sardulavikrita* metre in his praise, and he describes him-

⁶ Bendall's 3rd inscription has also Bhattaraka Skandadeva as Dutaka, *Journey*, Pp. 77-79.

⁷ Gnoli, Ins. No. LXIV.

⁸ Gnoli, Ins. No. LXVI.

self to have adorned the Lichhavi family. The address is the common one employed in the records of his predecessors except that he is now the *Maharajadhiraja*, which is the designation always assumed by Shiva-deva II and Jayadeva II. Narendradeva's message is directed to the future kings of Nepal (*Nepal rajnas*). The dutaka is Kumaramatyia Priyajivah.

(3) Patan Darbar stone inscription, dated Samvat 69, Pausa Shukla 5, issued from Kailasakutabhavana. It incorporates a charter to a certain village drawing concessions in respect of dues to be realised by certain departments of State, which had been directed not to enter the area to give the people relief from grievous pressure. The Dutaka is *Kumaramatyia Priyajivah*.

Other records are, (4) Deopatan (Kasaintole) inscription of Sambat 71 with dutaka Nripadeva, (5) Nacksal water conduit slab of Samvat 78, (6) Vatukabhairav (Patan) of Samvat 89, which is much mutilated and worn out and (7) Chyasaltole Stele issued from Bhadradhivasa bhavanat with many lines worn away. The dutaka in the last inscription is Sauryadeva. The inscription is dated Samvat 95 Pausa Shukla 10.

Narendradeva enjoyed a long reign of nearly 40 years. We have already narrated the circumstances which brought him back to power. His reign was reputed for the visits of the Chinese and Tibetan missions, which have left recorded anecdotes of their experiences in the capital of Nepal. According to Chinese sources he also sent cultural and diplomatic missions to China and Tibet. These we have described in the next chapter. Narendradeva adopted full royal titles like *Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja*. But the T'ang annals call him a vassal of Tibet. Nepalese sources, however, have nothing to indicate a subservient status of the country for those years. Nor they speak of any foreign missions visiting Nepal. Narendradeva's reign was free from internal disturbances as his restoration had put an end to the machinations of his adversaries.

One of the verses (9) in the inscription of Jayadeva II speaks of Narendradeva 'being a proud monarch and whose footstool was covered with the dust from the row of diadems worn by numerous prostrated kings.'⁹ The chronicles also associate Narendradeva's reign with the entry of Lokeswara Matsyendranath into Nepal. According to the Buddhist legend Narendradeva retired to a monastery in his old age. His love and devotion to Buddhism are indicated by the representation in some of his inscriptions of Buddhist wheel of (dharma chakra)

⁹ BGL, Inscriptions from Nepal, Ins. No. XV; Levi, II, P. 137.

flanked by two deer (Gnoli, LXXI). But all the other inscriptions have Saivite and Visnuite symbol of the bull or the sankha-chakra (conch and wheel) in them.

An inscription in Gupta character commemorating the setting up of an image of Lokeswara (see above) is attributed to Ramadeva (Samvat 469), but it seems that this was done in the time of Narendradeva. A later inscription, that of Jayadeva II mentions Lokanath in an imagery drawn by the poet, which shows that the cult of Avalokiteswara Matsyendranath was introduced in this country in that century.

The Double Rule

What is termed as the two Sircar Rule in Nepal is an ancient institution, which had asserted itself prominently during the time of Amsuvarman and Jisnugupta. As in the present day, the administration and regnal machineries were owned by separate dynasties in those days. The Regent or Prime Minister as of now owed nominal loyalty to the throne but otherwise enjoyed the most supreme and absolute authority in the realm as appears from the history of this period.

This kind of double rule certainly obtained long before Jisnu came, probably from the time of the Ahirguptas. This seems to have been the natural culmination of a long series of infantile reigns or of a successful coup d'etat staged in the circumstances by a powerful feudal lord, those very factors which have given rise to a parallel form of government in several countries in our own time. The double rule, however, had contributed to the weakness of the State in as much as it was itself an offspring of the circumstances where feud and bickering were common. But the effect was so serious that the internecine quarrel between the two houses opened the gate for foreign domination as happened after Amsuvarman. The double rule has been always a factor of political and economic ruination of the country and also of exploitation by outside powers for their own purpose at the cost of the prosperity of the country concerned. This is evident from the forementioned chapter of the history of Nepal, which reminds sharply of the consequences. It took some fifty years to recover from the ill effects of this Rule and that also was achieved only when the foreign domination had collapsed in 705 A.D.

II

Narendradeva's Successors

A few names in certain inscriptions stand out unique as those left

out both by the *Vamsavalis* and the Inscription No. 15.¹⁰ About Vikarmasena, the name occurring in the former, we may infer that he did not belong to the Thakuri stock as he comes to the same line as related to Rajaputra Surasena of the earlier inscriptions. About Bhattaraka Skandadeva of one of the later inscriptions no doubt can be entertained as to his lineage and date as his inscription amply shows his Lichhavi parentage.¹¹ He must have been the eldest son of Narendradeva who died in birth. Similarly yuvaraja Sauryadeva, the dutaka of another inscription must be yet another son of Narendradeva, who also might have expired in the lifetime of his father.¹² We have, therefore no ruler in between Narendradeva and Shivadeva II, the last coming probably after Samvat 109 (=C. 678 A.D.).

The Year 705 A.D.

One of the most notable achievements of the Nepalese in this period was the defeat of the Tibetan king in their hands in 705 A.D. From the Chinese history we come to know that the Tibetans had revived their attempts to capture certain frontier districts of Nepal in 703 A.D. But two years thence they were so heavily defeated that no further attempt was made in that direction after that event. The Tibetan king was killed in the battle¹³ according to some other sources.

The hero of this battle field is not known from any sources. The T'ang history also had not cared to note him. There is nothing in the Nepalese source materials about Nepal's adventures or engagement with the Tibetan King in 703 or even before or after. We have already brought out ample evidence against accepting Dharmadeva in that capacity. If the Thakuri Regent be taken to have fought in that battle it must be Varadeva but his role seems to be of a secondary importance as we have Shivadeva in the period after C. 688 A.D. as the King of Nepal in full glory. The latter most probably is the person to have gained the laurels of the battle-field but our verification is limited by absence of any authoritative evidence on that point.

Whoever he may be, the defeat of the Tibetan king enabled the Nepalese to regain their independence, a typical expression of which was the form of address the rulers reserved to themselves now appearing in a more dignified and pompous style of *Sri Paramabhata-*

¹⁰ IA, IX, No. 4; P. 164; Bendall, X, 77.

¹¹ Gnoli; LXX.

¹² Gnoli; LXXII.

¹³ Parker in Manchester Journal of the Oriental Society, 1911, Pp. 129-52, Missionary Journal, China, 1904; Asiatic Quarterly Review, 1910; JRAS, 1880, p. 435 ff.

raka Maharajadhiraja hitherto unknown in connection with their predecessors¹⁴ but started, however, with Narendradeva. By the time Shivadeva II came to the throne, the consolidation of the home front was complete and all vestige of foreign rule was withdrawn, which is noted triumphantly by the MMK in the words that "Shaivism was reintroduced, Sanskrit was restored and the spirit for the veneration of cows and Brahmans enlivened."

About Sivadeva whom we may call the second, we have several inscriptions, of which the two are dated. If the first of them be taken to be the oldest, his date as stated in that inscription falls in Samvat 109. Now to what era this date be referred to? Those who believe that the era of Amsuvarman was followed by the successor attribute the epoch to 595 A.D. But it is said that they seem to have missed the point that Jayadeva II, Shivadeva's son, only a hundred and ten years after Amsuvarman's death has omitted reference to his name, though in the same context, profuse praise is lavished on the Lichhavi kings reigning previous to himself by three hundred years. This is very important for the epoch of the era of Shivadeva II's or Jayadeva II's inscriptions, as not only the Thakuri lineage of these two rulers is hereby disproved but also at this stage doubt can be entertained as regards the Thakuri epoch of the era in their inscriptions, because we find that relationship with the Thakuris is altogether disowned in the inscriptions. Our doubt is further strengthened by the marital relationship of Shivadeva II with Bhogavarman Maukhari, which brings in the possibility of Harsa era to have been followed at that time in substitution of the era founded by Amsuvarman. The Lichhavis must have seen and made sure that no amount of dishonour attaches to them on any account and that for ensuring such an unstained position they had to, at least, remove the principal vestige of the Thakuri rule, that was their era. It is claimed that the Lichhavis then probably had a notion that the Thakuris had eclipsed them. In fact when Aditya Sena's inscription reveals the adoption of Harsa era (GI, Text pp. 208-10) it is quite logical that his grandson in Nepal might have not hesitated to follow in his footsteps for his own sake¹⁵ and, therefore, his father's inscription, too, may be referred to the epoch of the Harsa era. On the basis of the above arguments it is admitted that in imitation of his father-in-law, Shivadeva II had adopted the Harsa era for his reign.

But a proposition of the Harsa era can hardly stand to ground at

¹⁴ Dr. Ray endorses the view of Levi that the provision of transport service for Bhot is a proof of the obligation borne by Nepal towards Tibet as the latter's vassal (DNI, p. 163).

¹⁵ Levi, II, Pp. 167-68.

this stage. The inscriptions of Shivadeva II and Jayadeva II follow in sequence the earlier ones issued since the time of Amsuvarman. All of them together constitute one single line. They are a series by themselves. There is no breach, no interregnum anywhere in the series.

The earliest inscription of the restoration period is dated 69. If this is referred to the Harsa era, the first date of Narendradeva must occur in 675 A.D., which is quite unlikely in view of the evidence of the T'ang history. There is a gap of about 38 years, which is also not filled up by any regnal data in the event of the epoch year being placed in 606-07 A.D. We find the date figure 69 in the first of Narendradeva's inscriptions coming immediately after 67 or 68 of the last inscription issued by Visnugupta. There is no sense in creating a gap, where it does not exist. Visnugupta's records bring the pre-restoration period down to 637-38 A.D. (68-69 year of the era). Narendradeva ascends the throne in the same year and has an inscription of the same date. The gap is filled up. The sequence thus established appears logical. Therefore, the argument in favour of the Harsa era is refuted. All these inscriptions must now be referred to the epoch year of 568 A.D. as suggested in the last chapter.

Inscriptions of Shivadeva II and Jayadeva II.

We have only one dated record of Jayadeva. But to Shivadeva's name stand as many as four dated ones. The first, the Balambu stele, is dated 109.¹⁶ Then follow :

- (a) Lagantole address. This is incised in a black stone slab in the temple of Visnu in Lagantole, southern suburb of the city of Kathmandu. The stone has in the upper portion a semi-circular shape and inscribed within the arch are the relief images of Kailasha and Nandi. The charter is issued from the *Kailasha Kutabhavana* in the name of Shivadeva (II) with the epithets *Bhattaraka Maharajadhiraja*. The dutaka is Rajaputra Jayadeva. The record is dated samvat 119+568-78=687-97 A.D. (IA, IX, P. 175). Managriho wis then in a dilapidated state, and it was no longer occupied.¹⁷
- (b) Sonaguthi grant dated 125. The place of issue is Kailashakuta, and the ruler's name is clearly readable as Shivadeva. The dutaka is Rajputra Jayadeva (Gnoli, Ins. No. LXXVIII).
- (c) Pashupati grant—This was found inscribed in a stone slab at the southern gate of Pashupati. The record is damaged,

¹⁶ Gnoli, LXXVI. *Lichavi Kulaketu Maharajadhiraja*.

¹⁷ It seems Sivadeva began his reign from Kailasakutabhavana.

the date of issue and the name of the king are illegible. The subject matter is the grant of laod to the monastery named *Sivadeva Vihara*. The date has been read by Fleet and Bhagvanlal as 143=743 A.D. in terms of the Harsa era. It is believed that the record belongs to Sivadeva II (IA, IX, P. 176). The charter is issued from probably referring to the name of (*Bhadradi-basa Bhavana*). It must be dated 103+568=671 A.D.¹⁸

- (d) Chasaltal inscription. This was discovered near the stupa of Asoka in Patan. The record is in prose and its orthography agrees with that in Amsu's inscriptions. The various names of Gosthis, now called Goothi occur in the portions referring to the boundaries of the grants. The date is samvat 137 with the *dutaka Bhatturaka Sri Vijayadeva* (Levi, III, Pp. 112-18).
- (e) Thimi inscription—Thimi is two miles west of Bhatagaon in between Kathmandu and this town. The record deals with a contribution to be made by the villagers. The date is lost. The *dutaka* is Rajaputra Jayadeva (118-139).
- (f) Yagbahal inscription of Patan. This is issued from the same place as the inscription (b) of our order in the name of *Lichhavi Kulaketu Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja Narendradeva*, the two letters preceding *Deva* could not be read by Levi. The reading Narendra is confirmed by Gnoli. The letters occurring with the place of issue are common to (b) and (e), the latter was also being taken to have belonged to Shivadeva II. The subject of the epigraphy is the grant made to the fraternity of the Buddhist monks coming from all quarters and living in Shivadeva Vihara. There is an allusion to *Manadeva-Vihara, Kharjurika Vihara, Yama Vihara, Abhayaruchi Vihara, Varta Kalyana Gupta Vihara, Chaturbhalankasana Vihara, and Sriraja Vihara* (Levi, III, 139-45).¹⁹
- (g) Minanath Patan inscription. The date is samvat 145 + 568 = 713—14 A.D. The name of the king is lost; but the *dutaka's* is preserved by another Yuvaraja's name Vijayadeva. Dr. Bhagvanlal says that this name is a vicarious name of Jaydeva II and, therefore, ascribes the record to Shivadeva II. Fleet, however, takes it as a name of Jayadeva's son and pushes the record down to the reign of Jayadeva II.

¹⁸ Gnoli, LXXIII. The name of the king is now read as Narendradeva.

¹⁹ Gnoli, LXXIV.

- (h) Inscription No. 15 of I.A. belonging to Jayadeva II. This is the last of the series but the most important of all. It is dated Samvat 153=721—22 A.D. The importance of the record is due to the fact that it gives the genealogy of Jayadeva's ancestors of the glorious Lichhavi family. The earliest reference is to Supuspa of Pataliputra, who flourished twenty-three generations previous to Jayadeva (I). After Jayadeva I followed eleven unnamed kings. Then the following order is given.

Vrsadeva
 Shankaradeva
 Dharmadeva
 Manadeva
 Mahideva
 Vasantadeva

The next verse which has been subjected to confusion of reading on account of certain letters fading away in the epigraph has been already dealt with in another place of the present discourse. Let us, therefore, proceed with the conclusion arrived at in that connection. After Vrsadeva (not after Vasantadeva) thirteen kings ruled in succession some of whom are named as above and then came Udayadeva being succeeded by his son Narendradeva "bowed to by all the kings who took the dust of his feet" (Verse 11). His successor (the relationship is not defined) was Shivadeva who was a conqueror of enemies and protector of his subjects. He married the daughter of the Maukhari king Bhogavarman, who was a grand-daughter of the Magadha king Adityasena. This princess Vatsadevi gave birth to the great Jayadeva who called himself *Parachakrakama*. (IA, IX, p. 178 ff; GI, 186-87; Basak, p. 270) Jayadeva married the daughter of Gauda king.²⁰

The restoration of the Lichhavis was attended with widespread prosperity in political and cultural sphere. Nepal had just got clear of its foreign rulers, under whose sway this country chafed for about half a century. Politically the victory over Tibet had a consequence of enhancing its reputation abroad and at the same time contributed to its own consolidation at home. There was also an end of the process of double rule now that the Thakuris had sunk themselves into disrepute, so that free from domestic and external dangers, Nepal could record a high level of prosperity as in the time of Amsuvarman.

This period can be compared favourably with that of Amsuvar-

²⁰ Jayaswal probably did not care to note the word *Parachakrakama*, when he says that Jayadeva was not given the full title of sovereignty (pp. 249-50).

man. The kings as it were treading in the footsteps of Amsuvarman wisely refrained from reversing what had been done in the past in cultural and political spheres. The administration was run much in the same way as before. Toleration and piety formed the foremost rules of conduct in the court. The kings, though themselves, Saivites rendered obedience to Buddha and other Mahayana deities while even the most common privileges enjoyed by the Viharas and monks was zealously guarded. Economically the restoration of the original position of Nepal as the minter of the Himalayan country prepared the ground for speedy recovery from the past slump and from the state of devastation and ruin which accompanied the wars and foreign domination. All these vanished as the lightning, while the adoption of the old policy of agriculture and irrigation as prevailing in the time of Amshuvarman paved the way for the establishment of an all round economic prosperity on sound footing (see inscriptions : Levi, XX, BGL, No. 13).

The contact with India was kept up through more than one channel, the marriage relation being one of them. In culture, education and trade, Nepal identified itself with the major current of forces in the plains and specially of those countries whose boundary lay contiguous. As before the intimate connection of the time remained as firm as ever with the powers in Pataliputra and Gauda, with whom the Nepal kings had entered into matrimonial alliance we have just noted. It is possible that these had helped them to regain their position in Nepal as well as consolidate forces in the Terai, now that the dread of invasion from the north had vanished for ever with Tibet as the vassal probably enjoying a status parallel to what has come to be under the present Tibeto-Nepalese treaty.

The status of Nepal contrary to what some scholars have held seems to have undergone a great change for the better during the eighth century A.D. The Nepalese king for the first time in the history of Nepal was admitted into the fold of the Ksatriyas and could woo the hands of a ksatriya Princess of the plains. The Maukhari king offered his daughter to Shivadeva II and the Gauda king gave his daughter in marriage to Jayadeva II. Thus a new chain of marital alliances set up a new grouping of powers, which definitely classed the ruling dynasty of Nepal with the noble dynasties of India, those very dynasties which would have simply refused to have anything to do with those in distress and disgrace, least of all with those suffering under Mlechha tutelage.

We are not ready to take each word of the poet who composed the verses of the inscription of Jayadeva II even in its face value or something conveying the entire truth. Much seems to have been in-

serted by way of decoration or beatification generally as a mode of figurative speech, which undoubtedly expresses the fact in a manner likely to give a bright painted picture of a thing in spite of the factual embodiment underlying the expression, sometimes even in quite antagonism of the latter. The claim of the grantee as to his sovereignty of the whole of North India erroneously believed by some (Basak, p. 280) to have represented the correct status of his royalty cannot be accepted without reservation as we have another evidence to the contrary. But his all powerful position in Nepal itself is least subject to doubt and should not be construed as a mere indulgence of a poet, for it is evident that the composer with all his exaggerated estimate of the king's conquest has not used the word Sarbabhauma (sovereignty) in the sense otherwise than what it really means in so far as it was applicable to Nepal and its dependencies in the Terai under the circumstances.

Nepal defeats Kashmir

Those who refuse to accept the above fact of revival of independence and prosperity argue that it was just the time when Nepal was again under Tibetan suzerainty (Levi, II, Pp. 171-77). They, however, forget the situation in which Tibet was put after 705 A.D., which was responsible for the subsequent defeat the latter suffered in 769 A.D. at the hands of the Kashmiri king.²¹ Torn in the midst of internecine strife and itself faced with a calamity imminent and grave, Tibet was not in a position to lead any crusade against the southern neighbour. Nepal on the other hand had emerged triumphant out of the very chaos which was engulfing Tibet at this time, viz., the threat of foreign invasion. The historical episode of how the Nepalese king could inflict a defeat on the sovereign of Kashmir as narrated in Rajatarangini is too clear an evidence to lead us to think otherwise on the subject. And we have no doubt that the achievement reflects credit on the ruling Lichhavi king Jayadeva II who is undoubtedly the monarch referred to therein.

The account given by Kalhana is as follows. In the year 782 A.D. the throne of Kashmir passed into the hands of Jayapida who being imbued with the most exceptional daring and ambitions aspirations entered upon an adventurous career of conquest and in the first stage could conquer a large portion of northern and central India. His expansion, however, was checked subsequently after by the intervention of the king of Nepal who succeeded in defeating and imprisoning him, and would

²¹ K'ri-sron-Ide-brtsan (755-97).

let him off only when the latter surrendered a huge ransom and pledged words of absolute loyalty to himself.

According to *Rajatarangini* the battle was fought on the bank of the river kala Gandak, called locally Kaligandaki at present. Kaligandaki is the name which Gandak bears in the Himalayas, so the centre of the fight must occur somewhere on the hills near about Ridi which is a very important place in the western part of Nepal even today.²² The king's name, however, which is given as Aramudi cannot be identified.

Prof. Levi with his innate prejudice to give credence to anything glorifying Tibet, (II, P. 176) attributes the victory to the then Tibetan king by interpreting the name Aramudi as a Tibetan word; V. Smith (p. 387) and Stein (TV. Vol. I, 95) have followed suit much at the cost of Kalhana's evidence. We have already said as to how the scene of the battle and its place exactly fit in with the town of Ridi, apart from the name of the river which suggests an unquestionable identity with the present Kali Gandak in Western Nepal. Further the historian who exhibits all praise for the Nepalese valour and achievement more than once is least expected to commit so trivial a mistake as to entertain a confusion between Nepal and Tibet, two entirely separate countries with two entirely separate names.²³

Let us now quote from *Rajatarangini* the relevant verses 531-553.²⁴

"The Raja named Aramudi, skilled in magic, protector of Nepal, endowed with the arts of peace and war planned to overreach him (531). When Jayapida entered his principality he did not make his submission but retired from before him to a great distance with his army (532). Thus it was that he who was ambitious to conquer inflicted while in pursuit of Aramudi defeats on the various ruling princes which would have necessitated special efforts to achieve (533). He proceeded in each country to search the enemy who was in hiding somewhere and was occasionally visible just like to the hawk the pigeon in the thicket (534). Then when he had exhausted the perilous adven-

²² Ridi is only a few miles west of Palpa on a hill site overlooking the River Gandak. It is a summer seat of the Nepalese district head of Palpa. It is also a sacred place where many go to die and those who cannot may have the posthumous satisfaction of ashes being burnt in the common pyre. Here *Saligram*, the black deified stone, is found.

²³ JBORS, 1936, III, pp. 251-53. According to P. Landon the account has also the backing up of legends in Kathmandu, but I know nothing of this legend.

²⁴ Translation by R. S. Pandit, Pl. 42-44. Jayaswal identified Aramudi with Varadeva of Bendall's chronicle (Nep. Cat. p. 21). The chronicle relates a story about Varadeva's life of renunciation as a monk and attributes to him the victory over Karkotanaga. Jayaswal says that Aramudi in Kasmiri means a monk and karkota is the dynasty of Jayapida and the account refers to the fight which Varadeva had with Jayapida.

tures while engaged in conquest up to the horizon he planted his army on the bank of river which was in the vicinity of the ocean (535). At this time on the further bank of the river on the right of the king was found posted Aramudi displaying his army with the emblem of his own parasol (537). Seeing his powerful army which resounded with the rattle of massed kettle drums Jayapida flared up like fire which has absorbed melted butter (538). He on seeing that the river water which was knee deep was no impediment in his anger plunged in to cross unacquainted with the terrain as he was from never having been before (539). When the king had reached the middle the river was filled by the rising tide and unexpectedly became unfathomably deep with the waters (54).²⁵

The king's army teeming with men, elephants and horses sinking in the river, which was rising in that manner, in a trice came to an end (541). The king whose ornaments and clothes were torn off in the rushing waves, penetrated the waves with his arms and was carried off far by the flood waters (542) with the pitiful shrieks of the one army, the triumphant shouts of the other and with the roar of the waves of the river the direction became full of tumult (543). The enemy made haste and with armed men on inflated skins he drew out Jayapida from the midst of the river and took him prisoner and held a feast (544) on the bank of the Kala Gandaka in a very high stone he put Jayapida into the hands of guards who were in his confidence (546). Thus the Kashmiri king was once more submerged in adversity and, puzzled as to what should be done, was consumed by concealed sorrow (547). The wise Rajah so guarded him that among the artful not even the moon and among the brilliant not even the sun could see him (541). Together with the fortune of Jayapida I shall deliver to you the throne of the king of Kashmir" thus through the emissaries Aramudi heard the message (553) when upon the arrival of the emissaries of the opposite side the agreement was complete."

Was Aramudi a Magar Chief?

Except for Kalhana's account Aramudi is an unknown figure for the history of Nepal. His name so eloquently appearing in Rajatarangini is nowhere traced in the indigenous source materials of our country. This is certainly strange. How is it that his brave exploits are acknowledged by a historian of the country, whose king he defeated, and there is not even a faint recollection of the event cherished by his own countrymen who inherit the glory earned by him in the encounter. But this

²⁵ Op. Cit., p. 254.

alone should not form a ground to reject Aramudi as a ruler of Nepal. A historian of Kalhana's reputation could hardly recount the event of a Kashmiri King's defeat at the hands of a foreign ruler without properly ascertaining the facts of the case. We have already expressed our opinion against identifying Aramudi with any country other than Nepal. But the problem of his identification remains all the same unsolved.

The place where the battle was fought is located in the region where a tribe of Indo-Mongolian origin lives under the impact of a Brahmanical culture. The locality is Magarat on the upper reaches of the Gandak, and the tribe is known as the Magar with a hoary tradition of Brahmanical Culture.

The region as it falls in the Gandak basin is one of the four major centres of human settlement and culture for the whole of the area now comprising the Nepal Himalayas. Palpa and its neighbourhood constitute the principal habitation assuming an air of urbanity. But we know very little about the historic past of this region. Unearthed it may reveal something interesting and rich as it was the case with the Karnali basin.

The first time we hear of Palpa is in connection with the visit of Atisa, who had taken that route to cross over to West Tibet. From his account it appears that a Ksatriya king was ruling over the Gandak region at the time.

Now, suppose we were to assign to Aramudi a place in this region. Could the riddle be solved? There is no doubt that he fought with the brave Magars on his side. But the Magars could have as well stood by their king who came to resist the enemy from his capital in the Nepal valley. The problem of identification remaining unsolved another speculation would be to represent Aramudi as a local king in that region.

At the time Jayapida invaded the eastern Himalayas the ruling dynasty of Nepal had got weakened in strength owing to adverse circumstances. Quite possibly, Aramudi functioned as an independent monarch in the Gandak pradesh at about this time. As the Khasa kingdom of Karnali had not by then come into existence, Aramudi's principality might have covered the entire sub-Himalayan tract in the West as far as the present Kali river of the Kumaon—Nepal border and even farther. Today the Magars are found scattered throughout the Khasa tracts of the Bheri-Karnali doab. Probably they had expanded following the conquest of their king as early as the 8th century.

It might be that Kalhana by what he heard about the event in his time failed to notice a separate kingdom so close to the Nepal valley. The story of Jayapida's campaigns came to his knowledge after nearly

five hundred years of their occurrence. Kalhana wrote in circumstances where the context of the old period had entirely changed. We can suggest in the same vein that the political map of the East Himalayas might have also substantially changed in all these years. Not only the ruling dynasties but ruling kingdoms could be wiped out from the map within the duration these fateful centuries.

As Nepal by far was the name of the most ancient and glorious country in the eastern Himalayas and he could not hear of any other kingdom there, at the time he wrote his composition 'the River of Kings' Kalhana had his own reason to link the event of a fight on the bank of the Gandak that Jayapida fought with none but the king of Nepal. This kind of reasoning may however be contested otherwise if evidences to the contrary ever appeared.

Aramudi in all possibility was a king of the Gandak region. He might as well be a ruler of a native dynasty of Magars. The Magar vocabulary might provide a clue to the meaning of the word Aramudi in its historical setting. But scholars with a competent knowledge of linguistics and Indo-Mongoloid dialects are needed for the task. If Gandak region is thoroughly searched for historical studies, we are likely to gain new light on the event of the Kashmir-Nepal conflict and Aramudi's own identity to a phantom by the overwhelming authority

Lichhavis After Jayadeva II

After Jayadeva II, the position of the Lichhavis was shaken, as the foregoing account has suggested. But it does not appear that they had ceased to exist since that time.

However, we have no reliable data for their rule in the time following Jayadeva II. Jayadeva's Pasupati inscription is the last of their dated records. In between this record and a dated manuscript coming about two hundred and fifty years later, we have absolutely to grope in dark for historical names belonging to the ruling dynasty.

The absence of reliable evidence is a handicap in the way of preparing even a sketchy history for the time between Jayadeva II and the early eleventh century.

In the few lines below an attempt is made to prove the continuation of the Lichhavi dynasty on the basis of certain unidentified coins of the period.

The best testimony to the continuity of the Lichhavi dynasty for another long period of years is provided by the coinage of this period, which unfortunately till now had been ascribed to the earlier regimes and to different names. We know from the history of the Nepalese

coinage that there is a type of coins with the legend Sri Pashupati, after whom they are known today.²⁶ These bronze coins are 'of less value. They represent only three-fourths of the anka cons'. These have been rightly assigned to the eighth century A.D. both by Dr. V. Smith²⁷ and E. A. Walsh²⁸, two foremost numismats; but under a queer idea of Nepalese coinage and working on the evidence of the irregular paleography other Indologists have confusingly misplaced them a century earlier.

The six specimens of coins according to the above opinion represent the six Lichhavi kings from Shankardeva onwards, whom they have placed in the latter part of the seventh century A.D. This, however, does not seem to be a right inference not only for the misplacement of these rulers but also because the Pashupati coins if properly considered represent kings having the name in words synonymous with Pashupati, the God Siva implying their devotion to the cult of Pashupatinath, rather than those whose allegiance to even Shaivism is doubtful and whose dates under all circumstances belong to previous centuries. Apart from that the epigraphy of the coin is a strong factor to determine their place in the eighth century, which of course may also be brought into effect a consonance with the erroneous arrangement if they are assigned a place in that century. But as two allied authorities simultaneously are not expected to issue coins in the same place, which position it would amount to if we ascribe them to rulers in the above order, we have either to deny paramountcy to Shivadeva II and his successors or to dismiss the existence of the former kings altogether from our proviso so that the latter get their due credit. And as Shiva II and Jaya II have to their advantage the unassailable proof of their paramountcy expressed through their inscriptions, we have no other way save to recongnise their position as such, and the coins only supplement the evidence to that effect. The coins belong to them and their two predecessors who were also devotees of Shiva and there can

²⁶ Arranged on a horizontal line, sometimes divided in symmetrical syllables around the central design trident or flower vase: PA/PA CU/TI. Their diameter, 21×22 mm. is less by little to those of Mananka (24 mm.), their weights go from 6 gr., 13 to 9 gr., 85 in passing through the intermediaries 7 gr., 40; 8 gr., 30; 9 gr., 46 (Levi, I, p. 111).

²⁷ CIM., pp. 280-82.

²⁸ Op. Cit., p. 681. There are six varieties of these coins. (1) On the obverse recumbent bull to left, reverse shows sun surrounded by rays, (2) same on the obverse, Nandipada trisula opposite, (3) Humped bull with crescent above, reverse sun with rays, (4) on the obverse Trident with an axe attached to the shaft on the left, some ornament hanging from the right on the reverse, (5) same with trident but without axe, (6) on the obverse seated figure of a king wearing a crown and on the reverse vase of flowers. These coins were found in Buddha Gaya as votive offerings.

be no two opinions on that point. On that inference the two other types must belong to two of Jayadeva's successors. These coins also testify that the Lichhavis had at this stage maintained in name and fact, unmitigated royalty and honour, reputation and grandeur as was the case in the last period.

CHAPTER VI
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITION OF
ANCIENT NEPAL

The Account of the T'ang History

We now come to the account of the T'ang history, which applies to the year 646 A.D. We have to observe here that though the estimate was prepared for that year, conditions prevailing then obtained throughout the seventh and eight centuries, so that they may be taken as representative of the period in review here. We have also to remark that the policy outlined in relation to Amsuvarman's regime was common with the successive regimes and therefore we may take them too as representative of that period.

Here is the extract from the T'ang annals :—

1 “The Si-Kouo-hing-tchonon of Wang Hiuen-tse says : In the second year of Hien-King (657) Wang Hiuen-tse and certain others were sent by imperial order to the kingdoms of the west for offering Buddha a Kasaya. They went to Nepala towards the south-West.¹ After arriving in Pouo-to-tou, they reached the east of the village where there was a depressed bed. There was a small pond with water in fire. If one takes in hand some lighted fire to illuminate it, suddenly on its surface appears a luminous fire which emerges from the very bosom of the water. If one wishes to extinguish it by drenching it with the water, the water changes into fire and burns. The Chinese envoy and his followers placed there on a cooking vessel and thus prepared their nourishment by heating. The envoy interrogated the king of the country, the king replied to him. ‘Yore, in striking strokes with a staff, one made to appear a chest of gold; order was given to a man to drag it out. But each time that one pulled it out, it replunged. Tradition says that it is the gold of the diadem of Mi-le P’ou Sa (Maitreya Bodhisattva), who is due to come to complete the path. The Naga of five protects it and defends it; the fire of this lake is the fire of the Naga of fire’.²

11 “To the south-east of the capital, at a small distance, there is a lake of water and of fire. In going one li towards the east, one

¹ This was the third mission.

² Mission of Wang-Fragment IV, drawn from Fa-Youen-tchon-lir Chap. xvi, p. 154, Col. 7. Tao-che, xxxvi, 1, p. 5a. Levi II, pp. 157-59; JBORS, 1936, III pp. 241-43 (Translation by A. P. Banerji Shastri from the French).

finds the fountain A-ki-po-li (the Youen-tcho-lin bears : Aki-po-mi; the same alternations in the two redactions of the history of the T'ang). Its circumference is of 20 pou (40 paces). In the dry time as the season of the rains, it is deep; it does not dissipate but keeps on steaming always. If one holds in hand some lighted fire the entire tank takes fire; the smokes and the fire rise several feet high. If one drenches this fire with some water, then the fire becomes more intense. If one launches therein powdered dust, the flame ceases and what one throws therein turns to ash. If one places a cooking vessel over the water to prepare the food by heating, it is well heated. There was in olden time in this fountain a coffer of gold. A king ordered to drag this coffer out. When one had brought it out of the mud, the men and elephants pulled at it without succeeding in making it come out. And in the night a supernatural voice says: Here is the diadem of Maitreya Buddha; creatures could not assuredly obtain it, because the Naga of Fire guards it." [The reference is probably to Ankhe Pokhri in the vicinity of the Godavari village, south-east of Patan but not to Tou-dah (south-west) as proposed by Levi I, 159].

"To the south of the town, at more than 10 li is found an isolated mountain covered with an extraordinary vegetation, temples are disposed there in numerous stores which one would take for a crown of clouds under the pines and the bamboos. The fishes and the dragons follow man, tame and confiding. They approach the man and come to receive what to eat. Who does them violence causes the ruin of those and his own."

"Recently the orders of the Empire passed by the kingdom and thence extended far. Now it depends on T'en fan (Tibet)" (Fragments II and III).

"In the capital of Nepal there is a construction in storeys which has more than 200 tch'en of height and 80 peu (400 ft) of circumference. Ten thousand men can find place in its upper part. It is divided in three terraces and each terrace is divided in seven storeys. In the four pavilions, there are sculptures to make you marvel. Stones and pearls decorate them" (see also, Waters, II, p. 83).

The following is another item of extracts from the same Notices:

"The kingdom of Nepal is right to the west of Tibet. The inhabitants have the custom to shave their hair just to the level of eye brows. They pierce their ears and suspend therein tubes made of bamboo or horn of cattle. It is a mark of beauty to have ears hanging up to the shoulders. They eat with their hands without using spoons or sticks. All their utensils are made of copper. The merchants

there, moving and stationary are numerous; cultivators rare.³ They have coins of copper which bear on one side a figure of man and on the reverse a horse (*New history*: They have coins of copper which bear on one side a figure of man and on the reverse a horse and a bull, and which have no hole in the middle). They do not pierce the noses of their bulls. They clothe themselves with a single piece of cloth which envelops the body. They bathe themselves several times a day. Their houses are constructed of wood. The walls of these are sculptured and painted. They are very fond of scenic plays, they take part in blowing trumpets and beating drums. They understand fairly well calculation of destiny and researches in physical philosophy. They are equally clever in the art of calendar-making. They adore five celestial spirits and sculpture their images in stone. Each day they wash them with purifying water. They roast a lamb and offer it to sacrifice.

“The King, Naling-ti-po (Narendradeva) adorns himself with the pearls, rock crystal, mother of pearl, coral, and amber, he has in the ears rings of gold and pendants of jade, and a breloc belt ornamented with the figure of Buddha. He seats himself on a seat of lions. In the middle of the hall one spreads flowers and perfumes. The nobles and the officers and all the court are seated to the right and to the left on the ground; at his sides are ranged hundreds of soldiers having arms.

“In the middle of the palace there is a tower of seven storeys with coppers tiles. Its balustrade, grilles, columns, beams, and everything therein are set with fine and even precious stones. At each of the four corners of the tower there projects a waterpipe of copper. At the base there are golden dragons which spout forth water. From the summit of the tower water is poured through runnels which finds its way down below, streaming like a fountain from the mouth of the golden Makara.⁴

“The father of Naling-ti-po was deposed by his younger brother; Naling-ti-po lay hidden to escape from his uncle. Tibet gave him refuge and afterwards established him on his throne; he became in consequence its vassal. In the period of Tching-koan (627-649) Li-I-piao with some military officers was sent as ambassador to India and they passed by this kingdom. Naling-ti-po offered him a grand joy; he took Li-I-piao to Aki-po-li, this tank is 20 pales in circum-

³ The New History adds: Since they do not know how to plough the earth with the bulls.

⁴ Levi II, pp. 164-66; JBORS, 1936, pp. 238-39.

ference; the water was boiling constantly. Though it is flowing in current it sweeps confused by hot stones and throws odours of metal. It is neither swelling nor barren. If one strikes with an object, there rises mere vapour and smoke; if you drop cauldron, the dressing is done instantly.

“Subsequently when Wang Hiuen-Tse was pillaged by the Indians, Nepal sent cavalries along with Tibet; they fought bravely with Indians, baffled them and obtained success. In the second year of the period of Yong-hoei (651) their king Chi-li Nalien-to-lo (Sri Narendradeo) sent a new ambassador to offer homage and presents.”

What had most impressed the Chinese travellers was the very unique commercial position of the country between 646-57 A.D. The development of commerce is a testimony to the lively interest taken by rulers in such matters. Commerce, of course, grew in Nepal to the extent that was allowed by the disposition of nature and geography on communication and production. There is little prospect of a large scale agricultural development in Nepal owing to the hilly nature of the country and rocky soils in most places. The large tract of uncultivated lands in between Tibet and Nepal must have been noted by the traveller, when they remarked that cultivators were rare in Nepal. Under that limitation the consequent development of commerce took place as it were in consonance with the law of natural division of resources, and of labour. The trade as appears from Yuan Chwang's disclosure mainly consisted of dealing in corns, fruits, copper and yak, all excepting the last produced by itself and which this country sent to Tibet and India in sufficient quantities. The yak Nepal got from the areas bordering on Tibet and its role was in this respect to take out *chamars* (fly flap) and export to India as may be inferred from the same. The merchandise was carried by itinerary merchants and handed over to marketing organisations stationed in Tibet and India, who did the disposal business amongst the consumers.

Iron was probably not used by the inhabitants and all works were mainly done by the help of wood and copper, a natural corollary of the same factors of natural limitation, which explains the position with reference to the dearth of the former and abundance of the latter. Silver was rare. The coins were chiefly of copper but to a small extent silver pieces were in circulation (Panas and Puranas, See Ins. No. XIII, Levi) despite rarity of that metal, probably because the country badly needed them for reasons of advanced state of transaction involving rapid exchange of goods.⁵

⁵ But silver coins of his time are not traced.

Unlike what Yuan Chwang himself says about the ugly shape of the people, the T'ang account is definitely eulogising. Nor the assertion of the pilgrim that they were mostly of coarse behaviour and ignorant is accepted by the latter. From the evidence of the T'ang it appears that the people were not only well shaped and good natured but they were also proficient in astrology and science, which shows the high state of cultural achievement attained by the Nepalese at that time.

It is very difficult to discover the causes of these two contradictory accounts in as much as both claim to have been drawn by eye witnesses and therefore seem in no way distracted or distorted on apparent observation, but it is much likely that Yuan Chwang's estimate was based on prejudice which was given rise to by his hatred towards the ritualistic Buddhism in that country and by his first contact with the Tharus⁶ of the Terai or some other people who are likely to have caused unfavourable impression in his mind by a tendency to illtreat strangers.

The Pagoda Style

The description of the palace of Naling-ti-po, we do not know whether it was a reference to Kailasakuta or to Managriha, may be identified with the style of the buildings which is still present in Nepal and which is wrongly known as the Pagoda style from the name *Pagoda* borne by temples of such a style in Burma. The style represents temples or houses of hierarchical and sloping roofs in tiers, storey upon storey, standing on a pavement, supported by a single or a more similarly hierarchical platforms.

The Pagoda style of architecture was attributed to the Chinese and as such was generally believed to have travelled thence to Tibet and Nepal (Fergusson: *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, II, p. 369). But now we have a definite information from the Chinese sources that up till 646 A.D. there was no like of it to be seen in China. The possibility, therefore, of the style to have travelled from Nepal to elsewhere is more acceptable. It was during the seventh century that the advent was made by this style into Tibet mainly through Nepalese efforts. All credit goes to those who not only produced a new masterly style of architecture but also gave expression to the same the way such as was gladly copied by others.

The temples or houses in Nepal on the authority of the T'ang

⁶ The Tharus are the Indo-Mongolian people speaking a variety of Hindi language.

history assumed a highly decorating pose on account of the exquisite architectural and artistic designs covering the surface and also because of the beautiful picturesque lining walls inside and the artistic facade and enrapturing mural painting borne by them.

There seems to be little doubt that a large number of temples and chaityas, the latter large mounds of earth with stone pavements of architectural grandeur and on the top surmounted by similarly carved metal roof (Gajur) under a canopy of gold-leaved umbrellas of metal and of larger dimension (chhatra), existed in the valley or outside it. The inscriptions standing in the name of contemporary rulers are testimonies to what these rulers did to construct temples and create endowments, and in addition to what was being done by a number of private people. Most of these temples are buried today underground, some of them which are existing, have been preserved in a changed shape, while a few lie demolished and dilapidated and with no remarkability about them at present. In the silence of their tombs and demolished walls and wrecked countenance, however, the inscriptions standing as sentinels remind that at one time they were the objects of attractions of thousands and pride of the place of millions and a sorrowful cry reverberating through the willows growing on the ruins sends a thrill through our body in imaginative remembrances of that past which was so rich and so beautiful.

For temples and their upkeep the kings maintained a liberal grant, as may be gathered from the inscriptions and if what the inscriptions have conveyed is perfectly true, nobody can deny that Nepal had enjoyed an advanced type of cultural progress in those days under the fostering care and patronage of the benevolent rulers.

Cultural Mission to Tibet

The Nepalese contribution to the Renaissance in Tibet in the time of Narendradeva was of immense value to that country. As was the case, Nepal helped in conjunction with Kashmir to polish the language of Tibet and there would be no surprise here on that account as we know the priority of Newari over almost all the Indo-Mongolian languages so far as its origin and its richness and grandeur are concerned. Tibet also imbibed from its association with Nepal and Kashmir some fundamental characteristics of Indian culture. First of all it got the rich Gupta script and then its later development, the decorative Lantsa. It is surprising that the Gupta script could find its way in Tibet at a time when it was less in vogue in India itself. It was, however, not a case of direct contact with the culture of the Indian plains. The script went from Kashmir

and Nepal where it was current since the beginning of the fifth century A.D. Paleographic evidence suggests that the type of script current in India in the seventh century A.D. was adopted in Tibet. This may explain the variance in the Gupta and Tibetan scripts and also the difference existing in the Tibetan and Manadevite scripts. It must be known that the last are very close to the Gupta scripts whereas the Amsuvarman type are not. Incidentally, therefore, the variation supplies us with one of the strong grounds for dissociating them from the inscriptions of the later date. The second gift of India for Tibet consisted of the entire structural basis of Tibetan religion, the Mahayana Buddhism, which was planted on Tibetan soil by dint of Nepalese and Kashmiri efforts and affection for that country. We have been used to call it a gift from India not because Buddhism was ushered into Tibet by the people of the plains but because it is a product of that place and India as a whole, stands to have contributed to developing the principles and practices in that direction; otherwise it is no exaggeration to say that in the first stage of Tibetan Renaissance Nepal and Kashmir were the only countries to help it in this direction, the people from Vikramsila taking up the thread only after a full hundred years. Rgyal-rabs (E. Schlinginweit's edition, p. 49) gives in its list of visitors to Tibet 'Kumara from India, Silamanjusri from (Rockhill, O.P. Cit. p. 613) Nepal, Tabuta and Ganuta from Kashmir. A few more names from Nepal including that of Budhakirti are known from Tibetan legend in the same connection. Sila Manjusri, Buddha Kirti and others had done for Tibet at that time the same services as were rendered later on to Tibetans by Shanti-raksita and Padmasambhava. Even at a late stage, the Nepalese evinced the same keen desire to serve Tibet. Apart from a large number of scholars from Nepal living there, Tibet enjoyed the advantage of securing from Nepal the talents of gifted artists and sculpturists who shaped the present capital of that country and to whom most of the famous temples preserved till now are due. The Pagoda style and the superstitious school of Tibetan painting owe their origin to the valley of Kathmandu. In these fields what Magadha did in regard to the cultural development of Burma and Ceylon, Nepal did to Tibet. Its role in Tibetan renaissance was so magnificent that we cannot afford to forget it so soon.⁷

The Route to Tibet

So long, the contact with the Asiatic countries was maintained

⁷ Nepal then followed the greater vehicle of Buddhism though there were many attached to the lesser vehicle also. Tantric form of worship had not made its appearance.

through other routes. As late as 629 A.D. Yuan Chwang had to pass the circuitous route through the Hindukush to get to the frontier of India. Since 639, however, the Banepa-Kuti pass (Banepa is known as Bhatta in Newari. Cf. Ins. No. 13 of BGL, IA) was opened and with it a more intimate contact between Nepal and Tibet and between India and Tibet began to take shape. The closing of this route till that time was a factor to shut Tibet from all events in India. It was really surprising that Tibet so nearer to the frontier of India was kept barbarous and ignorant, whereas China some two thousand miles further north-east could imbibe Buddhist culture as early as the second century A.D. The Banepa route offered all facilities to Tibet to learn Indian culture and became the principal thoroughfare of all cultural and commercial contact between the two countries.⁸

Politics

That in the Vedic and Mauryan times the idea of absolute monarchy was practically unknown has been amply proved by the thesis of Dr. K. P. Jayaswal (*Hindu Polity*, II, pp. 163-97) and accordingly the data in this connection need not be recapitulated here. In these days the monarch was merely an executive head with no absolute powers and was himself subject to dictates of the people as manifest through the Paura or Janapada or even through the council of wise men (sahasad), which had power to depose or to instal him (Raichaudhuri: *Political History*, pp. 260 ff, pp. 276-85).

But as time passed on, the forces of absolutism grew triumphant. The constitutional slave turned into a moral master and he in turn was elevated into the position of an absolute king responsible to none but to himself. That was the position in the sixth and seventh century A.D. The contribution towards absolutism was made by so many

⁸ Huang Sheng-chang writes :

"In the middle of the seventh century, the Chinese Buddhist monk Hsuan Chao discovered the 'Turfan-Nepal route'... a new way from China to India through Tibet and Nepal. It was much shorter and easier to travel than the old one, which lay along the Tienshan and across the Balaturgh Mountains. Leaving India for home via Nepal in the ninth lunar month of 654, Hsuan Chao reached Loyang in Honan Province four months later. Never before had the distance between China and India been traversed in so short a time. This route was afterwards followed by Indian monks coming to China, monks going in the opposite direction, all of whom spent some time in Nepal, because it was there that the Buddha was born and died.

"Hui Chao, an eighth-century Chinese pilgrim who returned to Ansi, Kansu Province, in 729, penned a *Record of a visit to the Five countries of India*, a portion of which was discovered in the Tunhuang caves. Many books written at the time mention how hospitable the Nepalese Government and people were towards Chinese visitors, and also laud the beauty of the arts of Nepal." (*Peoples' China*, May 1956).

factors, e.g. (i) the decline of the Janapadas, (2) the line of usurpers who based their sovereignty on divinity, (3) the series of foreign invasions which made it quite necessary to confide in and concentrate power on one man, (4) the idea of unique imperial glory and grandeur under the Guptas, etc. etc. The monarchy in Nepal as stated was a Gupta prototype, and marked the development of factors which had substituted autocracy by the head of the tribe for the democracy in which the tribe participated.

The Government

At the head of the Government was the Maharaja or the Regent as in the time of Amsuvarman. The Maharaja was a hereditary ruler. He was assisted in the administration by his Prime Minister called Generalissimo (mahasarvadandanayak) and Grand Usher (mahasarvapratihara) who combined in himself the functions of the judicial head and the secretary-general. The head of the army was called Mahabaladhyaksha (Chief of General Staff), and the Minister of worship was similarly called Dharmarajikamatya. The various details of administration were carried on by officers designated as bhattarakapadiya (King's officers) or Vartri (salary holders). The *samantas* were provincial Governors, sometimes holding posts by virtue of their hereditary rights. The diplomatic department was generally held by the king himself or by his son or by one of his favourites.⁹

The above functional distribution of power does not envisage sharing of it with the people, for all these posts were filled by the king by virtue of his prerogatives and he also mainly appointed his officers from the rank of those who were loyal to him. Amsuvarman, however, as befits a man who rose under circumstances critical and had to usurp power, seemed to look to his subjects as a source of his strength and support so that in his time a definite stage towards the revival of the old type of limited monarchy had appeared near in sight. His address to the people was couched in highly respectable terms; he often took

⁹ Ins. No. XIII: "The 'personnel' of the royal family is at least partly enumerated in an inscription of Amsuvarman, dated in the year 625 J.C. and which seems connected with the coronation ceremony of this prince. At the head appears the great 'Inspector of armies' Mahabaladhyaksa; then the 'Superintendent of donations' Prosadadhirkrt; then at a short distance the bearer of the 'Fly-Flap' Cameradhar; 'The standard bearer' Dhiraja Manusya; the 'supplier of drinking water' Paniya-Karmanatika; the 'inspector of the seat' (Royal) Pithadhyaksa; the 'bearer of Puspa Pataka' Puspa-Pataka Vaha; the 'drum and blower of the conch' Nandicanhavada; and even the 'sweepress' Sammarjayitri." (Levi).

The Danvarika of Gnoli's LXXXII must have been quite an important official, who was entrusted with the task of making payments to different priests and others on ceremonial occasions.

the advice of the elders of the country, protected the people from unusual interference of the officials and exacted a little tribute as was only necessary. The ideal of kingship—the fatherhood of ruler and sonhood of subjects, was ungrudgingly followed by him and under him every facility for the encouragement of high ideals was earnestly rendered.

The system which Amsuvarman stood for was put out of operation a little in the time of his successors. The procedure normally developed in the line determined by the peculiarities of circumstances in which Jisnugupta or his successors had triumphed. But all the same the rulers were not so dictatorial as to harbour pretension to absolutism and for the matter of that straightaway trample down all rights and liberties of the people. All of them ruled with a show of rod, no doubt, but they strictly followed the tradition and example set by Amsuvarman and his predecessors and there was not much harm done to public cause by their rule. To them also we owe the cultural advancement and economic prosperity of Nepal of the seventh and eighth century A.D.

In inscriptions which record charters granting certain privileges to villages, the issue is addressed to the community of inhabitants (Gramā Kutumbinah) led by their chief (*pradhana purassaran*). In some the community is mentioned as led by Brahmanas. In a few inscriptions of Amsuvarman, the address is made to Grihaksetrikadi Kutumbino, the house-holders and land owners (Levi, Ins. No. XIV). Obviously by these terms whether separate units of villages or those of the inhabitants charged with the contributions under royal grant they were being treated each as one family. This presupposes the existence of self government at the lowest level. It appears that the village assemblies were functioning actively at the time.

Agrahara

We have a number of inscriptions showing the boundary lines of an area set aside as agrahara (e.g. Gnoli, Nos. LXXIV, LXXII, in the name of Aryabhiksusangha). The donor in each case is the ruler himself. By decrees issued through the inscriptions the area was exempted from all kinds of levies and taxes. The donee became the absolute proprietor and landlord of any property within the confines of the agrahara specified. No state officials entered there and interfered in any way with the activities of the organisation, in whose name the grant was made.

The practice of creating endowments of Agrahara was prevalent since a long time and applied both to Buddhist and Brahmanical clergies.

The ostensible purpose of such endowments was to enable those desiring to pursue learning to lead a life exclusively devoted to the profession free from the cares and worries of want and poverty. The agrahara maintained institutions and centres of education far from the din and bustle of commercial towns. As our inscriptions bring out spacious and rich agrahara, we are apt to think that, in those days learning and scholarship obtained wide encouragement and support from the state, and that there were a large number of people who were engaged in intellectual pursuits and academic research.

Economic Policy

Amsuvarman's economic policy was actuated by only one consideration and that was how to benefit the people of the country. It was, therefore, natural that he should always devote himself to the improvement of trade and commerce of the country. His time on that account was the most prosperous, for we have on the evidence of the T'ang annals that the country was fully advanced and developed in commerce when Wang Hieun t'se visited Nepal. Amsuvarman, at first, put the monetary system in order by introducing new copper and silver coins and by adjusting the deficiency of the former debased coins of gold.¹⁰ Two modes of reckoning values are known, one was the Purana and another Pana. Karsapana was another name of Purana weighing 3 grams 80 of silver, which was divided into 16 panas+ (9 grams 48 of copper).¹¹ On the medium of exchange depended the whole basis of commercial transaction and by effecting the monetary reforms he fulfilled a great need of the trading community. The country enjoyed the monopoly of the trade passing between Nepal and Tibet and also of the transit trade between Tibet and India. The Government was alive to the need for maintaining this entrepot trade, and ensured supply of transit labour to all concerned. If under him the commercial position would not have been strengthened, never was such a hope to be entertained. His was the most prosperous time from that point of view.

It was not to be supposed that the industrial advance was effected at the cost of agricultural economy. Agriculture was the primary occupation of the people in the valley and there was no reason for the state to neglect its development. Amsuvarman and his successors understood the significance of agricultural prosperity and they, therefore, made every effort to help the people in this direction. They ran

¹⁰ Walsh, Op. Cit., P. 678; KPJ, Op. Cit., P. 215.

¹¹ Levi, III, XII footnote to P. 83; Rapson, *Indian Coins*, P. 2.

a network of canals for the purpose (tilamakam),¹² which in the end produced untold advantage for the peasants. The hilly nature of the country naturally offered the only prospect of terrace irrigation.

In matters of irrigation the Government exhibited the utmost sense of prudence and constructive ability. It was not such as to have merely erected a water course and then left it to run by itself, as was the case with the lax administration of those days. But under the sagacious regime of Amsuvarman and his successors, everything was well conducted in the best interest of stability and efficiency, which naturally resulted in checking wastage and in ensuring adequate supply as the case may be. The writ issued to the villagers whose committee (Panchalika) managed the administration of such water works, directed them under state provisions to use water in proportion to specified allotments, to use for themselves or to divide it with others according as it was stipulated (Inscription 14, IA, IX. *Saptada bibbajya bhoktavyam*). To meet the capital expenditure and upkeep of the canals, the Government levied water tax on all users, which shows also the source of finance by which all such affairs were managed by the state.

Taxes

Besides revenue from land three forms of direct taxes have been noted from the inscriptions. The first is a tax called Mallakara or Potaka which was probably realised universally as a defence contribution.¹³ The second was a kind of cess on water used for irrigation purposes. The third was a levy exacted in specific cases for the maintenance of religious endowments. A tax on gold and luxuries also seems to have been in vogue.¹⁴ Bhagabhogakara mentioned in the related inscription can only mean royal shares of the annual produce of farms and orchards which included daily or seasonal household necessities. The word sulka occurs in connection with the tax on fishes.

Porters for the purpose of carrying loads to Tibet were provided to merchants by a particular unit of village.¹⁵ Porterage was obtained as a form of forced labour by the King who distributed to the merchants according to requirement. The Government when needed also obtained compulsorily as many load carriers as the requirement was

¹² Gnoli, Ins. Nos. L, LII, BGL, Ins. Nos. 9, 10.

¹³ Levi, III, XVI, P. 109; XI, Gnoli, XXX, LVI, Pp. 71-75.

¹⁴ Inscription No. 12, IA, IX, P. 171 (BGL.); Gnoli, XII, LXXVII (*Samucitadeya-bhagabhogakara hiranyadi*). For bhagabhogakara read Fleet, Pp. 118, 122, 179, 191, 198, 295; D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, I, P. 372 Ln. 7; Bose, *Social & Rural Economy*, I, P. 126; Ghoshal, *Historiography* (Beginning and other Essays), p. 172; Arthashastra (Bhattasvamin) JBORS, XI, Pt. III, p. 83ff. (II, 15,24); Manu, VIII, 307.

¹⁵ *ibid.* *Bhotta Visti heto bhavikajana pancha Vyabasavibhi gyahitabya.*

deemed. There was also a local cess realised from certain dealers and retailers particularly as the production of oil from mustard seeds (tailakaram)¹⁶ and on fishes¹⁷ and on fowls and pigs.¹⁸ Some villages used to pay specified jars (ghatakam) of oil to the ruler.¹⁹ The rates for fishes were different according to their qualities. The wood-cutters paid a sort of levy on the woods and leaves collected from forests.²⁰ One inscription in particular (Satungal) forbids carrying of an axe into the prohibited forest area unless otherwise ordered. The tax mentioned in regard to onion and garlic was in all probability applied when these appeared as articles of export to places outside Nepal.²¹

According to Levi, the land tax 'fixes along with *sinhakara* the amount of 4 copper panas on the plough'.²² This interpretation taken along with *sinhakara* is not correct as it is based on the misreading of a word (22 line) in the related inscription. Two letters being peeled off, the meaning of the expression is not as clear as it should be. The tax on lion is not imaginable.

The king received further a portion of harvests, 1/6 or 1/8 or 1/12, as was determined in accordance with the nature and degree of productivity of cultivation.

Inhabitants of the area where the royal animal farm was raised contributed in money for its maintenance unless otherwise exempted. The tax totalled 3 pana purana.²³ But whether it was per head of the population or for the unit of a village as a whole nothing can be said with certainty. The Khopasi inscription of Sivadeva I grants certain privileges to the inhabitants of that village, while it asks them each to give to the authorities 50 pieces of white chalks on the occasion of the Kailasakutayatra.

A part of the revenue came out of the realisation of the fines imposed on certain classes of offenders particularly guilty of five great crimes. If the locality happened to be the one enjoying the status of a Kotta, then the fines went to the coffers of the Sangha or panchayat as the case may be.²⁴

¹⁶ Levi, III, XV, Pp. 96ff.; Gnoli, XXXVII, IV.

¹⁷ Gnoli, XXXII (Chapagaon). *Asulkantadasya, sulkapahrasena* probably a market duty as the wording shows (*upakrayan krtva pratinivariamnanam*).

¹⁸ Gnoli, XXXIX, BGL, 6; Gnoli, XLIII.

¹⁹ Levi, XV; Gnoli, XXXVII.

²⁰ Gnoli, XXVIII.

²¹ Gnoli, XXIII; *Itihasa Prakasa*, I, i, Pp. 55-58 (*Lasana Palandu-Karabhyam*).

²² Levi, III.

²³ Gnoli, LXXIII, LXXIV.

²⁴ Gnoli, LXXIII, LXXIV. *Sarivamatram rajakulabhyam tadgrhuksetva Kalatradi sarvadrayani aya sanghasyeti*.

Bhagwan Lal's inscription No. 13 now re-read refers to a contribution of 100 panas for the taking out of the foetus from the womb of a dead pregnant woman.²⁵

Crimes listed in the panchaparadha included theft, enticement and murder, and these were specified by decrees. The state had a claim over the body of the offender. His earthly belongings, house, land, wife and everything else went to the possession of the Sangha.²⁶

A tax on a woman (Strikara) looks strange. But this is prominently mentioned in several inscriptions of the reign of Sivadeva I.²⁷ Certain officers were permitted to enter villages under question only to realise strikara. The last of the inscriptions to give this tax is that of Jisnugupta.²⁸ As no mention is made of this tax in the following inscriptions, this seems to have been stopped since the time of Narendradeva. Now the question is how this tax was determined. Did this exist in the nature of a poll-tax on every girl born to a parent? Some inscriptions speak just of strikara without any kind of elaboration. Jisnugupta's Maligaon inscription has more things to say about fines to be realised when a woman forsakes her husband to take to another. But this does not throw any light on strikara as such.

Nailyakara figures in one inscription as an item from which a village in present-day Thankot was exempted in regard to payment.²⁹ But the nature of this tax is yet difficult to understand. Was it a tax on the output of indigo?

We have come across four different offices dealing with the realisation of revenues and contributions. These are Bhatta, Mapchoka³⁰, Solladhikarana and Kutheravrittadhikarana. One more Lingvaladhikarana³¹ also figures in two inscriptions. Perhaps Bhatta-mapchoka and Lingval were offices which also performed the duties of arresting those charged with five crimes (Gnoli, XIX). The sphere and scope of duties allotted to these offices of state, cannot, however, be ascertained. Ordinarily the administration in general was known as adhikarana. There were four departments of state distributed with assignments for each of the east, west, north and south zones. The

²⁵ Gnoli, LXXIII.

²⁶ *Chawaparadarahatya sambhandadi panchaparada*. Gnoli, LXXIV. Levi, XX.

²⁷ Gnoli, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII. (*Kutheravrttyadhikaryananiha Samucitas trikara matra sadhana yaiva praveso lekhyana panchaparadha tv appradharthan (nimittam)*).

²⁸ *Itihas Prakas*, I, I, Pp. 58-59. Gnoli, LVII.

²⁹ Gnoli, LVI; Levi, III, Ins. XVI.

³⁰ *Sanskrit Sandesh*, II, 1, 2, 3, Pp. 6-9; Gnoli XV.

³¹ Gnoli, XIX.

department dealing with the general administration, which also co-ordinated the above four, was called Sarvadhikarana.³²

Whenever the king was pleased he made a charter granting relief to those concerned in respect of tax collections, and enjoined on the authorities in charge of the above noted offices not to interfere with them on that account. Similarly all regular and irregular soldiers or policemen (chata bhata)³³ on watch and ward duty were prevented from wandering about the prohibited areas so that the citizens lived in peace without being harassed or persecuted by unauthorised Government agents or by those who collected additional impositions inflicting torture on the assesseees.

Any grant of land was made over to the recipient only after a thorough survey. All lands in the villages were properly and carefully marked and measured and their boundaries fixed. More often than not detailed and minute descriptions appear in inscriptions while speaking of the grants in question.³⁴ Sometimes the location corresponded to the natural barriers. In the words of S. Levi, 'the details of the settling of boundaries attests the overscrupulous precision of the Nepalese land surveyors' (III, p. 150).

Below we reproduce two passages, one each from two inscriptions of our period, which give us an idea of how carefully frontier lines of land grant were delimited by royal decrees.

From inscription XVI of S. Levi, we have " (14-20). And here is the settling of the limits; to the north-east as far as the east, above the summit in skirting at the base the drain of the Gomin, the Five Waters; thence to the south-east, Jrbramkharo; to the south, Dharighmadul, then in continuing to the South; to the South of the river; and to the south-west Lanka; to the west the drain, then in skirting Pahanco; and to the north on the Summit from the top of the mountain the drain; then as farto the north-east the drain."³⁵

Further, another inscription, XVIII of Levi has " 1. .to the south. .the garden. .(3) .to the south. .the garden. .(4) as far as. .the West. .of Mana. .(5) in skirting. .in the west. .a little to the south to the west of Cankara. .(6) .to the west. .by going from there to the north. .the circle of houses. .(7) .and by going to north the great. .; by going to the west by the west, by the west of the Bridge

³² Levi, 12; Gnoli, XXXI.

³³ Gnoli, XII: Inscription No. 12 of Bhagwanlal (BGL). For the interpretation of the word Chatabhata, read Fleet, p. 98, f.n. 2; IA, 1876, p. 115 f.n.; IA, 1880, p. 175, n. 41. E.I. XI, p. 221.

³⁴ Gnoli, XII; XXXIV. LV, LXXVI.

³⁵ Levi, III, Pp. 103-109. Gnoli, LVI.

Stone. .; at the panchali of Reta (8-12) and by going to the north-east by going to the north-west of the garden of the panacali of Loprim . .of the Dolacikhara, by going to the north-east by going to the north-west of the field of the Panacali of Punka by going to the north-west of the field of the panacali of Loprim by going to the north of the field of the Indra of the village of Loprim by going to the north of the field of Mana thence as far as, such is the settling of boundaries of the field of the convent of Puspavatika.

(12-18) . .to the west to the north. .the Palaces the circles. .limit of stronghold has been conceded by us."³⁶

Land Measurement

We have three words used in our inscriptions for land measurement. These are *bhumi*, *pindakam* and *manika*.³⁷ In some cases *pindakam* and *manika* are used as one phrase. Perhaps *bhumi* is the original expression of the word *bum* in Newari, which meant a plot of land measuring nearly 2 acres. *Manika* also has been traced with reference to the quantity of paddy measured.³⁸ It conveyed very probably the same sense as done by *mano* (a pound) of the present day. In relation to land measurement, *manika* connoted an area of land, which required the amount of seeds for sowing in terms of the *manika* measurement. The word *manika* used conjointly with *pindakam*, according to an anonymous Nepalese writer, expresses the sense of an eight *mano* unit, called *pathi*. The same applied to the area of land would mean a plot measuring about 1/100th of a *bhumi*. In Inscription X of Gnoli, we find 72 *pindakam manika* as the next unit of measurement coming after *bhumi*. *Manika* used singly might contain even lesser area of measurement.

Land Tenure

The term *bhumi Chhidranayaya* occurs in many inscriptions of the post-Amsuvarman period in connection with the land grant. We have no idea of the system of land tenure obtaining in those days. But this much may be said that land granted under this system was owned with the rights of a permanent tenant, the King reserving to himself residual proprietorship of the mineral resources and treasure trove. In all cases *bhumi chhidra* implied cultivable plots or if it was a whole village under grant inclusive of barren but cultivable waste lands as

³⁶ Levi, III, Pp. 111-18. Gnoli, LXXIX.

³⁷ Gnoli, VI, X (*pindakam-manika*), XV; XVII (*Ksetrapindakam* 28).

³⁸ Gnoli, LXX; Bendall in *Journey in Nepal*, Ins .3, Pp. 77-79.

well.³⁹ While the King intended to make a grant of land which was not in his direct possession, he purchased it from the proprietor. The fact that land had the price even while the King was involved in the deal shows that in ancient Nepal the state had no ownership right over the properties of a citizen, and he could not be deprived of the same without due compensation.

Kotta and Dranga

Kotta and Dranga were areas, the inhabitants of which enjoyed a status higher to those living ordinarily in villages. Kotta probably refers to a fortified area on a high altitude, a ridge or a meeting of two ranges.⁴⁰ Dranga had a similar position, but its status was not equal to that of a Kotta. While any place was raised in status, the charter referred to it by the expression *Kotta maryada sthita* meaning 'attained the dignity of a fort'. According to one author Dranga means a police station, while another took it as an item of police tax.⁴¹ Both these meanings appear not too wide of the mark for dranga has been used in our inscriptions in a manner to cover the meaning of a station and a tax.⁴² In the Inscription XXII of Gnoli there is an expression *asmin drange*, which clearly establishes its situation as a station enjoying certain strategic importance. But dranga in the expression *Sarvatalagrama sahityaivasya drangasya muktam* might imply a tax associated with dranga as an outpost of military or any kind of defence utility.

Forced Labour

Slavery was unknown in ancient Nepal, but a system of forced labour employed in state undertakings obtained in our period.⁴³ This was called *visti*, the same as *beth* current for forced labour at the present time. The expression appears in several inscriptions which record grant of a charter to villages exempting their inhabitants from forced labour. It seems that forced labour was treated as a form of taxation and a burden on the people. It must have been compulsory. Sometimes the king transferred on to the grantee the privilege of exact-

³⁹ Gnoli, LXXVII. BGL, No. 12.

For interpretation of the term read, IA, 1872, I, P. 46 f.n. IA, 1875, P. 106 f.n.; EI, II, P. 353; Fleet, Pp. 137, 166, 179.

⁴⁰ Gnoli, XXXIV (*Sarvakotta maryadopapannatvad*), LXI.

⁴¹ Rajatarangini (Stein), II, Pp. 291-92. Fleet, Pp. 97-98, f.n. 6.

⁴² Gnoli, LXVI.

⁴³ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. LXXVI; LXXIII, LXXVII; BGL, No. 12.

ing forced labour from a particular area that formed the subject of a royal grant. A few villages were required to pay in alternative amount of cash money to the king if they did not render physical labour.⁴⁴ We have not been able to correctly interpret the word Jhalandu Visti of the inscription LXXVI of Gnoli. Probably this was used in the same sense as *bhottavisti* of another inscription. Jhalandu might be a destination like Bhatta, to which merchandise was sent from Nepal. But it is hard to locate Jhalandu.

General Picture

An inscription of Amsuvarman records a charter prohibiting the entry of bulls, horses and horse drawn carriages into a specified area irrigated by Nilisala pranali.⁴⁵ Another inscription (Yengahiti) speaks of a certain category of jewellery and ornaments prohibited to those convicted of treason and like crimes.⁴⁶ These references to horses, horse drawn carriages and ornaments and jewellery do certainly testify to a high degree of material prosperity attained by the Nepalese people of the period under review. The evidence of the T'ang annals is amply supported by our inscriptions.

Ancient Nepal seems to have been rich in agricultural resources, which had developed to a great extent. Although time and again the peasants suffered in their own way, Nepal's agricultural economy was sound enough to be a guarantee against ravages and depredations of natural calamities and wars. But all this is just an inference. We have no materials at our disposal to add here to what we have already written about this subject in our treatment of economic policy.

Apart from this, we may note a few details about agriculture as attested by our inscriptions.

We have made a reference to taxes on fishes, fowls and pigs. From the wording of the inscription it appears that care was taken under royal decrees to preserve fishes and animals.⁴⁷ We have traced lines in the inscriptions, which speak of horses and elephants. The word *Gohale goyudhe* in the inscription XVI of Levi suggests that ploughing was done by bullocks. Sandhika comes for a reference in the inscription XLII of Gnoli. This indicates that bulls roamed freely

⁴⁴ Levi, Ins. No. XIX; Gnoli, LXXII, *Visti manusyasambandhena prativarsam yat puranasata eva graminair datavyam rajakulaya vyavasayibhistu nakadacid.*

⁴⁵ Sans. Sandesh, I, 10, 11, 12, Pp. 34-35; Gnoli, Ins. No. XLII. *Lingual Sandhahavikahita gantribali vardanam.*

⁴⁶ Gnoli, Ins. No. LXI (*Pandakeyuranupuran*).

⁴⁷ Gnoli, Ins. No. XXXII; BGL, 6. A variety of fishes is mentioned. *Gragagriba, Kastikamatsya, bhukundika.*

in the streets and they were venerated and looked after for selective breeding. The agraharas marked in several inscriptions does testify to the interest of the state in the maintenance of public parks and forests.⁴⁸

Our inscriptions do not give anything about industries. Our quotation from the Chinese history given initially in this chapter may enable us to form an idea of how artists and builders flourished in the ages. The Chinese have all words of praise for the workmanship displayed in specimens of Nepalese art creations. One of the inscriptions of the period speaks of the king as one who was pleased to see a huge carved jalasayana image of Visnu done beautifully and successfully.⁴⁹ This certainly is a tribute to the artist in question. The industrial aspect of art has also to be acknowledged. But if we were to seek for any information about industries yielding necessities of life, we have not got any source materials so far to avail of. Except for a cursory allusion even the Chinese notices fail to provide any clue about the subject matter.

However, as jewellery and ornaments are mentioned in the inscriptions, we have no doubt that goldsmith's industry was quite advanced. In like manner we can adduce the working of metals like copper, bronze and brass to have been in a developed stage. Copper coins of the age bespeaks the advance in the industrial growth of this metal. About oil-containers (tailaghatam) mentioned in some inscriptions, we cannot say whether these were of earth or copper or leather. As the practice goes, they must have been of black earth, which are much lasting. Water mills and oil-mills must have been in abundance. If Kautilya's *nepalikam* meant woollen blankets from Nepal, the existence of woollen industry has got to be admitted.

We do not know if sewn garments were in use. From the Chinese account we obtain an information that the Nepalese in the 7th century had only one piece of cloth to wear and they enveloped their body with the same. Probably textiles had developed to that extent they were in India, but the art of cutting and sewing had lagged behind.

Talking of the prowess of the rulers in eulogising terms, the inscriptions make a reference to bitter wars which must have been surely fought out with highly advanced weapons.

⁴⁸ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. LXVI; LXXXVII, BGL, 12.

⁴⁹ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. LXI (*jalasayanarupanispadanayogya brhacchila Karsanavya-para paritustair*).

Trade and Industry

From the inscriptions no idea of the extent of internal and external trade is obtained. Load carrying comes for reference as a category of forced labour. The word Bhatta used in the same context shows that Nepal carried some kind of trade with Tibet. But other facts do not come to light. The T'ang annals say that the merchants were numerous and cultivators rare. Nepal's industry and trade must have highly advanced to earn this kind of reference.

We have already made a passing reference to the trade routes, either ways leading to Tibet or India. Quite possibly there were big and small traders. One inscription records the erection of an image of Sun God by a Sarthavaha of merchants whose name was Guhyamitra.⁵⁰ Probably he was a leader of a band of traders who sent their caravan to distant spots within Nepal and to neighbouring countries. Thus the existence of caravans negotiating the Indo-Nepalese and Tibeto-Nepalese highways are inferred.

For an idea of export and import trade of Nepal of those days, the reader's attention is drawn to the lines following the quotation from the T'ang annals, which appear as comment on the observation of the Chinese about the subject under consideration.

Currency

In the Section above dealing with economic policy, we have written a few lines about the currency of this period. Our inscriptions give reckoning in four terms, (1) Karsapana⁵¹, (2) Purana⁵², (3) Pana⁵³, and (4) Panapurana⁵⁴. In one inscription we have Tamrika Pana. But pana comes without any qualification in others. Levi's XVI has an expression *tasyardhanpratimuktam sim-kare ca yena karsapanam deyan tenastau pana deya yenastau pana deyam tena panacatustayam*. This clearly gives in reckoning the ratio between a karsapana and pana, which is 1 Karsapana is twice eight panas. Karsapana is another name of Purana, which was a silver coin. The pana might have been also coined in silver. But whether Purana or Pana, no trace of silver coinage is found. All coins of ancient Nepal

⁵⁰ Sanskrit Sandesh, 1, 9, P. 29.

⁵¹ Gnoli, Ins. No. LVI, Levi, XVI.

⁵² Levi, XIII; Gnoli, Ins. Nos. XXXV, LXXIII, BGL, 13, Levi, Ins. No. XIV, Gnoli, Ins. Nos. XXXVI; XXXII.

⁵³ No. 13 of BGL; Gnoli, Ins. Nos. LXXIII, LXXXIII, Levi, Ins. No. XXI. LXXXIII.

⁵⁴ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. XXXII, LVIII (*Caturbhi tamrikapanah*).

available up-to-date are of copper. The panapurana is still an unknown unit of currency.

The above does not give a full account of the currency position of the country. But nevertheless this will sufficiently establish that economic life in ancient Nepal was far advanced while it enjoyed money economy and all that it meant in terms of industry and commerce.

APPENDIX I

Managriha, Kailasakutabhavana and Bhadrdivasabhavana

Above, while speaking of inscriptions we noted three chanceries, Managriha, Kailasakutabhavana and Bhadrdivasabhavana from which royal charters used to be issued.

Much has been said about these chanceries at respective places. Here we intend to discuss the problem of their location and identification.

Attempts have been made to identify the site of the present royal palace at Patan with Managriha.¹ The site with the shopping centre close by is otherwise known as Mangalbazar. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Kings of Patan invariably addressed themselves with the title of Maniggaladhipati, Lord of Maniggal.²

The inference is that the word Mangal in the name of Mangal-bazar is derived from Maniggal and both stand for the same site. L. Petech thinks that gal is the apabhransa (corrupt form) of griha as pronounced by the Newars.* Further, according to him "Mani" or Mana has the same root as, and is presumably connected with the goddess Manesvari, who from the beginning to the end was placed in a special relationship with the royal houses of Nepal".³ But we may accept this statement not without serious objections. First of all, the word gal can be an equivalent of griha, but today it means a pit and not a house. The second syllable of the word is pronounced as ga e.g. names of certain localities in the city of Kathmandu, like tangal, Yangal, etc. Secondly, Maneswari came to be associated with the royal house only since the time of Jayasthitimalla, and not since earlier. We do not have any document with Manesvari as the deity of royal devotion, which goes back to a period earlier than the 14th century. Thirdly, the term Maniggaladhipati appears in documents only since the time of Sivasinha (late 16th century), although Manigal standing for the name of a locality is noticed about the middle of the 14th century.

It is true that Manigal came to bear the name of a locality within Patan in the middle of the 14th century. L. Petech cites an ms. Gita-govinda (Darb. Lib. IV. 45) bearing date NS 469=1349 A.D.), which mentions Manigal. Later than this, another ms. of 499=1379 A.D.

¹ Petech, *Medieval History*, Pp. 199-20. Itihas Prakas, I, i, (last few pages).

² See later, Sivasinha's Reign.

³ Petech, *Ibid.*

was written in a Patan monastery situated north of Manigwal.⁴ VIII (f. 50 b) has for the year NS 467 an event noticed in the narrative. Thus the antiquity of Manigal upto the early 14th century cannot be subjected to doubts. But this by itself does not lead us very far in our search of the old site of Managriha. We do not get any idea of location and identification of Managriha from Manigal's stature and hoary medieval past.

One may easily take Mangal as another form of Manigal. Possibly Mangal-bazar is the same as Manigal of the documents cited above. But there is nothing to prove the identity of Manigal or Mangal with Managriha and the latter being in Lalit Patan.

Because in the centuries while Managriha housed the chancery of Nepal's Kings, there was no other locality as prosperous as Patan in the valley we may as well attempt to locate the site somewhere in this city. But for this more reliable data are needed.

If Manigal was the same as ancient Managriha and modern Mangal (bazar), then we need an explanation as to the fact of its having gone out of notice for about seven centuries from the late 6th to the late 13th century. But as no explanation is forthcoming, we also find that even a hazy memory of this chancery seems to have faded away, and no tradition of its location had been in existence to enable one to hazard speculation as to its identity.⁵

While the inscriptions were being unearthed and discovered for the first time, the finds by accident belonged to quarters in the neighbourhood of Pasupati's shrine, and this led many to guess that the site of Managraha lay somewhere in Deopatan, near the sanctuary of Pasupatinath. But beyond the evidence of this guess-work we have nothing to establish the identity of any site in this area with Managriha.

About Kailasakutabhavana Levi and a few others (Nepalese writers) have tried to identify the site within the present Harigaon. The basis of their argument is an inscription of Amsuvarman traced in that locality. In it Amsuvarman was supposed to have addressed the citizens of the adjoining area of Kailasakuta, which they thought was Harigaon itself (Levi, III, Ins. XIII and XIV).⁶

Petech has his own version to offer in regard to the identification of the site. The colophon of an Ms. Navagrahadasavichara (473 dvirasadha Krishna 3), which reads *Sri Yangaladese Sri Kailasakuta—Vaja*

⁴ CPMDN, I, P. 126.

⁵ Manigal is variously spelt Manigwal (CPMC, P. 177), Manigal (VIII. f. 50 b), Maniggal (later inscriptions) Manigal.

⁶ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. XXXV, XXXVI, Levi, III, Pp. 83-96, comments and footnotes.

(Vamsaja), he translates as 'descended from the dynasty of Kailasakuta in the district of Yangala, Patan' and says that the site 'was to be looked for somewhere in the neighbourhood of Patan, and not near Pasupatinath and Deo Patan'.⁷

It is true that we search in vain for any site in Harigaon or Deo Patan to be identified with Kailasakuta.⁸ But we cannot also agree with Petech about his interpretation of the expression in the colophon of the above noted Ms. As we shall say later in the next volume the name Yangala did never apply to Patan, which was called Yallai. Yangala was a name applied to Kathmandu. Similarly, to interpret Kailasakuta Vamsaja in a way to locate it in Yangala was carrying the point too far. It could at the most refer the expression to the dynasty of Kailasakuta but the same without trying to explain where it was and what it stood for. In the circumstances, it will not be correct to say that 'alternance between Managriha and Kailasakutabhavana seems to refer merely to changes of palace within Patan and its neighbourhood.' The actual site of Kailasakutabhavana has yet to be located and identified.

There are three inscriptions issued from Bhadradiabasabhavana.⁹ In two the date figures are read 95 and 103 respectively. These happen to be the last inscriptions of Narendradeva recorded towards the end of his reign. All the records of his successors are issued from Kailasakutabhavana. The Bhadradiabasabhavana appears to have been a stop gap arrangement of a chancery for these dates.

We have no idea of its location. Even the remotest impression of identification is lacking.

⁷ Petech, Op. Cit. P. 200. The ms. according to him is unpublished.

⁸ Bhagwanlal Indrajī writes 'Kailasakuta is at present the name of a large mound about forty feet high situated to the north of Pasupati's temple. It is a palace mentioned in the inscriptions' fn. to P. 8, *Inscriptions from Nepal*.

⁹ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. LXXII, LXXIII, LXXIV; BGL, No. 13, Levi, No. XX.

APPENDIX II

Caste in Ancient Nepal

With the Chronicles ascribing caste to Jayasthitimalla in the late 14th century, an impression has gained ground that the society in ancient Nepal was absolutely casteless.

But it is not correct to say that castes did not exist in ancient Nepal.

Castes in Nepal are as ancient as its history. Its inscriptions and foreign source materials have testified to the existence of castes in Nepal as early as the 5th century A.D. and even earlier.

Yuan Chwang talks of a ksatriya dynasty ruling over Nepal, and of numerous Brahmanas who pursued the calling of priests in the society. They were so numerous, that the Chinese pilgrim could not have their exact number.

Several inscriptions issued by Lichhavi rulers of the Pre-Amsuvarman period, as well as those by the later Kings of the same dynasty address the villagers and inhabitants as those led by Brahmanas (*Brahmana purassaran*).¹ The very first available inscription (i.e. of Manadeva, 386 Samvat) talks of Brahmanas to have received bountiful gifts at the hands of the queen mother and the king.

This certainly presupposes a society with a caste structure. Details of the caste system are, however, not known from these records.

¹ Gnoli, Ins. Nos. XII, XV, XIX.

APPENDIX III

On the Lichhavi Origin of the Rulers

Although the chronicles except the Gopala Vamsavali do not have the expression Lichhavi used in relation to the ruling dynasty and give to the same the name of Suryavamsi, the lineage claimed by the rulers in inscriptions being Lichhavi there should be no dispute in regard to that claim and the line of rulers who figure in these records must pass as the Lichhavi dynasty. The Gopala Vamsavali (F. 19a) speaks of the Lichhavi dynasty of the solar race to have come to power after defeating the Nepala Kiratas. But there is one point which has got to be clarified in this connection. The three rulers, of the earlier inscriptions Manadeva, Vasantadeva and Ganadeva do not call themselves in the address Lichhavi Kulaketu as do the others following them. We trace their Lichhavi lineage from the inscription of Jayadeva II (No. 15 of BGL). How is it that these rulers do not mention anything about their Lichhavi origin, while their successors took pride in addressing themselves as descendants of the Lichhavi family? Was it a late realisation come to the Lichhavi rulers after so many generations of rule? Or the rulers of the later period had only arrogated to themselves the illustrious lineage of the Lichhavi family just to enhance their reputation and status in the eyes of the world. We confront all these questions while we deal with the subject of the genealogy of these rulers. But we have got to be reconciled to the idea of accepting the Lichhavi genealogy presented as such in the inscription for want of contrary evidence, even though the claim of the rulers could be disputed.

There is one more puzzle. Manadeva gives a chronology of his ancestors for three generations, but none others until Jayadeva II have talked of their paternity. But for the information provided in the inscription of Jayadeva II, the sketch of the family tree of the Lichhavis we have drawn elsewhere in this volume would not have been there. Obviously much of what we have argued above in this respect is an inference, though based on certain data of the inscriptions.

We have an extract here from Sylvain Levi's book 'Nepal' on the origin of the Lichhavis, to which the attention of the readers is hereby drawn :

"Here we are a good distance from the genealogy which the inscription of Jaya Deva pompously displayed. The Buddhistic texts

mention a particular legend on the origin of the family; the spouse of the king of Banaras conceived a ball of flesh red as the flower 'Kin' (hibiscus), which she hastened to throw into the Ganges; a hermit gathered it; fifteen days later, the ball divided in two after another fortnight, each half produced five placentas. Another fifteen days passed; one of the pieces then became a boy, the other a girl. The boy was of a yellow colour like that of gold; the girl was as white as silver. By force of compassion, the fingers of the hermit metamorphosed into breasts and the milk went down the children's throats as a limpid water down a jewel Mani; as the refulgence was alike within and without the hermit gave to the children the name of Lichhavi. Other exegetics interpreted this by name by 'thin skin' or again 'in the same skin' in memory of the origin of the two children. All these explanations are based on a so-called popular or skilful etymology which thought of recognizing in the name of the Lichhavis the work 'Chavi' which signifies at the same time 'skin' 'colour' and 'refulgence'. The tale itself places in hand the work of a theme fairly ordinary; thus it is that in the Maha Bharata (1,115) the hundred sons of Dhritarastra are born from a ball of flesh which Gandhari, through impatience, has prematurely rejected.

"The legend is thus mentioned in the dictionary of EKKE S. U. Litche, Li—Tche—pi, according to the Cheu—Tsoung—ki (or more exactly the Seu—fau—lin—chou—cheu—. Tsoung—i—ki) glossary on the commentary (Chou) of the Dharma Gupta—Vinaya (Sen-Fau—lin) in ten or twenty Chapters by T'ing pin. The sin-Tsi-Tsang-King in-i-Soei hau lou of 'k' o-houng preserved in the Korean collection and printed in the Japanese edition of the Tripitaka (XXXIX. 1—5) gives the same legend in a condensed form. An analogous legend drawn from the texts of the south is found again in Spence Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, P. 242. n. The story related by Fa-Hien in connection with the 'Tower of the bows and arms deposited' at Vaicali, is evidently only a variation of the same tradition: one of the wives of the king conceives on the bank of the Ganges, a ball of flesh, which her rival the first queen has had thrown into the water enclosed in a casket. A king recovers the casket, opens it and finds within a thousand children, he brings them up. Once they grew big they invaded the kingdom of their father. But their mother, to make herself recognizable to them and to stop their invasion, climbs to the top of a pavilion, squeezes her breasts and thereby causes the outflow of a thousand spirits of milk which fall into the mouths of her thousand children (trans, Remusat, Ch. XXV).

“According to the Tibet-is-che Lebens beschreibung cakyamunis of Schiefner mentioned in Korm (Buddhismus, trans, Jacobi, P. 312) the ancestor of the Lichhavis as well as those of the Mallas was a grandson of Virudhada named Vasisthar.” (Levi, II, Pp. 87-89).

Levi quotes (Vol. III, Pp. 181-85) with his own comment the relevant passage of the Mulasarvastivadavinaya as it applies to Nepal, and this is reproduced here for our benefit.

Mulasarvastivadavinaya, Chap. 21 (16th naihasargika) ed. of Tokyo, XVI. 8,9,100 b.

“The Buddha dwelt at Cravasti in the Jetavana the part of Anathapindika. The bhiksus seeing a troop of men moving towards Nepal (Nipo-lo) asked them ‘who are you?’ They replied ‘we are proceeding towards Nepal.’ The bhiksus said to them: ‘We wish to follow the same route; it is like the back of a camel. You could not possibly be rejoicing to proceed thither.’ The bhiksus replied: ‘We are going together to find out about this country’.—‘Wise men if such be the case you can come along with us’. They continued their journey with the merchants and in the end they reached this kingdom. The bhiksus found no pleasure there. As early as the next day they proceeded to the market to rejoin the merchants and they asked them ‘When do you wish to return to your country?’ The merchants replied: Why now? Is it because you find no pleasure here? ‘The bhiksus replied, ‘We are newcomers, and today we do not feel well.’ The merchants then said; ‘as long as we have not exchanged our goods there can be no talk of returning. We have friends who are desirous of returning to the central country (Madhyadeca); ‘we only have to request them and they will keep you company on the return journey.’ The bhiksus replied: “Perfect Goal bargain’. In Nepal there are two kinds of cheap goods; wood and orpiment (hiung-hoang). And then the merchants having bought wool in large quantities loaded their chariots with it and left. And the troop of bhiksus journeyed with them”

Another section of the same Vinaya, the Sarva-vastu also provides a reference to Nepal.

Mulasarvastivadavinaya, XVII, 4, P. 111 b col. 9.

“In these days the son of king Mal-ne (Virudhaka), as a result of his frenzy massacred the race of the Cakyas of Kapilavastu. Thereupon the town was deserted some fleeing towards the west; others left for Nepal. Those who entered Nepal were all the parents of the ayusmat Ananda. And later merchants of Cravasti having taken goods proceeded towards Nepal. The Cakyas having seen the merchants

asked them, 'We are now suffering the terror of death. The ayusmat Ananda, why does he not come and see where we are.' The merchants thought about it all and having finished their business they returned to Cravasti and they said to Ananda. 'The parents of the venerable who are established in Nepal make you hear this' and the venerable Ananda having heard the words that the merchants conveyed to him, was moved and afflicted and he proceeded to the kingdom of Nepal. This kingdom is cold and snowy. Ananda got chapt on his hands and feet. And then he returned to Cravasti. The bhiksus having seen him asked him, 'O, Ananda, at one time our hands were as smooth and even as the tongue. Why then are they now rough and chapped?' 'He answered: 'In the kingdom of Nepal the soil neighbours on the Himalayas. As a result of the wind and snow, I have my feet and hands in this state'. Thereupon, they asked him. 'Your parents, yonder how do they live?' He replied, 'They wear pou-la (pila).' They asked him, 'And why do you not wear them also?' He replied: 'The Buddha has not yet allowed to wear any.' And then the bhiksus went to interrogate the Buddha. The Buddha said to them: 'In cold and snowy countries' pou-la can be worn.'

We conclude with another note on the subject by the same author, which will add more facts to the above.

"1. The word poula is found (under the transcription fou-lo) in the chan-kien p'i-p'o-cha abbreviated translation of the commentary of Buddhaghosa on the Suttavibhanga of the Vinaya pali (Jap. ed. XVII, 8 p. 89 a col. 20). Treating on the Sekhiya the author adds two rules "They are wanting he says in the Indian original. The first one refers to the stupas. The case being that when the Buddha was in the world, there were no stupas as yet. But the Buddha when he was in the world has prescribed this rule. As a result of which no sandals must be worn when entering a stupa of the Buddha; they must be carried in the hand when entering a stupa of the Buddha and the fou-lo must not be worn when entering a stupa of the Buddha; the fou-lo must be carried in the hand when entering a stupa of the Buddha."

"Yi-tsing mentions the 'pu-la' in recalling this rule in his 'Non-hai ki kouel' at the end of chapter 11 (Key Takakusu. *A Record of Buddhist Practices* P. 22 and the note P. 218).

'The 'yi-ts'u king yiu-yi' of Hiuen-hing in chap—17 comments upon the word fou-la. 'one still saus (fou-la). The form is pou-lo. This signifies 'low boots'.

"The original Sanskrit term pula is found again in the Rudrayana avadana (Divyavadana XXXVII) which is borrowed from the Mula

Sarvastivada Vinaya. Maha Katyayana on returning from a circuit in the North-West, reaches the banks of the Indus. He soliloquised 'Bhagavat has said that in the Madhyadeca one must wear pula. I am going to give them (to the divinity of the North who is asking for a relic)'. He presented them to the divinity. He placed them on a raised site (the word sthandila is translated by 'kai Choang techeu ti' raised spot and exposed to view) and erected a mast (lat-tchi-yasti) called pylayasti (pou-lo-lai-chi). This is then the way to restore the text, spoiled in all the manuscripts (Divyav, P. 581, 1, 9—Jap XVI, 9, 98 col. 19-20).

"Recently I made an inventory of the second of these texts in my article on the elements of formation of the Divyavadana (T'oung-pss, 1907, P. 113) in connection with the epoch in which the Vinaya of the School of Mula-sarvastivada could have been compiled. I did not then dare to build much hope on this datum; inserted at the end of a section of the Vinaya, it risked being considered a late addition, introduced by interested monks in the account translated by Yi-tsing. But the episode relative to the traffic of wool cannot lend itself to similar suspicions. It is part of one of the fundamental inscriptions and is found in the very middle of the column that pre-eminently constitutes the Vinaya. Thus so long as no anterior of the Guptas is found in which Nepal is alluded to it will be permissible to believe that the Vinaya in question has only received its definitive arrangement after the third century. I fairly believe that the work was executed in Nepal herself. A monk from the plains would probably not have voluntarily admitted that the mountaineers belonged to the family of Ananda and to the blood of the Cakyas. The selection of the Vinayas of the other schools in the Tibetan collection seems also to attest the marked favour this Vinaya enjoyed in the Himalayan regions. In any case the two episodes are connected to an epoch during which a through commercial exchange was placed in regular relations with the plain."*

* Levi, III, fn. to P. 183.

APPENDIX IV

Asoka & Nepal

The Ceylonese Pali chronicles, the Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa, do not at all mention Nepal while narrating the story of Asoka's life and career. Every detail of his pilgrimage is noted in either treatises. There is no reason for the omission of Nepal in these if he had ever gone there. As for his daughter Charumati, this name also seems to be just coined by the Nepalese chronicle while weaving the tale of his visit to the valley, for no daughter of his has come in for notice in his records either in edicts or in inscriptions.

Nepal has been often marked in the historical map of India within Asoka's empire. But the representation of Nepal as a part of his empire was suggested as a corollary to the event of his visit to the valley. We have, however, to view the entire question of Nepal's being a feudatory of Asoka in the light of what we have said earlier about his visit to this country.

One may argue that if Nepal was then independent it must have surely figured in the list of *anta* and *pratyanta* countries as given in Rock Edicts Nos. 5 and 13. But in the consideration of the very complicated question of determining the extent of Asoka's empire one has to admit that the enumeration is inconclusive and incomplete. Otherwise we shall have to dismiss the very existence of many areas such as those now occupied by Nepal and some states in Western and Eastern Himalayas.

This position we cannot simply accept. At least half a century earlier to Asoka's birth Kautilya talks of Nepalese blankets. Obviously this presupposes a country of that name.

On any consideration it looks most unlikely that Asoka had at any time visited the Valley of Nepal and could impose his suzerainty over this country. Any suggestion leading to the acceptance of the old thesis will be absolutely imaginative.

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